Southend YMCA Community School

building a future

AI Acceptable Use Policy

Approved by: Governing Body & Headteacher	**Date: April 2026**
Last reviewed on: April 2026	
Next review due by:	April 2028

BACKGROUND

Southend YMCA Community School strives to be a pioneer in Learning and Teaching. We recognise that now is the most exciting time to be a teacher and a pupil. As such, we intend to capitalise on opportunities for learning which technology affords us. The onset of Artificial Intelligence provides exciting opportunities for learning and teaching.

We are committed to fostering a safe and secure environment for learners which will equip them with skills for their future. Artificial intelligence is likely to be part of our pupils' futures and as such we want to incorporate it into their learning.

POLICY OBJECTIVE

This policy aims to provide a clear framework for staff and pupils to use AI ethically and safely within school. This policy acknowledges that AI has the potential to support teaching and learning within the school, helping to customise learning experiences, improving administration efficiency and driving innovation. This policy also covers exiting systems which have or will have embed AI technology. This emerging technology presents risks to the privacy of staff and pupils' personal data if not used appropriately.

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The school is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils and staff promoting a 'culture of vigilance' to safeguard and protect all in its care, and to all aspects of its Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

All users of AI will comply with applicable laws, regulations, policies and guidelines governing Keeping Children Safe in Education, intellectual property, copyright, data protection and other relevant areas. There will be no unauthorised use of copyrighted material or creation of content that infringes on the intellectual property of others. We will prioritise the safeguarding of our pupils and their online safety and will not knowingly use any AI technology that puts their safety or privacy at risk. Staff will not allow or cause intellectual property, including pupils' work, to be used to train Generative AI models without appropriate consent or exemption to copyright.

APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, governors, volunteers and visitors to The School who use generative AI resources both on and off the school premises. It covers all aspects or forms of generative AI technology that are provided by the school, accessed on school equipment, or used in conjunction with any tasks relating to schoolwork.

When new tools are introduced to the school or become available for staff to use, these will be evaluated to ensure compliance with academic standards, privacy considerations, accessibility needs and usability, before they are adopted and used within the school.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The School is committed to the responsible and ethical use of AI. The following principles will guide our use of AI technology:

- Transparency: We will be transparent and accountable about the use of AI technology so that stakeholders, including staff, pupils, parents and other partners understand where and how AI is used and who is responsible. The use of AI-technology should be clearly signposted by pupils in their work and users must take responsibility for their actions when using AI-enabled software. Any stakeholder feedback or questions about the use of AI will be considered and responded to appropriately.
- Fairness: We will engage with AI-technology in a way which is fair and equitable to all. We will work to avoid bias which can occur in AI-powered systems
- Privacy: The privacy of pupil data must be protected. This is the responsibility of all individuals using technology. Pupils are taught to do the same, developing important lifelong habits of security and the prevention of misuse
- Confidentiality: In particular, personal or confidential information should not be entered into generative AI tools. This technology can potentially store and/or learn from data inputted and you should consider that any information entered into such tools is released to the internet
- Safety: All AI-technology used in class will have had prior use by the teacher to ensure that it is safe for pupils. We recognise that AI is ever evolving and staff and pupils have a responsibility to disclose when matters arise in a lesson which deviates from the intended outcome.
- Errors: It is also important to be aware that the technology, despite its advances, still produces regular errors and misunderstandings and should not be relied on for accuracy. In particular, pupils should not use these tools to answer questions about health / medical / wellbeing issues, or indeed anything of a personal nature. It is always best to seek help and recommendations as to reliable resources from a relevant member of staff or DSL
- Human oversight: AI-technology is to be used under human oversight. Teachers will have the final say on the use of AI technology in their classrooms.
- Accountability: All users, regardless of AI use, remain personally accountable for the accuracy, originality, and appropriateness of their final output.

ACCEPTABLE USE

All staff and pupils are expected to use technology responsibly and in accordance with the school's primary Acceptable Use Policies, which are located on the school's website.

Responsible Use of AI

The following principles will be used to guide the use of AI at the School:

- AI tools should be used to support teaching and learning, not replace human judgment.
- Students should not use AI as the first step in their thinking or to circumvent learning.
- Prioritize safeguarding and online safety, ensuring AI tools do not put students at risk.
- Students should avoid plagiarism and the School must uphold copyright regulations, taking

care when using AI (AI) services to protect the intellectual property of themselves and others and checking the accuracy of content accessed through AI services.

Use of AI-Technology in the Classroom

AI technology can be used in the classroom in a variety of ways, including but not limited to:

- Personalised learning: AI-powered platforms can track student progress and adapt instruction to meet the needs of individual learners.
- Automated tasks: AI can automate tasks such as generating personalized learning materials. This can free up teachers to focus on more complex tasks, such as developing relationships with students and designing engaging learning experiences.
- New and innovative learning opportunities: AI can be used to create new and innovative learning experiences, such as immersive simulations and interactive games.

We permit the use of AI in school, subject to the following guidelines:

- Staff exploring the use of AI in a lesson have considered the age and stage appropriateness of the activity. They are aware that pupils must not share personal information or information about the school with AI.
- Staff engaging with AI in lessons must have made careful considerations regarding data privacy.
- AI is not to be used to impersonate others or engage in any activity which might be considered deceptive or malicious.
- AI must not be used to cheat or gain an unfair advantage in any academic task. Specifically, this means not submitting AI-created content without referencing where appropriate or following the guidance of the specific task set. If AI is used for grammar checks, this should be noted.
- Students should not use AI as the first step in their thinking or to circumvent learning.
- AI tools should be used to support teaching and learning, not replace human judgment.
- Where AI has been used, teachers should request to see the prompts used so that they can gauge the level of understanding of the pupil of the task in hand.
- Prioritise safeguarding and online safety, ensuring AI tools do not put students at risk.
- Students should avoid plagiarism and the School must uphold copyright regulations, taking care when using AI (AI) services to protect the intellectual property of themselves and others and checking the accuracy of content accessed through AI services.

