

Lift Schools documents

Modern Slavery Statement

2023/24

Lift Schools - Modern Slavery Statement

1. Summary	2
2. Structure and supply chains	2
3. Policies in relation to slavery and human trafficking	3
4. Due diligence processes	3
5. Risk assessment and management	3
6. Measuring effectiveness	4
7. Training for staff	4
8. Actions we have taken	5

Lift Schools - Modern Slavery Statement

1. Summary

- 1.1. This statement is published in line with Section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015
- 1.2. Modern slavery remains a crime that affects millions of individuals around the world. The Modern Slavery Act 2015 defines these offenses as those of 'slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labor' and 'human trafficking'. At Lift Schools we are committed to ensuring that modern slavery is not tolerated, and encourage all those employed by the trust, or associated with it, to take a proactive approach to tackling this type of crime. Trustees have not had cause to believe that modern slavery practices have occurred within the trust or within its supply chains, but remain keenly aware of the need for continued vigilance.
- 1.3. This statement applies to all persons working for and/or on behalf of Lift Schools in any capacity, including employees of all levels, trustees, agency workers, seconded workers, volunteers, agents, contractors and suppliers.
- 1.4. We expect our external suppliers and contractors to abide by this statement and will carry out appropriate due diligence within our procurement process to ensure that we will not knowingly enter a business relationship with a non-compliant organisation.

2. Structure and supply chains

- 2.1. Lift Schools was established in 2008 and is one of the largest multi-academy trusts in England with 57 Primary, Secondary and Special Schools across England. We are a single legal entity and are an exempt charity.
- 2.2. Our main business operations are in the provision of education. These are supported by a large number of suppliers of various sizes, the vast majority of which are entirely UK-based.
- 2.3. We require organisations tendering to work with the trust to confirm that they have fulfilled their statutory requirements to have produced a Modern Slavery Statement if they meet the criteria to do so.
- 2.4. Our approach to modern slavery is communicated to all suppliers, contractors, and business partners at the outset of our business relationship with them and reinforced as appropriate thereafter. We ensure that this approach is embedded in our supply chains:
 - 2.4.1. Due diligence - all key suppliers are asked to confirm that where relevant they are compliant with the annual reporting requirements contained within Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
 - 2.4.2. Where we procure via an external framework agreement, we will ensure that the framework provider has requested the same.
 - 2.4.3. Procurement policy - our Procurement Policy places a strong emphasis on ethical procurement and includes processes for ensuring that suppliers comply with our approach.

Lift Schools - Modern Slavery Statement

2.4.4. Real Living Wage employer - we are an accredited Living Wage employer and ensure that our suppliers pay all staff contracted to work in our schools the Real Living Wage.

2.5. We are committed to ensuring there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in our supply chains or in any part of our business. We maintain a Modern Slavery Policy, published on our website, reflecting this commitment to act ethically and with integrity in all our business relationships and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure slavery and human trafficking is not taking place anywhere in our supply chains.

3. Due diligence processes

3.1. We are making increasing use of consolidated contractual arrangements with larger providers who have their own statements and policies in relation to modern slavery. This will make due diligence in relation to contractors more transparent and efficient.

4. Risk assessment and management

4.1. Trustees continue to deem the risk of systemic modern slavery within the trust itself to be **very low**. This is because recruitment to the trust takes place within a highly-professional framework and employees and volunteers are subject to legal checks, including Right to Work and DBS. Trustees are, however, clear that even one instance of modern slavery is one too many and are clear on the need to maintain vigilance.

4.2. The trust recognises that it is exposed to a greater slavery and human trafficking risk when dealing with suppliers of products and services. However, trustees deem the risk of systemic modern slavery within the trust's supply chains to be **low**. This is because procurement processes are such that reputable firms are contracted and, where cost-effective, larger contractors with their own modern slavery statements or policies are used. Similarly, the trust makes extensive use of services provided by local authorities and framework contracts.

4.3. Trustees have, however, had regard to sectoral risks and have identified the following supply chains as requiring enhanced assurances because they are more likely to make use of temporary workers sourced through an intermediary or employment agency:

4.3.1. Capital works - for high-value works, the trust contracts large firms who have greater ability to provide the service and who are more likely to have their own policies in place in respect of modern slavery.

4.3.2. School uniforms - a review of providers' policies in respect of modern slavery took place in August 2022.

4.3.3. Catering - in 2021, the trust moved to having two providers of catering services across all its schools (excluding some PFI sites). The provider's approach to modern slavery has been reviewed and trustees are satisfied that this properly addresses supply chain risks. The Modern Slavery statements for Aspens Services Ltd. have been obtained and the trust is satisfied with their actions. Hutchison Catering are not required to produce a statement as their turnover is insufficient however, we have confirmation from them that they adhere to the principles of the Act within their operation.

Lift Schools - Modern Slavery Statement

- 4.3.4. Estates management (including cleaning) - the trust has engaged the services of ISS to manage Planned Preventative Maintenance across all academies. Some of our schools have outsourced cleaning contractors and as part of the tender submission they confirmed that they will adhere to our policy requirements and their modern slavery statements have been reviewed.

5. Measuring effectiveness

- 5.1. The finance committee of the board of trustees reviews the Procurement Policy and modern slavery statement annually.

6. Training for staff

- 6.1. All staff have received training in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, which includes reference to child criminal exploitation.

7. Actions we have taken

- 7.1. In July 2024, the board approved the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- 7.2. In June 2024, the board approved the Whistleblowing Policy to promote each person's duty to raise concerns of wrongdoing and criminality. Incidents of whistleblowing are routinely reported to the Audit & Risk Committee.
- 7.3. We continue to move towards trust-wide contracts with large, established firms, many of which have their own statements or policies on modern slavery. This includes cleaning, catering, supply staffing and all high-value capital contracts.

This statement was agreed by trustees on 5th December 2024 and constitutes the trust's modern slavery statement for the financial year ending 31 August 2025.



David Hall

Chair of Trustees