THE FATHER'S HOUSE
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

The Father's House Christian School
Box 3166, Morinville, Alberta, T8R 1S1
Phone: 780-939-2987
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www.tfhschool.ca

Literacy Materials Procurement Policy

Documents Referenced:

- *Education Act* (Ministerial Order # 034/*2025)*
- *Early Childhood Services Regulation* (AR 126/2022)

Independent Schools Regulation (AR 127/2022)

The Father's House Christian School is committed to meeting the standards relating to the selection, availability, and access of school library materials that comply with the Standards set out in Ministerial Order #034/2025.

1. Definitions:

For the purposes of these Standards,

(a) "child" means a child younger than 6 years of age who is registered in an early childhood services program and therefore does not fall within the definition of "student" in the *Education Act;*

(b) "classroom collection" means a teacher's collection of literary materials, including books, magazines, comics, graphic novels or other literary or graphic materials, whether in physical or electronic form, that are selected, curated or managed by the teacher for use by or available to children or students in the teacher's classroom;

(c) "school authority" means any Alberta public or separate school board, francophone regional authority, operator of a charter school, person responsible for the operation of an independent school, or independent ECS operator as defined in the *Early Childhood Services Regulation* (AR 126/2022);

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(d) "school literary materials" means any
materials, including books, magazines, comics, graphic novels or other literary or graphic materials, whether in physical or electronic form, that are accessible or available to children or students at a school;

(e) "sexual act" means an activity or action of a distinctly sexual nature as defined in the Ministerial Order #034/2025.

(f) "visual depiction" means a visual or graphic representation, such as a drawing or painting, an illustration, a photographic or digital image or a video file.

2. Standards for School Library materials:

The Father's House Christian School commits to the following standards of practice for the selection, availability, and access of school library materials effective January 5, 2026:

(a)TFHCS will ensure that school literary materials containing any explicit visual depiction of a sexual act are not accessible or available to children or students in the school, and will ensure that no such literary materials are selected for inclusion in a school library, unless such materials are for information or reference, such as technical materials, dictionaries or encyclopedias, that are not narrative in nature;
(b) TFHCS will regularly review school literary materials to ensure the school authority complies with the Standards and the school authority's policies or procedures required in accordance with the Standards;
1. All books ordered by teachers, and all donated materials will be vetted PRIOR to input in the system by at least one veteran staff member in accordance with this policy.
(c)TFHCS will establish and maintain a publicly available listing of all school literary materials other than those contained in a classroom collection;
(d)TFHCS will ensure parents of children or students who have access to a classroom collection have access to view any school literary materials contained specifically in the classroom collection;
(e) TFHCS will, on request by the Minister, provide to the Minister any information and reports on school literary materials.

3. Procedure Development:

TFHCS has procedures relating to the selection, availability, and access of school library materials. These are clearly communicated to school staff, parents and students, and children. Procedures will:

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a. Comply with the Standards as prescribed by the Ministerial Order (See appendix)
b. Establish criteria for the selection, curation and management of school library materials;
c. Set out the process for the review of school library materials;
d. Establish processes for:
(i) a child or student enrolled in the school,
(ii) a school authority employee,
(iii) a parent of a child or student enrolled in the school,
(iv) a member of a school council, or
(v) a member of the community with a direct connection to the school, to request that the school authority review, change the access to or availability of, reconsider or remove specific school literary materials in a particular school for reasons related to section 2(a) of this Policy.

4. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years by the Board. The Board will review related school administrative procedures to ensure compliance every 3 years.

School Administrative Procedure

1. Purpose

This procedure ensures that the school library provides developmentally appropriate, high-quality literary materials that promote student learning, well-being, and a safe, inclusive school environment. It aligns with the **Ministerial Order (#034/2025)** (Sept 8, 2025) on the selection, availability, and access of school literary materials.

2. Guiding Principles

- **Educational Merit:** Materials must enrich students' academic, cultural, and social development.
- **Developmental Appropriateness:** Content must reflect the maturity, literacy level, and well-being of students at different grade levels.
- **Respect for Diversity:** Materials should reflect varied perspectives and respect human dignity, supporting a welcoming and caring environment.
- **Protection from Harm:** Materials with explicit visual depictions of sexual acts, as defined in the Ministerial Order (#034/2025), are prohibited unless for non-narrative reference purposes (e.g., medical dictionaries).

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- **Transparency:** The library material selection policy and administrative procedure will be available to the public upon request. School library material selection and review procedure will be communicated to employees, parents and students in the school's handbook.

3. Standards by Grade Range

Kindergarten – Grade 3

- **Content Focus:** Simple narratives, picture books, early readers, fables, folk tales, introductory non-fiction, poetry.
- **Standards:**
  - Age-appropriate vocabulary and illustrations.
  - Themes of kindness, cooperation, family, community, and basic inquiry.
  - No explicit or graphic violence, mature themes, or sexual content.
  - Visuals should be supportive of early literacy and positive identity development.

Grades 4 – 6

- **Content Focus:** Chapter books, accessible non-fiction, graphic novels, historical fiction, age-appropriate fantasy and science fiction.
- **Standards:**
  - Content addressing growing independence, friendships, responsibility, and problem-solving.
  - Mild references to complex issues (loss, resilience, fairness) are acceptable if handled sensitively.
  - No explicit depictions of sexual acts; references to puberty and body changes must be factual and age appropriate.
  - Violence, if present, must be minimal, non-gratuitous, and framed in a moral/educational context.

