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, including Early Literacy Interventionists, 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/ Scottish PVG check before they begin to tutor
- To ensure that all reading calls are recorded and recordings can be reviewed on demand
- 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/Scottish PVG checks

IFL will perform an Enhanced DBS or PVG 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

All IFL staff are required to have up to date safeguarding training and knowledge of the Prevent duty. Staff who are school-facing and who do not have recent proof of training on joining IFL will be required to take the NSPCC Child Protection in Schools online course. All IFL chat team staff are trained on how to respond to tutors who approach them with safeguarding questions, as explained in IFL's internal Safeguarding Procedure Process Guide.

All IFL TutorMate volunteers are required to have safeguarding training and agree to comply with IFL's Safeguarding Protection Policy and Procedure, as well as a Tutor Code of Conduct (see Section 10). Volunteer training includes guidance how to spot signs of abuse, how to deal with disclosures and how to report them to IFL. IFL's training reinforces this simple advice: 'if in doubt, report it'. 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 TutorMate volunteer programme

In the event that a child discloses any form of abuse to a tutor 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 for use these in the 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 they 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 safeguarding@innovationsforlearning.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 **emergency** concerns about the home environment of a child they will additionally follow this procedure:
- If the tutor believes the situation is an emergency they must telephone 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.
- In addition, the volunteer should report the concern in writing immediately to safeguarding@innovationsforlearning.org using the Rapid Reporting Form (appendix 1)

Once IFL have received a Safeguarding disclosure, the team will follow this procedure:

- In any emergency situation relating to the home programme, 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.
- In a non-emergency situation, relating to home or school sessions, on receipt of a Rapid Reporting Form the staff member picking up the concern at safeguarding@innovationsforlearning.org will refer it immediately to Emma Bell, Designated Safeguarding Officer, who will acknowledge receipt to the referrer and check they don't have any additional support needs.
- Emma will review the report act in accordance with the IFL's internal Safeguarding Procedure Process Guide. Either she, or the relevant Programme Manager, will share it with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead by email the same school day or within 24 hours. The referral email will clearly indicate that a safeguarding concern is being raised and ask the school to acknowledge receipt. If no acknowledgement is forthcoming then the DSO or Programme Manager will call the school.
- All information about the referral, including dates and times information is received and passed on will be recorded on IFL's Safeguarding Incident Log by Emma.
- If Emma learns about a disclosure outside school hours, or before a weekend/break when the school will be closed, she 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.
- IFL will keep an updated list of school DSLs available and accessible to all programme staff at all times.

8. 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 procedures in Section 7 will 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.

9. Procedure for dealing with a Disclosure or Concern of Abuse in the ELI programme or to IFL staff in a school

ELIs are IFL staff based in schools part-time, and other IFL staff visit schools occasionally. All IFL staff present in schools should adhere to the policies and procedures within that as well as IFL's procedures:

- All IFL staff members present in schools should familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding procedures and DSLs in that school
- If a child makes a disclosure to an ELI, or other IFL staff member in a school, or an IFL employee observes something of concern, they should report it according to the school's procedure to the school DSL. The school should be asked to acknowledge receipt.
- The ELI/staff member should also immediately notify the IFL Designated Safeguarding Officer, Emma Bell, who will record details of the incident on the internal IFL Safeguarding Incident Log, ELI tab. The ELI should also inform Emma when the school acknowledge receipt and the name of the school DSL.

10. 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 individual 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

11. Guidelines for teachers

IFL will ensure that teachers are briefed on how to introduce the TutorMate programme to their 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.

12. Support for staff and volunteers who receive Safeguarding disclosures

Receiving a disclosure of concern from a child can be distressing. When a volunteer reports a concern, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will always acknowledge receipt and check that the volunteer has no additional support needs. This includes reminding them that they can get back in touch at any point if they feel like they need additional support/opportunity to debrief. It is important for the Designated Safeguarding Officer to explain to volunteers that we won't be able to share details of any investigation or outcome with them, and naturally volunteers may find this challenging.

IFL is committed to ensuring that staff have access to debriefing with the Designated Safeguarding Officer and can also use the support offered by the Employee Assistance Programme.

13. 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
May 2022	EB	Updates made for call recording, ELIs in schools, TutorMate Home, support for volunteers making disclosures, refinement of procedures

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
Reasons for Recording Incident: Use the questions on the right to assist you in filling out the box below	Why are you filling out the form? What are your concerns? What have you said to the child? Did you seek advice from IFL emergency number?

Next Review: May 2023

Incident Details:
Please fill in all relevant details then email the form to
safeguarding@innovationsforlearning.org