

## Unattended Child Policy

Gore and Mataura Libraries provide a welcoming environment that encourages children to enjoy the library, participate in activities provided by the library, choose and borrow books, and have age-appropriate internet access. The libraries provide a family-friendly and breast-feeding-friendly space.

Library staff assisting and supporting children to use the library will do their best to ensure their safety and well-being. However they do not provide supervision for unattended children and are not responsible for their safety. Libraries are not equipped for this purpose and library staff are not trained or qualified to care for children.

**Children up to age seven** must be actively supervised by an adult caregiver, or a responsible and capable person 14 years or older.

In addition to safety risks, young children can easily become frightened, distressed, anxious or insecure. These feelings can easily lead to a child behaving inappropriately. Gore Library reserves the right to notify the Police if a child under the age of eight years is left unattended in the library, or under the supervision of a child under 14 years.

**Children aged 8-13 years**, if confident and independent, may visit the library for up to one hour without adult supervision. Police will be notified if staff have any concerns about a child's well-being.

**Teens aged 14-17** are very welcome. Any who behave inappropriately will be asked to behave; if they don't they will be required to leave.

### Behaviour

- Any person behaving in an antisocial way that disturbs the peace, compromises the safety of others, or denies easy access to or enjoyment of the libraries by others, will be asked to behave appropriately. If that person does not comply they will be required to leave the premises.

- Serious anti-social behaviour will require Police intervention and a trespass notice may be issued against the person.

#### **Internet and device use**

- A child may use a library computer for a maximum of one hour on any day. During periods of high use time limits ensure fair access for everyone.
- Devices must be on silent within the library. Earbuds/headphones can be used to listen to phone calls or music.
- If anyone is unwilling to observe library rules they will be required to leave the premises for a period stipulated by the Library Manager.
- Charging devices is subject to power socket restrictions, and does not extend to electrical devices other than phones and laptops.

#### **Truancy and illness**

- Children aged 5-15 years who are not home-schooled must be in school between 9.00am-3.00pm on school days. If a child is in the library during school time without supervision, they must show written proof from their school or adult caregiver excusing them from school on that day. Library staff will report suspected truancy to the Truancy officer, the school and/or the Police.
- A sick child must not be left unsupervised in the library in consideration of others who could be exposed to infection.