Grades 7 – 8

- **Content Focus:** Young adult literature, novels, biographies, diverse cultural perspectives, more advanced non-fiction.
- **Standards:**
  - Themes may explore identity, belonging, ethical dilemmas, and social issues in age-appropriate ways.

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- Sensitive topics (mental health, discrimination, relationships) may be included when educationally valuable.
- No explicit visual depictions of sexual acts; references to relationships must be responsible and developmentally suitable.
- Violence or mature themes should support critical thinking and not glamorize harm.

4. Selection Process

1. **Initial Review by staff member:** Staff member evaluates new and existing library materials against grade-level standards, curriculum connections, and literary quality.
2. **Consultation:** Staff members may consult teachers, curriculum guides, and age-appropriateness indexes.
3. **Final Decision:** Staff member (with Principal oversight if necessary) approves or declines acquisition.
4. **Transparency:** A publicly available list of all school library materials will be maintained and updated annually.
5. **Classroom library collections:** Teachers are responsible for selecting materials for their classroom libraries. Parents of students in their class may view the materials available in the classroom.

5. Ongoing Review

- **Annual Audit:** School Library materials are reviewed annually by staff members to ensure compliance with Standards.
- **Ministerial Requests:** TFHCS will provide reports or listings to the Minister upon request.
- **Parental Notification:** Parents of students in a particular grade will be informed of materials available in **classroom collections** of their child/student's grade, upon request or be invited into the classroom to view the existing classroom library materials.

6. Community Request for Review or Removal

School library: Any member of the school community (student, parent, staff, school council member, or connected community member) may request a review of specific library materials.

Classroom library: Parents or students may request review of materials in the child/student's specific classroom library.

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Request for Review or Removal Process:

1. **Submission:** A written request is submitted to the principal, stating the material in question and the reason for concern.
2. **Review Committee Formation:**
    a. Principal (Chair)
    b. Teachers (Staff)

3. **Committee Review:**
    a. Assess according to Ministerial Standards and grade-level criteria.
    b. Consider literary, educational, and developmental value.
    c. Ensure decisions respect diversity, safety, and student well-being and the school's values.
4. **Decision/action:**
    a. Retain, restrict access by grade, relocate, or remove the material.
    b. Decision recorded and communicated in writing to the requester within 30 school days.
5. **Appeal:** Requesters may appeal to the Board. The Board's decision is final.

7. Communication

- This procedure will be available to members of the school community in the school handbook. It is available to members of the public upon request.
- Annual reminders will be sent to parents and staff.

8. Compliance

- All school library and classroom library practices will comply with the **Ministerial Standards (effective January 5, 2026)**.
- The principal will ensure staff understand and apply these standards.

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Appendix A: Request for Review of School Literacy Material Form

Notification in writing is to be sent to the school principal.

Please indicate:

1. Contact Information (Full name, email, phone number)
2. Date
3. Role (student, parents, teacher, pastor, etc.)
4. Title
5. Material (book, magazine, graphic novel, etc)
6. Author
7. Location materials were found (classroom, library, other)
8. Description of concerns (include page numbers and examples).
9. Concern Category (check all that apply)

☐ Developmental appropriateness
☐ Explicit depiction of sexual act (as defined in Standards)
☐ Violent or graphic content
☐ Language concerns
☐ Mental health or well-being concerns
☐ Other (please explain): _____

10. Action Requested

☐ Retain material but provide restricted access (specify grade levels: _____)
☐ Relocate to older grade section of library
☐ Remove material from school library
☐ Other (please explain): _____

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Appendix B: School Literacy Material Review Committee Decision Form

School Name: _____

Date of Review Meeting: _____

1. Material Reviewed

- **Title:** _____
- **Author/Creator:** _____
- **Format:** _____
- **Location:**
  - ☐ School Library
  - ☐ Classroom Collection (Grade: _____)
  - ☐ Other: _____

2. Committee Members

- Principal (Chair): _____
- Teacher Representative(s):

  _____

  _____

3. Request Summary

1. **Requester Name:** _____
2. **Role/Connection to School:** _____
3. **Date of Request:** _____
4. **Nature of Concern (from Request Form):**
   - ☐ Developmental appropriateness
   - ☐ Explicit depiction of sexual act (per Standards)
   - ☐ Violent/graphic content
   - ☐ Language concerns
   - ☐ Mental health/well-being concerns
   - ☐ Other: _____

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4. Committee Review Process

☐ Material was read/reviewed in full by committee members.
☐ Ministerial Order (#034/2025) (standards) were applied (effective Jan 5, 2026).

☐ Grade-level standards were applied (K–3, 4–6, 7–8).
☐ Literary/educational/school values was considered.
☐ Perspectives from staff, parents, and students were considered.

Notes from deliberation (attach additional pages if needed):

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Committee Decision

The committee has determined the following action:

☐ Retain material in library/classroom collection without change
☐ Retain material but restrict access to Grade(s): _____
☐ Relocate to older grade collection
☐ Remove material from school library/classroom collection
☐ Other (explain): _____

Rationale for Decision:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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6. Communication of Decision

1. **Requester was notified in writing on:** (date) _____
2. Requester may appeal to the Board Chairperson within **10 school days** if dissatisfied.

7. Signatures

Principal (Chair): _____ Date: _____
Teacher Representative: _____ Date: _____
Teacher Representative: _____ Date: _____
Teacher Representative: _____ Date: _____
Teacher Representative: _____ Date: _____
Teacher Representative: _____ Date: _____
Teacher Representative: _____ Date: _____
Teacher Representative: _____ Date: _____