

Library questionnaires – comments and action points

Number of responses – this was somewhat disappointing as the purpose of the questionnaire was to get everyone's views. I have only a small percentage of your views which may or may not be representative. Also others may have also had some interesting ideas to share. If you have any comments and you just forgot, please do speak to me when you can.

Purpose of Library

All responses reflect what I am trying to achieve in the Library.

Use of Library

By staff – a disappointing amount of those who replied do not use the Library for various reasons.

By pupils – the perception is that the Library is not well-used. However, although we frequently see the same faces day after day, the area is often filled to capacity (and more!). What would be good would be to encourage use by a wider range of pupils - but this would require more space and more staffing to supervise.

Books are still used for research although obviously the Internet is frequently quicker and has a wider range of topics available.

Range of books/resources

I was surprised to see how many were unaware of what is available and how many thought there were considerable gaps in the range of materials and that the books were not relevant to subjects. I was also surprised that it was considered not up-to-date as I have spent a lot of time this year weeding out old stock and have bought 1179 new books – over 10% of stock.

I will be sending subject specific lists to those mentioning this and ask for their views.

Lists of new acquisitions are always put onto the staffroom wall for information and I will add this to the Intranet site shortly.

Please always feel free to suggest items for purchase – if funds are available, I will endeavour to acquire them.

Intranet

I was planning to add Library pages to the school Intranet, giving details of how to use the Library etc but wasn't sure if this would be helpful or looked at. It seems from your answers that it will be worthwhile so I will go ahead.

Problems

I was surprised by some of the perceived problems (particularly as they were contradicted in some cases with the positive comments!) and not at all surprised by others. Where problems are under my control I will act to remedy them but many are a result of the schoolwide problem of not enough space.

Dull looking and poorly decorated I would argue with and this was contradicted by those who said it was well presented.

I have to argue with there being too few books – there are over 9000. However, lack of space means that not many more can be accommodated.

Too many computers – again, my experience, especially at lunchtimes, is that there are not sufficient computers. I suspect this should be reformatted into 'Lack of space'.

Cluttered and too few comfortable places to read – again result from lack of space.

Poor system for tracking book loans – the system itself is fine – it has just been used inconsistently in previous years and there are indeed incorrect records on it. I keep sending out overdue reminders and some have been in error, but if no one tells me the records are incorrect they will remain that way. **Please encourage your pupils to come and see me when they get overdue reminders even if they think they have returned the books.** Furthermore, text book issues are very inconsistent throughout the school (with only MFL giving me both full lists of issues and returns) which leads to many records being wrong.

No designated quiet time/Ethos not respected – the only time available is breaks and lunchtimes for pupil use. Designation as a wet break room is inappropriate to the ethos of a Library as it encourages pupils to come and loiter, using it as a social space instead of a work space. All this leads to the workspace not being as quiet as it should be, but John and I do work hard to keep it as you would expect.

Too small - as can be seen from some of the other sections, the size of the Library is a big problem. There is not enough space for more books, sufficient computers nor enough workspace for the amount of pupils who want to work here. There is seating for about 45 pupils (including computers) and the Library feels comfortable with about 60 pupils. However, up to 90 pupils at a time have been experienced.

It is recommended that a school library can accommodate 10% of the school roll which in our case would be 130. So we have a space which is roughly half of what is required.

Dominated by the English Department – although many lessons are held by the English Dept they are by no means the only ones. The problem here seems rather to be that the Library is used as a classroom for much of the school day, including one lunchtime this year.

Low profile

This is the main reason I issued the questionnaire. I feel that the Library is underused by staff for research lessons and as a book resource – endorsed by the responses mentioning that they did not know what was available. These will be addressed as mentioned above.

I am happy to visit departments (or have them come to the Library) to discuss what is available, advise on use, provide inductions. Please tell me when is suitable.

It would seem however, that many of you feel that teachers should be encouraging pupils to use the library, by using it themselves, providing directed homework, attending inductions.

I will use some of the ideas suggested in the questionnaire to encourage use by pupils as they were seen to be useful.

Some will be easier to implement than others – eg visiting authors cost an awful lot of money, a lunchtime club will not be possible because the library is in use all lunchtime, an after school club will only be possible if staff are prepared to man it as there is no money to pay for extra hours worked.