





Contents

Abstract.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Methodology.....	5
Headline Figures.....	7
Impact Reports.....	8
Leadership & Governance.....	9
Business Efficiencies.....	13
Data Analytics.....	17
Curriculum Content.....	21
Early Years and Oracy.....	25
Student Practice, Attainment and Attendance.....	29
Assessment, Feedback & Marking.....	33
SEND and Adaptive Teaching.....	37
Reducing Workload.....	41
Phase 2 Findings Report.....	45
Data Protection and Legal Reflections.....	51
Browne Jacobson Data Pack.....	52
Summary of AI Tools Used.....	53
References.....	55
Phase 3 Onboarding Timeline.....	57
Join the Hub.....	58



Abstract

This report presents findings from the RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub, a practitioner inquiry project funded through the Department for Education's RISE programme. The initiative supports regional school partnerships to develop and share evidence-based approaches to improvement, aligned with national priorities including attainment, inclusion, and attendance. Led by TCAT, Kernow Learning, and Ted Wragg Trust, and supported by AI strategy adviser Alex More, the Hub established nine working groups to trial AI and digital tools across the 2025 - 26 academic year. Using a test-and-learn approach, these groups gathered qualitative and quantitative evidence and developed practical, context-driven recommendations. This report outlines the methodology, key findings, and recommendations, offering both an account of the project and a practical guide for schools seeking to embed AI and digital tools effectively and responsibly.





Introduction

Across education, we are seeing a rapid shift in how digital tools and artificial intelligence are beginning to shape the way we work. The challenge we face is not simply understanding these technologies but determining how they can be applied in a way that is purposeful, ethical and sustainable within our schools.

The Digital Skills and AI Hub have been established to respond to that challenge through a collaborative, partnership-led approach.

This work has been developed collectively by Cornerstone Academy Trust, Ted Wragg Trust and Kernow Learning Partnership, alongside colleagues across our organisations. From the outset, our intention has been clear: to create a space where schools can work together to test, learn and share openly.

At the centre of the Hub is a 'test and learn' methodology. The concept is simple, we want to support teachers to enhance their practice, not replace or automate what they do. Through a series of working groups, staff from across our trusts have explored how AI and digital tools can support key priorities - reducing workload, improving efficiency and enabling high-quality educational outcomes. Importantly, this work reflects a broad range of roles and perspectives, ensuring that innovation is grounded in the realities of day-to-day practice.

The case studies and findings shared within this pack represent the early stages of that journey. They are not presented as final answers, but as emerging practice - offering insight into both the opportunities and the challenges of embedding AI in a meaningful way.

What has been most encouraging throughout this work is the collective commitment of colleagues to engage thoughtfully and professionally with this agenda. This is not simply about adopting new technologies, but about shaping a culture that is open to change, collaboration and continuous improvement.

As we move into the next phase, our ambition is to grow this partnership further - bringing more schools and trusts into a shared model of collaboration, where learning is collective and impact is strengthened through scale. We recognise that meaningful engagement requires commitment, and we are seeking organisations who are ready to actively contribute to, and benefit from, this work.

If the work you see today resonates with your priorities, we would encourage you to consider how your organisation might become part of this growing community.

I hope this conference provides valuable insight, practical ideas and an opportunity to connect with others engaged in this important work.

Jonathan Bishop
CEO, Cornerstone Academy Trust



Methodology

The purpose of this methodology is to describe the design and processes underpinning the RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub's Phase 2 inquiry. The project sought to address the following overarching research questions, each corresponding to a strand of structured collaborative inquiry:

- a) To what extent can AI tools reduce administrative and planning workload for school leaders and teachers while maintaining quality and compliance?
- b) How can AI be embedded meaningfully across the curriculum to improve equity, quality, and teacher capacity?
- c) In what ways does AI-supported adaptive teaching improve outcomes and consistency for students with SEND?
- d) What impact does AI have on assessment, feedback, and data literacy across participating schools and trusts?

Each of the nine working parties was assigned a focused strand of inquiry aligned to one of these broader questions, enabling the project to function both as a cohesive whole and as a set of discrete, contextually grounded investigations.

Working Party Structure and Process

The project was structured around nine working parties, each comprising six to eight practitioners drawn from the three participating Multi-Academy Trusts: TCAT, Kernow Learning, and Ted Wragg Trust. Working party leads were identified in advance, and trained by AI Consultant Alex More through an AI Accelerator approach. Working party leads were responsible for coordinating activity, maintaining documentation, and presenting findings at the Spring conference. The nine strands of inquiry were: Leadership and Governance; Business Efficiencies; Reducing Teacher Workload; Curriculum Content; Student Practice, Attainment and Attendance; Assessment, Marking and Feedback; SEND and Adaptive Teaching; Data Analytics; and Early Years and Oracy Development.

Each working party met four times across the grant period, with sessions scheduled between November 2025 and March 2026. Each session was structured as a full working day, encompassing the meeting itself alongside time allocated for in-school actions arising from it. This design reflected a deliberate commitment to embedding inquiry within practice, rather than treating collaborative sessions as isolated from the everyday realities of school life.

Test-and-Learn Approach

The methodological approach adopted across all working parties was a test-and-learn model, which positioned participating practitioners as active co-investigators rather than recipients of externally generated guidance. This approach is consistent with a practitioner inquiry framework, in which professionals identify a problem of practice, trial an intervention, and reflect critically on its outcomes before iterating further. Each working party began by identifying the core problem or challenge within their strand, considering both whose problem it was and what new challenges might be introduced by any proposed solution. This problem-posing structure encouraged critical engagement with AI tools and avoided a naive adoption stance, acknowledging that implementation can generate unintended consequences; including increased workload, data risk, and over-reliance. Tools trialled across the project included Microsoft Copilot and Copilot Studio, ChatGPT, Padlet, TeachMate and Canva, selected on the basis of school accessibility, GDPR compliance, and relevance to the working party's focus.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was both qualitative and quantitative in nature, reflecting the varied contexts and objectives of the nine working parties. Quantitative indicators included time savings in specified administrative tasks, measurable reductions in planning time, and, where applicable student outcome data such as reading engagement metrics within the Student Practice, Attainment and Attendance strand. Qualitative evidence was gathered through practitioner reflections, structured observations, and the documentation of challenges and adaptations encountered during trialling.

Each working party maintained a shared action plan, recording the problems being addressed, the tools deployed, anticipated risks, compliance considerations, and CPD requirements. These plans served as both a planning instrument and an ongoing record of evidence, updated iteratively across the four sessions.

Impact Measurement and Evaluation

Impact was assessed against success criteria established by each working party at the outset of the project. The steering committee, which met six times across the academic year and included the CEOs of each participating trust, provided oversight of the evidence gathered and ensured consistency in evaluation standards across strands. Findings from all nine working parties were synthesised and presented at the regional conference on 30th March 2025, where outcomes were shared with the wider school community and submitted as part of the Hub's formal reporting to RISE.

Alex More is an Educational Consultant specialising in the safe and ethical implementation of AI at scale in schools. With a background as a senior leader and Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) director, Alex brings over two decades of experience driving innovation in teaching, curriculum design, and professional development. He works with schools, MATs, and education organisations to develop strategic, future-focused CPD programmes that embed AI and STEM, and has supported over 50,000 teachers globally.

Email: alexmorelearning@gmail.com

Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/alexmorelearning>



Headline Figures



Reducing Workload

Lead: Rob Bradley

2+hrs

saved per teacher per week
by week 4 of the trial

- Time savings grew week-on-week: 0–30 min → 30–60 min → 1–2 hrs → 2+ hrs
- Early career teachers reported greater gains than experienced colleagues
- KS2 teachers reported higher impact than KS1
- ChatGPT & Copilot rated most effective for flexibility

Copilot ChatGPT TeachMate AI Claude



Assessment, Marking & Feedback

Lead: Ben McGowan

+

Grade Improvement after AI supported redrafting

- In-lesson feedback reduced to under 1 minute per student
- Sustained improvements in reading words-per-minute across a half term
- AI writing assessment aligned closely with teacher judgement when prompts were well-designed
- Shared prompt/agent bank created to reduce adoption barriers

Copilot M365 Fruitify.AI Reading Coach



Student Practice & Attainment

Lead: Tamsin Frances

3x

increase in reading volume for reluctant Y6 readers

- AR quiz scores improved in 2/3 focus students by 6.5–25%
- Book Level rose in 2/3 students; 3/5 SEN students actively engaged
- students requested additional sessions; whole classes asked to continue
- Writing enrichment agent extended impact beyond reading

Copilot Agent Accelerated Reader



EYFS & Oracy

Lead: Hannah James

7

nurseries connected via single Ratio Agent deployment

- 6 bespoke AI agents created: Maths Learning, Writing Assessment, Oracy, Speech, Emotional Check-In, Nursery Ratios
- Maths tool generates 5 targeted intervention lessons from whole-class data
- “Book Chat Club” oracy companion builds vocabulary & individual targets

Copilot NotebookLM VoiceFlow TeachMate



Curriculum Content

Lead: Alex Druce

3–5hrs

weekly prep time saved in some cases

- SEND adaptation agent & accessible text tool deployed across pilot schools
- AI-generated comprehension questions, slides, science assessments & creative writing used at scale
- UKS2 AI literacy strand built: classification, safe use & job-sector exploration
- Safer Internet Day assemblies shifted staff culture around AI use

TeachMate Copilot ChatGPT



Data Analytics

Lead: Michael Kimber

30min

saved weekly via automated data reporting agent

- IDSR-style summary agents trialled across Kernow, Ted Wragg & Cornerstone
- Power Automate paired with Copilot Studio to automate data extraction & scheduling
- Copilot Notebooks proved reliable for policy and document review at scale

Copilot Studio Power Automate Power BI



Business Efficiencies

Lead: Kelly Hayward

4

operational agents deployed across HR, Finance & Admin

- “Kernow HR Assistant” gives staff instant access to policy & absence guidance
- Automated letter agent produces consistent parent correspondence
- Invoice/order reconciliation agent flags financial discrepancies automatically
- First aid & accident data centralised via Microsoft Forms & workflow

Copilot Microsoft 365 Power Automate



Leadership & Governance

Lead: Anthony Lees

10+

distinct leadership agents built & ready to scale

- Agents for meeting transcripts, task harvesting, SWOT analysis & SIP authoring
- Policy review, EDI assessment & PM timetabling all automated via Copilot
- Journal data confirms time savings once agent creation cost is paid back

Copilot Gemini ChatGPT NotebookLM Arbor AI



SEND & Adaptive Teaching

Lead: Amy Rutherford

3

AI agent modes deployed for SEND planning & Support

- SMART target agents built for all three APDR cycle stages
- Mode A-C agent covers new plans, review & classroom support - no SENDCo required
- TeachMate SaLT resources improved session structure & pupil engagement
- Azure pay-as-you-go resolved licensing barriers without per-user cost
- GDPR consent embedded directly inside the agent
- Staff reported renewed focus on what makes effective SEND provision

Copilot Teachmate

Cross-Hub Themes

- Microsoft Copilot the dominant platform across all 9 parties
- Clean, structured data inputs essential for reliable AI outputs
- Initial time investment recouped within 3-4 weeks of use
- AI most effective as a first-pass tool - teacher oversight remains essential
- Licensing & access remain the primary infrastructure barrier
- Phase 3 opens April 2026 - scaling proven agents across wider network





Impact Reports

RISE

01392 717939 digitalskills.education

Led by Cornerstone Academy Trust · Kernow Learning · Ted Wragg Trust



Leadership & Governance

Page 9



Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study

Name of Working Party:
Leadership & Governance

Working Party Lead:
Anthony Lees

What specific problem were you trying to solve?

