



# Guidance for engaging with a private tutor, carer, or similar



CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## **Guidance for Parents and Carers who are considering engaging a private tutor, music teacher, religious instructor, sports coach, or similar**



There are many reasons why as a parent or carer you may want to engage an individual to provide 1:1 coaching, care, or tuition to your child. However, given this is a private arrangement you are solely responsible for ensuring that this is a safe arrangement and that relevant checks are in place to ensure your child is protected.

There are no legal regulations around certain types of activities with children. Even people who have committed criminal offences can legally continue to work in some roles, e.g. children's entertainer, private tutor. Anyone can set up a professional looking website with "genuine" reviews and testimonials. Whilst someone may have been recommended by others, there are additional checks and questions you can ask to reassure yourself that your child will be safe and protected.

### **How to be reassured that they are appropriately qualified and verified**

- Ask to see a copy of their Disclosure and Barring Certificate (Private Tutors are only entitled to a basic check).
- Ask to see and check their professional references, and any registration with a qualifying body e.g. Teaching Regulation Agency
- Ask to see professional qualification certificates.
- Make sure that you can monitor and supervise the activities undertaken.
- Talk to your child about their progress, what they have been doing, what they enjoy about the session, or anything that they'd like to change.
- Do you know anyone who this person has previously worked with that can be contacted?
- Make sure you have the full name of the person you are engaging, that this is the same as any checks, certificates, or references that you have seen.
- If you are engaging the person through an agency, organisation, or religious institution that you have the contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, all should have an identified safeguarding lead, if they don't you should query this.

Don't assume that because someone is well respected in a certain field or community, that you can trust that these checks are in place.

Whilst Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS) can provide some reassurance, these are generally updated every 3 years, and certain types of checks (basic, standard, enhanced) don't show all information. There is a helpful explanation about what each type of check shows here; [What shows up on a DBS check? - Mind](#)

Also don't assume that because a tutor or coach provides services to a school/club that there is no reason to check their credentials, as most private tutors are not directly employed by the school/club. The environment of an education or formal setting is very different to a family home, there is greater staffing ratios and supervision taking place, which cannot be replicated in a family home.

**There are also actions you can take to increase the safety of having an individual come to your home or provide online sessions to your child. These include:**

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- Avoid tuition taking place in a bedroom, it should take place in a quiet but communal location.
- Be clear where the activity will take place and who will be present.
- Ask to be present in the same room, or to leave the door open and enter the room at random.
- Whether at home or a tutor's location it is important that you are able to go into the teaching area and can watch and listen. This is reassuring to children and tutors to know that you are nearby.
- Any online sessions must be arranged between yourself and the tutor directly, not with the child.
- Sessions must not be recorded without your approval.
- You should be present for online sessions or making checks regularly.
- You should ask if anyone else is present in the tutor's space during online sessions, and if there is give agreement to this.

Professionals should welcome your vigilance as it also provides protection for them. If they do not appear to understand the basis for your requests or are resistant to this, you should be wary of why this is.

### **You can also support your child to be clear on how professionals should behave and to spot signs and let you know if boundaries are being blurred.**

#### **For example –**

- A tutor or coach is not a friend or pseudo family member, they should always behave in a professional way like a teacher.
- They should never ask for a child's personal information or contact details or share their own directly with your child.
- They should never message your child privately or on public social media networks etc.
- They should never ask to meet without your approval.
- They should never ask your child to keep a secret.
- If anything ever happens or is said that is strange or makes your child feel uncomfortable, scared or upset, they must tell yourself of another trusted adult as soon as possible.

More advice is also available from;

[Finding a tutor for your child | NSPCC](#)

[Employing-Private-Tutors1.pdf \(boarding.org.uk\)](#)

[Advice for parents and carers | Sport England](#)

[About safeguarding in faith communities | NSPCC Learning](#)

[After-school clubs, community activities, and tuition - safeguarding guidance for providers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

If you are unhappy with or worried about the conduct of a professional you have engaged to work with your child, unless there is an immediate safeguarding risk you should address directly with the individual to try and resolve. If this is not successful and they are affiliated to an agency, organisation, or religious institution raise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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If you feel a potential crime has been committed, contact the Police on 101 or 999 if there is immediate danger.

Where it is believed or suspected that a person who is employed or volunteers with children has behaved inappropriately or in an abusive manner, this should be reported by their employer, to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The contact details for Hackney LADO and the City of London LADO can be found here; [Allegations against Staff & Volunteers | chscp](#)