



Hedingham School & Sixth Form

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 At Hedingham School, we recognise the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly Generative AI, to transform how our school is managed and how students learn. This policy outlines our approach to integrating AI responsibly into our operations and teaching practices. It ensures everyone benefits from new technologies while fostering safe, responsible, and ethical AI use.

1.2 Hedingham School's stance on AI aligns with the Department for Education's Statement on Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education. The guidance underscores that when used appropriately, technology such as Generative AI holds potential to alleviate workload within the education sector, thereby enabling educators to focus more on delivering high-quality teaching.

2. Core Principles

2.1 When investing in, implementing, and using AI in our school, we follow these key principles:

- **Professional Judgement:** AI is a tool to support, not replace, professional judgement
- **Educational Value:** We consider how AI applications align with curriculum objectives and improve teaching and learning experiences for students.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** We ensure AI deployment is equitable and inclusive, addressing biases and guaranteeing fair access to educational opportunities for all students.
- **Transparency:** We prioritise transparency in AI usage. Students, families, and staff understand how and where AI is used, along with its effects on teaching and workplace organisation.
- **Privacy:** We apply strict data protection standards, safeguarding student and staff data used in AI applications. All AI use must comply with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018

2.2 We use AI as an administrative and educational tool, actively developing staff and student AI literacy and skills. AI supports teachers by streamlining tasks and reducing workload, rather than creating additional burdens. It also improves and streamlines school operations, maximising time and resources for teaching and learning.

3. Guidelines for Staff

3.1 Staff must not share personal data (including student names, email addresses, behavioural records, or identifiable assessment data) or sensitive information (such as medical or safeguarding details) with any AI tool. Where use of data is necessary for educational purposes, a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) must be completed and signed off by the Data Protection Officer before proceeding.

3.2 Staff can explore and utilise licensed AI-based tools and technologies to support their work, as long as no proprietary or personal information is shared with the AI tool. Examples include lesson planning, curriculum materials production, and administration.

Ethical Use of AI

The use of AI systems, especially Generative AI, will be conducted cautiously with a clear understanding of their limitations. Whether staff are using AI for teaching and school administrative purposes they must be mindful of:

- a) **Bias:** AI-generated data and information may reflect biases inherent in the datasets used to create them. This could result in content that is discriminatory based on factors such as race, gender, or socioeconomic background.
- b) **Accuracy:** AI-generated information may be inaccurate, and therefore any content produced should be fact-checked.
- c) **Contemporary:** Some AI models only utilise data collected up to a certain date, meaning that generated content may not reflect the most recent information available.

3.3 At present, no AI tools have been blocked on the school network. However, staff must exercise extreme caution when using any external AI platform, including ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, or similar platforms. AI platforms—unless explicitly provided through verified, school-approved enterprise accounts—are effectively public environments. Inputting identifiable information such as student names, assessment data, or staff records into these tools may result in data being retained, analysed, or used to improve commercial AI models, which constitutes a breach of data protection legislation.

3.4 AI tools will be used responsibly, complementing expertise, not replacing professional judgement. For example:

- AI tools can assist staff in gathering and creating relevant educational resources, developing whole group or personalised lesson plans, generating extension tasks or scaffolded work, and identifying potential knowledge gaps. For instance, AI-based platforms can suggest specific topics or learning activities. Teaching staff are permitted to use these suggestions as a starting point, incorporating their professional expertise to customise the lesson plans and make necessary adjustments to ensure student learning objectives are met.

3.5 It is essential that staff work within the agreed boundaries in that AI will support their planning and not replace it. Content generated must reflect curriculum intent and be personalised to the class context. Staff remain responsible and accountable for the quality and content of any AI-generated output.

3.6 All staff using AI will be expected to complete training on the use of Generative AI during their employment at Hedingham School. This will include foundational training during whole school INSET and ongoing CPD opportunities to ensure staff understand the safe, ethical, and effective use of AI tools in education.

3.7 Staff are also responsible for identifying any personal training or development needs in this area and should discuss these with their line manager. The Digital Strategy Lead will coordinate training provision and ensure it reflects varying levels of experience and the specific needs of different roles and departments.

No member of staff should use AI in their professional practice without a clear understanding of its limitations, risks, and the expectations outlined in this policy.

[Generative AI for Education \(2 hour course\).](#)

Personalisation and learning:

3.8 Staff promote equity in education by considering AI use to address learning gaps and provide personalised support. They prepare all students for a future where AI technology is integral, being mindful of disparities in opportunities.

Data protection and Intellectual Property:

3.9 Staff should understand that any information entered into a Generative AI model loses its privacy and security. Therefore, staff must refrain from inputting personal information (such as personal data, intellectual property, or confidential information, including commercially sensitive details like contracts) into any Generative AI model. Breaches of security would be managed under the relevant school policies, including the Code of Conduct Policy and Data Protection Policy.