We set out to improve the quality and consistency of collaboration, through:

- 1) Meetings, through focus on agendas, transcripts, task management, summarising, rereading / watching listening.
- 2) Authoring and multi authoring, e.g. SIP and other documents. Integration of gathered data and systems of self- accountability for what is included.

Who experiences this problem most acutely?

Leaders, trustees, governors. Teachers within regular phase, year and faculty meetings. Support staff as part of training and organisational meetings. Extended staff within termly whole staff meetings. All leaders responsible for management of top-level school documents. Send and specialist staff responsible for creating individual student plans. Project leaders responsible for harvesting data to create overviews. Subject and Faculty Leads.

What evidence led you to prioritise this issue? What were you trying to measure?

Leaders expressed frustration at time spent creating agendas and action plans for tasks that were repetitious. Also that often key tasks, actions or details were lost from meeting notes. They expressed concern that when interrogating large data sets to identify priorities there is a high margin for human error or for missing patterns or coming to differing conclusions than colleagues may spot.

Tell us about the work your group undertook

Across the working party, we have explored a range of problems leaders wish to solve. In each case, initial AI prompts were created, gradually improving and refining, and then finally creating Agents (mostly in Copilot) which could be shared for others to critique. We are now at the point of creating a strategy for sharing these at scale for our organisations, considering the cost of licensing at each level. Most successful Agents created have been:

Copilot Agent to harvest tasks completed and report in categories, based on Teams and Outlook communications.



Prompts and agents for creation, review and editing of policies. Cross referencing between multiple policies. EDI assessment creation.

SWOT analysis from progress spreadsheets and IDSR reports. Analysed dashboards, graphs, and item level data to identify trends, strengths, and areas for development across domains

Agent for summarisation of education texts.

Agent for parent newsletter article writing, email response and parent letter writing.

Agent for creation of PM timetables.

AI used to verbally record key strengths, achievements, and next steps for individual students directly into Copilot.

Copilot agent to draw strengths and areas of development from multiple ETC observation forms and create summative report and new targets using teaching standards.

Copilot agent for summarisation of meeting transcripts and email preparation, as well as PR target setting and actions.

Room redesign based on photos given and criteria to be included (e.g. shelves, front facing displays, access/walkways)

What AI tools or platforms did you use to support your work?

Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, ChatGPT, Decisions (Teams add on for meetings), Claude, Notebook LM, TeachMate, Arbor AI.

What competing explanations or alternative solutions were considered?

There are commercial solutions such as Decision that harvest transcript details and suggest tasks to manage – these are very helpful. We have remained inside our tenancy using Copilot for most of this work as the data protection is clearer, but have found Google Gemini, ChatGPT and Claude very capable as well. With those solutions it is not acceptable to share student work and progress data to them through for us. TeachMate has shown itself to be very capable, but for this the decision comes down to if you would like the flexibility of giving your own precise instructions, or the convenience and speed of choosing a task from a menu of services.

What implementation barriers emerged?

Accuracy – sometimes meeting actions were missed out, sometimes excessive listing occurred. Occasionally repetitive results, where the AI needed to be told to avoid this.

Consistency – currently each AI tool used created different length and quality of responses on different occasions. Sometimes the AI believes it does not have access to files or folders even when it has previously used those locations.

Licensing – successful use of agents in Copilot requires a higher licence purchased than the standard 'Web' copilot free to all users.

Policy - need for a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to ensure safe and compliant use of AI tools within the school. Legal clarity around GDPR, and SARS implications.

Transcription can work very well, but is less practically successful live in a room, compared to online meetings where the transcription tool can more easily identify who is speaking.



Staff training / Time / Confidence – Dedicating time to this is key. Initial time taken to understand the process is well spent and paid back later but cannot be avoided and requires support of the organisation to allow time for this.

Cultural resistance – There is often push back from colleagues concerned about the unknown and unseen processes involved in using AI. Whilst there are clear dangers, we have felt strongly that exploring the technology and being aware is the best way to ensure ethical and safe use for our organisations.

What did the data show?

Journal entries from the team identified clear time saving for each type of activity, after initially more time taken to create the agent or prompt. Once created, leaders felt that a great deal of time is saved on each occasion the agents are used, and over time agents can be further refined to produce results that require increasingly less follow up editing each time.

What unintended consequences emerged as a result of your work?

Mistranscription is an issue to be aware of. Occasionally we have found that transcription tools either mishear what is said, contract and so lose the nuance of what was intended or capture irrelevant details that a human transcriber would know to exclude. The human check is vital. As all AI use, removing the friction from manually completing tasks can have the adverse fact of removing the need to pay full attention to what is being drafted or created.

If this working party was to scale, what are the main benefits?

- Greater compliance & consistency across all schools.
- Reduced admin time.
- Immediate scaffolding for new or less confident staff.
- Replicable model for deploying agents with usage analytics.
- Increased engagement at work for those with a passion for exploring AI further.

Where do you see value for other people to learn from your work?

This has the potential to have huge knock-on beyond leadership and strategy document management or leadership meeting and task dissemination to all staff who have any responsibility that requires multi-authoring and data collection as well as task management from online meetings.

Staff readiness

- Knowledge must come before the tool - build a quality-assured knowledge base before any agent.
- AI reduces blank-page anxiety & saves time, but professional judgement remains essential.

Choosing tools

- Run a short dual trial before committing - then focus development effort on one platform done well. TeachMate is a curated resource library, low setup. Copilot is for Trust-specific custom agents, but with higher time investment.
- Manage scope deliberately - SEND use cases are easy to over-extend.

Build & governance

- Pair technical AI expertise with SENDCo subject knowledge - the most effective development model.
- Publish early, gather real user feedback, iterate fast to keep the momentum going.
- Solve Microsoft licensing early — Azure pay-as-you-go is straightforward to set up.



Business Efficiencies

Page 13



Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study

Name of Working Party:
Business Efficiencies

Working Party Lead:
Kelly Hayward

What specific problem were you trying to solve?

Focus on agents and workflows in three key areas: HR, Operations and Finance. We will focus on FAQ chatbots, analysing and improving our data and workflow/automation.

Who experiences this problem most acutely?

Central staff in the trust, finance teams, admin teams, SLT.

What evidence led you to prioritise this issue? What were you trying to measure?

This was a key area that our team identified across all three trusts as an area that would significantly increase efficiencies if we were successful in our focus.

Tell us about the work your group undertook

The team successfully developed and implemented the 'Kernow HR Assistant', an agent designed to deliver comprehensive, policy-based guidance on a range of HR matters. This agent provides staff with immediate access to information concerning HR policies, absence management, leave entitlements and the code of conduct. By streamlining responses to frequently asked HR questions, the agent has contributed to more efficient internal operations and improved staff confidence in navigating complex policy requirements.

In addition, a bespoke letter agent was created to automate the compilation and distribution of official correspondence to parents. The initial focus was placed on trip letters, ensuring consistent and timely communication regarding school events. This automation should reduce the administrative workload for staff but also enhanced the quality and accuracy of information shared with parents.

The group also undertook the centralisation of first aid and accident reporting by using Microsoft Forms and integrated workflows. This approach allowed for the efficient collection, organisation, and monitoring of incident data across the trust, ensuring compliance and enabling the rapid identification of trends or areas for improvement. The streamlined process minimised manual errors and facilitated timely action in response to reported incidents.



An agent was developed specifically to compare orders, delivery notes, and invoices, with the objective of identifying and flagging any discrepancies. This solution should prove invaluable for finance and administrative teams, as it automates the reconciliation process, reduces the risk of human error, and supports robust financial management practices. By ensuring accuracy in procurement and payment records, the agent could strengthen internal controls and accountability.

Building on these successes, the team also explored the development of additional agents to address other operational needs. These included a records management agent to support document organisation and retrieval, agents for risk management and the creation of risk assessments, as well as tools to facilitate finance report writing. While some of these initiatives remain in the exploratory or pilot phase, they represent the group's efforts to enhance efficiency and effectiveness across the Trusts.

What AI tools or platforms did you use to support your work?

Co-pilot and Microsoft

What competing explanations or alternative solutions were considered?

We focused on using co-pilot as this was the licensed tool we had available.

What implementation barriers emerged?

The development and successful deployment of an agent requires a considerable investment of time and resources. Many team members initially lacked the technical expertise necessary for agent creation, necessitating a process of ongoing learning and skill acquisition throughout the project. Additionally, access to the full suite of features within Co-pilot is contingent upon holding the appropriate licence, which introduces further administrative and financial considerations. The need for additional training was identified as a critical factor, both to optimise the use of available tools and to ensure consistent and reliable outcomes. During implementation, it became apparent that Co-pilot's performance could be variable, with inconsistent results that sometimes failed to meet expectations. Furthermore, issues with data accuracy were encountered, particularly in relation to the retrieval and integration of information. Co-pilot was unable to access files unless they were stored within a centralised repository, highlighting the importance of robust data management practices and the need to restructure file storage systems to facilitate seamless access and integration. These barriers collectively emphasise the complexities involved in adopting new AI-driven solutions and the requirement for ongoing investment in skills, infrastructure, and support mechanisms to ensure successful implementation.

What did the data show?

While the implementation of these tools did not result in immediate time savings during the initial stages, there is significant potential for efficiency gains once the systems are fully operational and integrated into our established workflows. At present, we do not possess concrete evidence to demonstrate measurable time savings; however, early indications suggest that these solutions have already begun to streamline certain tasks and processes. Team members generally agree that, although still in the bedding-in period, the tools are proving to be valuable aids in supporting our day-to-day responsibilities. As familiarity with the technology grows and processes are refined, we anticipate that the benefits, particularly in terms of reducing administrative burdens and improving response times, will become more apparent and quantifiable. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will be essential to capturing these improvements over time, ensuring that we can substantiate the value added to our roles through the adoption of such AI-driven solutions.



What unintended consequences emerged as a result of your work?

To date, we have not identified any unintended consequences arising from the implementation of our work. All processes and changes introduced have proceeded as anticipated, with no negative impacts or unforeseen outcomes affecting staff, operations, or the trusts more broadly.

If this working party was to scale, what are the main benefits?

