‘’The LRC at The Heart of The Howard’’

*“Books are sometimes **windows**, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also **sliding glass doors**, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a **mirror**. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection we can see our own lives and experiences as part of a larger human experience. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books.”*

Rudine Sims Bishop

1. Mission Statement

The Howard LRC is a welcoming space where students are encouraged and empowered in their reading and learning.

Our users include secondary school students from years 7-13, school staff and additional visitors from our primary schools.

We offer:

- physical stock of fiction and non-fiction books and reading material to support reading for progress and reading for pleasure
- a large collection of age-appropriate, accessible material from recognised, specialist publishers to meet the needs of students for whom reading is challenging due to interest, ability or physical and/or learning needs, or for whom English is an additional language
- audio and visual compact/video discs to support the curriculum
- a digital service which provides accessible e-books and audio books
- two dedicated comfortable areas for reading
- two large areas for quiet study including individual and group tables and access to desktop PCs and laptops
- a dedicated LRC website within the HOE’s intranet offering literacy related information and recommendations
- a lower school reading scheme enabling tracked progress and targeted support
- an extensive stock management system to enable research, reviews, and requests
- a well-stocked professional development library for school staff

In addition to study, the LRC offers a space for students to undertake homework before and after school, a safe space during breaks for quiet relaxation through clubs and events, and a space for events such as author visits, career events and visiting lecturers.

We offer a warm welcome to all students and staff as a diverse and inclusive space where all our library users can feel safe to read, learn, relax, and explore their interests.

2. Selection Criteria

The Howard LRC School Librarian is responsible for the selection of materials for inclusion in the Library. Recommendations and requests are encouraged from staff, students, and parents/carers.

Items are selected based on the needs of the Library's diverse user groups; students from Years 7 to 13 and staff members. We prioritise stock that users will enjoy, but that will also challenge and extend their reading and build empathy. Our central principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are reflected in both fiction and non-fiction stock and representation is provided at all levels.

Items are selected to support the curriculum and include books suggested by teaching staff or chosen by the School Librarian as complimentary to the subjects taught at school.

3. Deselection Criteria

Materials are "weeded" from the Library on a rolling basis when they no longer meet the selection criteria and space is needed for new stock. Deselection is based on loan history, changes to the curriculum, outdated or inaccurate information, multiple copies, and overall condition. Old stock is offered to the students as prizes if appropriate or it is given to:

- school staff for classroom use
- students for individual use
- school staff for individual use

Finally, old stock may be donated to charity or disposed of using recycling services where possible.

4. Acquisitions and Donations

The LRC has a designated budget with which to purchase stock via THPT Finance Department. The School Librarian is responsible for ensuring the most effective use of Howard LRC resources and applying to alternative funding streams to support specialist purchases. The School Librarian line manager ensures a stringent overview of spending by providing authorisation of purchases.

The LRC welcomes donations with thanks. These are used to enhance the library or classroom stock or are offered to students as prizes or to support for example, book give-aways.

5. Library Access

The Howard School supports the child's right to read widely as enshrined within the Human Rights Act (1998), the IFLA statement on censorship (2019), and CILIP's Ethical Framework (2018).

The LRC is open daily during term time for the loan of stock before and after school and during morning and lunch breaks. In addition, lower school students receive library lessons. A digital service is also available. Students and staff can download eBooks and audio books 24/7.

We use specialist book suppliers to help guide age recommendations and our library management system is programmed with age restrictions as appropriate for books featuring more mature themes such as the inclusion of offensive language, and the inclusion of violent or sexual content. Books are labelled with an identifying sticker denoting restriction to 14-19 years only. Lower school students can request their parents/carers complete a parental permission form to borrow books from the upper school collection.

Any comments or complaints about library materials should be directed to the School Librarian in the first instance. In the rare instance that an informal conversation does not resolve the issue, a written stock reconsideration request should be submitted to the School Librarian. The item will be assessed by the Howard Senior Leadership Team, the LRC line manager, and the School Librarian. The item will be assessed against the selection criteria and the reasons given for the complaint and may be either returned to stock, re-catalogued as restricted for example to upper school use only or be removed from stock. The complainant(s) will be informed in writing of this decision and why it has been made.

6. Privacy Policy

Concurrent with CILIP's (2021) publication 'Protecting the Individual's Right to Privacy', we do not disclose student borrowing records or item requests to outside parties (including parents/carers) unless:

- There is a Safeguarding concern, in which case relevant information will be passed to the Safeguarding team
- The parent(s)/carer(s) have made a Subject Access Request as permitted by GDPR.