Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education Policy

Approved by Trustees: 9th April 2025

Chair of Trustees: Jasmine Armstrong

Review date: 9th April 2026

Artificial Intelligence in Education Policy

Aim of the Policy:

This policy aims to provide guidelines and principles for the ethical and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in educational activities at Excelsior MAT. It ensures that AI technologies enhance teaching and learning while upholding ethical standards and safeguarding the well-being of pupils and staff.

The policy shall guide the responsible use of AI technologies to enhance education, foster innovation, and protect the interests and rights of pupils and staff. It shall be communicated to all stakeholders and integrated into each school's broader educational policies and practices.

Definition:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the development of computer systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, decision-making, and language understanding.

Why do we need an AI strategy?

Artificial Intelligence (AI), although nothing new, is rapidly advancing throughout all sectors. As a forward-thinking multi-academy trust, committed to ensuring equality for all through innovative and inclusive practices, it is our responsibility to ensure we are responding to the current climate, providing the best for our pupils and preparing them for life in a modern world.

Having an AI strategy is crucial: we must ensure that we make changes responsibly and safely so that all staff members can confidently use AI to enhance teaching and learning, as well as saving time on high-input, low-reward tasks to maximise staff impact and prioritise key areas. By implementing an AI strategy, we can ensure that the use of AI across the Trust is in line with our educational vision, for all our schools to be outstanding beacons of equality, where pupils succeed in a safe, innovative and vibrant learning community. We can guide the use of AI tools to address concerns about the use of AI, and ensure all data is managed responsibly and all ethical considerations are taken into account.

Ultimately, people are our most valuable resource. Our AI strategy will ensure that our staff are able to maximise their time and resources in a safe, responsible way, and will allow our schools to be innovative when preparing our pupils for a rapidly developing digital climate.

Applicability and Scope

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, governors, volunteers, and visitors who utilise AI resources both on and off the premises. It covers all forms of AI technology that support learning, teaching, assessment, pupil wellbeing and administrative processes.

Users should adhere to this policy whenever they engage with the AI tools provided by the school, ensuring the content generated aligns with our educational objectives and ethical standards.

This policy will also extend to any party intending to introduce a new AI tool to our school system. The tool will be scrutinised in accordance with our evaluation processes to ensure compliance with academic standards, usability, privacy considerations, and accessibility needs before being deployed for use.

In the next sections, we will detail roles and responsibilities, ethical standards, data privacy and security, and steps ensuring accessibility and inclusivity aligned with our continuous learning and improvement

ethos. Each of these essential elements will help reinforce our collective understanding of a technology that promises to nurture an innovative, engaging and inclusive learning environment.

Guiding Principles

Child-centred: AI implementation will prioritise the wellbeing and educational enhancement of all pupils within the Trust.

- The priority of all schools across the Trust is the pupils. Any use of AI must enhance pupils' educational experience, not hinder it.
- Where AI tools are having a negative impact on pupils' education, they will be picked up through the evaluation cycle and support will be put in place, whether this is to support the teacher to use the platform more effectively, or to remove the tool.

Ethical and Responsible: we will ensure the responsible and ethical use of AI, adhering to the highest standards of data security and privacy for all Trust schools.

- Generative AI tools have significant limitations, which all staff and pupils must understand.
- There is a risk to privacy and intellectual property when generative AI tools are used.
- Generative AI tools have the potential to replicate answers containing social bases or stereotypes.
- Data and information must be carefully checked as their source is generally unknown, and inaccuracies and misinformation could be generated.
- Ethics codes are not embedded in all AI tools.
- There is a risk of plagiarism when using generative AI.
- Some developers have outsourced data labelling to low-wage workers in poor conditions.
- Any use of an AI platform must be approved by the Trust to ensure data protection and security.

Teacher Empowerment: AI will be used to augment, not replace, the crucial role of teachers, empowering them with data-driven insights and tools to personalise instruction.

- All teachers will be given CPD to ensure that AI is used effectively across the Trust to reduce teacher workload and cut down on administrative tasks without replacing their role.

Equity and Access: we will strive to ensure equitable access to AI-powered learning resources for all pupils across all Trust schools, regardless of location, background or learning needs.

