

CYPF Scrutiny Panel: Report on AI potential within Children's Services

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Overview

This document provides an assessment of the opportunities and future deployment of AI across Business Support's Children's Spoke and Hub teams. Its purpose is to support the CYPF Scrutiny Panel in understanding the potential for AI to aid the Children's Services workforce and ensure workers spend more time with the families they work with.

The report aims to inform the Service's direction for AI adoption by evaluating how emerging tools and technologies can be safely tested, piloted, and implemented. The focus is on ensuring that AI deployment enhances the delivery of statutory safeguarding responsibilities, strengthens operational resilience, and enables the workforce to dedicate more time to meaningful engagement with children and families. The assessment also aims to support long-term planning by identifying the capabilities required to build a responsible and ethical AI delivery, across the Service.

Purpose & Principles

The purpose of this document is to provide relevant insight into current and emerging AI capabilities that support Children's Services, with a view to shaping future investment, governance, and implementation decisions.

There are two positions to consider when defining our approach to automation:

- 1. The organisation could adopt a principle that all eligible processes should be automated, with explicit exclusions for Safeguarding activities where human oversight remains essential.
- 2. A more conservative stance would limit automation to a defined set of carefully selected activities, introduced only where there are clear strategic value and minimal operational risks.

The trade-off is that the full potential and positive impact of AI may not be realised.

Specifically, this document outlines:

- **AI capability currently in operation** – establishing a baseline for planning and alignment with the wider directorate's digital priorities.
- **Benefits** – evidencing value, informing the service for broader adoption, and highlighting areas where AI already contributes to improved service delivery and outcomes.
- **Future potential** – identifying opportunities for scoping and potential transformation, and highlighting AI's role in strengthening safeguarding, decision making, and workforce capacity.
- **Barriers and constraints** – highlighting the risks, governance considerations, and organisational enablers required to implement AI safely, ethically, and in compliance with statutory duties.

Assessment of AI use and Data Privacy considerations.

The activity of essential minute taking is currently the most relevant for AI use and is already in use where appropriate:

Task/Activity	Outcomes	Benefits	Barriers
<p>Minute Taking</p>	<p>Microsoft Co-Pilot is implemented to transcribe recorded meetings and generate structured, consistent minutes including summaries and action points, reducing turnaround times and administrative workload while supporting statutory safeguarding duties and multi-agency collaboration.</p> <p>Best practice and outcome consistency on all Minutes.</p> <p>Key meeting details, such as dates, attendees, presenting issues, identified strengths, and assessed risk are automatically extracted and pre-populated into the case management system or outcome report. This streamlines administrative effort and improves data accuracy. Actual turnaround times are reduced.</p> <p>Improved satisfaction and performance.</p> <p>Best practice and guidance in place for safe, effective and standardised use.</p>	<p>Transcribe and summarise multi-agency children’s services meetings, aiming to improve the timeliness and accuracy of meeting minutes crucial for safeguarding children.</p> <p>Capacity savings: Each meeting is saving approx. 50% of time taken with the opportunity to reduce this further once staff are confident in the use of Co-Pilot, estimating a 75% of time savings.</p>	<p>Key risks include data privacy, accuracy of output, and adoption of change, mitigated by secure environments, manual review, and stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Inconsistent use and resistance from stakeholders, outcomes are not recognised as this is dependent on individuals’ knowledge and appetite from managers.</p> <p>Manual oversight required to QA, as small errors and duplication can occur.</p> <p>Different AI tools being used i.e. Magic Notes, therefore providing inconsistent output.</p>

From and information security and data security perspective the following should be considered:

Security/GDPR overview	
System	Microsoft Co-Pilot
<p>Data Protection Principles</p> <p>The use of information must comply with the 6 Data Protection principles laid out in the GDPR. : All users are reminded of their responsibilities under the Council’s Code of Conduct and data sharing agreements. Transcriptions will be handled in accordance with multi-agency protocols to protect the privacy of children and families.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner 	

- **Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes**
- **Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes**
- **Accurate and up to date**
- **Kept no longer than necessary**
- **Appropriate Security Measures**

Key points:

Microsoft Copilot operates within our Microsoft 365 tenant, using the same enterprise-grade security, compliance and privacy controls that already protect our Microsoft 365 services. This ensures that data remains secure, compliant, and auditable.

Tenant isolation – Copilot runs inside our Microsoft 365 tenant and does not mix or pool our data with that of other customers.

Data residency – Data is stored and processed in Microsoft data centres that align with our tenant’s configuration (e.g., UK or EU).

Encryption – All data is encrypted both in transit and at rest

Access to Copilot and transcribed minutes is restricted to authorised users through existing Microsoft identity and access management controls.

No training on our data – Copilot does not use our organisational data to train its foundation models. Our data stays within our tenant.

Information barriers – Our existing restrictions (e.g., separation between teams) remain enforced by Copilot. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be completed before deployment, and ongoing monitoring will ensure compliance with DfE, ICO, and DSIT guidance.

Human review is built into the workflow, so practitioners remain responsible for the accuracy and appropriateness of final records.

Copilot’s use will be piloted and evaluated for any unintended consequences, with the option to withdraw or adjust usage if risks are identified.

RISKS AND MITIGATIONS.

Risk: Data privacy

Mitigation: Use secure, UK-hosted Microsoft environment; comply with data protection guidance

Risk: Accuracy of output.

Mitigation: Manual review of draft minutes before distribution. Manual input through templates and prompts for Co-Pilot to enable a specific and consistent output.

Risk: Adoption of change and management.

Mitigation: Business Support will monitor and report outcomes and performance and engage with stakeholders when required. Business Support will provide in house training and update guidance, templates and prompts and process maps regularly.