Scaling up the working party would enable the achievement of greater outcomes and foster a broader spectrum of innovative ideas. By involving more participants, the group could benefit from an expanded pool of expertise, diverse perspectives, and varied experiences, all of which are crucial for creative problem-solving and the development of effective strategies. Moreover, a larger team would facilitate more robust collaboration, leading to the identification and implementation of best practices across different trusts. This increased capacity for collective thinking and experimentation would not only accelerate progress but also enhance the quality and impact of the solutions generated.

Where do you see value for other people to learn from your work?

Reflecting on our experience with Co-pilot, it is evident that certain aspects of its implementation worked particularly well, while others presented notable challenges. On the positive side, once the system was fully operational and team members became familiar with its functionalities, Co-pilot proved to be a valuable aid, streamlining tasks and providing support in day-to-day roles.

However, there were also significant hurdles encountered. A major barrier was the initial lack of technical expertise among team members, which necessitated ongoing training and skill development. The requirement for appropriate licensing restricted access to the full suite of features, introducing both administrative and financial complexities. Additionally, the performance of Co-pilot was inconsistent at times, with variable results and occasional issues related to data accuracy and integration. The inability to access files stored outside a centralised repository highlighted the importance of robust data management and the need for organisational restructuring of file storage systems.

For organisations considering similar initiatives, it is crucial to recognise both the benefits and the pitfalls of such implementations. Investing in comprehensive training, ensuring access to necessary resources, and establishing effective data management practices will be key to realising the potential advantages of AI tools like Co-pilot. Equally, organisations should be prepared for an initial period of adjustment and learning, with the understanding that consistent outcomes and tangible time-saving benefits may only become evident once the system is fully integrated and optimised within their workflows.



Data Analytics

Page 17



Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study

Name of Working Party:

Data Analytics

Working Party Lead:

Michael Kimber

What specific problem were you trying to solve?

Conscious that data often sits in siloed and inaccessible spaces, our working group has been focusing on three key areas for development: clearer & more efficient collation, visibility and communication of data.

Who experiences this problem most acutely?

Whilst data analysts, administrators or IT technicians are those who are most central to implementing change in this space, our 'target audience' has been school leaders as those who are most invested in reviewing data.

What evidence led you to prioritise this issue? What were you trying to measure?

Data now plays an increasingly prominent role in schools, and senior leaders in our group highlighted ongoing difficulties in accessing and interpreting the information their MATs collect. We all recognised this tension first-hand, particularly the risk that heavy data collection demands can overshadow the curriculum. Without constructive use of the insights, data work can consume valuable time without delivering meaningful benefits for teaching and learning.

Tell us about the work your group undertook

- Kernow focused on building agents to interrogate assessment data and create IDSR style summaries, testing how well Copilot handled simplified datasets and where its accuracy and consistency broke down.
- Ted Wragg used Copilot for operational, student facing tasks such as generating data sheets, analysing surveys and producing report content, concentrating on breaking tasks into smaller steps to improve accuracy.
- Cornerstone trialled advanced agents in Copilot Studio and paired them with Power Automate to automate data extraction and scheduled reporting, creating more consistent workflows with minimal manual input.



- Another project used Copilot Notebooks to reliably review policies and source documents, showing they can extract key information quickly and consistently from long or complex texts.
- The Working Party explored how notebooks, agents and automation could enhance communication, collation and visibility of data across trusts, while also addressing workflows, compliance, licensing and scalability.

What AI tools or platforms did you use to support your work?

CoPilot, Microsoft 365, Power Automate, PowerBI, Internal MIS systems

What competing explanations or alternative solutions were considered?

The most prominent solution was in-built programming in tools that collect data. For instance, many curriculum assessment programmes have their own analytics. However, these are difficult to integrate centrally, which was one of the motivations of our work from the beginning.

What implementation barriers emerged?

1. Reliability of output has been the most challenging element for our group. We found that CoPilot responded better to some file types (Excel) than others (PDFs) but required ongoing vigilance around the accuracy of data.
2. Time – due to the time taken to increase accuracy of output, our group found ourselves spending more time manipulating files to make them easier for AI to review accurately.
3. Staff confidence – due to data analysis being a specialist skill, we had a real diversity of comfort in this area on the group. Some members found it easier to have direct impact on our overall progress, but all were able to bring unique perspectives to help steer our operations.

What did the data show?

Users found that AI tools didn't produce immediate time savings or consistent accuracy, but they began to streamline some tasks once workflows and data structures were simplified. It also showed that clean, well structured inputs and automation (e.g., via Power Automate) were essential for producing reliable and repeatable outputs. In some cases, such as a weekly data reporting agent, approximately 30 minutes was saved each week.

What unintended consequences emerged as a result of your work?

There was an increase in workload as teams spent time troubleshooting inconsistent outputs and checking accuracy, alongside moments where unreliable results temporarily reduced trust in the tools. However, this led us to look wider, and the subsequent integration of CoPilot Studio and Power Automate, whilst still in relative infancy, has opened very positive doors for our next steps.

If this working party was to scale, what are the main benefits?

Scaling this working party would strengthen consistency in how data is collected, analysed and reported, while automating more workflows to significantly reduce manual workload. It would also build a stronger,



more data confident workforce, enabling faster insights, better decision making and more efficient collaboration across all schools. If more schools join, further perspectives and existing efficiencies could support ongoing innovation, including the sharing of CoPilot agent/studio instructions to empower future workflows.

Where do you see value for other people to learn from your work?

Other people can learn from this work because it shows, in a real educational context, what actually happens when AI meets messy, siloed data, and how structured workflows and automation dramatically improve reliability. It also offers a clear roadmap of what to avoid, what to standardise, and what genuinely works—helping others accelerate success while avoiding the same pitfalls.



Curriculum Content

Page 21



Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study

Name of Working Party:
Curriculum Content

Working Party Lead:
Alex Druce

What specific problem were you trying to solve?

Develop an awareness and ability to think critically about the benefits/drawbacks of A.I in society, as well as support the need for increased diversity and adaptation of curriculum content in a time efficient manner. The group felt that 3-5 hours of weekly preparation time could be saved in some cases through A.I support.

Who experiences this problem most acutely?

Teachers spend considerable time tailoring resources to their learners' needs, not guaranteeing that the output of their time will be successful. TAs are overly reliant on their in-lesson intervention making it more challenging to support responsively. Students can become frustrated by a lack of personalised resourcing and can also lack the skills to analyse sources, meaning they are influenced by inaccurate sources.

What evidence led you to prioritise this issue? What were you trying to measure?

Staff voice indicating that teachers were spending substantial time rewriting activities, producing modelled pieces and designing assessment questions.

They also desired a reduction in safeguarding logs related to forming biased interpretations of online content, therefore the balanced approach towards benefits and drawbacks within the discrete e-safety lessons was deemed necessary.

Book looks in some schools demonstrated either a lack of curriculum scaffolding taking place or heavy adaptation having little impact (lack of independence or completion).

Tell us about the work your group undertook

Strand 1: A.I's societal presence and functionality

1. UKS2 lessons on defining and classifying A.I, before beginning to explore uses.
2. Unplugged task completed looking at testing AI based on binary questions generated.
3. Safer Internet Day exploring safe and responsible use with assembly and phase-specific lessons including real scenarios.
4. Expansion of A.I use in other curriculum subjects to boost debate.
5. Further UKS2 lessons on A.I use across job sectors and in local enablement.

Strand 2: A.I supporting the development of an inclusive curriculum

1. Agent developed to produce curriculum content newsletter articles. Teachmate used by pilot group to make accessible text passages, true/false questions, topic immersion ideas.
2. Generation of reading comprehension questions and slides. Curriculum reviews and planning/slide creation across Art/Geography/PSHE.
3. Formulation of Science end of unit assessment questions. Stories and poems created from adjectives for Storytelling week.
4. Agent developed for specific SEND adaptation and broader use of Teachmate (models)

What AI tools or platforms did you use to support your work?

Microsoft Co-Pilot, Teachmate A.I, Chat GPT, other A.I agents used for the curriculum adaptation strand. Common Sense Education and the Scottish AI Alliance used for explicit teaching of its use

What competing explanations or alternative solutions were considered?

A.I was initially viewed by students as 'helpful but potentially risky with a strong consensus that it should be used to support learning through ideas, explanations and resources but not replace all thinking or be used for tests.

Parent views were favourable, understanding its multiple benefits but also being supportive of an approach that considers ethical points (misinformation, academic integrity and over-reliance).

Some consensus that Co-Pilot was more reliable than Chat GPT as it made more explicit reference to its sources through quotations.

What implementation barriers emerged?

Reflections that some systems, namely Chat GPT, are more effective at producing sequences of ideas to inform medium term planning than actual task/resource design.

Device infrastructure was strong through Google Chromebooks and iPads so this wasn't a challenge. Teachmate multi-user free trial package also made accessibility easier.

Some initial cultural resistance from some staff that were cautious and even hesitant about using A.I due to their perception it can lead to fake news and narrowed thinking, The theme of Safer Internet Day meant that assemblies could be held that convinced staff of its benefits such as improving children's confidence with evaluating material. Reference to the use of Sparx, Accelerated Reader and Magma Maths helped convince them.

What did the data show?

Journal reflections show successful pilots of dyslexia friendly resources and positive impact of A.I sequences on student knowledge of A.I via work samples and conferencing.

What unintended consequences emerged as a result of your work?

Cross-curricular links made including English discussion texts and RE questions/responses about the meaning of life (Built critical thinking effectively).



If this working party was to scale, what are the main benefits?

Time will be saved in resource preparation, personalised learning will become more prevalent, language barriers overcome and earlier analysis for targeted support.

Where do you see value for other people to learn from your work?

Within inclusive curriculum planning/resourcing and promoting source analysis.



EYFS & Oracy

Page 25



Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study

Name of Working Party:

Early Years and Oracy

Working Party Lead:

Hannah James

What specific problem were you trying to solve?

The working party set out to address the gap between assessment and action in Early Years, particularly in maths, communication, language and oracy. While teachers gather rich assessment information, this does not always translate into timely, targeted support. The aim was to develop clearer, more consistent ways to turn assessment into meaningful next steps without increasing workload or delaying intervention. .

Who experiences this problem most acutely?

This issue most directly affects children whose gaps in early learning are not identified or addressed quickly enough. It also impacts teachers and support staff, who invest time in assessment but lack manageable systems to act on it consistently, and parents, who may experience delays in support and communication.

What evidence led you to prioritise this issue? What were you trying to measure?

Assessment data and staff feedback showed that needs were often identified but not acted on quickly or consistently. The group therefore explored whether AI could support teachers and Early Years practitioners to make informed judgements and plan targeted support more efficiently, without increasing workload.

Tell us about the work your group undertook

The team developed a **Maths Personalised Learning Tool** using a Copilot Notebook inspired by **NCETM, Development Matters** and the **EYFS framework**. This tool analyses whole class maths assessment data to identify learning gaps, group students for targeted support, and generate a sequence of five age appropriate intervention lessons, supporting consistency and efficiency in planning.

