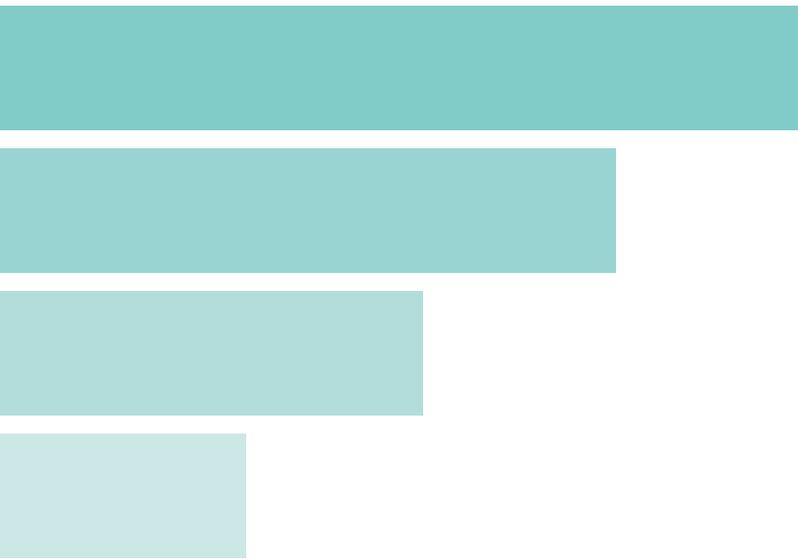


SHADOW SCHOOLING

Private tuition and social mobility in the UK

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September 2016



Improving social mobility
through education



FOREWORD

Private tuition is the hidden secret of British education. Within an educational ‘arms race’ that entrenches advantage for those who can afford private school fees or homes close to good comprehensives and grammars, it has remained largely in the shadows. Over the years, the Sutton Trust has polled young people through Ipsos MORI on their experiences of private tuition, helping lift the veil on its prevalence. In this new report, we provide a fuller account.

It is perhaps no surprise that ‘shadow education’ is the academic term for private tuition, and it describes well what we know (or rather don’t know) about the sector. Estimates suggest that the industry is worth several billion pounds, but its lack of regulation means that it is difficult to get an accurate picture of the UK market.

For this report, we’ve worked with private tuition agencies which have collected some of the most extensive data available. Their data is supplemented with commissioned polling by Ipsos MORI and the National Foundation for Educational Research. We’ve worked with Ipsos MORI on this topic for over a decade, allowing us to measure trends over time and across the country.

About a quarter of 11-16 year old state school students in England and Wales have had private tuition at some point in their life - that’s over 700,000 young people. In London, the proportion exceeds 40%. During 2015 alone, one tenth of all young people – 280,000 – were tutored, a remarkable figure in a country with a largely comprehensive education system.

There are important social mobility issues here. Students who receive private tuition disproportionately come from those who are already advantaged. About twice as many attend private schools as in the national population as a whole and the proportion of advantaged over disadvantaged pupils being tutored is equally marked. So, private tuition is exacerbating existing educational inequalities. As the government mulls over more grammar schools, it is notable how important tutoring is for the 11-plus tests, contributing to their social selectivity.

If we are to create as level a playing field as possible in education, we have to ensure that private tuition doesn’t make educational inequality worse. State-funded voucher schemes for private tuition offer one possibility; another is the best practice that we already see within certain parts of the industry: agencies that don’t charge commission and/ or provide a certain proportion of their tuition free to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. We have argued also that pupils in grammar school areas should receive test familiarisation. Some interesting models are discussed in this report.

No one wants to limit parents doing their best for their children, or supporting them academically outside of school hours. But, we need to make sure that these extracurricular advantages are available as widely as possible: to narrow, rather than widen the attainment gap. Otherwise we make it harder still for those who are already at a disadvantage.

SIR PETER LAMPL

Chairman of the Sutton Trust and of the Education Endowment Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report provides an overview of the private tuition market in the UK, focusing on England and Wales.
- It summarises previous research by the Sutton Trust, paying particular attention to the differing distribution of private tuition according to social class.
- It considers four main aspects of the industry – extent, purpose, people and delivery – and reviews how these intersect with issues of social mobility.

Extent

- Across England and Wales, about 25% of state-educated 11-16 year olds have ever received private tuition (rising to 42% in London). This is approximately 700,000 pupils.
- Across England and Wales, about 10% of state-educated 11-16 year olds received private tuition in 2015 (rising to 18% in London). This is approximately 280,000 pupils.
- Over the last decade, the proportion of 11-16 year olds who have ever received private tuition in England and Wales has risen from 18% to 25%.
- Some have suggested that there are 1.5 million tutors in the UK and that the market is worth £6 billion. These are likely to be overestimates.
- However, the UK private tuition market is substantial and does appear to be growing. Polling has shown a gradual increase in the proportion of students receiving tuition over time.
- Calculations for this report suggest that the private tuition market for 5-18 year olds in England, Wales and Scotland is worth between £1-2 billion per year.

Purpose

- In the UK, the most popular subjects tutored are maths and English, in that order. These are followed by the sciences, musical instruments and foreign languages, respectively. Of those between the ages of 11-16 who have ever received tuition, over two thirds (68%) were tutored in maths, half in English (50%).
- Between the ages of 11-16, of those who have ever received tuition, about a quarter (21%) received tuition in a musical instrument.
- Between the ages of 11-16, of those who have ever received tuition, nearly half (47%) of young people have received tuition to assist with school work in general, over a third (38%) to do well in a specific GCSE exam and nearly 1 in 5 (18%) to assist with a school entrance exam.
- Of those students who do not receive tuition, over a third (37%) of those in academic years 6, 11 and 13 say that this is because tuition is too expensive. Other estimates for other groups support this, suggesting that between a third and a half of students who do not receive private tuition cite concerns with affordability as the reason.

People

Students

- Privately-educated students are about twice as likely to receive private tuition as state-educated pupils, according to multiple estimates.
- Girls are more likely to receive private tuition than boys. Last year, about 11% of girls aged 11-16 received private tuition, about 8% of boys.
- Ethnic minority students are more likely to receive private tuition than white pupils. About 41% of BME (black and minority ethnic) pupils aged 11-16 have ever received private tuition, 21% of white pupils.

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- Poorer students are less likely to receive private tuition. Of those aged between 11-16, 17% of students who receive free school meals (FSM) have ever received private tuition, 26% of students who do not receive FSM.

Parents

- Better off families are more likely to employ tutors. Of pupils aged between 11-16, children from richer families are twice as likely (30% vs. 15%) to have ever received private tuition.
- Tutored students are more likely to live in a two-parent household than in a single-parent household. Of pupils aged between 11-16, about a quarter (26%) living in two-parent households have ever received private tuition, falling to a fifth (21%) in single-parent households.

Tutors

- Nearly half (43%) of state school teachers have tutored outside of their main teaching role at some point during their lives.
- Most tutors work part-time. Data from Tutorfair suggests that the majority (56%) are female and below 30 (73%), suggesting that tuition may be a way to supplement HE study and early-career incomes.

Delivery

- Across all types and age groups, private tuition costs about £24 per hour, excluding commission, according to Tutor Hunt.
- Across all types and age groups, private tuition costs about £27 per hour in London, excluding commission, according to Tutor Hunt.
- Other estimates of tuition cost, based on freelance tutors rather than agencies, place the cost higher, at about £31-32 per hour across all types and age groups.
- Most lessons last one hour and are weekly, with 5-6 months of tuition per year, concentrated in the spring and autumn in the run-up to exams.
- Individual tuition is more common than group, with most taking place in the student's home. Tuition centres appear to be gaining in popularity.
- In London, of state-educated students aged between 11-16, over 150,000 (42%) have received private tuition at some point in their lives.
- Tuition agency business models vary, especially in their engagement with tutors and tutees. Some actively manage relationships, others are more akin to marketplaces.
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks appear to be more common amongst agency tutors than freelance tutors. These can be prohibitively difficult for individuals to acquire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implement a means-tested voucher scheme for tuition

The government should introduce a means-tested voucher system, funded through the pupil premium, enabling lower income families to purchase additional educational support. Limited trials of voucher schemes have shown them to be successful. The system should be simple, providing quick remuneration to tutors and tuition agencies who participate. These tutors should be experienced and well-qualified (not all tutors have specific teaching qualifications) – evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation suggests that good teaching skills are crucial in improving the attainment of disadvantaged students.

2. Expand non-profit and state tuition programmes

Charities, such as the Tutor Trust, supported by the Education Endowment Foundation, connect tutors directly with disadvantaged schools. Such schemes are in their infancy, but have the potential to offer the advantages of tutoring to more disadvantaged students.

3. Encourage best practice for private tuition agencies

Some private tuition agencies provide a certain proportion of their tuition to disadvantaged students *pro bono*, in an effort to make tuition widely accessible. To prevent tutoring from further exacerbating educational inequalities, such best practice should be encouraged as widely as possible.

4. Ensure grammar school tests do not disadvantage low-income students

Grammar schools should carefully assess their testing system to ensure that the 11+ tests they use for selection do not act as a barrier for high-achieving students from certain communities. Some grammar schools are already attempting to develop tests that are less susceptible to preparatory tutoring.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	6
2. METHODOLOGY	7
2.1. SUTTON TRUST POLLING	7
2.2. UK SURVEYS	7
2.3. PRIVATE TUITION AGENCIES	8
2.4. INTERNATIONAL SURVEYS	8
3. PRIVATE TUITION: BACKGROUND	9
3.1. INTERNATIONAL LANDSCAPE	9
3.2. ETHICS	10
3.3. EFFICACY	12
4. PRIVATE TUITION: THE UK MARKET	15
4.1. EXTENT	16
4.1.1. <i>UK private tuition market</i>	16
4.1.2. <i>Previous estimates of UK private tuition market</i>	17
4.1.3. <i>Popularity of private tuition over time</i>	17
4.2. PURPOSE	19
4.2.1. <i>Reasons for receiving private tuition</i>	19
4.2.2. <i>Popularity of academic subjects</i>	20
4.2.3. <i>Reasons for not receiving private tuition</i>	21
4.3. PEOPLE	23
4.3.1. <i>Tutees</i>	23
4.3.2. <i>Parents</i>	26
4.3.3. <i>Private tutors</i>	27
4.4. DELIVERY	29
4.4.1. <i>Lesson costs, duration, form and location</i>	29
4.4.2. <i>Agencies</i>	31
5. PRIVATE TUITION: POLICY OPTIONS	32
5.1. REGULATION AND PRIVATE TUITION	32
5.2. EVALUATING PRIVATE TUITION AGENCY MODELS	33
5.3. STATE-FUNDED TUITION AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	35
5.3.1. <i>State-funded and non-profit tuition</i>	35
5.3.2. <i>Access to extracurricular activities</i>	36
6. CONCLUSION	38

INTRODUCTION

What do we know about private tuition? A recent summary of work on private tuition internationally states that, “Research on shadow education has considerably increased in volume and has helped to improve understanding of the scale, nature, and implications of the phenomenon. However, the field is still in its infancy. Literature on shadow education reflects confusion over terms and parameters, and data suffer from challenges in securing evidence from actors who may be unwilling or unable to respond to enquiries in a clear manner.”¹

The picture of private tuition in the UK is similarly clouded. This report sheds light on the area by consolidating and reviewing the major previous work on the topic and analysing the results of additional research, including 2016 surveys for the Sutton Trust undertaken by the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) and Ipsos MORI, as well as data revealing core characteristics of the profession collected by the data teams at the internet-based tutoring marketplaces, Tutorfair and Tutor Hunt. We also analyse the findings of surveys such as the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) and Millennium Cohort Study (MSC), which consider private tuition tangentially, but offer some informative data. The proliferation of internet-mediated private tuition in the UK, while representing only a single part of the industry, means that increasing amounts of data are becoming available. Given the importance of private tuition to issues of social mobility, it is to be hoped that, over the coming years, more information on ‘shadow education’ will emerge.

In this report, private tuition is defined as academic teaching outside of state provision, for which the tutor is remunerated, usually by the parents of the child being tutored (the ‘tutee’). The reader will likely be most familiar with individual private tuition, although there are markets for group tuition, which are lesser and not the focus of this report. The majority of tutors are adults; the majority of tutees are under the age of 18. Paid tuition also occurs at pre-school and university level, but the report focusses on tutees of school age. Typically, individual tuition takes place in the home of the tutee, with the tutor assisting the student in improving their subject knowledge, or preparing for selective secondary school or university entrance exams. In later sections of the report, school-based individual tuition is compared with private tuition, to assess its potential for ameliorating some of the inequalities fostered by private tuition; elsewhere, governments have trialled indirect funding for private tuition through voucher schemes and other measures. If not apparent from context, these forms of tuition are prefaced, ‘state-funded’.

In structure, the report begins by discussing some of the specific methodological challenges in researching private tuition, as well as the research – both UK and international – that has considered the field. We then consider the ethics of private tuition and some of the social mobility issues at stake, before assessing the efficacy of private tuition, which passes without comment in much of the literature on its ethics. Finally, we offer an overview of the UK private tuition market across four strands – extent, purpose, people and delivery – before discussing some of the policy options in this area in depth.

METHODOLOGY

Reliable data on private tuition is difficult to obtain for several reasons: the industry is unregulated, much tutoring is informal, different groups possess partial knowledge. Students will know much about their sessions and whether they deem them helpful, but are perhaps less reliable when it comes to knowing exact costs (usually borne by their parents); parents will know better the financial burden of tutoring, as well as its frequency, but are normally absent from the tutoring itself; tutors may be able to offer answers to all these questions, but their consultation is dependent upon their location.² While tutors registered with agencies may be contactable, “[individual tutors] may recruit students entirely through personal recommendation in which case they are virtually invisible.”³ Tutors may also have motives to answer questions in particular ways (stressing the efficacy of their tutoring, for example), which tutees and parents may not.

