

SAFE AI USE

AI and GDPR: do's and don'ts

A quick guide to protecting pupils, staff and confidential school information when using AI.

THE QUICK TEST

If you would not publish the information or send it to an unknown supplier, do not paste, upload, photograph or dictate it into an AI tool.

Do not enter or upload

- Pupil, parent or staff names, identifiers or contact details.
- SEND, medical, safeguarding, behaviour or disciplinary information.
- Photos, recordings or pupil work that identifies someone.
- Unredacted emails, reports, meeting notes or attachments.
- Passwords, MFA codes, security settings or network details.
- Confidential HR, payroll, legal, finance or contract information.
- Information that could identify someone when combined with context.

Do

- Use only tools and accounts approved by your school.
- Start with general, fictional or properly anonymised information.
- Remove names, initials, dates, classes, roles and distinctive context.
- Check facts, sources, tone, bias and suitability before use.
- Keep a human responsible for every decision and final output.
- Acknowledge AI use where school policy or assessment rules require it.
- Ask the DPO or IT lead before trying a new use case.

Do not assume

- A paid tool, school account or privacy setting automatically makes every use safe.
- Deleting a chat removes every retained copy or training use.
- An AI answer is accurate, complete, unbiased or appropriately sourced.
- Anonymising only the person's name is enough.
- AI should make final decisions about pupils, staff or safeguarding.

If information was entered by mistake

- Stop using the chat and do not enter any more information.
- Record the tool, account, time and what was shared.
- Report it immediately to the DPO and IT lead as a possible data incident.
- Preserve the details and follow their instructions.
- Do not conceal the mistake or rely on deleting the conversation.

REMEMBER

AI can help draft generic content without personal data. For example, ask for a neutral parent-email structure, then add necessary details later in an approved school system - not inside the AI tool.

AUTHORITATIVE GUIDANCE

DfE: [AI and data protection in schools](#)

DfE: [Generative AI in education](#)

ICO: [AI and data protection](#)

Guidance checked 22 August 2026. Use this alongside your school's approved-tool list, AI policy, data protection policy and safeguarding procedures.