

## **Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Schools Policy**

### **Statement of intent**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology is already widely used in commercial environments and is gaining greater use in education. We recognise that the technology has many benefits and the potential to enhance outcomes and educational experiences, with the opportunity to support staff in reducing workload. We also realise that there are risks involved in the use of AI systems, but that these can be mitigated through our existing policies and procedures, amending these as necessary to address AI risks. Our primary AI tool is Microsoft Co-Pilot, a licensed, GDPR-complaint model under Lancashire County Council's governance. It does not store or use data for training and keeps all information within the UK.

We will educate staff and learners about safe and ethical use of AI, preparing them for a future in which AI technologies are likely to play an increasing role.

The safeguarding of staff and learners will, as always, be at the forefront of our policy and practice.

The school will maintain an up-to-date register of all approved AI tools in use, including their intended purpose and associated risks. This register will be reviewed at least annually as part of the school's safeguarding and data protection processes.

### **Related policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies:

Data Protection Policy

Staff Discipline policies and codes of conduct

Behaviour policy

Anti-bullying policy

Online safety policy

Acceptable Use Agreements

### **Policy Statements**

- Acorns Primary School acknowledges the benefits of the use of AI in an educational context - including enhancing teaching and learning and outcomes, improving administrative processes, reducing workload and preparing staff and learners for a future in which AI technology will be an integral part. Staff are encouraged to use AI based tools to support their work where appropriate, within the frameworks provided below and are required to be professionally responsible and accountable for this area of their work.
- We will comply with all relevant legislation and guidance, with reference to guidance contained in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) and other statutory safeguarding, data protection and online safety requirements.
- We will provide relevant training for staff and governors in the advantages, use of and potential risks of AI. We will support staff in identifying training and development needs to enable relevant opportunities.
- We will ensure that, within our education programmes, learners understand the ethics and use of AI and the potential benefits and risks of its use. The school

recognises the importance of equipping learners with the knowledge, skills and strategies to engage responsibly with AI tools, where appropriate.

- As set out in acceptable use agreements, the school will use AI responsibly and with awareness of data sensitivity. Where used, staff should use AI tools responsibly, ensuring the protection of both personal and sensitive data. Staff should only input anonymized data to avoid the exposure of personally identifiable or sensitive information.
- Staff should always ensure AI tools used comply with UK GDPR and other data protection regulations. They must verify that tools meet data security standards before using them for work related to the school.
- Where appropriate, staff should make it clear when AI tools have been used to support the creation of documents, communications, learning materials or reports, ensuring transparency and maintaining trust with learners, parents and carers.
- Only those AI technologies approved by the school may be used. Staff should always use school-provided AI accounts for work purposes. These accounts are configured to comply with organisational security and oversight requirements, reducing the risk of data breaches.
- We will protect sensitive information. Staff must not input sensitive information, such as internal documents or strategic plans, into third-party AI tools unless explicitly vetted for that purpose. They must always recognize and safeguard sensitive data.
- The school will ensure that when AI is used, it will not infringe copyright or intellectual property conventions – care will be taken to avoid intellectual property, including that of the learners, being used to train generative AI models without appropriate consent.
- AI incidents must be reported promptly. Staff must report any incidents involving AI misuse, data breaches, or inappropriate outputs immediately to the relevant internal teams. Quick reporting helps mitigate risks and facilitates a prompt response.
- We are aware of the potential risk for discrimination and bias in the outputs from AI tools and have in place interventions and protocols to deal with any issues that may arise. When procuring and implementing AI systems, we will follow due care and diligence to prioritise fairness and safety.
- The school will support parents and carers in their understanding of the use of AI in the school.
- We will prioritise human oversight. AI should assist, not replace, human decision-making. Staff must ensure that final judgments, particularly those affecting people, are made by humans and critically evaluate AI-generated outputs. They must ensure that all AI-generated content is fact-checked and reviewed for accuracy before sharing or publishing. This is especially important for external communication to avoid spreading misinformation.
- AI tools may be used by staff to support professional tasks such as drafting resources, summarising information or identifying learning patterns; however, assessment judgements and decisions about learner progress remain the sole responsibility of qualified staff. Some learners will be taught how AI can support learning appropriately, without replacing their own thinking, creativity or effort.
- Recourse for improper use and disciplinary procedures. Improper use of AI tools, including breaches of data protection standards, misuse of sensitive information,

or failure to adhere to this agreement, will be subject to disciplinary action as defined in Staff Disciplinary Policy.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Headteacher and Senior Leaders**

- Are responsible for the strategic planning of how AI will be used in the school, establishing AI policies and procedures and ensuring that all staff receive relevant training and have a clear understanding of these.

