

Academy 21

Parent & Carer Information Pack

All you need to know about
Academy21, our provision, and
how we will support your child.



Making a difference, together.

Academy21 is the UK's leading online alternative provision specialist.

We've partnered with schools and local authorities nationwide to provide high-quality, flexible education for students who need a different approach to learning. Combining proven pedagogy and expert teaching with a supportive, innovative learning environment, our mission is to get every child engaged and succeeding — ready for whatever their bright future holds.

Welcome statement from Executive Head

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Academy21 and for considering our alternative provision for your child.

I am pleased to share with you more about the support we provide in partnership with schools and local authorities.

You are in good company. We have been teaching online for nearly two decades, and thousands of parents and carers see their children flourish with Academy21 each year.

No matter the reason or how long a student is with us, everyone gets the full support of our teachers and the opportunity to thrive. As someone who has been a Headteacher across both Primary and Secondary age ranges for over ten years, I've seen the impact that passionate and skilled teachers can have.

Our teachers care, they are also, experienced and fully qualified. They have taught in UK schools and are fully trained in how to teach online to engage young people. We are a provision with inclusion at its heart.

We are the first online alternative provision to be accredited by the Department for Education, and everything we do is designed to provide the very best education experience — from our teaching to our flexible environment.

Throughout their time at Academy21, your child will be treated as an individual and challenged to be the best version of themselves.

We will support them to build relationships with our teachers and enjoy their learning. Our courses are all based on the national curriculum and are designed to promote as much engagement and interaction as possible.

Through our combination of expert teachers, live lessons and a supportive environment, we help children to connect with their subjects and build confidence. We also support reintegration back to school or to move into other education options, whenever that is the best path for the individual pupil.

If you have any questions after reading this pack, please do speak with your child's school or your local authority.



Amy Husband
Executive Head of Academy21

"Schools and local authorities value the quality of the information received about pupils they place at Academy21.

They praise the responsiveness of the service. In conversation with inspectors one such told us that 'I am confident they wouldn't take on a new pupil if they couldn't meet that pupils' needs. They are not in the business of setting up a young person to fail.'

Ofsted Report 2024

What is Academy21?

Since 2011, Academy21 has supported thousands of students across the UK to reconnect with their education through:

- Live, interactive lessons in virtual classrooms
- Fully qualified, experienced teachers
- Small class sizes of 15 students
- Extra support for learning and wellbeing

Our team is dedicated to providing high-quality, flexible learning for every child we work with. Academy21 is accredited by the Department for Education – [read our Ofsted report here](#).

Online alternative provision

Online learning offers a different path for pupils who may need some time away from a traditional classroom environment for a range of reasons.

The right support for your child

At Academy21, we adapt our provision to your child's needs. We offer flexible timetables, a wide range of national curriculum subjects, and lots of support along the way.

Working together with you

We believe in the power of partnership. That's why we work closely with schools, and students to get the best outcomes for each young person.

Who do we support?

We support children and young people across the country in partnership with their schools, local authorities, or specialist provision units.

Academy21 is fully inclusive, working with young people who face many different challenges. Some pupils may have special educational needs (SEN) that make the classroom too overwhelming, while others may be working through physical or mental health difficulties.

Our flexible approach means we can provide the right support for your child's unique journey and goals — whether that's short-term help to get back into school or a longer-term solution for ongoing health or educational needs. All our teachers have experience supporting children with a range of different needs, and they know exactly how to make online learning accessible, engaging, and effective.

With a track record of success helping numerous families, we're committed to making sure your child reaches their full potential, no matter their starting point.

Who are our teachers?

Our fully qualified teachers are the heart and foundation of your child’s learning journey, bringing understanding and expertise to every lesson.

