Best tutoring practice for schools: key messages from the evidence

National Tutoring Programme

How can schools ensure the content of tutoring sessions aligns with classroom teaching?

- Teachers are aware of the particular areas that pupils need support with, how to align these with classroom practice and how to receive feedback on progress from tutors. It is also useful to set an overall aim for what is expected to be achieved through a block of tutoring sessions with specific pupils.
- Systems are in place to manage and use feedback received from tutors on pupil progress.
- Pupils and regular class teachers are supported to sustain the impact of tutoring once they finish their cycle of sessions.

When in the school day should tutoring take place?

- Arrange tutoring sessions during standard school hours and rotate wherever possible, to minimise pupils missing core curriculum time.
- The timetabling of tuition is clear so that the planned block of tuition can be delivered with consistency.
- Individual tutoring sessions are relatively short; for example, 30–60 minutes.
- Delivery of tutoring sessions is sustained, with more regular, shorter sessions for younger pupils.

How should pupils be selected and grouped for tutoring?

- When selecting pupils, focus on those who are eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Consider using data on prior attainment, with low attaining pupils most likely to benefit, along with professional judgement on who would benefit the most.
- If you are undertaking a mixture of small group and one to one tuition, prioritise more experienced tutors/teaching professionals in delivering small group tuition.
- Arrange the majority of pupils into groups of three: consider the best approach based on the needs of your pupils along with advice from the tutoring provider who will be working with your pupils. One to one and one to two tutoring will also be available for pupils who need this support, including pupils with SEND and pupils attending Alternative Provision, as well as other pupils who may have specific needs.

How can positive relationships between tutors, teachers and pupils and their parents/carers be established and maintained?

- Careful consideration of messaging to pupils and their parents/carers as to how and why they have been selected to receive tutoring, ensuring it is perceived as a positive activity.
- Work collaboratively with tutors to identify and monitor any issues with pupil non-attendance to ensure that tuition can be delivered as planned.

How can pupils and teachers most effectively receive feedback from tutoring sessions?

- Consider how appropriate assessment will be used, particularly in the first half term of the 2020–21 academic year, in preparation for tutoring and to help set the aims for tutoring sessions.
- Clear outcome measurement/assessment structures are in place for pupils receiving tutoring. This will be important in enabling you to see if the tutoring is having the effect that you are hoping for and for informing any changes to tutor groupings.
- Feedback mechanisms are in place between tutors and schools; teachers are briefed on how to use this information.