BALLARD

BESPOKE EDUCATION

AI POLICY	
Reviewed by:	**Oliver Rose – Director of Teaching & Learning**
Review Date:	**September 2026**
Next Review due:	**September 2027**

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AI Policy

Policy Aims:

This policy aims to provide a robust framework for the ethical, safe, and efficient use of generative AI technologies within Ballard School. Its principal intent is to empower both teachers and pupils by supporting the integration of AI into teaching and learning processes whilst emphasising responsible and safe use, inclusivity, and the maintenance of high ethical standards.

We understand that generative AI holds incredible potential for enhancing pedagogical methods, customising learning experiences, aiding administrative efficiency, and driving educational innovation. Harnessing this technology effectively necessitates a comprehensive set of guidelines to uphold our shared values and ensure the successful incorporation of AI into our present and future school community.

Applicability and Scope:

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, governors, volunteers, and visitors who utilise generative AI resources both on and off the premises. It covers all forms of generative AI technology that support learning, teaching, assessment, pupil wellbeing, and administrative processes.

Users should adhere to this policy whenever they engage with generative AI tools signposted by the school, ensuring the predictive text and content generated aligns with the educational objectives and ethical standards of Ballard School.

AI Values at Ballard:

At Ballard we aim to harness the power of AI to enhance education, support pupils, and create inclusive learning environments in accordance with the following underlying principles:

Legal compliance: Importantly, our AI use at all levels will be in accordance with our legal obligations, including (but not limited to) adherence to data protection law, intellectual property and confidentiality obligations.

Academic rigour and integrity: While recognising and utilising the power of AI for educational benefits, we will also acknowledge its limitations and seek to combine the best of what AI can do with the creativity, intuition and understanding that only human beings are capable of. To embed this value pupils will receive lessons on the effective use of AI as part of the ICT curriculum and via section assembly.

Transparency: We will be transparent and accountable in our AI use and decision-making processes.

Ethical Use of AI: We believe that these technologies can greatly enhance teaching and learning, but they must be used in a manner that respects individual rights, promotes fairness, and prevents discrimination. When using AI, we will be mindful that AI can be inaccurate and biased and may amplify existing biases and discriminatory viewpoints which are already prevalent online. We will be vigilant about identifying biases that derive from the data/content AI has been trained on, or the ethical overlay that humans may have added.

Equality and inclusivity: We will consider using AI to broaden our communities, bridge the digital divide, and create a supportive and inclusive AI culture.

Mental Health: We will be mindful of the potential of AI to impact both positively and negatively on mental health and will teach pupils to use it responsibly.

Pupil Empowerment: AI should encourage active engagement, independent learning, and the development of skills and dispositions for life. The capacity of AI to stifle independent thinking and creativity and to 'steal the struggle' from pupils is acknowledged and should be avoided by clear support and guidance from teachers to pupils. This is reinforced via the ICT curriculum and assemblies.

Creative Collaboration: We embrace AI's opportunities to work together to be independent creators, not just content reproducers.

Responsible Innovation: We will use AI responsibly and thoughtfully, considering the potential benefits and trade-offs associated with AI, such as its impact on our brain development and learning.

Shared Learning: We will share the burden of ongoing research, development, and creating ethical guidelines around new tools with our staff and pupils. We will create safe spaces to ideate and discuss the risks and opportunities around AI.

Pupil use of AI at Ballard:

Many AI platforms available to our pupils have a minimum age requirement of 13 years old. As a result, we highly recommend that use of Generative AI be restricted to the Senior School only (Years 9-11) and that pupils in younger years are discouraged from using it.

Restrictions on access will be regularly reviewed considering any developments in AI guidance and age restrictions.

Unless they have specifically been told not to by their teacher, we must work on the assumption that pupils may use AI tools to complete tasks and assignments and to generate data/content (text, video, audio, images). Their use should be subject to the principles set out below.
There are situations and contexts within the school where pupils may be specifically asked to use AI tools to enhance their learning and to explore and understand how these tools can be used.

Conversely, there are also situations in which the use of AI is forbidden, and the tasks must be framed in a way that prohibits/avoids using AI tools, such as working offline or under supervised conditions.

Pupils are encouraged to always check with their teacher before using AI tools and to view the pupil specific guidance and rubric for appropriate use of AI. See Appendix 1.

