



Fun Reading 🐾 Reading for Life

Story Dogs

Code of Conduct V5

Our Commitment

Everyone who represents Story Dogs plays an important role in achieving our mission of supporting children's literacy.

We are committed to creating safe, respectful and positive environments for children, our volunteers, staff and our dogs. This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of everyone acting on behalf of Story Dogs.

Anyone who becomes aware of conduct that may breach this Code is encouraged to raise their concerns with an appropriate Story Dogs leader, Regional Coordinator or the Board of Directors.

Our Values

In everything we do, we demonstrate the Story Dogs values:

- **Safety** – We prioritise the physical and emotional safety and wellbeing of children, our people and our dogs.
- **Respect** – We treat everyone with dignity, fairness and inclusion, valuing diversity and different perspectives.
- **Kindness** – We act with empathy, compassion and consideration.
- **Joy** – We foster positive experiences that encourage learning, connection and confidence.

Standards of Conduct

When representing Story Dogs, you are expected to:

- Act honestly, ethically and with integrity.
- Support the vision, mission, values and reputation of Story Dogs.
- Treat everyone with courtesy, fairness and respect.
- Foster inclusive environments that are free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Respect confidentiality and privacy, sharing information only when authorised or required.
- Communicate respectfully and constructively, including in person, online and on social media.



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- Follow all applicable Story Dogs policies, procedures and lawful directions.
- Take responsibility for your actions and seek guidance when needed.
- Report concerns, incidents, hazards or suspected misconduct promptly through the appropriate channels.
- Comply with all relevant legal and safety requirements, including child safety obligations.

Working with Children

The safety and wellbeing of children is a high priority of Story Dogs.

Everyone working with or on behalf of Story Dogs will:

- Act as a positive role model.
- Treat every child with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Support environments where children feel safe, included and heard.
- Respect the diverse backgrounds, cultures, identities and abilities of all children.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.
- Protect children's privacy and confidentiality.
- Report any concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing in accordance with Story Dogs policies and applicable legal requirements.

You must not:

- Engage in behaviour that is abusive, intimidating, humiliating, discriminatory or harmful.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child.
- Develop inappropriate or exclusive relationships with children.
- Arrange contact with children outside authorised Story Dogs activities.
- Share personal contact details with children or seek theirs.
- Photograph or record children unless specifically authorised in accordance with Story Dogs policies.



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- Be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while undertaking Story Dogs duties.

Working with Dogs

Story Dogs is committed to the welfare of every dog participating in the program.

Everyone responsible for a Story Dog will:

- Treat every dog with care, respect and kindness.
- Ensure dogs are healthy, well cared for and suitable for their role.
- Promote animal welfare in accordance with the RSPCA Five Freedoms and all relevant laws and organisational requirements.
- Remove a dog from activities if its health, wellbeing or behaviour may compromise its own welfare or the safety of others.

Working Together

Story Dogs succeeds through teamwork, trust and shared responsibility.

Everyone is expected to:

- Work collaboratively and respectfully with colleagues, volunteers, schools, families and community partners.
- Be reliable and fulfil agreed responsibilities or communicate promptly if unable to do so.
- Accept feedback professionally and contribute to a culture of continuous improvement.
- Use organisational resources responsibly.
- Represent Story Dogs professionally and protect its reputation.

Breaches of the Code

All staff, volunteers and directors are expected to comply with this Code of Conduct.

Breaches of this Code will be managed fairly and may result in appropriate action, which may include additional training, performance management, suspension of duties, or termination of employment, appointment or volunteer engagement.