School Library and School Libarianship

A Guideline

The school library as a learning centre

The school librarian should be a qualified teacher who has also trained as a teacher librarian. The teacher librarian will be required to perform many and varied tasks, from advising and assisting on the choice or preparation of teaching materials to providing active assistance in searching databases together with communicating information relevant to the school's development.
The School librarian must be able to teach library and material studies, of which the use of both internal and external databases will form an integrated part.

School librarian training has to be based on participants having pedagogical experience as well as a pedagogical training. The aims of the teacher librarian training will be to enable teachers to handle the day to day functions of the school library and to take an active part in all development of the school library in accordance with the school's needs and profile.

Great importance is attached to the individual pupil's absorption and self-reliance in learning. Teacher and pupil are required to co-operate continuously on determining and reviewing learning targets including the establishment of working methods and the selection of subject materials. This is the essence of a new concept of learning with its basis in the individual pupil's own activity in an interaction with others. Students learn to use a variety of information sources and to
 express themselves in different ways including the use of computer, sound, video and other media.

School Librarian Jørgen Nielsen at Vridsløselille skole DK

One of the core tasks of the school library remains the loan of books and other materials to students and teachers and to provide advice and assistance in connection with these areas. Alongside this task is now included the option of providing access to information and experience through other media. In connection with various teaching projects students may produce newspapers, booklets, slides, multimedia presentations or videos.
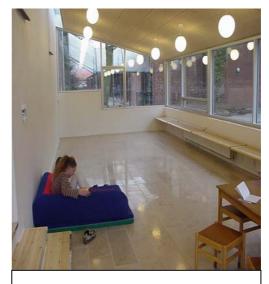
Media workshops must be set up for this purpose where students can work on accessing, evaluating, processing and communicating information. This requires the option of working on information technology in a number of different ways including access to information searching in both internal and external databases.
The pupil's self-reliance and responsibility for his own learning is central to these aspects. The school library fulfils an important role when students are working on specific subjects, interdisciplinary topics and assignments.

School library materials must meet the needs of the school's teaching and learning in all areas. Their composition must be broad enough to cover a particular subject at different levels with varying types of stimulus and learning materials.

Project work area

A quiet place to read and philosophise

When information for a project is to be assembled, the textbook is no longer the sole source of information. Information comes together with slides, tapes, video films, books and other print media, computer programmes, CD-ROMs, information from external databases and so on. The electronic media are a growing source of information and most schools now have access to external databases through which they can download information on a global scale.
The stream of information from TV channels, Internet, CD-ROMs, computer programmes etc. is unending. If the students, when they become adult citizens, are not to feel lost and helpless in the face of such rich sources of information, they must learn devise personal strategies for information retrieval while they are still at school. Information Literacy and "strategies for independent learning skill development" are key components of any school library.

The Information Seeking process (ISP) is a key issue for today's learning in the primary and secondary school. Students and teachers must be taught to find the information relevant to their subject, to evaluate information and to use the available means to process and pass on the information they have collected. At present, endeavours are being made to develop media workshops at schools; in most places within the framework of the school libraries or in close connection with them. In the media workshops students have access to a wide variety of expressive forms.

The school library has an important cultural role to play by making a broad selection of current fiction and non-fiction materials available and by encouraging good reading habits in the students.
School libraries may also contribute with cultural arrangements, which can give students new culture experiences such as visits from authors, theatre performances, readings and art-exhibitions.

The school library may contain collections of books and periodicals on pedagogy and psychology. These materials are at the teachers' disposal, enabling them to be up-to-date and to find inspiration within their own field.

View from ground floor to 1st floor

Basic areas of school librarianship

I. The school library in the learning environment at school

The concept of the school library and the function of teacher librarians must be seen in the light of current curricula and school development with an emphasis on learning and knowledge.
The library is the key to learning how to learn in information-rich technological environments. Librarians play a vital role in restructuring schools for the information age and preparing students for lifelong learning.

School librarians who have knowledge of the stages of the inquiry process and the use of sources and strategies for learning in each of the stages are prepared to make an essential contribution to providing inquiry based learning for the students in their schools.

The Information Seeking Process (ISP) and the evaluation process are basic for the tasks of the teacher librarians and that of course will be a part of the school library offers

Stage 1 – Initiation - contemplating the assigned task, problem or project and identifying Possible issues or questions to pursue; uncertainty
Stage 2 – Selection - selecting a topic, issue or engaging question to explore
Stage 3 - Exploration - encountering inconsistency and incompatibility in information and idea
Stage 4 - Formulation - forming a focused perspective from the information encountered
Stage 5 – Collection - gathering, documenting and evaluating information on the focus
Stage 6 - Presentation - connecting and extending the focused perspective for presenting to the community of learners
Stage 7 - Assessment - reflecting on process and content learning

Teachers themselves often do not have an ISP strategy that they use in their own personal preparation, or in the pedagogical approaches. Through modelling an ISP approach for teachers the school library can help students develop their own personal approach to learning that will have life-long-learning applications.

ICT facilities on 1st floor balcony

II.   Library knowledge

It is important to focuson themes related to the administration, operation and organisation of school libraries:

Classification systems
Cataloguing systems
Circulation systems
Organising existing library materials
Processing new materials
Procedures for lending out materials
Marketing
Writing off – criteria and procedures
School library budget

III.   Media workshop activities

Teachers working as teacher librarians need to develop the skills and knowledge of information technologies. To-days environment requires all teachers to provide varied, continuous and well-planned technological opportunities to extend students information skills.

The school library information centre provides a complete range of information resources and multimedia equipment – print and electronic, book and tape, video, film, and CD-ROM file and web. The teacher librarian is the guide and advisor for the teachers and the students in their daily use of the library resources – analogue as well as digital.

The teacher librarian must be a trained user of the modern media workshop activities and presentation software. Therefore the course intents to teach and demonstrate best practice in using digital media equipment as well as presentation programmes such as PowerPoint and Mediator in daily education.

IV.   Cultural role.

The school library has an important cultural role to play by making available a broad selection of current fiction and non-fiction materials and by encouraging good reading habits in the students.

Reading a wide range of national and international literature is a vital part of a literacy program but also a vital stage in the student's mental and cultural development. Reading children's literature from various European countries will be an important item in the future education and will be supported from the school library

The School library contributes with cultural arrangements, which can give the students new cultural experiences, such as visits from authors, theatre performances, reading and exhibitions.

Working areas for students and teachers

All pictures from SLAM partner school Vridsløselille skole, Albertslund DK
Last picture from SLAM partner school Stangeland Ungdomsskole, Karmøy NO