READING BLUE COAT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

1. Introduction

Purpose of the Policy

This policy establishes Reading Blue Coat's approach to the ethical, safe, effective and legally compliant use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), including Generative AI technologies. The School recognises the potential of AI to enhance teaching, learning, administration and operational efficiency, whilst acknowledging associated risks relating to safeguarding, academic integrity, data protection, bias, accountability and professional judgement.

This policy sets out the principles, expectations and safeguards that govern the use of AI across the School and should be read alongside the School's Safeguarding Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Data Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Assessment Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Use of Generative AI in Academic Work Policy.

Regulatory Context

The School's use of AI is informed by:

- Independent School Standards Regulations 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Equality Act 2010
- Department for Education guidance on AI in education settings
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance on AI and malpractice

All use of AI within the School must comply with applicable legal and regulatory requirements and does not remove the need for professional judgement, accountability or human oversight.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all pupils, teaching staff, support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and consultants undertaking activities on behalf of the School.

The policy applies to all AI-enabled technologies used within the School, including:

- Generative AI platforms

- Agentic AI systems
- AI-enabled educational software
- AI chatbots
- Administrative AI tools
- AI systems integrated within existing school platforms
- Wearable devices using AI technology

2. Principles and Objectives

Ethical Use of AI

The School is committed to ensuring that it's approach remains in line with the UNESCO AI Policy, so that AI use is:

- Human-centred
- Respectful of privacy
- Transparent
- Fair and non-discriminatory
- Secure and accountable
- Aligned with educational values and professional standards

Promoting Academic Integrity

AI use must support, not undermine, academic honesty. Reading Blue Coat students must:

- Acknowledge and cite any use of AI tools
- Avoid submitting AI-generated work as their own
- Understand the limitations and risks of AI-generated content, including hallucination and misinformation

Teachers must:

- Supervise and authenticate student work.
- Use professional judgement to assess AI-assisted submissions. More detailed instructions are provided in the *Use of Generative AI in Academic Work Policy*.
- Educate students on ethical AI use and citation practices

Enhancing Educational Outcomes

We will encourage AI use to support personalised learning, reduce administrative workload and improve feedback. Examples include:

- AI-driven analytics (e.g. Sparx Maths and Languagenut) to identify learning gaps
- AI tools for lesson planning and curriculum development
- AI agents in Copilot for administrative support

These uses will be critically evaluated by the Digital Strategy Committee and aligned with our curriculum and professional standards.

3. Definitions

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Systems that simulate human intelligence to perform tasks such as decision-making, pattern recognition, and content generation
- **Generative AI:** AI tools that create new content (text, images, audio, video) based on training data
- **Hallucination:** A response produced by Generative AI that appears credible but contains inaccurate, misleading or fabricated information.
- **Closed AI Tools:** AI systems approved, managed or contractually controlled by the School.
- **Human Oversight:** Ensuring AI decisions are subject to human review and intervention. At Reading Blue Coat we are committed to keeping a human 'in the loop' with regard to all aspects of AI development.

4. Safety and Legal Compliance

Operational responsibility is shared between:

- Headmaster
- Deputy Head (Education Development)
- Deputy Head (Pastoral)/ Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Digital Strategy Committee
- Bursar/Data Protection Lead
- IT Services Team

Before any new AI platform is adopted, consideration will be given to:

- Safeguarding implications
- Data protection compliance
- Cyber security risks
- Reliability and accuracy
- Equality and accessibility
- Educational benefit
- Contractual terms and conditions
- Age appropriateness

The School may prohibit platforms considered unsuitable.

Online Safety and the Online Safety Act

In accordance with Ofcom's guidance on the Online Safety Act (2023), Reading Blue Coat will:

- Conduct risk assessments for AI tools used in school
- Implement content moderation and age assurance for student-facing AI tools
- Ensure reporting mechanisms are in place for harmful or illegal content
- AI systems must not replace safeguarding procedures, reporting routes or professional safeguarding judgement.
- Any concerns relating to deepfakes, synthetic media, impersonation, harmful content or AI-related safeguarding risks must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead using existing reporting procedures for safeguarding concerns.

