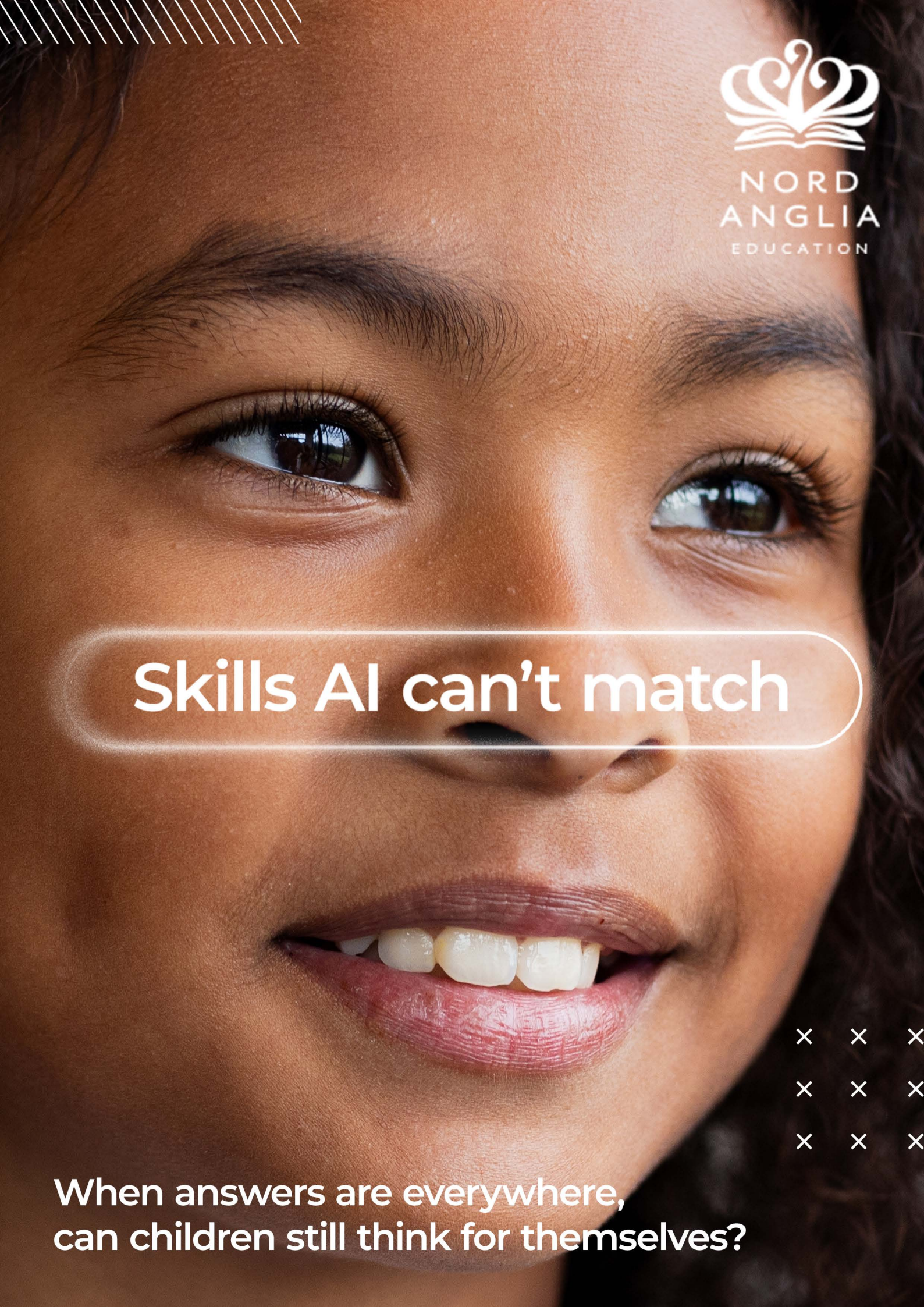
NORD
ANGLIA
EDUCATION
Skills AI can't match
When answers are everywhere,
can children still think for themselves?

ABOUT NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION

As a leading international schools organisation, we're shaping a generation of creative and resilient global citizens who graduate from our schools with everything they need for success, whatever they choose to be or do in life.

Our strong academic foundations combine world-class teaching and curricula with cutting-edge technology and facilities, creating learning experiences like no other. Inside and outside of the classroom, we inspire our students to achieve more than they ever thought possible.

No two children learn the same way, which is why our schools around the world personalise learning to what works best for every student. Inspired by our high-quality teachers, our students achieve outstanding academic results and go on to study at the world's top universities.

