

PARENT & CARER GUIDE

Hiring a Private Tutor

A practical guide to choosing a safe, reliable tutor for your child, at home or online.

A good tutor can make a real difference to your child's confidence and progress. Since 21 January 2026, self-employed tutors who are eligible can get their own Enhanced DBS check, so it is now easier to ask to see one. This guide explains what to look for and how to check it properly.

They can get a DBS check. You can ask to see it.

Since 21 January 2026, eligible self-employed workers can apply for their own Enhanced DBS check through a DBS Umbrella Body.

Why a DBS check matters for tutors

Tutors often work one-to-one with children, sometimes in your home and sometimes online. A DBS certificate helps you make a safer choice, alongside everything else you learn about them.

You cannot apply for a check on a tutor's behalf. The tutor applies themselves through a DBS Umbrella Body, such as self-employed-dbs.co.uk. Not every tutor will qualify, as eligibility depends on the work they do and who they do it with. The DBS eligibility tool at gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check can help confirm.

Tutoring at home

- Hold sessions in a shared space, like the kitchen or living room, not a bedroom.
- Make sure an adult is at home, especially for the first few sessions.
- Keep doors open and pop in now and then. A good tutor will expect this.
- Agree times, location and fees in writing before you start.
- Ask for lesson notes or a quick chat at the end of each session.

Tutoring online

- Set up the computer in a shared room where you can see and hear the lesson.
- Use a platform you know, with links sent to your email, not your child's.
- Ask whether sessions are recorded, and who can see the recordings.
- Messages should go through you or a group chat you can see.
- Online tutors still need to show you the original certificate, for example at a first meeting, alongside an Update Service check.

How to check their DBS certificate

For tutoring children, look for an Enhanced DBS certificate for the child workforce. Where the role is eligible, it may also include a Children's Barred List check. The certificate belongs to the tutor, so sharing it is their choice, but you can ask to see it.

- ☐ I have seen the original paper certificate, not a copy or photo.
- ☐ The name and details match their government photo ID.
- ☐ I have checked the issue date.
- ☐ It covers the child workforce.
- ☐ I have asked whether they subscribe to the DBS Update Service.
- ☐ With their permission, I have done a free status check at gov.uk/dbs-update-service.

Using the DBS Update Service

If your tutor subscribes, you can check their certificate online for free, with their permission. You will need the certificate number, their surname as shown on the certificate, and their date of birth. GOV.UK suggests entering "private employer" as the organisation name.

The result will tell you whether the certificate is still current, or whether new information has come to light. If there is new information, ask them to apply for a new check.

If a certificate shows a tutor is on the Children's Barred List, they are legally barred from this work. Do not hire them, and tell the police if you know they are tutoring children.

Where to get help

- In an emergency, call 999.
- Worried a child is being harmed? Call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.
- For non-emergency concerns, contact your local police.
- Guidance for families: gov.uk/guidance/private-individuals-employing-self-employed-workers-or-personal-employees
- Find an umbrella body: gov.uk/find-dbs-umbrella-body

Questions to ask

1. Do you have an Enhanced DBS certificate for the child workforce, and can I see the original?
2. Are you signed up to the DBS Update Service?
3. What qualifications and teaching experience do you have in this subject?
4. Can you give me two references from families you have tutored?
5. How will you track and share my child's progress?
6. Where and how would you run sessions, at home or online?
7. What is your policy on messaging my child between lessons?

Warning signs

- They will not show a DBS certificate, or only offer a photo or copy.
- The name on the certificate does not match their photo ID.
- They ask to teach behind closed doors or in your child's bedroom.
- They contact your child privately on social media or personal apps.
- They cannot give references or avoid questions about their experience.
- They offer gifts or ask your child to keep secrets.

KEY POINT

A DBS certificate is only one part of the picture, so combine it with references, qualifications, your own judgement and regular chats with your child.

Working with children or vulnerable adults?

Point them to **self-employed-dbs.co.uk**. Eligible self-employed workers can apply online in around ten minutes and get their Enhanced DBS check processed by a registered Umbrella Body.

self-employed-dbs.co.uk

This guide is general information based on DBS and GOV.UK guidance published September 2026. It is not legal advice. Always check the latest guidance at gov.uk. DBS for Self-Employed is a brand of MJD Ventures Limited.