# Survey reveals students' conflicting views and challenges on AI in education



A recent survey conducted by Oxford University Press has revealed a striking ambivalence among secondary school pupils towards artificial intelligence (AI) tools in education. According to the survey, which polled 2,000 pupils aged 13 to 18, eight in ten reported using AI tools for their schoolwork. Despite this widespread use, nearly a third—32%—admitted they could not determine whether AI-generated content was true or not. Less than half (47%) felt confident in their ability to identify accurate AI information, while 21% were uncertain.

Daniel Williams, associate assistant headteacher and AI lead at Bishop Vesey’s Grammar School, noted that many students recognise AI’s usefulness but often opt to use it as a shortcut rather than a genuine learning aid. Williams stated that this trend was particularly evident among older students, such as those in sixth form, where the skill to judge AI content’s accuracy or bias was especially limited.

The survey also unveiled a considerable demand among students for more support from educators. Nearly half (48%) expressed a desire for guidance on where AI-generated content can be trusted. However, a significant concern emerged about teachers’ preparedness: a third of pupils felt their teachers lacked confidence in using AI tools, and 47% worried that educators might struggle to detect when students were using AI to complete assignments.

Moreover, over 60% of those surveyed felt that AI had negatively impacted their skills in schoolwork. Specific worries included the perception that AI made schoolwork too easy (26%) and that its use might stifle creative thinking (12%). Interestingly, geographic variations were evident. Pupils in London reported the highest usage of AI tools (92%) and the greatest confidence (63%) in spotting AI misinformation, suggesting regional disparities in both access and education around AI.

This survey’s findings echo wider educational concerns about AI's role in learning and assessment. Earlier this year, the Curriculum and Assessment Review highlighted the urgent need for school curricula to adapt to technological changes. The Review advocated for equipping young people with the skills to critically evaluate misinformation, a challenge increasingly vital as AI-generated content becomes ubiquitous.

In response to these challenges, the UK Department for Education has released various resources to help schools use AI safely and responsibly. Oxford University Press itself has launched an AI and Education Hub aimed at supporting teachers. Amie Lawless, secondary product director at Oxford University Press, emphasised the importance of such initiatives, acknowledging the pressing need for guidance as AI technology becomes more integrated in classrooms. She remarked, “We know that teachers are under many different pressures, which is why we developed our new AI and Education Hub to bring together educators and experts across the industry to provide guidance, inspiration and support to schools.”

Supplementary reports reinforce the need for more comprehensive support and training for teachers. An Oxford University Press report urges the establishment of clear principles and regulations around AI use in education, emphasising that AI should complement rather than replace the teacher’s role. Dedicated AI educational leads and extensive training resources are recommended to ensure safe and ethical deployment of these technologies in schools.

Data from other contexts also highlight challenges with AI in education. A study from the Pew Research Center in the US found that 25% of K-12 teachers believe AI tools do more harm than good. Meanwhile, research involving 15 secondary school teachers revealed that 60% struggled to correctly identify AI-generated content, with many misidentifying which answers were produced by students versus AI. These findings underline the complexity teachers face in adapting to this new educational landscape.

