

Supporting online tuition at home

Briefing for schools

**National
Tutoring
Programme**

The logo for the National Tutoring Programme, featuring a stylized graphic of three colored lines (red, blue, and black) forming a shape that resembles a right-pointing chevron or a stylized 'N'.

Introduction

This brief guide aims to support schools participating in the **National Tutoring Programme** to maximise the impact of NTP tuition while it is being delivered remotely to pupils at home.

The NTP's default model is focused on within-school delivery. This is supported by the evidence base, which highlights the value of in-school delivery to maximise input from teachers on the content of sessions and ensure high levels of pupil attendance, particularly for the most disadvantaged pupils.

However, the current national lockdown means that delivery of the NTP must adapt to ensure schools are supported to reach as many pupils as possible, including those learning from home.

It's been no hassle getting pupils set up from home. I [...] got replies saying the kids loved it and there were no problems.

Kevin Presneill, Deputy Headteacher at Brompton Westbrook Primary School

Remote, at-home tutoring brings with it a unique set of challenges. This brief guide draws from the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) [guidance](#), the experience of schools across the country, and insights gained from the NTP [Tuition Partners](#) to offer practical solutions to these challenges.

EEF research on the [impact of school closures on the attainment gap](#) (June 2020) found that:

- School closures are likely to reverse progress made to close the gap in the last decade since 2011.
- Supporting effective remote learning will mitigate the extent to which the gap widens.

- Sustained support will be needed to help disadvantaged pupils catch up.

NTP tuition can help mitigate against lost learning for disadvantaged pupils; however, the evidence base is clear that tuition should always be seen as an additional resource and support for teachers and not as a substitute for high-quality teaching.

This guide provides evidence-based suggestions for how schools can support the implementation of at-home tutoring to maximise its impact. For a broader summary of best available evidence supporting the NTP tuition model please see our [Best Tutoring Practice: Briefing for Schools](#).

How does moving to remote learning affect NTP tuition?

NTP Tutoring can continue to be delivered throughout this period of national lockdown and remote learning.

NTP Tuition Partners are offering online tutoring for disadvantaged pupils at home, as well as continuing to offer support to vulnerable pupils in schools.

This flexibility means that tutoring can continue as planned during any period of remote learning, ensuring pupils receive sustained delivery of 15-hour blocks of academic tuition in 1:1, 1:2 or 1:3 groups. The vast majority of the NTP's 33 approved [Tuition Partners](#) are now authorised to deliver at-home online tutoring under accepted circumstances.

It is also possible for primary, secondary, special schools and alternative provision settings to book blocks of tutoring to start later in the year.

How can schools and Tuition Partners best work together to maximise the impact of at-home tuition?

Close working between schools and Tuition Partners is critical to ensure the success of the tutoring at any time, and particularly during remote learning. There are five main areas to keep in mind:

1. Schools should consider the **individual circumstances of pupils** before delivery of tutoring continues or begins at home. These circumstances should be discussed and clarified with parents/ carers and include:

Does the pupil have suitable access to technology at home?

Will the pupil have a space to work that will allow them to concentrate on their tutoring?

If the tuition is for a pupil with SEND or additional needs, will remote tuition still be suitable for them?

To ensure that NTP Tuition reaches the pupils who most need it, **in some cases it may be best to pause delivery and resume when the pupil is able to attend in school again**. This would be preferable to replacing the pupil who is not able to access tuition at home with a pupil who does not have as much need for the additional support. We encourage open conversations between schools and Tuition Partners wherever possible to discuss the most appropriate option for specific pupils.

2. Schools should continue to work with tutors to identify key topics for pupils and **ensure that tutoring sessions remain as targeted as possible while they are being delivered remotely**. Tutoring which focuses on specific subtopics or skills within a broader academic subject can be an effective way to improve attainment; for example, focusing on specific subskills of literacy, such as decoding skills and comprehension strategies, and reading and sourcing skills for writing.

Teachers give the tutors an action plan for each individual student. This is key as it means the tutors know specifically what each individual student needs to focus on.

