



Libraries & Information

A Safe Place for Children Policy

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A Safe Place for Children

Purpose: To outline the measures in place to keep children safe whilst using the County's Libraries.

Policy

Children under the age of eight

Children are the legal responsibility of their parents or carer and as such parents are expected to accompany their younger children whilst at the library or to assign a carer with this responsibility.

If a child under the age of 8 is left unaccompanied in a library at closing time staff will make every effort to contact the parent or carer but if all attempts fail then the local police station will be contacted. The police will also be contacted in extreme circumstances if staff have immediate concerns about a child or if a criminal offence has been committed.

Children over the age of eight

Whilst older children also remain the legal responsibility of their parents or carers it is accepted that children aged 8 or over may at times use the library unaccompanied by the parent or carer. Library staff are not acting in "loco parentis" and do not take on the responsibility of looking after children. However staff do have a duty of care under the Occupier's Liability Act 1957 to ensure that visitors are reasonably safe in using the premises for the purpose for which they are permitted to be there. The standard of care expected in relation to children will be such as a reasonable parent would take to protect them from danger.

Children's use of the Internet

Children's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or carer who must act as Guarantor. The adult is agreeing to take responsibility for the child's library use, and will receive correspondence relating to that child's use e.g. notice of overdue items or unacceptable computer use. In the case that a responsible adult in an official capacity has agreed to act as guarantor for a child in care, while the correspondence will take place with that named guarantor, Gloucestershire Libraries & Information accepts that the individual does not have personal responsibility for the child's library use.

Children attending library activities and events

Parents or carers must ensure staff have their contact details when leaving children at an event. Children under 8 years old should be accompanied by a parent or carer/older sibling.

Photographic Consent

All images of recognisable people taken by Library staff require the subject's consent for the image to be used. All children under 12 years old require an adult to give consent. Children aged 13-17 may give their own consent if able to do so, otherwise adult consent is required.

For further information about how we handle your data please see the following page on our website:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/data-protection/your-information-rights/>

Withdrawal of a child's library membership

It is occasionally necessary to temporarily withdraw library membership for children who persistently show bad or dangerous behaviour that may cause harm to themselves or others or disrupts the use of the library for other customers. Parents and carers will be contacted should this arise.

Child Protection

If staff become aware of any allegations or have concerns relating to child protection issues they will follow the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board policy and procedures for reporting and recording them.