2.1 Sutton Trust polling

Perhaps because of these methodological challenges, UK private tuition has rarely been the focus of large surveys. One approach to the topic has been opinion polling of young people and the Sutton Trust has conducted some of the most comprehensive research using this method. The Trust’s first survey of 11-16 year olds in England and Wales was undertaken in 2005 by Ipsos MORI. Polling was reintroduced in 2009 and has been undertaken every year since, allowing comparison across time. This has captured the demographic characteristics of young people using private tutors (such as gender and ethnicity), the school year in which tuition was undertaken (and so the approximate age of the tutee), the characteristics of their family (such as affluence and parental employment), the region in which they live, and the purpose and subject of tuition (such as assistance with a specific exam or general subject improvement). It has generally avoided questions that tutees are less well-equipped to answer, such as tuition cost (see above).

For this report, this polling has been supplemented by data from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), which collects information from state school teachers through its periodic Teacher Voice Omnibus Survey. This identifies the proportion of state school teachers who have ever privately tutored; data that can also be broken down by UK region.

2.2 UK surveys

Those surveys that have addressed UK private tuition – by government, academia and interest groups, amongst others – either observe the topic tangentially or, when dedicated to private tuition, are generally small-scale. For example, the Millennium Cohort Study, which tracks a sample of 11,000 children born at the turn of the century, asks a broad range of questions of its participants, some of which cover extra-curricular learning and activities. The same is true of the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England. Others focus solely on private tuition, such as that conducted for the Department for Education in 2009, the education research group EdPlace, and the tutor organisation Tutor Pages.⁴ Typically, the former are larger surveys, with less granularity, but greater sample sizes; the latter are more focussed works, which seek to answer specific questions.

Perhaps the principal limitation with such work is its age. The private tuition market is expanding and many of its characteristics (most obviously average costs) alter according to changing economic factors. In the absence of regulation that could provide population data – a point returned to below – surveys are often partial, attempting to uncover certain aspects of the private tuition market in the UK, without the ability to trace its complete outline. Often, they look at students of differing ages, too, which makes direct comparison difficult. Later in the report, these surveys are summarised and tabulated for clarity.

2.3 Private tuition agencies

One of the more under-used sources of data on private tuition is that collected by private tuition agencies themselves. There are perhaps several reasons for this. First, data collected by such agencies has dramatically increased since the majority of agencies have moved online, a medium especially able to assist in the collection of large amounts of data. Much pre-existing data on private tuition is becoming increasingly dated; in other words, it was collected before the internet (and so these agencies) became so important in the private tuition market. Second, it is possible that researchers have been reticent to use data from organisations with a vested interest in the topic. It is also possible that agencies would wish to present data that showed them, or their profession, in the best possible light. Third, the data provided by tuition agencies potentially suffers from sample bias. By definition, agencies only collect data from tutees and tutors who have registered with them: if a tuition agency is regional, data will only be pertinent to that area. Similarly, data collected by online tuition agencies will only represent tutors and tutees that use this medium; it will not cover those who purchase and provide tuition through word-of-mouth recommendation or newspaper advertisements, for example.

In this report, data collected by two tuition agencies, Tutorfair and Tutor Hunt, has been used with their permission. The potential limitations above are acknowledged, but have been minimised in several ways: data has been produced by the agencies in discussion with the author and agencies have been chosen that work nationally, rather than regionally. These are both online marketplaces, so it should be noted that their data applies to that private tuition market only (the tuition arranged through these agencies itself, though, is predominately conducted in person). Data is also used from a recent survey undertaken by Tutor Hunt of their tutees. Of 30,000 recipients of the survey, 1,010 responses were received (from either parents or tutees). In this case, unlike population data, particular groups may respond in greater numbers to online surveys than others, which should be borne in mind.

2.4 International surveys

The remaining research on private tuition considers countries other than the UK, or features the UK only through international comparison.⁵ Such work is normally qualitative and domestic in focus, so offers little to the researcher interested in the UK case. While bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) do collect data on countries' per capita expenditure on private education (which would, in theory, cover the UK), figures for household payments to 'outside educational institutions', including private tutoring, appear more difficult to acquire.⁶ The OECD have collected data on the proportion of students in the UK receiving lessons 'outside school', which are discussed below.⁷ This research provides a useful introduction to some of the main characteristics and challenges of private tuition, as well as placing the UK experience into wider context. As such, the report begins by reviewing this international literature, before considering the key debates on the ethics and efficacy of tuition.

PRIVATE TUITION: BACKGROUND

3.1 International landscape

Private tuition has existed globally for centuries, often with particular connections to social class that mirror those in the UK. Typically, it has been a precursor and alternative to schooling, established to teach the children of wealthy families and those of 'higher' social classes.⁸ Over recent decades, this imperative has remained stable, but the size of the private tuition market has burgeoned, "becoming increasingly structured and commercialized."⁹ Its present scale and composition is historically unique, with the industry employing and catering for millions of tutors and students worldwide.¹⁰

North America and Western Europe, Asia and Africa have strong traditions of tutoring and are the major markets (albeit of differing economic scope); in Latin America, the extent of tutoring is apparently more modest, for reasons that are not entirely clear.¹¹ Within these regions, there are significant variations in the nature and extent of tutoring, as well as the purposes for which it is undertaken. Mark Bray, one of the leading authors on the international private tuition market, has linked the increasing preponderance of tutoring in the West to both the aforementioned increase in the commercialisation of education and the growing focus on performance ranking. In Africa, tutoring exists for similar reasons, in part – parents wishing to enhance the opportunities of their children, most obviously – but is also an important way for teachers to supplement otherwise modest incomes.¹² In East Asia, "tutoring has long been a vigorous activity and is deeply embedded in the culture. Part of the explanation for this", Bray suggests, "lies in Confucian traditions which value education and which stress diligence."¹³

Who are these tutors and tutees? And what is being taught and where? International research suggests that many tutors are university students, seeking additional income by teaching secondary level pupils.¹⁴ State-employed teachers form another, significant group of tutors, as well as retirees, some of whom may be former teachers themselves.¹⁵ These tutors may be working individually or through an agency. In Asian countries, such as Hong Kong, 'star tutors' command significant salaries and fill large lecture theatres, but such tutors are rare in Western Europe.¹⁶ Increasingly, the global tuition market is being managed through agencies, with the largest operating at the national, even international level.¹⁷

Mode of delivery is equally varied. "Most tutoring is delivered in person, but some is delivered by phone, television, and [increasingly] the Internet. Formerly, a lot of tutoring took the form of postal correspondence courses, but this now has been mostly replaced by websites and email." While in the UK individual tuition is perhaps the best known form, in many Asian countries tutoring in small groups is more common.¹⁸

Tutees, of course, can be any age, but the majority receive assistance at the level (and typical age) of secondary education. One commonality across cultures appears to be that tutees still disproportionately herald from more advantaged backgrounds and are often pre-existing high achievers. In England and Ireland specifically, research suggests that private tuition markets are disproportionately composed of middle-class consumers.¹⁹ That tutees are pre-existing high achievers is more debatable and discussed below. It has been argued that, because of these trends, students who often require individual assistance the least, actually receive the most: a central concern in debates around the ethics and social justice of tuition, returned to later.

Globally, the subjects in greatest demand are those tagged to transitional exams. Thus, "Mathematics and the national languages tend to be in especially high demand"; the same pattern observed in the UK, discussed below.²⁰ Given its role as *lingua franca*, English is often in significant demand in non-Anglophone countries, as well as the UK.

International research has also suggested an association between the prevalence of tutoring and the urban/rural divide. According to the European Commission, both supply and demand factors contribute to this: “Cities tend to be more competitive, may have more higher-income families able to afford private tutoring, and are more likely to host universities whose students provide tutoring in order to earn supplementary incomes.”²¹ In this sense, “Tutoring also exacerbates geographic inequalities insofar as it tends to be more strongly demanded and more easily available in urban than in rural areas.”²² While this most obviously maps onto the developing world, given that the majority of the world’s poor are located in rural areas, the bifurcation between rural and urban spaces is characteristic of the British private tuition industry, too (see below).²³

The Soviet Union banned private tuition permanently and other countries have imposed various forms of legislation on the industry (in South Korea, a temporary ban was overturned as unconstitutional).²⁴ In many cases, this has been to prevent or deter state-employed teachers from tutoring their own pupils, presumably in the belief that this unfairly disadvantages certain pupils (the extreme example being teachers who withhold elements of the curriculum in school and then charge students for these ‘additional’ lessons outside of the classroom).²⁵ “In Australia, Germany and Singapore, teachers are prohibited from providing paid tutoring to the children for whom they already have responsibility in the mainstream.”²⁶ In India, states often forbid mainstream teachers from tutoring externally.²⁷ And in the Baltics, “The Lithuanian [2003] Law [on Education] envisaged that some tutors might also work in mainstream schools, and forbade them to tutor their own students in such schools”.²⁸

Perhaps because of such issues, the intersection of private tuition and social justice has been discussed by the United Nations. In 2014, the UN special rapporteur on the right to education stated that, “The existing [global] disparities [between advantaged and disadvantaged students] in education should not be aggravated by private providers catering to persons with means, to the detriment of the poor... [Universal] access [to free, basic education] should be recognized as a key instrument for putting an end to the intergenerational transmission of poverty.”²⁹ Similar sentiments are expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.³⁰ Private tuition would seem to be in (at least part) contravention of Article 26’s imperative that, “Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages”, and that consequently, “higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.”³¹

3.2 Ethics

The international experience of private tuition crystallises many of these ethical debates. Perhaps the central ethical criticism of private tuition is that it exacerbates social inequalities, given that students from richer backgrounds are more likely to receive it.³² From this perspective, “It [private tuition] disadvantages working-class children and undermines any pretensions to a comprehensive school system”. As the same author continues, “it distorts the league tables of test and examination performance, which are supposed to reflect the quality of teaching in schools, and thus makes a nonsense of the [UK] government’s entire strategy for raising standards”.³³ While it seems likely that a good head teacher would be able to identify a struggling classroom teacher, regardless of whether private tutors were assisting their class, there is a logic to this argument: if student performance is being positively affected by ‘shadow education’, the extent of which is largely unknown, then how can the quality of ‘regular’, non-supplementary education be accurately judged? And if it cannot, what does this mean for the possible success of reforms intended to improve school performance and, in particular, assist disadvantaged students, for whom private tuition is less accessible?

One of the most problematic forms of tuition from this perspective is perhaps that specifically designed to improve students’ performance in entrance exams; exams that are intended to assess students based on holistic merit (and capacity to succeed in a given educational context),

rather than their ability to pass one, particular test. Subject tuition may have wider positive effects on a student's academic ability and knowledge base; tutoring for entrance exams is more tactical, with less emphasis on sustainable and more widely beneficial learning. The Sutton Trust recently found that, "Less than 3% of entrants to grammar schools are entitled to free school meals – an important indicator of social deprivation – whereas almost 13% of entrants come from outside the state sector, largely believed to be fee-paying preparatory schools."³⁴ And it was recently reported that, "just over half of families who put their children through [grammar school] admissions tests pay for tutoring to help them pass." In other words, able students from disadvantaged backgrounds may miss out on such places not because of their academic ability, but because they are less able to afford targeted 'exam entrance' tuition. In response to this specific issue, "The education authority with the highest number of grammar schools, Kent county council, has now ordered a review of its test, which was taken by 11,500 children this year."³⁵ Such reviews have led to the development of 'tutor proof' entrance exams by organisations such as the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at Durham University, although the efficacy of these has been debated.³⁶

Apart from grammar schools, there are burgeoning markets in tutoring for university entrance exams, too, especially those of Oxbridge. Recent research for the Sutton Trust stated that, "Over time, the proportion of students from state schools at both Oxford and Cambridge has increased, with Cambridge tending to have a higher proportion in most years. However, given that just 7% of young people in the UK attend an independent school, and 14% of sixth formers are at independent schools, there is still a significant disparity in their success at gaining a place at Oxbridge."³⁷ And of Oxbridge graduates, a high number go on to secure jobs in the uppermost tiers of the UK's leading professions – including law, business, medicine, journalism, and the civil service – a statistical overrepresentation that appears to have changed little in decades.³⁸ If we assume that such tuition improves an applicant's chances of admission, even conservatively, then it represents another hurdle for those from disadvantaged backgrounds to overcome in order to achieve the same career progression as their equally academically able, but more socio-economically privileged peers.

One of the difficulties in addressing questions such as this is that, as with many issues of social justice, inequalities in access to private tuition are symptoms of wider systemic inequality, as well as being contributory to the same. Private tuition is obviously neither the sole cause of, nor sole panacea for, these issues. Wage inequality in the UK is amongst the highest in the world; if that gap were narrower, it seems likely that supplementary tuition might be more evenly distributed.³⁹ Indeed, parents from poorer backgrounds often say that they would purchase private tuition for their children, if they could afford it (see below). It is more important, therefore, to find solutions for those who cannot afford private tuition than to criticise those who pay for it.

It should be noted, too, that there are exceptions to these broad arguments, which are not the focus of this report, but are nevertheless important to highlight. Parents of a student with special educational needs, such as dyslexia, might employ a private tutor to provide support in a specific area; individual hours of support that, by virtue of resource limits, a school might not be able to provide to the same degree as a home tutor. Other examples could include additional English tuition for an immigrant student from a non-English speaking background or remedial lessons for a pupil who required time away from school. The argument has also been made that tutoring reduces the workload of ordinary teachers, "helping pupils to understand the materials which have been, or will be, presented during the ordinary school day."⁴⁰ Put simply, it is neither 'unethical' for those who can afford to pay for private tuition to receive it, nor 'ethical' for those who cannot afford it to go without. Policy options in this area, discussed later, should seek to limit the extent to which private tuition exacerbates educational inequalities between advantaged and disadvantaged, but preserve parents' choice to employ private tutors if they wish. These statements might seem irreconcilable, but attempts have been made. One such

effort has been pioneered by the tutoring agency, Tutorfair, which provides a certain proportion of its tutoring to disadvantaged students, *pro bono*; another has been implemented by Tutor Hunt, who receive no ongoing commission for tuition in an effort to make it affordable to as many students as possible. Other policy options, including those led and funded by government and non-profit organisations, are discussed below.

