

Modern Slavery Statement September 2020 to August 2021

1. Overview

This statement is made on behalf of The Mead Educational Trust (TMET) (company number 9079258) and is pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. It constitutes our slavery and human trafficking statement. This statement relates to actions and activities during the financial year September 2020 to August 2021.

The Trust recognises that it has a responsibility to take a robust approach to slavery and human trafficking. The organisation is committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking within its activities and to ensuring that it is able to identify the signs of slavery and human trafficking through its safeguarding practices.

This statement sets out the Trust's actions to understand all potential modern slavery risks related to its business and to put in place steps that are aimed at ensuring that there is no slavery or human trafficking in its business and supply chains.

2. Structure, business and supply chains

Formed in 2014, TMET is a well-established, respected multi academy trust in Leicestershire, with a growing family of primary and secondary schools, a teaching school hub and an initial teacher-training centre. It employs over 950 staff, with a turnover exceeding £36,000,000.

TMET establishes a relationship of trust and integrity with all its suppliers, which is built upon mutually beneficial factors. Its supplier selection and on-boarding procedure includes due diligence of the supplier's reputation, respect for the law, compliance with health, safety and environmental standards, and references.

The Trust's supply chains are UK-based and key supply areas cover catering, maintenance/repairs, agency staff and cleaning.

3. Our approach

TMET works to the highest professional standards and comply with all laws, regulations and rules relevant to our business. It expects the same high standards from those it works with and is committed to ensuring that there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in its supply chains or in any part of its operations.

4. Policies, documentation and key relationships

The following key policies and documentation detail TMET's approach to protecting its pupils and staff from modern slavery and ensuring its supply chains are free from modern slavery.

- Finance Policy;
- Procurement Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy.

In addition, the Trust works closely with the unions via the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) to help reduce risk by improving working and pay practices.

5. Identifying and addressing risks

There are two main avenues by which modern slavery could impact TMET. The first is through safeguarding practices and covers child sex exploitation and human trafficking, which can directly affect pupils. This also potentially affects the staff of its contractors. The second is the Trust's supply chain and the service providers with which we contract.

a. Safeguarding

The Trust takes safeguarding incredibly seriously. It has designated safeguarding leaders (DLSs) in every school who lead on the implementation of policy and practice. Each school proactively works with their local authority, the LADO and local stakeholders to combat all safeguarding issues, including child sex exploitation and human trafficking.

Safeguarding practice in school is reviewed by the academy councillors, and is audited annually.

Safeguarding is a standing agenda item for every Board Education Committee meeting. The TMET Board has a named Safeguarding Trustee who sits on the Education Committee.

The Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually by the Executive Leadership Team, is approved by the Board of Trustees and is fully compliant with the DfE requirements and with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education. Due to the varied communities our schools serve, each site is required to understand its local safeguarding context and this is included with the policy for each school site.

b. Supply chain

The Mead Educational Trust's procurement policy defines its engagement with suppliers. Its suppliers are expected to comply with all local and national laws and regulations. This includes the requirement to pay staff the minimum wage and complete a DBS check when working on-site (as required).

Due diligence is carried out throughout the supply chain and tendering process within the Trust, with expectations clearly stipulated in regards to compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

c. Training

Safeguarding

Every member of staff, whether or not they are based in a school, is trained on the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (either in person or via e-learning) and is required to declare that they have read and understood the policy annually. The focus within the safeguarding training is on early identification of those at risk of exploitation.

In addition, the Trust has a Whistleblowing Policy which enables those with concerns about any wrongdoing or breaches of law to raise these concerns in confidence without fear of disciplinary action.

Supply Chain

Additional training for finance staff and business managers is provided to ensure they are informed of the Modern Slavery Act, how we must avoid supporting the practices of Modern Slavery and how to identify signs that Modern Slavery could be occurring.

The Trust is satisfied that, through its robust safeguarding training, staff could identify and act appropriately for at risk pupils, staff and contractors. This is an area that requires vigilance and review, therefore training and practice are under regular review.

6. Reporting

To date, no referrals have been made in relation to modern slavery.