

## Reviews

### Everything in its Place: Managing Electronic and Physical Resources in the School Library

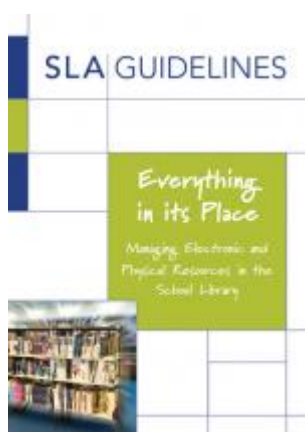
Lemaire, Kathy Lemaire and Sally Duncan-March (2014)

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Sally Duncan, one of the authors of this publication, was originally an academic librarian who retrained as a Primary School teacher. She has, however, remained involved with school libraries within the UK for the past eighteen years. She has been an on-going advocate for the role of school libraries in student learning and student outcomes. Sally is also the author of a number of significant publications of primary school libraries and actively promotes the ability they have to engage students in all forms of reading formats. Her co-author, Kathy Lemaire, spent eleven years as the Chief Executive of the School Library Association in the UK after working as the Principal Librarian in the Oxfordshire School Library Service and in a variety of positions in public and school libraries. Kathy is currently chairperson of the Oxford Children's Book Group.

As a generic 'checklist' for policies, procedures and guidelines for a school library this publication provides an excellent platform from which to work for all library staff regardless of whether they hold school library and/or teacher-librarian qualifications. This reviewer is not in a position to speak with great authority on the resourcing – staffing, physical or content-wise – of libraries in the UK. It is imperative that the context in which this article is written, UK school libraries, is kept in mind when reviewing the information as it could apply in an Australian setting.

This reviewer, however, is well placed to speak on the application of such a publication as it could apply in an Australian school. Although written in response to UK conditions – salient points are made for us here in Australia – the publication reminds all working in school libraries, and school administrations, of the operational 'inventory' for every school library in the country.

In Victoria, as an example, we are experiencing the removal of qualified, experienced teacher-librarians in state primary schools while some still remain in the private sector. Across the state secondary sector there has been a significant reduction in the number of qualified teacher-librarians in school libraries. These positions are, increasingly, being filled by teaching staff without teacher-librarian qualifications, public librarians and by library support staff.

Furthermore, in some schools, there has been a concurrent initiative by school administrations to reduce the number of print resources or replace print resources with greater access to online resources of varying qualities across wider areas of the school. This has, in some more dire cases, led to some library physical spaces being `reclaimed' for other purposes deemed to be of greater importance in the whole school schemata.

In settings where teaching staff, public librarians and library support staff are operating they are doing so in an established school library, which will already have established policies, procedures and guidelines in place. The publication, however, remains a beneficial advocacy tool by which they can maintain `best practice' within their school communities, sometimes in the face of considerable competition from other elements within their workplaces.

In a setting where a new school library was being established the publication provides a checklist, regardless of the educational background and professional experience of those undertaking the work, of the primary factors which form the basis of such planning.

When operating in an Australian setting it is prudent to keep in mind the differing terminology to that which exists in a UK setting. `Creating a Library Policy and Development Plan', `Audit Current Resources', `Edit the Stock' and `Select New Resources' would, in our context, fall broadly within one `Collection Management Policy' rather than appear as independent activities.

Other subtitles within this publication are somewhat more spurious. `Finding the Funding', `Create Catalogue Records', `Classify your Resources', `Provide Easy Access', `Teach your Library Users' and `Annual Stock Check' are operational components of all libraries, not just those in a school setting. Furthermore the list is not exhaustive – a volunteer worker, with little background in the field, may not pick this up. Due to this factor, the value of the article, particularly for school libraries, is diluted.

Of each of the sections the least applicable are the Appendices. Alternative sources of information and libraries suppliers are all UK based – it would be up to an employee to inform themselves of those existing in their local area. This reviewer is unaware of any instance where a library is still using a card system as suggested – this process, along with borrowing data can be managed through all available electronic management systems. The best fit for information such as `Care and Repair of Books' would be as part of a `Procedures Manual' – it would have been of assistance to library staff had the structuring and contents of such a manual been incorporated into the article also.

In conclusion, the publication is helpful, rather than essential, reading for those of us working in a variety of libraries or resource curation areas in Australian settings.

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