

Ofsted's accreditation visit to Nisai Virtual Academy Limited

On 3 and 4 June 2026, Ofsted visited Nisai Virtual Academy Limited as part of the [Online Education Accreditation Scheme](#). Through this scheme, providers of full-time online education to school-age children in England can apply to the Department for Education (DfE) for accreditation.

Ofsted visits providers to find out whether they meet the minimum standards for online education set by the DfE (the standards). This report sets out what we found during our visit on 3 and 4 June 2026. You can find out whether this provider is accredited by the DfE at [Get Information about Schools](#).

Key findings

- **Nisai Virtual Academy Limited meets all the minimum standards** for online education.
 - The provider has improved the breadth of the curriculum since the previous accreditation visit. The range of areas of learning now on offer exceeds that prescribed in the standards. There is also the same broad variety of activities available for post-16 students as there was at the previous visit.
 - Staff have highly positive relationships with parents/carers and pupils. Teachers ensure that pupils understand what they are learning. They adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs successfully. Teachers know their subjects in depth and use high-quality resources to deliver skilfully designed lessons. Consequently, pupils' self-confidence and attitudes to learning improve considerably during their time at Nisai Virtual Academy Limited.
 - Senior leaders focus on the all-round development of each pupil. This can be seen, for example, in the carefully organised activities to support pupils' wellbeing, which effectively complement the academic provision. As a result, a large majority of pupils experience positive outcomes. The chair and members of the governing body maintain suitable oversight of the provider. They challenge senior leaders to secure continuous improvement, which has helped them to ensure that all the applicable standards are now met. Leaders are now considering ways of making sure that their policy documentation is more consistently kept up to date.
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Who is this online provider?

- Nisai Virtual Academy Limited is an established online education provider, which began operating in 2004. It provides an academic education for pupils aged 11 to 16 years, and for students aged 16 to 25 years who have an [education, health and care \(EHC\) plan](#). Many pupils and students access their education at home. Some receive education from the provider while attending their placing school. All full-time pupils have an EHC plan. The aim of Nisai Virtual Academy Limited is to nurture learners' development by providing personalised support and tailored education.
- Nisai Virtual Academy Limited's operations centre is based in office accommodation in Stockton-on-Tees. Its head office is in Watford. All teaching staff deliver lessons from the premises in Stockton-on-Tees.
- Pupils and students study towards functional skills, GCSE, AS and A-level qualifications. The curriculum includes all the prescribed areas of learning contained in the standards, as well as other subjects in some age groups, such as business studies and psychology.
- Currently, 7 school-age pupils study with Nisai Virtual Academy Limited full time. All these pupils have an EHC plan and all of them live in England. Another 163 school-age pupils study with Nisai Virtual Academy Limited part time.
- Nisai Virtual Academy Limited offers a part-time transition programme for pupils in Year 6. This covers English, mathematics and science only. However, at the time of the visit, no children were taking part in this programme.

How are pupils taught at Nisai Virtual Academy Limited?

- Teachers are all based at the premises in Stockton-on-Tees and teach live lessons. These lessons are recorded to allow leaders to conduct quality assurance and to provide pupils with access to learning that they may have missed through absence. Pupils are typically taught in small groups of approximately 5 and receive lessons between 9am and 3.30pm each day, from Monday to Friday. Lessons are typically 30 minutes long, with some lasting 60 minutes. There are also periods between lessons for completing and returning assignments set by teachers. The timetable includes a wide variety of curriculum subjects. There are also online sessions covering pupils' wellbeing and health, as well as a range of virtual clubs, such as book club and creative club. There is also 'Critter Club', which enables pupils to share pictures and information about their pets.
- The provider's online platform, designed in-house, has a substantial range of functions and facilities. Features include group and private chat functions, an interactive whiteboard and a slide presentation tool. Teachers also have access to information about each pupil's needs and aptitudes, which is summarised in a one-page profile. This feature provides effective support for teachers in planning

and delivering the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. Leaders have trained teachers well in how to use these resources.

- Teachers plan and deliver well-structured lessons, using assessment effectively to meet the needs of pupils. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge. They check pupils' understanding regularly throughout each lesson and adapt their teaching as needed. Teachers have audio and video facilities to communicate with and supervise pupils. However, staff communicate with most pupils using public and private chat functions because of pupils' needs related to mental health and anxiety issues. There is also a break-out room facility to enable teachers to have longer communications with individual pupils in private if there are more complex concerns. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and pupils behave very well in lessons.
- There is a broad range of subjects on offer for school-age pupils at Nisai Virtual Academy Limited. In the post-16 age group, students can study for a variety of suitable qualifications, which are appropriate to their needs and abilities. These include functional skills awards, GCSEs, AS levels and A levels. The provider's overall approach to teaching and the effective use of high-quality resources have a positive impact on pupils' learning progress, confidence and engagement.

