

Guide for secondary schools

Raising attainment of disadvantaged pupils in English and maths through volunteer tutoring



Who we are

Action Tutoring supports young people facing socio-economic disadvantage to achieve a meaningful level of academic attainment.

What we do

We are an education charity that partners with schools to deliver tutoring programmes for pupils sitting their GCSEs in maths and English. We work specifically with pupils who are eligible for the Pupil Premium funding and at risk of missing out on a grade 4 in their final exams.



We also work with primary schools supporting pupils to reach national standards in their Key Stage 2 SATs.

We select and train high-quality volunteer tutors who use our specially designed resources to deliver impactful tutoring. We keep in regular contact with our teachers to ensure tutoring remains focused on priority areas.

Online tutoring

We also offer online delivery of our programmes. Pupils are able to connect with their

tutors via our online platform, using computers in your school.

The set-up and structure of these programmes follows the same format as our face-to-face programmes and the volunteer tutors are assessed by the same criteria. A member of our staff team attends the sessions each week to support the pupils, teachers and tutors.

Our tutoring workbooks are uploaded to the platform for the pupils and tutors to work through. The provision is as close to face-to-face delivery as possible.



"[Action Tutoring's Impact Report] shows that it is possible to close the attainment gap and Action Tutoring has had huge success raising attainment. The pupils are proof that regardless of your circumstances, it is possible to get crucial English and maths qualifications. Action Tutoring offers a practical, structured solution. Action Tutoring's vision is one that I fully endorse."

Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP

Former Minister of State for School Standards,
March 2019

Who we work with

Schools

We work with non-selective state secondary schools in England where a higher than average percentage of pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium funding.

Pupils

Within those schools we look to work with pupils who are eligible for Pupil Premium funding and need additional support to secure a grade 4 in the subject they would receive tutoring in.

Action Tutoring's resources have been designed for the curriculum introduced in 2014, aimed at pupils working from grades 3 to 5.

Year 7 catch-up programme

Action Tutoring is aware of the huge impact on pupils of all ages caused by Covid-19 and school closures, and in particular the effect on those eligible for the Pupil Premium. Our Year 7 catch-up programme is designed to support Pupil Premium pupils who did not reach the expected standard in Year 6, so they can make the additional progress they need while facing the challenging transition up to secondary school.



Our Impact

Only 25% of disadvantaged pupils achieve a grade 5 or above in GCSE maths and English, compared with 50% of their non-disadvantaged peers.¹

Pupils who do not achieve GCSEs are more likely to become NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) after turning 16.²

Pupils sit a baseline assessment at the start of their Action Tutoring programme and a progress check in February, roughly halfway through their time with us.



9%

The average progress made by pupils in secondary English between the two assessments.

10%

The average progress made by pupils in secondary maths between the two assessments.

Read more about our impact at:
www.actiontutoring.org.uk/our-impact

How our programmes work



Tutoring sessions take place as a group on the school site once a week before, during or after school hours and last for **1–1.5 hours**. Typically we work with **15–20 pupils** at any one time, with an average ratio of one tutor to two pupils. Programmes run for **15 weeks**, and we aim to deliver **two programmes** with a year group over the academic year.

Our provision includes:

8 to 10 high-quality, DBS-checked and trained volunteer tutors.

Structured pupil workbooks, developed by curriculum specialists specifically for tutoring sessions.

Tutor workbooks containing guidance on how to explain topics and common misconceptions.

A Programme Coordinator to engage pupils, support tutors and manage the school partnership.

Progress analysis and reporting for schools.

Full enrolment, induction and engagement support for pupils.

We seek to work closely with subject teachers to ensure that tutoring complements classroom teaching. All pupils enrolled on our programmes sit a baseline assessment, which is used to develop personalised learning plans. Our tutors use these plans to support their pupils' progress in key topic areas and with subject-specific skills. Pupils are then re-assessed to measure progress and map impact made, identifying gaps in knowledge.

Cost

Our tutoring programmes are subsidised by over 60% through grants and donations, and funding from the National Tutoring Programme. This significantly reduces the amount we ask schools to contribute.

The cost to your school for 15 weeks of tutoring for 18-20 pupils would be **£2,797**. This works out as between £9 and £10 per pupil per session.

Your school can sign up to multiple 15-week blocks to support different age groups or successive blocks to support the same pupils over the whole year.



Why tutoring?

