

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This handbook is intended first and foremost for teachers in Commonwealth developing countries who take on the responsibility of managing their school's library without previous experience. It therefore covers, at a very basic level, those procedures which are fundamental in setting up a new library, reorganising an old one, carrying out the day-to-day administration, and integrating the library with the work of the school. It does so in a simple and straightforward way. The procedures are set out step by step so that they can easily be followed, and they are explained so that they can be understood. This does not mean that a beginner who tries to read the handbook from cover to cover will immediately comprehend everything it contains. It is not intended for use in that way. Instead, it resembles a cookery book or a car servicing manual in that the full meaning of its instructions will become clear only when they are being put to use in planning or carrying out a specific task in the library. This is particularly true of Section 6 and Section 7.

Besides serving as a self-study guide for those teacher-librarians who have to learn on the job, the handbook can serve two other purposes. First, it can be used as a basic text by teachers' colleges wishing to offer their students some training in school library management. Second, it can be used as a starting point by libraries and other institutions which offer in-service courses for newly appointed teacher-librarians. In both of these cases it should be supplemented by larger and more comprehensive books about school libraries, some of which are listed in Appendix A. From such books, readers will learn in more detail of special problems and solutions in organising libraries, and add to their knowledge of those set out in this handbook.

Work on the handbook began during a book development seminar held by the Education Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat in Africa. The material prepared there was handed over to Colin Ray, Senior Lecturer in Librarianship at the City of Birmingham Polytechnic, a former chairman of the Children's Libraries Section of the International Federation of Library Associations, and author of the Unesco manual "Library Service to Schools and Children". Mr. Ray began by preparing a pilot version of the handbook for consideration by participants attending a Commonwealth Library Association conference in Fiji. Their suggestions have been taken into account in preparing this edition. The Commonwealth Secretariat is most grateful to them and to many other people who have assisted in the project.

Though people from many parts of the Commonwealth have contributed to this handbook, any book written for the Commonwealth as a whole cannot take local conditions and circumstances into account. For this reason, some Commonwealth countries may wish to adapt the text and produce versions of their own. Thus they may wish to modify the Dewey classification scheme given in Appendix B so as to make special provision for books about their own country. Or where they have centralised school library support services which purchase, classify, and produce cards for school library books (see Appendix E), they may wish to alter the text of Section 5. Or they may wish to add new appendices. Such changes can easily be made. For, as readers will see, the text of the handbook has been set on an electric typewriter (an IBM "Selectric" using Orator, Diplomat, Prestige, and Courier Italic "golfballs"). In a few hours, an experienced secretary with the same equipment could type new pages which no one could distinguish from those typed in London for this edition.

The following possibilities therefore exist for Commonwealth developing countries:

1. They can purchase copies of the existing handbook from the Commonwealth Secretariat at a specially reduced price for bulk orders. (Details will be provided on request.)
2. They can reprint the book as it stands from photocopies of the original typemasters which the Commonwealth Secretariat will provide.

3. If they have the same typewriting equipment, they can obtain the photocopies from the Secretariat, retype those sections they want to alter and add others if they wish so that the publication will contain a mixture of the original material and the new material ready for offset printing. (The printer will have to photo-reduce the pages when making the plates.) In a similar way the illustrations can be altered to meet local or national requirements, and new ones can be added if required. The Secretariat will be willing to advise on techniques for incorporating alterations and additions.

4. They can retype the whole book in any format for offset printing or stencilling. (Machines exist which can put the illustrations onto stencil without anyone redrawing them.)

5. They can translate the handbook and set the text in the most convenient way (e.g. in letterpress, offset or stencilled form). If photocopies of the original illustrations are useful, the Secretariat will supply them.

Information on these matters may be obtained from The Director, Education Division, Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, London SW1Y 5HX, England.