Our Nord Anglia global family includes 89 day and boarding schools in 37 countries, teaching over 100,000 students from ages 2 to 18.

To learn more or apply for a place for your child at one of our schools, go to **www.nordangliaeducation.com**.

ABOUT BOSTON COLLEGE AND THE LYNCH SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Boston College, a leading global research university founded in 1863, is committed to academic excellence and the holistic development of students. Its Lynch School of Education and Human Development is renowned for advancing education, psychology, and social work through innovative research and practice.

Together, they are at the forefront of exploring metacognition, helping students and educators understand how reflective thinking enhances learning and development.

Through its commitment to innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration, Boston College empowers individuals to deepen their understanding of learning processes, equipping them with the skills to excel academically and contribute meaningfully to society.

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01

WHEN ANSWERS ARE EVERYWHERE, CAN CHILDREN STILL THINK FOR THEMSELVES?

Last night, your child might have been stuck.

Not because the work was too hard, and not because they didn't know enough.

But because they didn't know where to begin.

Which idea to choose. How to shape it. Whether to keep going or think about giving up.

If you're a parent, you'll recognise that pause. The uncertainty. The unspoken question: "Can they work this out on their own?"

They're moments many parents quietly notice, because they hint at whether a child feels confident in their own judgement.

And there's a question that's becoming harder to ignore:

> *If answers come too quickly, will my child still learn how to think for themselves?*

Today, answers are everywhere.

AI can explain, summarise, translate, and suggest in seconds. And at a speed that no one can match.

But many parents are sensing something deeper.

Research shows that while AI can support learning, relying on it too early — or too often — can weaken something essential: the ability to wrestle with uncertainty, to make decisions, and to persist when things don't work the first time.

At the same time, employers are clear about what still matters most. **The World Economic Forum** highlights analytical thinking, creativity, adaptability, and lifelong learning as essential skills for the future — with nearly 40% of today's core skills expected to change by 2030.

nearly

40%

of today's core skills expected to change by 2030.

So, the challenge isn't whether children should use technology. It's whether they can still think for themselves, without relying on it.

02
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THINKING IS TAUGHT DELIBERATELY?

Over two years, Nord Anglia partnered with Boston College to explore a simple but powerful question:

> *What happens when children are explicitly taught how to think, not just what to learn?*

The difference showed up in everyday classroom practice.

Across more than **12,000 Nord Anglia students** in **27 schools** and **20 countries,** teachers embedded simple **"thinking routines"** into daily learning. These routines encouraged students to pause, reflect, and explain how they were thinking, rather than rushing to an answer.

One routine, **See, Think, Wonder,** invites students to ask:

- What do I notice?
- What does that tell me?
- What questions do I still have?

Over time, these questions stopped feeling like prompts, and instead, became habits.

Now, picture your child starting a project.

Before, they might have:

- Chosen the first idea that came to mind
- Looked to you for reassurance
- Waited for confirmation that they were "right"

Now, they pause.

- What do I already know?
- What does that suggest?
- What could I try next?

Now, they're no longer waiting for an answer. Instead, they're making a decision.

That ability — to pause, reflect, adjust, and try again — is known as metacognition.

03
WHAT THE FULL RESEARCH SHOWS

By the end of the second year of Nord Anglia's research, the impact was clear.

Students who regularly engaged with thinking routines demonstrated measurable growth in:

+21%
Critical thinking

+20%
Curiosity

+15-16%
Collaboration, commitment and compassion

In classrooms where thinking routines were used daily, the results were even stronger:

40%
At least 40% growth across all skills

50%
Approaching 50% growth in curiosity and compassion

Just as importantly, students reported feeling more confident when navigating uncertainty, and that's a skill no algorithm can replicate.

85% reported increases in knowing what they are good at, 76% reported increased independence, and 72% said their knowledge of how they learn improved.

Teachers noticed the difference, too.

Not louder classrooms, but:

- More thoughtful questions
- Clearer explanations
- Greater determination to keep going when things felt difficult

By the end of the research up to **96% of teachers agreed** that this way of teaching and learning helps students succeed — not just academically, but beyond school.

