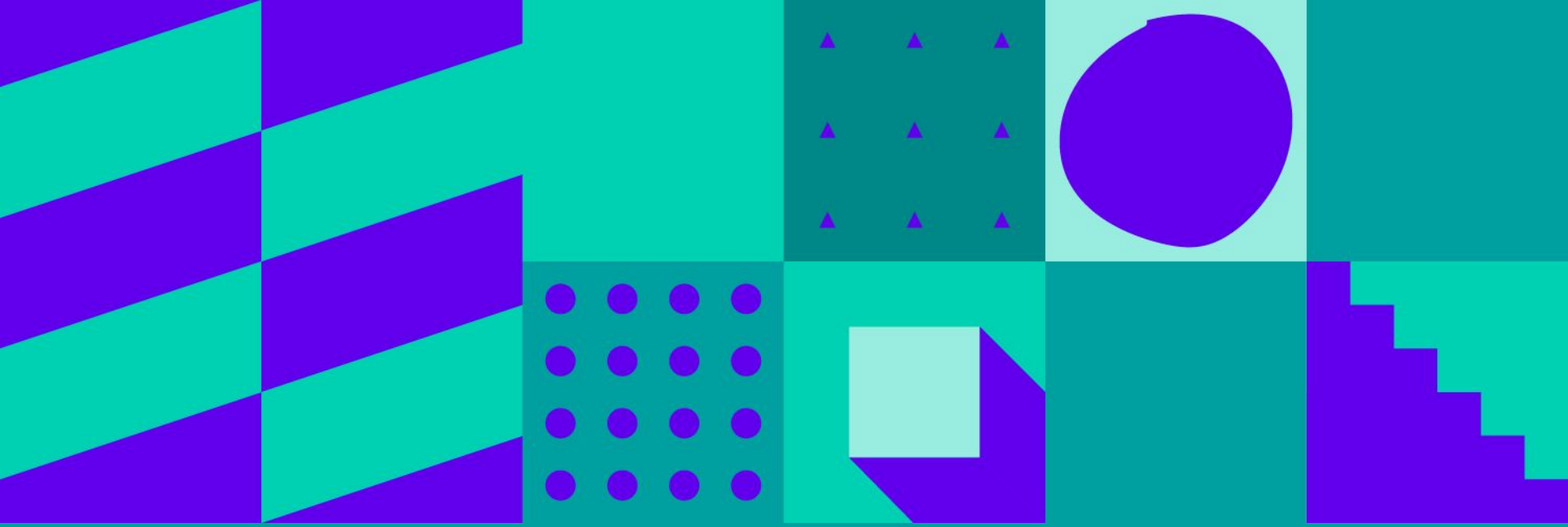


Generative AI in Education

Have your say: Engagement Report

Generative AI in Education

Have your say: Student Engagement Report

January 2026

Authors: Tim Davies and Jeni Tennison (Connected by Data)

Commissioned by the Department for Education as input to the January 2026 international summit on generative AI in education.

Thank you to all the students, teachers, school leaders and facilitators who took part in Generative AI in Education: Have your Say.

CONNECTED BY DATA

Generative AI in Education – Have Your Say

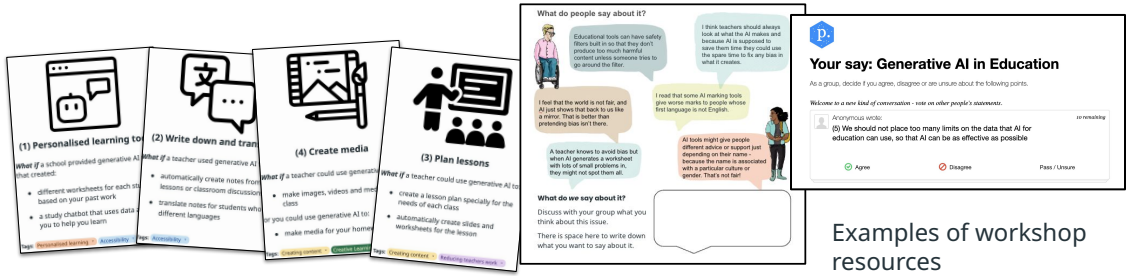
- Executive summary
- Background & method
- Evidence & analysis
  - Voting clusters
  - Top tools
  - Thematic analysis
- Conclusions and future opportunities

Executive Summary

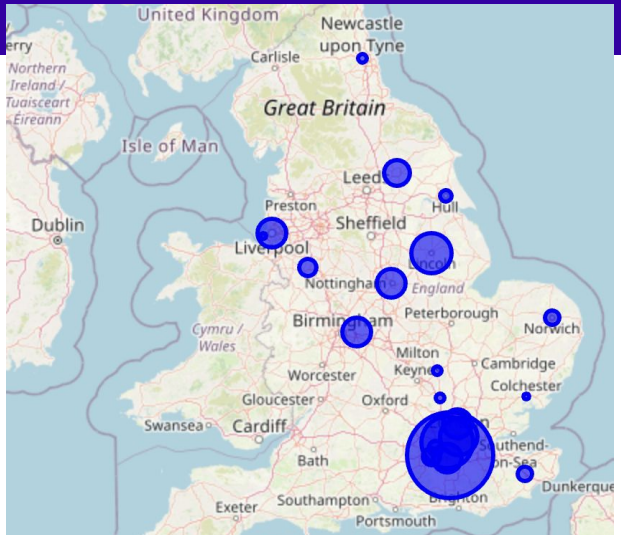
Executive summary: what & who

Between 1st November and 15th December 2025, over 1000 students shared their views through a distributed dialogue on how schools, government and AI firms should be approaching the use of generative AI in education.

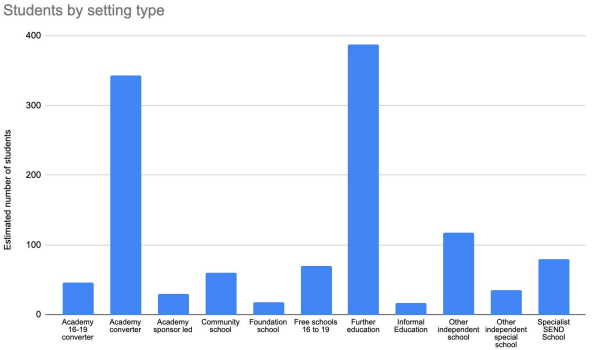
- **23 settings:** across England, Year 6 - Year 13, and representing a range of urban and rural schools and school types. Over 50 individual workshop sessions.
- **1 or 2 hour deliberative workshop sessions:** learning about AI in education, discussing issues and providing feedback.
- **Balanced workshop materials** exploring benefits and problems of AI in education, supporting students to develop their own views.



Examples of workshop resources



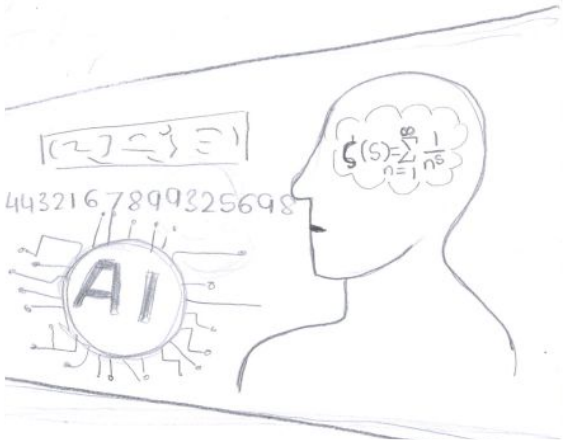
Data on participating settings: ⬆️ location, ⬇️ type and number of students engaged



Executive summary: method

Students were asked to:

- **respond to a set of statements** about the use of generative AI in education, through a pol.is platform, starting with 10 statements developed with the UK Department for Education (DfE), with new statements from students added over time
- **discuss benefits and problems of different AI in education tools** and vote on their top and bottom tools
- **generate creative feedback** reflecting their hopes and fears about the use of generative AI in education



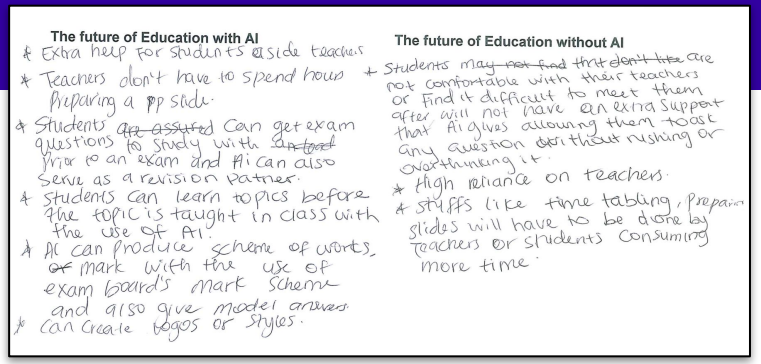
Headline findings are based on patterns of responses to the statements alongside themes arising from creative feedback and session observations.

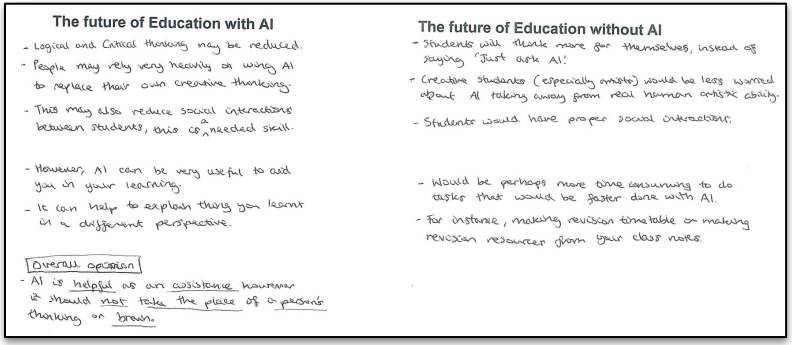
Supporting images come from worksheets and creative feedback activities, sharing student feedback in their own words.

