

Are you thinking of using a private tutor, tuition centre or after-school arts or sports class for your child?

Guidance for parents, carers and organisations

Introduction

You might want to employ a tutor or a provider for your child:

- to help them with their school work
- to improve their grades
- to learn a musical instrument
- to take part in other out of school activities, such as sports coaching and drama.

You are responsible for choosing and paying for private tuition, classes or activities and the Council and your child's school will not be able to approve or recommend tutors or providers.

Safety advice – the importance of making proper checks

While the vast majority of private tutors and coaches are reputable, you still need to take care to make proper checks when hiring their services.

The advice below is to help you make informed decisions about tutoring services or out of school activities for your child and to give you confidence in your choices.

Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly CRB) check

This service carries out a DBS check on anyone who works unsupervised with children under 18 to make sure there is no known reason why they should not work with children or vulnerable adults.

Tutors who have had a DBS check will usually tell you they have one and you can ask to see their DBS disclosure certificate when you meet them. Individuals cannot get a DBS by themselves - only if they are part of an organisation.

The DBS certificate may show if there are any previous criminal offences and it would then be for you to decide whether employing a private tutor with convictions, a DBS certificate for other employment or no DBS check would pose a risk to your child's safety or wellbeing.

For more details visit:

[gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview](https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview)

Other checks you should make

- ✓ Think about where you found their details - was it through an advert or from another parent?
- ✓ Regardless of how you found them, ask the tutor or coach for details of two referees, and follow them both up with a phone call.
- ✓ Ask the tutor for details of the parents of some current or former students, and follow them up with a phone call.
- ✓ If there are career gaps on their CV, ask for reasons and seek any additional evidence.
- ✓ If a local school, college or service employs the tutor, ask for a reference from the Headteacher, Principal or Head of Service.
- ✓ Check to see whether the tutor is properly accredited, experienced and qualified by asking for evidence such as certificates, and then contact the relevant accreditation body or organisation. Where someone claims to have qualifications but cannot produce the certificates, you must decide if the tuition can still go ahead. There is no requirement for private tutors to have formal qualifications but most good ones will have them.
- ✓ Ask the tutor about the tuition they provide, locations, past clients and results. Listen for any inconsistencies in any of their replies and observe body language. Do their answers sound genuine or are they avoiding certain issues and not telling you the full story?
- ✓ Be clear where the tutoring will take place and who will be present. Is it at your house, their house or another venue?
- ✓ If present, you may wish either to be in the same room, or to leave the door open and enter the room at random. Your child's bedroom is not a suitable place for tutoring.
- ✓ If using another venue you will need to check arrangements for drop-off and collection, where your child will wait and what the venue is like.

- ✓ Who else might be in the tutor's house at the same time or while the child is waiting? Trust your instincts and do not be afraid of calling off the lessons if you or your child feels uncomfortable.
- ✓ Ask your child how the session went.

Organisations that provide tuition

When you send your child to a provider, never assume that the venue is also the provider of the sessions, which may be run by another company. Tuition, coaching companies and franchises often rent premises in sport centres, school halls or from community groups, charities and local churches.

Checklist for parents

- ✓ Who owns the organisation?
- ✓ Who is the lead person if you have concerns?
- ✓ Where are their headquarters?
- ✓ What are their contact details?
- ✓ Do they have child protection and anti-bullying policies? Ask for copies.
- ✓ Are all the staff members DBS checked?
- ✓ Is it the same staff members every week?
- ✓ If the children have to change their clothes, does anyone supervise this activity?
- ✓ Does the activity require appropriate physical contact relevant to the activity? For example, in a dance, music or sports class tutors may need to correct posture, stance and position. Children should know in advance if there will be any physical contact and it should be explained what contact and why.
- ✓ What provision is there for dropping off and collecting your child? Does it always have to be the same person who collects your child or can you send someone else without telling the tutor, coach or centre in advance?
- ✓ Do parents and carers stay while their child is taking part in the activity and, if so, where do they wait?
- ✓ Does the tutor, coach or centre have insurance liability?

Organisations renting premises for tutors and activities

- ✓ Who owns the organisation?
- ✓ Who is the lead for concerns?
- ✓ Where are their headquarters?
- ✓ What are their contact details?
- ✓ Do they have child protection and anti-bullying policies? Ask for copies.
- ✓ Are all the staff members DBS checked?
- ✓ Do they use volunteers who may or may not be DBS checked?
- ✓ Is it the same staff members every week?
- ✓ Who should you speak to if you have a concern or a parent or carer reports a concern about the organisation?
- ✓ What provision is there for drop-off and collection and what happens if children are still uncollected from the premises but the tutor or coach has already left?
- ✓ Do parents stay while their child is at the activity and where will they wait?
- ✓ Is the tuition linked to the Camden Supplementary Schools Forum?

If your child tells you something inappropriate has happened or the tutor / provider is behaving inappropriately

Any adult who behaves in an inappropriate or abusive manner towards a child should be reported to Children's Services – see contact details below - and / or the police. Further enquiries would then be made and, where necessary, a child protection investigation would be launched.

If your child tells you of inappropriate behaviour by the tutor or a provider, you should listen to your child and reassure them that it is not their fault. You should immediately stop using the tutor's services and report it to us and / or the police.

How to report your concerns

Contact Customer Service Centre on **0300 123 4043** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). Or you can email: Protectedreferrals.cs@hertfordshire.gov.uk

If you think a child is in immediate danger you should call the police on 999.

Radicalisation and extremism

If you are concerned that your child's tutor is teaching them extremist views or influencing them to hold such views, please read our information leaflet 'Keeping children and young people safe from radicalisation and extremism', which is available at:

http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_prevent_guide.html

This website also has a range of other useful information and resources to help you keep your child safe.