In general, pupils must understand the following principles when using AI:

1. AI tools used in academic work must not be used for cheating, plagiarism, or any other unethical behaviour. Pupils should always ask their teachers for clarification if they are unsure about what constitutes any of the above. It may help to know that JCQ defines cheating as *'taking something made using AI and saying it is your own work.'*

2. If pupils have not already been given guidance on how to use AI in a specific task/assignment, they should seek clarification on whether AI can be used in completion of the task/assignment and in what capacity.

3. AI-generated content should not be considered a substitute for pupil effort or original work. Pupils are required to put in their own effort to understand the material and produce unique content. AI should not replace the 'hard thinking' element of learning.

4. Pupils must always clearly credit/acknowledge the use of known AI technology in their work when they have actively engaged with it. Pupils should include a record of the AI tool used, the date of use, and the exact prompts/questions used.

5. AI tools must not be used to impersonate individuals or organisations, in a misleading or malicious manner, or to generate content that is unlawful, harmful, or offensive.

6. Use of AI tools and data/content created using such tools must comply with the following policies: Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, E-Safety and Data Protection Policy, Pupil Code of Conduct Policy.

7. Pupils must not submit or otherwise publicise school materials using AI tools. Such materials include (but are not limited to): past papers, textbooks, worksheets, curriculum materials, pastoral information, and other school materials.

8. It is the responsibility of pupils to verify the accuracy of information received from any AI sources (including search engines) used.

9. Pupils should be aware that some AI tools run in the background of certain software and programmes and pupils may not even know they are there. Pupils must also be mindful of the rights of any third parties and avoid infringing those rights, for example by using trademarks or other content. It is also preferable that pupils trace the sources that the AI tool itself used to generate the response where possible (and pupils should be encouraged to do so accordingly).

10. Aside from internal schoolwork and assessments, pupils must also be made aware that Non attribution of AI help/content in their work submitted that may count towards an external qualification (e.g. coursework) is malpractice and will have to be reported to the exam board, leading potentially to disqualification from that unit, that qualification or all qualifications with that exam board (see JCQ regulations in Section 5). Also see pupil friendly guidance on use of AI.

11. Pupils must maintain confidentiality in their interactions with AI tools and must not disclose any confidential or personal information about themselves or any other people to the AI model since then the information may be in the public domain and accessible to others. Additionally, pupils should not use AI tools for advice on emotionally/socially complex problems or other sensitive issues (for example, medical diagnoses or wellbeing concerns).

12. Pupils who breach this policy may face disciplinary action by the school.

Staff use of AI at Ballard:

In some situations, staff may find it helpful to use AI but the following principles must be complied with:

1. Staff should be transparent and honest in their use of AI.

2. AI tools must not be used to impersonate individuals or organisations, in a misleading or malicious manner, or to generate content that is unlawful, harmful, or offensive.

3. Use of AI tools and data/content created using such tools must comply with the following policies: Staff Code of Conduct and the Acceptable Use Agreement.

4. Official school pupil or parent-facing correspondence created with the use of AI must not be sent without clearance and checking from an appropriate member of the Leadership Team.

5. AI must not be used to mark or help assess work without being transparent about this both to the pupil(s) concerned on each occasion and to the Head of Department (or line manager if a HoD).

6. Staff must use appropriate discretion and due diligence to assess whether information obtained from generative AI tools infringes upon any third-party rights (for example, branding, logos or third-party academic output) and refrain from using such material. The school will not be responsible for any infringing use.

7. If staff are inputting any personal or professional information about themselves, the school, other staff members, pupils or their families, they must only use Microsoft CoPilot.

8. Additionally, staff must not solely rely on generative AI tools to attempt to resolve emotionally/socially complex problems or other sensitive issues (for example, medical diagnoses or wellbeing concerns) in a school context.

9. If staff are inputting information about school events or trips using specific locations, or information that makes the school or any individual identifiable, for example to help write risk assessments, staff must only use Microsoft CoPilot.

10. If staff are inputting any proprietary and/or confidential information belonging to the school, other members of staff, or pupils. Aside from personal information (which is discussed above), such information includes (but is not limited to): financial materials, images of the school/school materials, academic materials, other intellectual property, or commercial information, staff must only use Microsoft CoPilot

11. Staff must not solely rely on the use AI tools to make pupil or other workplace-related decisions that could have significant educational, legal, social or other similar effects (for example, disciplinary, academic assessment, or employment-related decisions).

12. Staff must be aware of the potential biases and inaccuracies of generative AI tools and inform pupils about these risks.

13. Staff should familiarise themselves with these guidelines about AI use at Ballard and the potential of AI tools, since even if an individual does not use it, our pupils will be. It is worth reading the following policy paper on Generative AI in Education.

