

Shape the Future Leaders Coalition 2025-26 Case Study

School: The Cavendish High Academy, Runcorn, Halton (North West England)

Project Leader: John Munro, Assistant Principal

Research Strands: Leveraging Data and Generating Insights; Addressing Inequity and the Digital Divide; SEND and Personalised Learning

Research Question: Can AI synthesise fragmented multi-agency documentation to create coherent, actionable, person-centred profiles that follow young people with complex needs through school and into adult life?

Timeline: November 2025 - April 2026

Key Data Collection:

- AI-generated learner profiles and progress reports
- Staff, carer, and parent feedback surveys
- Case studies documenting behavioural changes and transition readiness

The Challenge

The Cavendish High Academy serves 108 students aged 11-19 with Severe Learning Difficulties, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, and Autistic Spectrum Condition in Runcorn, Halton, one of England's most deprived areas. Every student has an Education, Health and Care Plan, and 63% are eligible for free school meals. Senior leaders and teaching staff face a series of problems familiar to special educators everywhere but particularly acute in resource-constrained settings: information about each young person arrives in fragments, in multiple formats, from multiple agencies - health professionals, social care, SEND assessment teams, mental health services, behavioural support, previous schools, sometimes police. Each document has its own frameworks and language, and addresses its own set of priorities. For staff trying to provide person-centred support, this means hours spent manually piecing together a coherent picture of each student's needs, strengths, and progress. For families and receiving institutions when students transition, it means vital context gets lost in translation. The students who most need consistent, informed support across their lives are the ones whose information is most scattered and inaccessible.

The Action Research Approach

Working with 5-10 students with complex needs across Key Stage 3, John is taking steps to develop a wrapper Product - a geo-locked, closed large language model that can ingest diverse documentation and synthesise it into coherent, person-centred educational profiles and individual support plans (ISP's). The research follows a carefully staged process: securing permissions and conducting Data Protection Impact Assessments, training staff on AI prompting, gathering baseline observations, then using AI to extract and structure information from EHCPs and associated PDFs, generating personalised learner profiles with visualisations of progress, and produce reports in consistent formats that can be shared with teachers,

therapists, families, and future providers. Crucially, the system maintains editability - allowing redaction of sensitive information when needed while preserving the integrity of the profile. The action research cycle emphasises iterative refinement: testing prompts, checking outputs for bias and accuracy, gathering feedback from staff and families, and refining the system based on what actually proves useful in practice. Despite operating with minimal budget (estimated £1,500) and limited technical expertise, John has developed sophisticated frameworks including a Theory of Change, Logic Model, and Strategic Framework, and is starting to leverage support from the Good Future Foundation and EVR consultancy to build capacity.

The Broader Significance

This project sits at the intersection of three critical Coalition concerns: data management, equity, and SEND support. For schools serving students with multiple complex needs, the challenge isn't lack of information - its information overload combined with fragmentation. It is also about supporting families who shoulder a tremendous burden and often don't have the skills or resources to navigate their child's diagnosis, education and coming-of-age. If AI can genuinely make scattered multi-agency documentation accessible and actionable, it transforms the possibility of truly person-centred support for the young people who need it most. The equity dimension is very real: students in well-resourced independent schools often have dedicated SENCos with time to synthesise information; students at Cavendish in Halton have staff working with great commitment but impossible caseloads particularly at transition points. AI might not level that playing field entirely, but it could narrow the gap. The project also models what responsible innovation looks like under constraint - John isn't implementing a commercial off-the-shelf solution; he's building a proof-of-concept with closed systems, rigorous data protection, and constant evaluation for bias and accuracy. If successful, this approach could fundamentally change how information follows vulnerable young people through transitions, ensuring that hard-won insights from years of multi-professional support don't vanish when students move between settings. Most importantly, it asks whether AI can serve not just efficiency but dignity - creating profiles that truly represent each young person's complexity, strengths, and potential.