What are Nisai Virtual Academy Limited's arrangements like for keeping children safe?

- **Ofsted's visits to online providers can give only a limited level of assurance on the effectiveness of safeguarding, compared to our inspections of schools and other providers of face-to-face education and training.** However, we found that the arrangements for keeping children safe at Nisai Virtual Academy Limited are appropriate.
- There are suitable systems in place to report safeguarding concerns, and leaders and staff have received appropriate training. Staff report concerns to the designated lead for safeguarding. Where appropriate, the designated lead alerts the commissioning school or the safeguarding team at the relevant local authority. There is an online recording system, which is up to date and detailed. Leaders respond promptly and thoroughly to concerns.
- A suitable filtering and monitoring system is in place which covers all devices, including those used by staff. There are daily reports of online activity by pupils, which are checked by the designated lead for safeguarding. Any concerns identified are shared with parents and the appropriate agency. Pupils all receive training from the provider in the safe use of the online facilities.
- The provider's safeguarding policy is suitable and is appropriately adapted to the context of online provision. Leaders make thorough checks on the suitability of staff and governors. The provider has an appropriate risk assessment policy and leaders carry out thorough assessments to minimise risks that they have identified. Leaders provide pupils and parents with substantial advice on

safeguarding and online safety, which is available on the pupils' and parents' portals.

What do pupils and parents and carers think about Nisai Virtual Academy Limited?

- Parents who expressed opinions to the inspector were highly complimentary about the provider. They reported no instances of bullying and said that staff teach their children how to stay safe online. Positive comments received about the provider included, 'I can't fault them.'
- The inspector also received highly positive comments from pupils in their survey responses. They stated that they enjoy learning at the provider and that teachers are very helpful. They used words like 'fantastic' to describe Nisai Virtual Academy Limited, along with comments such as they 'love the school'.
- Parents appreciate the supportive communications that leaders provide. Comments included a reference to the 'visibility' of the help and encouragement their child is given. The parents' and pupils' portals are considered especially useful in this regard.
- Officers from commissioning local authorities who spoke with the inspector were very impressed by leaders' clarity and promptness of communication. Among many positive comments made about the provider were examples such as, 'I can't praise them highly enough.'
- Parents expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their children's improved attitudes to learning, using phrases such as 'fully motivated and engaged'. There was also praise for teachers' patience and understanding in supporting their children's development.

About the visit

- This is Nisai Virtual Academy Limited's second accreditation visit. Mark Quinn, His Majesty's Inspector (HMI) was the lead inspector.

Compliance with the Department for Education's standards for online education

This section reports on how well Nisai Virtual Academy Limited meets the standards for online education.

Nisai Virtual Academy Limited meets all of the applicable standards for online education set out by the DfE. The standards that are not applicable to Nisai Virtual Academy Limited are listed below.

The full list of standards can be found in [DfE's guidance on meeting the online education standards](#).

Section 1. Quality of education provided (curriculum)

The provider meets all the standards in section 1 of the standards.

Section 2. Quality of education provided (teaching)

The provider meets all the standards in section 2 of the standards.

Section 3. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provider meets all the standards in section 3 of the standards.

Section 4. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provider meets all the standards in section 4 of the standards.

Section 5. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The provider meets all the standards in section 5 of the standards.

Section 6. Provision of information

The provider meets all the standards in section 6 of the standards.

Section 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The provider meets all the standards in section 7 of the standards.

Section 8. Quality of leadership in and management of the service

The provider meets all the standards in section 8 of the standards.

Standards that do not apply to this provider

The following standards do not apply to this provider:

- **Standard 5.8** only applies if a staff member lives or has lived outside of the UK
- **Standards 5.11, 5.12, 5.13, 5.14, 5.16, 5.17, 5.18** only apply where the provider uses supply staff
- **Standard 5.22** only applies if a proprietor lives or has lived outside of the UK
- **Standard 6.10** only applies where a report on the provider following a quality assurance visit has been published under the Online Education Accreditation Scheme at the time of the visit

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