Examples of operational opportunities to support Children’s Services:

Beyond minute taking the following opportunities stand out as the near-term potential areas for increased use:

Task/Activity	Potential/Expectations	Benefits	Barriers
Public Protection Notice (PPN)	Information from external source, regular and consistent, high volume potential to use Triggers and Flows using Power Automate to route all relevant information to various teams/departments/schools.	Consistent responses reported to relevant parties/organisations within the targeted deadlines , therefore realising improvement measured against current transactions.	There is a risk that inaccurate information received from the police may result in data being shared with an incorrect organisation, potentially leading to a data breach.

		<p>Intelligent task routing and workflow optimisation:</p> <p>This routine administration and process-driven task could be automatically directed to the appropriate teams, improving efficiency and reducing delays.</p>	<p>As a mitigation measure, AI should be utilised to verify that the information received is consistent with the records held on Capita.</p>
<p>Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)</p>	<p>Information from and to external sources, regular and consistent.</p> <p>Potential to use Triggers and Flows using Power Automate to route all relevant information to various teams/departments/schools.</p>	<p>Responses sent and received on time automatically, reducing touchpoints from Social Workers and Business Support, and generating relevant data for performance reporting.</p>	<p>Delays in receiving responses from external partners are resulting in extended case handling times and an inability to meet complaint resolution targets, consequently generating adverse performance data.</p>
<p>Transport support – Education Participation & Schools (EP&S)</p>	<p>Collating information for School transport drivers list. 250 per month.</p> <p>Automatic information collated re drivers' information into consistent and standardised template</p>	<p>High volume, every month Automation potential will reduce time and touchpoints.</p> <p>Intelligent task routing and workflow optimisation:</p> <p>This routine administration and process-driven task could be automatically directed to the appropriate teams, improving efficiency and reducing delays.</p>	<p>Information must be provided using the standard template; any submissions that do not adhere to this format will not be accepted and risks of inaccurate or missing information.</p>
<p>Minute Taking Abridgments & Child Protection Plans</p>	<p>Potential to use Triggers and Flows using Power Automate to update abridgments and collate the redaction in documents.</p> <p>Use standardised symbols to clearly indicate previous redactions for all relevant</p>	<p>Intelligent task routing and workflow optimisation:</p> <p>This routine administration and process-driven task could be automatically</p>	<p>Inconsistent use and resistance from Chairs. Dependent on individuals' knowledge and appetite, to implement new opportunities and tools.</p>

	<p>parties, including primary carers.</p>	<p>directed to the appropriate teams, improving efficiency and reducing delays.</p> <p>Professional oversight with reduced administrative burden: Social Workers would shift from generating documents from scratch to reviewing, editing, and approving AI-drafted case records. This supports professional judgement while significantly reducing time spent on routine documentation.</p> <p>Turnaround times and compliance with statutory timescales.</p> <p>Standardised minutes and abridgement providing continuity with all documents.</p>	<p>There is a potential risk of data breaches resulting from the inadvertent dissemination of inaccurate information to relevant stakeholders. All prompts should therefore be subject to systematic and regular review to ensure their continued accuracy.</p>
<p>Automated data entry and routine documentation</p>	<p>Digitally captured case interactions:</p> <p>Planned and unplanned visits or conversations could be documented through a secure, compliant mobile application. AI would then transform these recordings into structured, high-quality case notes, reducing manual transcription and ensuring consistency.</p> <p>Enhanced insight from existing records:</p> <p>AI could extract relevant information from reports and generate up-to-date chronologies. Long, historical</p>	<p>Using Power Automate already integrated into SharePoint with no additional cost for licences</p> <p>Professional oversight with reduced administrative burden:</p> <p>Social Workers would shift from generating documents from scratch to reviewing, editing, and approving AI-drafted case records. This supports professional judgement while significantly</p>	<p>Training will be required to ensure staff are confident and competent in the use of new technologies.</p> <p>Successful implementation will depend on staff engagement and acceptance of new ways of working Additional associated costs relating to the procurement or ongoing use of AI tools may be identified</p>

	<p>case files could be summarised into concise, accessible formats, enabling practitioners to quickly identify patterns, risks, and key events.</p> <p>Improved data quality and accuracy:</p> <p>Duplicated entries or gaps in case information could be automatically flagged, supporting compliance, quality assurance, and better-informed decision-making.</p> <p>AI-powered internal support and guidance:</p> <p>Potential to provide rapid responses to routine queries—for example, where to find specific forms or which worklist applies—reducing interruptions and supporting staff to navigate systems more effectively</p>	<p>reducing time spent on routine documentation.</p> <p>Automated scheduling aligned to statutory requirements:</p> <p>AI could track statutory deadlines and automatically schedule required reviews, reducing the risk of missed timescales and strengthening safeguarding governance.</p> <p>Proactive task management:</p> <p>Overdue actions could be highlighted and routed to the correct role or team, ensuring timely follow-up and improving workflow coordination.</p>	
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Summary

There is clear potential to develop a comprehensive, systematic rollout plan for AI adoption across the Children’s Services incorporating clear expectations, structured training, and robust safeguards. The impact would be:

- Replace the current inconsistent and individually driven use of AI with a coherent and standardised service wide framework. The use of AI could be characterised as a cohort of early adopters - where uptake is variable, unstructured and dependent on personal confidence or interest,
- Create a plan that would define standards, governance requirements, workforce capabilities, and accountability mechanisms to ensure safe, ethical, and compliant use of AI.
- Outline the support model, training pathway, and monitoring processes needed to embed AI effectively into practice.
- A range of additional opportunities could be identified through comprehensive scoping and testing.

Ensuring compliance and standardisation will be essential, with a clear focus on how these enhancements could support Children’s Services in managing caseloads effectively and improving outcomes for the children and families they work with. Using AI to create capacity