

# A Flexible Solution For Safeguarding Education

SUCCESS STORY

At Potteries Educational Trust, education is about people first. With multiple schools to protect and limited IT resources, cybersecurity had to be strong without being intrusive. By working with ESET, the Trust simplified security, reduced daily pressure on staff and gained peace of mind, allowing everyone to focus on learning.



## The Customer

**Potteries Educational Trust (PET) is a multi-academy trust serving young people from the age of three through to post-16 education. Our mission is to shape young people to transform the future by improving educational outcomes across Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire and beyond. We focus strongly on innovation, care and ensuring that every learner and member of staff is supported to succeed and thrive.**

---

## The Relationship

### **Q: What role does cybersecurity play for the Trust?**

---

**A:** Cybersecurity is absolutely central to what we do. It underpins safeguarding, protects sensitive student and staff data, ensures compliance with GDPR and DfE guidance, and supports uninterrupted teaching and learning. Strong cybersecurity also helps maintain the trust placed in us by parents, learners and the wider community.

---

### **Q: What challenges did you face prior to working with ESET?**

---

**A:** Before partnering with ESET, we were managing multiple security tools across our schools, which created complexity and inconsistency. Endpoint protection varied between sites, visibility of threats was limited and administration was time-consuming. This increased our overall security risk and placed additional pressure on a relatively small IT team.

---

### **Q: What would a cyber breach mean for PET?**

---

**A:** A cyber breach could have serious consequences, from exposing sensitive data and disrupting education, to financial costs and reputational damage. Most importantly, it could impact the wellbeing and safety of our learners and staff. Cybersecurity is therefore critical to protecting our learning environments and maintaining confidence across our communities.

---

## The Solution

### **Q: How did you come across ESET?**

---

**A:** We discovered ESET through trusted sector recommendations and our own research into cybersecurity providers with a strong track record in education. ESET's reputation for reliability, effective protection and low impact on system performance made it stand out.

---

### **Q: Why was it important to partner with a vendor that understands education?**

---

**A:** Education environments are unique. You need strong protection that doesn't interfere with teaching and learning. A vendor that understands these nuances can deliver security that is robust but unobtrusive. That sector-specific understanding was essential for us.

---

### **Q: How does ESET support the Trust across different schools and settings?**

---

**A:** ESET provides a unified security platform that delivers consistent protection across all our academies. At the same time, it allows flexibility so individual schools can tailor settings to their specific needs. This balance of standardisation and autonomy is incredibly valuable in a multi-academy trust.

---

## The Results

### **Q: How was the onboarding and implementation process?**

---

**A:** The onboarding process was smooth and very well supported. ESET provided clear documentation, training and responsive technical assistance. We were able to deploy the solution efficiently across multiple sites with minimal disruption to staff or learners.

---

### **Q: Can you give an example where ESET's support made a critical difference?**

---

**A:** During a suspected phishing incident, ESET's support team responded immediately with clear, practical guidance. They helped us isolate affected endpoints, contain the issue and prevent escalation. Their rapid response minimised downtime and maintained confidence across our schools, something that we wouldn't have had if ESET were not in place.

---

**Q: How has ESET helped maintain consistent security policies across schools with different needs?**

---

**A:** ESET's centralised management console allows us to apply Trust-wide security policies while still enabling schools to adapt settings where necessary. This ensures consistent compliance and protection without limiting operational flexibility.

---

## The Deployment

**Q: What impact has ESET had on day-to-day operations?**

---

**A:** For our IT teams, ESET has reduced workload by automating routine tasks and streamlining security management. For teaching staff, it runs quietly in the background, providing strong protection without disrupting lessons or access to learning resources.

---

**Q: What made ESET stand out during the vendor selection process?**

---

**A:** ESET stood out due to its low system footprint, comprehensive feature set, strong reputation in education and competitive pricing. Combined with positive peer feedback, it offered the most balanced solution for our needs.

---

**Q: Have you seen measurable improvements since implementing ESET?**

---

**A:** Yes. We've seen a reduction in malware-related incidents, faster resolution times, and improved compliance reporting across all schools. The increased visibility and automation have significantly strengthened our overall security posture.

---

**Q: What does this mean for your internal teams?**

---

**A:** Knowing that ESET MDR is providing 24/7/365 monitoring allows our teams to focus on strategic priorities rather than constant reactive firefighting. It also gives us peace of mind outside of normal working hours and during school holidays.

---

**Q: How do you ensure staff and students remain cyber-aware?**

---

**A:** We run regular training sessions, share clear guidance through internal communications and reinforce good practices as part of day-to-day processes. ESET's educational materials also support our awareness campaigns and help keep everyone engaged.

---

**Progress. Protected.**

**Q: How does ESET support compliance and safeguarding requirements?**

---

**A:** ESET helps us meet GDPR and DfE requirements by securing endpoints, detecting threats early and providing detailed logs and reports. This consistent protection helps us demonstrate due diligence in safeguarding sensitive data.

---

**Q: How important is scalability, and how does ESET support Trust growth?**

---

**A:** Scalability is critical. ESET allows us to onboard new schools quickly and securely without increasing complexity. That makes it well suited to a growing Trust like ours.

---

“ESET gives us assurance that our schools are protected, allowing us to focus fully on education rather than worrying about cyber threats.”

**Q: How do you see the cyber threat landscape evolving in education?**

---

**A:** Threats are becoming more sophisticated, particularly ransomware and phishing. ESET's proactive detection capabilities and MDR services help us stay ahead of these evolving risks.

---

**Q: What role will ESET play in PET's long-term security strategy?**

---

**A:** ESET will remain a core part of our endpoint protection and MDR strategy. As our digital estate grows, we see ESET evolving with us and supporting a more proactive, intelligence-led approach to cybersecurity.

---

**Q: If you could describe ESET's impact in one word or phrase, what would it be?**

---

**A:** Confidence. Because ESET gives us assurance that our schools are protected, allowing us to focus fully on education rather than worrying about cyber threats. ESET are like an extension of our team, they are experts in what they do so we can trust them with what they do best so we can focus on what we do!

---

Interviews conducted with:

- **Heather Mclachlan, CEO Potteries Educational Trust**
- **James Earp, Director Of It Potteries Educational Trust**
- **Caroline Prince, Headteacher, Werrington Primary School & Director Of Primary Education, Potteries Educational Trust**
- **Nikki Bell, Assistant Headteacher Moorside High School**
- **Lorna Sharrock, Digital And Computing Teacher City Of Stoke-On-Trent Sixth Form College**
- **Tori Deavall, Associate Assistant Headteacher Biddulph High School**

**Progress. Protected.**



**We shape young people to transform the future.**

[www.potteries.ac.uk/](http://www.potteries.ac.uk/)

[info@potteries.ac.uk](mailto:info@potteries.ac.uk)

“ESET are like an extension of our team, they are experts in what they do so we can trust them with what they do best so we can focus on what we do!”