3.10 Teaching staff will emphasise critical thinking, creativity, and originality in students' work. Clear guidelines and expectations will be communicated regarding the appropriate use of Generative AI tools for homework and assessments, ensuring work reflects students' own efforts and understanding. (Please refer to section 4.2 regarding public examinations.)

3.11 All staff, including school leaders, are responsible for reading and understanding this policy before using any AI technology. Staff must report any suspected breaches of this policy to the Digital Strategy Lead, Mr Daniels by emailing hed.danielsr@hedingham.essex.sch.uk

Child Protection and Safeguarding

3.12 Guidance is provided to protect against harmful or inappropriate content online, including content generated by AI in the school's Online Safety Policy.

3.13 As part of our child protection and safeguarding policies and processes, staff will ensure that students are protected from harmful online content, including that produced by AI technology.

3.14 Any AI tools used will be assessed for appropriateness based on the students' age and educational needs. We will ensure that staff are aware of the risks posed by AI, such as the generation of harmful content, including deepfake and impersonation materials.

3.15 A culture of responsible AI use will be fostered by engaging students, when necessary, in conversations about data privacy, bias, safeguarding, and the social impact of AI applications.

4. Educating Students

4.1 Hedingham school will educate students about the safe use of AI.

- Students are educated on the capabilities and limitations of the most widely available, age-appropriate, Generative AI tools, empowering them to critically evaluate AI-generated content. They learn to discern between reliable and unreliable information and use AI tools responsibly.
- Students will be taught about the potential bias of AI and how it should be used responsibly, particularly with reference to age restrictions. They will be taught to quality-assure and fact-check information.
- Students are prohibited from using AI to create and/or distribute content that is discriminatory, harmful, offensive, or intentionally biased. Using AI software to generate or edit any content about or impersonating any student, staff member, or member of the wider community is strictly prohibited. Any incidents of this occurring will result in the appropriate sanction being administered in line with the school's Behaviour Policy and IT Acceptable Use Policy.
- Students are trained in digital citizenship and online safety, including understanding the implications of sharing personal data and intellectual property online. They learn to protect their privacy and respect the intellectual property rights of others in digital environments.
- Clear guidelines and expectations will be communicated regarding the appropriate use of AI tools during assessments, ensuring that student work reflects their own efforts and understanding.

Educational integrity, including Malpractice

4.2 Measures are taken to prevent misuse of AI in assessments and safeguard the integrity of qualifications. Hedingham school has robust practice in place to ensure students are aware of the potential examination malpractice if they use AI against JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) regulations.

- If a student submits any AI generated content as their own without acknowledgement, this will be treated as plagiarism. Any misuse of AI that breaches JCQ rules will be treated as malpractice, in line with the JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/>).
- Students should be aware that the material generated by AI may be inaccurate, incomplete, misleading or otherwise problematic. They should check and verify ideas and answers against reputable source materials. They are responsible for any content they submit.
- Staff who suspect inauthentic work must gather supporting evidence (e.g. inconsistent style, student unable to explain content, identical AI-like phrasing), report concerns to the Exams Officer, and log the incident. The Exams Officer will assess whether a JCQ malpractice referral is warranted and handle communications with parents and the exam board.

5. Risk Management

5.1 Bias and discrimination: We are committed to fairness and equality; we will reduce the risk of unfair outcomes by upskilling our staff to understand the potential for bias in AI-generated content and to monitor AI outputs to ensure fairness and equality.

5.2 Data security: Cybersecurity measures include the use of Smoothwall for filtering and monitoring, device encryption, multi-factor authentication for sensitive systems, regular password change protocols, and termly audits of AI tool access by the IT team.

5.3 The school will ensure the technical robustness and safe operation of AI technologies by:

- Implementing stringent cybersecurity protocols and access controls, including encryption, regular security patches and updates, access management, and secure data storage;
- Establishing oversight procedures and controls for data practices, system modifications, and incident response to uphold integrity;
- Promptly reporting any suspected or confirmed security incidents to the Network Manager, Mr Stuart Jarvis and the Data Protection Officer, Mr Daniels;
- Conducting a thorough security evaluation of any AI tool before its deployment. This includes reviewing security features, terms of service, and data protection policies, integrated into the DPIA process;
- Maintaining awareness and readiness against deep fakes, which are synthetic media used to create realistic videos or audio that misrepresent individuals for malicious purposes such as spreading misinformation or committing cyber fraud; and
- Educating both staff and students on the importance of cybersecurity and the potential role of AI in cybercrime.

6. Conclusion

6.1 At Hedingham School, we are committed to harnessing AI technologies responsibly where they can improve teaching and learning outcomes. By applying ethical principles, promoting transparency, and implementing measures to safeguard students, we aim to use AI effectively for the benefit of our school community.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Digital Strategy Lead in consultation with the SLT. An earlier review may be triggered by new statutory guidance, significant changes in AI technology or in response to any significant incident or misuse involving AI.