As AI continues to permeate classrooms, the pressing task for educators, policymakers, and technology providers is to foster a balanced approach. This approach must harness AI’s potential benefits while safeguarding educational integrity, creativity, and critical thinking skills. The voices of pupils, as captured in the Oxford University Press survey, highlight not only the opportunities but also the uncertainties and risks that lie ahead.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll-OL3MH3J355M23HUYTMK44BUSAQ/), [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/tech/opinium-london-b1252965.html), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/oxford-university-press-grammar-school-opinium-london-b2845516.html), [[4]](https://www.ireland-live.ie/news/uk/1919173/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll-OL3MH3J355M23HUYTMK44BUSAQ/), [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/tech/opinium-london-b1252965.html), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/oxford-university-press-grammar-school-opinium-london-b2845516.html), [[4]](https://www.ireland-live.ie/news/uk/1919173/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll-OL3MH3J355M23HUYTMK44BUSAQ/), [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/tech/opinium-london-b1252965.html), [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/oxford-university-press-grammar-school-opinium-london-b2845516.html), [[4]](https://www.ireland-live.ie/news/uk/1919173/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll.html)
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* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll-OL3MH3J355M23HUYTMK44BUSAQ/), [[5]](https://www.mynewsdesk.com/uk/oxford-university-press/pressreleases/more-support-needed-to-harness-the-potential-of-ai-to-transform-education-says-new-report-3280654)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll-OL3MH3J355M23HUYTMK44BUSAQ/), [[5]](https://www.mynewsdesk.com/uk/oxford-university-press/pressreleases/more-support-needed-to-harness-the-potential-of-ai-to-transform-education-says-new-report-3280654), [[6]](https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/05/15/a-quarter-of-u-s-teachers-say-ai-tools-do-more-harm-than-good-in-k-12-education/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[6]](https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/05/15/a-quarter-of-u-s-teachers-say-ai-tools-do-more-harm-than-good-in-k-12-education/), [[7]](https://the-educator.org/study-finds-that-three-in-five-teachers-cant-identify-ai-written-content/)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll-OL3MH3J355M23HUYTMK44BUSAQ/), [[5]](https://www.mynewsdesk.com/uk/oxford-university-press/pressreleases/more-support-needed-to-harness-the-potential-of-ai-to-transform-education-says-new-report-3280654), [[6]](https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/05/15/a-quarter-of-u-s-teachers-say-ai-tools-do-more-harm-than-good-in-k-12-education/), [[7]](https://the-educator.org/study-finds-that-three-in-five-teachers-cant-identify-ai-written-content/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/one-in-three-pupils-say-they-cannot-tell-if-ai-content-is-true-poll-OL3MH3J355M23HUYTMK44BUSAQ/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/tech/opinium-london-b1252965.html> - A recent survey by Oxford University Press revealed that 80% of pupils use AI tools in their schoolwork. However, only 47% feel confident in identifying accurate AI-generated information, with 21% uncertain about its accuracy. Daniel Williams, an associate assistant headteacher, noted that many students view AI as a shortcut rather than a learning tool. The survey also found that 48% of students desire support from teachers to understand trustworthy AI content, and 47% are concerned that teachers cannot detect AI usage in assignments. Additionally, 62% feel AI negatively impacts their schoolwork skills, with 26% believing it makes tasks too easy and 12% feeling it limits creative thinking. Pupils in London are more likely to use AI tools (92%) and are more confident in spotting AI misinformation (63%).
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5. <https://www.mynewsdesk.com/uk/oxford-university-press/pressreleases/more-support-needed-to-harness-the-potential-of-ai-to-transform-education-says-new-report-3280654> - A report by Oxford University Press highlights the need for more support to harness AI's potential in education. The report recommends that school leaders, education business leaders, and policymakers establish principles and regulations for AI use in teaching and learning. It emphasizes the importance of continuing to prioritize the role of the teacher as a guide, advisor, and supporter, acknowledging that AI should support teachers, not replace them. The report also advocates for providing comprehensive support and guidance for teachers on how to use AI technologies safely and ethically, including introducing dedicated educational leads in AI within schools and training resources.
6. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/05/15/a-quarter-of-u-s-teachers-say-ai-tools-do-more-harm-than-good-in-k-12-education/> - A Pew Research Center study found that 25% of U.S. teachers believe AI tools like ChatGPT do more harm than good in K-12 education. Among teens who have heard of ChatGPT, 19% have used it to help with schoolwork, with usage more common among higher-grade students. The study also found that 69% of teens find it acceptable to use ChatGPT to research new topics, 39% to solve math problems, and 20% to write essays. However, 18% to 24% are unsure about the acceptability of using ChatGPT in these situations.
7. <https://the-educator.org/study-finds-that-three-in-five-teachers-cant-identify-ai-written-content/> - A study involving 15 secondary school teachers found that 60% struggled to identify AI-generated content, with one-third failing to correctly identify both AI and student-written answers. The teachers were provided with two answers to real exam questions, one written by a student and the other by ChatGPT. The study also found that nearly half of the answers reviewed were misidentified, indicating challenges in distinguishing between human and AI-generated content.