Executive summary: findings

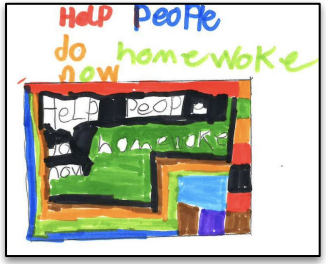
Students expressed detailed, nuanced and critical views on how generative AI could or should be used in education, emphasising:

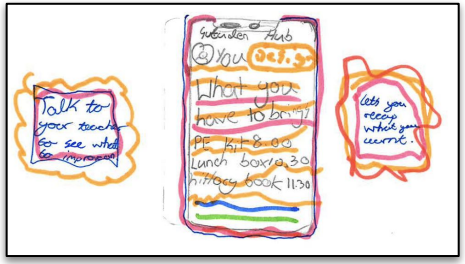
- the importance of the existing **student-teacher relationship**
- specific uses of AI to enhance learning by:
  - **making lessons more engaging**
  - providing more **personalised pathways**
  - supporting **self-directed learning**
- **preparing students** to navigate a future where AI is ubiquitous

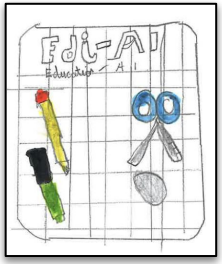




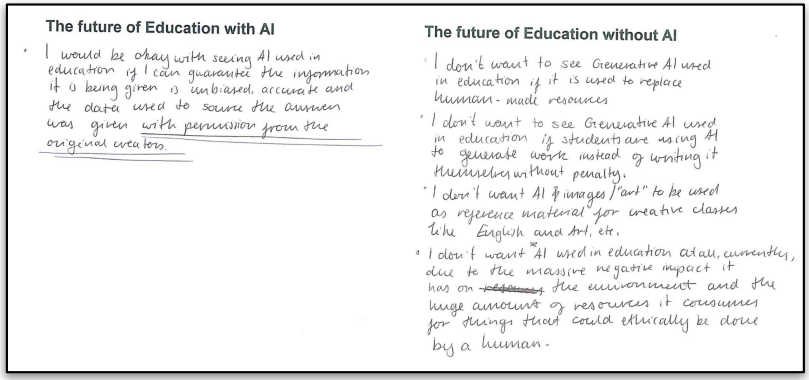
Student feedback: ⬆️Year 13 and education app ideas: ⬇️Year 6







Executive summary: findings



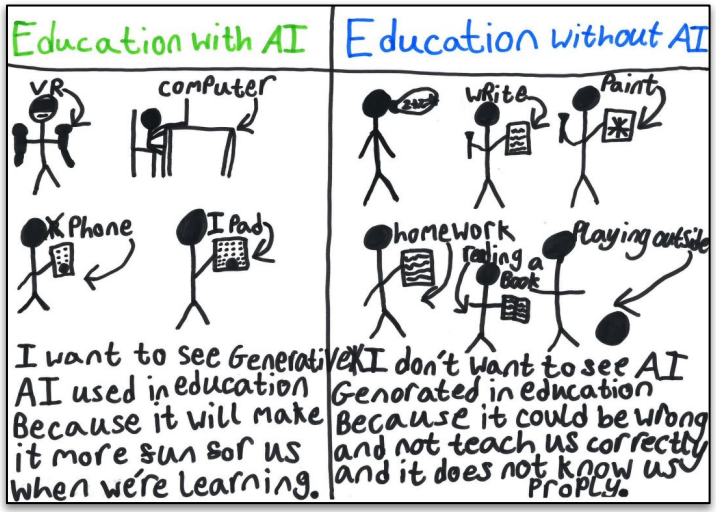
The future of Education with AI

- I would be okay with seeing AI used in education if I can guarantee the information it is being given is unbiased, accurate and the data used to source the answers was given with permission from the original creators.

The future of Education without AI

- I don't want to see Generative AI used in education if it is used to replace human-made resources
- I don't want to see Generative AI used in education if students are using AI to generate work instead of writing it themselves without penalty.
- I don't want AI & images "art" to be used as reference material for creative classes like English and Art, etc.
- I don't want AI used in education at all, currently, due to the massive negative impact it has on ~~[illegible]~~ the environment and the huge amount of resources it consumes for things that could ethically be done by a human.

Student feedback: ⬆️Year 12/13 and ⬇️Year 6



Students want AI tools to be checked for safety, accuracy and fairness before they are used in the classroom.

There was near unanimous support for the statement:

> *"AI tools for education should be officially checked and approved as safe, accurate and unbiased before they can be used, even if that means it takes longer for the latest models to be used in schools."*

Students raised concerns about AI tools:

- being **inaccurate** and giving false information
- being too quick to offer **easy answers**, rather encouraging a process of learning

Executive summary: findings

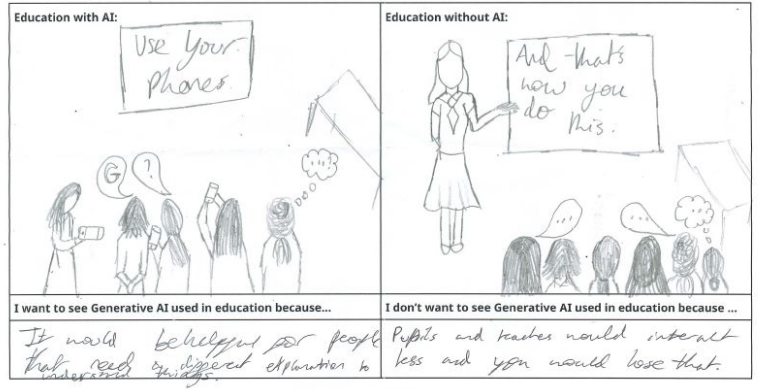
Students strongly value personal attention from their teachers and social interaction in the classroom with peers. They are concerned that AI could disrupt this.

Students prefer **human teachers and human markers**, even if AI might be faster or fairer.

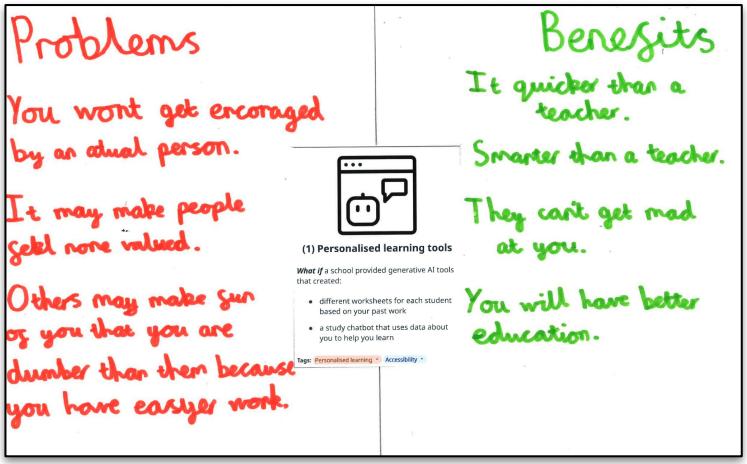
Some felt AI could:

- support **factual learning** in subjects with right and wrong answers
- **help struggling students** when teachers do not have capacity to provide personalised help

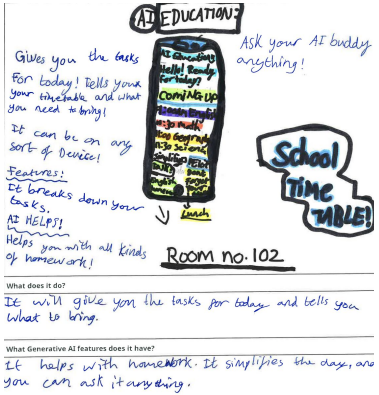
Some younger students (Year 6) suggested AI tools might be smarter than their teachers, or expressed that "AI can't get mad at you", suggesting some may prefer feedback delivered through AI.



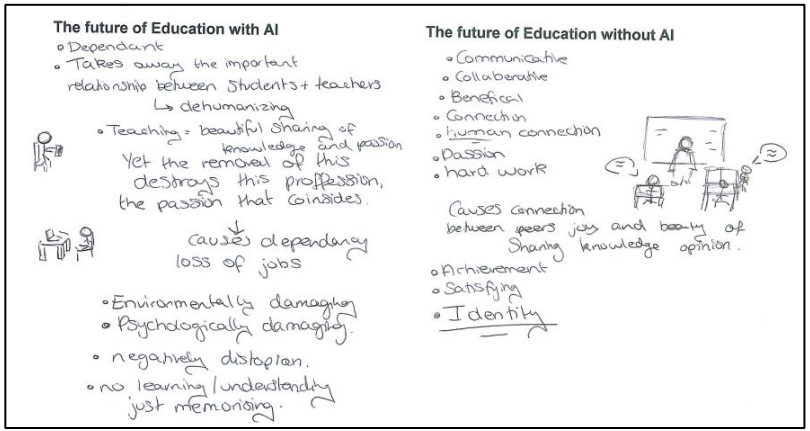
Student feedback: ⬆️Year 9 and ⬇️Year 6



Executive summary: findings



Student feedback: ⬆️Year 6 and ⬇️Year 12/13



Students are split on whether AI use should be mandatory. 50% of groups disagreed (39% agreed, 10% unsure) that:

> *"Sometimes students will have to use AI in the classroom, whether they want to or not"*

Groups in favour of a requirement to use AI want it to be **accurate** and want AI tools to support students to clearly **tell their teachers when they have completed work using AI**.

Some students expressed concerns about the **environmental impacts** of AI, although this was not widely considered to be a barrier to exploring the use of AI in education.

A number expressed strong opposition to **use of AI for creative work**.

