

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Please note that a record of the changes made to the original issue of this document can be found at Schedule 1 after any Appendices to the Policy/Procedure.

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1. Background and context

Purpose and goals

Cumbria Education Trust recognises that artificial intelligence (AI) poses significant opportunities and risks for schools. This is the first version of this policy and it aims to achieve three overall goals.

- **Safe.** We will protect against safeguarding, cyber, and personal risks, ensuring AI is used in ways that do not harm pupils, staff, or the wider community.
- **Effective.** We will adopt AI in ways that demonstrably improve education and operations, ensuring that it adds value wherever it is used.
- **Responsible.** We will follow regulatory, ethical, and professional standards in our use of AI, ensuring fairness, accountability, and trust.

Example use cases

A wide variety of potential effective use cases for AI exist within schools.

Type of use	Examples of potential use cases
Direct use in learning	• Supporting teacher preparation. Tools like Oak National Academy's AI Lesson Assistant have been designed for this purpose. A formal evaluation of the tool is ongoing, but earlier evaluations have shown marked reductions in teacher workload. • Providing feedback to pupils. Organisations like No More Marking and Smartgrade have released tools to automate marking, which has the potential to dramatically reduce workload and increase the quality of feedback and assessment. • Tutoring systems. Traditional computer-aided instruction tools, such as Sparx Maths used across our secondary schools, are widely used and AI is leading to their further development. These tools have the potential to provide low-cost one-to-one tuition. • Accessibility and inclusion. AI features can enhance traditional text to speech tools and also provide text simplification and translation. These tools have the potential to significantly benefit some vulnerable groups of pupils, including speakers of English as an Additional Language.
Operational and administrative use	• Drafting and editing paperwork. Generative AI can support staff in drafting reports, letters, newsletters, and policies, and in adapting tone and style for different audiences. • Capturing minutes and actions from meetings. AI transcription tools can record, summarise, and structure meeting notes, reducing the burden on staff and improving accuracy. • Idea generation. AI can be used as a thought partner in the early stages of designing projects. Many professionals have report that it can be useful in critiquing and developing ideas. • Report writing. Arbor, our management information system for primary schools, is prioritising using AI to create operational efficiencies, including supporting teachers to write reports.

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Our current position

To date, the Trust has not issued formal guidance to staff about the use of AI, but some users have begun exploring how AI can be used.

We use Microsoft as our core digital platform, which is investing heavily in the use of AI and strongly pushing adoption of features through Copilot. Copilot is an adapted version of OpenAI's frontier ChatGPT 5 model. However, Microsoft's model is subjected the same data protection and privacy as all the other data within the Microsoft system, such as emails and word files. Therefore, Copilot presents an accessible way of using AI features with fewer risks around data protection. The standard version of Copilot is included within our existing licencing with Microsoft, but the more feature rich version which integrates with applications like Outlook, Word, Excel and Teams is an added cost of around £10 per user per month for education users. This version is needed to summarise meetings. Arbor is the management information system that we use across our primary schools. They are also making the incorporation of AI features into their work a key focus and prioritising features that reduce workload and provide additional data insights.

2. Key guidance

Guidance from a range of organisations has been considered in developing this policy, including:

Organisation	Guidance	Implications
UK Government AI Playbook	Ten guiding principles for the safe, effective and responsible use of AI in the public sector. Emphasis on proportionality, transparency, accountability, and ongoing monitoring.	Incorporate key ideas from this playbook into our guiding principles to ensure alignment with wider national expectations.
Department for Education	Policy paper on generative AI in education. Outlines opportunities, risks and the expectation that AI supports professional judgement rather than replaces it.	Use AI to complement teacher and staff expertise, while maintaining safeguards around fairness, data protection, and wellbeing. Ensure professional judgement remains central.
Ofsted	Five expectations for providers: (1) safety, security and robustness; (2) transparency and explainability; (3) fairness; (4) accountability and governance; (5) contestability and redress.	Ensure that trust policies and practices can demonstrate alignment with these expectations. Be prepared to demonstrate how AI use meets these criteria during inspections.
Joint Council for Qualifications	Guidance on AI in assessments and qualifications. Focus on preventing malpractice, clarifying acceptable and unacceptable uses, and ensuring integrity in coursework and exams.	Training staff and pupils on appropriate AI use in assessments. Put processes in place to prevent malpractice and ensure compliance with awarding body requirements.
Keeping Children Safe in Education	Statutory safeguarding guidance. Requires schools to protect pupils from online risks, including harmful content, data misuse and manipulative uses of technology.	Ensure staff are trained to recognise and respond to new forms of online harm linked to AI, including deep fakes and data exploitation.

