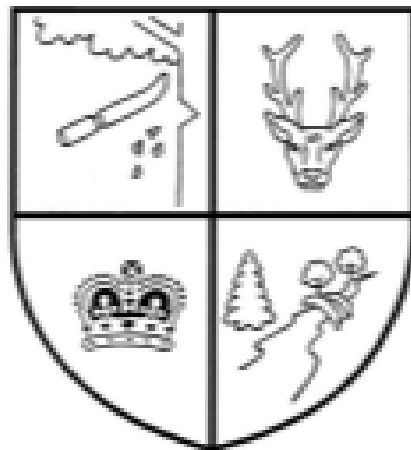


Thomas Willingale Primary School and Nursery

Using Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence)



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Introduction

This policy sets out the strategic framework for integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) at Thomas Willingale Primary School and Nursery, in alignment with the 2014 National Curriculum and Ofsted expectations. AI offers opportunities to enhance learning, promote digital literacy, and prepare pupils for the future. However, it also presents ethical, legal, and safeguarding challenges. This policy ensures AI is used responsibly, safely, and in support of our core educational values.

Please click the link below to view a 4-minute video containing guidance from the Department for Education on using AI in schools:

[Protecting children's privacy when using Artificial Intelligence](#)

Scope:

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, volunteers, and third-party providers (including external companies or individuals who supply or support digital/AI tools used by the school, such as AIR-ed). It covers all AI use for teaching, learning, assessment, and administrative tasks, whether on school devices or personal devices used for school purposes.

Aims:

The aims of this policy are to:

- Encourage the use of AI to enhance teaching and learning.
- Support staff in exploring AI solutions to improve efficiency and reduce workload.
- Prepare staff, governors, and pupils for a future where AI is integral to education and society.
- Promote equity in education by using AI to address learning gaps and provide personalised support.
- Ensure AI technologies are used ethically and responsibly by all members of the school community.
- Protect the privacy and personal data of staff, governors, and pupils in compliance with UK GDPR.

Definitions:

This policy refers to both 'open' and 'closed' generative AI tools. These are defined as follows:

Generative AI: Generative Artificial Intelligence refers to AI systems that can create new content, such as text, images, audio, or code, based on patterns learned from large datasets. These tools use machine learning models to generate outputs that resemble human-created content. Examples include ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and similar platforms.

Open generative AI tools: These are accessible and modified by anyone. They may store, share or learn from the information entered in them, including personal or sensitive information.

Closed generative AI tools: These are generally more secure, as external parties cannot access the data you input.

Legalisation:

This policy reflects good practice guidelines/recommendations in the following publications:

[Generative artificial intelligence \(AI\) and data protection in schools](#), published by the Department for Education (DfE)

This policy also meets the requirements of the:

UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) – the EU GDPR was incorporated into UK legislation, with some amendments, by [The Data Protection, Privacy and Electronic Communications \(Amendments etc\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)

[Data Protection Act 2018 \(DPA 2018\)](#)

Objectives

Objective	Key elements
Child-Centric Approach	AI use must always support the developmental needs, safety, and wellbeing of children. Tools should enhance learning in ways that engage students positively, such as through interactive applications and extracurricular activities. All AI use must be age-appropriate and contribute meaningfully to student growth.
Curriculum Alignment	AI tools will be used to enrich learning experiences in line with the 2014 National Curriculum and Ofsted’s expectations for high-quality education. This includes supporting subject-specific learning and encouraging interdisciplinary projects that demonstrate real-world applications of AI. Ethical discussions around AI will also form part of the curriculum.
Teaching and Learning Enhancement	AI may support differentiation, adaption of tasks, resource creation, and learning activities, with teachers retaining control and judgment. Personalised learning platforms and collaborative projects will be encouraged to foster critical thinking and teamwork. Staff will receive training to use AI effectively.
Safety, Wellbeing and Data Protection	Clear guidelines will govern the safe use of AI technologies. Students will be taught about privacy, digital ethics, and responsible technology use. All AI tools must comply with GDPR and school safeguarding policies. Regular monitoring will ensure tools remain age-appropriate and beneficial to learning.
Human-in-the-Loop	AI must act as a collaborator, not a decision-maker . Staff retain full responsibility for all outputs and decisions, with AI providing support rather than replacing human judgement. To maintain control and quality: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Break tasks into smaller steps and guide the AI tool incrementally. This approach helps ensure accuracy and allows staff to apply critical judgment throughout the process.● Always review AI outputs for errors, bias, or inappropriate content before use.● AI must not replace teacher judgment or professional expertise. Teachers remain accountable for all educational decisions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AI should never generate full reports or substitute teacher-led assessment and feedback. ● Staff should apply human judgment to verify that AI-generated content aligns with school values, safeguarding requirements, and curriculum standards. <p>Clear Communication when using AI When interacting with AI tools, provide clear, detailed instructions and context. Use complete sentences and specify expectations. Clear prompts lead to higher-quality responses and reduce errors.</p>
Ethical Use	Staff must recognise the risks of bias, misinformation, and inappropriate content in AI outputs and ensure their use aligns with Thomas Willingale’s Code of Conduct. Colleagues should critically evaluate AI assumptions and their impact. Teaching will include ethics, privacy, and the societal role of AI, encouraging pupils to think critically about its influence on their lives and futures.
Accountability:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AI must never replace teacher judgment. Teachers remain fully responsible for all decisions and outputs, regardless of whether AI tools are used. ● All AI-generated content must be reviewed and verified by staff for accuracy, bias, and appropriateness before use. ● AI tools must not be used to generate full reports or any documentation that substitutes professional teacher input. ● Teachers should apply critical thinking and professional expertise when integrating AI outputs into teaching, learning, or administrative tasks.
Transparency	Staff at Thomas Willingale will maintain transparency about how AI is used and its educational benefits. Staff, pupils, and parents will be informed about AI integration and its purpose. Feedback will be gathered regularly to ensure continuous improvement and trust.
Monitoring and Evaluation	The school will regularly assess the effectiveness of AI tools and strategies in teaching and learning. Feedback from staff, students, and parents will be collected to identify areas for improvement. Evaluation will ensure AI integration remains aligned with objectives and delivers positive educational outcomes.

