

# Raise your game, schools, so we can ditch costly tutors

BUT PAYING FOR EXTRA LESSONS IS THE EASY OPTION WHEN A PUPIL STRUGGLES

■ Has the world gone mad? Educational charity the Sutton Trust is calling for a voucher system so the poor can get a private tutor (Metro, Wed). A bit radical, I know, but how about teachers in the state system provide a proper education so that pupils, rich or poor, do not need to pay for tutors?

**Jacqueline Scollan, Bracknell**

■ As a secondary school teacher, I believe tutoring is usually unnecessary. Most students are taught by good teachers; tutors are often used by parents and students as a way to avoid putting in the effort required to do well.

The number of times at parents' evening where we have patiently explained what the student needs to do to get better, only to hear the response 'oh, I'll get them a tutor' is staggering. Teachers, in the meantime, put in untold extra hours to get their students the results the teachers themselves will eventually be judged on.

**Angela Oviedo, Chelmsford**

■ Sadly, this is not about social mobility, it's about the sad state of state education generally.

I was a teacher for 23 years and was teaching when 'Baker Days' and the national curriculum were introduced. The powers that be haven't stopped messing about with education since, not to mention what's being done by schools themselves.

Being at school doesn't seem to be joyful or rewarding any more, judging by

## 27% of pupils pay to have private tuition

by ALEXANDER BRITTON

More than a quarter of secondary school pupils have used private tutors, a new poll has found.

Some 27 per cent of 11- to 16-year-olds in England and Wales have been taught by one, rising to 41 per cent in London, according to the educational charity Sutton Trust.

It said the findings fuel concerns about educational inequalities and called on the government to support lower income families. Chairman Sir Peter Lampl said tuition means those

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state providing funding for private tuition on a means-tested basis.

Almost half of the 2,251 children asked used tutors to help with work in general, while a third were studying for a particular test.

The trust is calling for a voucher system, funded by the pupil premium for lower income families. It would also help private tuition firms provide a proportion of their work for free to disadvantaged children.

Meanwhile, the National Education Union is calling for all private home tutors to face criminal record checks.

**Digging deep:** Metro's story yesterday

the conduct of local young people emerging from various upper schools and the expressions - or lack of expression - on their faces.

**Heather, Bradford**

■ Wholly disagree with the Sutton Trust. It is not the state's job to provide means-tested additional tutoring. My wife worked extra night shifts to fund the tutoring for our daughter. We didn't expect anything beyond that from the schools but my daughter also attended the additional lunchtime and after-school clubs teachers gave their time for. Sometimes parents and children have to step up.

**Jon, Hampshire**

■ Our son gets a private tutor once a week but we have to do this as he's in a state school that is woefully underfunded and they are struggling to provide a quality education. All schools need enough money so that no one needs to pay for extra tuition.

**Simon, Wokingham**