Head Teacher: Kirsten MacLeod

Acceptable Use of Technology (including AI) Policy

Reviewed by: **Roman Kutereba**
Policy approved by Head Teacher: Autumn 2023
Policy update: **Autumn 2025**
Policy to be reviewed again: **Autumn 2027**

1. Introduction and Scope

Newham Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) seek to embrace the use of **Information and Communications Technology (ICT)** and **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** to enhance teaching and learning, support student well-being, and improve administrative processes.

This policy applies to **all staff** when using any Newham PRUs digital/computer equipment, as well as when using personal devices for work-related purposes.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that:

- Information is readily available to the relevant users throughout the PRUs.
- **Confidentiality is always maintained.**
- The integrity of the information is maintained.
- Data access and use conforms to regulations in regard to the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018** and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Undesirable consequences associated with breaches of information security are avoided (e.g., bad publicity, fraud, and illegal use of personal data).
- Staff understand their responsibilities online to ensure the **welfare and safeguarding of pupils.**
- Staff understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour to mitigate the risk of inappropriate communication taking place between staff and pupils and of having misplaced allegations being made against staff.

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2. Guiding Principles for Technology and AI Use

This section governs the use of all Newham PRUs digital/computer equipment, networks, and personal devices used for work purposes.

Staff Responsibilities and Safeguarding

- Staff must understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour to mitigate the risk of inappropriate communication taking place between staff and pupils.
- Staff must understand their responsibilities with regard to the ICT systems and equipment that they are provided with.
- The policy applies when using all Newham PRUs digital/computer equipment, as well as using your own devices.

Digital Education Platforms

- Digital education platforms (VLEs/VCEs) can be used to enable continued access to teaching resources and facilitate teacher-pupil interaction, feedback, and assessment.
- Schools should keep these platforms secure and up to date, and ensure staff remain trained and confident in their use.
- Staff should be trained on the accessibility features available on their chosen digital platforms.

Provision for Pupils with SEND

- For pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), teachers should determine how their needs can most effectively be met to ensure they continue to access the curriculum.
- Schools should put in place appropriate curriculum, teaching, and support to enable continued effective learning.

Our approach is guided by our core values, focusing on kindness, courage, and resilience. Specifically regarding AI and technology, we are committed to the following:

- **Student Well-being and Human Interaction:** Technology, especially AI, must **supplement and support our teaching—not replace it**. AI should not replace the crucial relationship between our dedicated staff and our pupils.
- **Ethical Use:** AI must be used in a fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory manner. Potential biases in AI algorithms must be recognised and mitigated.
- **Data Privacy and Security:** Student data must be protected in accordance with **UK GDPR**. Clear protocols for data collection, storage, and usage must be established and followed.
- **Safeguarding:** All technology, including AI tools, must be carefully vetted for potential risks and must not compromise student safety. Robust safeguarding measures must be in place to prevent misuse and potential harm.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** The use of AI must be transparent to staff, students, and parents/guardians, with clear lines of accountability for all technology and AI usage established.

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3. General Acceptable Use of Technology (Staff)

This section outlines the responsibilities of staff concerning the use of all technology systems and equipment provided by Newham PRUs.

Staff Responsibilities and Boundaries

Responsibility	Detail
Communication	Staff must understand the boundaries of acceptable online behaviour and communication with pupils to mitigate the risk of inappropriate interaction or misplaced allegations.
Equipment Use	Staff understand their responsibilities with regard to the ICT systems and equipment that they are provided with and are required to use as part of their job descriptions. This includes keeping equipment secure.
Personal Devices	This policy also applies when using your own devices (phones, laptops, tablets) to access Newham PRUs information or systems (e.g., email, cloud storage). Personal devices for any school related action should only be used with the express permission of the headteacher and IT department. This will be time limited pending the needs of any post as per the job description.

Digital Education Platforms

Digital education platforms (virtual learning environments) can be used to enable continued access to teaching resources, facilitate teacher-pupil interaction (including feedback and assessment), and allow pupils at home to stay connected to their peers.

Schools using these platforms must:

1. Keep them **secure and up to date**.
2. Ensure staff remain trained and confident in their use.
3. Ensure necessary steps are taken to train staff on the platform's **accessibility features**, especially for pupils with SEND.

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4. Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

At this time, pupils are not permitted to have direct access to GEMINI or any other AI platform within lessons. Staff are responsible for monitoring pupils in their care to ensure that this approach is enforced until such time that full regulation and monitoring of AI across the school can be suitably monitored and tracked to comply with all GDPR and Safeguarding requirements.

As AI Platforms become officially available within Newham PRUs Online tools, AI tools are to be used under strict **teacher supervision**, and **human judgment remains at the heart of our decision-making.**

How AI Supports Students and the Curriculum

We leverage AI to support our staff and students in a variety of ways:

- **Personalised Learning Support:** AI-based platforms help identify gaps in students' understanding by analysing assessment data, allowing teachers to focus interventions where they are needed most.
- **Assisting in Planning:** AI helps teachers generate ideas, differentiation options, or alternative ways to explain difficult concepts, ensuring students with different learning styles can access the curriculum.
- **Enhanced Data Analysis:** AI can analyse large datasets to identify patterns in student behaviour, attendance, and academic performance, enabling earlier intervention and data-driven decisions.

Permitted Uses of AI (Vetted and Authorised)

4.1 Guiding Principles for AI Use

The use of AI must adhere to the following principles, which ensure an ethical, fair, and secure implementation.

Principle	Description	Our Commitment - We Will:
Student Well-being	AI must prioritise the emotional and mental well-being of students; human interaction and support remain paramount.	Implement AI tools that support diverse learning styles and needs, including adaptive learning platforms that personalise education.