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3. Cumbria Education Trust's Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles will shape our approach to using AI. We will regularly review these principles to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. The principles take account of all the key guidance from relevant authorities listed in the above section.

Principle	Description	Implication
Safe	We will use AI in ways that safeguard pupils and staff, protect information and minimise cyber and personal risks. Risk awareness is our starting point.	Every AI tool and novel use case will be risk-assessed before adoption, with consideration given to safeguarding, cybersecurity, data protection and other compliance risks.
Effective	AI should only be adopted where it demonstrably helps us to achieve our goals as a trust.	We will prioritise use cases with evidence of benefit and avoid adoption driven by novelty or hype.
Responsible	We have responsibilities to be transparent in how we use AI and to meet all expected legal, regulatory, and ethical requirements.	Our use of AI will comply with GDPR, Ofqual and JCQ rules, Ofsted expectations, and statutory safeguarding duties. Staff, pupils, and parents will be informed where AI is used.
Fair and inclusive	AI should reduce, not widen, inequalities, and be deployed in ways that promote fairness, equity, and accessibility.	Deployment reviews will consider bias and differential impacts on disadvantaged or protected groups; accessibility tools will be prioritised.
Human-centred and accountable	AI must support, not replace, professional judgement. Accountability will always rest with humans. The level of human oversight should be proportionate to the stakes.	Teachers and leaders remain responsible for educational and safeguarding decisions; AI outputs will always be checked and moderated by staff.
Disciplined innovation and continuous learning	We will encourage innovation with AI but within a clear framework of pilots, oversight, and review, learning iteratively from experience.	Pilot projects will be time-bound, monitored, evaluated, and either scaled, adapted, or stopped based on evidence and feedback.
Forward looking	AI is evolving rapidly, and we commit to anticipating future risks, opportunities, and skills needs.	We will regularly review and update this policy, invest in staff and student digital literacy, and prepare for emerging uses of AI in education and beyond.

4. Appendix 1: Key Actions Over the Next Year

Introduction

We will take forward the implementation of this policy as part of the Trust Improvement Plan project relating to Trust Services, which includes a focus on digital technology.

Updates to other policies

- Update staff and pupil Acceptable Use Policies to provide clear guidance.
- Update other relevant policies in response to this policy, including safeguarding and data protection.
- Update privacy notices for all users with relevant information.

Communication and training

- Provide staff with briefings on AI risks, opportunities, and safe practices.
- Create simple reference guides ('do's and don'ts') tailored for different audiences.
- Ensure families are informed about our approach to AI with clear communications, including a published list of frequently asked questions.

Curriculum updates

- Ensure AI-related skills, like critical evaluation of AI outputs and ethical issues in technology, are embedded into the curriculum for personal development.

Disciplined innovation and use case development

- Identify a small number of priority use cases where AI could add clear value.
- Run structured pilot projects with clear risk assessments and evaluation plans.
- Capture and share learning from these pilots across schools to inform future adoption.

Risk management

- Update the risk register drawing on this policy with clarity about controls and owners.

Training for controlled assessments

- Provide targeted training for staff and students on the use (and non-use) of AI in contexts where assessment integrity must be maintained.

Monitoring and governance

- Monitor uptake, risks, and impacts of AI use throughout the year, reporting regularly to trust leadership and governance committees.
- Review and update this policy annually to reflect new guidance, technologies, and learning.

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SCHEDULE 1

DOCUMENT CONTROL – RECORD OF CHANGES

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