### **Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) / Online Safety Lead**

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Online Safety Lead has responsibility for online safety in the school. They are expected to have knowledge of AI and its safeguarding implications and an in-depth working knowledge of key guidance. We ensure that they receive appropriate specialist training, commensurate with their role and that ongoing training is provided for all school staff.

### **Data Protection Officer**

The DPO will be responsible for providing advice and guidance about data protection obligations in relation to the use of AI, including related Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs).

### **Technical Staff**

Technical staff / IT Leads will be responsible for technical support and guidance, with particular regard to cyber-security and the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems.

### **Staff**

It is the responsibility of all staff to have read and understood this policy and associated Acceptable Use Agreements. All staff must report any incidents or suspected incidents concerning the use of AI in line with school policy. All staff will challenge any inappropriate behaviour. Staff have a duty to ensure that:

- the school environment is safe
- sensitive and confidential data / information is secure
- that their actions do not put the reputation of the school at risk and that
- learners understand their responsibilities

### **Governors**

We ensure that our governing body has a good understanding of how AI is used in a school context and potential benefits and risks of its use. They receive regular training and updates, enabling them to support the school and challenge where necessary. This may include evaluation of the use of AI in the curriculum, administration and

communications, ensuring that risks relating to these issues are identified, that reporting routes are available, and that risks are effectively mitigated. Governors receive regular updates on the use of AI in school, enabling effective oversight, challenge and strategic decision-making.

## **Parents/carers**

We work hard to engage parents and carers by:

- sharing newsletters
- sharing information online e.g., website, social media
- Drop in sessions throughout the year at different events e.g. parents evenings

Our parents and carers are made aware of how AI is used in school and receive guidance on both good practice in its use and the risks of misuse that may affect their children's learning or safety. They are encouraged to report any concerns to the school and are made aware that all incidents will be handled with care and sensitivity.

## **Vulnerable groups**

We recognise that vulnerable learners are more likely to be at risk from the misuse of AI (both in their own use or through the actions of others). We ensure that vulnerable learners are offered appropriate support to allow them to gain full benefit of the use of AI, while being aware of the potential risks.

The school recognises that some learners may be at greater risk of misunderstanding AI outputs or developing emotional reliance on AI systems. Staff will remain vigilant to the risk of emotional dependency or over-trust in AI, particularly for learners with communication, cognitive or emotional needs.

Children are considered to be vulnerable data subjects and therefore any process involving their personal data is likely to be "high risk". If an AI/ automated process is used to make significant decisions about people, this is likely to trigger the need for a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA).

Use of AI tools by learners with SEND will be closely supervised and adapted in line with individual needs. Access, permissions and levels of adult support will be determined through risk assessment and, where appropriate, individual support plans.

## **Use of Personal Data in AI Systems (Including Images of Pupils)**

The school recognises that artificial intelligence (AI) systems may involve the processing of personal data. For the purposes of this policy, AI systems include any software or online tools capable of generating, editing, or analysing content using automated or machine learning techniques.

In accordance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, any personal data, particularly that relating to children, must be processed lawfully, fairly, transparently, and only for specified purposes.

Images of pupils shared by the school constitute personal data and are provided for clearly defined, limited purposes. Images shared by the school remain subject to the school's data protection and safeguarding expectations, regardless of where they are accessed.

The use of such images in AI systems (including image generation, manipulation, enhancement, or likeness replication) is not permitted unless explicitly authorised by the school and supported by an appropriate lawful basis, determined by the school.

Members of the school community (including parents/carers) **must not**:

- Upload, input, or otherwise use images of pupils obtained via school platforms in any AI tool or system
- Create, share, or distribute AI-generated or manipulated images based on school-provided content
- Process pupil images in ways that are incompatible with the original purpose for which they were collected

Unauthorised use of pupil images in AI systems may constitute unlawful or unfair processing of personal data and may introduce safeguarding risks.