Executive summary: findings

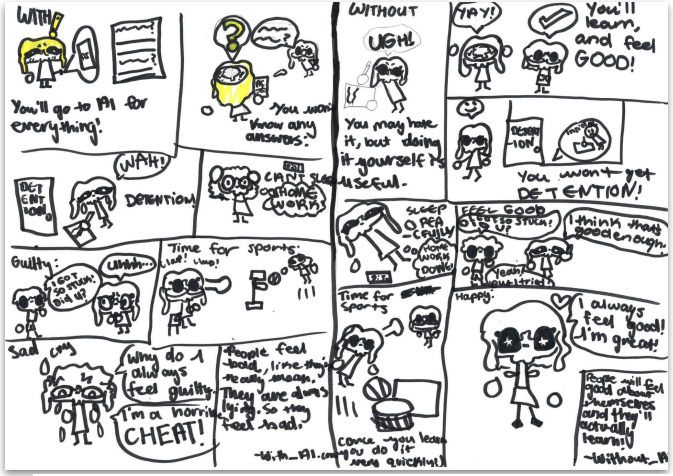
Students are concerned about the mental health impacts of AI. They do not want AI tools to be involved in personal, emotional and social support. A clear majority of groups agreed that:

> *"AI tutors should never be able to have conversations with pupils about personal issues, like friendships or family problems."*

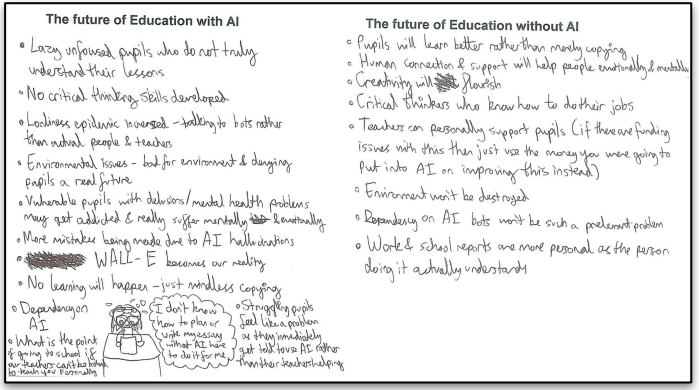
They opposed AI tools pretending to have feelings, though some suggested it could help if AI tools offered **light encouragement**.

Students were generally in favour of the statement that:

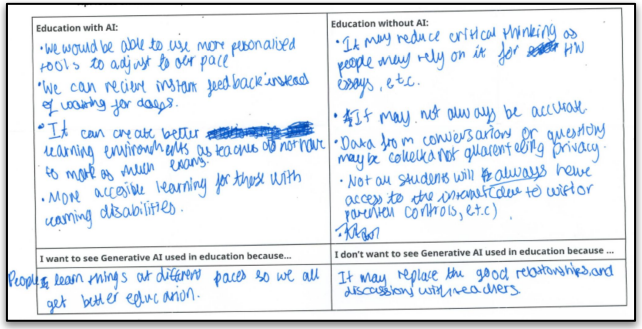
> *"Children from a young age should be educated on how to use AI most effectively and safely in their learning"*



Student feedback: ⬆️Year 6 and ⬇️Year 12/13

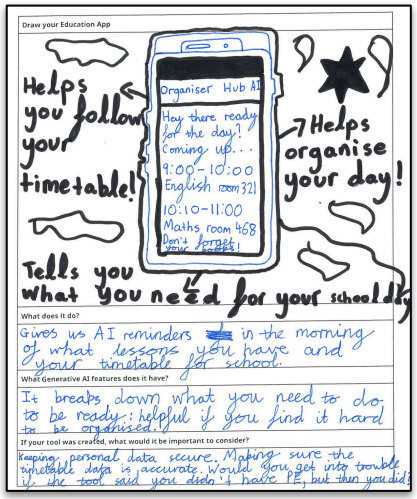


Executive summary: findings



Education with AI:	Education without AI:
• We would be able to use more personalised tools to adjust to our pace • We can receive instant feedback instead of waiting for days. • It can create better learning environments as teachers do not have to mark as much exams • More accesible learning for those with learning disabilities.	• It may reduce critical thinking as people may rely on it for HW essays, etc. • It may not always be accurate • Data from conversations or questions may be collected not guaranteeing privacy • Not all students will always have access to the internet (due to wifi or parental controls, etc.)
I want to see Generative AI used in education because...	**I don't want to see Generative AI used in education because ...**
People learn things at different paces so we all get better education.	It may replace the good relationships and discussions with teachers

Student feedback: ⬆️Year 9 and ⬇️Year 6



Further work is needed to understand student views on the use of their data within AI. A majority opposed the statement:

> *"We should not place too many limits on the data that AI for education can use, so that AI can be as effective as possible"*

However, there was a degree of uncertainty on the statement:

> *"AI needs a lot of data to be effective. We should wait until all the privacy and data protection issues are sorted out before we start to use it in education"*

Students might not fully understand the kinds of data that personalised learning through AI uses. We observed students interpreting personal data as details such as name and address, rather than examples of past work and marks.

Some students also expressed concerns that personalised learning would lead to **feeling judged by AI**, or to a **loss of opportunities for peer-support** when everyone is given different tasks.

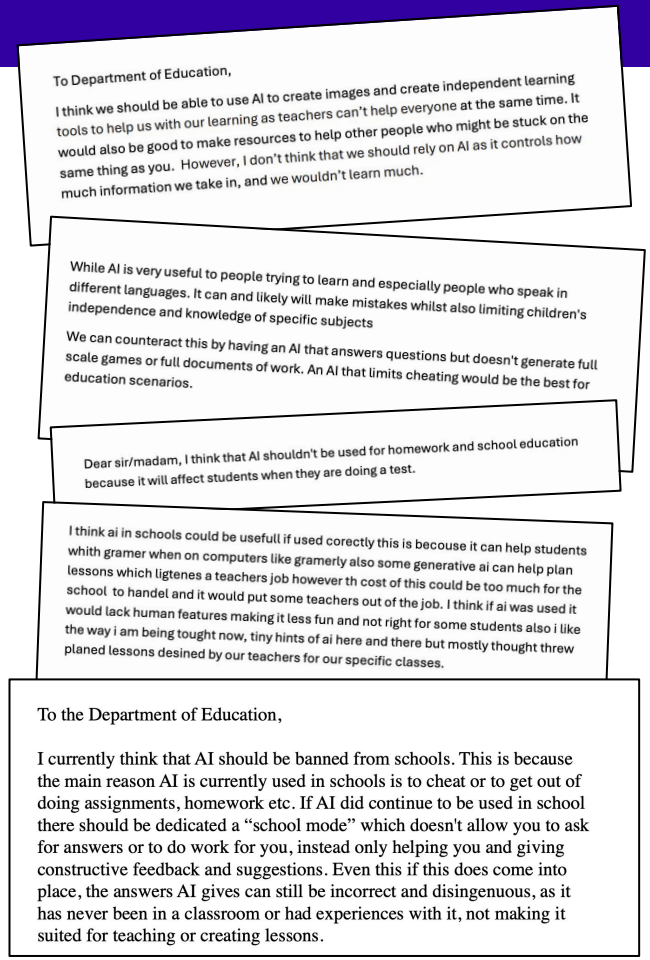
Executive summary: findings

Students suggested that AI for education needs a 'school mode', adequate restrictions, and tightly defined scope of use. Students strongly preferred a focus on safe educational AI tools that can support independent learning or personalised consolidation of learning.

A notable minority called for a **ban or very limited AI use** in education due to ethical concerns, and feeling AI is bad for learning. Others suggested ways of **mitigating risks** such as:

- AI tools not giving direct answers but encouraging step-by-step learning
- AI tools that express uncertainty
- restricting the use of AI for homework
- daily time-limits or quotas on AI use

Others highlighted **customising the tone of voice** in AI for education; **co-designing applications** with student inputs; and **involving students in the assurance** of educational AI tools.



Student feedback: Year 9

Executive summary: recommendations

For generative AI to play a positive role in education, it is vital that AI developers, policy makers, school leaders and individual teachers engage in ongoing dialogue with students, and listen to their ideas and concerns.

- **Take the time to get generative AI in education right.** Students want assurance that AI is accurate, and that bias and safety risks of AI are well addressed *before* it is deployed in the classroom. Focus on limited classroom and homework uses of AI, rather than AI everywhere.
- **Embed a role for students in decision-making on AI.** AI for education should be co-designed with student input. Support should be available for teachers and education leaders to have ongoing and informed dialogue with students about shared expectations around AI in education. The 'workshop in a box' demonstrates the feasibility and value of a deliberative approach.
- **Build student agency in a world of AI.** Young people hold a diversity of attitudes towards AI and its future use. Support students to learn about the pros and cons of particular uses of AI, and to make informed individual and collective choices about when and how they engage with it.

Background & method

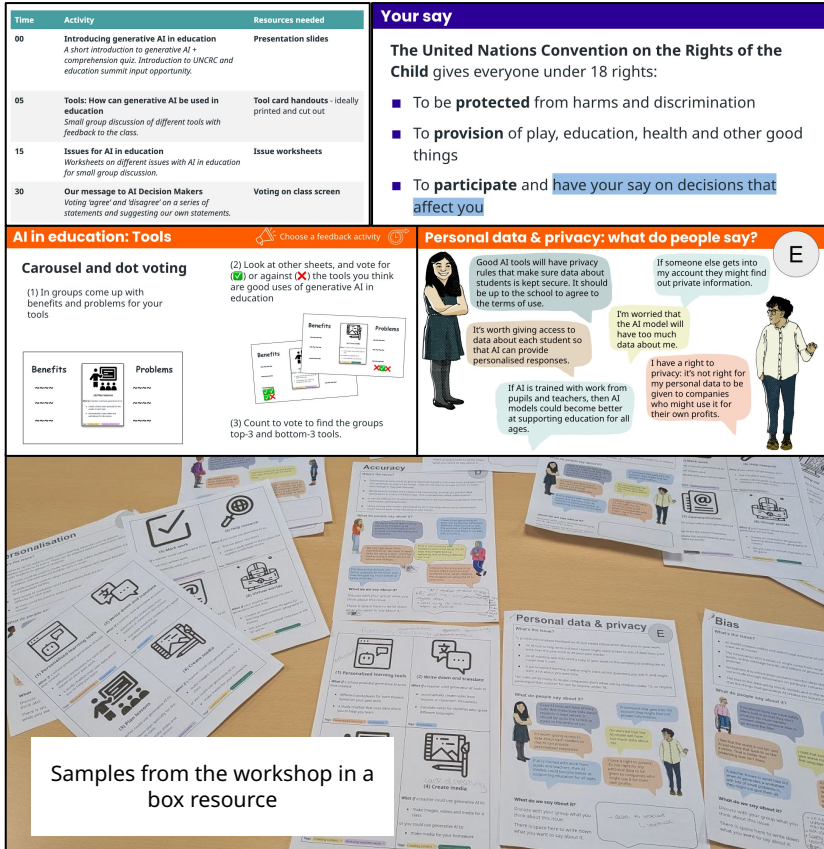
Toolkit design: a distributed dialogue

We organised a **distributed dialogue on generative AI in Education**. In a distributed dialogue, self-organised groups use common materials to hold informed deliberation on a topic. Their findings and feedback is collated centrally.