3.3 Efficacy

Debate around social justice and private tuition is predicated upon one key assumption, which is often unchallenged in the literature: that private tuition is actually beneficial to tutees. Presumably, this gap is testament to the limited amount of research that has actually assessed private tuition's efficacy, which in turn is limited by the methodological difficulties inherent in such an undertaking. Regardless, it is obviously important to come to some judgement regarding tuition's efficacy to underpin policy recommendations in this area. This section considers the efficacy of state-funded individual tuition, then private tuition. In the papers discussed here, private tuition will usually be referring to individual, rather than group tuition.

With respect to improving the performance of disadvantaged pupils, the consensus among UK teachers is that individual tuition is the most effective intervention, albeit limited by resource constraints (such as time or cost). The UK National Audit Office recently commissioned a survey of 543 primary and secondary school leaders, asking them what they considered to be the most and least effective forms of intervention for this group. One-to-one tuition was deemed to be highly effective at improving attainment and was the most popular intervention, with 72% of schools claiming to use this approach.⁴¹

The effectiveness of such interventions is borne out by evidence. The Education Endowment Foundation – a sister charity of the Sutton Trust that commissions trials to assess the best strategies for narrowing the attainment gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students – has run several trials of individual tuition, which have been independently assessed. Interventions aimed at improving numeracy, reading and literacy skills in previously low-achieving students have had small, but marked positive effects on achievement, *vis-à-vis* control groups that did not receive the intervention (it should be noted that these trials were undertaken by teaching assistants, rather than external tutors). Positive effects, of varying degrees, have also been found for the UK government-instituted programme, *Making Good Progress* (see below), as well as similar trials for equivalent programmes in the US. In a review of major international meta-analyses regarding the efficacy of individual tuition, the EEF has rated the positive evidence as 'extensive'.⁴²

Does the picture change for private tuition? Judith Ireson, Professor of Education at the Institute of Education, UCL, performed a review in 2004 of the evidence around the effectiveness of private tuition, specifically. This found that private tuition has been linked to improved academic performance and more positive attitudes to learning, although overall the evidence is mixed. In certain cases, tutoring was found to be associated with reduced test anxiety and better attendance; although one can imagine that, in the case of the latter at least, this might reflect the tutee's or tutee's family's attitude to schooling, rather than tutoring, *per se*.⁴³ Other reviews have found that tuition can facilitate access to tertiary education.⁴⁴

Perhaps the central difficulty in ascribing increased academic performance to private tutoring is controlling for other characteristics of private tutees, such as their social class or previous level of attainment. When these are controlled for, an oft-cited study from Ireland (where there is a strong tradition of 'grinds' in preparation for exams, using tutors external to the school) finds that private tuition fails to yield significant academic performance advantages at upper secondary level.⁴⁵

The typical privately tutored student may also receive more academic support from her or his parents, resulting in differing kinds of engagement with study. As Emer Smyth states, “while a number of studies control for parental background in assessing the effect of private tuition on academic outcomes, studies rarely take account of key behavioural and attitudinal differences between those taking tuition and other students.”⁴⁶ In other words, there are structural conditions outside of private tuition itself that may benefit the average privately-educated student. These are less easy to account for in the case of privately tutored students, because data is partial; in the state-sector, more data is available on the various demographic characteristics of students.

It seems likely, too, that quality of teaching is important here. That the evidence base for the effectiveness of private tuition appears less robust than for individual tuition in schools may be a symptom of methodological challenges, but it may be because school-based tuition is usually undertaken by trained, experienced teachers, almost certainly more familiar with a particular student’s learning needs. The EEF has found that, “Tuition is more likely to make an impact if it is additional to and explicitly linked with normal lessons”.⁴⁷

Tuition agencies themselves generally rely on more qualitative assessments of tutor performance. In the UK, a survey for the Department for Education found that, “The main forms of quality assurance were formal feedback from parents (reported by 79% of agencies) and students (64%). Agencies reported a wide range of quality assurance measures.”⁴⁸ This suggests that, in addition to measures of how tutors have (or have not) affected tutees’ grades – or perhaps instead of them – the *de facto* effectiveness of tutors in the actual marketplace is usually assessed by parents. Presumably, such assessments encompass a range of characteristics, not all of them academic. In a survey of its tutees, Tutor Hunt has found that the average rating of tutors was 8.7 out of 10, although it is unclear how respondents determined this score.⁴⁹ Polling for this report by Ipsos MORI found that nearly nine in ten respondents considered tuition either ‘very helpful’ or ‘fairly helpful’ (89%). Nearly half (45%) felt that the tuition added no pressure at all to their school workload, with just over a quarter (27%) saying that it added “a little” and only 4% that it added “a lot”. It is a point worth recalling, therefore, that tutors may improve a student’s confidence or opinion of studying, whether or not they improve a particular test point score (although it should also be noted that, if a client found their tutor unhelpful, they would likely change them for one that was, so these results are, in many ways, to be expected). For their part, tutors believe that ‘successful outcomes’ of tuition are predicated on one-to-one instruction, sufficient tuition time, the environment in which tuition takes place, the dynamic with the tutee, tutor qualities, student engagement and parental support.⁵⁰

Overall, the evidence that individual tuition is one of the most beneficial interventions for the learner is robust. The picture becomes more clouded for private tuition specifically, reflecting, in part, the greater difficulties of research in this area. As the summary table below suggests, the majority of private tuition analysed does seem to have a positive effect on student attainment (with none observing a significant negative effect), within the methodological constraints of these studies, but this is variable and often small; certainly from the perspective of cost-effectiveness. However, the evidence is convincing enough that policy options can (and should) be formulated predicated on its efficacy, but it is also important to note that private tuition is not necessarily a guarantee of improved student attainment in all cases. There is, in the UK, an especial need for greater research into the efficacy of tuition, which is difficult to gauge accurately while the industry remains in the ‘shadows’.

	Date/author(s)	Location	Student type	Subject(s)	Description	Principal effect/ notes ⁵¹
State-funded individual tuition	2015. NFER	UK	Low-achieving; all	Reading	30 wks.; EEF Catch Up Literacy	+0.12 ES
	2015. WSIPP	US	Low-achieving	Eng.; maths	Approx. 30 hrs.; struct., non-struct.	+0.52 ES (struct.); +0.06 ES (non-struct.)
	2014. Gorard et al.	UK	Low-achieving; sec.	Reading	10 wks.; EEF Switch-on Reading	+0.24 ES
	2014. NFER	UK	Low-achieving; pri.	Numeracy	30 wks.; EEF Catch Up Numeracy	+0.21 ES
	2011. Slavin et al.	US	Low-achieving; pri.	Phonics	12 wks.; var. programmes	+0.62 ES
	2011. Torgerson et al.	UK	Low-achieving	Maths	12 wks.; var. programmes	+0.33 ES
	2010. Brown et al.	UK	Low-achieving; all	Maths; Eng.	10 hrs.; Making Good Progress	+0.9 KS sub-level of progress in Eng. (yr. 7)
	2010. PwC	UK	Low-achieving; all	Maths; Eng.	10 hrs.; Making Good Progress	+0.5 KS sub-level of add. progress
	2010. TCEP	US	Low-income; pri.	Maths; reading	Var. SES programmes	+0.43 ES (maths); +0.17 ES (reading)
	2010. Jun et al.	US	Var.; sec.	Literacy	Var. programmes	+0.70 ES
	2009. Ritter et al.	US	Var.; all	Var.	Var. programmes	+0.30 ES
	2004. Allor, McCathren	US	Low-achieving; pri.	Reading	10-14 hrs.; var. programmes	+0.53 ES
	2004. D'Agostino, Murphy	US	Low-achieving; pri.	Reading	20 wks.; Reading Recovery	+0.32 ES
	2000. Elbaum et al.	US	Low-achieving; pri.	Reading	Var. programmes	+0.41 ES
Private tuition	2008. Smyth	Ireland	Var. recipients	Var. subjects	20+ hrs. tuition increase	+0.8 in Leaving Cert. test score
	2007. Kang	S. Korea	Var. recipients	Maths, Eng., Korean	10% tuition expenditure increase	+0.56 p.p. in CSAT test score
	2005. Banerjee et al.	India	Var. recipients	Literacy; numeracy	Tuition vs. no tuition; group-based	+0.14 s.d. in test score (yr. 1); +0.24 (yr. 2)
	2005. Ireson, Rushforth	England	Var. recipients; sec.	Maths	Tuition vs. no tuition	+0.4 in GCSE maths grade
	2005. Tansel, Bircan	Turkey	Var. recipients	Var. subjects	Tuition vs. no tuition	Approx. +9% increase in award of uni. place
	2002. Mischo, Haag	Germany	Var. recipients	Var. subjects	Tuition vs. no tuition	Improvement in performance, unquantified
	2001. Baker et al.	Intl.	Var. recipients	Maths	Relative amount of tuition	No effect on completion of national tests
	2001. Briggs	US	Var. recipients	Maths; verbal; reading	Tuition vs. no tuition	+14-15 pt. in maths SAT score, +6-8 pt. verbal

Table 1: Summary of research on the effectiveness of state-funded individual/ private tuition⁵²

PRIVATE TUITION: THE UK MARKET

Several estimates are available for the proportion of students in the UK receiving private tuition. These differ according to geographical coverage, their definition of private tuition (some exclude music lessons, some do not, and so forth), the age of the student considered and the dates during which the research was undertaken. These differences in methodological approach mean that each is looking at a slightly different student group. Similarly, some offer information about the most popular subjects tutored, others do not; some offer geographical specificity, others less. They remain, though, some of the best sources for data on private tuition in the UK context and, because of their various strengths, are referenced throughout this section. It is important to remain aware of their particular foci, though, which are summarised in Table 2, and that such figures are not always cited with the appropriate caveats.

In addition, four sources of original data are highlighted in this section: 1) polling by Ipsos MORI for the Sutton Trust, which asks questions about the experience of tutees in England and Wales aged 11-16 (n=2,555); 2) the NFER Teacher Omnibus Survey (n=1,607), which is used to determine the proportion of state teachers in England that have, or are currently, tutoring outside of their main teaching role; 3) data (n=8,588) from the tuition agency, Tutorfair, which provides a variety of characteristics about their registered tutors; 4) data (n=38,540) and survey responses (n=1,010) from the tuition agency, Tutor Hunt, which provides information on tutees. Both tuition agencies operate across the entire UK. These four sources are highlighted because they provide original data, previously unpublished (all from the period 2015-16), and are more recent than the sources discussed in the previous paragraph. Data from the latter are used where they address questions that are not covered by the former, and to provide context and support to the same. When sources are older, the report generally considers only findings that might be considered more stable across time, rather than others that are more variable.

Date/author	Coverage	Tutee %	Age/type	Source	Method
2016. Sutton Trust	England, Wales	10% in 2015	11-16 yrs.	Polling by Ipsos MORI	Sample of 2,555 students
2014. DfE	England	14%, per year	Academic yr. 9	Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE)	Sample of 13,100 students
2014. Chanfreau, Tanner	United Kingdom	22%, per year	11 yrs.	Millennium Cohort Study (MCS)	Sample of 19,000 children
2009. DfE	England	11%, per year	5-16 yrs. Exc. music, sport	Survey for then DCSF (present DfE)	Sample of 1,500 legal guardians
2005. Ireson, Rushforth	England	27%, per year	Academic yrs. 6, 11, 13	Survey for research project	Sample of 3,500 students
2001. Baker et al.	England	12%, per year	Academic yr. 8. Maths only	Trends in International Maths and Science Study (TIMSS)	Int. sample of young people
2001. OECD	United Kingdom	24%, last three years	15 yrs. Outside sch. lessons, inc. tuition	Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)	Int. sample of young people

Table 2: Summary of data on young people receiving private tuition in UK⁵³

4.1 Extent

Summary

- Across England and Wales, about 25% of state-educated 11-16 year olds have ever received private tuition (rising to 42% in London). This is approximately 700,000 pupils.
- Across England and Wales, about 10% of state-educated 11-16 year olds received private tuition in 2015 (rising to 18% in London). This is approximately 280,000 pupils.
- Over the last decade, the proportion of 11-16 year olds who have ever received private tuition in England and Wales has risen from 18% to 25%.
- Some have suggested that there are 1.5 million tutors in the UK and that the market is worth £6 billion. These are likely to be overestimates.
- However, the UK private tuition market is substantial and does appear to be growing. Polling has shown a gradual increase in the proportion of students receiving tuition over time.
- Calculations for this report suggest that the private tuition market for 5-18 year olds in England, Wales and Scotland is worth between £1-2 billion per year.

4.1.1 UK private tuition market

The Sutton Trust's most recent polling, conducted by Ipsos MORI, finds that a quarter (25%) of students between the ages 11-16 have received private tuition (including musical instrument lessons) at some point in their lives. This polling is representative of state students only, of whom there are about 2.8 million in England and Wales across this age range, excluding those at special schools.⁵⁴ This suggests that about 700,000 young people between the ages of 11-16 have been privately tutored at some point in their lives. Across the year 2015 only, about 10% of students in this age group received private tuition. Extrapolating in the same manner, this suggests that about 280,000 students between 11-16 years old received private tuition last year in England and Wales. This is a conservative estimate, because the survey does not consider privately-schooled students, who are more likely to receive private tuition than their state school peers, according to other surveys.

