



Dedicated tutors deliver tailored one-to-one and group sessions to improve student outcomes

Tutor

Deborah Parsons

Tuition subjects

KS3 and KS4 Mathematics



Background

Deborah Parsons was a Maths teacher for 32 years before she started tutoring KS3 and KS4 pupils in Maths in 2017. We spoke to Deborah about her experience and why she became a tutor for Pearson Tutoring.



I wanted to help students who needed additional support

I wanted to help students who had struggled to make progress during the pandemic. I also wanted to help individual students who needed additional support outside of a regular classroom setting.



Pearson made sure I had everything I needed to get started

The support I have received is excellent. Pearson made sure I had everything I needed when I joined the programme. They provide tutors with resources for each block so there is a strong foundation of materials from the outset. I also like to add my own resources, collected over many years, which I can personalise for the tutoring sessions and tailor to individual students' needs. The Tutor's Guild resources are also excellent – they promote critical thinking within a topic and therefore deepen understanding.



The more students learn from their mistakes, the more confident they become

I like to create a relaxed atmosphere in the sessions where it's OK to make mistakes and to learn from them. Most of my students lack confidence for various reasons, and one-to-one or small group tuition allows them to make mistakes without judgement and make progress. The more successful they are, the more their confidence grows.

I also work with many SEND students, and they always make such good progress. The individual attention means that their challenges are dealt with immediately and they do not plough on making the same mistakes over and over again. They can also ask questions without fear of feeling embarrassed in front of others which helps deepen their understanding. The work with this group can be scaffolded, and adjustments made, such as tweaking the font or background easily to suit the needs of the student. I find that Year 11 students in particular find tuition useful to help them prep for their exams.



Individual attention helps bring out the best in students

I love working with students, it's quite a unique relationship and I do believe the tutees like the personal attention that tuition gives. Tuition is important for so many children whether it's a one-to-one session or in small groups. Students in small groups have the opportunity to work together and help each other out. For example, by using the birds-eye function in Bramble – I can drop a student into another person's area to allow them to work together whilst the third person is otherwise engaged, so no-one is waiting around.

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In addition to subject specific skills, students become better at communicating...

We also have a little bit of fun too in the sessions – my worst joke Wednesdays are becoming quite famous. I sometimes also weave in some games and puzzles. I try to tailor sessions to individual interests where possible – favourite football teams, cycling or marvel comics have all featured recently. In addition to subject specific skills, students become better at communicating e.g., one of my students would not speak at all at school, after a few sessions he began to talk to me, only a few words but it was magical.



I have been amazed by the progress

I have been amazed by the progress of some of my students who are often scoring less than 15% on the pre-tests and then go on to score 80%+ on the post-tests. Research shows that tutoring is the single biggest factor in improving student outcomes which is evident in my experience. Tutoring gives me the opportunity to help young people across the country, and it's so rewarding to get positive feedback from schools who are amazed at the progress students have made.