An **EYFS Writing Assessment Agent**, inspired by the **Babcock assessment exemplars**, was also developed. After uploading a photograph of the child's writing, this agent produces structured reports outlining students' strengths and areas for development, suggests next steps for progress, and supports moderation by indicating whether age related expectations have been met once the year group is identified.

In addition, the team created an **Oracy Assessment Agent** inspired by on the **Voice 21 framework**, enabling spoken language to be assessed across each strand of oracy and generating clear strengths and next steps. A **Speech Assessment Agent**, inspired by with the **EYFS Communication and Language Educational**

Programme and Development Matters, was developed to identify potential speech concerns and suggest play based, targeted activities.

The team also explored the development of an **Emotional CheckIn Agent** to support children's wellbeing. This agent is intended to help children recognise and express their feelings verbally, reinforce that all emotions are valid, suggest simple strategies to support selfregulation in the classroom, and provide teachers with a brief summary to inform pastoral followup where appropriate.

Alongside this, the team developed a **Nursery Ratio Agent** to support staffing and safety decisions. Drawing on weekly nursery registers, session timings (BC, AM, PM, ASC), staff working patterns and the **EYFS statutory framework**, the agent calculates attendance, confirms whether statutory ratios are met, and identifies when additional cover is required. This approach was subsequently extended across one Trust by incorporating data from all seven nurseries.

Finally, the team developed an **AI Oracy Companion**, Book Chat Club, to support purposeful book based discussion, encourage full sentences, develop vocabulary and generate individual oracy targets, reflecting the team's wider ambition to strengthen oracy through structured, meaningful dialogue supported by AI.

What AI tools or platforms did you use to support your work?

CoPilot, Chat GPT, Notebook LM, Voice Flow and TeachMate AI

What competing explanations or alternative solutions were considered?

The team focused primarily on Microsoft Copilot as the main platform, while also exploring other tools to support the design and refinement of prompts and interaction flows. This wider exploration helped shape and improve how the tools functioned before being implemented within Copilot.

What implementation barriers emerged?

Planning and trialling these AI tools required time and careful preparation. All of the team members were new to this type of work, so opportunities were needed to learn, practise and build confidence. Appropriate access to Copilot was important, as this influenced how easily tools could be used and shared. At times, the technology did not behave as expected, particularly when information was stored in different locations or formats, or when using voice functionality. Safeguarding and data protection were ongoing considerations in the work and the group were unsure of what was necessary, a consideration for engaging legal advice for phase 3 implementation. Overall, this work highlighted that introducing AI into school practice requires time, reliable systems and ongoing support to ensure staff can use it confidently and responsibly.

What did the data show?

Although these tools have not yet led to measurable time savings across all areas, early impact evidence demonstrates clear benefits. Staff survey data showed that 87% of practitioners reported the Maths Personalised Learning Tool saved them time, particularly in grouping children with similar gaps in learning and planning targeted intervention sessions. Student voice gathered through Book Chat Club was consistently positive across age groups. Reception students described the experience as "really fun," a Year 2 student commented, "I liked how it could talk about any book I wanted to," and a Year 6 pupil highlighted the depth of discussion, noting that "teachers can't possibly have read every single book, but Mr Book Chat knows them all." Teachers also reported that a child who typically avoided speaking with adults engaged confidently with Mr Book Chat, with the conversation transcript providing valuable insight afterwards. Notably, all children expressed a desire to take part more than once.

Page 27



What unintended consequences (positive and negative) emerged as a result of your work?

The team's work resulted in several unexpected outcomes. As confidence and professional curiosity increased, members began to innovate beyond the original scope; AI was applied to new areas such as writing assessment, nursery ratios, monitoring children's wellbeing, and developing an AI Oracy Companion.

While EYFS and Oracy were both explored in a single working group, each topic proved so rich and inspired such enthusiasm among practitioners the team believes that they each deserve focused attention in future cycles.

How were implementation barriers addressed?

The team addressed implementation challenges through phased trialling and flexible use of platforms. Where full Copilot functionality limited sharing, prompts were refined and shared to support wider testing and feedback. Tools were continually improved based on trial outcomes, with clearer instructions added to support consistency. Alternative platforms were used to develop and test ideas before moving them into Copilot, maintaining momentum throughout. Safeguarding and professional judgement were ensured through strict adult supervision during all trials involving children.

If this working party was to scale, what are the main benefits?

If this working party were to scale, the main benefits would be reduced workload, improved efficiency and stronger support for professional judgement. Assessment data could be uploaded to automatically group children by shared gaps and generate targeted lesson sequences, saving teachers time and enabling quicker responses to need. The ratio agent would support nursery leaders by confirming statutory ratios and suggesting cover plans when staff are absent, reducing pressure during morning organisation. Book Chat Club would also provide an engaging, low pressure context for children to talk about books and develop oracy skills in a relaxed and motivating way.

Where do you see value for other people to learn from your work?

Our work shows that AI is accessible to all, not just those who consider themselves "techsavvy." Members of the working party began without technical expertise, yet through time and shared exploration were able to develop practical, impactful and innovative tools. The work highlights the strong potential of AI in Early Years and oracy, and as confidence grew, a wider range of ideas emerged. Going forward, there is clear value in separating the Early Years and Oracy strands, as both offer significant and distinct opportunities for further investigation and shared learning.



Student Practice, Attainment and Attendance

Page 29



Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study

Name of Working Party:

Student Practice

Working Party Lead:

Tamsin Frances

What specific problem were you trying to solve?

Year 6 students showed low engagement and reluctance towards independent reading. Many were not choosing to read outside classroom time, limiting reading volume and slowing comprehension progress. The group aimed to use an AI-powered reading agent to create a more interactive, engaging and self-directed reading experience, particularly for students who would not typically choose to read independently.

Who experiences this problem most acutely?

This issue most strongly affected reluctant and disengaged readers in Year 6. These students were not independently selecting books, were not completing Accelerated Reader (AR) quizzes, and showed limited progression in comprehension. Teachers also faced challenges in identifying sustainable, time-efficient strategies to improve reading engagement.

What evidence led you to prioritise this issue? What were you trying to measure?

Staff observations identified a recurring group of reluctant readers, predominantly boys. This reflects national KS2 trends, where girls outperform boys in reading attainment.

The group set out to measure:

- Increases in independently read books
- Improvements in AR quiz scores
- Stronger comprehension responses
- Student engagement and participation (via teacher observation)

Baseline AR data showed students had read only 2–3 books, with Book Levels between 3.63–4.2 and quiz scores ranging from 40–63%. Teachers also noted a lack of independent book selection and limited progress.

Tell us about the work your group undertook

Beginning in January, the working party implemented a structured action research programme across multiple Year 6 classes and schools within the Cornerstone, Kernow, and Ted Wragg networks. Each teacher identified three focus students (reluctant readers, not SEND) and used a Microsoft CoPilot AI agent to facilitate interactive, genre-based reading sessions. The agent generated collaborative, “choose-your-own-

direction” stories, divided into six sections with embedded comprehension questions. Delivery evolved from whole-class teaching to smaller group formats (groups of 10 or 2–3 students), which proved more effective for sustaining engagement. Sessions were delivered approximately three times per week during DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), or small group time. The agent linked story genres and supported students through the Accelerated Reader texts. A Year 6 writing agent was also tested to create writing outcomes. The group focused on creating an agent to mask AI-generated answers from student inputs, adjusting to group sizes and giving feedback.

Due to platform limitations, agents could not be directly shared across schools. This was addressed through a “how-to” video and written guidance, enabling each setting to recreate the tool.

What AI tools or platforms did you use to support your work?

Microsoft CoPilot (Agent Builder):

Used to develop a bespoke AI reading agent capable of generating interactive stories with embedded comprehension questions. The agent was iteratively refined and shared through guidance materials.

Accelerated Reader (AR):

Used as the primary quantitative measure, tracking number of books read, Book Level, and quiz performance before and after the intervention.

What competing explanations or alternative solutions were considered?

The group recognised that reading engagement is influenced by multiple factors, including home environment, student-teacher relationships, and access to appealing texts. As such, this was not a controlled study and other reading activities continued alongside the intervention.

Alternative approaches considered included:

- Traditional guided reading groups
- Teacher-led comprehension sessions
- Peer reading programmes

What implementation barriers emerged?

Time: Three weekly sessions were difficult alongside SATs prep, consistently running 20–25 minutes over.

Answer prompts: The agent occasionally surfaced suggested answers. Teachers managed this through projection control and oversight.

Cross-organisation sharing: Agents couldn’t be shared across Microsoft tenancies directly - guides and videos bridged this, with some loss of consistency.

Independent access: Age restrictions kept sessions teacher-led despite student interest in independent use.

Book recommendations: Early suggestions lacked differentiation. Librarian input aligned recommendations with reading level and available stock.

Engagement: Genre mismatch caused some disengagement - rotating choices and student input helped.

What did the data show?

After approximately eight weeks, Accelerated Reader data for three focus students showed clear improvements in reading volume and, in most cases, attainment:



Child A: 3 → 10 books; Book Level 3.63 → 3.86; quiz score 63.3% → 54.8%

Child B: 2 → 6 books; Book Level 4.2 → 4.08; quiz score 40% → 46.5%

Child C: 2 → 4 books; Book Level 4.2 → 4.45; quiz score 40% → 65%

Overall:

- Reading volume increased by 2–3 times
- Book Level improved in two out of three cases
- Quiz scores improved in two out of three students (by 6.5–25%)

Teachers also reported increased engagement, with some students requesting additional sessions. Positive impacts were observed among SEN students (3 out of 5 engaged), suggesting broader accessibility.

What unintended consequences emerged as a result of your work?

Enthusiasm spread beyond the target group, with whole classes requesting continuation and discussing reading more widely. The writing enrichment agent produced strong creative outcomes, and teachers noted growing oral comprehension - with responses increasingly structured to SATs-style expectations. AI-generated book recommendations remained a limitation, requiring ongoing teacher intervention to differentiate by level.

If this working party was to scale, what are the main benefits?

This approach offers a low-cost, low-preparation model for scaling reading engagement. Once built, the agent needs minimal upkeep and adapts across year groups and subjects. Integration with Accelerated Reader supports existing assessment, and the writing agent extends impact across the curriculum. With Copilot increasingly included in school licences, financial barriers to adoption are low.

Where do you see value for other people to learn from your work?

- The genre-matching model effectively links AI-generated content with real reading materials, supporting independent reading habits.
- The collaborative sharing approach demonstrates how schools can work across systems while maintaining safeguarding.
- The project highlights that AI is not primarily a time-saving tool, but a way to enhance and complement existing classroom practice.



Assessment, Feedback & Marking

Page 33



Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study

Name of Working Party:
Assessment, Feedback & Marking

Working Party Lead:
Ben McGowan

What specific problem were you trying to solve?