However, we can gauge an approximate figure for how many privately-schooled students are receiving private tuition. Considering the same age group, Tutor Hunt data suggest that 16% of Key Stage (KS) 3 tuition (pupils aged 11-14) supplied through the agency goes to privately-schooled pupils, and 15% of KS4 tuition (those preparing for GCSEs). This is despite the privately-schooled constituting only 7% of the student cohort as a whole in England. Given that it is not possible to determine how representative Tutor Hunt's experience is relative to the population as a whole, this data should be treated with caution. But it suggests that as many as 30,000 additional students can be added to the number of 11-16 year old state students who received private tuition last year, bringing the total to a little less than 300,000 across all student types.

From this data, we can begin to gain an idea of the size of the private tuition market, at least among 11-16 year olds. Tutor Hunt finds that, of those being tutored at KS3 and KS4, the weighted average hourly rate paid for tuition is approximately £23.50, and that they receive about 32 hours per year. If we multiply this by the 10% of pupils between 11-16 in England and Wales (including independent school pupils in the former, which are not specifically considered in the Ipsos MORI polling, but whose inclusion will provide a closer estimate for the purpose of this extrapolation), this suggests that the private tuition market in England and Wales for this

age group is worth up to £400 million. Performing the same method, but drawing on sources for England, Wales and Scotland, suggests that the entire market for 5-18 year olds in Britain is worth between £1-2 billion. Again, estimates based on such extrapolations are approximate. Several estimates have been made, including models using higher hourly rates of tuition, as have been reported elsewhere (see below). The conclusions above are still satisfied using these alternative projections.

4.1.2 Previous estimates of UK private tuition market

This analysis also suggests that some previous estimates of the economic size of the UK private tuition market are overestimates. An oft-quoted 2012 estimate placed the total value of the UK market at £6 billion a year.⁵⁵ Another common estimate, attributed to Ipsos MORI, suggests that there are around 1.5 million tutors in the UK. This figure has been reported widely across the media, although Ipsos MORI have no record of this being their calculation and it appears to have been misattributed to them.⁵⁶ Such estimates can be difficult to reconcile with more robust evidence on private tuition, including that actually undertaken by Ipsos MORI for this report.

With reference to the market value of private tuition, another way of expressing the UK market's worth as £6 billion a year is that six million young people are having £1,000 spent on them each, which is about 40 hours of tutoring; or two hours every week for about five months a year. While this is approximately how much individual private tuition students receive on average, according to estimates derived from Tutor Hunt's database, this is a much higher proportion of students receiving private tuition (nearly 70%, given that there are only about 8.7 million students between the ages of 5-18 in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) than other estimates.

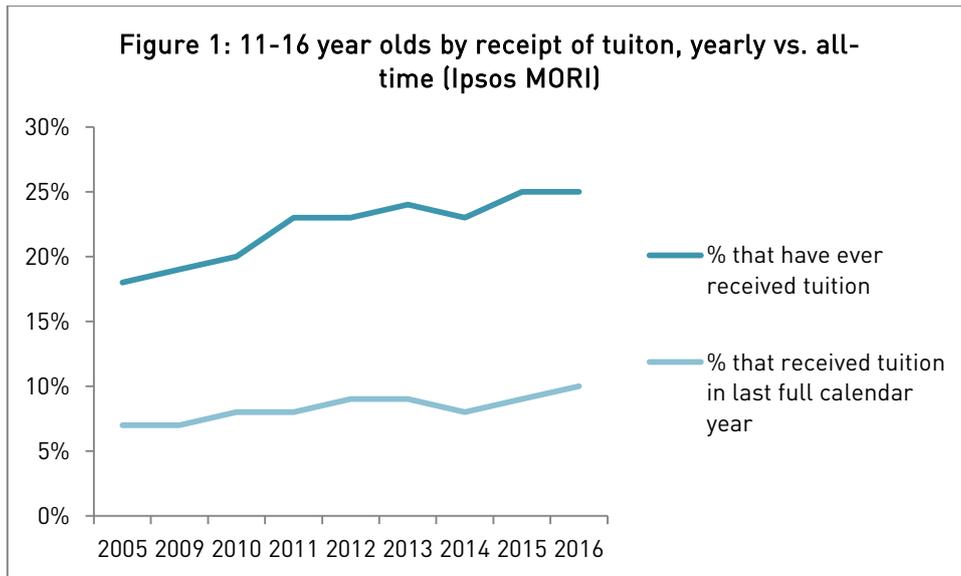
Were we to apply the Ipsos MORI percentage of 11-16 year olds receiving tuition a year (10%) across the entire 5-18 age group for all these countries (which provides an approximate indication only, given that it refers only to England and Wales; and a generous one, given that older pupils are generally more likely to receive private tuition than younger), this suggests that about 870,000 UK students are receiving tuition a year, in total.⁵⁷ Accepting the £6 billion figure, this would mean that each student is receiving nearly £7,000 worth of tuition per year, which is about 275 hours. This would need to start at the age of five and not finish before the age of 18, continuing at the same rate for each student every year. This would seem unlikely.

With reference to the number of private tutors in the UK, accepting that there are 1.5 million practising tutors would mean that there are over 600,000 more tutors in the country than tutees, given the calculations above, and about three times as many tutors as full-time teachers. It would mean that, of the entire UK population between the ages of 20 and 70, more than 1 in 30 people are working as a private tutor, at least partly.⁵⁸ Even if they are only working part-time (as almost all tutors do), this is an exceptionally high number of people.

The UK private tuition market is substantial. Its total worth may run into the billions. But well-publicised figures about the industry are likely to be overestimates.

4.1.3 Popularity of private tuition over time

That these are likely overestimates, though, should not disguise the fact that private tuition has increased in popularity in recent years. Over the last decade, the proportion of 11-16 year olds that have ever received private tuition in England and Wales has risen from 18% to 25%, according to Ipsos MORI. The proportion receiving private tuition a year has risen from 7% to 10%. Clearly, there appears to have been an upward trend in the proportion of students receiving tuition over time, even across this relatively short period. (Please note that no data was available between the years 2006-2008.)



It is not immediately clear why this is the case, though it may reflect what has been called a 'tutoring arms race', where middle class parents seek additional advantage for their children to secure competitive places in selective schools or universities.⁵⁹ Perhaps the most notable finding is that this increase in the preponderance of private tuition has not diffused across society equitably. Rather, it has been accompanied by a marked social differential in the kind of parents paying for tuition and the type of student who received it, as discussed below.

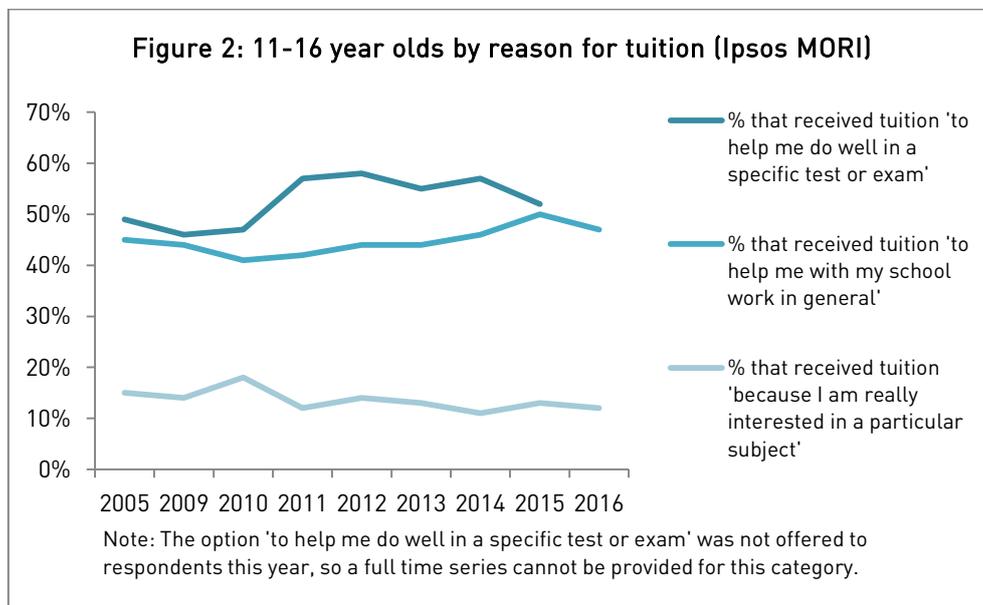
4.2 Purpose

Summary

- In the UK, the most popular subjects tutored are maths and English, in that order. These are followed by the sciences, musical instruments and foreign languages, respectively. Of those between the ages of 11-16 who have ever received tuition, over two thirds (68%) were tutored in maths, half in English (50%).
- Between the ages of 11-16, of those who have ever received tuition, about a quarter (21%) received tuition in a musical instrument.
- Between the ages of 11-16, of those who have ever received tuition, nearly half (47%) of young people have received tuition to assist with school work in general, over a third (38%) to do well in a specific GCSE exam and nearly 1 in 5 (18%) to assist with a school entrance exam.
- Of those students who do not receive tuition, over a third (37%) of those in academic years 6, 11 and 13 say that this is because tuition is too expensive. Other estimates for other groups support this, suggesting that between a third and a half of students who do not receive private tuition cite concerns with affordability as the reason.

4.2.1 Reasons for receiving private tuition

In polling conducted by Ipsos MORI this year, of those young people receiving tuition, about half (47%) stated that they had received tuition, "To help me with my school work in general." Over a third (38%), bearing in mind the age group studied, stated that it was, "To help me do well in a specific GCSE exam", and nearly a fifth (18%), "To help me do well in a school entrance exam." These reasons for tuition have remained broadly stable across time.⁶⁰



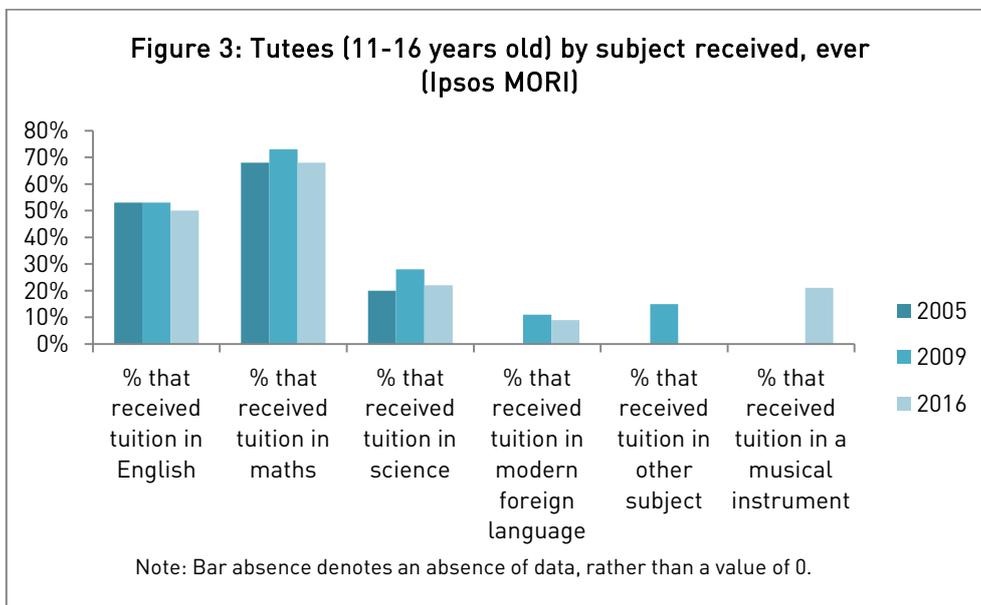
Tutor Hunt has collected data on the purpose of tuition amongst those registered with the organisation. This survey used different categories than Ipsos MORI, with respondents able to nominate a single answer only. Of respondents (n=1,010), a little under a third (31%) said that they had sought a tutor to "improve confidence"; about a fifth (20%) because of a "poor teacher at school"; a sixth (16%) because of "poor exam results"; 8% for "help with entrance exams";

and 5% to “improve grades”.⁶¹ The age range of respondents and the questions asked differ from Ipsos MORI, too, which makes broad trends of greater interest here than specific comparison. It should also be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive and some are effectively synonymous, such as “poor exam results” and “[to] improve grades”. The most common response, “[to] improve confidence”, may also be a euphemism for the more instrumentalist, ‘to improve performance’, which would align that category with the aforementioned. Nonetheless, the results offer an interesting snapshot of how tutees (or in some cases, their parents – it not being clear from the survey results how many of these answers were authored by the purchasers of tuition) understand the purpose of their tuition.

