



FREE PARENT GUIDE

Does My Child Need a Maths Tutor? An Honest Checklist

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By Ibrahim, maths tutor since 2018 · Updated October 2026

Not every child needs a tutor, and a tutor is not a magic fix. But for the right child at the right time, one-to-one help can change how they feel about maths. This checklist will help you decide.

Signs Extra Help Would Make a Real Difference

- ✓ Maths homework regularly ends in arguments, tears or avoidance
- ✓ A particular topic, such as fractions or algebra, keeps causing problems
- ✓ The school will soon choose Foundation or Higher tier, and your child is on the borderline
- ✓ A big step is coming: starting secondary school, GCSE or A Level
- ✓ Test or mock results have dropped, or are well below the target grade
- ✓ Your child is a few marks away from an important grade, such as a 4 or a 7
- ✓ Your child says "I'm just bad at maths" and has stopped trying
- ✓ Your child has been moved down a set (a lower ability group) and is upset about it

If you ticked two or more, one-to-one help is likely to be worthwhile.

When You Might Not Need a Tutor

Being honest, these situations can often be solved without paying for lessons:

- Your child is making steady progress and is happy in maths lessons.
- It is one topic, and the teacher has offered extra help or a revision session.
- The problem is mainly organisation, which a routine and a revision planner may fix.
- Your child is in Year 7 or 8 and simply needs to practise times tables and number skills.

Try free resources first, such as a **revision checklist** and a **revision planner**, and talk to the teacher. If things have not improved in a few weeks, look at tuition then.

What to Look For in a Maths Tutor

Knows the Exam

They know your child's exam board and tier, and can explain how the marks are given.

Has a Plan

They start by finding out what your child can and cannot do, then follow a clear plan rather than just "homework help".

Keeps You Informed

You get regular, honest updates on progress, not just a lesson count.

Puts Safety First

They have a background check, welcome parents to sit in, and are clear about how lessons work online.

Questions to Ask Before You Book

1. Which exam boards and levels do you teach, and for how long have you taught them?
2. How will you find out where my child is starting from?
3. Will there be a written plan, and how will I know if it is working?
4. Can I sit in on lessons, and how do you keep online lessons safe?
5. What happens if a lesson needs to be cancelled or moved?
6. Is there a free first lesson or trial, so my child can see if they get on with you?

How Long Does It Take?

Be wary of anyone who promises a grade. Progress depends on the starting point, how often lessons happen and how much practice is done in between. As a rough guide, a single weak topic can often be fixed in a few weeks, while moving up a whole grade usually takes a term or more of regular lessons and practice.

Online or Face to Face?

Both work well. Online lessons save travel time, give you access to tutors who know your exam board well, and let parents listen in easily. Using a shared whiteboard and a graphics tablet, an online lesson can be just as clear as sitting side by side. The most important thing is the tutor, not the format.

What You Can Do This Week

- Go through the checklist above with your child and count the ticks.
- Look at the last test or mock paper together, and note the topics that lost the most marks.
- If you are considering a tutor, take the six questions above to your first conversation.

Want Help With Maths at Home?

Book a free 90-minute online lesson. I'll find exactly where your child is and what to do next.

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