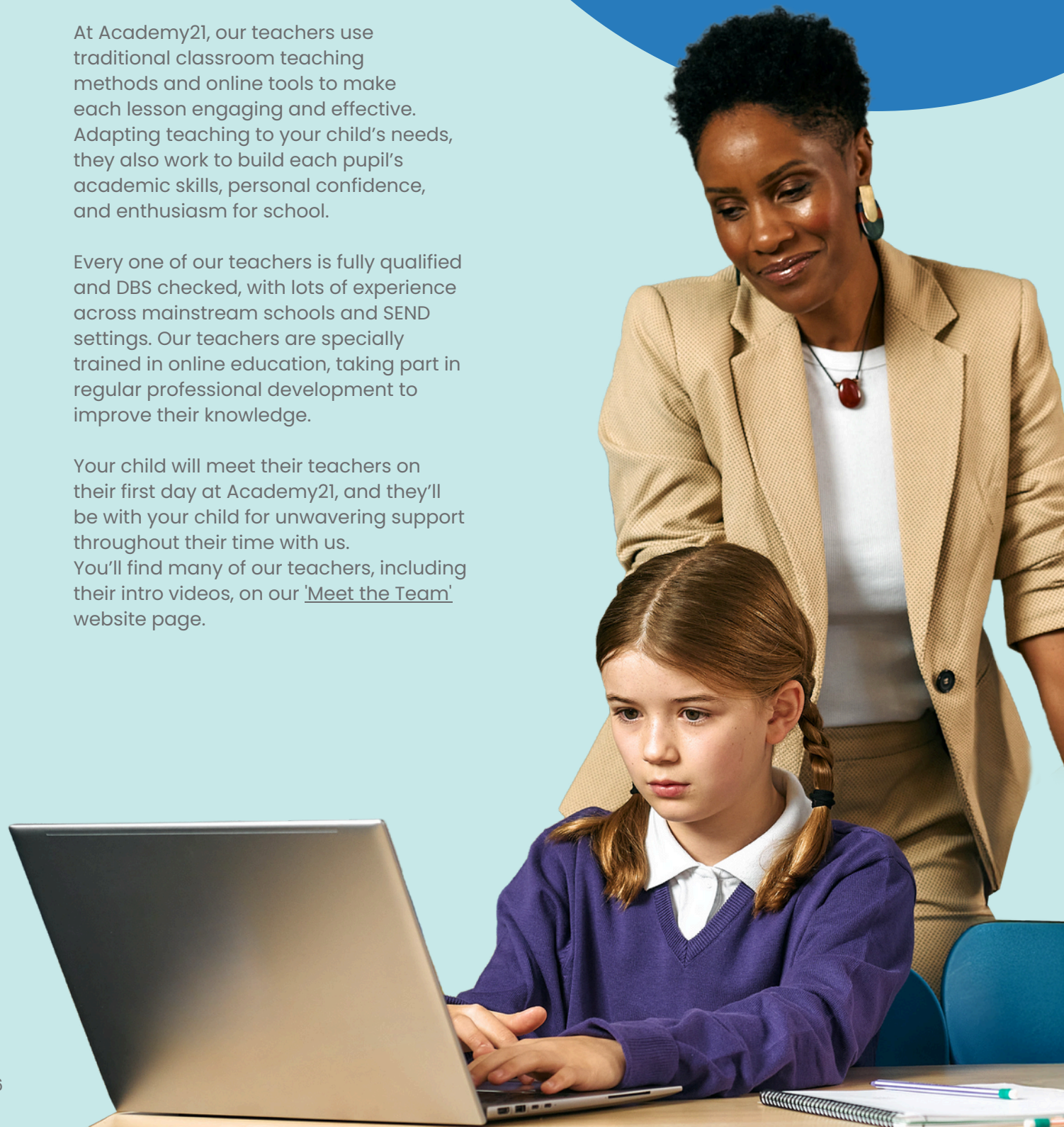
At Academy21, our teachers use traditional classroom teaching methods and online tools to make each lesson engaging and effective. Adapting teaching to your child’s needs, they also work to build each pupil’s academic skills, personal confidence, and enthusiasm for school.

Every one of our teachers is fully qualified and DBS checked, with lots of experience across mainstream schools and SEND settings. Our teachers are specially trained in online education, taking part in regular professional development to improve their knowledge.

Your child will meet their teachers on their first day at Academy21, and they’ll be with your child for unwavering support throughout their time with us. You’ll find many of our teachers, including their intro videos, on our [‘Meet the Team’](#) website page.

“I’ve gone to many schools and met many teachers, I always struggled to be interested in lessons, but my teacher is able to make the lesson interesting, and engages with us which I appreciate so much. Makes me enjoy school, so thank you!”

Daisy
Year 7 Student



What will your child learn in Key Stage 2?

Our year 5 and 6 curriculum combines reading, writing and maths with essential PSHE, wellbeing, and oracy content interwoven throughout.