Research by the Education Endowment Foundation has found that a year-long programme of small-group tuition could add as much as **five months' progress** to a young person's schooling.



They found that *"small-group tuition offers an opportunity for greater levels of interaction and feedback compared to whole-class teaching which can support pupils to overcome barriers to learning."* ³

The main barrier for schools wanting to use tutoring is cost. The average cost of a private tutor is £25–30 per hour. ⁴

An external evaluation of Action Tutoring's GCSE results showed that pupils attending seven to eight sessions made up to half a grade more progress than their non-tutored peers. ⁵

In 2020–21, we worked with:

156
schools in
nine regions

5,528
pupils

2,749
volunteer
tutors

"The resources provided have plugged gaps in learning and have been an effective revision aid. Pupils have openly informed the school that they felt more confident going into the examinations and the strategies that tutors covered with them significantly reduced stress levels before going into their exams. Pupils' self esteem throughout the year has increased significantly and the relationship that they form with their tutors is a huge part of this. Pupil mindsets changing from 'I can't do this' to 'let's do my very best' is something that the programme scaffolds pupils with fantastically."

Ross Scherer

Year 11 Assistant Principal for Achievement,
Kenton School, Newcastle

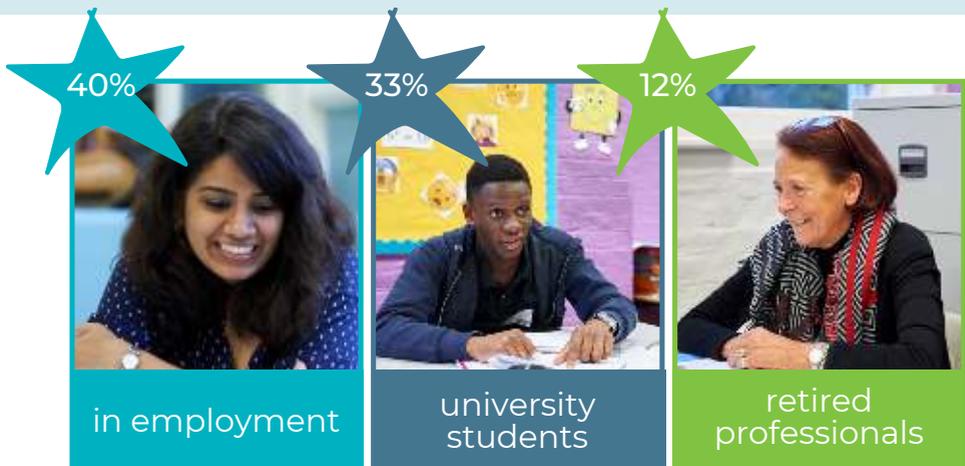
Tutoring can benefit your pupils by:

- Improving their academic attainment in the subject.
- Boosting confidence through individual attention.
- Helping them to develop independent study skills.
- Building on their communications skills by interacting with new adults, helping them prepare for further education, training or employment.

Who are our volunteers?

All of our volunteers go through a strict selection process which focuses on their academic credentials (degree-educated or equivalent, or studying for a degree, and at least a B at A Level in the subject they wish to tutor) and core tutoring competencies. We also complete DBS checks for them.

Volunteers receive an initial two-hour training session. This covers core tutoring skills, safeguarding training, the time commitment and our expectations. Once they have started a programme, they receive ongoing developmental support through our Bright Ideas updates and access to all the training and materials in our tutor resources library.



15% of our volunteers are not currently in employment or selected 'other' under occupation.

“Before I started I was a bit apprehensive but once I got here, my Programme Coordinator put me at ease. I think the best thing about volunteering is the fulfilment, just seeing that they’ve clocked the particular concept that they wouldn’t have got in class, but I’ve been able to break through the barriers and teach it to them – that’s quite satisfying.”

Chike, an Action Tutoring volunteer

Sources cited

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3. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition>
4. <https://www.suttontrust.com/news-opinion/all-news-opinion/tackling-the-shadow-education-system-private-tuition/>
5. https://actiontutoring.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/action_tutoring_impact_evaluation.pdf



"It's dedicated time where you can talk to someone about your learning and where you need help. Knowing you have that extra support has given me more confidence in class."

— A secondary pupil in London

Email hello@actiontutoring.org.uk
Or call 020 3872 5894
www.actiontutoring.org.uk
@ActionTutoring

Registered charity number: 1147175
Registered company number: 8015978

National
Tutoring
Programme 