Other research has also looked at why students receive private tuition (again, according to the parents of tutees, rather than the tutees themselves). According to polling by YouGov for EdPlace undertaken in 2015, of those parents who pay for tutoring, over one third (34%) claim that the purpose of tuition is “To prepare for upcoming exams”; 29% “feel that it’s important to add continual support throughout the year”; 15% “don’t trust the school to get my child(ren) through the key exams”; 14% claim that “My child(ren) isn’t [aren’t] getting the support they need at school”; and 10% that “My child(ren) has [have] learning difficulties.”⁶² With respect to advantaging their own children ahead of others, some 9% of parents who employ tutors claim that, “Outside of school, private tuition is the only option to help my child(ren) get ahead” and 8%, “It means my child(ren) stays [stay] ahead of their peers.”⁶³

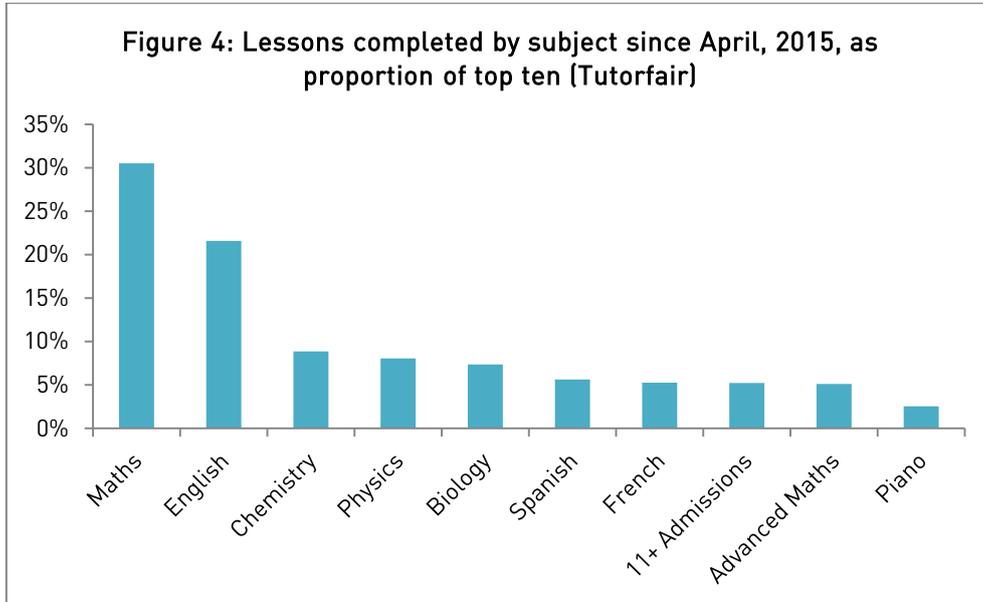
4.2.2 Popularity of academic subjects

Of academic subject tutoring, the most common subjects tutored in the UK are maths and English, in that order. Less common, but still notable subjects tutored include science and foreign languages. Ipsos MORI polling for the Sutton Trust looking at subject popularity has been undertaken three times, in 2005, 2009 and this year, with similar results on all occasions. These suggest that just over half of tutees have received instruction in English, which rises to around two thirds for maths.



The predominance of maths and English in the private tuition market is supported by other research. Ireson and Rushforth state that, “Over 3000 students in years 6, 11 and 13 completed a questionnaire survey of the nature and extent of private tuition in school curriculum subjects, their views about and evaluations of private tuition and demographic information. In the sample as a whole 27% of students had a private tutor and there was no significant difference between the year groups. Most tutoring was in mathematics, followed by English. The main reason for

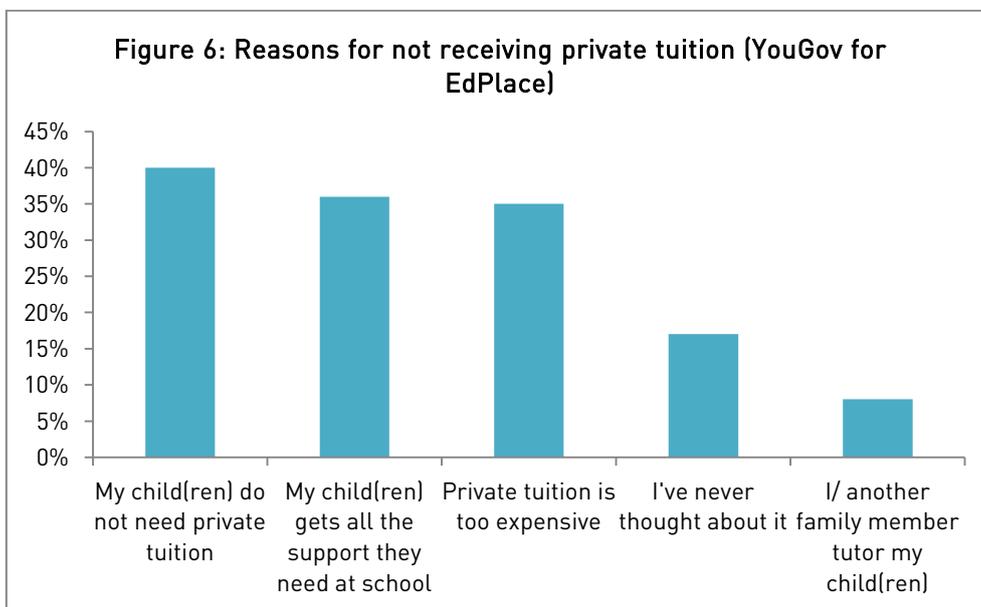
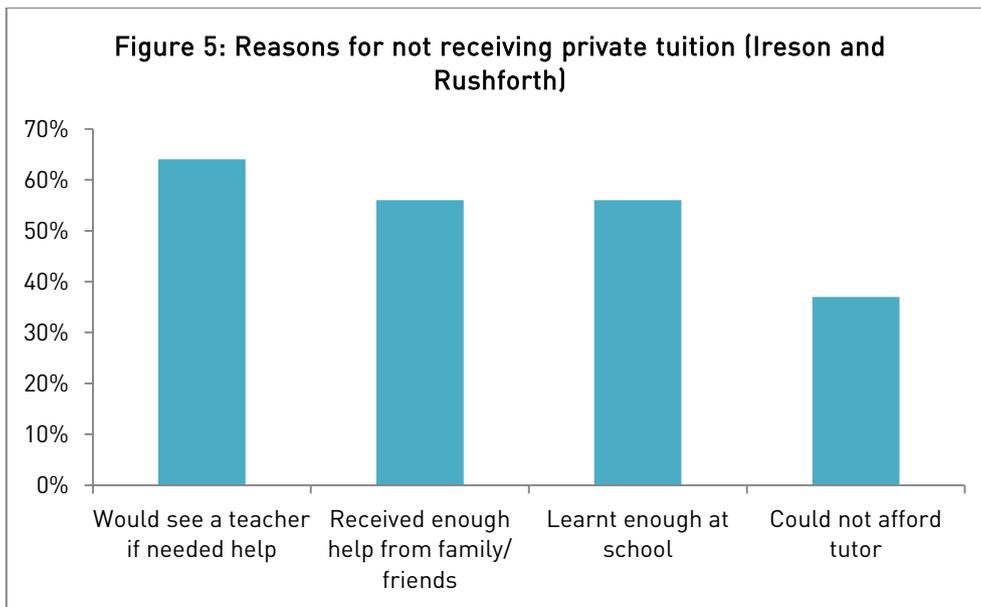
tutoring was to help students do well in entry tests for secondary school and in national examinations.”⁶⁴ (The proportion of children receiving private tuition in this survey is likely to be so high because it considers only academic years 6, 11 and 13, which are all transitional or exam years). More recent data, focussing on young people aged 13-14 (year 9), is available from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England. According to the LSYPE, 14% of students in this school year have received tuition in the past 12 months. Just over half of these (54%) received tuition in maths, just under a third in English (31%), and a similar proportion (30%) in a musical instrument. About 16% of this year had received tuition in science.⁶⁵



At Tutorfair, the most popular subjects tutored are, in order: maths, English, chemistry, physics, biology, Spanish and French. These are followed by specialist tuition in passing 11+ admissions tests, advanced maths and, rounding out the top 10, piano. At Tutorfair, tutoring for secondary school admissions exams is about twice as popular as the most common musical instrument lesson. To put the figures for the demand of 11+ examinations into focus, there are currently 163 grammar schools in England, with a total of about 164,000 pupils.⁶⁶ The proportion of secondary school students in grammar schools is about 5%.⁶⁷ As previous Sutton Trust research has shown, grammar schools source a high percentage of their entrants from private preparatory schools, with estimates ranging from around 13-15%. This is double the proportion of 10 year olds that attend preparatory schools.⁶⁸ Given the relatively small number of state selective schools as a proportion of the whole, it is perhaps surprising that tuition for 11+ examinations is so common.

4.2.3 Reasons for not receiving private tuition

Few studies have looked at the reasons why students do *not* receive private tuition. Two that have are Ireson and Rushforth, and YouGov polling for the education resource provider, EdPlace. In the former, of those students who claimed not to have received such assistance, “64% of students [said that they] would go and see a teacher if they needed extra help... Over half of the students (56%) who did not have a tutor felt they received enough help from their family and friends [...] over half the students (56%) felt they learn enough at school so did not have a tutor [...] About a third of students (37%) indicated that they did not have a tutor because it was too expensive”.⁶⁹ In the latter, polling by YouGov for EdPlace in 2015 (n=1,030), of those parents who do not pay for private tuition, over one third (36%) stated that, “My child(ren) gets [get] all the support they need at school”, and about the same proportion (35%) that, “Private tuition is too expensive”. 40% of parents state that, “My child(ren) do [does] not need private tuition”.⁷⁰



In both surveys, therefore – Ireson and Rushforth, and YouGov – about one third of students who do not receive private tuition and a similar proportion of parents who do not purchase it cite concerns about affordability. Given the attainment gap between children in receipt of the pupil premium (and thus those from the poorest households), and their peers, it seems likely that children who might benefit from additional support outside of school the most are precisely those who have disproportionately less access to such support.

4.3 People

Summary

Students

- Privately-educated students are about twice as likely to receive private tuition as state-educated pupils, according to multiple estimates.
- Girls are more likely to receive private tuition than boys. Last year, about 11% of girls aged 11-16 received private tuition, about 8% of boys.
- Ethnic minority students are more likely to receive private tuition than white pupils. About 41% of BME (black and minority ethnic) pupils aged 11-16 have ever received private tuition, 21% of white pupils.
- Poorer students are less likely to receive private tuition. Of those aged between 11-16, 17% of students who receive free school meals (FSM) have ever received private tuition, 26% of students who do not receive FSM.

Parents

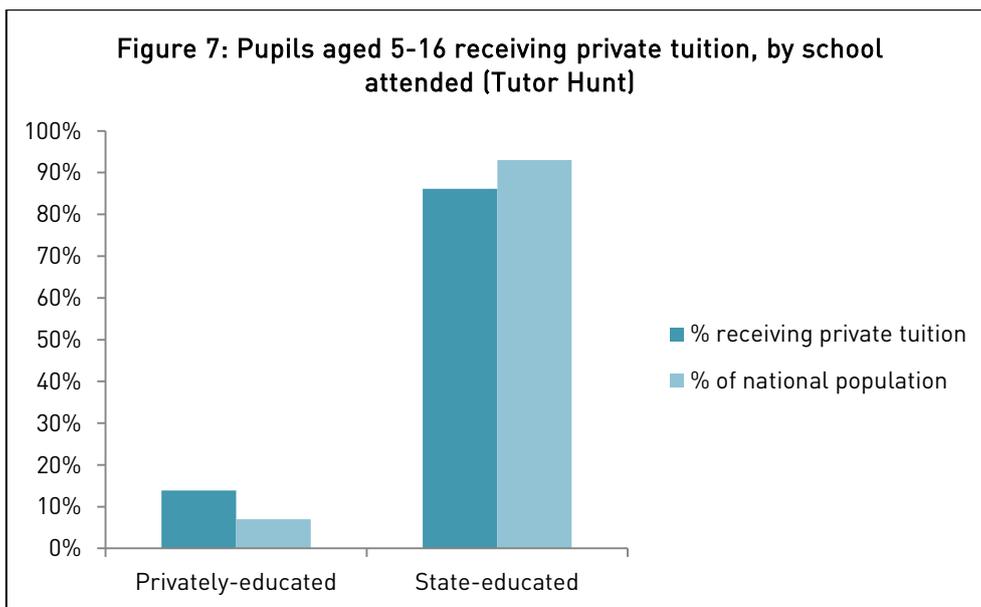
- Better off families are more likely to employ tutors. Of pupils aged between 11-16, children from richer families are twice as likely (30% vs. 15%) to have ever received private tuition.
- Tutored students are more likely to live in a two-parent household than in a single-parent household. Of pupils aged between 11-16, about a quarter (26%) living in two-parent households have ever received private tuition, falling to a fifth (21%) in single-parent households.

Tutors

- Nearly half (43%) of state school teachers have tutored outside of their main teaching role at some point during their lives.
- Most tutors work part-time. Data from Tutorfair suggests that the majority (56%) are female and below 30 (73%), suggesting that tuition may be a way to supplement HE study and early-career incomes.

4.3.1 Tutees

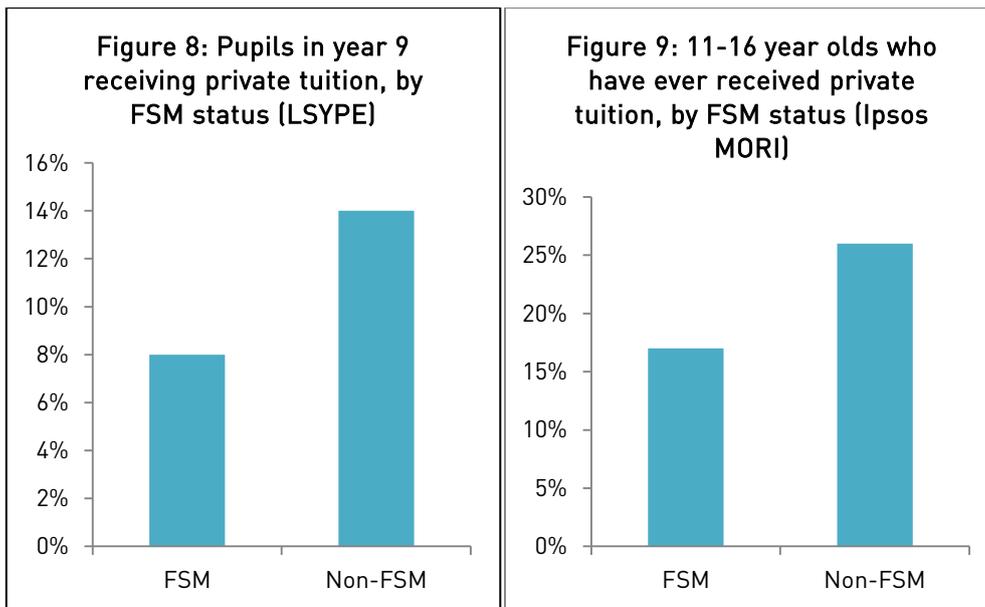
Privately-schooled students constitute about 7% of students in England between the ages of 5 and 16. Data from Tutor Hunt for England finds that, of over 13,000 (n=13,170) tutees surveyed across this age range, 14% attended independent fee-paying schools. In other words, according to this data, private school pupils are twice as likely to receive private tuition (outside of school) as their proportion of the national population would suggest. At A-level, the proportion of privately-schooled students receiving private tuition rises to 19%, although it should be noted that the national proportion of privately-educated pupils is also higher at this age, at about 14% of the total.⁷¹ This still means that the privately-educated are receiving greater levels of private tuition outside school than one would expect, all things being equal.



