

Innovations for Learning UK: Child Safeguarding 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 unsupervised physical meetings between tutors/staff and pupils do not take place. IFL staff are regularly present in schools.

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. IFL therefore undertakes:

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

2. Why is Safeguarding important?

All children have an absolute right to a childhood free from abuse, neglect or exploitation. Innovations for Learning believes that in all matters concerning child protection and safeguarding, the welfare and protection of the young people we work with is of paramount consideration. 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 primary 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 happens when a person – adult or child – harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve a lack of love, care and attention. Neglect can be just as damaging to a child as physical or sexual abuse. Children may be abused by family members, friends, people working or volunteering in organisational or community settings, people they know or, much less commonly, by strangers. Children suffering abuse often experience more than 1 type of abuse. The abuse usually happens over a period time, rather than being a single, isolated incident. Increasingly, abuse can happen online.

For definitions and signs of abuse please refer to this [NSPCC guide](#)

4. What is the purpose of Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is:

- Protecting children from maltreatment with appropriate measures
- 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

5. Criminal Record/Enhanced DBS checks

IFL will perform an Enhanced DBS in the UK every two years for all volunteers through a qualified third-party supplier. 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 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's Safeguarding Protection Policy and Procedure.

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

In the event that a child discloses any form of abuse to a tutor or IFL staff member, whether the session is taking place at home or at school, they will follow this procedure:

- Be welcoming and allow the child to speak openly but be clear that nothing can be kept confidential and that you will need to tell someone that can help them
- Try to make a note of the child's exact words and use these in your report to IFL
- 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 Safeguarding Lead in the relevant School.
- Continue with the TutorMate session (if relevant, and you believe it to be in the best interests of the child at that particular moment)
- As soon as the session has ended report the concern immediately to communityuk@tutormate.org using the Rapid Referral Form (appendix 1) and the child's own words as far as possible

In the event that the tutor is reading with a child who is at home, and has concerns about the home environment of a child they will follow this procedure:

- As soon as the session has ended report the concern immediately to communityuk@tutormate.org using the Rapid Reporting Form (appendix 1)
- If the tutor believes the situation is an emergency the procedure is outlined to them as follows: Please ring Emma Bell, Designated Safeguarding Officer on 0787 2182373. If Emma doesn't answer please send the following text: "*It is (Name). I have an emergency situation at (Child's) home.*" A member of staff from IFL will ring back immediately to discuss the situation.

Internal IFL procedure:

- In any emergency situation Emma Bell will either call 999 or immediately refer to statutory Children's Services. Emma will ensure that any such action is also reported to the child's school.
- On receipt of a Rapid Reporting Form the staff member picking up the concern at communityuk@tutormate.org will refer it immediately to Emma Bell, Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Emma will review the report and share with the school's Headteacher (or Designated Safeguarding Lead) the same school day or within 24 hours of receipt of the rapid referral forms asking them to investigate further under school procedures and to acknowledge receipt
- If Emma learns about a disclosure outside school hours, or before a weekend/break when the school will be closed, they may decide to report the incident immediately to statutory Children's Services.
- 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 Code of Conduct (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 during school events 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 KS1 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. TutorMate at Home

The majority of TutorMate sessions will take place in the school setting, however some may take place while the child is in their home, especially in the context of a pandemic which closes schools. All the above procedures will all apply to the home setting, but both volunteers and parents will be given additional information and support for at home session delivery. This will consist of:

- A technical guide for parents to help them understand how to set up their home devices and mobiles for safe use
- An additional parental agreement and consent form which describes the responsibilities parents have for ensuring home-based sessions run smoothly and safely
- A revised code of conduct that all volunteers delivering home based sessions will be required to consent to plus a refresher training and safeguarding guidance which specifically addresses safety questions and issues that might arise in the home.

IFL has also developed a framework document for schools which explains the expanded Safeguarding procedures in place for at home sessions.

10. IFL Review of Safeguarding Incidents

IFL will collate all reports of abuse/concern. These reports will be anonymised and reviewed by the Board 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.

Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
March 2018		Policy approved by the Trustee Board
June 2019	EB	Review of policy and additions made to reference other policies
January 2020	EB	Addition to clarify process to be followed if disclosure received out of hours
May/June 2020	EB	Alterations to meet needs of TutorMate Home
Jan 2021	EB	Updates made for TutorMate Home

Appendix 1
TutorMate Rapid Reporting Form

Name of Child	Date of Tutor Session
Name and Details of Tutor	Tutor Organisation
Date Form Completed	Time Form Completed
<p>Reasons for Recording Incident:</p> <p>Use the questions on the right to assist you in filling out the box below</p>	<p>Why are you filling out the form?</p> <p>What are your concerns?</p> <p>What have you said to the child?</p> <p>Did you seek advice from IFL emergency number?</p>
<p>Incident Details:</p> <p>Please fill in all relevant details then email the form to communityuk@tutormate.org</p>	