- Although schools across the Trust have autonomy in certain areas, where AI tools are paid for, it will be ensured that all schools within the Trust have the option to subscribe.
- Appropriate adaptations may need to be made for certain pupils and groups.
- The Trust is committed to ensuring equity when allocating technology and devices across the Trust.

Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing: we will foster collaboration and knowledge sharing across Trust schools and with outside agencies regarding best practices in AI implementation.

- Collaborative practice will ensure our implementation of AI tools will be of a high standard across the Trust.
- Links with outside agencies will support us to develop our practice.

Continuous Improvement: we will continuously evaluate the impact of AI on student learning and task automation and adapt our strategies accordingly across the Trust.

- The evaluation cycle will be used to effectively analyse the impact of AI on pupils' learning experiences.
- This strategy is a working document and will be updated.

Safeguarding: we will ensure that the implementation of AI does not have a detrimental impact on pupil or staff safety or wellbeing.

- AI-driven educational tools must prioritise the well-being of pupils, ensuring that they are not exposed to harmful content or experiences.
- AI systems must be safeguarded against cybersecurity threats to protect pupils' data and the integrity of educational processes.
- Responsible use of AI must play a role in curriculum design, and pupils must be taught to recognise how AI generated content can be used maliciously.

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Teams hold the ultimate responsibility for the implementation and oversight of this policy. The body ensures that each school's use of generative AI aligns with its educational objectives, legal obligations, and ethical standards. It will also guarantee that reasonable human and financial resources are allocated to facilitate safe and effective AI usage, where reasonable to do so.

The Senior Leadership Team is also responsible for promoting an organisational culture that values responsible AI usage, maintaining a balance between innovation and ethical considerations. They will work collaboratively with teachers, pupils, and experts, ensuring that all AI processes adhere to the laid down policy. The team will also be responsible for addressing any concerns related to the use of generative AI brought to their attention by any member of the school community.

Teaching Staff

Teachers play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of generative AI technology. They should use the AI tools provided for enhancing pedagogical techniques and improving pupil engagement. It is their responsibility to guide pupils in using these tools responsibly, whilst encouraging a climate of academic integrity. Furthermore, they need to stay informed about advancements in the field of generative AI and adapt their teaching practices accordingly.

Pupils

Pupils are central stakeholders in this policy, with their intellectual curiosity, creativity, and learning experiences shaping the need for generative AI in our school. They are expected to use AI-generated resources responsibly and abide by the ethical use guidelines outlined in this policy. They are encouraged to embrace the concept of originality while using generative AI and to report any misuse or concerns to the relevant authorities in the school.

It is essential for everyone involved to play their part to ensure the harmonious integration of generative AI technology into our school environment, maintaining its focus on enriching learning experiences and upholding ethical standards. As generative AI continues to evolve and mature, so should our understanding of its potential benefits and challenges. The team strives to make our educational establishment an example of excellent, inspirational 'generative AI-enhanced' learning.

What problems are we trying to solve?

- Personalised education and enhanced teaching through adaptive learning and assessment.
- Improved efficiencies across the organisation.
- Professional Development and collaboration across the Trust.
- Future-ready skills development across the Trust.

Personalised education and enhanced teaching through adaptive learning and assessment.

All pupils learn differently, with different baselines, strengths and interests. A huge amount of teacher time is spent adapting lesson resources to meet the needs of all pupils within their classes: AI can be used to make this process run more efficiently and allow the teachers to focus on their instruction. A personalised learning experience can be most effectively implemented through the use of effective feedback, which can be streamlined using AI alongside teacher expertise. Pupils' learning journeys can be customised and teacher efficiency can be improved by automating routine tasks, enabling teachers to focus more on personalised instruction and pupil interaction, guiding all pupils to be successful.

Goal: To leverage AI to personalise learning experiences and feedback for all pupils within the Trust, catering to individual needs, pace and learning styles.

Improved efficiencies across the organisation.

Not just teacher time, but also leadership and support staff time is often taken up by completing administrative tasks. This includes lesson preparation, data analysis, communication, timetabling, admissions and HR processes. By streamlining these processes and improving efficiencies across the Trust, staff can focus on more impactful work and decision-making can be enhanced. Through improved efficiencies, we can ensure value for money by reducing manual workloads, improving accuracies and operating more efficiently across all departments.

