

AI and education

AI is changing the way we interact with technology, information and each other in workplaces, homes and education. It has the potential for both enormous benefit and serious harm and we need to teach and support our children to navigate this – learning to **think, create and live** both with and without AI. AI needs to become one tool in their toolbox, not their default solution.

Central questions when using AI for schoolwork

Every time your child uses AI, they should be asking themselves these questions:

- Is this use of AI **helping me to learn or robbing me of a learning opportunity?**
- Is this use of AI making me **more or less creative?**
- Would I be comfortable to **openly acknowledge this use of AI?**
- Do I **practise doing that** as a matter of course?
(Image shows how JCQ, the exam regulator, say this **MUST** be done in coursework (JCQ, 2024))



Reference reference reference!

If you're allowed to use AI tools, you must reference them clearly

- Name the AI tool you used
- Add the date you generated the content
- Explain how you used it
- Save a screenshot of the questions you asked and the answers you got

Constructive uses of AI	Uses of AI that impede learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subject specialist packages recommended by teachers, e.g. Eedi or Duolingo.• Revision help – generating questions and answers. But make sure you are very specific in your prompt to stay on topic.• Asking for alternative explanations of concepts you are finding tricky.• Brainstorming ideas for new projects (but check with your teacher if this is something you are marked on).• Shortcutting (with permission) a task that is not central to the main learning aim of the homework so that you can focus your time on the learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Putting homework questions into AI and copying out the answers that it gives – whether shorter answers or longer ‘research’ projects.• Using AI to write for you (or even rewrite for you). Tools like Grammarly can be helpful if you are using them as a learning tool rather than routinely writing with them and accepting their corrections without thought. When used routinely and thoughtlessly they can cause us to become dependent and incapable of writing clearly without them. Any AI tools embedded within these packages MUST be switched off for coursework.• Using online translation tools to translate blocks of text in languages subjects.

Uses of AI that might be OK or might be better done another way

- *Using AI purely as a search engine.* Think about **why** you are doing this. AI summaries often disguise the source of the information, making it harder to determine accuracy and understand bias. How will you guard against this?
- *Summarising longer documents.* Sometimes this is fine, but if you never practise skimming and scanning skills to extract relevant information, you will never learn these. Remember too that AI summaries are not always accurate.
- *Revision.* Would you be better off using revision materials provided by your teacher, tailored revision sites (like BBC Bitesize) and past papers? How certain are you that your AI revision is sufficiently focussed on what **you** need to learn?

Safety

There is serious global concern, alongside that about social media use, about the impact of extensive use of AI chatbots on some children.

- Be aware of personal risks and watch out for key indicators, such as social withdrawal and overdependence on chatbots.
- Be curious about children's online lives and make their online world part of everyday conversation.
- Discuss the risks and benefits of AI (both personal and societal) in a neutral, curious way. Include discussions about sharing of personal data and images.
- Set up children's accounts with parental controls where possible. Avoid sharing accounts. Note that companies are increasingly using AI profiling to predict the age of the user in order to put safeguards in place, and sharing accounts confuses this.
- Set reasonable time limits.

AI age restrictions: These shift and change rapidly – worth looking at the T&Cs for individual sites your child uses. Creating accounts on many sites is restricted to age 13+ (e.g. Microsoft CoPilot, Canva), while some are 13+ *with additional parental consent for users under 18* (e.g. ChatGPT, Perplexity, SnapChat). Grammarly is 16+.

Privacy, Environment & Ethics

Beyond all of the educational challenges, there are huge societal issues with the rapid development of AI that are beyond the scope of this document but are exceptionally important and need to be part of the ongoing conversation. In particular: data privacy, security and ownership; environmental issues with energy and water use, particularly for image and video generation; widespread ethical concerns; and the proliferation of AI 'slop'. Children need to be part of the conversation about how AI is changing the world – for better as well as for worse – because this is the world they are inheriting.

Further reading

APA. (2025). *Artificial intelligence and adolescent well-being: An APA health advisory*. American Psychological Association. Retrieved from American Psychological Association website: <https://www.apa.org/topics/artificial-intelligence-machine-learning/health-advisory-ai-adolescent-well-being>

Han, O. (2025, June 18). We need to Chat(GPT). *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/18/learning/we-need-to-chat-gpt.html>

Joint Council for Qualifications. (2024). *AI and assessments: A quick guide for students*. JCQ. Retrieved from <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/JCQ-AI-poster-for-students-2.pdf>

McBain, S. (2025, October 18). Are we living in a golden age of stupidity? *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/oct/18/are-we-living-in-a-golden-age-of-stupidity-technology>