

Guidance for parents/carers on recruiting a private tutor



There are many reasons why a parent/carer might want to employ a tutor. It may be to help their child improve their potential exam grades, to assist with their schoolwork in general, to learn a musical instrument or to study religious texts.

This leaflet is designed to support parents/carers to find a suitable tutor to work with their child. It is important for parents and carers to know that there are no regulations governing tutors. While many tutors are skilled at developing a child's learning, they do not need qualifications to work in this field.

In fact, a person can be barred from teaching or commit an offence which makes them unsuitable to work with children yet still offer their services as a tutor. Local Authorities and schools cannot provide a list of approved professionals who work as tutors. Therefore, it is the parents/carers' responsibility to make sure the tutor is qualified and does not pose a risk to their child.

The following FAQs may help you make a decision about whether a tutor is the right person to work with your child.

I am worried about my child's progress at school, what should I do?

If you have concerns about your child's progress, then talk to the school. The school might not know that you are worried. They also know your

child well and may be able to offer some additional support. If you still decide to employ a tutor, then you should inform the school so they can be responsive to your child's changing learning needs.

Where can I find a tutor to work with my child?

Many private tutors advertise in the local paper or on the internet, often under specific subject headings. Parents considering this option should ensure they are satisfied that the tutor in question is qualified and does not present a threat to their child's welfare.

Your child's school may have details or knowledge of tutors who work in the local area and might be able to provide names and contact details. Remember that your child's school is not able to endorse tutors or check their suitability. You should always make sure the tutor is qualified and will keep your child safe.

How can I be sure that a tutor I employ is qualified and does not pose a risk to my child?

Request a copy of the tutor's CV and professional references. If they are currently or have been recently employed by a school, ask to see a reference from the Headteacher. Always interview potential candidates and if there are gaps on their CV ask for an explanation and evidence to support their reasons. If the tutor is

not currently employed by a school, you could ask why they aren't actively teaching at present. Ask to see the tutor's professional qualifications and make sure they are competent in the area they will be assisting your child in. Do they have GCSEs/A Levels in the subject and are they familiar with the course syllabus?

Arrange for your child to meet the tutor. Observe their interaction and ask your child what they thought of the tutor and how they felt during the meeting. This might help inform your decision. Reputable tutors will understand that you are taking these steps to make sure your child is safe.

Ask the tutor if he/ she has a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate and ask to see it to ensure it is clear, and also ask to speak to other families that the tutor is working with, or has previously worked for.

You should not feel you are being unreasonable by recruiting in this way. If the tutor refuses to give you the details you have asked for, to meet your child prior to a decision being made or to have an interview then you should carefully think about whether they are the right person to work with your child.

I have made a decision about a tutor, where should the tuition take place?

If the tuition takes place in your home, arrange for it to happen in a quiet, tidy location away

from the distractions of the television, the radio, the internet, gaming, phones or tablets. Tuition should never happen in a bedroom even if it contains a study area. If the tutor operates in their own home or premises, then visit the location beforehand to make sure it is safe and appropriate for study.

Wherever the tuition takes place, you, or another trusted adult, should remain in the building and you should have access to the teaching area at any time. Intervening doors should be kept open so that you can hear and observe the activity, even if this means you have to curtail your own plans.

Chaperone arrangements offered by the tutor should be refused. Make sure your child knows where their tuition should take place and ask them to tell you immediately if the tutor tries to change the arrangements, even if that means interrupting the lesson. Appropriate tutors should be aware of these professional expectations and are likely to offer them without your suggestion. You should not accept inferior arrangements and you should question whether the tutor is a suitable to work with your child if they refuse to cooperate.

What should I do if my child tells me something inappropriate or abusive happened or if I find the tutor behaving inappropriately or abusively with my child?

As the tutor's employer, you have the right to terminate the employment at any time and should do so if you are unhappy about the way that the tutor behaves with your child. Make sure your child knows that they should talk to you if anything happens while they are meeting the tutor that makes them upset, uncomfortable, scares them or worries them.

If your child tells you something inappropriate or abusive happened, then listen carefully to what they have to say. You might be angry at the tutor or be upset but try not to let your child see this as they might think you are angry or upset with them. Reassure your child that they have done the right thing to tell you and that what happened isn't their fault. If the tutor has behaved in a way that is harmful, abusive or inappropriate towards your child or other children it is really important that you contact the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**.

The LADO manages allegations against individuals who work or volunteer with children in Merton. The LADO will discuss your concerns with you and decide what further action needs to be taken. The LADO can be contacted at LADO@merton.gov.uk. In an emergency please call the Police on 999.