The core problem was inefficiency and inconsistency in assessment. Teachers were investing significant time in marking, yet feedback was often delayed and therefore less impactful on student progress. This created a gap between effort and outcome, particularly given strong evidence (EEF) that timely, specific feedback and effective reading strategies drive high gains. In practice, three issues persisted: excessive marking workload, slow feedback loops that missed the optimal learning window, and variability in judgement across classes and schools. The challenge was to reduce workload while improving the speed, quality, and consistency of feedback.

Who experiences this problem most acutely?

This problem was felt most acutely by classroom teachers, and the student who depend on them for timely, meaningful guidance. The nature of the problem was dependant on the context. We mapped this across four domains:

1. Writing Assessment & Moderation (Y6 & Y2)
2. Timely In Lesson Feedback (All Teachers)
3. Reading & Differentiated Practice (Y6)
4. Secondary Extended Writing

What evidence led you to prioritise this issue? What were you trying to measure?

Across all areas, the core measure was the same: improved student outcomes, with time savings and consistency acting as enabling factors. The issue was prioritised based on consistent staff voice across the trust. Teachers and leaders identified marking workload, delayed feedback, and limited capacity for individualised support as key barriers to student progress. This practitioner evidence highlighted where AI could meaningfully improve efficiency and impact. Each strand defined clear measures: In-lesson feedback: speed and immediacy of feedback, and its effect on student progress within the lesson. Reading: pupil engagement and rate of improvement in comprehension. Writing (Y2/Y6): accuracy of assessment against National Curriculum criteria, quality of next-step feedback, and consistency of judgements across teachers and schools.



Tell us about the work your group undertook

The working group brought together teachers from across primary and secondary phases, all using Microsoft 365 and Copilot as the primary AI platform. Work was structured around four distinct areas of practice, with each practitioner taking ownership of their strand and reporting back at regular group meetings.

Strand 1: In Lesson Marking and Feedback (Richard Sills, Y6). Integrated Copilot into assessment to deliver sub-minute, rubric-aligned feedback, enabling in-lesson editing and rapid resubmission; later embedded it in Teams for seamless workflows and used the Assessment Notebook to analyse misconceptions and generate personalised spelling lists.

Strand 2: Reading and Differentiated Practice (Harry Watkin, Y6). Developed Copilot agent to differentiate texts at three levels and deliver them via Reading Coach, which provides automated fluency feedback and comprehension tasks, enabling daily, data-rich reading practice with minimal teacher input. He tracks progress over time (showing gains in accuracy and speed) and uses Copilot to support marking by generating first-pass reviews and converting rubric scores into student feedback.

Strand 3: Writing Assessment and Moderation against the NC Framework (Amy Wilcox Y6 & Emily Goodey Y6/Infants, with Matt Williams Y2). Implementing Copilot Notebooks for writing assessment across Years 3 to 6, enabling teachers to upload handwritten work for AI marking against KS2 criteria and trial SATs-style digital marking, with early accuracy promising but some technical and reliability issues emerging. Parallel work by Emily and colleagues showed that moderation accuracy depends heavily on prompt design, with best-fit, criteria-aligned prompts producing the most consistent results; overall, AI proved effective for accelerating moderation but required teacher oversight. Trials in KS1 confirmed usefulness, though scaling raised practical workload challenges.

Strand 4: Secondary Extended Writing (Andrew Sandercock via Fruitify.AI). Trial of Fruitify.AI in the secondary setting to address the time lag in marking extended GCSE writing, enabling real-time, detailed feedback for large cohorts and supporting redrafting that led to +20% grade improvements.

What AI tools or platforms did you use to support your work?

Microsoft Copilot (M365 Premium) was the primary platform used across all strands.

ChatGPT (with paid subscription) was used by one team.

Fruitify.AI, a Southwest based EdTech platform, was used in secondary schools for extended writing assessment, providing rapid whole class feedback.

Other tools considered and explored included OLEX.AI (previously trialled across trust primaries and secondaries; licences lapsed and fizzled due to device access and feed back to student barriers). Microsoft Reading Coach (within Teams) was used by Harry for reading fluency and comprehension tracking.

What competing explanations or alternative solutions were considered?

Amy's trials with Copilot on SATs papers suggested that with training it may reach a comparable level of accuracy to paid specialist tools, which would remove the need for additional spend if Copilot reliability can be confirmed at scale.

General purpose ChatGPT was used alongside Copilot for cross platform comparison in writing moderation but was found to be more generous than Copilot and potentially less suited to high stakes assessment contexts where accuracy of judgement is critical.



What implementation barriers emerged?

Key barriers were technical, structural, and cultural. Platform reliability issues (notably Copilot's inconsistent handwriting recognition) disrupted workflows, while licensing and device access limited who could participate and how quickly feedback could be delivered. Image quality affected marking accuracy, and safeguarding around student, AI interaction remains under review. Implementation was further constrained by staff time and confidence in building prompts and agents, alongside ongoing scepticism about AI reliability, particularly for high-stakes judgements, reinforcing the need to position AI as support, not replacement, for teacher judgement.

What did the data show?

The data showed clear gains in speed, engagement, and attainment. Overall, AI increased feedback speed, practice frequency, and measurable student progress.

- In-lesson feedback: feedback reduced to <1 minute per student, with increased student engagement and repeated resubmissions.
- Reading: sustained improvements in words per minute and accuracy over a half term, with up to 5 AI-supported sessions per week.
- Writing assessment: AI successfully processed multiple input formats, with early SPaG accuracy promising and close alignment to teacher judgement when prompts were well designed.
- Secondary writing: ~20% grade improvement (Grade 4 → 6) following AI-supported redrafting, with transferability still under review.

What unintended consequences emerged as a result of your work?

Unintended consequences included both gains and risks. Instant feedback increased student agency, with students becoming more self-directed and repeatedly resubmitting work. However, platform reliability issue, particularly inconsistent handwriting recognition disrupted workflows, and AI judgements proved “persuadable,” reinforcing the need for teacher oversight to avoid inaccurate outcomes. In KS1, workload savings were less clear, as time gained in marking was offset by image capture and upload processes. Additionally, direct student–AI interaction raised unresolved safeguarding and policy questions.

If this working party was to scale, what are the main benefits?

The work led to a significant reduction in teacher marking workload, freeing time for responsive teaching and targeted intervention, alongside much faster feedback cycles that kept student engaged within lessons. It improved consistency of writing assessment across schools, increased the volume and tracking of differentiated reading practice, and demonstrated a scalable approach to SATs and GCSE mock marking. In addition, a shared bank of prompts, agents, and workflows was established, lowering the barrier for wider adoption across the trust.

Where do you see value for other people to learn from your work?

The key finding is to start with the problem, not the technology. AI was effective only when applied to clear assessment and workload challenges. Outcomes depended heavily on high-quality prompt design, with framework-aligned prompts producing the most reliable results. Across all strands, AI worked best as a first-pass tool that extends teacher capacity rather than replacing professional judgement. Crucially, the approach aligns with strong evidence (EEF) that improving the speed, frequency, and quality of feedback and reading practice directly drives student progress.

Page 36



SEND and Adaptive Teaching

Page 37



Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study

Name of Working Party:
SEND & Adaptive Teaching

Working Party Lead:
Amy Rutherford

What specific problem were you trying to solve?

As a group, we were trying to address inconsistencies in SEND planning & speech & language interventions to improve the quality of practice, and a big one for us- help with staff workload. We selected this focus because the challenge is experienced by teachers across all phases, not only SENDCOs. We wanted to tackle a problem that benefits the widest range of practitioners while also improving outcomes for students.

Who experiences this problem most acutely?

SENDCOs & specialist intervention staff & classroom teachers. Students with speech, language & communication needs who benefit from engaging, structured, & relevant therapy materials.

What evidence led you to prioritise this issue? What were you trying to measure?

Staff feedback showed that SEND planning & interventions were time-consuming & inconsistent. In respect of SALT teams therapists were often creating or adapting resources individually. We aimed to measure whether AI support could save time, standardise planning, & improve the quality of resources/ outputs.

Tell us about the work your group undertook

The group split across two AI platforms, each exploring where the technology could reduce workload & strengthen practice.

TCAT developed three stage-specific agents mirroring the APDR cycle:

- Review agents refined teacher-drafted targets into SMART, MAP-aligned plans - flagging missing success criteria or strategies.
- Creation agents built plans from scratch using structured prompts, drawing on strengths, needs, & observations.
- Self-checker agents acted as a final moderation tool, auditing near-complete plans for SMART compliance, consistency, & MAP alignment.



Kernow Learning consolidated this into three user-facing modes within a single agent:

- Mode A – New Plan: builds SMART targets from scratch, even with incomplete information
- Mode B – Review/Refine: audits & rewrites existing targets in child-friendly language, with an optional difficulty adjustment step.
- Mode C – Classroom Support: delivers classroom strategies for specific barriers - no formal targets required, ideal for when the SENDCO is not immediately available.

A pay-as-you-go Azure subscription gave staff access to test the agent without requiring full Copilot licences.

Ted Wragg explored what was already available. The SaLT team reviewed & trialled TeachMate resources in therapy sessions focused on instruction-following & spoken language processing. Student engagement was strong & sessions became more clearly structured around specific language targets. The team then turned their attention to secondary settings, exploring how resources could address classroom language demands & support more complex language processing needs.

What AI tools or platforms did you use to support your work?

TeachMate & Microsoft Copilot, specifically Agent Mode in Copilot.

What competing explanations or alternative solutions were considered?

TCAT and Kernow Learning trialled multiple agent configurations at different points in the process to identify which delivered the highest quality output. Power Automate was identified for future IEP template automation linking with Copilot. Ted Wragg considered developing resources internally or drawing from traditional intervention programmes - but the time cost of building from scratch made a curated platform the more practical starting point.

What implementation barriers emerged?

Get the right people in the room from day one: Leaders and developers cannot build tools that work in classrooms without teachers and practitioners helping to shape them.

Time: Staff cannot trial new tools on top of full workloads. Protected time is not optional- it is the difference between adoption and abandonment.

Licensing: Without a trust-wide solution, access will be inconsistent. Resolve this early. A pay-as-you-go Azure subscription for using Copilot agents proved one practical route to equitable access without full per-user licensing costs.

Cultural resistance/ confidence: Create space for staff to trial tools without pressure and frame AI as supporting professional judgement, not replacing it. Training is required on customising agents. AI trials exposed some lack of general IT confidence in school teams that had previously been hidden.

GDPR and compliance (custom AI builds specifically): This is an area identified by the group as a training need. There was a request for advice and potential training here.

What did the data show?

Data collection is ongoing - but early signals are encouraging. Staff report improved consistency and reduced planning time. In SaLT sessions, TeachMate resources provided clearer session structure and stronger student engagement, with therapists noting better focus on specific language targets. The process also prompted the team to review and update older resources that had been in use for years



What unintended consequences emerged as a result of your work?