Generative AI tools that allow user-generated content or group interaction (e.g. chatbots) and pornographic content generated by AI are regulated are regulated under The Online Safety Act. The School's *AI Policy* complies with the regulation as set out in the Act and its measures for enforcement.

Data Protection
We understand and have taken steps to ensure that all AI use at Reading Blue Coat complies with UK GDPR and the Department of Education guidance on data protection in schools.

This includes:

- Avoiding the use of personal data in AI prompts
- Seeking consent from students and parents when personal data is processed.
- Ensuring transparency in data collection, storage, and use
- Providing mechanisms for data access, correction, and deletion

Any personal data breach involving AI technologies will be managed in accordance with the School's Data Protection Policy and statutory reporting requirements.

Confidentiality

Staff must not enter into unapproved AI systems:

- Safeguarding information
- SEND information
- Health information
- Parent correspondence
- Staff disciplinary information
- Commercially sensitive School information

unless explicit approval has been provided and appropriate safeguards are in place.

Intellectual Property (IP)
AI-generated content must respect copyright law. At Reading Blue Coat we do not:

- Use student work to train Copilot without explicit permission
- Publish AI-generated content that infringes on third-party IP
- Assume AI outputs are free from copyright risk

We ask staff to critically evaluate AI-generated materials before use or publication because of hallucination and because we value human, critical appraisal.

5. Acceptable Use of AI

Staff Use

All outputs generated using AI must be reviewed critically for:

- Accuracy
- Bias
- Suitability
- Safeguarding implications
- Professional appropriateness

Staff remain fully accountable for decisions, communications and materials assisted by AI.

Staff may use AI tools for:

- Initial research and idea generation
- Drafting lesson plans and resources
- Administrative tasks (e.g. emails, curriculum development, collating feedback/data)

Prohibited Staff Uses of AI:

Unless expressly authorised:

- Automated decision-making without human oversight is prohibited.
- AI must not be used to make safeguarding decisions.
- AI must not be used as a substitute for professional judgement.
- Personal data must not be entered into unapproved AI tools.

Student Use

Copilot as the Reading Blue Coat Generative AI default

At Reading Blue Coat we use Microsoft's Copilot as our default Generative AI tool for students who are over 13 years of age. We run the Windows operating system across our site and we use Office 365 as the default productivity application. Importantly, Microsoft Copilot is more secure than other Generative AI options because Microsoft guarantee to keep the School's data safe. **When students and staff log in with an RBC User Account,** none of their queries, prompts or data that are uploaded to Copilot will be used to train any AI models.

Copilot's existing age restrictions (minimum age of 13) mean that our Year 7 and 8 students will not have access to Copilot at school. However, they will be introduced to the ethical and safe use of AI tools through teacher-supervised activities in classrooms, the Year 7 IT curriculum and the Wellbeing curriculum.

Students aged 13 and over do not have permission to use alternatives to Microsoft Copilot at School. LLMs such as Google's Gemini and OpenAI's ChatGPT cannot ensure that their data remains secure in the same way that Copilot can.

Students from Year 7 will encounter embedded AI technology through:

- Individualised learning pathways that are self-marking (e.g. Sparx Maths)

Students in Year 9 and above may use AI technology for:

- Research and gathering ideas
- Generating brief quotations with citations
- Receiving feedback, explanations or refining a particular line of reasoning
- To open up different perspectives by using AI as a critical friend
- To strategically cognitively offload to enable deeper questioning and critical thinking

Students must:

- Clearly document AI use, including tool name, prompt, and date
- Engage critically with AI outputs
- Ensure final submissions reflect their own understanding

Unacceptable uses include:

- Submitting AI-generated work as original
- Using AI to bypass learning or assessment requirements
- Creating misleading or harmful content (e.g. fake emails)
- Using AI to do the thinking and to replace human creativity and authenticity

For more detail on students' acceptable use and misuse of AI, please refer to the *Use of Generative AI in Academic Work Policy*.

