
Lesson planning using AI lesson assistant, Aila - A Teacher Choices Trial

School and Teacher Privacy Notice

1 Why are we collecting this data?

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to undertake a randomised controlled trial (RCT) to explore different approaches to lesson planning in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 as part of their 'Teacher Choices' programme. The aim of Teacher Choices research is to investigate the impact of different day-to-day pedagogical practices on pupil learning and to generate evidence that can be readily applied by teachers in the classroom. This is a developing strand of EEF projects.

This 'Teacher Choices' trial will explore the impact of Oak National Academy's AI-powered lesson planning assistant, [Aila](#). More information about the trial is available [here](#).

This document outlines how the personal data of school staff will be collected and processed during this trial.

NFER decides what happens to personal data as part of the trial, as outlined in this document, and is the Data Controller for the evaluation. Oak National Academy is the Data Controller for any personal data shared on the Aila platform and details of how it handles personal data can be found in its Privacy Policy at <https://www.thenational.academy/legal/privacy-policy>.

2 What is the legal basis for processing activities?

The legal basis for processing personal data is GDPR Article 6 (1) (f):

Legitimate interests: the processing is necessary for your (or a third party's) legitimate interests unless there is a good reason to protect the individual's personal data which overrides those legitimate interests.

We have carried out a legitimate interest assessment, which demonstrates that the RCT fulfils one of the NFER's core business purposes (undertaking research, evaluation and information activities). It has broader societal benefits and will contribute to improving classroom practice. The trial cannot be done without processing personal data, but NFER ensures that your rights (see section 9 for further information) are protected at all times.

3 How will personal data be obtained?

Personal data will be collected directly from staff at participating schools initially in an Expression of Interest (EOI) form and then in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Further personal data about nominated teachers will be collected throughout the trial, including through a teacher data template, weekly diary entries, online surveys and interviews (see section 4 for full details). Some of these activities will be carried out in person by NFER researchers visiting schools; others will use an online survey tool, Tivian.

Oak National Academy will provide NFER with anonymous lesson-level data about participating teachers' use of Aila (see section 4 for further details).

4 What personal data is being collected by this trial?

During the trial, we will collect the following personal data for school staff involved in the trial.

As part of the EOI form process, NFER will collect the following data from interested teachers and senior leaders:

- name
- job role
- contact details

As part of the MoU sign-up process, NFER will collect the following data from headteachers and the nominated trial lead:

- name
- contact details
- job role

NFER will collect the following personal data for teachers participating in the trial:

- name
- contact details
- job role
- length of time teaching
- subject / Year Group taught
- time spent in lesson preparation, confidence in lesson preparation and self-reported perception of their workload
- prior use of and confidence in using GenAI and Aila; and how they used Aila
- their knowledge, skills, confidence and attitudes to technology, pedagogy and subject teaching
- perceptions of facilitators, barriers and challenges as well as perceived costs/ financial implications of using Aila and teacher perceptions of pupil experiences.

NFER will share the names, email addresses and randomisation group allocations of participating teachers with Oak National Academy. The information will allow Oak National Academy to identify the relevant teachers on the Aila platform. Once matched, Oak National Academy will remove participants' personal data (names and email addresses) and provide NFER with a lesson-level dataset that does not identify individual teachers. The extract will include but is not limited to details of the subject, year group, topic of the lessons initiated or downloaded from Aila, refinements made to them and time spent in each interaction. It will not include any school details or other information which could be put together to identify individual teachers.

5 Who will personal data be shared with?

No individual will be named in any report arising from this work. With your permission, we may use verbatim quotes from your responses in research outputs, but these will always be anonymised before being used in any public document.

NFER will share names and email addresses of participating teachers with Oak National Academy in order to receive anonymised Aila usage data for teachers participating in the study from the Aila platform. Oak National Academy's Privacy Policy can be found here: <https://www.thenational.academy/legal/privacy-policy>.

