THE WAY

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FROM THE HEAD OF SENIOR SCHOOL

At the start of the school term, I joined 25 colleagues from Thomas Hassall at an AI conference attended by over 850 teachers from across the Anglican Schools network. The day featured a range of insights from industry leaders at **Google, Apple, and Canva**, as well as various academics and classroom practitioners.

Many of us felt understandably overwhelmed by the rapid advances in generative AI. However, the day highlighted two primary ways this technology is currently - and will continue - shaping education:

1. Supporting the Work of Teachers

AI can significantly reduce administrative and preparatory burdens. This may include:

- - Generating marking rubrics and lesson plans.
- - Designing custom diagrams and imagery.
- - Providing instant feedback on drafts.
- - Differentiating activities for neurodiverse learners to ensure inclusivity.

2. Enhancing the Student Experience

For students, AI serves as a powerful cognitive scaffold. It can assist with:

- - Breaking down complex assignments into manageable steps.

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- - Researching, editing, and summarising dense information.
- - Creating personalized memory techniques and flashcards.
- - Receiving real-time feedback on their writing.

Crucially, AI is not a replacement for the human elements of teaching and learning. It is a tool, much like the calculator, ruler, overhead projector, or laptop before it. Like any tool, its effectiveness depends entirely on the mastery and skill of the user.

Our greatest challenge moving forward is determining which aspects of human agency are critical to retain. There is a vital distinction between efficiency and learning. If we use AI to bypass the 'struggle' of drafting, researching, or problem-solving, we lose the opportunity to build those neural pathways. We are in danger of becoming a generation that knows how to prompt, but has forgotten how to think.

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