

27 March 2023

Dear Parent

ChatGPT

Although it was only released in November 2022, [ChatGPT](#) is already beginning to have a significant impact on education. Whilst this form of artificial intelligence (AI) is still at a relatively early stage, it is likely to be a revolutionary development in technology. Google has also joined the race with [Bard](#) which differs slightly in that it is only available to those over 18 and can call on current content (ChatGPT can only go back to last year).

ChatGPT responds to written commands in a different way to “googling”. It can, for example, write essays or newspaper articles on any given topic. It also allows for conversational research as it is able to refine results based on specific requests from the user. Other AI can create music from written input, and then be used to create songs using others’ voices. David Guetta has been a very vocal artist having used several AI platforms to create a song using Eminem’s voice: *“I think really AI might define new musical styles. I believe that every new music style comes from a new technology.”*

The fourth version of ChatGPT has now been released and this is even more advanced. It can now “understand” pictures, and humour and can even write poetry (more convincingly than when I asked 3.5 to write a poem about Tottenham winning a trophy). Amazingly, it can also outperform most humans on a wide range of tests and exams, including some professional qualifications.

Russell Group universities are split about how to handle the emergence of AI. Some have banned it completely, others permit the use but only for work that isn’t to be formally marked. However, what they all recognise is that it isn’t going away and therefore further education will need to adapt.

I, for one, am extremely excited to see how this technology develops further and to observe the revolutionary impact it is likely to have on education, as well as wider society; as Bill Gates says: *“It will change the way people work, learn, travel, get health care, and communicate with each other”*. However, it does also raise some concerns. If students become overly reliant on ChatGPT, their independent critical thinking and problem-solving skills may lack the cognitive development we would usually see when using traditional methods. This could negatively impact their ability to complete examinations when AI will not be available.

Another immediate concern has been recent incidents of students submitting work that has been completed by ChatGPT, without them referencing or acknowledging its use. This is plagiarism and brings with it serious sanctions. The School’s stance on plagiarism is firm and we have updated our guidance on plagiarism to now include the use of AI.

To support this at school, we have had an assembly on integrity and AI and all students will be having a session on plagiarism this week; it is vital that our students not only respect others’ work but understand the importance of academic integrity. I would encourage you to explore the potential benefits of ChatGPT and other AI with your son. However, I would also ask you to help ensure that they don’t use this new technology as an opportunity to plagiarise; our teachers provide the knowledge and development of skills needed to successfully complete tasks without the need to plagiarise. I would be grateful for your support in this regard.

For interest, I asked ChatGPT to write [this letter for me](#) - I would like to think that mine is still better.....at least for the moment!

Iain Wilson

Deputy Headmaster