Curriculum Integration

The emerging technologies are incredibly exciting and staff across disciplines are encouraged to engage with AI. As such, pupils will experience AI across a variety of disciplines. Our Computing curriculum is under review to incorporate a map of where AI skills will be taught as discrete lessons.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Leaders
Senior leaders within school are responsible for leading on AI policy and ensuring that the use of generative AI aligns with the school's educational objectives, legal obligations and ethical standards. They will ensure that adequate time and financial resources are provided to ensure that generative AI tools are explored before implementation and that the proper guidance and training is provided to all users.

Senior leaders will also promote the responsible use of these tools, maintaining balance between innovation and ethical considerations. They will review any concerns raised by any user or parents.

Teaching Staff
Teachers should consider the use of AI tools to enhancing teaching methods and improving pupil engagement and or accessibility. They have a role to play in supporting pupils to access AI tools without compromising academic integrity (human agency and oversight). AI technologies are evolving rapidly, and teachers need to stay informed and aware of changes that could bring both positive and negative features.

Support Staff / Visitors/ Volunteers /Supply Staff
Anyone using AI tools within school or away from school using school information or data must comply with the guidance within the policy, ensuring tools are used ethically and avoid breaching copyright or academic standards.

Pupils
Pupils should be supported to engage with AI tools that improve access to education, thus improving equality within the school but the tools used should not breach copyright of another author, break ethical standards or any rules laid down by exam boards.

SUMMARY CHART OF ACCEPTABLE AI USAGE

The School aims to use AI tools to improve efficiency, enhancing learning experiences, without compromising academic integrity, personal data security or breaching copyright.

The following chart is designed to demonstrate how AI can be used within Southend YMCA Community School with considerations to ensure the tools are used in the best way, examples of when AI should not be used are also provided. This list is not exhaustive, and additional guidance should be sought from a senior leader for any task that is not covered by the examples before it is undertaken.

A colour code is used: **Green** use without any significant concerns; **Yellow**, use but ensure the considerations are followed to ensure that academic integrity is maintained; Red**,** do not use AI for these tasks, please note that other schools may allow this, but due to the nature of our pupils the school has assessed that they are not suitable for use within Southend YMCA Community School at the current time.

USE BY STAFF

Use	Considerations
Drafting ideas for lesson plans and other activities in school	Check the output is factually accurate and has sound foundations. AI can provide a useful starting point Ensure no information about pupils are included
Help with the design of quiz questions or other exercises	The tools can quickly create multiple choice questions. Ensure that the output and answers are factually accurate. Ensure that any copyrights are not being violated
Customise materials – simplifying language, adjusting reading levels, creating tailored activities for different interests	As this is unlikely to introduce new material, therefore less likely to have factual inaccuracies, but this should still be checked.
Provide custom feedback to a pupil after marking a pupil's work	AI should not be used for marking or providing feedback to pupils
Use of AI by pupils for homework	Pupils should not use AI to produce homework and if any AI has been used, pupils should notify their teacher accordingly or submit their prompt.
Writing Reports for pupils	AI should not be used for preparing or amending reports.
Pupils using AI who do not meet age requirements	Pupils should not set up and use AI if they do not reach the age requirements stipulated by the provider.
Checking pupils work to see if it has been written by AI	Although some tools suggest they can detect if something has been written by AI, this is considered to be unreliable. AI should not be used in this way, teachers and teaching assistants should use their knowledge of pupils to assess if AI has been used.
Anything involving personal information	AI should not be used when personal information about pupils, staff, visitors, volunteers or parents are included. This could breach the school's data privacy rules. There are no exceptions to this.
Taking minutes during meetings	AI should not be used to do this, there are concerns that the AI tools could use the information to further learn and as the discussions in meetings can quickly move to personal data or confidential information this would be undesirable. The tools are also not very good at preparing minutes at the current time.
Summarising documents	Extreme care should be taken when providing documents to AI tools to summarise. The content of the document should be assessed to ensure that it is not confidential or contain any personal data. If either are true, then AI should not be used to summarise the document.
Prepare and construct policies	AI can provide a starting point for preparing policies however care should be taken to ensure that the content is factually accurate and that no

	copyrights are being breached.
Creating presentations and posters	AI could be helpful to be used in this way, ensure the content is factually accurate. If the presentation or poster needs to contain personal information, confidential information or details of a sensitive nature, AI tools should not be used.

USE BY PUPILS

Use	Considerations
To formulate aides – e.g. creating a structure to help prepare a piece of written work	The pupil must check the content is factually accurate and avoid plagiarising another person's work. This could support the pupils learning journey and could be an effective way to use AI.
To provide feedback on writing	Once a pupil has produced a piece of written work AI can provide feedback and suggestions on improvements. Pupils should be told by the teacher when they can use these tools, and they should be open and transparent when tools have been used.
To aid research	Pupils must understand how to check the accuracy of information provided, as AI can provide misinformation. However, this can be an effective way to use AI.
Generating Images to include in tasks	Pupils have access to free imaging tools, as part of their educational software, but pupils should be aware that other services can come at a cost and can be copyrighted. Pupils need to be aware of the rules and possible implications and ensure that they are complying with these.