Goal: To empower all staff across the organisation with AI-driven tools and insights to maximise their impact.

Professional Development and collaboration across the Trust

One of the barriers to implementing AI across an organisation is staff reluctance. It is important to address concerns and create a clear plan where AI can be used safely and effectively, while ensuring data is protected and staff roles are augmented, not replaced.

Goal: To provide staff and teachers across the Trust with the necessary training and support to effectively integrate AI into the classroom.

Future-ready skills development across the Trust

One of the most important things we need to do is ensure pupils at our schools are ready for a life where AI will be prevalent. We must teach them to understand the concept of AI, its applications in everyday life and its impact on society, but also the basic principles of how AI systems function, including machine learning, pattern recognition and data use. Pupils must be taught how to engage with AI technologies safely and responsibly, taking into account ethical considerations, data privacy and digital wellbeing, as well as using AI tools across the curriculum, effectively in various contexts.

Goal: To equip all students within the Trust with the digital literacy and critical thinking skills necessary to thrive in an AI-driven world.

Ethical Use of Generative AI

1. **Data Privacy**: Teachers and staff must handle pupils' data with care, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations. The privacy of pupils, teachers and other stakeholders must be protected, and personal data should be processed in accordance with the relevant data protection regulations.

2. **Transparency**: Teachers should inform pupils about the use of AI in the pupils' educational materials and clearly communicate how AI-generated content is created. The use of AI in education should be transparent, and all stakeholders should be aware of how the technology is being used, the data being collected, and the purpose of the AI system.

3. **Fairness**: Educators should avoid using AI in ways that perpetuate bias, discrimination, or inequality. AI should be used to promote equal access and opportunities for all pupils.

4. **Accountability**: Teachers and staff are accountable for the educational outcomes facilitated by AI tools and must continually assess their effectiveness. There should be clear accountability for the use of AI in primary schools. Responsibility for decisions made by AI systems should be clearly defined, and there should be a process for challenging or appealing any decisions made.

5. **Professional Development**: Teachers and staff will receive ongoing training to stay updated on AI technology and its responsible use in education.

6. **Ethical considerations**: Schools should consider the ethical implications of using AI in education. This includes ensuring that the use of AI is aligned with the school's values, and that the technology is not used in ways that could harm pupils, teachers or other stakeholders.

Responsible Use by Teachers

Teachers are expected to model responsible and ethical use of generative AI technologies. This includes the appropriate integration of these technologies into their lessons, in a manner that enhances teaching and learning, without compromising academic integrity. Moreover, teachers should strive to use these tools to inspire creativity and original thinking among pupils, rather than for direct content creation. Teachers' discretion is key in ensuring that the use of generative AI aligns with our Trust's educational objectives and ethical standards.

Use by teacher	Considerations
Drafting ideas for lesson plans or other activities	The output may be factually incorrect or lack sound pedagogical functions. Teachers are responsible for ensuring AI generated lesson ideas are compliant with our teaching and learning guidance and strategies for all subjects. However, it may be a good starting point.
Help with designs of quizzes or comprehension questions	Questions and answers must be reviewed carefully and fact checked before use.
Creating scaffolded materials, i.e. simplifying language, creating tailored activities	When asked to customise material, AI generally won't introduce new concepts, but strategies used must be carefully checked.
Providing custom feedback to pupils	Generative AI should not be used as the sole method for checking and responding to pupil work. However, it can be used within lessons to aid responsive teaching.
Writing reports	Where generative AI is used to make report writing more efficient, the teacher is responsible for creating accurate prompts and ensuring no personal data (including names or any other identifiable data) is shared to a public agent. The integrity of a bespoke report for each pupil should not be compromised.
Anything involving personal information	Staff should never share personal information into any system where we do not have a proper contract in place and have made a full assessment of its data privacy policies etc. Generative AI services are no exception.
Creation of image or video resources for lessons	Where images and videos are created using AI for lesson purposes, pupils should be informed that the content they are seeing was created using AI.
Conversing with an agent in role as a historical figure as a teaching tool	Generative AI can be used effectively to enhance lessons when acting in role, but it must be made clear to the pupils that they are conversing with a generative agent and where the information is coming from to avoid misconceptions and ensure they can spot misinformation.

