

Annual Report 2023/24



Department
for Education



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Introduction from the CEO



Dhruv Patel

Founder & CEO

After 28 years of supporting individuals requiring an alternative and inclusive approach to education, 2023/24 represented a year of change with the focus on equity and liberation for our students rather than inclusivity and equality. By focusing on the equity and liberation, we build equality for our students and inclusive learning environments for them to learn in.

At a time when we are looking to create global citizens, Nisai has consistently supported the principles of inclusion and equality. Whilst we recognise the importance of this, our ability to implement equity is what really drives the inclusion and equality agenda.

Understanding the difference between equality and equity affords us the opportunity to take this one step further and provide our students with the appropriate and personalised approach to education they need.

Equality essentially means providing everyone with the same number of resources regardless of whether everyone needs them. Equity is when resources are shared based on what each person needs to adequately level the playing field.

With many projects over 2023/24 coming to fruition, and many at the point of early-stage conversations, our focus on scalability is linked to the ever-increasing need across the world for quality assured education and training. Our work has included providing educational support to those who have been limited by their location, background, diagnosis, or gender e.g. females, individuals with special education needs, school dropouts and those in rural areas. I have spoken for many, many years on the need for accessible education for those who fall in to 4 key groups. Those who are Dis-advantaged, Dis-engaged, Displaced and those who have both visible and invisible disabilities. I am pleased to say that we have impacted these cohorts in many countries around the world.



Equality



Equity



Liberation

Looking forward to 2024, our work will continue to support marginalised and vulnerable groups both in the UK and internationally. In addition to our support for schools and parents, our work with government organisations will allow us to impact more learners through upskilling local nationals to support local children. There will be much to share over the next twelve months, and I look forward to you being part of our journey, and the journey of our learners.

Governance Report

2023/24

saw the first year after the global pandemic which has changed all our lives, our attitudes and our thinking.

In the field of education one of the outcomes of this has been to examine how curricula can be delivered effectively and efficiently and most importantly in a way which harnesses learners' passion and enthusiasm through inspirational teaching and learning supported by the very best learning platform. At Nisai we have always had as a strategic objective the continued development of our ground breaking learning platform that allows our teachers to use their creativity to develop in their students the knowledge and understanding to be successful. The Nisai Board of Governors continues to support the Nisai Chief Executive and Senior Management Team in the considerable investment in resourcing the development of the Nisai Learning Platform and associated data collection and interpretation and communication. The Board believes this to be essential to managing our approach to maintaining and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

This year has seen yet another expansion in both Nisai's UK and international provision enabling many more students to engage in quality education at a time and place of their choosing. Both spheres of provision complement each other as we work to bridge cultural and linguistic divides and foster understanding and co-operation in an increasingly complex world.



The Nisai Board of Governors is dedicated to monitoring and guiding the Nisai Group towards providing the very best in teaching and learning in the knowledge that education helps to break any cycle of poverty that may exist in the UK and in the those it serves internationally. The curriculum we deliver builds in the promotion of gender equality, the reduction of other inequalities and contributes to our students having the skills and knowledge to live healthier and more sustainable lives as well as nurturing attitudes of tolerance and peace in the numerous societies who now benefit from Nisai's educational approach. The monitoring of this approach through governance is a fundamental part of ensuring the accountability of the Senior Management Team and through them the whole of the organisation.

Nisai has always shown the ability to respond appropriately to external factors. As the international expansion continues, we will need to respond to the differing needs of the students in the countries we engage as well as the United Kingdom. Currently the Nisai Board of Governors and Senior Leadership Team are considering the structures will provide the best way to ensure quality provision in this changing environment. Whatever structure emerges from these debates the objectives will be to promote the interests of learners and to support and challenge the Nisai Chief Executive and Senior Management Team by gathering views, asking questions, examining data, and ensuring learners are at the heart of everything.

Dr. Gordon T Foulkes
 PhD MSc BA Hons
 Chair of Nisai Governors

About Nisai Education Trust

The Nisai Education Trust exists to develop innovation around, and understanding of, the potential of non-traditional learning. We undertake this work because we passionately believe in Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our charitable objective is to advance the education of the public in general (and particularly amongst teachers and educationalists) on the subject of 'online' education and to promote research for the public benefit in all aspects of that subject and to publish the useful results. The charity receives its funding from two sources - from Nisai Group in the form of Corporate Social Responsibility funds, and from external bodies where the charity is commissioned to undertake specific pieces of work that meet its charitable objectives.