We focus on building strong relationships through adaptive, trauma-informed teaching. Delivered by our expert teachers, live lessons are designed to engage, build confidence and prepare students for their future studies.

- Live lessons with UK-qualified, experienced teachers with a focus on relational teaching and consistency
- 3 x 40-minute lessons each day, 5 days a week
- Half-termly theme-based units of work to equip students for transition by the end of the year
- Highly engaging, interactive and varied class content comprising elements such as; circle time, teamwork, movement, turn taking, speaking and listening

Sample Key Stage 2 Timetable

AM	or*	PM	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI
9:05 – 9:45		12:50 – 13:30	Reading and Wellbeing	Reading and Wellbeing	Reading and Wellbeing	Reading and Wellbeing	Reading and Wellbeing
9:50 – 10:30		13:35 – 14:15	Writing and PSHE	Writing and PSHE	Writing and PSHE	Writing and PSHE	Writing and PSHE
60 MIN BREAK (AM) OR 15 MIN BREAK (PM)							
11.30 – 12.10		14:30–15:10	Maths and Social Skills	Maths and Social Skills	Maths and Social Skills	Maths and Social Skills	Maths and Social Skills
BREAK							

*Students attend either the morning programme or the afternoon programme

Key Stage 3: Year 7-9

40-minute lessons | 1 lesson per day in each subject | Monday to Thursday*

Available at two levels, our Key Stage 3 Skillbuilder curriculum gets students re-engaged with their learning and builds strong foundations for your child’s future GCSE studies.

Key Stage 4: Year 10-11

40-minute lessons | 1 lesson per day in each subject | Monday to Thursday*

At Key Stage 4, we offer GCSE courses that can be studied over one or two years, functional skills courses, and optional PSHE classes — all designed to help your child achieve their best and prepare for their next steps.

*May have Friday sessions if the school has commissioned them

What to expect

When your school or local authority registers your child with Academy21, the first step will be to give your child their login details.

These will be an Academy21 email address and temporary password. These will come directly from the organisation that has booked the lessons with us.

Try to use a desktop computer or laptop if possible. When your child logs in for the first time using the details provided, they will be asked to set up their own password.

When they log in, the first thing they will see is their home screen. It contains details of their timetable, links to support and links to join their classes. The classroom links will only work when there is a class to join.

There will be lots of help available to your child. For example, there is an induction video that will show them all the features of the platform which they can view any time. We also run a live induction class every week.

We recommend everyone attends the induction class once, to help them settle in and know what to expect.

Ensuring safety and comfort of students is our priority

Safeguarding is of the highest priority to us at Academy21.

We have a range of measures in place to ensure your students receive a safe and comfortable experience with us. Our robust Safeguarding Policy operates alongside other key measures, including consistent teachers at Key Stage 2, so we can be aware of any signs of change or welfare concerns in your pupils.

Our teachers are reactive and responsive, checking in regularly with students and monitoring wellbeing alongside our Primary partners. Academy21 staff are fully trained on safeguarding by our Safeguarding team, led by the DSL, ensuring the safety of students is at the forefront of everything we do.

We work closely and collaboratively with our partners so that our approach is suitable for your student needs and you will have access to our online Portal, as well as lesson by lesson updates and attendance reporting to track your students' progress.



Join the Class

Click this button to join your live lessons.

Activity Alerts

This view provides an overview of your homework, quizzes and more!

Today's Timetable

This view lets you see today's shedule of live lessons to attend

Notice Board

This view lets you check reminders, news and comments from teachers or the administrative team.

What do lessons look like?

The Academy21 virtual classroom is easy to use and designed for the best online learning experience.

Our main classroom window is an interactive whiteboard where students can interact directly with activities and use various tools as directed by their teacher. Surrounding the whiteboard, your child will find a range of 'pods' and tools for different ways of learning and communicating.

For example, students can message their teacher privately or share their thoughts with the wider class via the main chat pod. They don't need to have their camera on to engage, either, as they can raise their hand, react with emotions, and take part in polls, quizzes, and other immersive activities.

All useful class materials and links are easily accessible.



"Pupils are closely supervised by staff at all times.

Staff are kept fully informed of the vulnerabilities and needs of the pupils they teach in each class. This means they are highly attuned to pupils' needs and the provider's records show they routinely flag any concerns to leaders."