The school will treat any such misuse as a potential data protection and safeguarding concern, to be managed in line with school policies and relevant statutory guidance.

Parents/carers are expected to comply with this requirement as part of the school's wider safeguarding and online safety expectation.

For further information on safeguarding risks associated with images of children, refer to NSPCC guidance: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety/photographing-filming-children>

## **Responding to an incident or disclosure**

Our response is always based on sound safeguarding principles and follows school safeguarding and disciplinary processes. It is calm, considered and appropriate and puts the learner at the centre of all decisions made.

- All AI incidents (including data breaches and/or inappropriate outputs) must be reported promptly to the relevant internal teams. Effective reporting helps mitigate risks and facilitates a prompt response.
- Where relevant / required incidents will be reported to external agencies e.g., Police, LADO, DPO, ICO.
- All AI related incidents will be recorded through the school's normal recording systems

In the case of misuse of AI by staff, the normal staff disciplinary processes will be followed. All AI-related incidents will be reviewed to identify lessons learned and inform future training, safeguards and risk management.

## **Risk assessment**

It is key that our approach to managing risk aligns with, and complements, our broader safeguarding approach.

The school understands that despite many positive benefits in the use of AI, there are some risks that will need to be identified and managed, including:

- Legal, commercial, security and ethical risks
- Data Protection
- Cyber Security
- Fraud
- Safeguarding and well-being
- Duty of care

AI-related risks are assessed as part of the school's wider safeguarding and risk-assessment framework and are reviewed at least annually, or sooner if significant changes to AI use occur.

## **Education**

Our school's educational approach seeks to develop knowledge and understanding of emerging digital technologies, including AI.

Our school's approach is to deliver this knowledge and understanding wherever it is relevant within the curriculum. This will include:

- Computing
- PHSE

The following resources are used:

- [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) (including updated AI reference)
- [UKCIS DSIT "Education for a Connected World"](#)
- [Welsh Government - Generative AI – Hwb guidance](#) - Resources, guidance and
- Sheffield SEND Computing Scheme of Work

Guidance on AI use for learners will be differentiated, accessible and developmentally appropriate, using modelling, visuals and structured discussion were beneficial.

## **Training**

As AI becomes an integral part of modern education, it is essential for staff to be trained in its effective use. Training equips educators with the knowledge and skills

to integrate AI tools responsibly into teaching, learning, and administrative processes. It ensures that AI is used to enhance educational outcomes, streamline workloads, and promote equity while safeguarding ethical practices and data privacy. By fostering AI literacy, staff can confidently prepare pupils for a future where AI is a key driver of innovation and opportunity.

- We will provide comprehensive training to all staff on the effective, responsible, and ethical use of AI technologies in education, ensuring these tools enhance teaching, learning, and administrative processes.
- We will integrate AI-related risks and safeguards into annual safeguarding training, aligning with statutory guidance, including "Keeping Learners Safe."
- We will ensure all staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to confidently integrate AI into their professional practice and to prepare pupils for a future shaped by AI-driven innovation and opportunities.
- We will train staff to identify, assess, and mitigate risks associated with AI technologies, including issues such as biased algorithms, privacy breaches, and harmful content.
- We will train staff on robust data protection practices, ensuring compliance with UK GDPR and other relevant regulations while using AI systems.
- We will promote ethical practices in the use of AI, ensuring that these technologies contribute to equity, fairness, and inclusivity in education.
- We will empower educators to teach learners about the safe and ethical use of AI, cultivating a culture of awareness, resilience, and informed decision-making in the digital age – Where and when appropriate
- We will train staff to use AI responsibly as a tool to monitor and address online risks, reinforcing our commitment to a safe learning environment.
- This training programme extends to governors, ensuring they understand both the strategic benefits of AI and the safeguarding, ethical and data-protection risks associated with its use.

<b>Approved by Governing Body:</b> Autumn Term 2025
<b>Review date:</b> Autumn Term 2026
<b>Policy Owner:</b> Claire Bradford/Laura Hall
<b>Updated:</b> May 2026