



AI Policy

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Ratified:	October 2025
Review:	October 2026

Chair of Governors:

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Headteacher:

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Ethos of The Orchard School

At The Orchard School, **Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares**. Our ethos is rooted in the belief that every child has the potential to grow, thrive, and succeed when provided with the right environment, relationships, and support. **The Orchard Way** guides everything we do, ensuring that our approach is therapeutic, inclusive, and centred on understanding behaviour as communication. We are committed to nurturing the social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs of our pupils, recognising their unique challenges while celebrating their individuality. Through strong relationships and a culture of care, we create a school where every pupil feels safe, valued, and empowered to reach their full potential.

Principles of Our Ethos:

1. **Respect for the Individual:** Every pupil deserves respect, dignity, and the opportunity to be heard.
2. **Relationships at the Heart of Learning:** Positive, trusting relationships form the foundation of our work.
3. **Equity and Inclusion:** We ensure all pupils have access to the support they need to succeed.
4. **Therapeutic and Nurturing Approaches:** We integrate trauma-informed strategies to promote resilience.
5. **High Expectations with Compassion:** Balancing aspirations with understanding and personalisation.
6. **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Families, carers, and agencies work together to support pupils.
7. **A Safe and Predictable Environment:** Structure and boundaries foster trust and confidence.
8. **Restorative Practices:** Addressing conflicts through understanding, accountability, and growth.

Introduction

The Orchard School recognises that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming an everyday part of education, work and society. AI has the potential to improve learning, reduce barriers, support accessibility and streamline operations. However, it also introduces safeguarding, data and ethical risks.

This policy sets out how AI will be used responsibly in our school. It distinguishes between general AI systems used for administration and learning, and generative AI systems that create text, images, video or audio. All use of AI is underpinned by our Mission, Vision and Values, The Orchard Way, and our commitment to safeguarding and inclusion.

Mission Statement

At The Orchard School, **Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares**. Our ethos is rooted in the belief that every child has the potential to grow, thrive, and succeed when provided with the right environment, relationships, and support. **The Orchard Way** guides everything we do, ensuring that our approach is therapeutic, inclusive, and centred on understanding behaviour as communication. We are committed to nurturing the social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs of our pupils, recognising their unique challenges while celebrating their individuality. Through strong relationships and a culture of care, we create a school where every pupil feels safe.

Purpose

This policy aims to:

1. Provide clear expectations for staff, pupils and contractors on the use of AI.
2. Ensure all AI use is safe, ethical, transparent and compliant with KCSIE 2025, data protection law and DfE standards.
3. Support staff and pupils to use AI critically and responsibly.
4. Protect pupils from harm while preparing them for a future shaped by AI.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All AI technologies used for school purposes, both general and generative.
- All staff, pupils, governors, contractors and external providers engaged with AI in the school context.

Section A – General AI

General AI refers to systems that use automation, pattern recognition or predictive analytics without generating new content. Examples: school management systems, behaviour monitoring, adaptive learning platforms.

Principles:

- Safeguarding: AI tools must never replace human decision-making in matters of safeguarding or behaviour. Alerts must always be reviewed by staff.
- Data Protection: All systems must comply with GDPR. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) must be completed before use.
- Filtering & Monitoring: Systems must meet DfE filtering and monitoring standards and be reviewed annually.
- Inclusion: AI should be used to support pupils with SEMH and SEND needs, ensuring equitable access.
- Transparency: Staff remain accountable for teaching and administrative decisions, regardless of AI input.

Section B – Generative AI

Generative AI refers to tools that create new content such as text, images, video or voice. Examples: ChatGPT, image generators, voice cloning software.

Safeguarding Risks:

- Exposure to harmful or sexualised content, deepfakes or synthetic abuse material.
- Grooming, bullying or reputational harm via generated content.
- Misinformation and fabricated evidence.
- Pupils encouraged to share personal data with AI systems.

Use Boundaries:

- Pupils must not use generative AI unsupervised for communication, image/video creation, or assessment.
- Staff must not upload pupil data, safeguarding information or special category data into external AI.
- Staff–pupil interactions must not take place via AI chatbots or avatars.

Curriculum Entitlement:

- Pupils will be taught how generative AI works, including its strengths and its limits.
- AI systems can sometimes produce information that looks convincing but is false, inaccurate or misleading (this is often called 'hallucination').
- Digital literacy lessons will help pupils develop the skills to question, fact-check and cross-reference AI outputs.
- Ethical issues such as plagiarism, copyright and authorship will be explored in class discussions.

Academic Integrity:

- Coursework and exams:
 - Permitted – idea generation, planning, accessibility support (with acknowledgement).
 - Prohibited – submitting AI-generated work as original.

- Sanctions for misuse will align with JCQ and awarding-body policies.

Transparency & Accountability:

- Staff must disclose when generative AI has been used to prepare teaching resources.
- Pupils must declare if AI assisted their learning tasks.
- Professional judgement and pupil ownership of work cannot be replaced by AI.

Content Moderation & Monitoring:

- Only age-appropriate, safeguarded AI tools with filtering will be used in school.
- DSL oversight is required for any safeguarding alerts arising from AI.

Data Protection & DPIA:

- Generative AI use requires a DPIA approved by the DPO.
- Providers must confirm that data is not reused or used to train external models.
- Data residency, retention and deletion must comply with UK GDPR.

Roles and Responsibilities

- SLT: Oversees all AI use and ensures compliance with this policy.
- DSL: Leads safeguarding oversight, including AI-related incidents and DPIAs.
- DPO: Oversees data protection and provide advice.
- ICT Lead: Ensures systems meet DfE filtering/monitoring standards.
- Staff: Model safe, ethical use of AI and remain professionally accountable.
- Pupils: Use AI responsibly, following school rules and reporting concerns.
- Governors: Monitor policy effectiveness and receive annual safeguarding/data updates.

Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read alongside the following Orchard School policies and frameworks:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Relational and Therapeutic Policy
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

These ensure that the use of AI is consistent with The Orchard Way, our Mission, Vision and Values, and statutory safeguarding requirements.

Monitoring and Review

- Annual review of AI use by SLT and governors.
- Regular audits of AI systems for safeguarding, data protection and educational impact.
- Policy updated as technologies and risks evolve.

Conclusion

By separating general AI and generative AI, The Orchard School ensures that new technologies are used to enhance learning, support accessibility and improve operations, while keeping safeguarding, ethics and inclusion at the centre of practice. This policy protects pupils and staff today while preparing our community for the future.