Data from Tutor Hunt further shows that at GCSE, highly popular tuition subjects for privately-schooled students are foreign languages (French and Spanish, in particular), as well as chemistry and history. At A-level, the most popular tutored subjects for the same group are economics, geography and foreign languages again (French, Spanish and German). Privately-schooled tutees are also likely to spend more on tuition per hour, suggesting that they receive tuition from more expensive tutors. The average hourly rate paid by a privately-schooled tutee is about 13% higher, across all age groups, than that paid by a state-schooled tutee. Average hourly rate is not necessarily a proxy for tuition quality, but this may partly explain the differential.

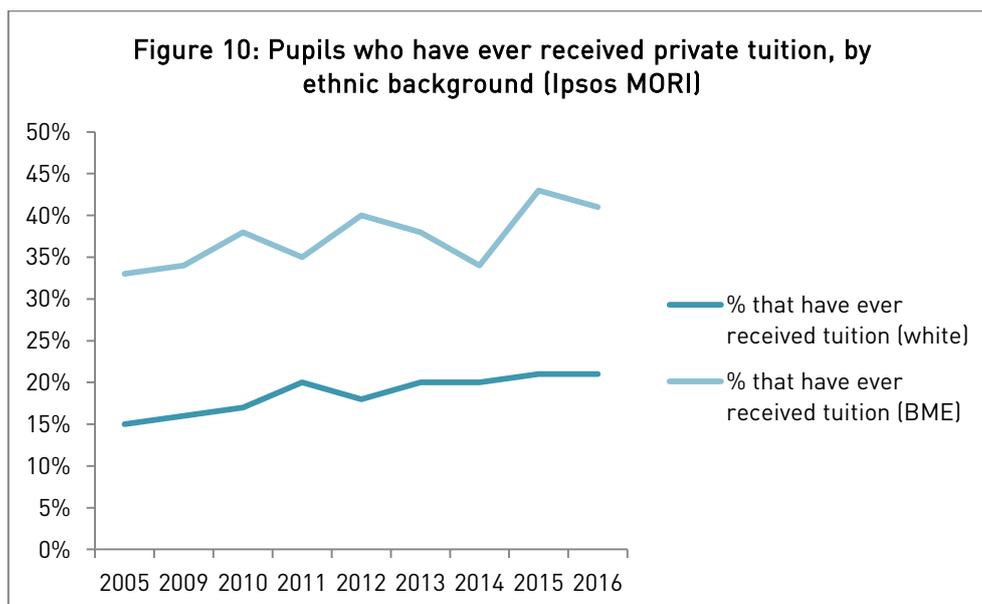
YouGov polling (n=1,173) in the Sutton Trust report, *Parent Power?*, reported similar results for the same age group (5-16 years old), with 27% of respondents with a child at private school saying that they had paid for private tuition outside of school, compared to about 14% of parents with a child in the state system.⁷² The methodological approach differs between this and the previous analysis – the former considers a sample of tutees, the latter a sample of the national population – but both find that privately-schooled students are about twice as likely to receive private tuition outside of school lessons as their state-schooled peers.

Outside the state/ private school divide, other research has found that there are differences between the social groups in the UK who receive private tuition. Analysis of the LSYPE suggests that young people with FSM are less likely to receive private tuition than those who do not receive free school meals.⁷³ Research from 2014 suggests that, in year 9, about 14% of students *not* receiving free school meals receive private tuition, but this falls to 8% for those who *do* receive free school meals.⁷⁴ Ipsos MORI 2016 polling for this report suggests similar trends, showing that, of students who receive FSM, about 17% have ever been privately tutored, which increases to 26% for those not receiving FSM.⁷⁵



The majority of UK studies have also found that private tuition is more common amongst ethnic minority children than their white British counterparts. The LSYPE states that over one third (34%) of African young people received tuition during year 9, as did just over a quarter (28%) of Indians and the same proportion (28%) in 'other' ethnic groups, which is mainly comprised of those from other Asian or Arab backgrounds. Just 12% of young white people, the survey found, had received private tuition during this period.⁷⁶

Ipsos MORI polling for 2016 reports similar findings. Moreover, these trends have remained broadly stable over time, reflecting the gradual increase in the prevalence of private tuition in the UK. Of all pupils, about 25% have ever received tuition, but that this increases to 41% for those from a black and/ or minority ethnic background. In 2015, about 17% of black and/ or minority ethnic students received tuition, falling to 8% for white students. These are, of course, broad categories, but suggest that there are, perhaps, cultural differences in the uptake of private tuition.



The reasons for this preponderance of private tuition amongst certain ethnic minority groups are not immediately clear. It has been speculated that, “One possible reason for this [pattern] might be that BME children are more likely than White children to attend supplementary schools.” However, data that breaks down tuition by type shows that while BME children are more likely to receive group tuition (as would be available in supplementary schools), they are also more likely to receive individual tuition.⁷⁷ If this explains the trends, therefore, it can only do so partially. Other explanations proffered have suggested that there are cultural differences between groups, with BME families placing a higher premium on education. As mentioned, different global regions appear to have different propensities toward private tuition. It is possible that these cultural factors explain why BME communities, some of whom will be first or second generation immigrants, appear to favour private tuition in greater numbers. It might also be noted that these trends sit within a national context in which certain white pupils, particularly white working-class boys, have been struggling to keep pace with the attainment levels of other ethnic groups.⁷⁸

4.3.2 Parents

According to a survey for the Department for Education, “Parents and carers in high income bands and higher social grades were more likely to purchase private tuition [than others].”⁷⁹ More specifically, “Those in the highest household income band (£50,000 or more per year) were most likely to say their child had private tuition in any subject – 16 per cent of parents and carers in this income band said their child received private tuition compared with nine per cent of parents and carers with an income of less than £50,000.”⁸⁰ With respect to social grade, rather than income, similar patterns were found. “Use of any private tuition was also highest amongst those in social grade A (21 per cent), while those in DE social grades were less likely to have any private tuition (six per cent).”⁸¹ Other UK surveys have found that, “Children of parents with managerial or professional jobs (27%), or self-employed (26%) were also more likely than children of parents in semi-routine or routine occupations (18%) or in non-working households (15%) to have extra tuition.”⁸² Similarly, “Extra tuition was most common among children whose mother had a postgraduate degree (30%) and least common among children whose mother had no qualifications (19%).”⁸³

This supports findings from the Sutton Trust report, *Parent Power?* According to that report, based on YouGov polling of parents (n=1,173) conducted in 2012, “a higher proportion of respondents whose child attended private school reported paying for private out-of-school tuition both in the last year (27% private v 14% state school) and ever (35% v 20%).” According to the authors, Becky Francis and Merryn Hutchings, “This illuminates their readiness to invest financially in their children’s education, and the *extent* of additional investment being made. It highlights issues of affordability, and the extent to which some of the parents who can afford to do so are investing in what they perceive to be added educational benefits for their children.” This links to further data presented in *Parent Power?*, which suggested that the provision of private tuition differed by the educational qualification of parents. With reference to the statement, “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘If we/I could afford to do so, I would pay for my child to have a tutor’ (N=806), “Those [parents] with the lowest levels of education were significantly more likely to agree than those with higher levels (43% of those with Level 2 and below v 22% of those with degrees). These are arguably the families that most need additional tuition, but for whom disposable income precludes it.”⁸⁴

Ipsos MORI polling for this report has categorised 11-16 year olds in England and Wales who have ever received private tuition into three levels of family wealth, using the Family Affluence Scale. “The Family Affluence Scale uses a set of questions about family resources – such as computer and car ownership, and frequency of taking holidays – to group respondents into low, medium or high affluence groups.”⁸⁵ Using this measure, nearly a third (30%) of pupils from families of ‘high’ affluence had been tutored, 20% of pupils from families of ‘medium’ affluence and 15% of pupils from families of ‘low’ affluence.

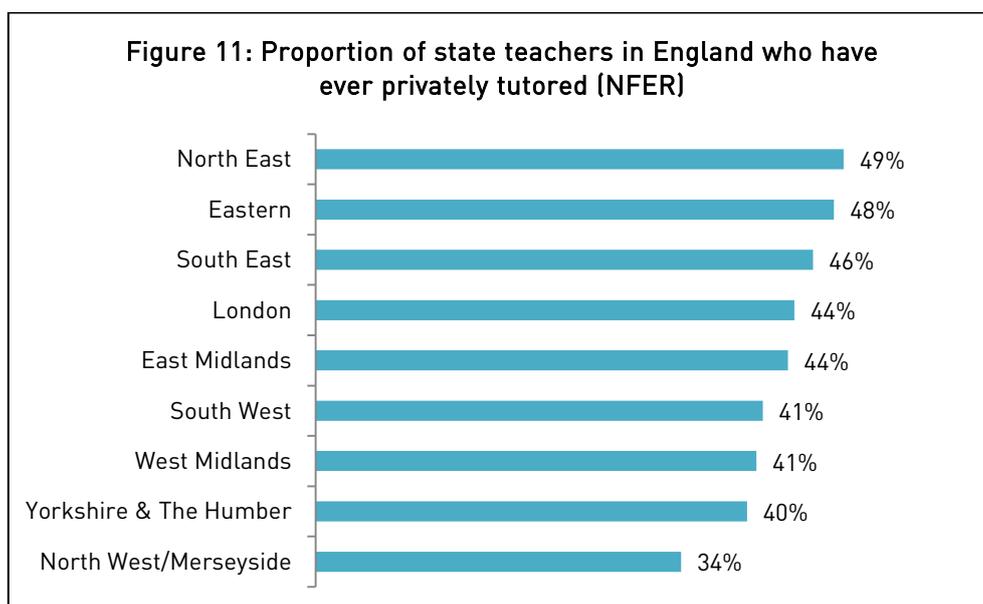
Family affluence was also aligned with how helpful pupils found their tuition. Pupils from low affluence backgrounds were over twice as likely to find tuition unhelpful as those from medium and high backgrounds (18%, compared to 7% and 6%, respectively). It is difficult to assign causality, but this may reflect the quality of tuition available to these different groups; it may reflect the wider socio-demographic contexts in which they receive tuition.

4.3.3 Private tutors

According to the Department for Education, the majority of private tutors work part-time (79%).⁸⁶ Periodically, the media reports on UK-based super tutors, who work longer hours for extremely high salaries.⁸⁷ As mentioned, 'celebrity tutors' of this type are more a feature of certain Asian private tuition markets than British. It seems unlikely that they represent anything other than a very small minority in the UK context. Indeed, their exclusivity is part of their appeal.

Of Tutorfair's over 8,000 fully registered tutors (n=8,588), the majority (56%) are female. Perhaps more strikingly, over three quarters (76%) are between the ages of 18-29, with nearly a third (32%) under 23. Only a minority of the 18-22 age group do not list attendance at university, thus many of the 18-22 age group are presumably tutoring while studying, perhaps to supplement income from student loans and other funding sources. Of Tutorfair's tutors, over a third (35%) attended or currently attend a Russell Group university; 7% attended or attend Oxbridge; and about 20% do not list a degree amongst their credentials. To put these figures into context, there were nearly 2.3 million students, of all types, at UK universities last year, of which about 2% attended Oxbridge.⁸⁸

Time series data is not available, so it is not possible to determine whether this has changed over recent decades. For example, has it been the case that the proportion of tutors under the age of 23 has increased since the introduction of higher tuition fees, as a method of supporting students financially through university? These findings do suggest, though, that tutoring is a significant source of alternative income for young people today, as the proportion with university degrees increases, without the graduate jobs market necessarily keeping pace. It may also reflect the preference of tutees. Younger tutors are closer to the average age of tutees, which may make it easier for them to build a rapport. Parents, as mentioned, often cite a tutor's personality and ability to build a relationship with their child as a key measure of their appropriateness.⁸⁹ It should also be noted that this is an online marketplace, which may be tilted toward younger tutors as a result.



