

Choosing a Club, Tutor, or Coach?

Essential Safeguarding Guidance for Sutton Parents



Many parents look for sports groups, music lessons, or personal tuition to boost skills and self-esteem.

The Goal:

To ensure these experiences are valuable, safe, and happy for your child.

The Approach:

Practical steps to give you confidence when selecting activities.



What to Ask a Group Leader or Club

Professional organisations will be happy to answer these questions.

- ✓ **Policy:** Does the club have a safeguarding policy?
- ✓ **Contact:** Who do I speak to if I am worried about anything?
- ✓ **Vetting:** Are staff trained, and do they have police checks (DBS checks)?
- ✓ **Affiliation:** Is the group linked to a professional body or recognised organisation?
- ✓ **Safety:** What is the staff ratio? Is there a trained first aider on site?
- ✓ **Protocols:** Is there a code of conduct for coaches/volunteers?
- ✓ **Personal Care:** What is the policy if a child needs personal care?

Hiring a Personal Tutor or Coach

Steps to take before the first session



Interview: Always interview face-to-face first; ensure they answer questions fully.



References: Ask for personal references and contact the referees directly to confirm authenticity.



Qualifications: Request to see original certificates. Do not accept photocopies.



Work History: Check their CV for career gaps; ask for evidence explaining any gaps.



DBS/Registration: If they are a qualified teacher, ask to see their Teaching Agency Registration and DBS check.



School Links: If they work in a school, speak to the headteacher for a reference.



Creating a Safe Environment

Non-negotiable rules for home and travel



Location & Supervision

- ✓ Home tuition must be in a communal area (e.g., kitchen, living room).
A bedroom is never appropriate.
- ✓ A trusted adult must remain on the premises. Decline 'chaperone' offers from the tutor.
- ✓ Doors should remain open so you can see and hear the activity.



Travel

- ✓ **Your child should never travel alone with a coach or tutor.**



Communication

- ✓ All contact outside of activities must be with the parents, not the child (no direct texts or social media).

Recognising Red Flags & Poor Practice

Trust your instincts—if it feels wrong, act on it.

✓ Acceptable Behaviour


- ✓ Coaches may be **stern** to maintain discipline.
- ✓ Coaches may be **excitable** to motivate performance.



✗ Red Flags / Unacceptable

- ✗ Children should **never** be upset, fearful of the coach, or encouraged to keep secrets.
- ✗ Tutor attempting to contact the child directly via social media or phone.
- ✗ The child becomes **withdrawn** or anxious about attending.
- ✗ The tutor resists background checks or parental observation.



 **Action:** If a tutor engages in 'poor practice' (unprofessional but not abusive), cancel the activity immediately.

What to Do If You Are Concerned



1. Listen

Give them your full attention.



2. Believe

Take what they say seriously.



3. Reassure

Tell them it is not their fault.



When to Report to the LADO

You must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if a person working with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed (or may harm) a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child.
- Behaved in a way indicating they pose a risk of harm.

! **Why Report?** If not reported, these individuals can go on to work with other families and potentially cause harm.

Useful Contacts in Sutton



LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

Address: Civic Offices, St. Nicholas Way, Sutton, SM1 1EA



Tel: **0208 770 4776**



Email: LADO@sutton.gov.uk



Police

Emergency: **999** (Immediate danger)

Non-Emergency: **101** (Available 24/7)

