

## Code of Conduct

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## Introduction

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected from Doorstep Library staff and volunteers<sup>1</sup> to ensure that

- the well-being and safeguarding of the charity's beneficiaries is paramount
- the welfare of the child is always put first
- the charity's volunteers, staff and associates are not put at risk
- those who come into contact with our beneficiaries on behalf of Doorstep Library are clear about the standards of behaviour Doorstep Library expects of them
- the consequences of unacceptable behaviour are clearly defined
- the managers of volunteers /front-line staff are able to manage effectively and responsibly
- the charity is not brought into disrepute
- the charity is effective, open and accountable
- employees and volunteers have productive and supportive relationships with other employees, volunteers, and any persons who interact with the charity

This Code of Conduct does not replace and should be read in conjunction with the following [documents and policies](#) as applicable

- Safeguarding Statement & Policy
- Online Safeguarding Policy
- Safeguarding Children The 4 R's
- Safeguarding Definitions & Signs of Abuse
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Digital & Social Media Policy
- Anti-bullying & Harassment Policy
- Health & Safety

Volunteers acknowledge that no employment relationship is created in the context of their role with Doorstep Library,

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<sup>1</sup> There is a separate policy governing the Board of Trustees

## Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to review this policy every year and sign off any changes.

It is the responsibility of the CEO, SMT and Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the code is implemented and embedded at an operational level and that all volunteers have read and understood it and are clear of the Charity's expectations of them.

## Core expectations for all staff and volunteers

**All** employees and volunteers are expected to maintain the highest standards of behaviour in the performance of their duties.

### They are expected to:

- follow the charity's policies on Safeguarding which are relevant to them at all times
- raise promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads any concerns about behaviours observed in the course of their role with Doorstep Library which might place another person at risk or create an environment of inequality
- direct any questions regarding Doorstep Library's Volunteer Training and Safeguarding policies to their Project Coordinator or the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- exercise caution and care with any documents, material or devices containing confidential information and, in the case of employees, at the end of their employment with Doorstep Library return any such documents, material or devices in their possession
- declare any interests that may conflict with their work or the work of the charity (e.g. other business interests or employment). If any doubt arises as to what constitutes a conflict of interest, employees may seek guidance from the Head of Operations and volunteers should speak to their Team Leader
- fulfil their role to the best of their ability as outlined in their job/role description
- perform their role/duties to the best of their ability in a safe, efficient and competent way
- act honestly, responsibly and with integrity
- treat everyone with fairness, equity, dignity and respect
- observe professional boundaries as outlined in the induction training at all times for the safety and protection of themselves, beneficiaries, other employees and volunteers at Doorstep Library.
- act in a way that is in line with the purpose and values of the charity and that enhances the work of the charity
- communicate respectfully and honestly at all times with colleagues and all persons who interact with Doorstep Library
- report any health and safety concerns to the Head of Operation
- address any issues or difficulties about any aspect of their role or how they are managed in line with Doorstep Library's Grievance Policy
- keep confidential matters confidential, in line with Doorstep Library's policies
- seek authorisation before communicating externally on behalf of Doorstep Library

### They are expected NOT to

- engage in any activity that may damage the property of beneficiaries, the charity, or remote places of work/volunteering
- take unauthorised possession of property that does not belong to them
- engage in illegal activity

- engage in any activity or communication, in a personal or professional capacity, that will bring the Charity into disrepute
- behave in such a way or engage in any activity which may cause physical or mental harm or distress to another person (such as verbal abuse, physical abuse, assault, bullying, or discrimination or harassment on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability or race)
- carry out their duties or represent the charity in any way whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs; or whilst on medication that may affect their ability or judgement
- provide a false or misleading statement, declaration, document, record or claim in respect of Doorstep Library, its volunteers, employees or charity trustees
- improperly disclose, by accident or design, during or after their employment/volunteering with Doorstep Library, confidential information gained in the course of their work
- seek or accept gifts, rewards, benefits or hospitality from a third party/beneficiary in the course of their work, which might reasonably be seen to compromise their integrity or personal judgement.
- (NOTE: Any gift other than a modest token of nominal value should be courteously but firmly declined, and should be reported to the Head of Operations. Gifts or hospitality that are generally considered as common business or social courtesies are acceptable only as long as they are reasonable in type, frequency and value. If any doubt arises as to what constitutes a modest token, employees may seek guidance from the CEO and volunteers with the Head of Programmes)

### Additional expectations for visiting projects/interacting with families

There are, in addition to the above, further behaviours which should be observed by all volunteers, as well as staff and trustees who may visit projects on occasion

#### They are expected to

- adhere at all times to the Charity's procedures for working in the home or online, successfully complete the relevant training, including all safeguarding, before participating in reading activities in the home or online
- be respectful of the different cultures, religions and backgrounds of beneficiaries and their families
- maintain an appropriate standard of dress in recognition of being a representative of Doorstep Library, to be aware of your health and safety, and to be respectful of different family situations and cultures
- meet time and task commitments and provide sufficient notice to the Volunteer Coordinator when they will not be available so that alternative arrangements can be made

#### They are expected NOT to:

- act outside the Charity's strict procedures for conducting reading sessions, in the home or online, as laid out in volunteer training and induction. In particular they must never
  - meet or have contact with a child or parent/carer on their own without the prerequisite permissions from the Charity (volunteers are not permitted to have lone contact with children or families under any circumstances) or share personal contact details with families\_(beyond those required for the online reading sessions only, and in accordance with our Online Safeguarding Policy and Volunteer Policy); this includes making or receiving connection requests on social media platforms

- ask overly personal questions, including those about age or appearance (unless specifically related to Doorstep Library activities, in which case it must be documented as directed by the charity)
  - send/give out material that could be considered offensive, which includes material on social media sites
  - suggest or imply a personal relationship could develop
  - take an aggressive or bullying tone
  - initiate or prolong physical contact with children or families
  - be alone with a young and/or vulnerable person during or outside of reading sessions
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- smoke/vape inside or within view of a beneficiaries' home if conducting a home visit, or when conducting online reading
  - take any photographs, images or recordings (both visual and audio) without prior permission or guidance from a Doorstep Library staff member, which includes permission from parents/carers, and if authorised then protocols outlined in our Safeguarding Policy and Volunteer Policy must be followed
  - give items or information to families without seeking authorisation from a Team Leader/staff member
  - bring any religious, political or other agendas to the reading sessions

### Breaching the Code

Breaches of the standards outlined above in this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action for employees up to and including dismissal in accordance with Doorstep Library's Disciplinary Policy; the termination of the services of the volunteer in accordance with Doorstep Library's Volunteer Policy; and will be recorded on the Incident Safeguarding Log as a safeguarding concern where applicable.