Polling by the NFER for the Sutton Trust finds that, in response to the question, 'Do you currently, or have you ever, undertaken paid tutoring outside of your main teaching role?', some 43% of state teachers in England say that they have; 45% of secondary school state teachers, 40% of primary. According to the latest state school workforce census, there are just over 450,000 full-time teachers in the state system, suggesting that about 200,000 current state teachers are presently, or have previously, tutored privately. This varies according to region. In the North West/ Merseyside, about a third (34%) of state teachers have privately tutored; in the North East, this rises to just under a half (49%). In London, about 44% of state teachers have privately tutored. Focusing solely on secondary school state teachers, over half (51%) in the Eastern, North East and South East government office regions have privately tutored. In London, this figure remains at 44%. In terms of teacher type, there is little difference between the proportion of senior leaders who have ever privately tutored and the proportion of classroom teachers. The high proportion of teachers or former teachers in the private tuition marketplace is borne out by other research. About four in 10 private tuition agencies, for example, have reported that all their tutors are qualified teachers.⁹⁰

4.4 Delivery

Summary

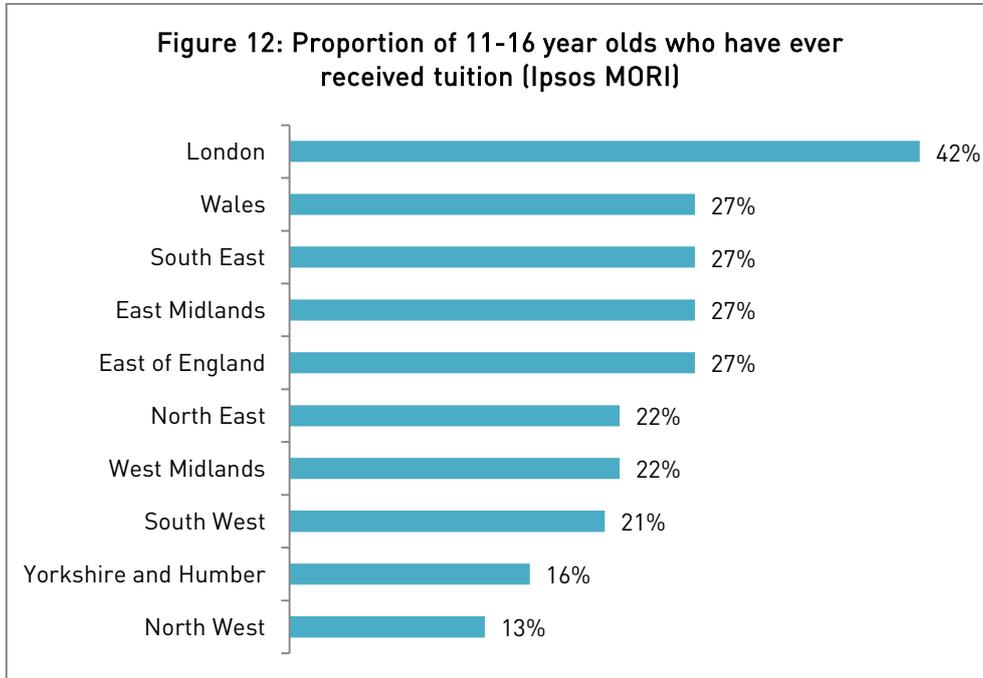
- Across all types and age groups, private tuition costs about £24 per hour, excluding commission, according to Tutor Hunt.
- Across all types and age groups, private tuition costs about £27 per hour in London, excluding commission, according to Tutor Hunt.
- Other estimates of tuition cost, based on freelance tutors rather than agencies, place the cost higher, at about £31-32 per hour across all types and age groups.
- Most lessons last one hour and are weekly, with 5-6 months of tuition per year, concentrated in the spring and autumn in the run-up to exams.
- Individual tuition is more common than group, with most taking place in the student's home. Tuition centres appear to be gaining in popularity.
- In London, of state-educated students aged between 11-16, over 150,000 (42%) have received private tuition at some point in their lives.
- Tuition agency business models vary, especially in their engagement with tutors and tutees. Some actively manage relationships, others are more akin to marketplaces.
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks appear to be more common amongst agency tutors than freelance tutors. These can be prohibitively difficult for individuals to acquire.

4.4.1 Lesson costs, duration, form and location

In 2009, the average cost of one-to-one tutoring in maths or numeracy was reported as approximately £21 per hour; in English or literacy, £24 per hour.⁹¹ In 2016, Tutor Hunt report the average hourly rate of tuition acquired through their agency is £24, across all types and age groups.⁹² For the same year, the online tutoring resource, Tutor Pages, places the average cost of tutoring at about £31-32, based on freelance tutors, rather than agencies.⁹³ There are several reasons for these trends: Tutor Hunt does not charge commission, whereas agencies surveyed by the Department for Education in the earlier study are likely to have done so. In addition, the expansion of the private tuition market online may mean that, today, tutors need to price more competitively to undercut the competition, and so forth. There will, of course, be differences in the precise sample of the population considered, so these figures should serve as indications of the price of tuition only.

According to a study for the DfE, the majority of tuition arranged through private agencies takes place in the student's home (68%) and lasts an hour (66%).⁹⁴ Both the Department for Education (2009) and Tutor Hunt (2016) surveys have found that most tuition takes place weekly. More specifically, according to Tutor Hunt, about two thirds (67%) of students, during their period of tuition, have one session per week; a quarter (25%) have two sessions; putting the average at 1.5 sessions a week, when those who receive more than two session a week are also included.⁹⁵ Ipsos MORI findings for this report are similar. Of 11-16 year olds receiving private tuition in England and Wales, 42% receive their tuition at home, just under a quarter (22%) at the tutor's house and a little less (21%) 'in a building (not someone's house) where other people are being tutored at the same time', which is likely to be a tuition centre. Nearly two thirds (63%) said that their tuition sessions lasted an hour or less, with about a quarter (21%) saying that they were longer.

The majority of tuition in the UK is one-to-one (78%). Group and paired tuition is offered by some agencies, but is less popular.⁹⁶ Similar findings have been reported by other surveys. In 2009, the Department for Education found that one-to-one tuition was the most common form of delivery. Other research has suggested that private tuition centres are increasing in prominence.⁹⁷



London

UK surveys have shown that private tuition is most common in London; in terms of both demand and supply.⁹⁸ This is not simply a product of population density; the proportion of children receiving tuition in London is higher than elsewhere. The LSYPE, with reference to children in year 9, finds that nearly a quarter (24%) of this age group in London received tuition in the last 12 months.⁹⁹ Ipsos MORI polling for this report finds that, of young people aged between 11 and 16 in London, 42% have ever received tuition; 18% received tuition in 2015. There are about 390,000 students in these year groups in London, suggesting that over 160,000 of them have received private tuition at some point. This will be even higher, given that these figures do not incorporate the privately-educated. According to Tutor Hunt, the average price of tuition across all levels in London is slightly higher than the national average, at £27.

There are several reasons that private tuition might be so common in London. As previously mentioned, black and ethnic minority populations are more likely to receive tuition than other groups, and London is more ethnically diverse than much of the rest of the country. Some of the wealthiest constituencies in the country are also located in London, meaning that there is, perhaps, a greater ability for Londoners – some Londoners, at least – to pay for tuition. Many of the largest private tuition agencies, including those profiled in this report, are also based in London. This is logical for the reasons given previously, but also suggests that tuition might be more accessible to Londoners than for other communities, especially rural. London also has a higher proportion of independent schools than in the country as a whole (at over 10%, compared to 7% nationally), which may explain the greater preponderance of tutoring, given findings discussed previously.¹⁰⁰

4.4.2 Agencies

As of 2009 – the last time that a comprehensive survey was undertaken – there were over 500 private tuition agencies in the UK.¹⁰¹ The majority (86%) operate on a regional basis – particularly London, the South East, Manchester or Birmingham, where tuition provision is amongst the most concentrated – with the remainder working nationally.¹⁰² Regional agencies are concentrated in London (32%) and the South East (25%). Agencies are seasonal, as might be expected; busier in the spring and autumn (in the lead-up to exams) and quieter in the winter and summer.¹⁰³

The same research created a taxonomy of private tuition agencies, which is presented in Table 3. (Since 2009, it is likely that the significance of the internet in the facilitation of private tuition has increased.) The research found that increasing numbers of tuition agencies were moving away from the ‘traditional’ construct – an organisation maintaining a register of tutors that earns revenue through commission – toward other, more flexible models, such as mediated noticeboards, which largely serve to connect tutors with tutees and may, or may not, charge a fee for this service. The absence of data makes it difficult to gauge the market share of each of these forms of agency, or their total market share relative to freelance tutors. In addition, a tutor may be registered with more than one agency, of course, or procure some of their work through agencies and some through personal recommendation. It should also be noted that these are broad categorisations. The difference between the categories ‘noticeboard’ and ‘noticeboard (mediated)’, for example, is blurred; certain agencies engage with tutors and/ or tutees more, or less, than these definitions suggest, but would still fall under the category, ‘noticeboard’.

Type	Description
Traditional	‘Maintaining a selected bank of registered tutors, which allocate work in response to requests from prospective clients’
Noticeboard	‘Maintaining a web-based notice board for individual tutor advertisements, with contract details allowing clients to negotiate directly with tutors’
Noticeboard (mediated)	‘Maintaining a list of registered tutors from which clients select, but with no individual contact details provided, so contact occurs through agency’
Individual/ small agencies	‘Individual tutors or informal professional networks of tutors that allow work to be shared or transferred’
Educational centre	‘A designated location in which tuition takes place, often solely dedicated to this purpose’

Table 3: A taxonomy of private tuition agencies in the UK¹⁰⁴

Previous research has looked at the security certification possessed by tutors working for agencies. While security screening of tutors is considered important by many agencies, not all tutors on agency books have passed Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, which highlight criminal records.¹⁰⁵ The majority of UK tutoring agencies (79%) claim that all their tutors have passed such checks, but this leaves a fifth that do not ensure comprehensive DBS certification.¹⁰⁶ The proportion of tutors without DBS checks is also likely to be higher than these figures suggest, because individual tutors, unaffiliated with agencies, are less likely to possess them. Indeed, one criticism of the DBS system is that they are difficult for individuals to obtain without the support of an employer or umbrella organisation, given that access to the DBS checking service is only available to registered employers.¹⁰⁷ As part of efforts to ensure the safety of tutored pupils, the NSPCC has recently called for compulsory DBS checks for tutors: “Children have a right to be educated in safety and parents need to know that every care has been taken to ensure unsuitable people cannot practise as tutors. The rules on applying for criminal record checks need to apply to self-employed tutors just as they do for teachers employed in schools.”¹⁰⁸

PRIVATE TUITION: POLICY OPTIONS

5.1 Regulation and private tuition

In the UK, there has been little policy discussion of private tuition. Several reasons for this lack of attention have been posited, ranging from the difficulty in gauging the extent of the profession (and if an entity cannot be measured, it cannot be taxed), to the suggestion (perhaps more pertinent to certain international examples) that, because it is an industry that allows teachers to earn a supplementary income, governments and trades union are reticent to address the topic.¹⁰⁹ Nonetheless, the expansion of tutoring has triggered calls for the regulation, or at least representation, of the UK 'industry'. Partly to this end, the Centre for the Study of Market Reform of Education, a think tank, launched the Tutors' Association (TA) in 2013. According to the TA, "Central to our Mission, Vision and Values is to represent tutoring and the supplementary education sector and become the 'go to' resource for tutors, the public, the media, schools and government."¹¹⁰ The Association offers professional development to its paid members, as well as forms of accreditation. Benefits listed under its 'membership benefits' include that members are permitted to use various post-nominals: 'ATA' for Associate of the Tutors' Association, 'MTA' for Member, and so forth.¹¹¹

Tutor support for greater regulation appears limited. Tutor Pages, an online forum that publishes extensive data and resources about private tuition, has surveyed tutors (n=>500) on the issue. In 2010, in response to a proposed voluntary government vetting scheme, Tutor Pages reported that nearly three quarters (74%) objected. Amongst other reasons, tutors suggested that the checks would create a blanket of suspicion, undermining trust in adults working with children (71%); would be bureaucratically too difficult to administer (70%); and could potentially leak or wrongly release sensitive information, affecting tutor reputations and careers (76%). Henry Fagg, director of Tutor Pages, continued that, "Many [tutors] already have Criminal Record Bureau [DBS] certificates and see this extra check as unnecessary, bureaucratic and intrusive and regard the cost of registering - £64 - as a tax on teaching. Very few parents ask to see CRB [DBS] checks as it is as they prefer to rely on personal recommendations and their own judgement."¹¹² According to Tutor Pages, similar antipathy met the creation of the Tutors' Association. During the Association's consultation period, 94% of tutors polled stated that, "they thought many excellent private tutors would decide not to join the association." With respect to the recommendation that all tutors be graduates, over two thirds (71%) thought that, again, this would exclude many high quality tutors. The majority (62%) agreed that an association to set and maintain industry standards was desirable in principle, but disagreement arose when concrete recommendations were proposed.¹¹³

Any top-down policy attempting to regulate private tuition would be extremely difficult to implement. Private tuition, by its nature, operates across more sites and with more flexible patterns of work than most other UK professions. Much private tuition operates on an informal basis - such as through word-of-mouth recommendation - that would be almost impossible to formalise completely. The first step toward regulation would presumably be a national or local government-administered national tutor registry, but it is difficult to imagine that such a registry could be anything other than voluntary. If parents are willing to employ someone to teach their child, and that person is willing to teach them, it is unclear how or why the government should intervene excessively in that relationship.

At the same time, there would be benefits to greater formalisation of private tuition in certain areas; for both parents and tutors. And there is precedent, in that all childminders and childcare providers in the UK must be registered with either an agency or Ofsted, with the latter also carrying out periodic inspections.¹¹⁴ And as Tutor Pages suggest, it may be that parents currently rely on their own judgement when assessing tutors, but it seems likely that this is due, at least in part, to the fact that they *have* to rely on their own judgement: there are few other metrics by which they can assess the suitability or credentials of a tutor (although some web-based agencies are pioneering algorithms that consider, for example, how often tutees

book a particular tutor, in order to gauge their popularity). It has been claimed that DBS checks, as an example, are more difficult for individuals to acquire than those working for organisations, which is true. This could be ameliorated by making the procedure to acquire DBS certification easier and less expensive for the individual. Individual agencies, such as Tutorfair, offer 'verified' status to tutors who, amongst other qualifications, possess a valid DBS certificate: clearly, there is a demand for tutors possessing such credentials.

5.2 Evaluating private tuition agency models

Given the limits to the extent that private tuition can (and perhaps should) be regulated, a crucial driver for change is tuition agencies themselves. Tuition agencies, especially of the mediated noticeboard type, have expanded much in recent years, with the internet particularly important for their work. They have been sources for some of the data that has become available to researchers over recent years. They have also been test sites for different business models, the best of which have attempted to limit the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students that private tutoring potentially fosters, even exacerbates. Here, two different models are profiled – Tutorfair and Tutor Hunt – which, through different approaches, attempt to make tuition more affordable to lower-income students.