Teachers found themselves re-examining what makes a good target, what effective provision really looks like, and why it matters - questions that workload had quietly pushed aside. It prompted wider reflection about consistency and quality: are we all doing this the same way, and is that way good enough? For some, AI became not just a time-saving tool but a professional frontier they want to explore further. That enthusiasm is an asset worth nurturing.

If this working party was to scale, what are the main benefits?

- Greater compliance & consistency across all schools.
- Reduced admin time.
- Immediate scaffolding for new or less confident staff.
- Replicable model for deploying agents with usage analytics.
- Increased engagement at work for those with a passion for exploring AI further.

Where do you see value for other people to learn from your work?

Staff readiness

- Knowledge must come before the tool - build a quality-assured knowledge base before any agent.
- AI reduces blank-page anxiety & saves time, but professional judgement remains essential.

Choosing tools

- Run a short dual trial before committing - then focus development effort on one platform done well. TeachMate = curated resource library, low setup. Copilot = Trust-specific custom agents, higher time investment.
- Manage scope deliberately - SEND use cases are easy to over-extend.

Build & governance

- Pair technical AI expertise with SENDCo subject knowledge - the most effective development model.
- Publish early, gather real user feedback, iterate fast to keep the momentum going.
- Solve Microsoft licensing early — Azure pay-as-you-go is straightforward to set up.



Reducing Workload

Page 41



Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study

Name of Working Party:

Reducing Workload

Working Party Lead:

Rob Bradley

What specific problem were you trying to solve?

This working party explored how artificial intelligence (AI) could be used to reduce teacher workload, with a particular focus on lesson planning and preparation. The secondary aim was to explore some key AI platforms to try and evaluate which ones were most effective in supporting practitioners with planning and preparation.

Who experiences this problem most acutely?

The issue of workload associated with planning and preparation was reported most strongly by:

- Class teachers
- Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs)
- Headteachers who regularly cover classes/ teaching

The challenge was particularly pronounced in mixed-age and mixed-phase classes, and classes with high levels of SEND, where planning demands are higher.

What evidence led you to prioritise this issue? What were you trying to measure?

Participants within the working party consistently identified lesson planning and preparation as a major contributor to workload. This was especially evident in schools with complex class structures.

To capture evidence, participants maintained weekly reflective journals, structured around the following prompts:

- What worked well?
- Which AI tools were used?
- What barriers were encountered?
- How were these barriers overcome?
- Was any time saved?

This qualitative approach enabled the group to track changes over time and to understand both practical impact and professional perceptions.

Tell us about the work your group undertook

The project initially adopted a broad focus, exploring the question:

“How much time does AI save teachers in a typical week?”

As the trial progressed, the focus was refined to examine time savings specifically related to lesson planning and preparation.

A deliberate decision was made to include teachers who were less experienced in using AI, working alongside the group’s main participants. This approach provided valuable insight into:

- Common early barriers
- Training and support needs
- Factors that influence successful adoption when scaling up

An extended trial of TeachMate AI was secured, although participants were encouraged to use a range of platforms rather than being restricted to a single tool.

Participants recorded weekly reflections in a shared journal and engaged in ongoing professional dialogue with colleagues beyond the working party.

What AI tools or platforms did you use to support your work?

- Microsoft Copilot
- Chat GPT (Open AI)
- TeachMate AI
- Claude (Anthropic)

What competing explanations or alternative solutions were considered?

While other AI platforms designed to support lesson planning were explored, these were not pursued further due to concerns around content reliability and consistency.

What implementation barriers emerged?

Several barriers emerged during the trial:

- **Time investment:** Initial learning and quality-checking required additional time.
- **Resistance:** More experienced teachers were more likely to feel AI did not save them time, particularly where they already had clear outcomes in mind. This was especially noticeable in the early stages of the trial.
- **Prompt quality:** Early outputs varied significantly depending on prompt clarity; this became less of an issue as confidence increased.
- **Reliability:** Occasional inaccuracies required professional checking.
- **Image generation limitations:** Poor handling of images and difficulties importing visuals reduced efficiency.
- **Data protection concerns:** Some staff were understandably cautious about what data could be shared with AI tools.
- **Platform usability:** TeachMate AI was perceived by some as less intuitive; Copilot was described by some as “clunky” compared to ChatGPT.
- **Phase and SEND limitations:** Impact was reported to be lower in KS1 and for SEND adaptations.
- **Pedagogical concerns:** Some reports of leadership noting occasions where AI-generated outputs did not align with agreed lesson structures or promoted over-reliance on worksheets.



What did the data show?

Reported time savings increased steadily over the course of the trial:

Week 1 – most reported 0-30 minutes of time saved.

Week 2 – most reported 30-60 minutes of time saved.

Week 3 – most reported 1-2 hours of time saved.

Week 4 onwards – most reported 2+ hours of time saved.

Impact varied according to experience and role, with early career teachers reporting greater time savings than more experienced colleagues.

ChatGPT and Copilot were most frequently identified as preferred platforms due to their flexibility.

Participants teaching in KS2 reported greater impact than those in KS1.

What unintended consequences emerged as a result of your work?

Several unintended consequences were identified:

- A short-term increase in workload during the learning phase
- Experienced teachers sometimes felt AI slowed them down
- A potential risk of over-reliance without adequate checking
- Ongoing technical limitations, particularly around images

These findings reinforced the importance of training, guidance, and professional oversight.

If this working party was to scale, what are the main benefits?

If scaled effectively, this approach has the potential to:

- Deliver sustained reductions in workload
- Improve staff confidence and consistency
- Accelerate the development of effective prompting
- Ensure alignment with agreed pedagogical approaches
- Provide clearer guidance around data protection and safe use

A shared, structured approach was identified as critical to success.

Where do you see value for other people to learn from your work?

This project demonstrates how AI can be implemented in a controlled, evidence-informed way to reduce workload without undermining professional expertise.

Key learning includes:

- The importance of deliberate, supported implementation
- The value of shared professional reflection
- How impact varies by phase and experience level
- Common pitfalls and how they can be mitigated

Most importantly, the work models a reflective approach to innovation, showing that staff confidence, consistency, and impact improve when AI use is intentionally embedded rather than left to ad hoc experimentation.





Phase 2 Findings Report

1. Summary of Overall Findings

Phase 2 of the RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub brought together nine working parties spanning three partner trusts; Cornerstone, Kernow and Ted Wragg. The aim was to test, trial and evaluate the practical application of AI tools in schools. Working across a deliberately broad range of contexts, from Early Years classrooms to trust-level governance, groups worked collaboratively across a sustained period to identify real problems and gather evidence of impact. The findings that follow are drawn directly from their reports.

Across the nine groups, a consistent picture emerged: AI tools produced genuine, measurable benefits when applied to clearly-defined problems, when staff were given time to build confidence, and when outputs were treated as a starting point for professional judgement rather than a finished product. Impact was rarely immediate but grew steadily as familiarity increased. This pattern held whether the context was classroom practice, operational administration or strategic leadership.

1.1 Workload and Time Savings

The most consistently evidenced finding across the hub was a reduction in time spent on preparatory and administrative tasks. The Reducing Workload group tracked this quantitatively through weekly reflective journals. In week one, most participants saved between 0 and 30 minutes. By week four, the majority reported saving over two hours per week, with savings continuing to grow thereafter. The data showed that early career teachers tended to benefit more quickly than experienced colleagues, and that KS2 practitioners reported greater impact than those in KS1.

Similar patterns were reported across other groups. The Curriculum Content working party noted that 3–5 hours of weekly preparation time could be saved in some cases through AI-supported resource generation. The Business Efficiencies group, while not yet able to quantify savings precisely, reported that agents for HR guidance, parent correspondence and financial reconciliation had already begun to reduce administrative burden for central trust staff. The Data Analytics group recorded approximately 30 minutes saved per week through an automated data reporting agent alone. Critically, all groups noted that the learning curve in the early weeks temporarily increased workload before savings were realised. This is an important finding as the work scales to Phase 3.

1.2 Student Outcomes and Classroom Impact

Several groups produced direct evidence of improved student outcomes. The Student Practice and Attainment group worked with reluctant Year 6 readers across the Cornerstone, Kernow and Ted Wragg networks, using a Microsoft Copilot reading agent to generate interactive, genre-based stories with embedded

comprehension questions. Accelerated Reader data for focus students showed reading volume increasing by two to three times over approximately eight weeks. Quiz scores improved for two out of three focus students by between 6.5% and 25%, and Book Level rose in two out of three cases. Engagement spread beyond the target group, with whole classes requesting sessions and teachers noting improvements in oral comprehension structured around SATs-style responses.

The Assessment, Marking and Feedback group demonstrated impact across four distinct strands. In-lesson feedback was reduced to under one minute per student, and student agency increased as students repeatedly resubmitted improved work. Reading fluency data showed sustained improvements in words per minute over a half term, with up to five AI-supported sessions per week. In a secondary context, AI-supported redrafting via Fruitify.AI resulted in approximately a 20% grade improvement (Grade 4 to Grade 6) for extended writing. Writing assessment against National Curriculum criteria showed close alignment with teacher judgement when prompts were carefully designed.

The EYFS and Oracy group developed six bespoke agents aligned to established frameworks including NCETM, Development Matters, Babcock assessment exemplars and the Voice 21 oracy framework. A Nursery Ratio Agent was extended to cover all seven nurseries in one trust. While outcome data at student level in Early Years remains qualitative, practitioners reported that the tools significantly reduced the gap between assessment and timely intervention.

The Curriculum Content group reported positive work samples and journal evidence demonstrating improved student knowledge of AI through discrete UKS2 lessons, alongside successful pilots of dyslexia-friendly resources and cross-curricular links including debate and critical thinking in RE.

1.3 Operational and Leadership Impact

Beyond classroom practice, three groups focused specifically on operational efficiency and strategic leadership. The Business Efficiencies group developed a suite of agents to support HR enquiries, automate parent communication, centralise incident reporting and flag financial discrepancies in procurement records. The Leadership and Governance group built over ten distinct Copilot agents covering meeting transcript summarisation, task harvesting from Teams and Outlook, SWOT analysis from IDSR data, policy creation and review, performance management timetabling, and observation summary reports. Journal evidence confirmed clear time savings once the initial investment in agent creation had been made.

The Data Analytics group explored how AI could improve the collation, visibility and communication of data across trusts. Using Copilot, Copilot Studio and Power Automate, groups within Kernow, Ted Wragg and Cornerstone tested approaches to IDSR-style reporting, survey analysis, automated scheduling and policy review. The integration of Power Automate with Copilot Studio, though still in its early stages, was identified as a particularly promising direction for reducing manual data workflows at scale.

2. Themes Across Working Parties

Despite working on distinct problems in different contexts, several strong themes emerged across the nine groups.

