



THORNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy 2026-2027

Purpose

This policy sets out how Thornton Primary School uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) responsibly, safely and effectively to support teaching, learning and school administration while safeguarding pupils and complying with Department for Education (DfE) guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, data protection legislation and wider safeguarding requirements. AI can provide significant benefits to education, but it must be used with appropriate human oversight and professional judgement.

1. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors who use AI technologies within school or as part of school-related activities.

The policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Acceptable Use Policy

2. Principles of AI Use

Thornton Primary School recognises that AI technologies may support educational outcomes and improve efficiency when used appropriately. The school adopts the following principles:

- AI will be used to enhance teaching, learning and administration where it adds value.
- Human judgement will always remain central to decision-making.
- AI will never replace safeguarding responsibilities or professional accountability.
- Staff remain responsible for checking the accuracy, suitability and quality of AI-generated content.
- Use of AI must support equality, inclusion and accessibility.
- AI will be used in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and copyright requirements.



3. Safeguarding Considerations

The school recognises that AI presents both opportunities and safeguarding risks.

Risks may include:

- Exposure to inappropriate or harmful content.
- Misinformation and disinformation.
- Deepfake images, audio and video.
- AI-assisted bullying, harassment or abuse.
- Grooming and exploitation through AI-generated content.
- Sharing personal or sensitive information with AI systems.
- Over-reliance on AI-generated information without critical evaluation.

To minimise these risks:

- Pupils will be supervised when using AI technologies.
- Staff will evaluate AI outputs before they are used with pupils.
- Any safeguarding concern linked to AI will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- AI-related incidents will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The school will consider AI-enabled risks as part of its wider online safety and safeguarding arrangements.

4. Approved AI Tools

Only AI systems that have been reviewed and approved by the school may be used for school purposes.

Approved platforms include:

- Microsoft Copilot
- Google Gemini
- ChatGPT
- MagicSchool AI

The approved list will be reviewed regularly as technologies develop.

The introduction of any new AI tool will be subject to appropriate risk assessment, safeguarding review and data protection considerations before implementation.



5. Staff Responsibilities

Staff must:

- Undertake appropriate training relating to AI, safeguarding and online safety.
- Exercise professional judgement when using AI.
- Verify the accuracy of AI-generated material before use.
- Ensure that AI-generated content is appropriate for the age and needs of pupils.
- Not input confidential, safeguarding or sensitive personal information into AI systems unless specifically authorised and protected by appropriate agreements.
- Be alert to potential bias, inaccuracies or misinformation within AI outputs.
- Report concerns or misuse immediately.
- Ensure that AI supports, rather than replaces, effective teaching and assessment.

Staff should be particularly aware that AI systems can generate convincing but inaccurate responses and should never rely solely on AI-generated information when making professional decisions.

6. Pupil Awareness and Education

Pupils will receive age-appropriate education about AI as part of the Computing curriculum, online safety education and wider safeguarding programme.

This may include:

- Understanding what AI is.
- Recognising the benefits and limitations of AI.
- Understanding that AI systems are not human.
- Identifying misinformation and manipulated content.
- Understanding privacy and data protection.
- Recognising deepfakes and AI-generated media.
- Using AI safely, ethically and responsibly.
- Reporting concerns relating to AI technologies.

The school recognises that developing critical thinking and digital literacy is an important part of preparing pupils for life in a technology-rich world.

7. Data Protection and Privacy

The school is committed to protecting personal information when using AI technologies.



Therefore:

- AI providers must demonstrate compliance with relevant data protection legislation.
- Personal data will only be shared where lawful and necessary.
- Staff should avoid entering personal, confidential or safeguarding information into AI systems unless specifically approved.
- Where possible, anonymised information should be used.
- Appropriate Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) will be undertaken where necessary.
- Parents and carers may request information regarding the AI systems used by the school and how information is protected.

8. Leadership and Monitoring

The Headteacher, DSL and Computing Lead will work together to oversee the safe use of AI within school.

Responsibilities include:

- Monitoring developments in AI technology.
- Reviewing safeguarding implications of new tools.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training.
- Reviewing incidents relating to AI use.
- Ensuring AI use aligns with safeguarding and online safety procedures.
- Supporting compliance with KCSIE and DfE guidance.

9. Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- There are significant developments in AI technology.
- New safeguarding risks emerge.
- DfE guidance changes.
- KCSIE requirements are updated.
- Significant incidents indicate a need for revision.

The school will continue to monitor national guidance and best practice to ensure that AI is used safely, ethically and effectively.

Signed: Mr David Ashcroft, Headteacher

Date: September 2026



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Review Date: September 2027

To be approved by the Finance, Staffing & Resources Committee on 03/11/2026