Our work has two main strands. Firstly, to promote awareness of non-traditional options to delivering education – knocking away barriers that can unfairly prejudice young people who find it difficult or impossible to access traditional schooling. Secondly, we work together with parents/carers, schools, governmental and non-governmental organisations to put together and evaluate innovative delivery models for vulnerable learners, and to raise awareness of the issues those children and young people face.

"Every child has a right to an education"



Raising Awareness

With support from British Embassies the Trust hosted two key events in Asia that explored innovation and partnership in special education.



In March 2023/24 the first of these took place in Vietnam, exploring how to promote partnership in special education needs (SEN) provision between UK and Vietnam and the event provided case studies from continuing education centers and schools in both countries.



The second event, early in 2024 took place in Kuala Lumpur and focused on 'Delivering inclusion for life: vocational training, meaningful employment and lifelong education for people with learning differences'

Nisai Education Trust's strategic partners for the events were **UNESCO IITE, UNESCO SE Asia (Bangkok), The Ministries of Education of Vietnam and Malaysia, SEMEO SEND**. We were also fortunate to attract a number of innovators in education as delivery partners - **Oasis Place Malaysia, CQ-TEC TVET College Kuala Lumpur, The Inclusive Outdoor Classroom Malaysia, with Venturers Trust Bristol** along with **Staffordshire** and **Greenwich Universities** from the UK.

Working with **UNESCO IITE** and the **Inquirer.net in the Philippines** the Trust delivered a successful webinar series looking at the restructuring of education post pandemic to maximizing inclusion and equity for all learners. The series objectives were to:

- Explore how we might organize education differently in Asia to include all citizens in education in our post-pandemic future.
- Engage policy makers, education leaders and educationalists in an active discussion about how things may change, and what 'best practice' in inclusive education might look like in the future.
- Put front and centre how technologies and information technologies can enable educational inclusion.

Over 300

people took direct part in the webinar series

Approx. 50,000

engaged with the series through web-feeds and social media

Innovation in delivery

2023/24 saw the charity continue to support and learn from innovative literacy projects with refugee parents in London in partnership with Happy Baby Community, and in South Africa with Home of Hope Edu-care children's centre in Cape Town.

We are also pleased to report that 2024 was also the year in which Nisai Education Trust and Staffordshire University won a three-year Knowledge Transfer Partnership grant from UK Research & Innovation. This is the first academic KTP in the field of virtual learning in the UK!

The project will provide additional capacity and expertise to innovate in the delivery of education services model for young people placed further away from mainstream education by the COVID 19 pandemic. The project will also have a focus on synthesizing data to establish the whole system/ life -time savings of blended and on-line learning.



Working with Policymakers

Along with membership of relevant All Party Parliamentary Groups the Trust has increasingly gained support for its work over the last year from MPs with a real concern over educational inclusion and equity - taking the time to talk with us and to challenge the government around the provision and outcomes for those neuro-diverse young people we advocate for, and who constitute the majority of young people using online and blended education at this time.



Market report

United Kingdom

2023/24 saw an increase in requests for flexible solutions for schools in the UK. Schools are seeking flexible scheduling options to better meet the diverse needs of their students, including those who may require alternative learning environments or have other commitments outside of school. Quick turnaround support is essential for students who are on fixed term exclusions or transitioning back into a school setting after a period of absence. Our Core Curriculum and access to long term recordings allows for timely interventions and support.

Schools

are recognising the benefits of incorporating online learning into traditional classroom settings to provide a more flexible and dynamic learning experience. Online learning can cater to diverse learning styles and preferences, allowing students to access educational content at their own pace and convenience. This approach ensures that quality education is accessible to all students, including those with disabilities or special educational needs, as our platform is designed to accommodate various accessibility requirements.

Local Authorities

are recognising the growing need for educational support, especially now due to increasing challenges faced by students. Virtual mentor support offers a viable solution to address this need, providing personalised guidance and assistance to students in our virtual setting. By utilising our virtual mentor support, Local Authorities can provide educational support to a wider range of students, regardless of geographical location or resource constraints.

The growing demands

There is a growing demand for mentor support both within school and college settings as well as outside of traditional classroom environments. There has also been an increase Pre-16 student accessing provision with LA funding places as young people require additional support to help them succeed academically and socially before moving on to Further Education. Mentor support plays a crucial role in providing support to students, contributing to their overall well-being and academic success.

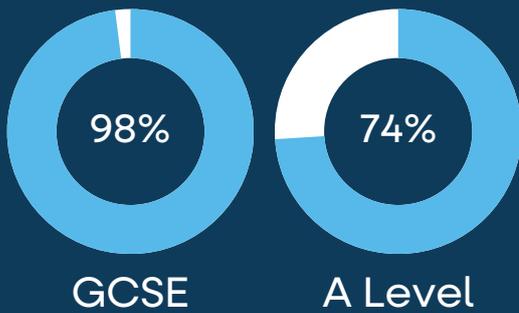
There is a growing demand for resources and technology to support online learning, including laptops, tablets, and computer peripherals. Access to these tools is essential for ensuring that all students have equitable access to educational opportunities. Schools and Local Authorities are seeking support from Nisai to ensure that students have access to the necessary resources and technology to engage effectively in online learning environments.

