



GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS CONSIDERING EMPLOYING A PRIVATE TUTOR

**Joint Local Safeguarding Children Board
and Children & Learning guidance**

Introduction

Parents may consider employing a private tutor for a variety of reasons. They may wish, for example, to assist their child generally with school work; to help them build confidence with a particular subject or skill such as reading; to help them improve on potential examination grades; or to help them learn a musical instrument or other skill.

This leaflet is intended to assist parents in selecting an appropriately trained and verified professional to work with their child as a private tutor.

Some commonly asked questions:

· Does the Local Education Authority hold a list of approved tutors?

Local Education Authorities (LEAs) do not keep lists of approved tutors. LEAs directly employ home tutors in order to make provision for children who are unable to attend school on a protracted basis and for whom alternative special arrangements are necessary. The names of such LEA home tutors cannot be made available to the public in order to employ them privately.

· Can the school help me identify a tutor?

Your child's school is often the best place to start.

Share your concerns about your child's progress. Staff may not otherwise be aware of your worries. Staff will already have a good knowledge of your child and his or her individual learning needs and abilities. They may be able to offer additional support to your child as part of the teaching they provide in school.

If you remain concerned, staff at the school may know of other colleagues who would be willing to provide additional support for your child at home on a private paid basis. All teaching staff employed in maintained schools should have

been subject to professional checks regarding their suitability to work with children and young people, and also regarding their professional qualifications.

· If I do not wish to approach the school, how do I find a tutor to work with my child?

Many private tutors advertise in the local paper, often under specific subject headings. When recruiting from these sources, it is still helpful to inform your child's school that you are doing so to enable them to be responsive to your child's changing learning needs. Parents considering this option should ensure that they are satisfied that the tutor in question is qualified, and does not present a threat to their child's welfare.

· When selecting a tutor in this way, how can I be sure that he or she is properly qualified and does not pose a risk to my child?

Always interview any potential candidate, and ask to see their career resumé.

Ask for and check professional references from someone who knows the tutor now and ask to see qualification certificates. If there are career gaps on the individual's resumé, ask for reasons and seek evidence of any explanations given. If the tutor is currently, or has recently been employed in a school, ask for a reference from the head

teacher, and (if a qualified teacher) ask to see a copy of the tutor's General Teaching Council Registration. If the tutor is a freelance and or works as a supply teacher ask to see their Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Check. This will indicate that the individual has been checked for any known offences.

It is also helpful for the tutor and your child to meet prior to you making a decision. Observing the interaction between the potential tutor and your child may help to inform your decision.

· When I have found a suitable tutor, where should tuition take place?

Tuition is best undertaken in a quiet place, which is well organised and suitable for study, away from the distractions of television and radio. A bedroom is never appropriate, even if it contains a study area.

It is essential that you (or another trusted adult chosen by you) remain on the premises. Any chaperone arrangement offered by the tutor (for example his or her partner) should be refused. It is important that you have access to the teaching area and can observe and hear activity at any time you wish. Intervening doors should be kept open, even though this may mean curtailing your own activities. Any tutor who is mindful and aware of current expectations of professional staff

should have no objection and is likely to offer the arrangement without your suggestion.

You or the tutor may have a preference about whether the tuition takes place in your home, the tutor's home, or elsewhere, but the conditions outlined above should apply in each case. You should not feel that you are acting unreasonably to expect this and should not accept inferior arrangements.

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

Any adult who behaves in an inappropriate or abusive manner with a child must be reported to Social Care. If your child tells you of inappropriate behaviour you must listen to your child and reassure them that it is not their fault.

However embarrassed or uncomfortable you feel about what your child tells you or what you find, you must put the welfare of your child first. In such circumstances you should ensure that the individual is dismissed immediately from the position of private tutor to your child and you must inform the Social Care First Contact team in Southend who will make enquiries into the matter jointly with the police and where appropriate in liaison with the LEA.

Conclusion

Recruiting a private tutor can cause anxiety. As a parent you will wish to be satisfied that you are employing a tutor who is properly qualified and who can be relied upon to cause no harm to your child.

By following the guidance within this leaflet, you will have taken reasonable steps to safeguard your child;

- ❖ Wherever possible go through your child's school in the first instance. Where you do not wish to do this, you could still inform the school of your intention to provide additional learning support;

- ❖ Remember, you are the employer and it is therefore reasonable to expect to see references and to check out any concerns that you may have;

Ensure that you see references that come from someone who has known the tutor recently;

Check out reasons for any career gaps;

Ask for evidence of qualifications and the CRB check if the tutor does not work currently in a school;

- ❖ Observe interactions between the tutor and your child;

- ❖ Ensure that the study area used, is well organised, quiet and orderly, and is easily accessible to allow observation. Do not use a bedroom. You or another trusted adult should remain on the premises;

- ❖ Report any abusive or inappropriate behaviour to the proper authorities and in such circumstances do not be afraid to dismiss the individual from your employ.

- ❖ **If in any doubt about recruiting a particular individual - DON'T!**

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