Responsible Use by Pupils

Generative AI technologies hold great potential for enhancing learning, but this also brings responsibilities. Pupils are expected to use these tools in a manner that respects our academic and ethical principles. This includes acknowledging the sources of AI-generated content and using these tools to support, rather than replace, their original thinking and creativity.

Use by pupil	Considerations
To formulate ideas, e.g. creating essay structures	Generative AI tools are generally effective in producing outlines as a starting point for an assignment.
To provide feedback on writing	Generative AI will proofread and correct text for pupils, in a similar way to grammar tools. It will also provide feedback on style and content. Pupils will need clear advice on when this should be declared.
As a research tool	A good understanding of the tool and its limitations is crucial here, particularly the tendency for generative AI to give misinformation.
Generating images or videos	Generative images can enhance lessons and are a great tool for pupils to understand, but they must be made aware of copyright restrictions and data sharing.
Conversing with an agent in role as a historical figure	Generative AI can be used effectively to enhance lessons when acting in role, but it must be made clear to the pupils that they are conversing with a generative agent and where the information is coming from to avoid misconceptions and ensure they can spot misinformation.

Responsible Use by Operational Staff

AI can be used to make workflow more efficient in all areas of the Trust, including finance, leadership, IT and general administration. All staff must be made aware of both the benefits and limitations of AI to ensure it is used safely and effectively.

