

Choosing a club, tutor or coach?



Safeguarding Children:

Guidance for parents in choosing activities, clubs or
personal tuition for children and young people



Many parents support their children in attending various activities. These might include a sports group such as football or in attending a group to learn a new skill. They may also consider employing a personal tutor (sometimes referred to as a coach) for their child at different stages of their educational life.

When choosing any group activity or in providing personal tuition, it is important that parents are confident that their children will be safe and happy. This leaflet provides some points for you to consider in selecting group activities or tutors for your children.

Choosing a Group Activity or Club

Questions you might want to ask a group leader include:

- ♥ Does the club or tutor have a policy on safeguarding children?
- ♥ Who do you speak to if you're worried about anything?
- ♥ Are staff trained and do they have police checks (referred to as DBS checks)?
- ♥ Is the group linked to a professional body or recognised organisation?
- ♥ What is the staff ratio and is there a trained first aider on site?
- ♥ Are you required to sign any consent forms, or provide emergency contacts and your child's relevant medical details?
- ♥ Is there a written code of conduct for coaches and volunteers? (Many clubs will have codes of conduct for the children and parents as well).
- ♥ What's the policy if a child needs personal care?



Choosing a personal tutor or coach

Employing the best tutor for your child is vital, so taking time to get it right is important and will help keep your child safe. These are some simple steps and checks to make to help you decide.

Always interview the tutor and be satisfied that they answer your questions fully.

Ask to see personal references and confirm their authenticity by contacting the referees directly.

Ask to see their qualification certificates (not photocopies) and be satisfied they are recognised and authentic.

Ask to see their CV or employment record, if there are career gaps, ask reasons and seek evidence of any explanations offered.

If the tutor is a qualified teacher ask to see a copy of the tutors Teaching Agency Registration and a copy of their DBS check.

If the tutor has recently been or is currently employed in a school, speak to the headteacher for a reference.

Arrange a time for your child to meet the tutor as observing the interaction between the tutor and child may help you make your decision.



Keeping your children safe:


- When arranging tuition to be in your own home this should be, in a communal area of the household (a bedroom is not appropriate).
- If attending a group activity it is a good idea to always stay in the premises with your child and sit within your sight.
- Ensure that you or another trusted adult chosen by you remains on the premises. Any chaperone arrangement offered by the tutor should be declined.
- Check that access for you is easy and that you can observe and hear activity at any time you wish.
- Your child should not travel alone with the coach/tutor at any time.
- Any contact outside of activities should be directly with the parents. The coach should not contact the child direct, either via telephone, email or social media. Club websites or social media pages that provide information to all the club members are appropriate, and should be accessible to everyone. This is actually a very good way of parents seeing what is going on with club activities.
- Ensure your child is aware of any arrangements that have been agreed.
- Speak with your child regularly to ensure they are happy with the arrangements and any agreements made with the tutor have been kept.
- Any volunteer or tutor that is mindful and aware of current expectations toward safeguarding children should have no objection to any of these checks or arrangements.
- Do not feel that you are acting unreasonably to expect this and you should not accept arrangements you are not happy with. Do not avoid asking for documentation or evidence in order to be polite, as an employer or client you have the right to this information.

What to do if your child tells you something inappropriate has happened



- If you are concerned that the coach /tutor has engaged in 'poor practice' i.e. has not done the right thing, rather than done something wrong that is abusive or a possible offence. Generally, we would advise parents to cancel the activities or keep the young person away from the activities until there has been time to seek advice.
- If as a parent you feel uncomfortable speaking with someone within the club in the first instance, you can seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer based at Sutton Civic Centre should be informed if you any have concerns where it is believed that a person working with children has;
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child,
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child,
 - or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- It is easier to stop your child attending the group or stop working with the tutor rather than reporting the concerns, however if not reported, these individuals can go on to work with other children and families and potentially cause harm.

Useful Contacts

 **LADO - Civic Offices,**

St. Nicholas Way,

Sutton

SM1 1EA



T: 0208 770 4776



E: LADO@sutton.gov.uk



Metropolitan Police: 999



Non-emergency number:



101 (available 24 hours a day seven days a week)

The non-emergency number does not replace