Emma Gunn

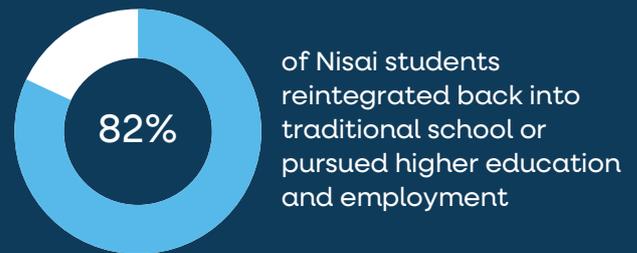
UK Business Development Manager

Our student achievements

UK Pass Rates



Re-engagement rate



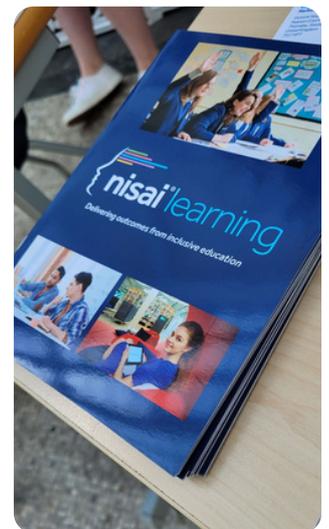
*95% of Nisai's UK student population are enrolled with Special Education Needs or Disability

Events

We have attended many events including the TES SEN show, EPOCH Event, Adulthood Event, Dyslexia Show 2023.

We launched N-HELPP at the Dyslexia Show 2023, bringing together Units of Sound, WordQ and the NVA to improve English Language proficiency.

We launched Nisai Professional Development Institute (NPDl) in Grimsby, the newest branch of Nisai. Working with the experience of The Institute of Productivity, we will provide a new training system for skills development in the workplace.



North America

Nisai’s involvement with Toronto based Quillsoft Ltd, has provided further confidence over 2023/24, that the need for inclusive and equitable education is as great in Canada and the US as it is in other countries where we work.



Following the pandemic the world felt like a far smaller place and as no great surprise the same challenges are affecting North America as they are in other countries.

The use of assistive technology as part of a wider strategy is on the rise and with WordQ this support is helping develop skills in reading and writing. The challenges with literacy across the world are well documented and we cannot underestimate the opportunities improved literacy can provide.



Like in many countries there are pressures surrounding Special Education Needs and the support needed and resource available to support those with learning difference. When consistency for learners with SEN is key, the retention rates of teaching staff is proving concerning.

We have also seen data relating to the challenges surrounding chronic absenteeism, known in the UK as persistent absence. Reporting of data in Canada shows that the percentage of students missing more than 10% of education was in the region of 35%, but across North America, there are significant variances based on province or state.



Whilst home educated numbers peaked during and directly after the pandemic, numbers have remained higher than pre-pandemic levels. Based on a survey carried out in the US, the main reasons given for parents choosing a homeschooling option included wanting a safe educational environment and poor academic quality. The reasons for homeschooling are varied, but ensuring a child receives a well-rounded and appropriate education is key to ensuring that they can follow their chosen pathway.

Our involvement in North America has up to now been very much focused towards technology and supporting as part of a wider strategy. 2024 will represent a move towards being a larger part of that wider strategy and sharing our experience and knowledge of inclusive and equitable education to support learners across North America.