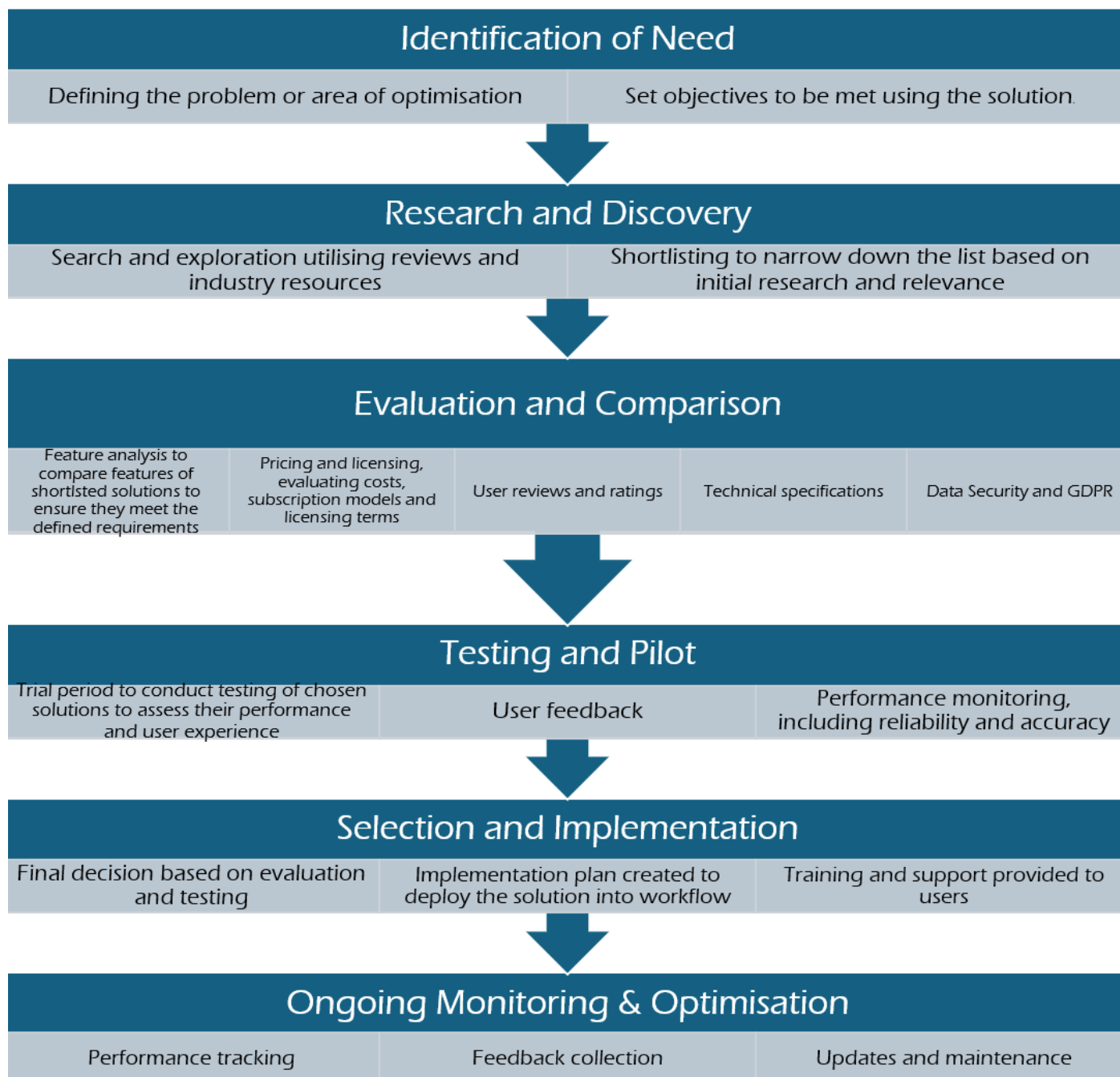| Use by staff	Considerations
Recording a meeting using AI notes, or to summarise content	Using an AI summary of a meeting can reduce staff workload drastically, but all members of the meeting must be made aware that this is happening. The notes should be approached critically, as AI is not always able to capture the nuances of speech.
Crafting newsletters, emails or other communications for parents or other stakeholders	Using generative AI to create communications for various stakeholders can save time and ensure writing is on a high standard. However, these must always be moderated by a human to avoid errors and maintain an appropriate tone, as well as avoiding bias.
Automating workflow such as communication or analysis	Automating tasks could result in a reduction in staff workload, but control measures must be put in place to ensure AI-generated content is appropriate.
Data analysis	AI can analyse large data sets, informing data-driven decision making by identifying trends and anomalies, as well as helping to correct errors in algorithms. Users must be cautious of sharing information with a generative agent, particularly data concerning pupils. If possible, data should be anonymised before analysis by an AI tool. Users should also be aware of bias in classification.
Resource Management	AI can be used to effectively manage resources such as food, transportation, materials and information, reducing staff workload. Staff must always be wary of the information they input, and responsibility for resource management and distribution will continue to lie with the staff.
Risk Assessment	Where generative AI is used to draft a risk assessment, it will only generate responses based on the information it is given, so accurate prompts and checking are vital. The final responsibility must lie with the person creating the document.
Creating presentations	AI can add flair and polish to presentations, but where AI generated images are used, it is good practice to share this with the audience. The user must also ensure that the program they have used to generate the image is verified for corporate use.

AI Evaluation Cycle

Where staff from across the Trust identify an AI solution they would like to trial, this must be sent as a request to the IT team. It will then be evaluated for cost efficiency, data protection and suitability before it is enabled. Training may then be put in place to ensure staff know how to use it responsibly.

Any new AI tool being used across the Trust will be added to the AI Library, where staff will find guidance on how to use it safely and effectively.

Identification of Need

Defining the problem or area of optimisation	Set objectives to be met using the solution.

Research and Discovery

Search and exploration utilising reviews and industry resources	Shortlisting to narrow down the list based on initial research and relevance

Evaluation and Comparison

Feature analysis to compare features of shortlisted solutions to ensure they meet the defined requirements	Pricing and licensing, evaluating costs, subscription models and licensing terms	User reviews and ratings	Technical specifications	Data Security and GDPR

Testing and Pilot

Trial period to conduct testing of chosen solutions to assess their performance and user experience	User feedback	Performance monitoring, including reliability and accuracy

Selection and Implementation

Final decision based on evaluation and testing	Implementation plan created to deploy the solution into workflow	Training and support provided to users

Ongoing Monitoring & Optimisation

Performance tracking	Feedback collection	Updates and maintenance

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Data Privacy, Security and Compliance