2.1 The Learning Curve Is Universal, and Predictable

Every group, without exception, reported a period of increased workload at the start of the trial. Creating effective prompts, learning platform behaviours, and building confidence in outputs all took time. For most groups, this initial investment was repaid within three to four weeks, a worthy consideration for scaling into phase 3. The Reducing Workload group documented this most precisely, but the same pattern was described qualitatively by the Business Efficiencies, Data Analytics, Leadership and Governance, and Assessment groups. The implication for Phase 3 is clear: schools joining the hub should be prepared for a short-term cost before the longer-term gain, and CPD support should be front-loaded accordingly.



2.2 Prompt Quality Determines Output Quality

Multiple groups independently identified the quality of the prompt as the single most important factor in determining whether AI outputs were useful. The Assessment, Marking and Feedback group found that framework-aligned prompts produced markedly more reliable writing assessments than generic ones. The Reducing Workload group noted that early output variability reduced significantly as participants became more confident and precise in their prompting. The Leadership and Governance group described a progression from initial prompts to refined agents, with each iteration producing more consistent and better-targeted results. The Data Analytics group found that breaking tasks into smaller steps improved accuracy considerably. Across the hub, the message was consistent: AI is only as good as the instructions it is given, and building prompting skill is itself a core professional capability.

2.3 AI tools should not replace teacher judgement

No group recommended using AI outputs without professional review, and several explicitly cautioned against it. The Assessment and Marking group found that Copilot's writing assessments could be 'persuaded' to change their judgement, reinforcing the need for teacher oversight. The Leadership and Governance group noted that meeting transcription occasionally missed nuance or contracted meaning, and that removing friction from a task risks reducing the attention given to it. The Reducing Workload group flagged concerns from school leaders about AI-generated lesson content that did not align with agreed pedagogical approaches. The data protection considerations raised by the Leadership group, particularly around GDPR, DPIAs and the appropriateness of sharing student data with external AI platforms further underline the importance of human oversight remaining embedded in every workflow.

2.4 Microsoft Copilot as the Dominant Platform with Recognised Limitations

Microsoft Copilot was the primary tool across all nine working parties, largely driven by existing M365 licensing across the three trusts. This consistency has value: shared infrastructure, familiar data governance, and a growing library of shared agents and prompts across the hub. However, groups were candid about Copilot's limitations. Inconsistent performance, particularly with handwriting recognition and PDF file types, disrupted workflows in the Assessment and Data Analytics groups. File access issues; Copilot requiring documents to be held in a centralised repository created additional administrative overhead for the Business Efficiencies group. The Leadership group noted that reliable agent functionality requires a higher-tier licence than the standard Copilot access available to most staff, creating an uneven experience across roles. Several groups found ChatGPT more intuitive for certain tasks, and the Curriculum Content group noted that ChatGPT was more effective at medium-term planning sequences than resource design.

2.5 Cultural Resistance Is Real but Addressable

Initial staff scepticism about AI was reported by several groups and took different forms. In the Curriculum Content group, some staff associated AI with misinformation and narrowed thinking; the Safer Internet Day focus, with explicit reference to familiar tools such as Sparx, Accelerated Reader and Magma Maths, proved effective in shifting attitudes. The Reducing Workload group found that more experienced teachers were more likely to feel AI did not save them time, particularly in the early stages. The EYFS group noted that all team members were new to this kind of work and required structured opportunities to learn and build confidence before meaningful implementation was possible. Across the hub, the groups that made fastest progress were those with designated time for experimentation and strong peer support structures.



2.6 Safeguarding and Data Protection Require Proactive Governance

Safeguarding and data protection were raised by multiple groups as requiring active management rather than retrospective consideration. The EYFS and Student Practice groups both emphasised that any workflow involving pupil data, photographs of children's work, or direct student interaction with AI might require consent, clear guidance and secure data handling but the group were unsure on this point and requested advice. The Leadership group identified the need for a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) and noted outstanding questions around GDPR and Subject Access Request (SAR) implications of AI-generated records. The Assessment group flagged unresolved questions about the appropriateness of direct student interaction with AI agents. As the hub scales into Phase 3, a shared governance framework covering these questions will be essential.

2.7 Agent Sharing and Cross-Trust Collaboration Needs Structural Solutions

A recurring practical frustration was the difficulty of sharing agents and workflows across Microsoft tenancies. The Student Practice group resolved this through instructional videos and written guidance, but acknowledged that this reduced consistency across settings. The Leadership group noted that successful agents could not simply be exported and redeployed, requiring each school to rebuild tools from shared specifications. As the hub moves into Phase 3 with a broader network of schools, establishing a shared repository of prompts, agent templates and workflow guides will be an important infrastructure investment.

3. Barriers Experienced

The nine working parties were consistent in their honesty about the difficulties encountered during Phase 2, documented via weekly journals. The barriers below represent the most frequently reported and most structurally significant challenges.

3.1 Licensing and Access

Licensing emerged as one of the most significant structural barriers across the hub. Several groups found that the functionality they needed, particularly around agent creation and Copilot Studio, required a higher-tier Microsoft licence than was available to most staff. The Leadership and Governance group identified that agents built in Copilot required premium access not universally held across trusts. The Business Efficiencies group noted that the full feature set of Copilot was contingent on appropriate licensing, creating inconsistencies in what different team members could access and do. The Data Analytics group highlighted that licensing and scalability were active considerations in planning any future rollout. Until licensing is resolved consistently across all schools and roles, equitable access to the hub's tools will remain uneven.

3.2 Platform Reliability and Output Consistency

Inconsistent outputs were reported by almost every group. Copilot's handling of PDFs was less reliable than Excel files (Data Analytics). Handwriting recognition was inconsistent (Assessment and Marking). The same prompt on the same platform could produce responses of varying length and quality on different occasions (Leadership and Governance). Retrieval of files from SharePoint was intermittent (Business Efficiencies and Leadership). The Student Practice group found that the AI agent occasionally surfaced suggested answers to students, creating a risk of copying.

3.3 Time and Capacity

Across every group, time was identified as a barrier. Building agents, refining prompts, checking outputs, attending group meetings and maintaining reflective journals all took time that was additional to normal teaching and leadership responsibilities. In most instances, the time output was an initial investment,



normally documented in weeks 1 to 4. For some groups, particularly those newer to AI, the early weeks represented a genuine workload increase before savings materialised. The Reducing Workload group was explicit that the learning phase required protected time and that staff who were not given this struggled to make progress. The EYFS group noted that all participants were new to this kind of work and needed structured learning time that was not always available. Several groups suggested that future phases should include explicitly ring-fenced time for CPD and experimentation.

3.4 Data Management and Infrastructure

The Data Analytics and Business Efficiencies groups both found that AI tools performed significantly better when working with clean, well-structured data held in centralised, accessible locations. In practice, much school data is siloed, held in inconsistent formats, or stored in ways that prevent Copilot from retrieving it reliably. This has implications for how schools and MATS work in work vs web function going forward. The Data Analytics group found that preparing data for AI use sometimes took more time than the analysis itself. The Business Efficiencies group had to restructure file storage to enable Copilot to access documents reliably. This is a systemic issue that sits beneath the AI tools themselves: without investment in data infrastructure, the tools' potential is constrained.

3.5 Staff Confidence and Cultural Readiness

As noted in the themes section, cultural and professional resistance was a genuine barrier for several groups, particularly in the early stages. Some experienced teachers felt AI did not save them time. Some staff were anxious about misinformation, over-reliance or data risks. Some leadership teams raised concerns about AI outputs not aligning with school pedagogical priorities. In each case, these concerns were legitimate. GDPR and IP queries were submitted to the Steering Committee for support and staff training.

3.6 Phase and Context Specificity

Several groups noted that impact varied significantly by phase, subject and context. The Reducing Workload group found that KS1 teachers reported lower impact than KS2 colleagues. The Assessment group found that KS1 workload savings in writing assessment were partially offset by the time required to photograph and upload handwritten work. The Student Practice group noted that the AI reading agent was most effective in smaller group formats, which required reorganisation of timetables and staffing. The Curriculum Content group noted that some AI tools were better suited to planning sequences than to resource creation. These nuances matter: Phase 3 scaling should involve matching tools and approaches to contexts deliberately, rather than assuming that what works in one setting will transfer directly to another.

4. Next Steps for Phase 3

Phase 3 of the RISE Hub opens in April 2026. The evidence from Phase 2 provides a strong foundation for what should be prioritised, structured and avoided as the programme scales to a wider network of schools and new working parties. The following recommendations are drawn directly from the findings.

4.1 Scale Proven Agents and Tools Systematically

Several groups have now developed robust, tested agents that are ready to be deployed more broadly. The Leadership and Governance group has over ten agents at deployment stage. The EYFS group has six agents aligned to statutory frameworks. The Assessment group has a shared bank of prompts and workflows. Phase 3 should prioritise creating the conditions for these tools to be shared efficiently, including establishing a shared prompt and agent library, investing in cross-tenancy sharing mechanisms, and providing induction for new schools based on what has already been proven to work.



4.2 Resolve Licensing Strategically

Licensing inequity is a structural barrier that Phase needs to acknowledge as this has implications for new schools and MATS joining the RISE SW work. Schools joining the hub should be supported to audit their current Microsoft licensing position and understand what functionality is and is not available to them. Where agent creation and Copilot Studio access are priorities, the case for higher-tier licensing should be made to trust leadership as part of the Phase 3 onboarding process.

4.3 Develop a Shared Safeguarding and Data Governance Framework

As the hub scales, Phase 3 should develop a shared framework that addresses: what data can and cannot be shared with AI tools; consent requirements for any workflow involving student information; DPIA requirements as listed in the Browne Jacobson Pack and how to complete them; expectations around GDPR-compliant record-keeping when AI is used to generate or summarise documents; and guidance on acceptable AI interactions with students.

4.4 Widen the Evidence Base

Phase 2 evidence is strongest where groups had clear, pre-specified measures and consistent data collection methods, as in the Reducing Workload and Student Practice groups. Phase 3 should encourage all working parties to define their outcome measures at the outset, establish baselines, and use a consistent template for recording evidence. This will not only strengthen the hub's own knowledge base but position the RISE Hub to contribute credibly to the wider national evidence base on AI in education.

4.5 Reconsider Working Party Groups: Attend to Phase, Context and Equity

Phase 3 working party design should be informed by the contextual variations identified in Phase 2. KS1 and SEND contexts require specific attention: the evidence base here is thinner, and the tools as currently configured are less well-suited to these groups. Actively recruiting Phase 3 participants with expertise in these areas, and pairing them with colleagues who have strong AI literacy is more likely to generate useful evidence than expecting generic tools to adapt themselves. Similarly, secondary schools are underrepresented in the Phase 2 dataset. In some instances, working party leads challenged the group names and made suggestions for alternatives moving forward.



Data Protection and Legal Reflections

Phase 2 surfaced a consistent need across working parties for deeper training on data protection and the legal dimensions of AI use in schools. Following the steering committee's review of the Impact Report, a series of observations were identified to inform the design of Phase 3. In response, steering committee member Claire Archibald, Legal Director at Browne Jacobson provided reflections on how learnings from Phase 2 could be brought forward into the next phase. These reflections are presented in Table 1.0 below.