Nick Heywood, Deputy Headteacher at Kingswood Academy in Hull

3. **A clear aim for each block of tutoring should be agreed with the Tuition Partner ahead of delivery,** although tutors will need flexibility to adapt the plan as tutoring progresses.
4. Even while tutoring is being delivered remotely, **schools should continue to ensure that feedback from tutors is being regularly received, used in the classroom and shared with families.** For example, planned school meetings with Tuition Partners take place as scheduled. Feedback may be practical (for example, technological issues from remote classroom teaching that the tutor needs to be informed of) and/or pedagogical (feedback from classroom teaching that may help a tutor adapt their planned session content).
5. Schools should also consider **how to best use ongoing assessments while pupils are working remotely** to identify if tutoring is having the expected impact, and if not, to help identify – and discuss with the Tuition Partner – where improvements could be made.

There is a strong connection from the tutors to what's taking place in the classroom, which is really good.

Diane Murphy, Assistant Headteacher at The Duchess's Community High School

How can schools maximise parental engagement with at-home tuition?

Remote delivery makes it more important than ever to ensure that parents/carers understand why and how tutoring is taking place and are enabled to encourage and support their child's participation.

Schools already know the importance and benefits of engaging parents/carers in children's learning. The evidence supports this:

Parental engagement is consistently associated with academic success.¹

However, schools now have the added challenge of developing their plans for parental engagement in fast-moving circumstances.

The six approaches outlined below are designed to encourage parental engagement.

1. Ensure that parents/carers are aware that **the tutoring session is a firm commitment** in the same way as their child's online classroom learning. Pupils and families can be encouraged to schedule the time and date of their online at-home tutoring session in advance, helping tutoring become part of the weekly routine. Schools can communicate a clear expectation that pupils should only miss sessions in the case of illness or extenuating circumstances, helping to reinforce shared high expectations for engagement in all learning.

2. **Take a flexible approach to communication** that can be adapted to a broad range of socio-economic, home and family circumstances. Well-designed school communications can be effective for improving attainment and a range of other outcomes, including attendance.²

Schools can consider using different mediums of communication to ensure that all families involved are aware of the opportunity for academic support that NTP tuition offers. Mobile phones may be more readily accessed than email and it is particularly important to ensure that parents/carers receive key information such as how and when at-home online tuition sessions will be arranged.

See government guidance on [writing content for everyone](#) and the EEF Guide for Schools on [Communicating Effectively with Families](#).

Text messages from school to parent



Reminder! X's 1:1 tutoring session is at 4pm today. login details sent to their school email address.

X Partner's session on Saturday will include a 10-minute recap of last week's content and require a pen and paper.

Don't forget to test the online platform in advance of the first session and let us or your Tuition Partner know if you have any technical issues.

Feedback from your child's tutor has been shared and is available online at:

1. Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning. Education Endowment Foundation (2018). [educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/ParentalEngagement/EEF_Parental_Engagement_Guidance_Report-.pdf](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/ParentalEngagement/EEF_Parental_Engagement_Guidance_Report-.pdf): Recommendation 1.

2. Ibid, recommendation 3.

3. Ask parents/carers what works for them.

Communication should be two-way: consulting with parents and carers about how they can be involved is likely to increase the effectiveness of home-school relationships.³ If pupils are not attending tutoring, follow up with their families as soon as possible to understand the reasons why and find out if there is anything that would support better attendance.

The feedback from those learners involved and their parents and carers has been excellent

Matt Rutter, Assistant Head at Upton-by-Chester School

4. Outline the key elements of NTP tuition

succinctly, using written communication that can be easily read and understood. 16.4% of adults in England have very poor literacy skills and are likely to find reading information from unfamiliar sources or on unfamiliar topics particularly challenging.⁴

Many parents/carers with low literacy will be reluctant to ask for help so it is important that communication from schools is accessible and can reach everyone.

5. Consider how best to **share with families the planned academic targets for a block of NTP tuition**, in addition to information about the content of sessions and how tuition links to and supports what pupils are learning in their day-to-day classroom teaching. This will help create a shared understanding that tuition is a key element of a child's overall programme of learning and academic development. However, it is also important to make it clear that there is not an expectation for parents/carers to act as tutors or teachers.

