



Implementing AI in schools: 10 lessons learned

Want to make more use of AI in your setting? Follow these 10 tips for safe and effective AI implementation.

In the podcast [AI in schools: harnessing the potential, protecting the human](#) we asked James Browning, Chief Operating Officer of Lift Schools, about the advice he would give to other schools and trusts who want to explore using artificial intelligence further. What lessons have they learned and what would they recommend?

1. Invest in staff confidence early. Provide AI awareness training to staff and equip them with guiding principles and tools to try.
2. Establish your organisational guardrails. Be clear on what you see the role of AI being in your organisation. For example, AI is there in a supporting role, not to replace teachers. Safeguard the things you don't want AI to touch.
3. An AI policy will get out of date quickly. Rather than worrying about a policy, focus on staff training and communicating those guardrails.
4. Start with the real-world problems and challenges you're facing. How can AI help you address them? For example, MIS software that captures voicemails, so attendance officers don't have to listen through and note all the absence phone messages. Instead they can focus on the action, because the tool has done the data capture.
5. Approach AI with a growth mindset – and keep a critical eye. Be open to what it can do differently or how it might change processes for the better. But always make sure you own the input and the output. Don't just do what AI tells you!
6. Encourage responsible use of AI, and be aware of the cost it carries to the environment. Seek ways in which AI can help streamline inefficient processes and duplicated effort, which will have a positive effect on environmental impact.
7. If you're piloting a project that uses an AI tool or process, think early on about how scalable it is. Can it work with a larger group?
8. Be alert to the risk of AI widening the disadvantage gap. Make sure your technology provision and connectivity are consistent enough that no pupils are left behind. And be conscious of how AI-powered tools used for home learning may benefit children from more advantaged backgrounds disproportionately.
9. One-off CPD isn't enough. Think about how you can embed ongoing, sustainable support for staff as the technology evolves – whether that's dedicated roles, peer networks, or regular touchpoints.



10. Measure the impact. How do you know if AI is genuinely helping – with staff workload, pupil outcomes, or operational efficiency? It's not easy, but building in ways to assess efficacy from the start will help you move beyond anecdote to evidence.

What next?

- Listen to the podcast [AI in schools: harnessing the potential, protecting the human](#)
- Find out more about [Using generative AI in schools](#)
- Explore [AI training resources for schools](#)
- Read about [Embracing AI in education: a leadership perspective from Lift Schools](#)

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