Newtown School

Use of AI Policy
2026-2027

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Approved by:	*Governing body*
Signature of Chair of Governors:	
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1. Introduction

1.1. At Newtown School we recognise the potential for Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly Generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT), to transform how our schools are managed and how pupils learn. This policy outlines our approach to integrating AI responsibly, enabling everyone to benefit from new technologies, educating them about safe, responsible and ethical AI use.

1.2. We recognise the guidance set out in the Department for Education's Statement on Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education, including the DfE's Generative AI Product Safety Standards (updated January 2026) and the AI in education staff training modules and leadership toolkit (updated May 2026). This policy has been informed by that guidance.

1.3. All users of generative AI will comply with relevant laws, regulations, policies and guidelines governing Keeping Children Safe in Education, intellectual property, copyright, data protection and other relevant areas. We will prioritise the safeguarding of our pupils and their online safety and will not knowingly use any AI technology that puts them at greater risk. Staff will not provide intellectual property, including pupils' work, to be used to train Generative AI models without appropriate consents or exemptions in place.

1.4. **Scope and definitions:** This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, students on placement, and contractors working with or on behalf of Newtown School, in relation to any AI use that touches the school, its pupils, or its data — whether using school-provided systems or privately purchased tools. “AI” in this policy covers generative AI tools (e.g., chatbots, image and text generators), AI features embedded within existing platforms (e.g., adaptive learning tools, MIS systems), and AI-assisted administrative or teaching tools.

1.5. This policy should be read alongside our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Data Protection Policy, E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy, and Whistleblowing Policy**. Where this policy and any of those policies overlap, the more restrictive provision applies.

2. Core principles

2.1. When we invest in, implement, and use AI in our school we follow these key principles:

- **Equity and inclusion:** We commit to deploying AI technologies in a way that is equitable and promotes inclusion, addressing biases and ensuring fair access to educational opportunities for all pupils.
- **Transparency:** We prioritise transparency in AI usage, ensuring that students, families, and staff understand how and where it is used and the effects on teaching and learning.
- **Privacy:** We apply strict data protection standards, including safeguarding student and staff data used in AI applications, in line with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- **Accountability:** We hold ourselves accountable for the ethical design, development, and implementation of AI systems, regularly reviewing their impact and efficacy. The Headteacher will ensure this policy is brought to the attention of all staff.
- **Educational value:** We consider how AI applications align with the curriculum scope and objectives and serve to improve teaching and learning experiences and outcomes for pupils.

2.2. We use AI as an administrative and educational tool. We use AI to help teachers manage their workload rather than add to it, and to improve and streamline school operations to maximise time and resources available for teaching and learning.

3. Guidelines for staff

3.1. Staff must not share personal or private information with AI tools without permission from the school Headteacher. To clarify, this means AI should not be provided with pupil or school specific information (as this data is no longer secure once it is loaded onto the many AI systems and is then used by the AI platform as a learning aid).

3.2. Staff are permitted to explore and use AI-based tools and technologies to support their work where no proprietary or personal information is shared with the AI tool. Examples may include use of licensed AI tools for lesson planning, production of curriculum materials, and administration. Staff must be transparent with their Headteacher about their use of generative AI before using new systems or software that involves the school or its pupils in any way (even if privately purchased, or used in their own time).

3.3. **Approved tools and vetting:** The school maintains a record of AI tools approved for staff use. Before adopting a new AI tool that will process any personal, pupil, or school data, the Headteacher (or delegated lead) will check it against the DfE's Generative AI Product Safety Standards and complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) where required. Tools that speak directly to pupils will not be used.

3.4. AI tools will be used responsibly, ensuring they complement expertise but do not create a substitute for professional judgement. Staff remain professionally responsible and accountable for the quality and content of any output they have generated using AI.

- **Professional judgement:** Staff exercise professional judgement in checking AI-generated content for accuracy, relevance, and appropriateness before use in educational settings. They are expected to provide context, and supplement AI-generated materials with their expertise.
- **Personalisation and learning:** Staff must promote equity in education by considering use of AI to address learning gaps and provide personalised support, preparing all pupils for a future in which AI technology will be an integral part, being mindful of disparities in opportunities for different pupils.
- **Data protection and Intellectual Property:** Staff are trained to protect personal and sensitive data, ensuring compliance with data protection legislation and other school policies, recognising the risks posed by AI.

3.5. **Statutory, safeguarding and SEND documentation:** AI may be used to help draft statutory or safeguarding documentation (for example, EHC needs assessment paperwork, SEN Support Plans, or child protection records), consistent with DfE guidance on AI supporting SEND administrative work. However, all such documents must be reviewed, verified for accuracy, and finalised by the responsible named professional (e.g., the SENCO or Headteacher) before submission or use in decision-making. AI must never be the sole basis for a safeguarding or SEND decision.

3.6. Children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 are unlikely to use AI tools on their own, in school. However, they are already surrounded by digital content — videos, images, games, and stories

— and it's important that they begin developing the very early foundations of critical thinking. At this age, the focus is not on teaching children how AI works, but on helping them understand that:

- Not everything they see online is real.
- Computers sometimes "get things wrong."
- We can ask questions and check with a trusted adult when something seems unusual or confusing.

Teaching staff will emphasise to pupils the importance of critical thinking, creativity, and originality in their work, as part of our wider e-safety curriculum.

3.7. All staff are responsible for reading and understanding this policy before using any AI technology. Staff must report any suspected breaches of this policy to the Headteacher.

4. AI-specific safeguarding risks

In addition to our general Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, staff should be aware of safeguarding risks specific to AI, in line with the DfE's updated (May 2026) safeguarding guidance:

- Deepfakes and AI-generated sexualised imagery, including AI-generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM), are treated with the same seriousness as any other form of child sexual abuse material.
- Guidance on incidents involving nudes and semi-nudes applies equally to AI-generated sexualised deepfakes of pupils or staff.
- "Nudification" tools that digitally alter images of real people are illegal to make, adapt, supply or offer under the Crime and Policing Act 2026; any suspected use involving a member of our school community must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Any concern involving AI-generated content of, or affecting, a pupil or member of staff is reported and managed through our existing safeguarding reporting procedures — there is no separate process for AI-related concerns.

5. Future skills development

5.1. Knowledge-rich curriculum: Students will be equipped with foundational knowledge and critical thinking skills effectively before using emerging technologies like Generative AI, in an age-appropriate and secure way.

6. AI governance

6.1. Headteachers are currently the lead for use of generative AI technology (they may delegate this responsibility but they remain accountable). They monitor compliance and work with the wider school community to communicate, promote and regulate AI use, including providing or arranging training where needed.

6.2. **Governor oversight:** The Headteacher will report on AI use, including any incidents or breaches of this policy, to governors at least annually.

6.3. **Queries and breaches:** Questions about this policy, or suspected breaches, should be raised with the Headteacher in the first instance. Data protection queries may also be raised with the school's Data Protection Officer.

7. Conclusion

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