

Sandown Public Library

Unattended Children Policy

The Sandown Public Library welcomes children of all ages to use and enjoy the facilities, collections, and programming offered by the Library. Although staff members are committed to the well-being and safety of children using the library, our facilities are not designed or licensed to provide childcare or emergency care. Any public place may be dangerous for a child who is unattended by a responsible adult or caregiver.

1. The Sandown Public Library and its staff do not assume responsibility for any child left unattended at the Library.
2. As used in this policy, the term “parent” may include legal guardians or other persons having custody or control of a minor.
3. Children under the age of eleven (11) may not be left unattended at the Library. A child is unattended if a parent or responsible person over the age of sixteen (16) is not present with the child at all times while in the Library.
4. At the discretion of a responsible adult, a child age eleven (11) to thirteen (13) may be left unattended for the period of time needed to select materials, complete a homework assignment, read, or attend a program. The child must know how to reach the adult in case the need should arise. Children should not be left for longer than two hours.
5. All Library visitors are subject to the “Behavior Policy” concerning disruptive behavior. Parents are responsible for the behavior of minor children at all times, even if they are not in the Library with the child. Library staff does not serve *in loco parentis*, in place of the parent. If a child’s behavior is inappropriate for the Library, and they do not respond to appropriate guidance from Library staff, the parent will be contacted to remove the child from the Library. If the parent cannot be reached and the child’s behavior is deemed dangerous or unduly disruptive, the Sandown Police Department may be called.
6. If a child is left at the Library without a way home one-half hour (30 minutes) prior to closing time, Library staff may contact the child’s parent. If the parent cannot be located or if a parent has not picked up the child within one-half hour (30 minutes), the Library staff will contact the Sandown Police Department to take custody of the child.
7. Under no circumstances will a staff member take a child out of the Library or provide any transportation. No individual staff person is to be left alone in the Library or on Library property with a child after closing.

Approved by Library Trustees May 9, 2024