# EXTERNAL ONLINE APPOINTMENTS AND PRIVATE TUITION POLICY

| **Policy Owner**<br><br>House Parents and Head of Boarding | **Applies to**<br><br>Prior Park College | **Superseded documents**<br><br>NA |
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| **Associated documents**<br><br>Safeguarding Policy<br>Mobile Device Policy<br>Prevent Duty Policy<br>E-Safety Policy | **Review frequency**<br><br>Every three years (unless the legislation/regulations update before this time)<br><br>**Implementation date**<br><br>1 September 2025 | **Legal Framework**<br><br>KCSIE<br>DfE Tutoring: guidance for education settings<br>Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023<br>Prevent Duty: Guidance for England and Wales 2023<br>Part 1 of Schedule 6 to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA 2015) |

**This policy is reviewed triennially, or more regularly as required, prior to approval by Trustees (if applicable)**

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| **Last reviewed by:** | House Parents (Mr L Andrews and Mrs M Gittins), Head of Boarding (Mrs S Holder) and Head of Compliance (Miss E Wickham) |
| **Date last reviewed:** | May 2025 |
| **Approved by Trustees:** | NA Approved by DH Pastoral (Mrs I Burton) |
| **Date last approved:** | August 2025 |
| **Date for next approval:** | August 2028 |

## 1. Introduction

Prior Park Schools (PPS) is a family of Christian schools based in Bath and Gibraltar. Prior Park College (PPC) and The Paragon School (TP) are incorporated in England as Prior Park Educational Trust Ltd. Prior Park School Gibraltar (PPSG), is incorporated in Gibraltar as Prior Park School Ltd. Both are companies limited by guarantee and registered charities.

The Prior Park Schools mission, underpinned by shared values, is to steward a thriving family of communities with love for the young people they serve at their heart. These vibrant communities cultivate creativity, foster integrity, and transform lives.

Prior Park Schools Values:

Curiosity – Generosity – Courage

## 2. Policy Statement

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of online appointments, including counselling and academic tutoring, has increased. While parents may choose to engage external professionals for 1-to-1 online services for their child, Prior Park College (PPC) must ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students, particularly boarders, when using such services.

There are increasing safeguarding concerns around unregulated private tutors, many of whom may lack enhanced DBS checks or affiliation with accredited agencies.

PPC does not promote or advertise private tutors or external counsellors. Any online tuition or appointments, whether regular or ad hoc, must be arranged by parents/guardians, who take full responsibility for the service provider.

The following guidance outlines the necessary processes for parents/guardians arranging external tuition while students are on site. The school is not able to recommend any tutors, tutoring agencies, or external professionals for online 1-to-1 meetings, however, academic tutors, who have undergone safeguarding checks can be found here: Find a Tutor - The Tutors' Association.

## 3. Booking Online Appointments

- Parents/Guardians must inform House Parents of any online appointments in advance via email. If this is for regular private tuition or external medical appointments (e.g., online counselling), please provide dates and times of all booked sessions.

- House Parents must be provided with the tutor's or service provider's details, including their name, agency affiliation (if applicable), and the level of background checks (e.g., DBS).
- Appointments **must not** be scheduled during the school day (7:00am – 6:00pm Monday to Thursday, and 7:00am – 4:45pm on Fridays).

  Additionally, online appointments **must not** take place during the following times:
  a. Monday – Friday (inclusive): Supper – 6:00pm to 6:30pm.
  b. Saturdays: Saturday Active and Lunch – 7:00am to 1:00pm (or later if your child is involved in sports fixtures).
  c. Sundays: Brunch and Supper – 12:00pm to 12:30pm and 5:30pm to 6:30pm.
  d. Junior bedtime: 8:45pm (Monday to Sunday).
  e. Senior night prayers and bedtime: From 9:30pm (Monday to Sunday).
  f. Allocated prep time – 7:00pm to 8:00pm (Monday to Thursday), unless day prep is completed.
- PPC reserves the right to cancel or end appointments that do not comply with the above requirements.

## 4. Protocols for Students Receiving Online Appointments

- Wherever possible, boarders should avoid making video calls from their bedrooms. A suitable environment for the call must be identified and agreed upon with the Houseparent.
- Boarders should blur their backgrounds when making video calls, to ensure no personal items are visible in the background, and that other students are not within view of the tutor.
- Boarders must not share overly personal information with tutors, including personal contact details or social media accounts.
- Appropriate clothing must be worn for all sessions.
- Boarders should not contact tutors directly. All communication, including private messages, must be handled by parents/guardians.
- Boarders should identify a member of house staff whom they can speak to if they have any concerns. The student must not have further contact with the service provider involved until the matter has been reviewed by the Safeguarding Team.

## 5. Duty Staff Responsibilities

- The House Parent or duty staff will be aware of the session taking place and will be present or nearby to manage any immediate concerns.
- The Houseparent or duty staff should ensure, wherever possible, that students are not using their bedrooms for 1-to-1 video calls with external service providers and should help identify appropriate, supervised areas within the boarding house.
- After the session, the Houseparent or duty staff member must check on the student's wellbeing.
- If the Houseparent or duty staff member is alerted to or witnesses any inappropriate behaviour, language, or information, they must immediately speak to the tutor, explain their concern, and end the session (if still in progress). The incident should then be reported to the Head of Boarding, with full details recorded on the school's safeguarding platform (CPOMs). Parents/guardians must also be informed.

The Houseparent or duty staff will inform the student that they should have no further contact with the service provider involved until the matter has been reviewed by the Safeguarding Team.

## 6. Students Receiving Online Appointments off school site (holidays and weekends).

If parents/guardians choose to use a private tutor or other professional while their child is off-site (e.g., at home during weekends/holidays or with a guardian), the school would not normally be involved. However, if the school becomes aware of unsafe practices that raise safeguarding concerns, it will act in accordance with its safeguarding policies and procedures.

## 7. PLD Usage for Online Appointments and Tuition

Students can use their PLD (Personal Learning Device – devices provided and maintained by the school) for online appointments and private tuition, in the same way the can during the school day. The acceptable policy for IT remains the same.

Students who reside in the Boarding Houses will have access to the school's internet in the evening and at weekends, for personal and non-educational purposes, though all access will remain monitored and filtered as appropriate.

We will filter and monitor the websites visited by students to ensure they comply with the above. This is via Securly, the College's monitoring and filtering software.