14. Staff have a responsibility to ensure, if AI is used, sensible and appropriate use, and to have read the JCQ guidelines in full (as summarised below).

If in doubt about whether use of AI is advisable or allowable, consult colleagues, your Line Manager or the Exams Officer.

JCQ (UK EXAM BOARD) GUIDANCE ON USE OF AI IN ASSESSMENTS

The JCQ guidelines are extremely strict and any staff working in subjects with non-exam assessments (NEAs) at any level should read the whole policy and familiarise themselves with the contents and any updates:

JCQ - AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications.

JCQ – Preventing AI Misuse in Assessments: A Summary for Teachers.

The document's executive summary outlines the salient points which staff must bear in mind:
"While the potential for pupil artificial intelligence (AI) misuse is new, most of the ways to prevent its misuse and mitigate the associated risks are not; centres will already have established measures in place to ensure that pupils are aware of the importance of submitting their own independent work for assessment and for identifying potential malpractice. This guidance reminds teachers and assessors in centres of best practice in this area, applying it in the context of AI use."

The guidance emphasises the following requirements:

1. As has always been the case, and in accordance with section 5.3(k) of the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres (https://www.jcq.org.uk/examsoffice/general-regulations/), teachers and assessors must only accept work for qualification assessments which is the pupils' own;

2. Pupils who misuse AI such that the work they submit for assessment is not their own will have committed malpractice, in accordance with JCQ regulations, and may attract severe sanctions;

3. Pupils and centre staff must be aware of the risks of using AI and must be clear on what constitutes malpractice;

4. Pupils must make sure that work submitted for assessment is demonstrably their own. If any sections of their work are reproduced directly from AI generated responses, those elements must be identified by the pupil and they must understand that this will not allow them to demonstrate that they have independently met the marking criteria and therefore will not be rewarded (please see the Acknowledging AI use and AI use and marking sections below and Appendix B: Exemplification of AI use in marking pupil work at the end of this document); and

5. Where teachers have doubts about the authenticity of pupil work submitted for assessment (for example, they suspect that parts of it have been generated by AI, but this has not been acknowledged), they must investigate and take appropriate action.

Oliver Rose
Director of Teaching and Learning
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Appendix 1: Pupil guidance on appropriate use of AI at Ballard

As with any technology, AI can be used to support learning, or it can be detrimental to the learning process. The following gives some suggestions for how AI might be used appropriately and some examples of inappropriate use. **If in doubt, ask your teachers!**

Example	Comments
Posing an essay question or series of questions set by your teacher to AI and then passing this off as your own work	This is plagiarism and unacceptable.
Posing an essay question to AI and making edits before submitting this to your teacher	This is still plagiarism (although better than the example above). In this case the majority of the hard thinking has been done by the AI so even if the product here is better than what you could have produced yourself, you are not gaining any information on how you might improve your work in the future.
Asking AI to provide statistics or evidence to back up your arguments	Caution is required here. It is often difficult to find out where AI is getting its information and it is your responsibility to check the accuracy. You should also reference this.
Write a first draft of an essay, ask AI to critique and give feedback, then rewrite the essay based on the feedback	This would be a good way to use AI but should be used with caution. You must be confident that the AI is assessing your work using the same criteria that your teacher would.
Asking an AI to translate a passage into English	If this translation has been set by your French teacher to assess your understanding of French, then this would be unacceptable. If you have come across a source of information in another language that you think might be helpful for a research project, then this might be an acceptable use.
Asking AI to produce a summary of a longer text.	This would be a good way to do some initial research, for example to find out whether the longer texts are appropriate. This could also help you to search for useful information.
Asking AI to explain a concept you are finding tricky	This would be a good way to interrogate your own understanding of a topic as you can have a conversation with the AI and ask it to elaborate or re-explain using different examples or more age-appropriate language. However, always check your final understanding with your teacher.
Use AI as a way of generating multiple different ideas	This would be a good way to use AI as it may come up with ideas that you wouldn't have thought of yourself. The important thing is that you then use your own knowledge and understanding, or other sources of information, to evaluate the different ideas.
Ask AI to provide some suggestions for further reading around a topic	This would be a good use of AI, particularly if you give it some detailed prompts.
Talking to an AI in a foreign language for extra practice	This would be a great way to use AI though bear in mind that some of the information it includes in its conversations may not be factually correct

References:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education/generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-in-education

Appendix 2: PSHE and Computing Curriculum

