



**STOUR VALE
ACADEMY
TRUST**

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

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| VERSION / DATE | VERSION 1.1 MAY 2023 |
| NEXT VERSION DUE BY | MAY 2024 |

Introduction

Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It takes various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking, all of which have in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain.

We are committed to ensuring there is transparency in our own Trust and in our approach to tackling modern slavery throughout our supply chains, consistent with our disclosure obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Stour Vale Academy Trust

Our multi-academy trust was founded in 2017 and developed from collaboration between schools, the significant positive impact of which convinced three schools, two secondary and one primary, that together we would have much greater capacity to continuously improve. Over time Stour Vale has worked collaboratively with a wider range of schools and steadily grown in size. We are now a diverse family of schools who serve children, families and communities in the West Midlands.

As a successful family of schools, delivering high-quality education for the communities we serve, Stour Vale values its diversity. Each school brings their own distinct character, community, history and identity. We celebrate the uniqueness of member schools, recognising that there is a great deal to learn from education in different contexts. This is also the reason why we remain outward-looking, committed to learning from research and excellent practice across the education system.

Our Approach

Stour Vale Academy Trust has a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery, and we are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure modern slavery is not taking place anywhere in our own Trust or in any of our supply chains. We work to the highest professional standards relating to delivering education to the communities that we serve. We also ensure that we comply with all the law, regulations and rules pertaining to a multi-academy trust.

Our approach applies to all persons working for us or on our behalf in any capacity, including employees at all levels, directors, officers, agency workers, seconded workers, volunteers, contractors, external consultants and third-party representatives.

Policies

As part of the Trust's commitment to the prevention of modern-day slavery it will ensure that this issue is considered and any risks are identified in all its policies.

Identifying and addressing risks

We recognise that there are two main avenues of risk through which modern slavery could impact Stour Vale Academy Trust. The first relates to safeguarding which covers child sex exploitation or human trafficking which can directly impact our pupils and staff. The second risk is via our supply chain and the vendors we contract with.

Safeguarding

Stour Vale is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people both within the school environment and outside. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. The Trust is committed in ensuring that all staff who come into contact with children, their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children.

Our Safeguarding Policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children, and the Governance Handbook. We comply with this guidance and the procedures set out by our local safeguarding children boards.

All schools have a designated safeguarding lead for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. Every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing bodies know the name of the designated safeguarding lead and deputies responsible for child protection and their role within their school. All staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead responsible for child protection.

Recruitment Processes

Stour Vale is committed to safer recruitment and ensures that all the necessary vetting checks such as Disclosure and Barring, Right to Work in the UK and references are obtained. This information is also obtained from external employment agencies for supply workers. Each member school has its own Single Central Record where this information is securely kept.

Supply Chain

Due to the nature of our business, we assess ourselves to have a low risk of modern slavery in our business and supply chains. Our supply chains are limited and we procure goods and services from a restricted range of UK and overseas suppliers, mainly through UK government frameworks.

Whistleblowing

We aim to encourage openness and will support anyone who raises genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken. We are committed to ensuring no one suffers any detrimental treatment as a result of reporting in good faith their suspicion that modern slavery of whatever form is or may be taking place in any part of our own business or in any of our supply chains.

Resources

The government has produced guidance that is intended as a resource providing clear and up to date information on the key facts, and to help public sector workers who may not routinely come across modern slavery recognise the signs and respond so that more victims get help and perpetrators are brought to justice. This guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-awareness-booklet>