Tutorfair

Tutorfair was founded in 2012 as a 'tutoring marketplace': an organisation to put tutors in contact with potential tutees. Currently, Tutorfair has over 30,000 tutors on its database, with about 8,500 fully registered. Tutees contact tutors directly, at no charge, through Tutorfair's web platform, which enables the tutee to locate an appropriate local tutor expediently. Over 10,000 tutees have found private tutors through the organisation since its inception. Tutorfair is aware of the social justice issues at stake in private tutoring. Their website, for example, cites DfE figures, which state that for the year 2012/13, 61% of children on free school meals received a 'D' grade or lower in GCSE mathematics and/ or English. This compares to pupils not on free school meals, where the equivalent figure was 35%. Their solution to private tutoring's potential to exacerbate, rather than ameliorate this attainment gap, has been to offer a proportion of their tutoring, *pro bono*, through the Tutorfair Foundation.

The Tutorfair Foundation is funded directly from sales made on the Tutorfair website. An optional 5% is included in the price of each order placed by a customer, which is used to coordinate and undertake tutoring programmes in London inner-city schools, focussing on those with a proportion of pupil premium recipients that exceeds 50% (in 2014/15, just over a quarter of students taking their GCSEs qualified for pupil premium). Class teachers then identify students who they believe will benefit from the tutoring most. Tutors are trained in conjunction with Teach First, delivering a minimum of 10 hours of small group tuition each over a half term. Specifically, the one-for-one promise is that for each paying client who has donated on all of their orders, the Tutorfair Foundation will provide free tutoring for a child at one of their partner schools. Through such programmes, Tutorfair have provided free tutoring to 5,000 students, involving over 400 tutors across 14 schools. This free tutoring covers preparation for 11+ exams, GCSEs, A-levels and university applications.¹¹⁵

With regard to such *pro bono* tutoring, it is recognised that such arrangements are perhaps more difficult for smaller agencies to enact. However, it seems reasonable to expect that, once a tuition agency has reached a certain size – administering at least 1,000 hours of tuition per year, for example – it should begin to ensure that a proportion of its tuition is provided economically to students from disadvantaged backgrounds; for whom it is disproportionately less accessible.



Figure 13: The Tutorfair Foundation *pro bono* scheme (Tutorfair)

Tutor Hunt

Tutor Hunt was founded in 2005 with the objective of bringing affordable tuition to everyone in the UK. As of today, it has over 50,000 tutors. A web-based service, Tutor Hunt allows tutees to correspond directly with tutors prior to lessons commencing, allowing them to find the tutor who they feel is most suitable. Tutors do not pay any commission to Tutor Hunt, the aim being that hourly rates will be kept as low as possible. Instead, Tutor Hunt charges tutees a one-off 'finders' fee' of £19.99, excluding VAT. As of 2014, Tutor Hunt has created a foundation, which uses some of the profits made through the website to sponsor various school clubs, events and programmes. With reference to their business model, Tutor Hunt state that, "We do not take any ongoing commission from the tutors like many agencies do, as this invariably leads to the tutor raising their hourly rate, and passing the cost onto the student."¹¹⁶

In this sense, Tutor Hunt's model differs from Tutorfair's, but with a similar emphasis on attempting to ensure that private tuition does not become a particular preserve of the wealthy, and that its benefits can be spread as widely as possible. In one case, tuition is actively targeted at disadvantaged pupils; in the other, access to tuition is cultivated through the market.

These case studies show that tutors and tuition agencies themselves can contribute to efforts that limit the potential negative effect of private tuition on social mobility. In the future, the Sutton Trust would like to see such approaches expanded; becoming the norm for private tuition agencies, and furthered wherever possible. At the same time, it is important to remember that there are limits to efforts to make tuition affordable and accessible to all, and that a range of solutions is required. Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson, for example, have found that fees for extracurricular support running to single-digit figures can be prohibitively expensive for the poorest families.¹¹⁷ Tuition fees of £30 might preclude many of these families from employing tutors, but so too might fees of £20 or less. This suggests that there is a real need for government and non-profit schemes, to which the report now turns.

5.3 State-funded tuition and extracurricular activities

5.3.1 State-funded and non-profit tuition

There is precedent for state support of individual and private tuition of disadvantaged students. In England, funding received by schools under the now defunct *Aimhigher* scheme (2004-2011), for example, was used by some schools to send pupils for tutoring with agencies specialising in Oxbridge admissions, although this was not the norm.¹¹⁸ More widely, the scheme was used to set-up mentoring of secondary school students by university students, with the purpose of encouraging university applications from the former, who might not otherwise have considered the HE pathway.

Elsewhere, the government-sponsored pilot scheme, *Making Good Progress*, was launched in 2007 to assist low achievers, partly through individual tuition. *Making Good Progress* allowed schools to either pay classroom teachers to provide additional lessons outside of the curriculum, or to employ external tutors from private agencies for the same purpose.¹¹⁹ Entitled 'progression tuition', the scheme focused on English and maths, targeting pupils struggling to reach national expectations in their current Key Stage and providing them with 10 one-hour sessions of individual tuition.¹²⁰ Two major reviews of the programme's efficacy were undertaken by PwC and the Institute of Education, University of London, respectively. These both found positive effects, with between 0.5 and 0.9 Key Stage sub-levels of improvement shown by the test group, depending on methodology (see Table 1).

Tutor Trust, Brilliant Club, Future First

Tutor Trust is a Manchester-based charity founded in 2011 with a grant from the Education Endowment Foundation. "The Tutor Trust aims to transform the provision of top-up tuition in the UK, and to play its part in reducing the attainment gap in education [...] The Tutor Trust is Britain's sole not-for-profit provider of tuition services [and aims] to democratise tuition by making top quality tutors available to children whose parents would never be able to afford a private tutor." According to the charity, "Tutor Trust has become a favoured way for Headteachers to spend Pupil Premium money in Greater Manchester." During the first two years of the charity, Tutor Trust delivered over 17,000 hours of tuition to over 3,000 pupils.¹²¹ Its work has recently expanded from Manchester into Leeds, and is currently delivering its first full year of tuition there. As yet, it has not been possible conclusively to determine the impact of the scheme on attainment, despite teachers' enthusiasm for the programme.¹²² A further trial with the organisation has recently been funded by the EEF, which will work in 100 schools with 1,200 students in year 6.¹²³

Other, similar schemes include Brilliant Club, an award-winning charity that widens access to selective universities for pupils from under-represented groups. It works by training doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, and placing them in non-selective state schools around the country. Last year, the organisation placed nearly 500 researchers in this fashion, working with just under 7,000 pupils.¹²⁴ At the charity, Future First, alumni networks are created at schools in order to support career progression for current students. These include mentors and e-mentors, who guide students through the decision-making processes involved in entering higher education and the workplace. This is not an exhaustive list.

Other English-speaking countries have also trialled the subsidy of private tuition for low-achieving students, many of whom come from low-income backgrounds. In the United States, funding available through 2002 *No Child Left Behind* legislation permitted spending on private tuition under certain circumstances.¹²⁵ *No Child Left Behind* has since been replaced by the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, which devolved duties to the state. If tuition provisions have been retained, they will now fall under state jurisdiction. In Australia, the *Tutorial Voucher Initiative*,

launched in 2004, “enabled eligible parents to spend up to Au\$700 [approximately £370] to secure tutoring for their children.” This was followed three years later by a second Australian scheme, *An Even Start*.¹²⁶ Akin to *Making Good Progress* in England, eligible students were those who did not reach national benchmarks in reading, writing or numeracy.¹²⁷

There is precedent, therefore, in both the UK and international contexts, for the state subsidy of private tuition. The efficacy of such schemes is difficult to gauge, for the same reasons that private tuition in any context is difficult to assess, as previously discussed. Many of these programmes have also been limited in scale, further hindering an accurate appraisal of what worked and did not work about them. The two major independent reviews of the UK’s *Making Good Progress* scheme, however, have been positive, showing small, but notable effects on the achievement of participants. Measures of raw attainment sit within less easily quantifiable appraisals, too, such as the positive reviews that teachers have reportedly bestowed upon such schemes. The widespread and sustained provision of means-tested tuition vouchers for low-achieving students could be one step forward, therefore, in an effort to level the playing field between advantaged and disadvantaged students.

5.3.2 Access to extracurricular activities

Evidence has suggested that school-provided extra-curricular activities, such as maths and homework clubs, rather than individual tuition *per se*, offer benefits akin to private tuition. In 1997, the UK government signalled its commitment to such activities with the implementation of the National Strategy for Study Support, wherein, “Funding was made available through the New Opportunities Fund to develop extracurricular activities in areas of social disadvantage as a means of improving student participation.”¹²⁸ As Judith Ireson has found, with reference to sports, games, music, arts and community-based extracurricular activities, in particular, “These activities may be held after school, during lunch breaks or at weekends. Students’ participation in these extra activities appears to offer similar benefits to private tutoring. International research shows that participation in extracurricular activities is associated with higher achievement and more positive attitudes towards school (Marsh, 1992; Camp, 1990; MacBeath *et al.*, 2001).”¹²⁹

As with private tuition, however, the Millennium Cohort Study shows that there is a correlation between economic disadvantage and decreased participation in extra-curricular school activities.¹³⁰ The MCS suggests that children from more advantaged backgrounds are more likely to have extra-curricular music (instrumental) lessons than their disadvantaged peers.¹³¹ The same trend was identified in 2014 Ipsos MORI polling of parents (n=1,728) for the Sutton Trust. “Overall, a strong majority of 76% of parents reported that their child regularly participated in some form of extra-curricular activity in the last 12 months. The most popular activity was sport/exercise (52%), followed by Scouts/Guiding (16%), dance/drama (15%) and music (14%). Although the majority of all parents report some participation, there remains a gap between social groups, with rates of participation around 15 percentage points higher among parents in social groups A, B, or C1 [the highest] (84%) than among parents in social groups C2, D, or E (69%).”¹³² The Living Costs and Food Survey (n=1,758) also reports this social gradient, with 35% of households in the top fifth of incomes paying for extracurricular classes, but only 9% in the bottom fifth.¹³³ As Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson summarise, “enrichment activities – including both individual but more often collective cultural, sporting, or leisure classes or groups – now feature in many children’s live but... middle-class children have greater access to these than their working-class counterparts.”¹³⁴

NatCen, in an analysis of the MCS, find that, “Taking part in organised physical activities, such as swimming lessons or football training, or a school sports club, is strongly linked to the level of education of the child’s mother. Four in ten children whose mother had a postgraduate degree or equivalent qualification took part in sports activities at least weekly, compared with

less than one in ten children whose mother had no formal qualifications.”¹³⁵ One can imagine that this is even more pronounced in sports with high access costs. It is perhaps interesting to note that research in the US context has found that some elite employers, when considering job applicants, are more likely to recruit those who have experience of extracurricular activities with high participation costs, such as squash, polo, rowing, and so forth.¹³⁶ It might also be noted that music lessons can translate into additional UCAS points when applying to university. The Sutton Trust’s report, *Parent Power?*, has described this as access to ‘cultural capital’.¹³⁷

In the 2016 budget, the government allocated up to £285 million a year for longer school days; a policy option also advocated by Tony Blair in 1999.¹³⁸ Affecting up to 25% of secondary schools, it has been proposed that this longer day will be used for extracurricular activities, such as extra art and/ or sports lessons. This has the potential to benefit disadvantaged pupils, for whom such extracurricular opportunities are frequently less available. This policy will need to be monitored as it develops, with assessment made of those activities benefitting pupils the most.

CONCLUSION

Much of the UK private tuition market is hidden. Some of the most important data that does exist – including its economic size – appears to overestimate its overall value, which can confuse issues around private tuition. This report has addressed these issues, and provided an overview of research on private tuition. It has also presented original data compiled by polling agencies, tutoring agencies and other research organisations. This suggests that the private tuition market is sizeable and growing – with a value of £1-2 billion annually – although not as large as some estimates have stated, and that there are several social justice issues at stake as it is currently formulated.

Central to these is the greater uptake of private tuition by those from higher socio-economic groups. Numerous studies, including original data in this report, have shown that those privately-schooled are more likely to have a tutor than those who are state-schooled, and that, concomitantly, those who receive free school meals are less likely to receive private tuition than those who do not. Similar questions looking at the family wealth of students receiving private tuition suggests the same trends.

There are ways that this inequality of access can be tempered, though. Some tutoring agencies attempt to broaden the availability of tuition, through schemes such as *pro bono* tutoring in schools with high proportions of disadvantaged students. A government programme of means-tested vouchers is another way that the benefits of private tuition can be shared more widely, ameliorating the social differential in tuition access. At the moment, though, private tuition still exacerbates the academic attainment gap between advantaged and disadvantaged pupils.

In the future, it seems likely that an increasing proportion of private tuition will take place online, with tutors sourced through the internet, smartphone apps and associated means.¹³⁹ This has benefits, most obviously the removal of geographical constraints: tutors and tutees will no longer need to pay for travel and tutors can be sourced from across the country, or further afield; English students can learn Spanish from a tutor in Spain, for example. It may also, however, make it even more difficult to gauge the size of the private tuition market and its characteristics. This is not an argument for the government to intervene excessively in a relationship between two independent parties. It is to draw attention to the fact that, in the future, as tutoring becomes even more accessible online, it is important to ensure that this accessibility is as equally distributed as possible.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Sam Floy (Tutorfair), Prof. Sarah Holloway (Loughborough University), Dominic Oliver (Ipsos MORI), Jack Tattersall (NFER), Nick Valoti (Tutor Hunt) and Matt van Poortvliet (Education Endowment Foundation), for their contributions to the production of this report. Despite their assistance, any mistakes remain the author's. The views expressed in this report are not necessarily those of the above.

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