6. Build opportunities for parents/carers to **promote self-regulation in children** whilst they are learning remotely; this will help pupils to achieve academic goals, including goal setting, planning, perseverance, and the management of time, materials, attentiveness, and emotions.⁵ For example, guiding parents/carers to have a 'five-minute plan' chat with children before they begin their tuition session and for children to summarise to them after the session what they learnt can pose helpful reflection, and involve families in achievable and tangible ways.⁶ This can also be as simple as supporting their child to create a **home learning routine** which includes their classroom teaching, tutoring session and other daily activities.

Supporting home learning routines
Planning the day

Consider routines an opportunity to reinforce and solidify in school and our routines at home have changed significantly. Routines support children and you with helping to manage your day. You could discuss routines with your child. See the links to help you plan your routines.

The frequency of single opportunities as part of a regular routine is key recommendation 1 of the EEF guidance report <https://eef.org.uk/eef-guidance-report>

	M	T	W	T	F
I wake up at a good time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I did some revision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I had regular meals and drank water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I enjoyed some reading in a quiet space.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I practised a maths skill.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I completed some school work at my work space.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I checked my school calendar too.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I talked to my family about my day and how I am feeling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I talked with a housemate/job and talked to my family while I did it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I contacted my friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I spent some time on my creative hobby.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I worked with my tutor online.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My parent/carer told me what I did well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Ibid, recommendations 1 and 3.

4. National Literacy Trust: information on adult literacy in the UK. literacytrust.org.uk/parents-and-families/adult-literacy

5. Metacognition and Self-regulated learning. Education Endowment Foundation (2018). <https://eef.li/metacognition/>

6. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19_Resources/Resources_for_schools/Supporting_parents_and_carers_at_home_-_What_schools_can_do_to_help.pdf

What practical support can schools offer families with at-home tuition?

Each NTP [Tuition Partner](#) has their own individual guidance for tuition at home, including practical detail on technological requirements, codes of conduct for pupils and families and safeguarding policies. Tuition Partners will share these with schools for dissemination to parents/carers before at-home tuition begins, including obtaining parental consent.

Schools can continue to share and reinforce the key messages from their individual Tuition Partner's code of conduct with parents/carers throughout their child's tutoring block, along with the following practical suggestions:

Practical recommendations for at-home tuition

- Notify pupils and parents/carers in advance of the time of the tuition session: for example, if sharing a weekly school timetable for their child ensure that tuition sessions are included alongside other lessons and activities.
- Encourage parents/carers to ensure that tutors are notified in advance if there is an unavoidable delay or cancellation and to actively remind pupils of their session times. Much of NTP tuition is in small groups (1:2 or 1:3) and the session is likely to go ahead for the other pupils if one child is unable to attend.
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of who to contact if they have a safeguarding concern. Tuition Partners will supply their safeguarding contact information; schools should also ensure that parents/carers know how to contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

- Remind parents/carers that it is mandatory that they are in the vicinity when tutoring takes place. For primary school pupils, a parent/carer should be in the room, whilst for secondary pupils they should be within earshot (for example, in the next room with a door open).
- Encourage parents/carers to support pupils with set-up for the tutoring session, including:
 - testing the connection to the relevant platform before the session starts and flagging in advance to tutors and schools if there are technological issues
 - seated comfortably in a quiet environment (for example, TV turned off and background noise minimised)
 - set up in a communal area of a house/flat which other adults have access to
 - any additional resources ready before the start time of the session (for example, pen and paper, if the pupil will need to take notes).

The relevance of the suggestions above will vary for different age groups and it is important for all involved to be mindful that pupils may be subject to limitations on suitable workspace, technology and parental time for supervision.