AI Education for Pupils

Pupils will be taught:

- What AI is and its role in everyday life.
- The benefits and risks of AI, including bias and misinformation.
- How to use AI responsibly and ethically.
- The importance of privacy and safeguarding when interacting with technology.

These topics will be integrated into computing and PSHE lessons and adapted for age appropriateness. Lessons will focus on developing digital literacy, critical thinking, and an understanding of the ethical implications of AI.

Approved tools

Thomas Willingale has approved Microsoft Copilot and Air-Ed. These can be used with sensitive data (i.e. pupil information) because we are paying for licenses which have the appropriate security controls.

Staff can use with caution other tools, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Canva, Quizlet etc; however, these **must not be used with sensitive, confidential or personally identifiable information**.

- We do not pay for these platforms which means they do not have the appropriate data security measures. In a school environment, sensitive data means things like:
 - Pupil names or initials.
 - Specific learning needs or behaviours.
 - Personalised assessments or feedback.
 - Any information that could identify a child.
- These tools could be used for generic activities such as lesson plans, quizzes or activity sheets.

The full list of approved tools can be found below. The school will maintain an **updated list of approved AI tools** and review usage regularly to ensure compliance with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

AI tool	Category	Reasons why (see annex for more real-life examples).
Microsoft Copilot	External (but enterprise-ready)	This is the preferred AI tool staff use due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It operates within a secure, closed Microsoft 365 ecosystem. ● It complies with UK GDPR and safeguarding policies. ● It avoids the risks associated with external AI platforms.
AIR-ed	Internal (school-approved educational tool)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To support teacher judgements with writing assessments. ● Data protection is in place.
Canva for Education	External (third-party but with education-specific agreements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Can be used to create worksheets/ displays/ resources etc. ● offers suitable privacy controls and compliance features
Grammarly	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Can be used to proof-read letters/ emails. ● a third-party service with its own data policies; generally considered secure but not school owned.
Quizlet	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Widely used for education and has privacy measures, but it's an external provider.

Process for Approval for new tools

- Staff are encouraged to suggest new ways of using AI to improve pupil outcomes and reduce workload. Staff may identify an AI tool which would be beneficial for the school, and you may want to explore purchasing an enterprise level license to ensure appropriate security.
- All ideas must be discussed with the headteacher, who will consult the AI lead, Data Protection Officer (DPO), and conduct a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) where necessary. It is the responsibility of the headteacher/DPO to ensure AI tools the school is purchasing have the appropriate security controls.
- The headteacher is responsible for approving new AI tools or methods before implementation.

Additional Governance and Compliance Measures

Purpose

This section outlines the governance, compliance, and ethical considerations for AI use within the school. It ensures that all AI practices align with safeguarding, data protection, and educational standards.

Expectations when using Generative AI tools

- We are committed to helping staff and governors **reduce workload** through responsible AI use. Generative AI tools can make certain written tasks quicker and easier, but they **cannot replace the judgment and knowledge of a human expert**.
- Always **consider whether AI is the right tool for the task**. Approval for use does not mean it is always appropriate.
- The school will maintain an **updated list of approved AI tools**, given the rapid evolution of technology.

