



31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

## Leigh Academies Trust Modern Slavery Statement

### **Introduction**

Leigh Academies Trust is a non-profit making charitable company limited by guarantee, based in Strood, Medway. The Trust exists to support and assist schools to build upon their existing strengths and to help them achieve rapid educational transformation. It has significant experience in running schools, and today includes both sponsored academies and schools which have chosen to convert to Academy status.

The Trust was formed in 2008 with the linking of the Leigh Technology Academy and Longfield Academy under one governing body. It encompasses 20,000 students between the ages of 2 and 19 in 31 primary, secondary and special academies including one all-through and one grammar school.

This statement sets out Leigh Academies Trust actions to understand all potential modern slavery risks related to its activity and to put in place steps that are aimed at ensuring that there is no slavery in its own business and its supply chains. This statement relates to actions and activities during 2021/2022.

Leigh Academies Trust is absolutely committed to preventing slavery in its mission to deliver exceptional education at the heart of the community, and, to ensuring that its supply chains are free from slavery.

As part of the education sector, the organisation recognises that it has a responsibility to take a robust approach to slavery.

We hope that our key values permeate everything we do and are obvious wherever and whenever anyone encounters Leigh Academies Trust:

- We care – about our pupils through our human scale approach to education, our staff and their well-being and the communities that we serve, driven by our high ideals and strong moral values.
- We have boundless ambition – to achieve excellence for all and create confident young adults with high levels of resilience and integrity.
- We work together – as one team in the belief that we are greater than the sum of our parts. We foster an enterprising culture through collaboration and in close partnership with industry and other educators.
- We keep getting better – using our ‘can-do’ attitude towards continuous improvement and innovation.

Our strong ethos is integral to our educational provision – it is an expression of our character, a statement of who we are and therefore the lens through which we assess all that we do.

We employ 3500 members of staff and all of our operations are currently based in the UK.

Please find further information relating to our activities and structure here.

<https://leighacademiestrust.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/>

## **Risk Management**

As part of our initiative to identify and mitigate risk we have identified the principal areas which carry material risks. Leigh Academies Trust ensures that suppliers are required to demonstrate their methods of corporate social responsibility during the tendering and selection process, details of which may vary according to the project. Leigh Academies Trust reserves the right to exclude any bidder who has been convicted of an offence under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Suppliers to Leigh Academies Trust are required to fully comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and are confirming that they do so by accepting the Leigh Academies Trust Terms and Conditions.

A considerable proportion of our procurement is with suppliers who are preapproved either by a purchasing consortium or appointed through means of a tender process. Our supply chains include:

Education equipment, textbooks and resources suppliers

ICT equipment and services

Student and staff uniform suppliers

Supply/agency staff

Estate management maintenance and services

Catering services and supplies

Cleaning services and supplies

Peripatetic music services

We have in place systems to:

Identify and assess potential risk areas in our supply chains.

Mitigate the risk of slavery occurring in our supply chains.

Protect whistle blowers.

## **Procurement and Supply chain management**

We have identified that some of our procurement takes place within sectors where modern slavery offences could occur, such as within our cleaning and catering supply chains and within the construction industry. We will be taking the following steps to promote awareness of this during 2021/2022:

Raise awareness amongst teams involved in employment, procurement and management, of the risks of modern slavery occurring within our supply chains.

Include compliance with the Modern Slavery Act as a condition or criterion in specification and tender documents wherever possible.

Ensure our 'New Supplier' form requests all suppliers adhere to the Modern Slavery Act.

Conduct a more in-depth review of our supply chains to better understand the risks of modern slavery occurring within them.

Our policies to resist modern slavery

We have reviewed our existing policies and procedures in light of the Act. We are confident that our policies promote good behaviour among our colleagues at work and within Leigh Academies Trust. Our policies and procedures are kept under review to make sure that they reflect the changing needs of Leigh Academies Trust and of the staff, students/pupils and the communities it serves.

Among the policies that we consider give us strength in avoiding modern slavery under the Act in Leigh Academies Trust are:

Code of Conduct & Confidentiality

Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

Fraud Policy

Recruitment Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

The whistleblowing policy has been amended to draw attention to the risk of modern slavery and to stress that a report of concern in relation to those matters can be made under the protection of the whistleblowing policy.

We are determined that there shall be no modern slavery or in Leigh Academies Trust. Our policies evidence our commitment to act ethically and with integrity throughout our organisation.

All tenders for supply of services and or goods include a requirement for the supplier to report on their ethical trading including ensuring they also comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

#### **Training and continuing vigilance**

We have provided guidance to those involved in procurement of the need to avoid those risks and on possible indicators of them during the procurement of goods and services. We will continue to enhance the assurances we seek from suppliers as to their avoidance of modern slavery.

#### **Declaration**

This statement has been approved by Richard Taylor – HR Director and is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.



Signed

Richard Taylor – HR Director

Date 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022