

# **Fylde Coast Academy Trust**

## **Modern Slavery Statement Financial Year Ending 31 August 2025**

### **Introduction**

Fylde Coast Academy Trust is fully committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking in all our activities and supply chains. Our core purpose is the education and welfare of children, and this commitment to ethical practice is an integral part of our duty to safeguard and support not only our pupils but also the wider community.

We recognise our responsibility to take a robust approach to slavery and human trafficking. We are proud of the steps we have taken to date, but we also remain vigilant and committed to continuously improving our practices to ensure we are doing everything we can to combat this crime.

This statement sets out the steps Fylde Coast Academy Trust has taken during the financial year 2024-2025 to ensure that slavery and human trafficking are not taking place in any part of our own business or our supply chains.

### **Our Organisation**

Fylde Coast Academy Trust “the trust” is an academy trust in Lancashire comprising 10 schools, 950 employees, and 6,400 pupils. The trust has an annual turnover in excess of £50 million.

Our trust strongly values:

- The ethical treatment of all individuals.
- The safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- The responsible, accountable and compliant spending of public and charitable funds.

### **Business and supply chains**

As an educational institution, our primary supply chains are related to the running of our academies. We have identified our key procurement categories as:

- Facilities Management: Including cleaning, catering, and building maintenance.
- Educational Resources & Supplies: Including textbooks, software, and classroom equipment.
- ICT Hardware & Services: Sourcing computers, network infrastructure, and support.
- Utilities: Gas, electricity, and water.
- Apparel & Uniforms: Sourcing school uniforms and sportswear.
- Professional Services: Including legal, audit, and HR consultancy.
- Capital Works & Construction: For academy improvement or expansion projects.

We recognise that our highest-risk areas for modern slavery are in supply chains for cleaning, catering, construction, and the manufacture of uniforms and ICT equipment, particularly where these services are outsourced or goods are sourced from overseas.

### **Our Policies in Relation to Slavery and Human Trafficking**

Our commitment to ethical conduct is embedded in our core policies. We operate a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery, which is supported by the following Trust-wide policies:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:** Our primary duty is to safeguard children. This policy and our associated training give all staff the skills to recognise signs of abuse and exploitation, which explicitly includes awareness of child exploitation, trafficking, and "county lines."
- **Whistleblowing Policy:** We provide a confidential and secure mechanism for all staff, volunteers, and stakeholders to report any concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice, including any suspicions of modern slavery, without fear of reprisal.
- **Safer Recruitment Policy (aligned with KCSIE):** We follow strict procedures to ensure the suitability of all individuals who work with our pupils. This includes mandatory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, right-to-work checks, and verification of identity and qualifications for all employees and relevant contractors.
- **Staff Code of Conduct:** This outlines the professional and ethical standards expected of all staff, requiring them to act with integrity and in accordance with all UK laws.
- **Procurement Policy / Financial Regulations:** This policy governs how we procure goods and services. We are committed to updating this to include specific provisions that require suppliers to demonstrate their own compliance with the Modern Slavery Act.

## Due Diligence, Risk Assessment and Management

We take the following steps to assess and manage the risk of modern slavery within our organisation and supply chains:

- **Our Own Business (Recruitment):** We directly manage all recruitment of our teaching and support staff, adhering to the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) statutory guidance. This robust process of vetting and background checks minimises the risk of human trafficking or forced labour within our directly employed workforce. For any agency or third-party staff, we use reputable agencies and seek to ensure they also comply with all legal requirements, including right-to-work checks.
- **Our Supply Chains:**
  - We expect all our contractors and suppliers to comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
  - For new, high-value tenders (particularly in high-risk areas like catering, cleaning, and uniforms), we are building questions into our procurement process that require suppliers to demonstrate the steps they take to tackle modern slavery.
  - Where possible, we use established public sector procurement frameworks (e.g., Crown Commercial Service) which have already vetted suppliers for compliance.
  - We aim to build long-term, transparent relationships with our key suppliers, which allows us to engage with them on ethical issues.

## Training and Awareness

To ensure a high level of understanding of the risks of modern slavery, we provide training and maintain awareness:

- **All Staff:** All staff receive comprehensive annual safeguarding training, which includes awareness of child exploitation, trafficking, and the signs of abuse.

- Procurement & Leadership: Staff involved in procurement, finance, and central Trust leadership receive specific information and resources regarding modern slavery risks within supply chains.

### **Our Commitment for the Coming Year**

Fylde Coast Academy Trust is committed to building on these foundations. In the next financial year 2025-2026 we plan to:

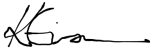
- Develop Targeted Training: Roll out specific modern slavery training for all central operations and finance staff involved in procurement.
- Update Policies: Formally review and update our Trust Procurement Policy to include explicit clauses and expectations for suppliers regarding the Modern Slavery Act.

### **Academies**

This statement applies to all academies within the trust.

### **Declaration**

This statement has been approved in full by the Fylde Coast Academy Trust board of trustees, pursuant to the fulfilment of its obligations under section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Signed  (Chair of Trustees)      Date 12/12/2025