



How to choose a tutor: questions worth asking

Choosing a tutor is a big decision. You're trusting someone with your child's time, confidence and, often, an important exam. This guide sets out the questions we think any parent should ask, whoever they're considering, including us. Good tutors and good centres will be glad you asked.

1. Safety and safeguarding

Start here, before anything else.

- **DBS checks.** Ask whether everyone who will teach or supervise your child has an enhanced DBS check, and ask to see the certificate. A DBS check has no official expiry date, so it's also fair to ask when it was done, or whether the tutor has signed up to the DBS update service, which lets you check online that a certificate is still current.
- **Who else is around.** At a centre, ask who else is on site during lessons. For lessons at home or online, agree where they'll happen and whether a parent will be nearby.
- **Safeguarding.** Ask who you should contact if you ever have a concern, and how the tutor or centre would handle it.

2. Subject knowledge and experience

- **Qualifications.** What has the tutor studied, and to what level, in the subject they'll teach?
- **The right exam.** Teaching the 11+ is different from teaching A-Level. Ask how much experience they have with the specific test or qualification your child is taking.
- **Who actually teaches.** If you're talking to a centre, ask who will teach your child week to week, and whether that might change.

3. Matching your child's exam board and tier

GCSE and A-Level courses vary between exam boards, and GCSE maths and science have Foundation and Higher tiers. A good tutor will ask which board, specification and tier your child is following, and plan around it. Bring the details with you: the school can tell you if your child doesn't know.

For the 11+, ask which test the tutor prepares children for. Around Burnham, that might be the Buckinghamshire Secondary Transfer Test, the Slough Consortium test or both, and they're set by different providers.

4. A first meeting before you commit

Most tutors offer some kind of first meeting before regular lessons start. It might be a consultation, an assessment or a first lesson. Use it to find out:

- how the tutor will work out what your child already knows and where the gaps are
- what a typical lesson looks like
- how your child feels afterwards: comfortable, stretched, or out of their depth

Be wary of anyone who wants a long commitment before they've met your child.

5. A plan, and progress you can see

- **A clear plan.** Ask what your child will work on over the next few weeks, and why.
- **Progress updates.** How often will you hear how things are going, and in what form?
- **Homework.** Is there any between lessons, and how much?

6. Honesty about results

Be cautious about promises. No tutor can promise a grade or a grammar school place, and the Buckinghamshire Grammar Schools themselves say they don't endorse tutoring. Results claims are only meaningful if the tutor can explain where the figures come from. A good tutor will also tell you honestly if they think your child is better served by a different approach, a later start or no tuition at all.

7. The practical side

- **Location and travel.** Can your child get there easily every week, including in winter? Is online an option for weeks when travel isn't practical?
- **Contracts and notice.** Is there a minimum term? What happens if you need to stop or pause?
- **Times.** Do the available slots fit around school, clubs and family life?

Always ask for the terms in writing before you agree to anything.

A quick checklist

Question	Asked?
Enhanced DBS check for everyone who teaches my child	☐
Relevant qualifications and experience for this exam	☐
Knows my child's exam board, specification and tier	☐
A first meeting before any long commitment	☐
A clear plan and regular progress updates	☐

Question	Asked?
Honest about what tutoring can and can't do	☐
Terms, notice and times that suit our family	☐

How we work

At Dr Khan Tuition, 36 High Street, Burnham, every family starts with a free 30-minute consultation. We send a personalised plan within 48 hours, lessons run weekly with progress updates, and there's no minimum contract, although we recommend a full term. Ask us any of the questions above. Call 01753 378222.

Sources: general guidance written by Dr Khan Tuition (October 2026). [GOV.UK: DBS checks](#); [The Buckinghamshire Grammar Schools: FAQs](#).

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