

Innovations for Learning UK: Child Safeguarding/Protection Policy and Procedure

1. The TutorMate Programme

Innovations for Learning's (IFL) TutorMate programme deploys volunteer tutors from corporate organisations to support young readers using an online platform and voice connection for 30 minutes once a week. No visual connection is established between the tutor and child during tutoring and the child remains in the classroom setting, supervised by his/her teacher. Tutoring calls are not recorded. IFL staff are also regularly present in schools.

Although unsupervised physical meetings between tutors/staff and pupils do not take place, IFL recognises that it has a clear responsibility to its staff, volunteers and beneficiaries to ensure that conduct and training complies with best practice in relation to Safeguarding/Child Protection. IFL therefore undertakes:

- To ensure all IFL staff and volunteer tutors are aware of what Safeguarding/Child Protection is
- To train all IFL staff and volunteer tutors in the appropriate procedure to follow should they become concerned that a child is experiencing abuse
- To ensure that all volunteer tutors pass a criminal record or Enhanced DBS check before they begin to tutor
- To ensure IFL staff and volunteer tutors understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in their interaction with children
- To ensure IFL's Senior Leadership team regularly reviews data on Safeguarding/Child Protection reports

2. Why is Safeguarding /Child Protection important?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families or carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. People involved in schools are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and prevent concerns from escalating.

3. What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They also may neglect a child's physical and emotional needs. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional, online, education or community setting by those known to them, or by others unknown to them. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Abuse may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and/or neglect.

4. What is the purpose of Safeguarding/Child Protection?

Safeguarding is:

- Protecting children from maltreatment with an appropriate measure
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child protection:

- Refers to the procedures adults use to protect children at risk of significant harm or who have been harmed

5. Criminal Record/Enhanced DBS checks

IFL will perform an online criminal background check (Enhanced DBS in the UK) once each year for all volunteers through a qualified third-party vendor. Further detail on how IFL administers this process can be found in the organisation's Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy, available on request.

All IFL staff are recruited in line with the organisation's Safer Recruitment Policy, a copy of which is available on request.

6. Training for IFL Staff and Volunteers

IFL undertakes to train all staff and volunteers in its Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and Procedures before they undertake any tutoring or, in the case of staff, school visits. All tutors and staff will agree to comply with IFL Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and Procedure.

7. Procedure for dealing with a Disclosure/Concern of Abuse

In the event that a child discloses any form of abuse to a tutor or IFL staff member, they will follow this procedure:

- Be welcoming and allow the child to speak openly but be clear that nothing can be kept confidential.
- Try to make a note of the child's exact words.
- Try to react in a calm and reassuring manner (controlling any shock) and show concern "I am so sorry that this has happened and I will make sure we deal with this."
- Do not ask any leading questions e.g. what was your mother doing at this point? This is the job of the designated school safeguarding officer.
- Continue with the TutorMate session (if relevant)
- As soon as the session has ended report the concern immediately to help@tutormate.org

Internal IFL procedure:

- The staff member picking up the concern at help@tutormate.org will refer it immediately to Kim Whitten (USA) or Emma Bell (UK)
- Kim or Emma will file a report with the school's Headteacher (or Designated Safeguarding Lead) the same or next possible school day from receiving the concern from the tutor, asking them to investigate further under school procedures and to acknowledge receipt
- If required, IFL will follow-up with the school not more than 2 working days later to ask for confirmation, in writing via email, that the report has been received and that appropriate action is taking place

8. Appropriate Tutor/Staff Behaviour

IFL staff and volunteer tutors will also be trained to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in their interactions with children. On registration for TutorMate, tutors are required to read and accept our Tutor Guidelines (copies available on request). Safeguarding training will also help to protect them against any malicious or unfounded allegations of inappropriate behaviour. The following are the essential requirements for all staff and tutors to comply with:

- Remember that staff and tutors are in a position of responsibility and should use language carefully
- Speak in a manner appropriate for the age group e.g. no swearing, no suggestive or derogatory comments
- Do not share personal information with students e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, phone number and email address
- Do not ask children for their personal information
- Do not arrange to meet a child anywhere outside the school setting
- Do not offer to send children gifts or money or make promises to them that cannot be fulfilled
- Do not interact with children under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Staff/tutors should only take photos of children if they have confirmed that the child has a photo release

9. Guidelines for teachers

IFL will ensure that teachers are briefed on how to introduce the programme to their Year 1 pupils. Teachers will be reminded to set the programme in the context of general discussions about online safety, emphasising that children should not share their personal contact details with their tutor, and that if they are ever concerned about something their tutor says they should tell a trusted adult.

10. IFL Review of Safeguarding/Child Protection Incidents

IFL will collate all reports of abuse/concern. These reports will be anonymised and reviewed by the Senior Leadership team on a regular basis. Any learning from specific incidences will be fed back into training and policy review, reflecting the organisation's culture of continuous learning.