The '**workshop in a box**' materials were developed with expert input to include:

- Slides and a quiz giving a **brief introduction to AI** including the history of AI and particular features of generative AI.
- 12 cards describing **uses of generative AI in education** based on real-world examples.
- 8 worksheets introducing **issues with AI in education** with examples of different viewpoints drawn from the literature.
- An initial set of **statements about generative AI** in education (added to over the project) inviting groups to agree or disagree.
- Optional **creative feedback activities** for groups to express views on generative AI in education

The dialogue was commissioned by the Department for Education to provide inputs to an international summit on generative AI in education.



Samples from the workshop in a box resource

Data collection and analysis

52	49	869	16.40
people voted	people grouped	votes were cast	votes per voter on average

All groups took part in a statement voting feedback activity, via the live pol.is platform [1].

Groups saw pre-prepared statements in a random order and were asked to vote with a rough consensus approach to determine group agreement or disagreement with the statements, using the 'unsure' response where there wasn't a clear majority view. Groups could also submit new statements. These were reviewed weekly, and statements that reflected themes or positions not already covered were added. There were 24 statements by the end of the process.

Pol.is creates distinct clusters of respondents and statements based on (a) aggregating together groups that responded in similar ways to statements; (b) separating out groups that responded distinctly. We produced short cluster descriptions based on analysis of statements in each cluster and refined these with supporting qualitative feedback from students.

[1]: One setting facing technical issues recorded votes on paper, and sent these to be entered by the project team. Another setting chose to gather individual student responses via a Google Form.

56% of settings provided feedback for the optional top tools activity. After discussing potential AI in education tools, groups were invited to identify their top and bottom 3 tools based on the balance between benefits and problems.

A form allowed submission of top and bottom 3 choices, along with an optional explanation of the reasons for the choice. Simple counts of how many times a tool appeared in the top and bottom 3 were used to analyse feedback, supported by qualitative review of reasons given.

30% of settings uploaded scans of student work from optional creative expressions worksheets. Inputs included drawings; typed and handwritten letters to the Department for Education; and hand drawn and computer-generated application designs.

Each was transcribed or described. Individual statements were extracted and then open coded for sentiment about AI (positive or negative), for themes, and for recommendations made (directly or implied). Coding was carried out by a single coder, with a cross-check from a colleague. Codes have been used to retrieve qualitative insights to support thematic analysis, rather than to report on prevalence of themes.

Recruitment & participation

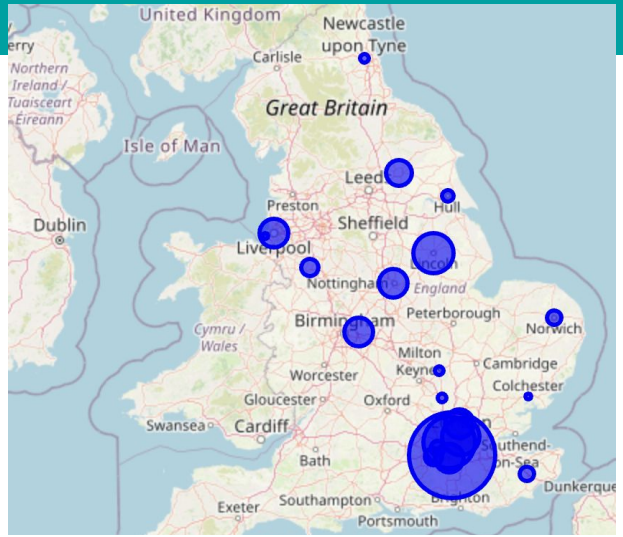
6 weeks	23 settings Schools, colleges and community workshops	> 50 workshops	> 1089 students

The toolkit was released on 3rd November 2025 and promoted by a Department for Education mailing, and through social media posts. 141 individuals representing 137 educational settings registered to access the toolkit, and 23 ran workshop sessions providing feedback before the deadline of 15th December. Most took place in schools, either as part of existing timetabled lessons, or through off-timetable sessions.

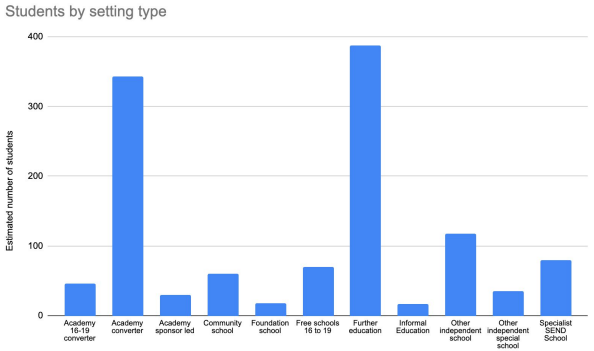
To limit the data collection burden on participating groups, we collected basic demographics about each setting. We asked for details of the year groups taking part in each workshop and the number of participants in each session (which was not always provided). We estimate the results represent the involvement of at least 1089 students.

All but one of the settings participating were in an Urban area. Most students came from London and the South East, but we had representation from across England and a wide range of types of educational establishment, including state and independent schools, with an estimated 80 students participating from a specialist SEND school.

The large number of responses from further education incorporates one setting that invited students to individually vote on statements through an online survey (separate from the pol.is voting system), accounting for 346 students. These responses are not directly included within the pol.is voting analysis (though they have been used to cross-check pol.is response validity). The pol.is voting reflects a balance of year groups.



Data on participating settings: ⬆️ location, ⬇️ type and number of students engaged



Limitations

The distributed dialogue approach can reach a larger group of participants than direct delivery of participatory workshops. However, this comes with compromises:

- **There is variation in session delivery.** Facilitator feedback highlighted challenges covering all material in hour-long sessions, and some teachers reported adapting materials for their group. This can be a strength, but also means that teacher's own views may skew conversations in some settings.

- **We have limited demographic information.** To limit the data collection burden on participating groups, we collected only basic demographics about each setting. Whilst we can link voting responses to school demographics, we were not always able to link qualitative and quantitative responses to particular individual workshop sessions when a setting had run multiple workshops (e.g. with different year groups).

- **We used pol.is to gather group rather than individual responses.** Recognising that not all groups had access to individual devices, and working within the account limits on the Policy Lab pol.is platform, we asked groups to vote on their response to each statement, and take the majority view. This can lead to minority views on each question being underrepresented, and may affect some of the clustering of statements, particularly given a relatively low overall sample size. One setting invited individual students to respond to 10 starting statements in a Google Form, yielding 346 individual votes. Comparing agree/disagree positions to pol.is votes reveals that individual votes tightly track group votes on statements with high consensus, but there is greater variation in individual voting on lower consensus statements.

These limitations have been accounted for in how data is presented, focussing on highlighting general trends and themes, rather than presenting a representative statistical account of student views.

Evidence & analysis

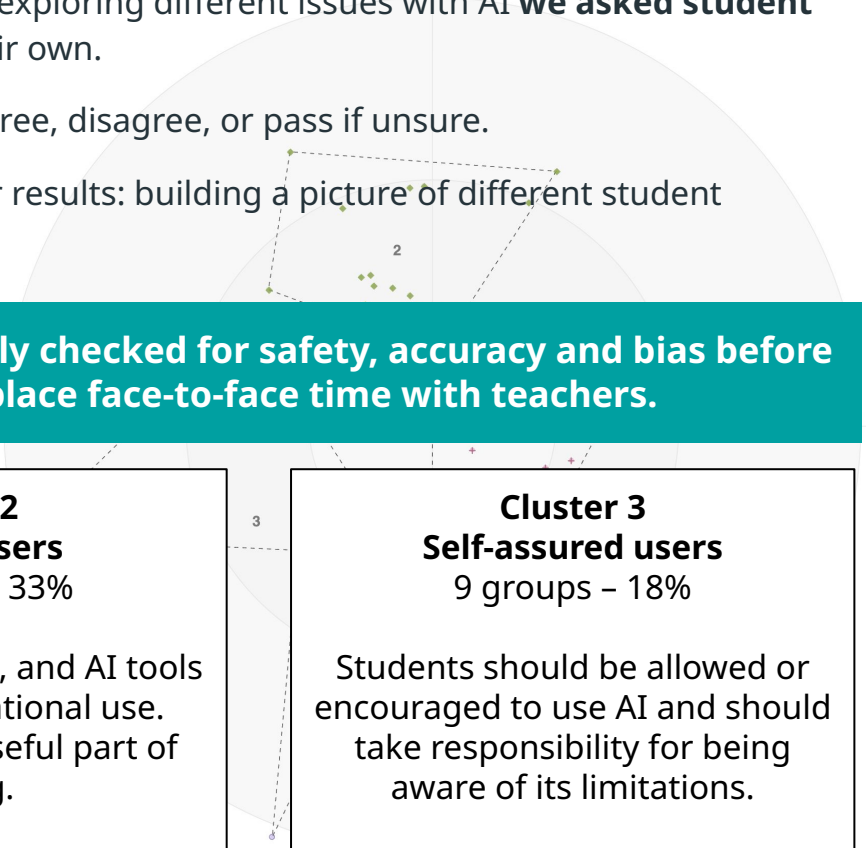
Voting & clusters

Voting & clusters

After learning about potential tools for AI in education, and exploring different issues with AI **we asked student groups to vote on a set of statements**, and to suggest their own.

Statements were shown in a random order. Groups could agree, disagree, or pass if unsure.

We used the pol.is platform to record responses, and cluster results: building a picture of different student perspectives on AI in education.



