



Press release

Minister Foley pledges commitment to establishing guidelines on the use of AI

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Minister for Education Norma Foley has today announced that her department is working on establishing comprehensive guidelines for teachers and educators on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Irish education system.

Officials are being supported by Oide, the support service for teachers and school leaders, on the development of guidelines to provide an overarching awareness of the opportunities and risks and the factors that should be taken into consideration in using AI in a safe, responsible and ethical manner.

The department is actively monitoring developments in AI and the impact it may have in education and assessment settings, including through discussions at EU level and with other Member States with regard to their experience and expertise.

Minister Foley said:

“As we continue to modernise and reform our curriculum and teaching practices, we need to be conscious of the rapidly changing world in

which schools operate. We know that artificial intelligence (AI) is already changing the way that people live and work. There is no doubt that AI has great potential to enhance education and inclusion but there are also many issues and challenges with its use. Education and training have a key role to play in ensuring that AI is used effectively and ethically and in line with data privacy legislation and guidelines.

“It is my clear intent that pupils and students in our primary and post-primary schools will be able to use generative AI for its potential benefits, while at the same time being supported to avoid becoming over-dependent on using it to do their thinking and learning for them. It is imperative that further research is conducted on the impact of digital devices on our classrooms and on their optimum use within our schools. This work has already begun and I look forward to its completion by the end of this year.

“We need to ensure that we consider the use of AI carefully on all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment and that teachers and school leaders have the necessary resources and skills to support them. It is important to note that in order to develop the necessary AI skills for both our students and teachers, the first foundational step in this is to ensure that they have the relevant digital skills to understand, navigate and interrogate its use effectively and ethically.

“I would like to thank teachers and school leaders for sharing their perspectives and experiences in this area to date at a recent event hosted by Oide to identify the needs of teachers regarding AI in the classroom. These views, on matters including how to increase awareness of AI and data literacy among staff members and school leadership and what supports the system should offer, will help to inform the development of future policy in this evolving space.”

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