

Before watching

1. Read this description of a tutor group and answer the questions below.

*A **tutor group** is a term used in the UK and corresponds to the term "homeroom" in the US. It refers to the system in secondary schools whereby students are taught in different groupings throughout the day. These groupings will often involve students from different year groups and this is called vertical tutoring. A specific tutor group is usually assigned a tutor who will stay with that group for several years. These groupings may also be used for the teaching of some subjects in school.*

- ▶ What is the US term for tutor group?
.....
- ▶ How long does a tutor normally stay with a tutor group?
.....
- ▶ What are tutor groups sometimes used for?
.....

2. **PW** Discuss these questions with a partner.

- ▶ What do you think of this kind of grouping of students?
- ▶ Do you have anything similar in the school?
- ▶ What are the (potential) benefits of a tutor group in your opinion?

While watching

3. Choose the correct option.

1. Martin Bacon is *Principal/a teacher* at Swavesey.
2. Katherine teaches *2/3 languages* at Swavesey.
3. Cameron teaches *science/maths*.
4. Swavesey students are aged between *11 and 18/11 and 16*.
5. Tutor groups are usually based on *age/sex*.
6. The Swavesey tutor groups have students of the *same age/different ages*.
7. The system is called *virtual/vertical* tutor groups.
8. The teacher has students from age *7-11/11-16* in her tutor group.
9. She thinks tutor groups help with *bullying/studying*.
10. According to Martin Bacon, drama *is/isn't* relevant to most students.
11. The school offers *only academic/also non-academic* subjects.
12. Cameron prefers a *practical/theoretical* approach to maths.
13. He tries to make maths interesting by *playing games/making use of modern textbooks*.
14. *All/Some* students learn well from a book.

4. Watch the video again and fill in the gaps in the explanation by Martin Bacon.

Our system is not necessarily (1) of tutoring in this (2) The most typical way is that you have year groups, so students are (3) by year groups and within that year group you will have tutor groups of the same (4) We changed the system, so we have a (5) system and we have what we call (6) tutor groups. So there are small tutor groups of (7) students and there are four students from each year in that tutor group. The idea is that students can help one another and can (8) from one another as they're going through from the school. And actually it helps them be less concerned or (9) about the older students or the bigger students, and similarly the big students don't think all the younger ones are (10) So it's created a very good sort of (11) across the school (12) out of the tutor groups.

After watching

5. **GW** Work in groups of three. Think of different ways that communication and relationships could be improved between different year groups in your school. Make new groups of three and explain your ideas to the other groups for comment and discussion.

6. **PW** Work in pairs. Prepare and then role play a dialogue between two students discussing their opinions of the vertical tutor group system, including both the advantages and disadvantages.

7. **PW** Read this extract. Discuss with a partner why you think there was a strike about vertical tutoring. Write few paragraphs (60 words) giving your own opinions on possible problems with the system.

Vertical Tutoring

Some schools have created tutor groups that contain pupils of all ages, rather than separating different year groups. This is intended to improve relations between different year groups and reduce bullying. Vertical tutoring is often used alongside a house system. However the idea has been controversial amongst pupils in several schools. For example The Crossley Heath School in Summer 2009 had a strike about the issue, other schools have followed suit. (Wikipedia)