

Press Release from Tutors' Alliance Ltd.

Parents Urged to Hire a Tutor Early to Beat the Rush

As children across the country prepare to go back to school this week, a professional body for private tutors has reported an unprecedented growth in demand. Despite the difficult economic climate, the competition for university places and jobs has fuelled the number of enquiries from parents. Many tutors are reporting before the start of term that they have limited availability.

Tutors' Alliance is the professional membership organisation for private tutors across the UK, based in Aberdeen. Valerie Kemp, the Managing Director of Tutors' Alliance has reported that agencies are actively seeking tutors to meet the demand. Parents have recognised the benefits of hiring a tutor early in the school year and many self-employed tutors have only a few spaces available.

Despite a poll released this weekend (August 29) by Yougov on behalf of Save the Children stating that parents were struggling to pay the costs of after-school activities, Tutors' Alliance has found that demand for private tuition continues to grow. Average rates for tuition vary between £20 and £40 per hour. A recent report by the Sutton Trust stated that one in five pupils have had a tutor.

A number of factors which have arisen over the past year have contributed significantly to parents' decisions to hire tutors. The competition for university places and jobs shows no sign of abating. The lack of Clearing places this year and wide-spread media reporting of the rush for university places has prompted parents to take early action to try to give their children the best chance of success. In addition, the introduction of the new A* grade at A-Level has led to the establishment of a new target for the brightest pupils. In some areas, spending on education has been cut which means pupils receive fewer lessons per week and dissatisfaction with teaching in schools is a significant motivation behind the decision to hire a tutor. The demand is growing not just at GCSE and A-Level but also for younger pupils. Competition for secondary school entry in the private sector is fierce and with entrance tests generally just after Christmas, there is limited time to prepare.

Tutors' Alliance advises parents to ensure a tutor is suitable for their child. Valerie Kemp says:

"Anyone can set up as a tutor as there is currently no governmental regulation of the industry in the UK. This poses a number of challenges to a parent looking for a tutor who is not only knowledgeable but also suitable for working with children. Parents should either use a reputable agency which thoroughly vets its tutors or if parents are employing self-employed tutors, they are advised to ensure the tutors have Enhanced Disclosures. Tutors ought to show parents their qualifications and references. Parents should remain vigilant and should not leave a child unaccompanied with a tutor. Tutors should provide regular updates of the pupil's progress. One-to-one tuition offers a number of benefits to pupils, the most important of which is instilling confidence. The more sessions a pupil has with a tutor, the more of a chance he or she has to build on that confidence."

Tutors' Alliance is the professional membership organisation for private tutors in the UK. Tutors' Alliance offers membership services for tutors and agencies including insurance, marketing and business support. Tutors' Alliance also provides training for tutors. All self-employed tutors who are members of Tutors' Alliance have Enhanced Disclosures and have been thoroughly vetted to ensure they are able to provide the highest quality tuition in a safe environment. This reduces the burden placed on parents to vet tutors themselves. Free information and advice about tutoring is provided to parents and pupils on the Tutors' Alliance website. Tutors' Alliance is also committed to introducing formal regulation of the private tuition industry.

For further information, please contact: Valerie Kemp, Managing Director, Tutors' Alliance Ltd. 01224 433163. 07889 178 932. valerie@tutorsalliance.co.uk.



Valerie Kemp (left) tutoring a pupil.