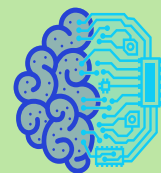


AI in Education: Mind the Gap – Unpacking the Mental Health Risks



amhie

Reduced Social-Emotional Skills:

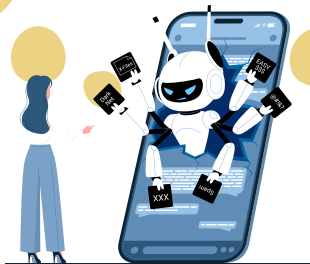
Less face-to-face time with teachers and peers can hinder crucial social development and the ability to build relationships.

"Creepy" Interactions:

Some find AI mimicking human conversation unsettling, leading to psychological discomfort.

Loss of Empathy & Support:

AI can't teach or model vital human emotions like empathy and sympathy, which are key for personality development and a supportive learning environment.



Less Play & Socialisation:

For younger children, over-reliance on AI could reduce essential play and socialisation opportunities.

Diminished Human Connection & Development

Over-reliance & Loss of Key Skills



Dependency on AI:

Pupils might use AI to complete tasks with minimal personal input, potentially leading to a failure to develop critical thinking, writing, or problem-solving skills independently.

SEND Pupil Concerns:

Parents worry about over-reliance for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, potentially hindering the development of fundamental skills despite initial support.

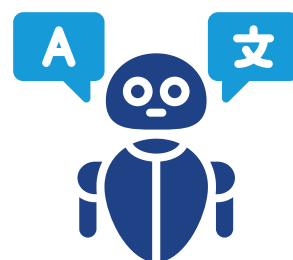
Accuracy, Bias & Unfairness

Unreliable Content:

AI can "hallucinate" false information, leading to inaccurate, inappropriate, or outdated content, impacting learning quality.

Perpetuating Inequalities:

AI trained on biased data can lead to unfair treatment or perpetuate existing inequalities among pupils, causing distress.



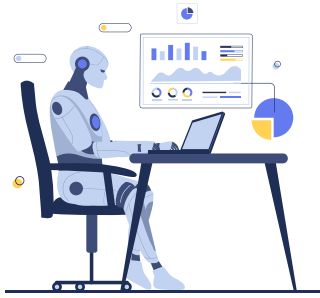
"Shaming" AI:

Concern that intrusive AI could "scold, shame, or punish students," causing disproportionate harm, especially to vulnerable pupils.



High-Stakes Risks:

Use in admissions or exam marking risks unjust outcomes and discrimination, severely impacting pupils' futures and mental well-being.



Data Privacy, Security & Surveillance

Big Brother Feeling:

Extensive data collection by AI systems raises significant concerns about privacy breaches and a "sense of big brother" surveillance.

Data Following Children:

Worries about personal data impacting future opportunities (employment, further education) if it's stored and shared extensively.

SEND Data Vulnerability:

Specific concerns about sensitive SEND status being shared without consent, potentially impacting future benefits or careers.



Exposure to Harmful Content & Increased Screen Time



Unintentional Harm:

Risk of pupils encountering inappropriate or harmful content when interacting directly with AI.

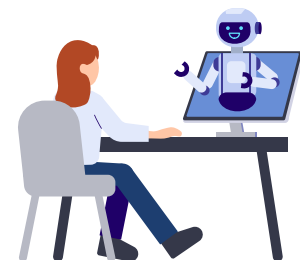
Prolonged Screen Time:

Significant parental worry about the long-term physical and mental effects of excessive screen time, including impact on sleep and well-being.

Lack of Trust from Users

Preference for Human Judgement:

Pupils and parents often prefer grades and feedback from human teachers, leading to scepticism and discomfort with AI-generated evaluations.



Scepticism & Anxiety:

Initial lack of understanding about AI's uses can lead to apprehension and anxiety about its introduction in education.

Teacher Well-being & De-professionalisation

Professional Identity:

Potential erosion of professional identity and well-being if teachers feel their expertise is being replaced by technology.



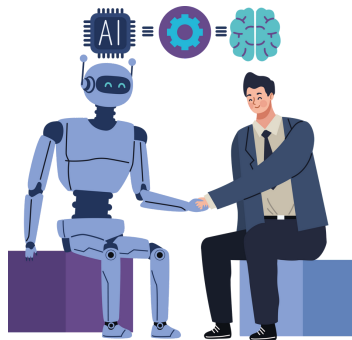
Devaluing the Role:

Concerns that AI could diminish the unique role of teachers, reducing them to mere facilitators, impacting job satisfaction and autonomy.

Exacerbation of Inequalities

Digital Divide:

High costs of advanced AI tools mean they might only be accessible to better-resourced schools, widening the gap in educational quality and opportunities.



Unequal Benefits:

Inconsistent training for teachers in using AI could lead to pupils receiving unequal benefits depending on their teacher's proficiency.

Addressing these risks is crucial to ensure AI truly supports positive mental health and well-being in UK education

Reference Guide:

[DfE Policy Paper on AI in education](#)

[DfE AI Guidance for schools](#)

[Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) In Education: Using AI Tools for Teaching and Learning Process - Fitria, tira Nur. 2021](#)

[Research on public attitudes towards the use of AI in education - DfE 2024](#)

[Precision Education - A New Challenge for AI in Education - Yang, Stephen JH. 2021](#)

[Role of AI in Education - Harry, Alexandara. 2023](#)



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