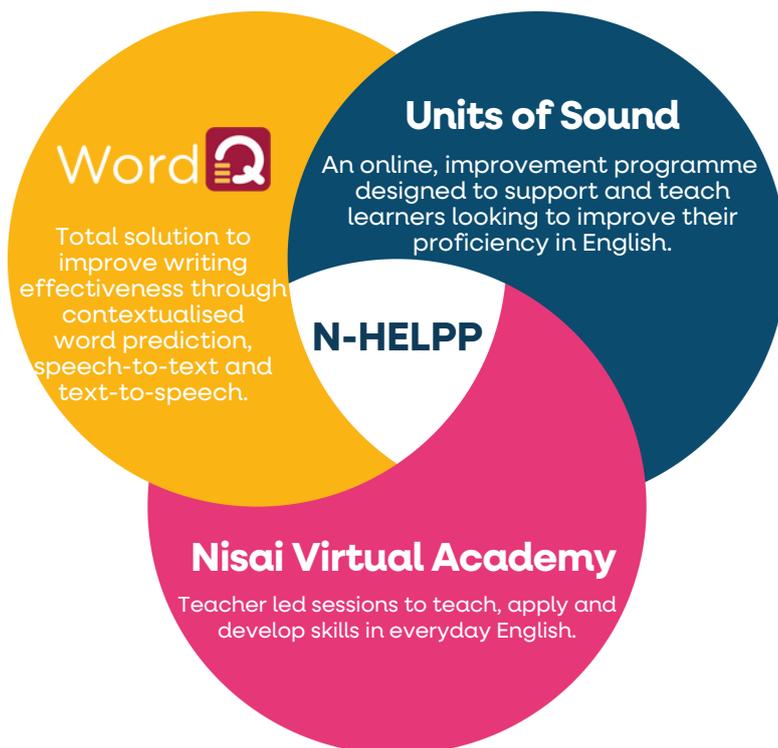
David Lester
Vice President Sales – Americas

Europe & North Africa

Developing and maintaining strong relationships with resellers in the online education sector in Europe and Africa requires strategic planning, cultural understanding, and ongoing engagement.

Our collaboration with partners has helped us understand and work with the potential challenges associated with cultural sensitivities, language and local business practices. When recruiting our reseller partners, we have identified those with extensive knowledge of the education sector with the reach required to engage and support schools and individuals at a local level.

Across Europe and North Africa, we have been working with our trusted partners Starship Management and Alumnize who have introduced Nisai to schools and parents in countries including Kazakhstan and Tunisia. In addition to the access to international curriculum there has, as been the case in many countries, been lots of interest in English proficiency programmes.



Through the use of N-HELPP, we have seen learners supported when English isn't their first language though the use of teaching, online resource and assistive technologies. There has been a learning curve for all parties where adaptations have been made on the delivery of programmes. Where changes have been made to meet the local needs of the students and school, the integrity of the course remains firm with assessments to show the distance travelled and ongoing support from our teaching team.

Over the course of 2023/24, there have been many events and online sessions both with our partners and the schools that they are speaking with. Whilst there is always uncertainty when approaching new markets the local knowledge of our reseller network is vital to ensure that we identify and meet the needs of the local communities.

Building and maintaining relationships with resellers in the online education sector in Europe and Africa has required a nuanced approach that considers the diverse needs and contexts of these regions. By focusing on strong partnership agreements, cultural sensitivity, ongoing support, and adaptability, we are creating a robust reseller network that effectively promotes and expands our online education offerings.

Asia

In Japan, the number of students far exceeded that of the previous year. This factor was attributed to marketing to the target audience for English language development. In addition we have seen an increase in the number of schools who are looking to increase the breadth of curriculum available to their students. There has been a significant shift in thinking by schools commissioning Nisai to support their students.

The need for supporting skills and development in English has been proven by the introduction of English Language proficiency programmes. This has brought together knowledge and best practice from the UK and Canada.

Overall, in 2023/24, Nisai Vietnam continued to provide three different services: Nisai Global School, Nisai Learning, Nisai Professional Development Institute (NPDI). These services aim at different target groups to achieve the mission of providing the opportunity to achieve quality-assured education to more and more students regardless of ages, social origin, property or other status.

This year, we hosted a national seminar on SEND with A-list guests from MOET and the British Embassy. The seminar was a huge success and has laid a stepping stone for Nisai's future focus on SEND students.

Across Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Brunei (SIMPTB), there were many activities and events organised and attended. The focus has been on short, medium and long term strategies which we saw develop over the course of the year. Projects at local and national level have kept the team busy and making best use of the expertise we have helped clients and students to access education and training opportunities.

In 2023/24 Nisai Education Trust have successfully collaborated and done three webinars in collaboration with UNESCO IITE and the Inquirer group, Philippines.

We organised an SEN seminar entitled Inclusion for Life in Feb 2024 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This event will be sponsored and supported by the UK High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Nisai was involved in SEAMEO secretariat events in Bangkok and Timor Leste. These events focused very much on Nisai's ethos of inclusive education and making education accessible to those who need it.



In just two years, Nisai Bangladesh achieved a significant milestone by internationally certifying a cohort of educators, marking a pivotal moment in our commitment to transforming education. Through rigorous training and mentorship, we empowered talented teachers and trainers with the skills to excel globally, leading to the launch of international classes at Nisai Global School – Bangladesh and Nisai Professional Development Institute. This achievement reflects our dedication, supported by our team, stakeholders, and partners, in pushing the boundaries of education to empower future generations.

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