

Ofsted's accreditation visit to Eton Academy

On 18 and 19 September, Ofsted visited Eton Academy 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. This report sets out what we found during our visit on 18 and 19 September. You can find out whether this provider is accredited by the DfE at [Get Information about Schools](#).

Key findings

- **Eton Academy meets all the minimum standards** for online education.
 - Supported by a committed chief executive officer (CEO), the enthusiastic and dedicated senior leadership team has established a culture of inclusivity and care for pupils who attend Eton Academy. Leaders have high academic expectations for all those who study at Eton Academy.
 - A significant strength of Eton Academy is the support that staff provide for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Frequent communication with parents by expert staff helps to ensure that teaching strategies accurately meet the individual needs of pupils.
 - Leaders have ensured that the full breadth of curriculum areas required by the Online Education Accreditation Scheme standards (the standards) are in place. However, the recently implemented scheme of work for physical education, while being carefully adapted for its online context and meeting the requirements of the standards, lacks some details about specific activities in some year groups. Leaders accept that further development of this scheme of work is an ongoing priority. Similarly, leaders acknowledged that new systems recently introduced to store and collate pupils' work over time is at an early stage of implementation.
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Who is this online provider?

- Eton Academy is a global provider, based in Salford, that delivers full-time education to pupils from England and a wide range of other countries. Pupils between the ages of seven and 16 years attend the setting to receive full-time education. Pupils learn from their home environment and do not attend a physical school.
- Pupils who attend Eton Academy study a broad curriculum that is based around the English national curriculum. Schemes of work are derived from a commercial product, which leaders have carefully amended to take full account of the setting's online context.
- Currently, 32 school-age pupils study with Eton Academy full time. None of these pupils has an [education, health and care \(EHC\) plan](#). Two live in England. No school-age pupils study with Eton Academy part time.
- Leaders have designed Eton Academy's curriculum to include all pupils. Individualised education plans created for all pupils with SEND ensure clear strategies are in place to help them learn. Similarly, individualised learning plans provide effective support to pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils swiftly become competent in spoken and written English.

How are pupils taught at Eton Academy?

- Classes and activities at Eton Academy are undertaken live. Staff and pupils are always visible during lessons due to their cameras always being active.
- Pupils are taught in classes organised into year groups. Specialist teachers, who have strong knowledge of the subjects they teach, oversee individual subjects. They teach small groups that typically contain no more than six pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and consistently demonstrate, in their teaching and interactions, the setting's core values of providing high-quality care for pupils and ambitious academic expectations.
- Teaching promotes pupils' self-motivation and takes account of their needs. A core strength of the school is the support provided for pupils with SEND. Expert staff in the setting's SEND department work in partnership with parents and pupils to develop and implement appropriate programmes of support. As a result, all pupils, irrespective of their needs, receive sequences of lessons that help them to succeed in a wide range of subjects.
- Teachers' skilful questioning routinely enables them to check pupils' understanding. Additionally, regular end-of-module assessments and end-of-year examinations test pupils' long-term retention of knowledge. Teachers use the information gained from assessments to help amend their curriculum planning. Older pupils have opportunities to study to gain iGCSE qualifications in a wide range of subjects.

- Teachers make effective use of technology and high-quality resources to support learning and make lessons interesting. The recent introduction of a new electronic teaching platform has increased the variety of tools available to teachers to help them deliver their lessons and provide effective feedback on the work that pupils produce. Additionally, leaders have begun to use the new teaching platform to archive and analyse effectively the work that pupils produce over time.

What are Eton Academy'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 Eton Academy are appropriate.
- Safeguarding is at the core of Eton Academy's operations. The designated safeguarding lead and her deputies are well trained and demonstrate a secure knowledge of safeguarding. The setting's safeguarding policy pays due regard to the most up-to-date guidance from the Secretary of State and takes appropriate account of the setting's online context. The policy is implemented consistently by staff. Knowledgeable staff know how to respond to concerns and keep up to date through frequent and comprehensive training. Records show that leaders' responses to the very few incidents that have occurred have been rapid and appropriate.
- The proprietor and leaders have ensured that Eton Academy's computer systems are safe and well protected from any malicious online activity. They are subject to appropriate filtering and monitoring processes to shield pupils from online threats. The CEO of the company routinely probes the system to check that the protections are working. Additionally, leaders provide parents with appropriate guidance and support regarding the purchase and set-up of the devices and connections used by pupils to access lessons.
- Health and safety procedures are implemented effectively. The setting has detailed risk assessments. These show that leaders are knowledgeable about the risks that may impact on pupils and staff and that leaders have implemented appropriate actions to mitigate them.

What do pupils and parents and carers think about Eton Academy?

- Pupils who responded to the online questionnaire or who spoke with inspectors typically have positive views of Eton Academy. Pupils said they liked the fact that

they did not need to travel away from home to access their education. Pupils also like the way teachers make learning fun, for example through successful participation in national engineering competitions. Pupils also praised the guidance they receive that helps them keep safe in an online environment.

- Parents and carers are the sole commissioners of places at Eton Academy. Those who responded to the online questionnaire or who spoke with inspectors expressed their delight with the quality of education their children receive and the ease of communication with teachers and leaders at Eton Academy. Parental comments highlighted the quality of care provided for their children by staff. This included praise for staff's swift communication to check on pupils' welfare with parents following an absence from the start of a lesson. Parents specifically praised the inclusivity of Eton Academy, including the help they receive from SEND specialist staff, which they said enables their children to access learning and thrive.

About the visit

- This is Eton Academy's first accreditation visit. Mr John Nixon, His Majesty's Inspector (HMI) was the lead inspector, accompanied by Mr Mark Quinn HMI.

Compliance with the DfE's standards for online education

This section reports on how well Eton Academy meets the standards for online education. It is included primarily for the benefit of the DfE, to help inform their decision whether to accredit Eton Academy.

Eton Academy meets all of the applicable standards for online education set out by the DfE ('the standards'). The standards that are not applicable to Eton Academy 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 1.8** only applies where the provider has at least one full-time pupil of above compulsory school age
- **Standards 5.11, 5.12, 5.13, 5.14, 5.16, 5.17, 5.18** only apply where the provider uses supply staff
- **Standard 5.23** only applies where an enhanced criminal check is made on a proprietor
- **Standard 6.3** only applies where a provider has a governing body
- **Standards 6.5, 6.10** only apply where a report on the provider has been published under the Online Education Accreditation Scheme at the time of the visit
- **Standards 6.8, 6.9** only apply where at least one full-time pupil at the provider is wholly or partly funded by a local authority

Contact details for Eton Academy

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