Data Protection Measures

The implementation of generative AI technologies necessitates the collection and processing of a variety of data. Our Trust is committed to protecting this data with robust security measures consistent with technological advancements. These measures include encryption, secure network infrastructures, controlled access permissions, and regular security audits. To ensure seamless GDPR compliance, regular training will be conducted for staff, particularly those who interact directly with generative AI technologies. This training will be designed to equip them with the skills required to handle data responsibly and to recognise potential data protection issues proactively. This training will be accessible to all staff through the AI Library, where they will find guidance on how to use a variety of AI tools safely and effectively

Compliance with Privacy Regulations

We recognise and respect our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other UK data protection laws to safeguard pupil and staff data privacy when deploying generative AI technologies. Accordingly, the Trust ensures that all data is processed within the rights of data subjects, including the right to access, correct, or erase personal data.

In line with our commitment to ethical conduct and best practices, adhere rigorously to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for the safe and responsible handling of data within our generative AI technologies. Given the intrinsic data-driven nature of these technologies, safeguarding personal information becomes paramount.

Data is collected for legitimate purposes, such as enhancing learning experiences and improving administrative efficiency, and is retained only as long as necessary for these purposes. Generative AI tools often require access to a large dataset to function effectively. While we strive to enhance the educational experience through AI, we equally prioritise the privacy of our staff, pupils, and all stakeholders involved. Data collected for AI processes will be limited to what is necessary for the stated educational or administrative purpose.

Data used or generated by generative AI tools will be anonymised where possible and stored securely. Retention periods will be kept to an absolute minimum, with data deleted once it has served its purpose and is no longer required. Individuals have the right to access their personal data processed by these technologies, as well as the right to correct inaccurate or incomplete information.

Pupil Data Storage and Management

Generative AI technologies often necessitate storage of vast amounts of data, which includes sensitive personal information of pupils. The Trust recognises the importance of careful data management. Data obtained from the use of generative AI tools is securely stored on protected servers and only shared with trusted third parties, if necessary, in line with our data protection policies.

Ensuring data privacy and security is not a one-time activity but a continuous process that must evolve with technological advancements and expanding regulatory frameworks. This policy outlines the Trust's commitment to maintaining a secure and trusted learning environment where generative AI technologies are employed responsibly. The Trust strives to balance the benefits of innovation with the necessity of privacy, setting a strong foundation for the pupils' digital future.

Support for Pupils with Learning Differences

Generative AI technologies present new opportunities for supporting pupils with learning difficulties.

Personalised content and interactive features can cater to varied learning styles and pace, thus facilitating a more inclusive learning environment. Our Trust is committed to leveraging these technologies to support diverse learning needs and ensure equal access to educational resources.

Catering to Individual Learning Needs

With generative AI, we can create personalised learning pathways that consider each pupil's unique attributes, abilities, and learning preferences. The technology allows us to provide individualised learning materials that can adjust to the pupil's progression, thereby boosting engagement levels and improving academic outcomes. All educators and pupils should strive to harness the potential of generative AI to enhance the school's learning environment.

Our goal is to ensure that generative AI technologies are used in a way that benefits all pupils, irrespective of their abilities or learning styles. We believe that all pupils should have the opportunity to achieve their full potential, and with generative AI, we are well-positioned to make this possible.

The continuous endeavour to ensure accessibility and inclusivity is part of our commitment to equal opportunities and will remain a priority in our educational approach.

Prohibited Practices:

1. Surveillance: The use of AI for surveillance purposes is strictly prohibited in schools. This includes the use of facial recognition technology, biometric data, and other forms of monitoring that infringe on the privacy of individuals.

2. Discrimination: The use of AI should not lead to any form of discrimination, including on the basis of race, gender, religion or any other characteristic protected by law.

3. Unfair Advantage: AI should not be used to provide an unfair advantage to certain pupils or groups of pupils. All pupils should have equal access to education and opportunities, regardless of their background or ability.

4. Deception: The use of AI to deceive or mislead pupils, teachers or other stakeholders is strictly prohibited. AI should be transparent and provide accurate and reliable information.

5. Inappropriate Content: The use of AI to provide access to inappropriate or harmful content is strictly prohibited. Schools should ensure that the content delivered through AI is age-appropriate and aligns with the values of the Trust.

Policy Lead: Helena Brzeski

Review date: April 2026

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