Data Protection and Privacy

- Personal or sensitive data must never be entered into unauthorised generative AI tools or chatbots.
- Any breach of this rule will be treated as a data breach and handled according to the school's Data Protection Policy. Refer to the Data Protection Policy if needed.

Accountability

- Staff remain fully accountable for all work they produce, whether or not generative AI tools have been used. AI must never replace teacher judgment. Teachers retain full responsibility for all decisions, outputs, and materials created. Whatever tools or resources are used to produce plans, policies, or documents, the quality, accuracy, and content of the final output remain the professional responsibility of the individual who produced it.
- Any plans, policies, or documents created with the assistance of AI should be clearly attributed.
- Staff or governors using AI-generated content should only share it if they are confident in its accuracy, as the content remains their professional responsibility.

Intellectual Property

- Pupils retain intellectual property rights for original work they create.
- Staff must not use pupil work to train generative AI models without appropriate consent or legal exemption. As such, pupil work should only be used with tools where we have appropriate data protections (see approved tools table above).
- Legal advice will be sought if there is uncertainty regarding copyright compliance.

Bias and Fairness

- AI tools can perpetuate bias related to protected characteristics (e.g., sex, race, disability).
- Staff must apply critical thinking and fact-check all AI outputs before use.

- The school will provide training to identify and mitigate bias and will review AI use regularly.
- Concerns from parents, carers, or pupils about unfair treatment will be addressed through the school's complaints procedure.

Annex: Practical Examples for AI Use

AI may be used to support teaching and learning in the following ways, with clear boundaries to preserve high-quality educational practice. These examples illustrate how to write clear prompts for AI tools to achieve quality outputs.

1. Teaching Support

Example Prompt: 'Create a Year 4 science lesson on the water cycle. Include a starter activity, main teaching points, and a short quiz. Make it suitable for mixed ability and link to the National Curriculum.'

2. Learning Enhancement

Example Prompt: 'Generate a creative writing starter for Year 3 pupils about a magical forest. Include three vocabulary words to inspire ideas.'

3. Assessment Support

Example Prompt: 'Review this Year 3 writing sample for sentence structure and vocabulary. Suggest two strengths and two areas for improvement, but do not give a grade.'

4. Administrative Efficiency

Example Prompt: 'Draft a parent newsletter paragraph about upcoming school trips. Keep the tone friendly and informative.'

5. AI-Enabled Educational Apps

Example Guidance: 'When using apps like Times Tables Rock Stars, monitor adaptive features and ensure they align with curriculum goals.'

Staff Responsibility

Teachers must:

- Be aware of which tools use AI and how they operate.
- Review all AI-generated content before using it with pupils.
- Ensure AI tools support, not replace, professional judgment and high-quality teaching.
- Communicate clearly with AI tools by providing detailed instructions and context to achieve accurate outputs.
- Report any concerns about AI use (accuracy, bias, safeguarding) to the headteacher or AI lead immediately.

Summary of Ofsted Expectations

Based on the most recent Ofsted framework, the following expectations apply:

- **Quality of Education:** Schools must provide a broad and balanced curriculum that develops knowledge and skills for all pupils.
- **Behaviour and Attitudes:** Promote a positive learning environment where pupils are engaged, resilient, and respectful.

- Personal Development: Offer opportunities for pupils to understand social, moral, and ethical issues, including the implications of technology.
- Leadership and Management: School leaders must demonstrate high standards and continuous improvement, including the effective use of emerging technologies such as AI.

How AI supports these expectations:

The use of AI in our school enhances teaching and learning, promotes digital literacy, and ensures pupils understand the ethical implications of technology. AI is integrated responsibly to support high-quality education without replacing teacher judgment.

Reporting Concerns

If any staff, volunteers, or partners have concerns regarding the use of AI, including issues of accuracy, bias, safeguarding, or data protection, they must report these concerns immediately to the Headteacher or the designated AI Lead.

Concerns can be raised:

- In person
- By email to: Admin@thomaswillingale.essex.sch.uk
- Through the school's safeguarding or complaints procedure if appropriate

All concerns will be logged and addressed promptly in line with school policies.

Conclusion

This policy ensures that AI is used safely, ethically, and effectively to support high-quality education. By keeping human judgment at the centre, maintaining accountability, and ensuring robust safeguarding, Thomas Willingale Primary School ensures AI enhances learning without compromising pupil safety or educational standards. The school will continue to review and update this policy regularly to reflect best practice and emerging guidance.