

Case Study

Education
AI Implementation



Cutting through the AI hype

Educator perspective: Where and how is AI starting to impact teaching, learning and educational outcomes?

Featured Educators:

Four UK Educators reflect on their efforts so far, progress and impact seen, what has helped and might help others.

- Cheryl Shirley, Director of Digital Learning - LEO Academy Trust
- Emma Darcy, Director of Technology for Learning - Denbigh High School
- Dr Carl Ward, Chair - Foundation for Education Development
- Dean Mohamedally, Professor of Computer Science - University College London
- Stuart Walker, Moderator, Author – Next Level Edu

The topic of AI has become increasingly high profile among the education community both in the UK and globally. Much talked about potential in crucial areas such as teacher workload reduction, efficiency, insight and tool enhancement in improving teaching and learning outcomes.

With this in mind, how are education institutions faring in exploring the potential benefits of this technology whilst considering associated risks and concerns? All of this taking place amidst a busy school day full of urgent priorities and a backdrop of varied edtech implementation and access.

Background

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not a new concept and has already been integrated into various technologies and skills development programs to varying degrees. In 2022, the emergence of ChatGPT*, a chatbot powered by a large language model (LLM) significantly elevated the profile of this technology and underscored the urgency of understanding its potential applications in educational settings. This rapid advancement also highlighted potential risks and concerns, particularly in areas such as assessment, privacy, and online safety. Additionally, the focus on AI skills development became more prominent, emphasising the need for both student curricula and professional development support for staff.

How have educators progressed in effectively using AI and what has been helpful amidst the hype?

Digital strategy

Both Cheryl at LEO Academy and Emma at Denbigh High School have deployed extensive multiyear digital strategies that predate both the recent profile emergence of AI as well as the pandemic. LEO has worked with thought leaders in the sector to chart impact progress via an extensive range of measures documented in the 'Pedtech Impact Report' issued in 2023 and updated in 2025.¹

The team continues to share learnings through the sector and team members run regular open day and study tours inviting other schools and community members. It's worth noting that neither Cheryl nor Emma view that their digital strategies have protected them from change due to AI with Emma reflecting on efforts of considerable iteration. However, both view that their digital strategy has provided a foundation from which to operate effectively.

"At LEO Academy our digital strategy helped us embed AI because elements of implementation, such as readiness and opportunity for innovation, were already in place."

Cheryl Shirley



Training and professional development support

Training provision was a focus in a recent BETT survey and report which noted 70% of respondents received less than 6 hours of Edtech training per year (21% received none).²

Cheryl and the LEO team emphasise that the time savings achieved in teaching, leadership, and professional services are enabled by staff training, which is a crucial element of AI advancement, as noted in the updated LEO report. Examples of impact include significant teacher time savings in tasks such as creating display resources for class, as well as in the child target setting process. Examples from the leadership team include drafting action plans, risk assessments, and policies. Additionally, they have been effective in creating policy-informed responses and improving communication efficiencies.¹

Access and provision of technology

Access and affordability of technology made headline news during the pandemic as the need for online schooling formed a key part of emergency response. Despite this focus, significant issues in equity of digital access remain and therefore by extension access to AI teaching and learning. A Digital Poverty Alliance report estimated one in five children in the UK are in digital poverty.³

It's worth noting that there can be significant differences in status depending on individual schools' approach to provision. Both Denbigh and LEO have "one to one" device provision for students. Both institutions point out the crucial need for robust technology infrastructure (such as connectivity) in addition to the devices themselves. It is also important to note that these efforts must be implemented in conjunction with other support measures, such as training programs and digital strategies. No one element alone is the golden ticket to success.

Culture and shared learning

Maintaining a growth mindset in considering change and when evaluating new digital techniques is important in Emma's view. This includes being prepared to make mistakes on the path to progress "falling forwards".

The team at Denbigh have involved their learners in AI adoption as part of a dedicated Period 6 Digital Literacy session every Wednesday and through a student AI Steering Group which meets monthly.

Emma and the team have created a "Digital Character" approach to integration. This provides an evaluation structure for considering new ideas that link back to school values.

"We impress to our students the importance of maintaining a growth mindset as part of their learning. It's important our approach to considering new techniques continues in this theme"

Emma Darcy



Dr Carl Ward has founded the Foundation for Education Development (FED), calling for a long-term strategy and plan for Education. FED efforts support members and the wider community in areas such as AI. Carl calls on international insight as valuable perspective and notes the extent of international focus on AI strategy development.

Problem based learning creating relevant skills and student engagement

At the UCL Computer Science department, skills development efforts have focused intensely on partnership and problem-based learning to develop solutions for social good, in collaboration with stakeholders. Professor Dean emphasises eliminating curriculum fiction by closely working with industry. This approach ensures that student projects are centred on impactful solutions, with learning supported by industry methods on real-world projects, through a broad and expanding network of partnerships.

The Industry eXchange Network (IXN) invites industry partners (and wider academic institutions) into a "doors open" approach to progress at three levels: resilience in integration, the exploration of technology and the delivery of new methods. Mentored students are currently working with advanced tech such as AI PCs powered by Intel to build solutions that utilise local AI processing on the device, as well as offline. They are also working on solutions that can be used in lighter technology settings to help further breadth of community access. This engaging learning approach focuses on developing and deploying solutions, resulting in outcomes that enhance education, healthcare, community engagement, and accessibility.^{4,5,6}

"We welcome all projects big and small that can make a positive change to society; there are 20,000 student engineers approximately in the UK looking for degree-level projects every year via their department. Reach out to your local Universities and propose projects."

Dean Mohamedally

Resources from Intel

Intel has released an AI in Education Infrastructure E-book⁷ and a position paper "Exploring the Potential of AI in Education"⁸. The whitepaper overviews key technology themes, skills and professional development perspectives as well as framework recommendations for institutions when considering AI adoption.

Intel has also developed an extensive professional development programme called 'Intel® Skills for Innovation', being used at scale internationally and in the UK. Over 20 AI resources exist and access to the platform is free:

Skillsforinnovation.intel.com (Registration code: INTELSFIUK).

1. LEO Academy Pedtech Impact Report: www.leoacademytrust.co.uk/2801/pedtech-impact-report

2. <https://uk.bettshow.com/unveiling-the-state-of-edtech-in-uk-schools>

3. Digital Poverty Alliance report: www.digitalpovertyalliance.org/digital-poverty-in-the-uk-a-socio-economic-assessment-of-the-implications-of-digital-poverty-in-the-uk/

4. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/computer-science/collaborate/ucl-industry-exchange-network-ucl-ixn>

5. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/computer-science/news/2023/aug/new-book-highlights-collaborative-projects-between-computer-science-students-and-nhs>

6. <https://download.intel.com/newsroom/archive/2025/en-us-2022-06-15-interact-with-a-computer-without-touching-it.pdf>

7. www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/education/intel-education.html

8. www.intel.com/content/dam/www/central-libraries/us/en/documents/2023-10/ai-in-education-whitepaper.pdf

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