Ethical Use	AI must be used in a fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory manner. Potential biases must be recognised and mitigated.	Check that AI solutions are appropriate before using them systemically and monitor AI systems for bias.
Data Privacy & Security	Student data must be protected in accordance with GDPR. Protocols for data collection, storage, and usage must be established.	Implement strong data protection measures and carry out and regularly review Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs).
Transparency & Accountability	The use of AI must be transparent to all stakeholders. Clear lines of accountability must be established.	Ensure stakeholders understand when they are interacting with AI or when a decision has involved AI.
Robustness & Safety	Ensure AI systems function reliably and securely under various conditions, protecting users from risks.	Ensure there is always a **'human in the loop'** verifying AI outputs and being vigilant against automation bias.
Support for Staff & Students	AI technologies should support professional development and enhance student learning.	Provide training for staff on integrating AI tools and create a curriculum that prepares students for a future where AI plays a significant role.

4.2 Permitted Uses of AI (Must be Authorised)

AI tools sanctioned and authorised by Newham PRUs may be used by staff for:

- **Personalised Learning:** Adapting to individual student needs and identifying learning gaps.
- **Administrative Tasks:** Automating tasks like scheduling, report generation, data analysis, and recording/reporting on meetings/SDS.
- **Behavioral Analysis:** Analysing behavioural patterns to identify students at risk, subject to appropriate ethical oversight and consent.
- **Communication:** Improving communications with parents and carers.

Approved AI Tools for Staff Use:

- **GEMINI** (accessed through your work login).
- **AI incorporated within formally approved third-party applications** (including Camber, CPOMS, BROMCOM).

4.3 Prohibited Uses of AI

Prohibited Use	Detail
Direct Student Access	**Pupils are not permitted to have direct access to GEMINI or any other generative AI platform within lessons at this time.** Staff are responsible for monitoring pupils to enforce this.
Inputting Sensitive Personal Data	Avoid inputting sensitive personal data (e.g., health information, religious beliefs, or biometric data) into AI tools unless absolutely necessary, fully compliant with GDPR, and with explicit consent.
Automated Decision-Making	Do not rely solely on AI to make critical decisions regarding student placement, discipline, assessment, or grading. AI must be used as a tool to support, not replace, human judgment.
Unapproved Tools	Only use AI tools that have been vetted and approved by the school's data protection officer or designated authority. Do not use public or unsecured AI tools.
Deepfakes/Image Manipulation	The use of AI tools to create deepfakes or manipulate images/videos is **strictly prohibited**.

4.4 Approved AI Tools

The following AI tools have been approved for use by Newham PRUs:

- **GEMINI** - accessed through your work login.
- **AI incorporated within formally approved third-party applications** (including Camber, CPOMS, BROMCOM).

4.5 AI Use in Assessments and Academic Integrity

In accordance with JCQ regulations, all work submitted for qualification assessments (including NEAs and coursework) must be the student's own independent work. AI misuse—defined as using AI tools to obtain content without appropriate acknowledgement or submitting AI-generated responses as one's own—constitutes malpractice. Students are strictly prohibited from copying or paraphrasing AI-generated text, calculations, or analysis into their submissions. Any permitted use of AI as a research source must be fully acknowledged, including the name of the tool, the date the content was generated, and a copy of the prompts/outputs in a non-editable format. Staff are required to verify the authenticity of student work by comparing it against previous performance and, where necessary, using AI detection tools. Failure to adhere to these standards, such as making a false declaration of authenticity, may lead to severe sanctions from awarding organisations, including the loss of marks, disqualification from the qualification, or being barred from future examinations.

5. Data Protection and Security

All use of technology, particularly AI, must comply fully with UK data protection legislation (UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018).

Staff Responsibilities: Data Do's and Don'ts

Do's	Don'ts
Use only School-Approved Tools.	**Input Sensitive Personal Data** (unless necessary and with consent).
Anonymise and Pseudonymise Data where possible (e.g., use student ID numbers instead of names).	**Use Public or Unsecured AI Tools.**
Ensure Data Security (strong passwords, multi-factor authentication, restricted access).	**Rely Solely on AI for Critical Decisions.**
Verify all AI Outputs (Do not assume AI is always accurate, as outputs can be inaccurate or biased).	**Store Personal Data in AI Tools Indefinitely** (follow retention policy).
Report Data Breaches immediately to the school's data protection officer.	**Upload Photos or Videos of Students without Consent** (especially into AI tools).

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6. Implementation and Review

The PRUs are committed to a phased, ethical, and collaborative adoption of AI.

Governance and Development

- An **AI Steering Group** will be established to guide the adoption, prioritising data privacy, security, transparency, fairness, and human oversight.
- The policy development is part of a plan to formalise policies (Use, Ethics, Data Security) into official PRU documentation.

Curriculum and Training

- **AI Literacy Workshops** will be provided for all staff to build foundational understanding.
- The PRUs will introduce **AI Literacy** as a formal part of the student curriculum, teaching students how to use AI responsibly, critically evaluate outputs, and understand ethical implications.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy must be reviewed and updated regularly (e.g., annually) to reflect advancements in AI technology and best practices.
- Regular forums (e.g., an AI 'Community of Practice') will be established for staff to share best practices and troubleshoot issues.
- Metrics will be implemented to continuously track the impact of AI on staff well-being (time saved) and student outcomes (re-engagement, progress).

7. Policy Review and Contacts

Item	**Detail**
Head Teacher	Kirsten MacLeod
Reviewed by	Roman Kutereba
Policy Approved	Autumn 2025
Policy Update	Autumn 2025
Policy to be Reviewed Again	Autumn 2027
Further Support/Guidance	Mira Gohil or Terry Carter