Assessment and Academic Integrity

The use of AI in assessments must comply with School assessment procedures and any applicable examining body regulations.

Where AI use is permitted, students must:

- Acknowledge use appropriately
- Retain evidence of prompts where required
- Demonstrate ownership and understanding of submitted work

Misuse of AI may constitute academic malpractice and may result in sanctions in accordance with School and JCQ procedures.

6. Responsibilities

Students

- Use AI ethically and transparently
- Cite AI-generated content properly
- Understand the limitations and risks of AI tools

Teachers

- Monitor student use of AI
- Authenticate student work
- Educate students on ethical AI use and citation

School Administration

- Monitor compliance and review this policy annually
- Maintain oversight of AI adoption and implementation.
- Review approved AI platforms regularly.
- Ensure appropriate training and risk management procedures are in place.

7. Safeguarding and Filtering

At Reading Blue Coat we have taken steps to ensure that AI use is integrated into the School's safeguarding framework. This includes:

- Filtering and monitoring systems that cover AI tools
- Age-appropriate access controls
- Supervision of student-facing AI use
- Alignment with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance

We use risk assessments to address potential misuse, such as students generating realistic, fake communications.

8. Technical Robustness and Oversight

We have taken the required steps to ensure that the AI systems in use at Reading Blue Coat are:

- Secure from cyber threats
- Regularly tested and monitored
- Transparent in their operation and decision-making

Oversight mechanisms include:

- Human-in-the-loop review of AI decisions
- Staff and student training on AI ethics and safety
- Clear reporting channels for concerns

9. Societal and Environmental Wellbeing

Reading Blue Coat recognises the broader impact of AI use. Therefore, we are committed to:

- Promoting wellbeing through responsible AI use
- Involving students and parents in decisions about AI
- Minimising environmental impact (e.g. energy use of AI systems)

10. Equality, Inclusion and Accessibility

The School recognises the potential of AI to support accessibility and inclusion, including support for pupils with SEND.

The School will seek to identify and mitigate any unintended adverse effects arising from AI systems, including bias, discrimination or unequal access to technology.

11. Training and Capacity Building

Reading Blue Coat will provide AI literacy training for students and staff

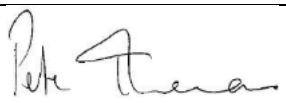
Training may include:

- AI literacy through the Microsoft Educator training platform
- Safeguarding implications
- Prompt design and evaluation
- Data protection requirements
- Academic integrity
- Verification of AI-generated content

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner in response to significant legislative, technological or regulatory developments.

The Digital Strategy Committee shall oversee implementation and make recommendations to Governors regarding future revisions.

Author(s):	Kevin Magill (Deputy Head [Education Development])
Date:	September 2026
Review Frequency:	Annually
Next Review Date:	September 2027
References:	• Department for Education (2026), Using AI in Education Settings: Support Materials • Department for Education (2025), Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education • Independent Schools Bursars Association (ISBA) (2026), *AI Policy Framework* • Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest edition) • UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 • Equality Act 2010 • JCQ, AI Use in Assessments Guidance • ICO, Guidance on AI and Data Protection • ICO, Data Protection Impact Assessments Guidance • Ofcom, Online Safety Act Guidance • National Cyber Security Centre, Guidance on Large Language Models and AI Security • UNESCO, Guidance for Policy Makers on AI and Education
Associated Policies:	• Acceptable Use • Anti-Bullying • Assessment, Marking & Reporting • Behaviour, Rewards, and Sanctions • Child Protection and Safeguarding • Data Protection • Disability • Equal Opportunities • E-Safety, Digital Communications, and Student Device • Exam Malpractice • GDPR Retention • Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) • Privacy Notice • Risk Management • Staff Code of Conduct • Use of Generative AI in Academic Work
Agreed by:	 Pete Thomas (Headmaster)
Date of Agreement:	4th September 2026