



## Children & Young People in the Library Policy

*Policy for Cassowary Coast Regional Council Libraries approach to providing for children and young people by defining the libraries expectations of parents and caregivers and library patron's expectations of library staff.*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Delivery Services Library Staff</b>	<b>Policy number: DS003</b>
<b>Related forms, policies and procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Internet Terms &amp; Conditions</li> <li>• Libraries Membership Policy</li> <li>• Cassowary Coast Regional Council Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy</li> </ul>	
<b>Key words</b>	Children, young people, carers, parents, caregivers, Council staff	
<b>Relevant legislation</b>	<p>This policy is supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Libraries Act 1988 <a href="https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1988-029">https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1988-029</a></li> <li>• State Library of QLD – Intellectual Freedom Policy <a href="https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate-information/policies-and-guidelines#how-we-operate-card">https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate-information/policies-and-guidelines#how-we-operate-card</a></li> </ul>	
<b>References and resources</b>		

<b>Review due by</b>	Manager Libraries & Customer Service	Date 10 October 2022
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Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes
1	July 2019	Senior Librarian	Initial policy

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LIBRARY POLICY

### 1. Purpose

Defines the Cassowary Coast Regional Council's expectations of parents, carers and Council staff and the care of children and young people in the library.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Cassowary Coast Regional Council Library branches.

### 3. Definitions and principles

- (a) Child/Children: refers to children aged from birth to twelve years.
- (b) Young Person: refers to young adults aged from thirteen to eighteen years.
- (c) Carer/Caregiver: a parent, an assigned adult or young person sixteen years or older.
- (d) Council staff: employees of Cassowary Coast Regional Council.
- (e) Patron: any person using a Cassowary Coast Regional Council Library.
- (f) Contractors: persons contracted to perform services on behalf of Cassowary Coast Regional Council.
- (g) Volunteers: registered volunteers of Cassowary Coast Regional Council.

### 4. Procedure

Cassowary Coast Regional Council Libraries endeavor to provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe library space for all to enjoy.

#### 4.1 Expectations of Parents, Carers And Caregivers

Cassowary Coast Regional Council Libraries seeks the cooperation of carers/caregivers to ensure that children's and young people's experience in our libraries is consistently positive. Cassowary Coast Library staff do not supervise children and young people and there are risks that unattended children may leave the library at any time, hurt themselves or be approached by strangers. Carers/caregivers are asked to understand that:

- Council expects carer/caregivers are providing the required level of supervision to all children while at a Cassowary Coast Library.
- It is required that children aged 0 – 8 year of age are directly supervised by a carer/caregiver at all times whilst in the libraries or when attending an organized children's' activity.
- Carers/caregivers of children aged from 9 – 12 years of age must remain in the building.
- Carers/caregivers accompanying children should alert a library staff member to any adverse interactions with other library patrons.

## **4.2 Matters Relating to Children & Young People in Cassowary Coast Libraries**

Carers/caregivers should be aware of the following issues relevant to the care of children in the Cassowary Coast Libraries:

- Libraries are busy public places that are open to all and staff cannot always judge which members of the public may present a danger to children.
- Library staff do not supervise children's use of collections. Library staff are available to help children and their parents effectively navigate collections. Similarly, Internet content and activity is not censored or screened by use of filtering software. Responsibility for use of public computers lies solely with parents and carers.

Young people in the library are expected to behave in an appropriate manner and not engage in any behaviour that may offend, injure or disturb other library users and staff.

Library patrons can expect library staff to demonstrate due care for young people and children in the library. Library staff acknowledge the right of all people to access library resources, programs and services.

## **4.3 Unattended Children**

If Cassowary Coast Library staff discover an unattended child on library premises the senior officer will endeavor to contact a parent or designated carer to collect the child. If such an arrangement cannot be made, the child will be considered at risk and the Queensland Police Service should be contacted.

## **4.4 School Aged Children During School Hours**

Cassowary Coast Library staff will contact the Truancy Officer or appropriate person from the school or carer/caregiver if school aged children are in the library during school hours.

## **4.5 Working with Children Checks**

Cassowary Coast Regional Council requires staff, volunteers, external consultants and contractors to hold a current Blue Card (issued by Department of Justice and Attorney-General) in order to work directly with children.