



## [Using one-to-one tuition to improve educational outcomes](#)

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Drawing on her experience as a [Love to Read](#) tutor – a reading intervention programme devised by education recruitment specialists [Supply Desk](#) – Teaching Assistant Lucy Keeling discusses the key factors to take into consideration when providing students with one-to-one tuition, including the importance of positive pupil-tutor relationships and agreeing upon adjustable and measurable learning objectives.

### The environment

All pupils can benefit from one-to-one tuition or the opportunity to work in a small group with an educator – from those who are performing at a lower learning level, to the more advanced learners. In terms of reading tuition, children who are at a higher level are able to develop the skills required to become more autonomous readers. For those at a lower stage, the opportunity to help the student progress, in a more timely manner, through intensive support is invaluable. For pupils to get the most out of their one-to-one mentoring, the environment needs to be a welcoming, calm and relatively quiet so that the focus and attention of students is maximised.

### The tutor-pupil relationship

When assigning a tutor to a pupil it is essential to take the child's character as well as the tutor's background and previous mentoring experiences into consideration. Fostering a collaborative and trusting relationship between pupil and mentor is a key component of successful tutoring. Working in smaller groups or one-on-one allows tutors to form a close bond with the pupils, which in turn positively impacts upon their drive to learn and increases their potential for success. Behaviour management is also critical and mentors should have the skills to teach and manage a wide range of pupils.

Further to this, children need to be kept engaged – not every pupil enjoys the subject you are teaching – but a great tutor will develop creative ways to make their sessions more appealing. For example, using games or songs can be excellent practices to motivate and encourage children who are less enthused about the subject material. It is important to regularly monitor how pupils are

responding to a session and adapt your approach if a particular mentoring method is not working.

#### Timing

If possible, providing pupils with tuition on a daily basis, even if only for 15 minutes, is highly beneficial. When mentoring sessions become a continuous part of students' daily routine engagement is substantially increased. Currently, I am working with pupils for one hour, four days per week. While not all schools are able to provide this level of support, establishing an ongoing routine has enabled my pupils to really get the most out of the mentoring sessions. The benefit of regular sessions is evidenced by the pupils' rapid development of key reading skills, which are also beneficial in other subject areas.

#### Aims

Once you have completed an initial introductory session with a pupil you can begin to develop some key learning aims to be met. These aims should take into account both the teacher's goals for the child as well as the pupil's personal objectives. Agreeing on learning targets is crucial as this provides the child with a benchmark to measure their success against and something to strive for. At the end of each session, it is important to tick off achievements, whether big or small, as this further incentivises the pupil to keep progressing with their learning. Aims may need to be adjusted if the child finds a task too easy or achieves a goal quicker than expected.

#### The benefits

One-to-one tuition is effective as pupils get that extra support which their teachers cannot always provide. Learning needs can be individually assessed – with strengths and weaknesses taken into account – and goals and sessions can be completely tailored to the individual. Additionally, for pupils who require extra guidance but normally do not have the confidence to ask for help in front of a whole class, one-on-one sessions and the undivided attention of a mentor is extremely valuable.