Almost everyone agreed that **AI tools should be officially checked for safety, accuracy and bias before deployment in education** and that **AI should never replace face-to-face time with teachers.**

Cluster 1
AI sceptics
24 groups – 49%

AI use should not be compulsory. There should be restrictions on data sharing with AI, and on where AI is used.

Cluster 2
Trusting users
16 groups – 33%

AI must be accurate, and AI tools tailored for educational use. Then it can be a useful part of learning.

Cluster 3
Self-assured users
9 groups – 18%

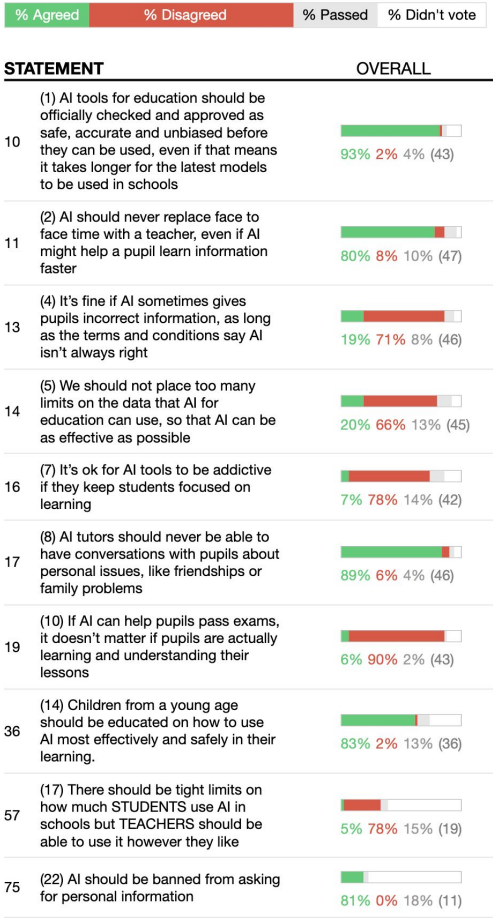
Students should be allowed or encouraged to use AI and should take responsibility for being aware of its limitations.

Consensus statements

10 voting statements saw high levels of consensus.

- 93% of groups agree that *"AI tools for education should be officially checked and approved as safe, accurate and unbiased before they can be used, even if that means it takes longer for the latest models to be used in schools"*
- 89% of groups agree that AI tutors should not be able to have conversations with pupils about personal issues.
- 83% of groups believe children from a young age should be educated on how to use AI most effectively and safely in their learning.
- 80% of groups agree that *"AI should never replace face to face time with a teacher, even if AI might help a pupil learn information faster"*
- 66% of groups *rejected* the idea of allowing AI tools unlimited access to education data

Note: statements were presented to groups in random order, but higher numbered statements were introduced later in the feedback period, so will have been seen by fewer groups.



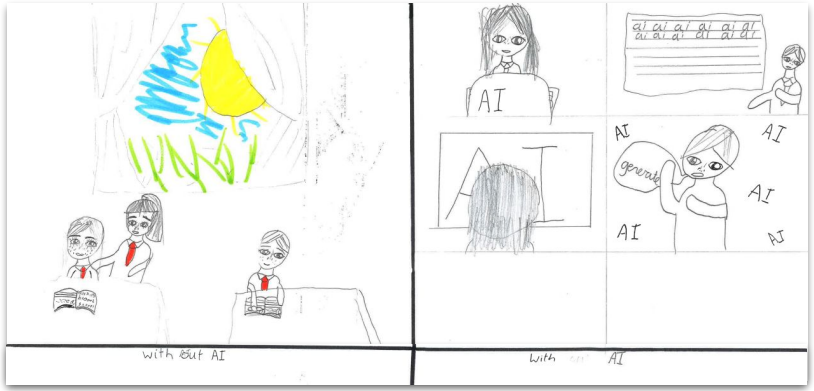
Cluster 1: AI sceptics (24 groups – 49%)

This cluster voted unanimously that AI tools for education:

- must be proven safe, accurate and unbiased before use
- must not use ‘addictive’ mechanics to maintain engagement
- should have clear limits on the data they use
- should not be made mandatory in the classroom

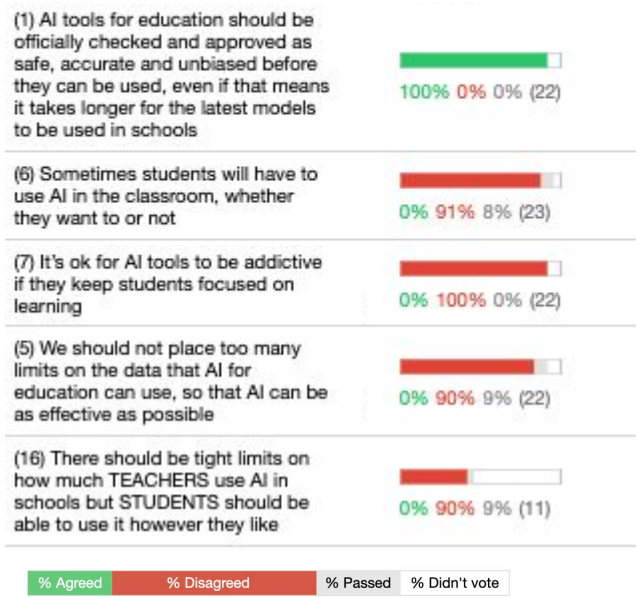
They were supportive of limits on student use of AI.

This reflects student concerns about the accuracy of AI systems, fears about safety and data protection, and a sense that AI might disrupt important student-teacher relationships.



Education with and without AI. Creative Feedback, Year 6 student, Primary Academy.

Defining statements
Statements which make this group unique, by their votes:



Cluster 2: Trusting users (16 groups – 33%)

This cluster voted unanimously that:

- sometimes AI use could be mandatory in class
- it is not ok for AI to give pupils incorrect information

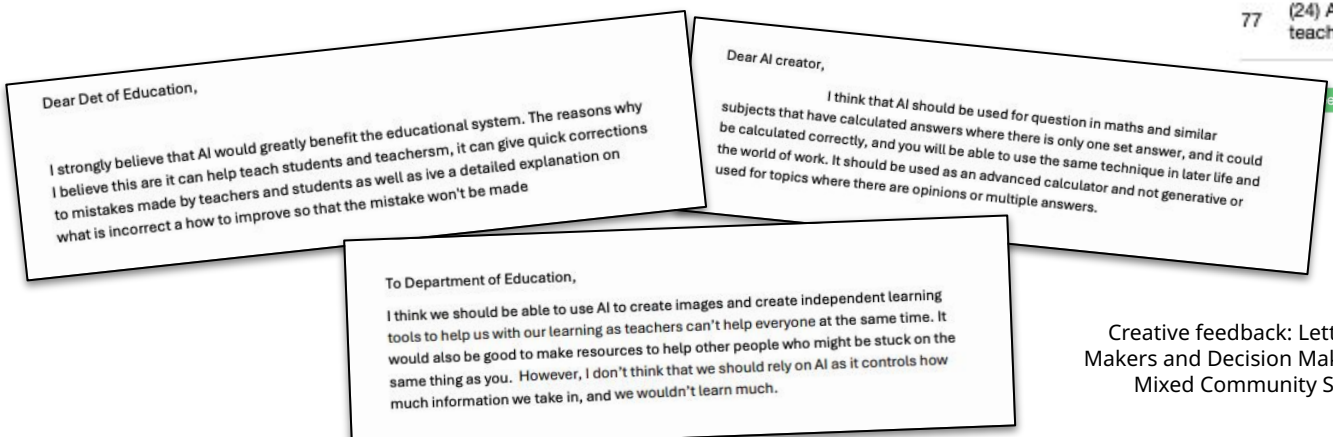
There was strong support in this cluster to schools to have AI systems that students can use independently to support their learning, and for the idea that AI tools should support students in being accountable for their AI use.

This group either assume that AI tools are already accurate and safe, or are focussed on targeted use of AI to support particular aspects of learning.

Defining statements
Statements which make this group unique, by their votes:

15	(6) Sometimes students will have to use AI in the classroom, whether they want to or not	93% 0% 6% (16)
59	(19) Students should tell teachers when their work has been made or supported with AI - and the AI tools should help them do this.	100% 0% 0% (6)
34	(12) Schools should have AI systems that students can use independently to support their learning	83% 16% 0% (12)
13	(4) It's fine if AI sometimes gives pupils incorrect information, as long as the terms and conditions say AI isn't always right	0% 93% 6% (15)
77	(24) AI should be monitored by teachers	0% 100% 0% (1)

ed | % Disagreed | % Passed | % Didn't vote



Dear Det of Education,

I strongly believe that AI would greatly benefit the educational system. The reasons why I believe this are it can help teach students and teachersm, it can give quick corrections to mistakes made by teachers and students as well as ive a detailed explanation on what is incorrect a how to improve so that the mistake won't be made

Dear AI creator,

I think that AI should be used for question in maths and similar subjects that have calculated answers where there is only one set answer, and it could be calculated correctly, and you will be able to use the same technique in later life and the world of work. It should be used as an advanced calculator and not generative or used for topics where there are opinions or multiple answers.

To Department of Education,

I think we should be able to use AI to create images and create independent learning tools to help us with our learning as teachers can't help everyone at the same time. It would also be good to make resources to help other people who might be stuck on the same thing as you. However, I don't think that we should rely on AI as it controls how much information we take in, and we wouldn't learn much.

Creative feedback: Letters to AI Makers and Decision Makers. Year 9, Mixed Community School.