Table 1.0

On Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) the Leadership and Governance group identified the need for a DPIA. DPIAs for AI projects can be overwhelming, but in the same way that projects have a steep learning curve initially, the same can be said for DPIA work. Once one 'best in breed' DPIA examining AI risks is created, that can then be used as a template for others. The Browne Jacobson support pack contains such a DPIA template. AI can also be used to support data protection work, and use of a template DPIA to support drafting further DPIAs is an efficient way to do this work.
On lawful basis, the report identifies consent as the basis for workflows involving pupil data. However, it is worth querying whether consent is in fact the most appropriate basis in all cases. Consent may be required where personal data is being used to train. For personal data appearing in inputs or outputs, public task is likely to be a more suitable and proportionate lawful basis- particularly in an educational context where schools are carrying out statutory functions. Relying on consent unnecessarily creates compliance risks, including the right to withdraw.
On Subject Access Requests, the report raises unresolved questions around SAR implications of AI-generated records. This is a concern- where identifiable personal data is held in or processed by a tool, it would fall within scope of a SAR. However, it is important to note that the legal standard for responding to a SAR requires only reasonable and proportionate searches; schools are not obliged to conduct exhaustive searches of every AI interaction. This is an emerging area where more specific guidance on SARs is required, either as a standalone document or as additional wording within existing documents in the Browne Jacobson pack.
On staff concerns and confidence, cultural and professional resistance was a genuine barrier for several groups, particularly in the early stages, with some staff anxious about misinformation, over-reliance or data risks, and GDPR and intellectual property queries. The Browne Jacobson pack is specifically designed to address this- by setting clear parameters within which staff can use AI tools confidently, knowing they are operating within a legally sound framework. The aim is not to restrict use, but to give staff the confidence to proceed without fear of inadvertently getting something wrong.



Browne Jacobson Data Pack

Created by data protection experts at Browne Jacobson who understand and work with AI, the pack gives you clear, actionable guidance, tools, and templates. It helps you mitigate risks and demonstrate compliance with regulatory expectations, including the ICO, Ofsted and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

The pack takes you through the Browne Jacobson Six Step AI Governance Framework tailored specifically for schools and academy trusts, and includes guidance and templates on:

- Planning - Introduction to AI governance and creating your own AI principles statement
- Communications - Staff engagement plans, parent communications, and student engagement guidance
- Governance - AI Governance Framework and Acceptable Use Policies for both staff and students
- Risk Assessment - Understanding AI risks, DPIA templates and examples, and vendor due diligence guidance
- Controls - Lifecycle risk management, monitoring checklists, incident response plans, progress trackers, and decision-making flowcharts
- Training - Understanding staff training needs

Ultimately, our support packs are designed to empower you to deal with many of the issues facing schools and trusts, rather than always having to rely on legal advice.

Contact: Karen Rowe - Karen.Rowe@brownejacobson.com

Note: Schools and MATS joining the RISE SW Digital Skills and AI Hub will access this pack at a reduced cost as part of the membership offer. This information will be shared during the initial onboarding meeting.

Summary of AI Tools Used

Tool	Purpose	Notes on use
Microsoft Copilot	AI assistant for planning, writing, agent creation and data analysis	Primary platform across all 9 working parties; used within M365 tenancy for data protection
Copilot Agent Builder	Custom agents built within Copilot to automate specific tasks and workflows	Used by EYFS, Student Practice, Business Efficiencies, Leadership and Data Analytics groups
Copilot Studio	Advanced agent and workflow creation with broader integration capability	Trialled by Data Analytics group; paired with Power Automate for automated reporting
Microsoft Copilot Notebook	Structured workspace for analysing documents and generating consistent outputs	Used for writing assessment, data review, maths intervention planning and policy review
Power Automate	Workflow automation to trigger tasks and reporting without manual input	Combined with Copilot Studio by Data Analytics group; ~30 mins saved per week on reporting
ChatGPT	Open-ended content generation, lesson planning and medium-term planning sequences	Rated most flexible alongside Copilot; preferred by some for planning idea generation
TeachMate AI	Menu-driven resource creation using structured education-focused proformas	Used by Curriculum Content and Reducing Workload groups; popular with early career teachers
Microsoft Reading Coach	Automated reading fluency feedback and comprehension tracking within Teams	Used by Assessment group; tracked words per minute and accuracy over a half term
Fruitify.AI	AI-powered extended writing assessment and feedback for secondary cohorts	Trialled in secondary; ~20% grade improvement (Gr 4→6) following AI-supported redrafting

NotebookLM	Document analysis and source-grounded question and answer	Used by EYFS and Leadership groups for summarisation and structured research tasks
VoiceFlow	Conversational AI workflow builder for voice and chat interactions	Used by EYFS group to support oracy-focused agent design and interaction flows
Accelerated Reader	Reading assessment and quiz platform tracking books read and comprehension	Used as quantitative measure by Student Practice group; reading volume increased 2-3x
Common Sense Education	Digital citizenship and AI literacy curriculum resources	Used by Curriculum Content group for explicit teaching of safe and responsible AI use
Scottish AI Alliance	AI ethics and awareness resources for classroom use	Used alongside Common Sense Education for UKS2 AI literacy lessons
Arbor AI	MIS-integrated AI for school data and reporting	Explored by Leadership and Governance group for student data workflows
Google Gemini	General-purpose AI assistant for drafting and analysis	Used by Leadership group; found capable but external data-sharing policy limits student data use
Claude	AI assistant for drafting, analysis and complex reasoning tasks	Used by Reducing Workload and Leadership groups alongside Copilot and ChatGPT



References

Books

Anderson, M. and Lewis, O (2025) The EdTech Playbook. John Catt Educational.

Knight, L. (2025) A Little Guide for Teachers: Generative AI in the Classroom. Sage.

Government and Policy Documents

Department for Education (2023) Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education. Policy paper. London: Department for Education. Published 29 March 2023, last updated

Department for Education (2025) Generative AI: Product Safety Expectations. Guidance. London: Department for Education. Published 22 January 2025. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-ai-product-safety-standards/generative-ai-product-safety-standards>

Department for Education (2025) Using AI in Education Settings: Support Materials. Guidance.

Anderson, M. and Carson, J. (2025) Embedding AI in Education: A Strategic Review of Practice at Woodland Academy Trust. [Impact report.] Bexley: Woodland Academy Available: <https://www.woodlandacademytrust.co.uk/assets/Woodland-Academy-Trust-AI-Impact-Report-2025-pdf.pdf>

Woodland Academy Trust et al. (2024) Pathfinding Artificial Intelligence Report: A 10-Point Guidance Framework for AI in Schools. [Collaborative report by 23 Multi-Academy Trusts.] Published 18 September 2024. Available at: <https://www.woodlandacademytrust.co.uk/learning-and-innovation/artificial-intelligence/artificial-intelligence-report/> [Accessed 20 March 2026].

McGowan, B. (2026) Assessment, Marking and Feedback: Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study. RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub Working Party Report. Southwest England: RISE Hub.

Hayward, K. (2026) Business Efficiencies: Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study. RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub Working Party Report. Southwest England: RISE Hub.

Druce, A. (2026) Curriculum Content: Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study. RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub Working Party Report. Southwest England: RISE Hub.

Kimber, M. (2026) Data Analytics: Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study. RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub Working Party Report. Southwest England: RISE Hub.

James, H. (2026) Early Years and Oracy: Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study. RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub Working Party Report. Southwest England: RISE Hub.

Lees, A. (2026) Leadership and Governance: Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study. RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub Working Party Report. Southwest England: RISE Hub.



Bradley, R. (2026) Reducing Workload Working Party 3: Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study. RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub Working Party Report. Southwest England: RISE Hub.

Frances, T. (2026) Student Practice, Attainment and Attendance: Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study. RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub Working Party Report. Southwest England: RISE Hub.

Common Sense Education (2025) Digital Citizenship and AI Literacy Curriculum Resources. [Online.] Available at: <https://www.commonsense.org/education>

Scottish AI Alliance (2024) AI for Schools: Resources and Guidance. Available at: <https://www.scottishai.com>

Voice 21 (2024) The Oracy Framework. London: Voice 21. Available at: <https://voice21.org/oracyframework>

Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) (2021) Feedback: Evidence Review. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/feedback>

Rutherford, A. (2026) SEND & Adaptive Teaching: Sharing Emerging Practice Case Study. RISE Digital Skills and AI Hub Working Party Report. Southwest England: RISE Hub.





Phase 3 Onboarding Timeline

Register your interest to join the RISE SW Digital Skills & AI Hub and schedule a meeting with a member of the Steering committee.	30th April 2026
Sign up by completing the Terms of Reference form. This commits to membership to include: • Identify an AI Lead at the MAT/School to handle liaison with the Hub work. • Identify 8-10 staff who will become part of the AI Accelerator group in your MAT/School. • Access the Browne Jacobson DPIA pack • Set up on the AI Quality Mark • Select a training date for Accelerator Group to attend Note: For MATS 8-10 staff is the number recommended. For schools, this number reduces to 3-5 depending on size and capacity.	30th May 2026
Accelerator Group attend 3.5 hour training session and meet Working Party Leads Note: Staff only need to attend ONE of the dates	Date 1: 11th June 2026 Date 2: 9th July 2026
Assign Accelerator Group members to a working party and agree scope of the work	13th July 2026
Phase 3 Working Parties Collaborations commence • 3 x testing windows • 1 x 1 hour monthly working party meeting • 1-day conference March 2027 • Review Phase 3 • Phase 4 (Sept 2027)	w/c 7th September 2026 Phase 3 runs from Sept 2026 to March 2027



Joining the Hub

We welcome schools, and educators to join the Hub and play an active role in shaping the future of digital skills and AI in education

- Attend our launch and progress meetings to connect with regional teams and shape activities.
 - Participate in working parties as a Digital or AI Champion.
 - Share your experiences through case studies and collaborative projects.
- Contact us to express your interest and find out how you can contribute to the Hub's mission.

Get Involved: The Process

Whether you are a school leader, educator, partner organisation, or stakeholder, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Joining the hub is free, but has a commitment to resourcing and staff time to contribute to the work of the hub.

- Provide from across the organisation key members of staff to be actively engaged in testing, evaluating and sharing their findings in the use of AI empowered digital tools.
- Share and showcase to other members of the hub through working party collaboration, case study development and conference speaking.
- A commitment to using AI safely and ethically and adopting the principles set out in clear policies that align with those set out in the AI Data Compliance.
- To allow and guarantee staff time to be involved in this work and to commit to them undertaking targeted training around the use of AI as part of the onboarding process into the work of the hub. Again, there is a small and shared cost for this training.
- To fund any software licencing and deployment of the Digital tools and AI products to allow staff to fully contribute to the work of the hub.

Visit our website to fill out and submit your request here →