Ofsted Report 2024

Frequently asked questions

What does my child need to get started learning from home?

Your child can join Academy21 lessons from anywhere as long as they have access to a computer or laptop with an internet connection.

A headset and microphone are required to hear and speak in class — but pupils don't have to talk aloud if they're not yet comfortable. All communication is then recorded and saved for child protection purposes.

How do we access the school platform and lessons?

When your child joins us, they'll receive a dedicated username and password. This gives students secure access to all lessons and a personalised dashboard, where they can:

- View their timetable
- Watch recordings of missed lessons
- Submit completed activities

[Watch our portal video here.](#)

What should I do if my child needs to be absent?

You can report any illness or absence directly to your child's school or local authority who commissioned the placement with us, who will then update your child's attendance on the Academy21 platform.

What should I do if there's a technical issue?

We provide live IT support to every pupil and mentor, available at any point during the school day. Just have your child head to the Support page in their portal and click 'Live Support' for help. Or, if they can't log in to the portal, they can also access live support from our website at academy21.co.uk/IT-support.

What should I do if I have questions or feedback?

You can raise any questions about your child's placement at Academy21 with your child's school or local authority who commissioned the placement with us. If your query needs escalating, every school and authority we work with has a dedicated customer service team they can get in touch with directly.

It is important we are able to speak to the commissioner of the placement to ensure communication is clear, but we are absolutely ready to receive feedback or queries from parents/carers via your child's school or authority. We welcome your views on your child's time with us.

How can you be involved as a parent or family member?

There are lots of ways you can help your child get the most out of Academy21.

At Academy21, your child will always have the support of our teachers, and our support teams. As a parent, the additional support you can bring them will be invaluable in boosting their confidence and helping them transition back into the right educational path.

Encourage your child to join in

Active participation in lessons will boost your child's learning and understanding and help them develop more confidence in connecting with their teacher and classmates.

You can support your child's participation by:

- Encouraging them to use the classroom tools to ask questions and join discussions
- Talk to them after lessons to hear what they've learned
- Keep their school updated on any changes that might affect their learning

Create a great learning environment

A dedicated learning space can be a big help in getting your child feeling focused and positive, and the same goes for a solid daily routine.

Some of our top tips for a great learning setting include:

- Choosing a quiet space with minimal distractions
- Staying organised with all necessary equipment within reach
- Building regular breaks, physical activity, and rest into the day
- If your child is accessing from home and using their camera, you can support them by ensuring good supervision and a space where there is an appropriately quiet background whilst their camera and microphone are on.

Stay connected with school feedback

Keeping connected with your child's school or local authority who commissioned the placement. This is the best way to stay updated on their progress, celebrate their achievements, and provide the right support at home.

They can provide you with updates, reports and information on the programme they and you have set up for your child with Academy21. They can also make changes to this programme with us after any discussions with you.

We recommend that parents:

- Regularly check in with their designated contact for updates
- Read all progress reports sent home
- Use this information to set goals and offer encouragement

Support your child's online safety

As part of our commitment to safeguarding at Academy21, we teach your child about the risks of the internet and how to use the web safely and positively.

To support your child's safety online, you can also:

- Set clear rules about internet usage, including social media
- Use parental controls to block inappropriate websites
- Talk openly with your child about what they're doing online
- Ensure full supervision if they are accessing Academy 21 from home.

You can also find more helpful information about internet safety from:

- [NSPCC](#)
- [Think UK Now](#)
- [Saferinternet](#)



"There is a driven focus on providing the best online provision possible for the pupils they serve. This extends to all aspects of Academy21's work, including the quality of teaching and safeguarding."

Ofsted Report 2024



**First Online
Alternative
Provision**
Accredited
by the DfE



Department
for Education

Your child's journey starts here

At Academy21, we're committed to nurturing potential and helping every student to flourish, no matter their circumstances.

Our online alternative provision can bring your child:

- Experienced, qualified teachers who understand their needs
- Interactive, engaging lessons in small class sizes
- A safe and supportive environment
- A proven pathway to regaining confidence and achieving goals

Next steps

We support thousands of families with online provision each year, and we'd be delighted to help make a difference for your child too.

If you are interested in exploring Academy21 as an option for your child, get in touch with your child's school to discuss how online alternative provision could work for you.

Academy 21

The Online Alternative Provision Experts ■

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