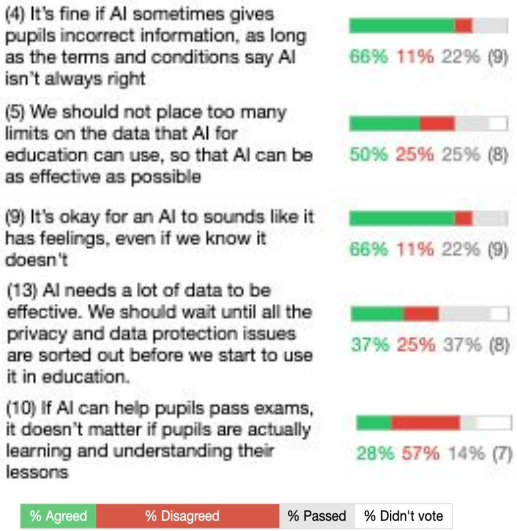
Cluster 3: Self-assured users (9 groups – 18%)

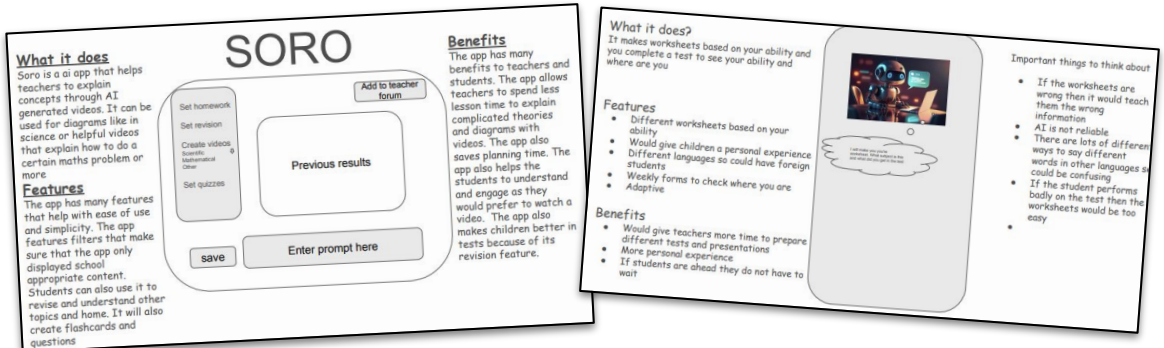
This is a small cluster, with few unanimous defining statements. However:

- it is the only cluster where a majority agree it is ok to AI to give incorrect answers, and for AI to sounds like it has feelings
- it is the only cluster to dismiss environmental concerns
- it is the cluster most likely to be positive about AI image generation
- it is the cluster most likely to object to requirements that students should tell teachers when they've used generative AI, and to be comfortable with AI 'teaching to the test'

This cluster included a higher representation of independent schools. It may represent a group of students more assured of their own ability, or the ability of their teachers to support them to navigate the use of current AI systems well.

Selected statements
Statements on which this cluster varies.

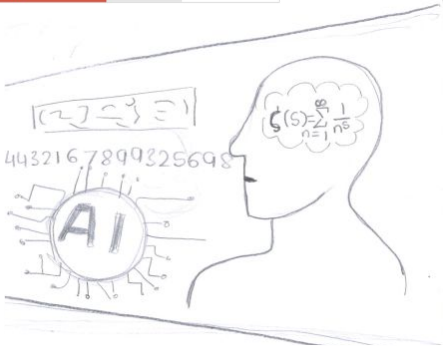




Creative feedback

⬅️ App designs for AI in education. Year 6 - 8. Mixed independent school.

Visions of AI. Year 9 Mixed Community School □



Suggested statements

Around 50 additional statements were submitted by participating groups. 14 were edited and included for future groups to vote on. A number were duplicates. Other statements suggested included:

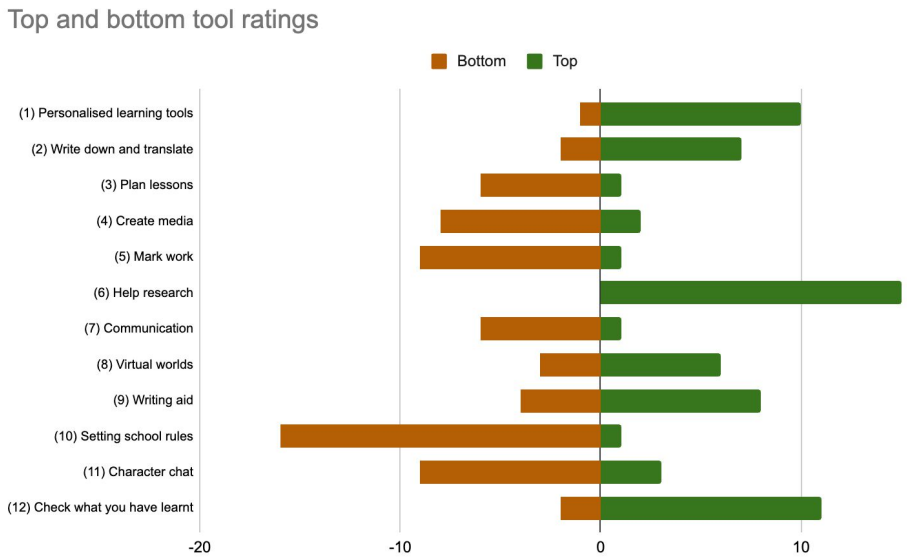
- Students should be able to use AI to help them get started on work, but should have to tell the teacher how they have used it.
- It would be better to have an AI tool set a lesson if your teacher is off, rather than having a substitute teacher.
- Schools should not use AI because of its environmental impact, even if it is beneficial for education.
- There is no reason to use AI image generation.
- There should be restrictions on how both students and teachers use AI.
- AI should be blocked from your school internet browser.
- Parents and teachers should be able to set limits on a young person using AI.
- AI needs to consider students' mental health vulnerabilities.
- AI should be monitored closely.

Top tools

Top tools

During the learning phase of the workshop, we asked students to consider different AI for education tools, and to discuss the benefits or problems of these tools.

22 groups sent in their top three tools where benefits outweigh problems, and their bottom three, where problems are greater than benefits.



Top tools put students in control of their own research, allow students to work at their own pace, and focus on personalised *consolidation* of learning.

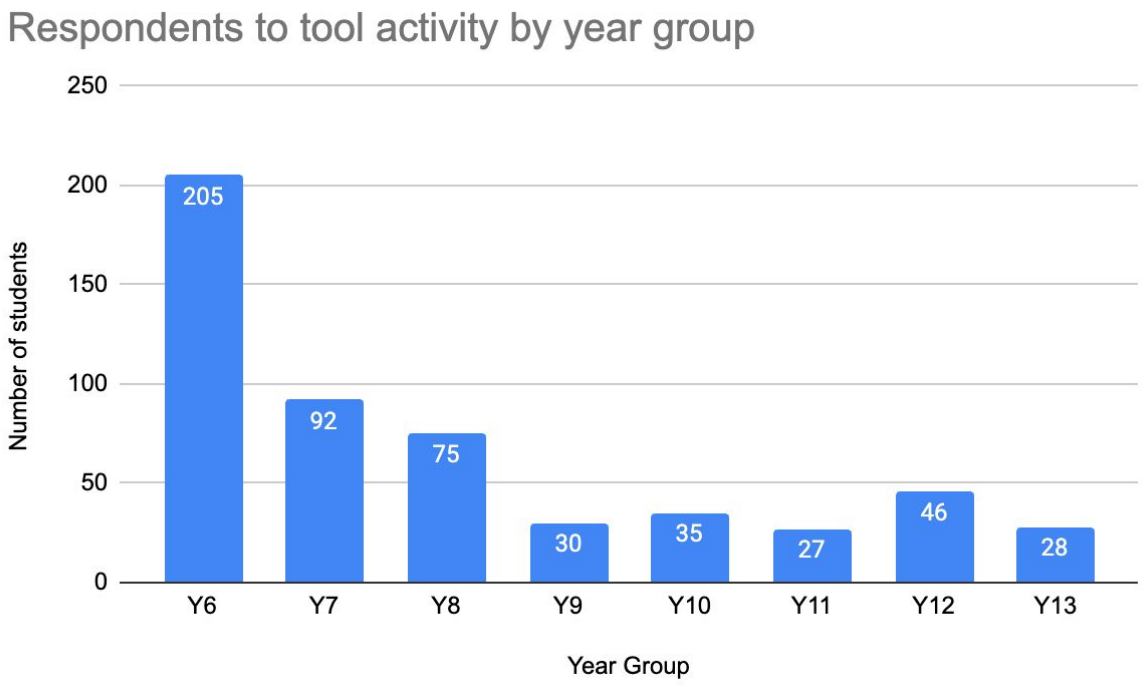
> *"[these] would support us without feeling like it was cheating or we weren't learning the information."*
> — Year 6 group

AI for lesson planning and marking featured most commonly in the bottom three ranking.

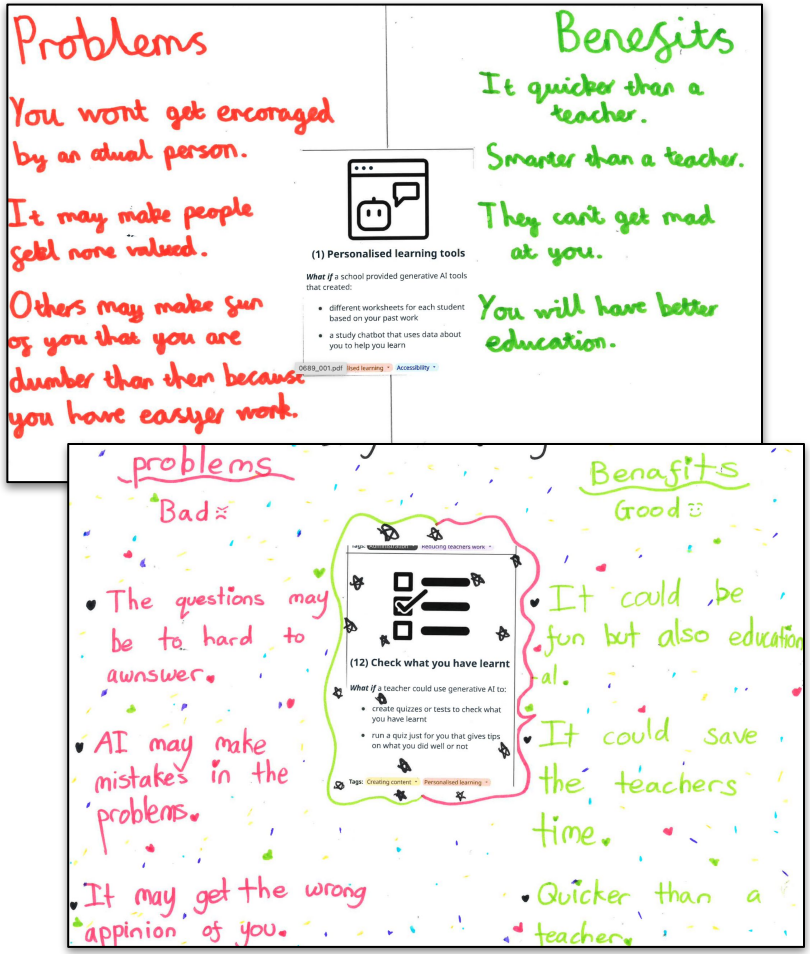
> *"Work is something we put a lot of effort into and we feel it needs to be read by a teacher."* — Year 6 group

Top tools: in detail

13 settings (over 22 different sessions) provided feedback to the tools activity, representing input from 538 students, with a slant towards younger year groups.



