



SLA Standards for Secondary School Libraries



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We believe that all work that the school librarian and library staff are engaged in should be in line with the whole school aims and should be measured



The primary and secondary schools visited emphasised the school library as contributing markedly to improving literacy skills. All the schools visited had well-resourced libraries, often with computerised loan systems and facilities for accessing learning resources on an intranet... The enthusiasm and responsiveness of the librarian generally had a direct impact on the attitudes of the students towards the library and reading.

—*Removing Barriers To Literacy*, Ofsted, January 2011, No. 090237

Staffing

- School libraries should ideally be staffed by a trained, experienced and qualified library professional.
- The School Library Association recommends a minimum staffing level of a full time librarian, a full time assistant librarian and a part time administrative assistant for schools of over 1,000 pupils.
- The School Library Association recommends a minimum staffing level of a full time librarian, and a part time assistant librarian (term time only plus two weeks) for schools of up to 500 pupils.
- These staffing levels are to allow the librarian to be away from the library to liaise with teaching staff, visit classrooms to assist with information literacy, attend external meetings and complete strategic administrative tasks.
- The School Library Association provides a generic job description, available online to SLA members and will also provide other examples of specific job descriptions on application.
- Any extra hours worked above 37 hours per week should be taken as holiday or paid as overtime.
- All library staff are entitled to an adequate lunch break of at least 20 minutes if you are expected to work more than six hours at a stretch. The SLA recommends a minimum lunch break of 30 minutes.
- The library should be open for at least one hour before and one hour after the school day. These hours and any extended school day activities within the library should be supervised by a member of staff with the ratio of one member of staff to 30 pupils.

Explore

Position statement for staffing for secondary school libraries:

<http://www.sla.org.uk/secondary-staffing.php>

SLA generic job description:

<http://www.sla.org.uk/advisory-note.php?i=33>

Lunch breaks information from DirectGov:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/WorkingHoursAndTimeOff/DG_10029451

Status of the school librarian

- The school librarian should be considered the head of an academic department, attending head of department and curriculum meetings.
- School librarians should have full control of their departmental budget and be responsible for management of their staff and organisation of their area, including preparing risk assessments.
- The school librarian should be entitled to attend and deliver whole school INSET.
- The school librarian should be entitled to an induction at the start of their employment and regular appraisals during their employment in line with other school staff.
- The school librarian should be entitled to relevant continuing professional development.

Explore

Position statement on the status of the school librarian:

<http://www.sla.org.uk/status-of-librarian.php>



Library space

- The library should have sufficient space to incorporate areas for study, soft seating, group work and ICT provision for project work, research and homework.
- There must be sufficient suitable room for the book stock with easy access to it.
- There should be sufficient space to house a full class of students, with a teacher and additional accommodation for students wishing to study. There should be no fewer than 30 places.
- There should be areas for book display and promotional materials.
- We advise that there should be no more pupils supervised than a maximum of 30 per staff member present.
- There should be office space for a library manager with staff, to provide storage, a book preparation/administration area and a secure space. A solo worker requires storage space and a secure area.
- The School Library Association recommends that dedicated ICT suites should be housed separately from the main library area, even when managed by library staff.
- The School Library Association recommends that there should be **additional** Sixth Form study areas separate from the library to accommodate differing study requirements.

Explore

Building Bulletin 98:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schoolscapital/buildingsanddesign/a0010896/area-guidelines-for-schools-building-bulletin-82>

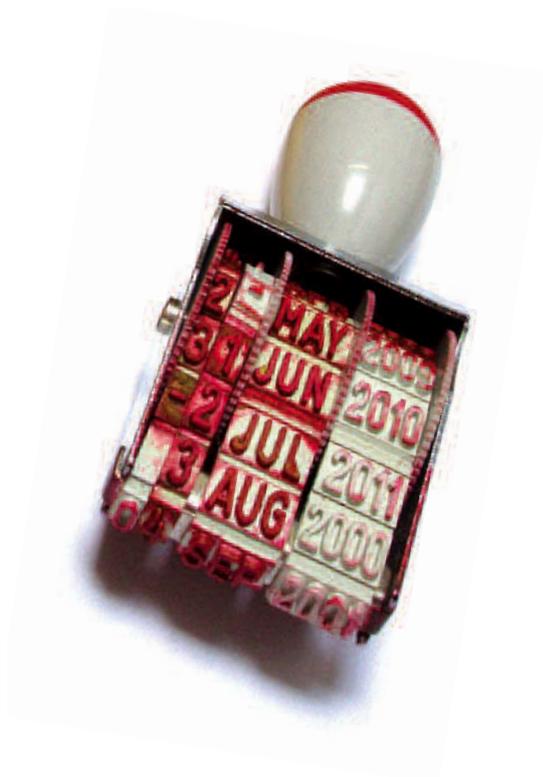
Stock

- The School Library Association recommends that the library should stock a minimum of 10 items per pupil.
- The stock should be in the proportion of 50% fiction to 50% non-fiction.
- Journals and magazines should also be kept in hardcopy and/or online covering both academic and leisure subjects.
- A minimum requirement of one broadsheet newspaper and one tabloid newspaper either in hard copy or online should be kept.
- All stock should be either relevant to the curriculum or of general interest and must contain accurate up to date and accessible information.
- The School Library Association recommends that general stock over 10 years old must be regularly checked to ensure that it complies with the above statement.
- The School Library Association recommends that stock which covers topics of science, technology and geography should be checked when it is five years old or over.

Explore

Position statement on weeding guidelines:

<http://www.sla.org.uk/advisory-note.php?i=35>



Budget

- The School Library Association agrees with the figures provided by Booktrust for recommended average spend per pupil.
- This figure is for the allocation of book stock.
- In addition to this figure there should be an additional budgetary allocation for subscriptions, stationery and digital and online resources as appropriate.

Explore

Latest figures from Booktrust:

<http://www.booktrust.org.uk/Resources-for-schools/School-libraries-research>



About the SLA

We believe that every pupil is entitled to effective school library provision. The SLA is committed to supporting everyone involved with school libraries, promoting high quality reading and learning opportunities for all.

The School Library Association is an independent organisation and registered charity which was founded in 1937 to promote the development of libraries in schools. Today the SLA exists to support and encourage all those working in school libraries, raising awareness and promoting good practice through an effective training and publications programme. Membership of the Association brings many benefits including an advisory/information service for national and international enquiries, a quarterly reviewing journal, online resources, and reduced rates for all publications, training courses and our annual residential course.

'The SLA know that books matter, that children matter, that children who do not have books in their lives are the poorer for it. That's why they do what they do. That's why I do what I do. That's why I'm so pleased to be a Patron of the School Library Association.'

— Michael Morpurgo

School Library Association

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Registered Charity Nos: 313660 and SC039453

SLA-06-11-B

