# Education Secretary pledges £1.1 million to pilot AI in UK schools to ease teacher workload and improve inclusivity



In a significant move to revolutionise educational practices in the UK, Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson is championing the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) as a transformative force in schools. Addressing the Education World Forum in London, she laid out ambitious proposals aimed at enhancing teaching dynamics while addressing longstanding challenges within the education sector, including teacher workload and student absenteeism.

Phillipson positioned AI as a tool that could fundamentally alter the landscape of education, stating, “Setting AI on the right track now is the most important challenge for global education in a generation.” This initiative is coupled with a financial commitment of £1.1 million for a pilot programme designed to explore how technology can bolster staff efficiency, improve educational outcomes, and foster inclusivity for students with special educational needs.

The Education Secretary outlined a vision where AI not only alleviates mundane administrative burdens for teachers but also enriches the educational experience for students. “For children, that means more attention, higher standards, better life changes. For teachers, less paperwork, lower stress, fewer drains on their valuable time,” she remarked. The potential benefits of such a shift arise at a critical juncture; teaching professions across the UK face recruitment and retention hurdles, further exacerbated by increasing administrative demands.

In alignment with her vision, the UK government aims to create a global consensus around the responsible use of generative AI in education, with plans for a summit next year to develop overarching guidelines. These guidelines stipulate that while schools are permitted to utilise generative AI tools like ChatGPT, there are strict regulations against using students' work to train such models without explicit consent. The emphasis on safety is underscored by the fact that existing frameworks afford schools significant latitude in decision-making while maintaining their legal obligations.

Beyond the proposed guidelines, the government is actively integrating AI technologies to mitigate issues such as student absenteeism. Current applications include using AI to generate attendance reports, a proactive step aimed at reducing the number of days children miss school. Phillipson highlighted the pressing need for educational institutions to adapt to technological advancements, stating that the government is committed not merely to integration but to paving a seamless path forward for educators and students alike.

As part of a comprehensive strategy, the UK’s ‘AI Opportunities Action Plan’ lays the groundwork for nurturing a workforce skilled in AI. The plan sets an aspirational goal to train tens of thousands of AI professionals by 2030, responding to the anticipated boom in this sector. Such initiatives are designed to ensure that both current and future generations are equipped for a rapidly evolving job market increasingly influenced by digital technologies.

Critics, however, express valid concerns regarding the implications of deploying AI in educational settings. Issues spanning from data privacy to the risk of technology overshadowing human interaction raise necessary debates among educators and policymakers alike. The conversation surrounding AI in education is complex and multifaceted, necessitating a careful balance between leveraging technological advancements and preserving the pivotal role of teachers in student development.

As the UK positions itself at the forefront of this educational transformation, the focus remains on fostering an environment where technology enhances, rather than detracts from, the human aspects of learning. The ongoing discussions and initiatives introduced by leaders like Phillipson underscore a commitment to innovation while navigating the myriad challenges that accompany such significant shifts in educational paradigms.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.bournemouthecho.co.uk/news/national/25172582.uk-back-global-rules-ai-schools-says-phillipson/), [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/bridget-phillipson-artificial-intelligence-education-secretary-teachers-britain-b1206484.html)
2. Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.bournemouthecho.co.uk/news/national/25172582.uk-back-global-rules-ai-schools-says-phillipson/), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/tech/bridget-phillipson-education-secretary-london-technology-teachers-b1206346.html)
3. Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.bournemouthecho.co.uk/news/national/25172582.uk-back-global-rules-ai-schools-says-phillipson/), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/mar/31/bridget-phillipson-eyes-ais-potential-to-free-up-teachers-time)
4. Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.bournemouthecho.co.uk/news/national/25172582.uk-back-global-rules-ai-schools-says-phillipson/), [[5]](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-opportunities-action-plan/ai-opportunities-action-plan)
5. Paragraph 5: [[1]](https://www.bournemouthecho.co.uk/news/national/25172582.uk-back-global-rules-ai-schools-says-phillipson/), [[7]](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-opportunities-action-plan/ai-opportunities-action-plan)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bournemouthecho.co.uk/news/national/25172582.uk-back-global-rules-ai-schools-says-phillipson/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/bridget-phillipson-artificial-intelligence-education-secretary-teachers-britain-b1206484.html> - Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson has outlined plans to harness technology, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), as a transformative force in the UK's education system. Speaking at the British Educational Training and Technology (Bett) Show in London, she emphasized the potential of AI to alleviate teacher workloads, thereby addressing the recruitment and retention challenges in the profession. Phillipson envisions a future where AI reduces administrative tasks, allowing educators to focus more on direct teaching and student engagement. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/bridget-phillipson-artificial-intelligence-education-secretary-teachers-britain-b1206484.html?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/tech/bridget-phillipson-education-secretary-london-technology-teachers-b1206346.html> - Bridget Phillipson, the UK's Education Secretary, has proposed leveraging technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), to address challenges such as student absences and teacher shortages. At the Bett Show in London, she discussed using AI as a 'positive, radical, modernising force' in education, aiming to reduce teachers' administrative burdens and enhance student engagement. Phillipson believes that integrating AI can help tackle the 'crisis of belonging' among pupils and improve overall educational outcomes. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/tech/bridget-phillipson-education-secretary-london-technology-teachers-b1206346.html?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/mar/31/bridget-phillipson-eyes-ais-potential-to-free-up-teachers-time> - Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson is exploring the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to streamline administrative tasks in schools, aiming to free up teachers' time for direct student engagement. At a Department for Education-sponsored hackathon, she discussed AI applications that could compile pupil reports and assess student work. Phillipson emphasized the importance of AI in reducing repetitive tasks, thereby addressing teacher workload and retention issues. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/mar/31/bridget-phillipson-eyes-ais-potential-to-free-up-teachers-time?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-opportunities-action-plan/ai-opportunities-action-plan> - The UK government's 'AI Opportunities Action Plan' outlines strategies to position the UK as a global leader in artificial intelligence (AI). It emphasizes the need to train tens of thousands of AI professionals by 2030 to meet anticipated demand. The plan includes supporting higher education institutions to increase AI graduates, launching flagship AI scholarship programs, and ensuring lifelong skills programs are ready for AI's impact on the labor market. ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-opportunities-action-plan/ai-opportunities-action-plan?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-opportunities-action-plan/ai-opportunities-action-plan> - The UK government's 'AI Opportunities Action Plan' outlines strategies to position the UK as a global leader in artificial intelligence (AI). It emphasizes the need to train tens of thousands of AI professionals by 2030 to meet anticipated demand. The plan includes supporting higher education institutions to increase AI graduates, launching flagship AI scholarship programs, and ensuring lifelong skills programs are ready for AI's impact on the labor market. ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-opportunities-action-plan/ai-opportunities-action-plan?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-opportunities-action-plan/ai-opportunities-action-plan> - The UK government's 'AI Opportunities Action Plan' outlines strategies to position the UK as a global leader in artificial intelligence (AI). It emphasizes the need to train tens of thousands of AI professionals by 2030 to meet anticipated demand. The plan includes supporting higher education institutions to increase AI graduates, launching flagship AI scholarship programs, and ensuring lifelong skills programs are ready for AI's impact on the labor market. ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-opportunities-action-plan/ai-opportunities-action-plan?utm_source=openai))