Top tools: supporting research and personalised consolidation



The most popular uses of AI in school were to help research, generate quizzes and tests, and provide personalised learning tools. Comments focussed on the way in which these tools can put students in control of their own learning, allow students to work at their own pace, and focus on personalised consolidation of learning.

> *"We thought these would be most helpful in the classroom and would support us without feeling like it was cheating or we weren't learning the information."* — Class feedback, Year 6 group.

Writing aids and tools to transcribe and translate lessons also received a degree of positive feedback, with one group focussed on how writing aids can generate custom 'WAGOLL (what a good one looks like)' examples. However, concerns were also expressed about having transcription tools recording a whole lesson.

> *"[Transcription tools could be] useful for non-native speakers and for those who missed lesson, but [we have] concerns about it capturing irrelevant material (student chatter, teacher telling off student) and mishearing words."* — Class feedback, Year 9 group.

One group commented that writing aid tools could lead to a loss of skills if students become reliant on them: *"You might as well have asked it to write to for you in the first place if it automatically improves."* (Group feedback, Years 7 - 10)

Student worksheets: Year 6 group.

Mixed picture: engagement, accuracy and ethics

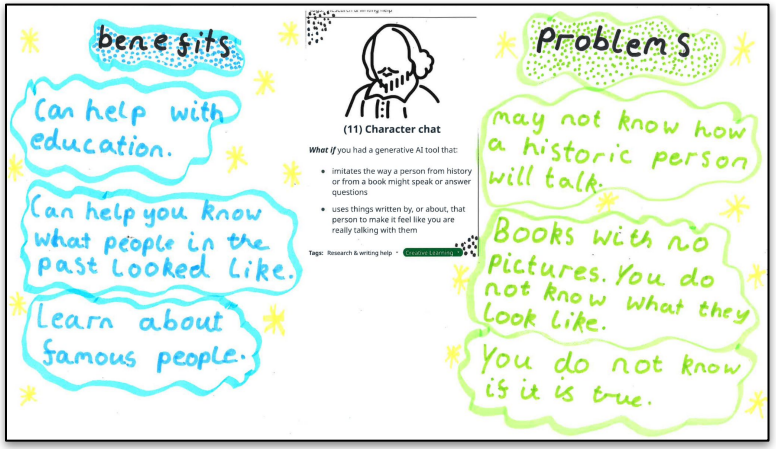
Mixed views are evident on tools designed to make learning more engaging, such as AI-generated virtual worlds, and 'character chat' with simulated historical figures. Accuracy was a key concern:

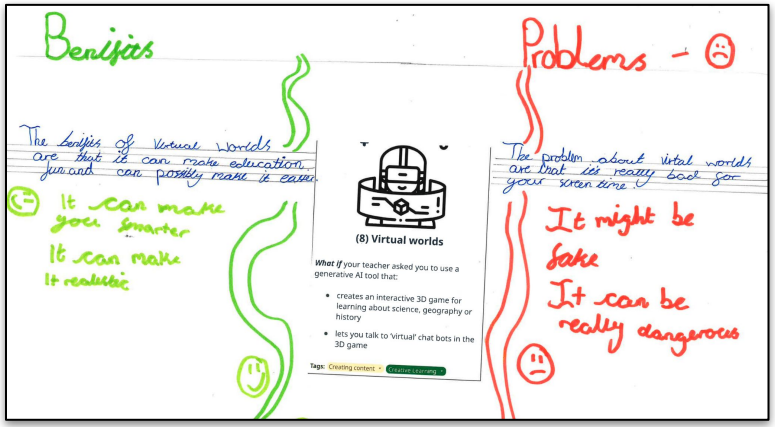
> *"We liked character chat as we thought being able to talk to a famous figure or historical figure could really make a subject more interesting providing the information it gave was accurate."*
> — Class feedback, Year 6

> *"[Character chat was seen] as inauthentic. How could we understand the character's entire thought process based on some of their writing (possibly from a long time ago)."*
> — Class feedback, Year 9

The use of AI to set school rules, in school communications, to generate media for learning all appeared more in groups bottom-3 than top-3 rankings. Some of the concerns about AI-generated media focussed on intellectual property, ethical and employment concerns:

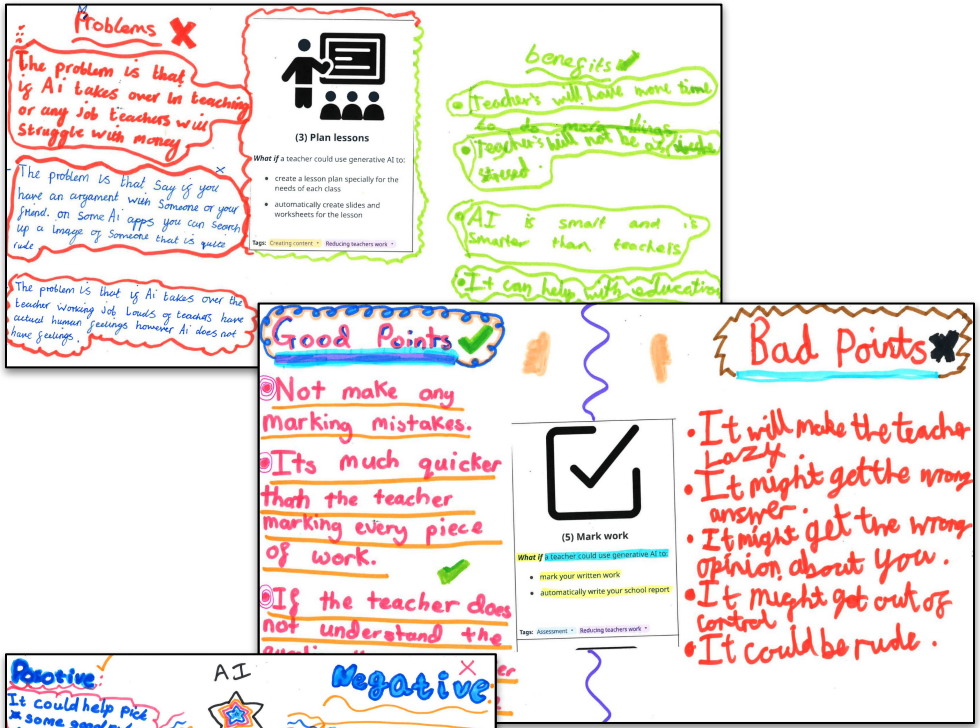
> *"AI has to source media from other sources - steals work from other artists and it is cheaper to use AI than people."*
> — Class feedback, Year 13





Student worksheets: Year 6

Student concerns: lesson planning, marking & setting rules



Student worksheets: Year 6

The use of AI to plan lessons and mark work featured commonly in the bottom-3 rankings. Comments addressed how AI-driven lesson planning would compare to teachers' ability to tailor lessons based on their knowledge of a class, and concerns about the amount of data that AI would require to personalise or mark content well. The relational aspect of marking was also prominent:

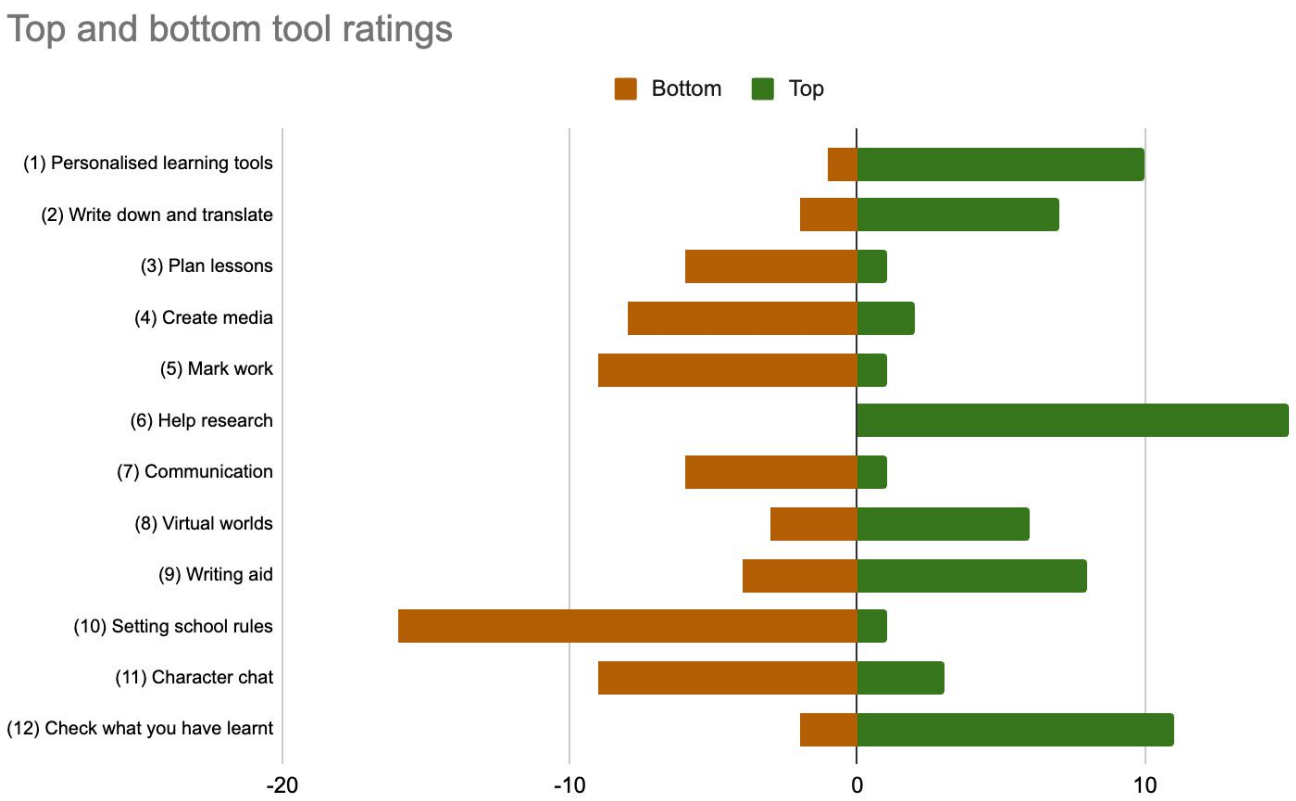
> *"Work is something we put a lot of effort into and we feel it needs to be read by a teacher."* — Class feedback, Year 6

Students expressed concerns about feeling 'judged' by AI systems, and that their judgements may not be sensitive to the particular situation a student is in.