NFER uses Tivian to collect online survey responses and to collect diary data. Tivian stores names, contact details and survey responses in Azure and AWS data center infrastructure in the European Union (EU). Tivian's privacy notice is available here: <https://www.tivian.com/uk/privacy-policy-2/>

Microsoft Teams may be used for interviews which cannot be undertaken in person. Information about how your personal data is used by Teams is available: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoftteams/security-compliance-overview#privacy>

Data sharing for archiving

After the report is published (currently planned for early autumn 2026), teacher personal data including direct identifiers (such as names, job role and other school identifiers) along with the responses from diaries and teacher surveys will be archived so it can be used in future research. The EEF archive is managed by Fischer Family Trust (FFT; EEF's data processor) on behalf of EEF and hosted by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). As part of the archiving process, FFT will pseudonymise the teacher records (replacing any direct identifiers with a unique identifier). At the point at which NFER shares the data with FFT, the EEF becomes the data controller for the archived data and NFER has no further involvement with decisions about how the data is used. The way the data is archived means it will be possible to match it within the ONS Secure Research Service (SRS) to other information held by the DfE about teachers.

For example, the archived project data may be linked with the School Workforce Census data in the future to support approved researchers with conducting additional research on wider teacher workload experiences. Any further use of the data will be through the ONS Approved Researcher Scheme. The Approved Researcher Scheme is used by the ONS to grant secure access to data that cannot be published openly, for statistical research purposes, as permitted by the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (SRSA).

The EEF will keep the information in the EEF archive for as long as it is needed for research purposes. The EEF's data archive privacy notice can be found <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/privacy-notices/privacy-notice-for-the-eef-data-archive>. EEF are in the process of updating this privacy notice to reflect archiving of teacher data (June 2025).

6 Is personal data being transferred outside of the UK?

NFER only stores personal data in the UK. When we use Tivian to administer online surveys, data is stored in the EU.

If online interview communications between schools are conducted by video conference software (Microsoft Teams), the software provider may transfer data outside the UK. However, this is safeguarded by use of the appropriate standard contractual safeguards.

7 How long will personal data be retained?

NFER will delete any personal data after one year from the publication of the final report (due to be published September 2026). The deletion process is currently planned for September 2027.

Oak National Academy will delete any personal data that NFER shared with them as part of the trial at the point of publication of the final report. This deletion process is currently planned for September 2026.

8 What are my rights with respect to personal data?

Schools and school staff can withdraw from the trial and/or from their data being used in the trial at any time. However, the NFER appreciates schools' and participants' support in collecting the data since it is very important for the validity of the results. If your school/you withdraw from the research, unless otherwise instructed, we will use any data we have collected up to that point in our analysis.

Under certain circumstances, you have the right:

- to request access to information that we hold about you (subject access request)
- to have your personal data rectified, if it is inaccurate or incomplete
- to request the deletion or removal of personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing

- to restrict our processing of your personal data (for example, permitting its storage but no further processing)
- to object to our processing
- not to be subject to decisions based purely on automated processing where it produces a legal or similarly significant effect on you.

To exercise these rights, please contact our Compliance Officer, compliance@nfer.ac.uk.

9 Who can I contact about this trial?

Any queries about the day-to-day management of the data processing outlined in this privacy notice, please contact the trial team at KS2TeacherChoices@nfer.ac.uk

If you have concerns about the way NFER processes personal data or wish to exercise a data subject right (see section 8), please contact the Compliance Officer: compliance@nfer.ac.uk. If you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to lodge a complaint about data protection issues with the Information Commissioner's Office, the body responsible for enforcing data protection legislation in the UK, at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>.

10 Updates

We keep our privacy notice under regular review to make sure it is up to date and accurate; any changes will be recorded.

The date when this privacy notice was last updated is shown in the footer at the bottom of this document. The latest changes include: (i) adding a link to the trial information page, (ii) clarifying archiving arrangements and (iii) adding a link to the EEF's data archive privacy notice.