04
WHY THIS MATTERS IN AN AI WORLD

AI can generate answers. But it can't decide:

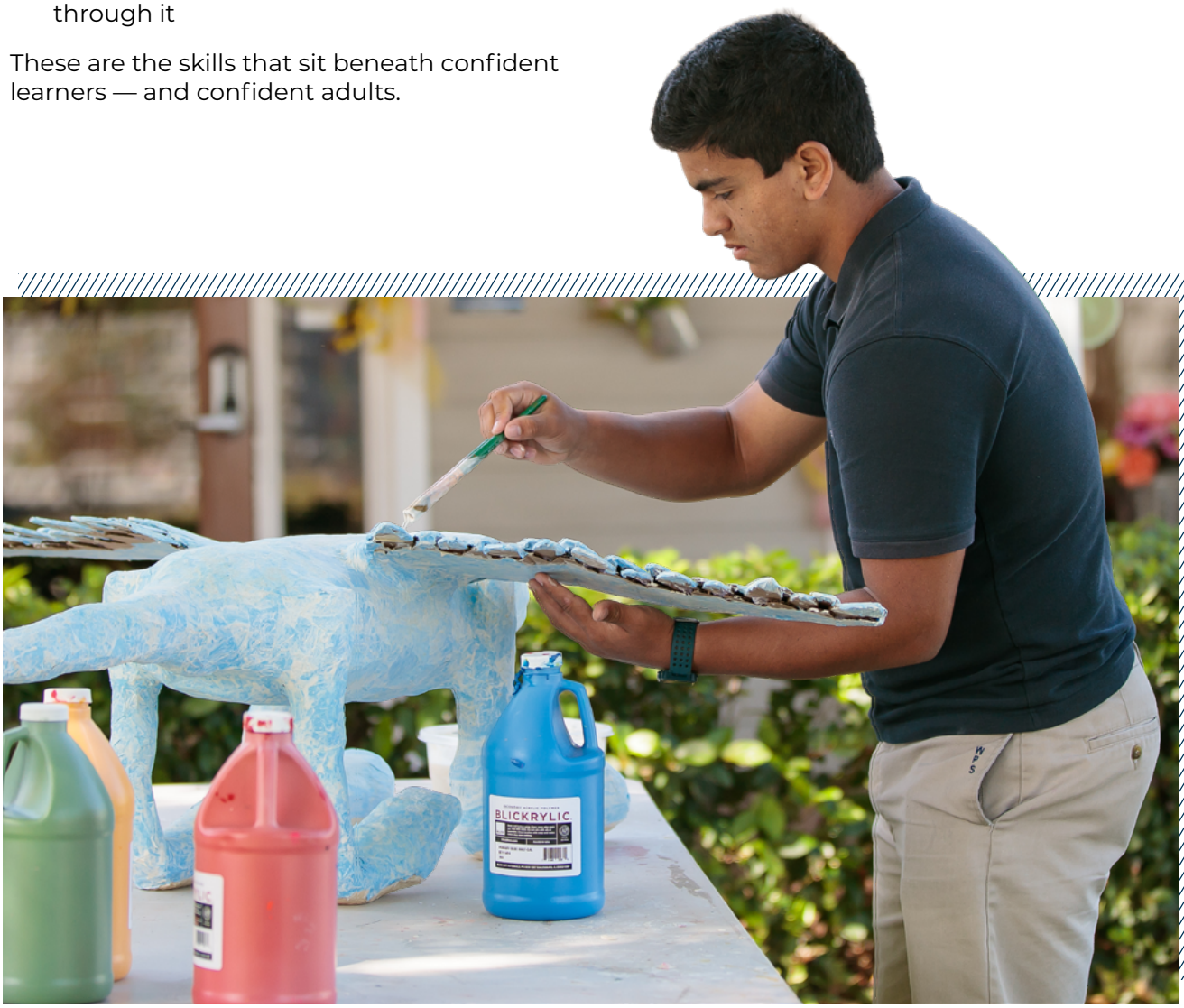
- When to persist
- When to change strategy
- When to trust your own judgement

Those decisions are uniquely human, and the children who will thrive in the future won't be the ones who simply know the most.

They'll be the ones who can:

- **Notice** when something doesn't quite add up, and pause rather than panic
- **Decide** what to try next without waiting to be told
- **Stay** with a problem long enough to work their way through it

These are the skills that sit beneath confident learners — and confident adults.



05
THE BIGGER PICTURE

As technology continues to change how children learn, one thing remains constant:

Children still need to learn how to think. Not just to succeed in exams, and not just to keep up with change.

But to face uncertainty with confidence, to make decisions without shortcuts, and to believe they can work things out; even when the answer isn't immediate.

These are lifelong skills. It's why Nord Anglia is helping its students develop them.

And they're the skills AI can't replace.

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