Throughout creative feedback, there is a common theme of concern that AI-driven lessons would involve a loss of human contact, and would undermine student-teacher relationships.

Concerns about the use of AI to set school rules focussed on the fact AI systems would not know the school well, or would require a lot of data to do so, as well as a sense that this is not something digital tools should be getting involved in.

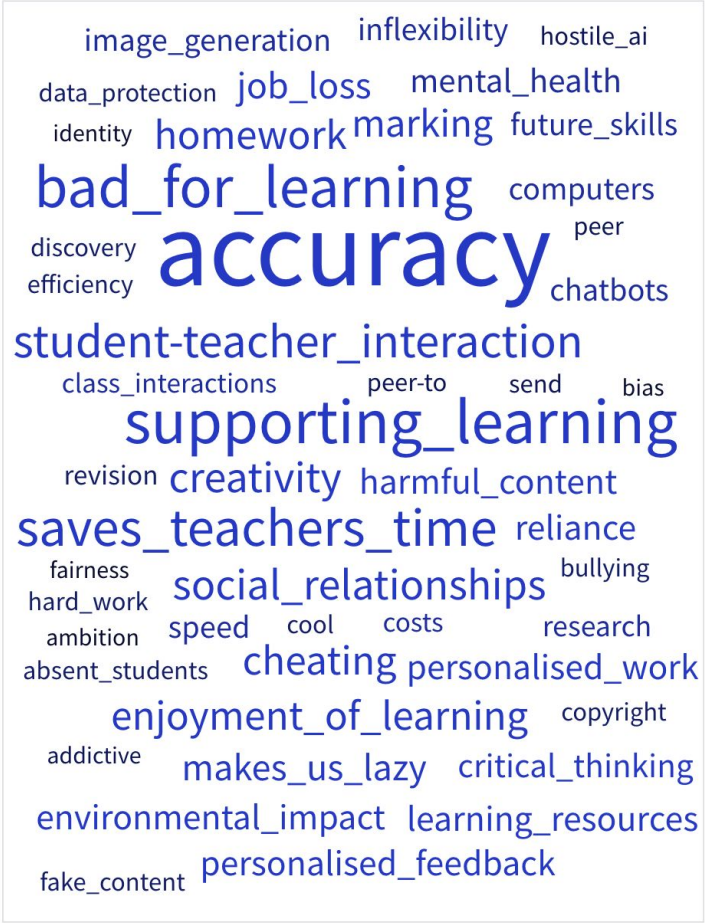
Overall tool rankings (count of votes)



An A–Z of additional themes

Additional themes

- Groups shared various free text inputs, and students from seven settings submitted over 100 items to creative feedback, including letters to AI makers and decision makers, drawings of education “with and without AI”, and annotated education app designs.
- Groups were also invited to share ‘parking lot’ themes that arose in discussions, but fell outside the questions asked by the workshop.
- One workshop was video recorded, and students interviewed afterwards with their responses transcribed.
- We coded common themes and recommendations across these sources, identifying an initial set of over 100 themes.
- We have presented these as an A - Z of themes for AI makers and decision makers to reflect on. Bullet points are paraphrased from student feedback. Direct quotes are indicated.



An A – Z of additional themes (paraphrased student views)

A. **Accuracy –** AI can be inaccurate: but who would get into trouble for giving a wrong answer? Who is responsible for making educational AI is factually correct?

B. **Business –** Will there be regulation of the companies making large language models? Companies should put the education, aspiration and thirst-for-knowledge of students before profit.

C. **Cheating –** Lazy students might use AI to cheat, and that might impact on everyone if it changes grade boundaries. “With AI, I feel like a cheat. I feel so bad.”

D. **Data protection –** School wouldn’t introduce any tools unless all the data protection is in place. “Data from our conversations or questions might be collected - There is no guarantee of privacy.”

E. **Environment –** I think AI should be banned because it is bad for the environment. Every school is against wasting paper, so why use AI? AI consumes a massive amount of resource for things that could be done more ethically by a human.

F. **Future skills –** AI in education is the smart choice: future jobs will include AI. AI will soon be in everything. Introduce it early so we can learn for our future.

An A – Z of additional themes (paraphrased student views)

G. **Games –** AI could be used to make learning games, and make learning fun. It could engage students who are typically disinterested. Teachers could make a game of 'beat the AI' to motivate students.

H. **Homework –** "AI can help you with your homework." Not everyone has access to the same AI at home. If we're using AI for homework, we need educational AI everyone can access at home too.

I. **Inequality –** "Not all students have access to the internet with or without parent controls.", "I don't want to see generative AI used in education... some people wouldn't be able to use it, so some would have an advantage."

J. **Judgement (feeling judged) –** An AI marking tool might get the wrong opinion about you.

K. **Knowledge –** "Jobs like healthcare, lawyers, and other jobs that deal with the lives of people are protected because students study using their own knowledge, not just using AI to do their homework in order to graduate without gaining actual knowledge needed for the job."

L. **Language –** "While AI could be very useful to people trying to learn in different languages, it can and likely will make mistakes, affecting children's independence and knowledge of specific subjects.

An A – Z of additional themes (paraphrased student views)

M. **Mental health –** Promoting the use of generative AI like chatbots is a risk factor for mental health issues. We're worried about increasing loneliness if students talk to bots rather than actual people and teachers.

N. **Navigating school –** AI could help make our timetable better. AI could help you sign up for clubs and activities. AI tools could focus on helping students navigate school.

O. **Outdated information –** AI may be giving us out of date information.

P. **Personalisation –** With AI, everyone might have different work on their desk. "We will be able to use more personalized tools to adjust to our pace. We can receive instant feedback instead of waiting for days." It might be trickier to help the person sitting next to you.

Q. **Quizzes –** AI could generate custom quizzes to help us consolidate our learning.

R. **Reliance –** "Education with AI has both positive and negative outcomes. Positive in the sense that it will help students learn faster and assist in explaining clearly at their own convenience. Negative in the sense that students can become overly dependent on AI to the point that they cannot think solely for themselves."

S. **Screen time & social interaction –** We don't want to be spending more time on screens. We want social interaction in our classrooms.

An A – Z of additional themes (paraphrased student views)

T. **Teachers –** AI should not get in the way of our relationship with teachers. Teachers know us in a way AI can't - and they can understand and support us. AI could help teachers have an easier job. I want to know teachers are still thinking about us.

U. **Uncertainty –** AI tools should say when things are not certain or when they don't know the answer.

V. **Virtual reality –** AI could be used to help create virtual learning spaces that are more engaging.

W. **Wrong advice –** AI shouldn't be giving advice if it might give the wrong advice.

X. **X-risks –** AI could be dangerous for our future.

Y. **Youth voice –** "Keep listening to feedback of the younger generation: we are the voice of the next generation. We will impact and shape the future."

Z. **Zoom out –** Improving education is not just about AI. "Education would be fine without AI, so long as the higher-ups actually do something to improve the foundation of the education system."

Conclusions & future opportunities

Recommendation & future opportunities

For generative AI to play a positive role in education, it is vital that AI developers, policy makers, school leaders and individual teachers engage in ongoing dialogue with students, and listen to their ideas and concerns.

- **Take the time to get generative AI in education right.** Students want assurance that AI is accurate, and that bias and safety risks of AI are well addressed *before* it is deployed in the classroom. Focus on limited classroom and homework uses of AI, rather than AI everywhere.
- **Embed a role for students in decision-making on AI.** AI for education should be co-designed with student input. Support should be available for teachers and education leaders to have ongoing and informed dialogue with students about shared expectations around AI in education. The 'workshop in a box' demonstrates the feasibility and value of a deliberative approach.
- **Build student agency in a world of AI.** Young people hold a diversity of attitudes towards AI and its future use. Support students to learn about the pros and cons of particular uses of AI, and to make informed individual and collective choices about when and how they engage with it.

For more resources, see https://connectedbydata.org/ai-in-education/.

Acknowledgements & links

Acknowledgements

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The resource does not necessarily reflect the views, opinions or policy positions of any of the individual contributors or authors.

AI Disclosure Statement

We used AI to support this research in the following ways:

- We made limited use of Claude 4.5 Sonnet via AirTable to support **transcription** of some written work, cross-checked by a human editor.
- We used MacWhisper with Parkeet 2 model for speech recognition to aid further **transcription** of work, again cross-checked by a human editor.
- We used Google Colab and Gemini models to assist in **writing python code** for **geographic visualisation** of respondent locations.
- Pol.is uses a set of algorithms to **cluster data**, but does not directly use either machine-learning or generative AI approaches.

We have not made use of generative AI tools in the data analysis or report writing.

https://connectedbydata.org/ai-in-education/