Resources and further reading

See our school stories for more information on how other Tuition Partners are managing remote provision of tutoring: [School closures and remote learning | NTP \(nationaltutoring.org.uk\)](#)

To arrange online remote tutoring while schools are closed see the list of Tuition Partners approved for at-home delivery here: [NTP update on school contingency plans from January 2021 | NTP \(nationaltutoring.org.uk\)](#)

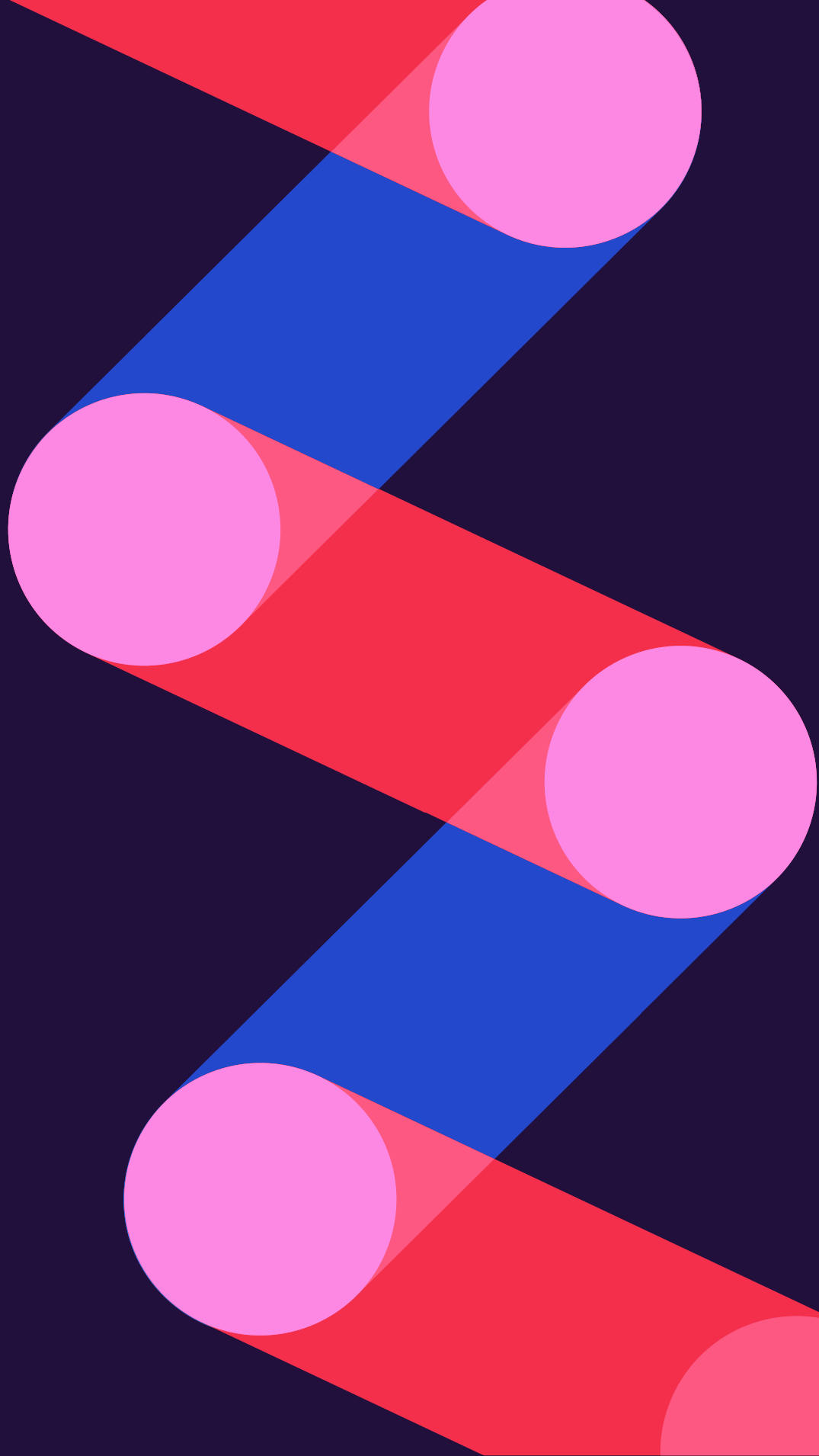
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