

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS & AI USE IN EDUCATION

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS & SCHOOLS

RIGHT TO BE HEARD

Children have the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them and to have their views considered and duly weighted in decision making.

★ **GOOD PRACTICE:** A school uses an anonymous feedback box to gather learners' opinions on AI software used in classrooms, and school policies on acceptable AI use.



FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Children have the right to freely express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings.

This includes communicating in ways that suit their preference and needs - through speech, writing, art, or other forms. It also includes the right to express themselves with or (if they prefer) without the help of AI tools in educational settings.

★ **GOOD PRACTICE:** A teacher shows their learners how to use GenAI tools to formulate and express their ideas more clearly by suggesting edits to make text more readable. They illustrate how to overcome writer's block by asking a GenAI tool for a range of suggestions of what might happen next in a story. The teacher works with the class to write prompts and draw sketches as input to an age-appropriate image-generation tool, moderating the output before showing it to the class.

CHILDREN'S BEST INTERESTS

The child's best interests are a primary consideration in any decisions that apply to them.

★ **WATCH OUT FOR:** When considering whether to adopt an AI tool to save teachers time, consider whether it is in the learners' best interests. AI-generated feedback or lesson plans may contain mistakes or be of poorer quality than the teacher would normally provide.

★ **GOOD PRACTICE:** A teacher uses an GenAI tool to produce a lesson plan suitable for their class and suggestions for differentiated activities. They check the output carefully for errors. The teacher informs the learners that they used GenAI for this purpose.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Children have the right to access reliable information from diverse sources, especially information that promotes their well-being, understanding, and development. GenAI tools can be a useful information source but should be used with care.

★ **WATCH OUT FOR:** Make sure your learners know that GenAI tools often produce output which is incorrect.

★ **GOOD PRACTICE:** A teacher works with her class to explore how GenAI tools can help summarise information from diverse sources in easy-to-understand language. They learn how to fact-check GenAI output and compare it to other information sources, such as encyclopedias and search engines.

RIGHT TO BE KEPT SAFE

Children have the right to be protected from harm, being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

★ **WATCH OUT FOR:** Check the age-rating for any GenAI tool you use in school. Many image-generation tools are intended for a general audience, and although they often have guardrails to prevent inappropriate images, this can't be guaranteed. Also check that they don't suggest inappropriate images in recommended related content e.g. "if you like this image, you will also like these".

★ **GOOD PRACTICE:** A local authority installs AI-powered content filters to block harmful or inappropriate material in all schools to help children explore diverse topics safely. The content filters have school-level and parental controls to ensure that humans can appropriately intervene. The school staff are trained to watch for signs that children may be upset by encountering inappropriate AI-generated material.

EDUCATION

Children have the right to a good education that helps them to reach their full potential.

Children's education should help them use and develop their personality, talents and abilities. Education should also help children learn to live peacefully, develop children's respect for the environment, and others. AI has the potential to help children with their learning, but it is not a replacement for highly skilled human teachers who will always be central to children's education.

★ **GOOD PRACTICE:** Schools work together (with learners and parents) on a clear policy about GenAI usage so everyone understands acceptable uses of AI to support learning. The teachers guide the learners in using AI tools to help them with learning tasks such as ideas generation, text editing, revision, or practising language skills.

They teach learners how to use AI tools critically and explain the basics of how AI technology works. The learners discuss ethics and the societal implications of AI.

PRIVACY

Children have the right to privacy, and their personal data and communications must be protected.

★ **WATCH OUT FOR:** Ensure that any AI tool does not have access to learners' personal or sensitive data without consent from the child and their parents. For example, if using a GenAI writing tool to give personalised feedback on a student's essay, remove the student's name and any identifying details, ensuring the child's privacy is respected.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

All children's rights apply to every child equally, regardless of their differences and they should be able to exercise their rights without discrimination.

★ **WATCH OUT FOR:** If choosing an AI tool for personalised learning, ensure that it doesn't use biased racial or socio-demographic data to predict students likely to be "at-risk" for poor exam performance.

★ **WATCH OUT FOR:** If your school is considering purchasing 'AI detection software', be aware that such technology is currently not very effective and is more likely to incorrectly accuse people with poorer English writing skills of cheating with AI. This could potentially discriminate against students with English as a second language or those with neurodevelopmental disabilities.

★ **WATCH OUT FOR:** When choosing speech recognition tools, check whether they work well with diverse accents. If not, it would make it harder for some students to use voice-activated features effectively, potentially reducing their participation and making it harder for them to learn.

DISABILITY

Children have the right to special education and care if they have a disability, as well as all the other rights so that they can live a full life. Although AI as a concept may be beyond the cognitive capacities of some learners, this does not mean they should be excluded from experiences that use AI to enhance learning.

★ **GOOD PRACTICE:** An ASL teacher uses AI tools (assistive technology) to help children with diverse needs and abilities express themselves and engage in learning activities in school. She also gives her learners with neurodevelopmental disorders extra support to understand how AI-generated pictures and images might be biased.

EVOLVING CAPABILITIES

Children grow and develop at different paces, influenced by their age, experiences, and circumstances. Parents should guide and support children in making decisions that respect their agency and evolving capacities. Teachers also apply their expertise in children's development to guide appropriate AI usage.

★ **GOOD PRACTICE:** A primary teacher guides children in using GenAI tools by showing them how to use them effectively for tasks like brainstorming or editing. He initially starts by modelling how to use GenAI tools so that children do not use GenAI unsupervised. He and his colleagues provide close, step-by-step support for students and encourage critical thinking about GenAI output. As children's skills and maturity grow, the teachers in the school cluster plan to gradually reduce support and foster independence, aligning with the learners' experiences and evolving capacities.

PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATION

Children have the right to protection from exploitation, including commercial exploitation. This could include software tools which profit from their data.

★ **WATCH OUT FOR:** Be careful not to use commercial GenAI tools that collect and use children's data to improve their models or services for companies' own profits without the children's or parents' consent.

If you're choosing AI-driven assessment/ marking software, be careful that children's work and exams (without their consent) aren't used to improve new versions of the software without their consent.

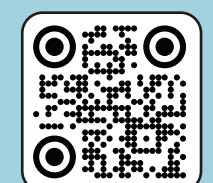
FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Children have the right to their own thoughts and beliefs and to choose their religion with guidance from their parents, consistent with their evolving capacities. This includes the right to views about AI and beliefs about how humans should use it.

★ **GOOD PRACTICE:** A young person does not want to use a GenAI tool for her school work because she believes it is morally wrong to use a tool that profits from the theft of copyrighted material and harms artists. Her teacher supports her in carrying out the task without using AI but ensures that she still learns about how AI works.

USEFUL LINKS & SOURCES

Remember: there are many more examples than we could fit on this poster! You probably have already developed good practice in your own school. For more information and resources, follow the QR code.



<https://trails.scot>