FRMAT Modern Slavery Statement 2024

This statement is made on behalf of the Five Rivers Multi-Academy Trust (FRMAT) (company number 10070417) pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking statement. This statement relates to actions and activities during the year January 2024 to December 2024.

Five Rivers Multi-Academy 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 its supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking.

This statement sets out Five Rivers Multi-Academy 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.

Structure, business and supply chains

Five Rivers is a multi-academy trust (MAT) whose principal activity is the provision of primary education in academies within the Sheffield city region, specifically in some of the more economically deprived areas.

Our approach

FRMAT has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of modern slavery and trafficking. We are committed to acting ethically, with integrity and transparency in all business dealings and we expect our supply chain, contractors, employees and all other business partners to commit to the same, including implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to prevent and deter modern slavery.

Policies, documentation and key relationships

The following key policies are in place to help reduce risk and promote vigilance in this area:

- Complaints Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Single Central Record (SCR), Personnel Files and Safer Recruitment Policy;
- Workforce Charter
- Safeguarding Policy;
- Code of Conduct;
- Procurement Policy;
- Supplier terms and conditions;
- Equality & Diversity Policy.

In addition, we work closely with the National Joint Council (NJC) to help reduce risk by improving employee working and pay practices.

Our Finance & Audit Committee (FAC) and HR, Pay and Operations Committee (HRPOC) have oversight of the process and practices embedded within FRMAT to reduce Modern Slavery and in ensuring our supply chains, which rely on people, can demonstrate adherence with local and national laws and regulations, including paying the minimum wage.

Identifying and addressing risks

We recognise as a Trust that there are two main avenues of risk through which modern slavery could impact FRMAT. The first is through matters of a safeguarding nature which covers child sex exploitation or human trafficking which can directly impact our pupils. This also potentially affects the staff of our contractors. The second is our supply chain and the vendors we contract.

Procurement and supply chain

We are committed to ensuring that there is transparency in our business and our approach to tackling modern slavery is consistent with our obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. We expect the same high standards from all of our contractors, suppliers and other business partners and we expect them to include specific prohibitions against the use of forced, compulsory and trafficked labour, or anyone held in slavery or servitude, whether adults or children. We expect our suppliers to hold their own suppliers to the same high standards.

The biggest risk to our organisation of falling foul of the Modern Slavery Act is through our procurement of goods and services. Whilst we cannot 100% guarantee supplier adherence with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act we will endeavour to eliminate the risks as much as possible. We will do this by ensuring that our procurement processes, supplier code of conduct and contractual terms include specific provision relating to the Modern Slavery Act. Should suppliers fail to meet our minimum requirements, or be unwilling to make any changes, we may cease to trade with them.

Safeguarding

Modern Slavery and trafficking are both forms of abuse and therefore our safeguarding policies and procedures should be followed. All frontline employees receive multi-agency Safeguarding Children training which incorporates modern slavery. These employees have an individual responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the signs and indicators and that they are aware of our Safeguarding policies and procedures so that they are able to respond appropriately. Line managers must ensure that safeguarding training is kept up to date.

We have Designated Safeguarding Leads in every academy. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at meetings of the Education, Inclusion & Standards (EIS) Committee and we have a named Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding. Our Safeguarding Policy is reviewed regularly by the Executive Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees. It is fully compliant with all statutory requirements and guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Last updated by DfE 3 September 2024).

Training for staff

Every member of staff, whether or not they are based in an academy, is required to declare annually that they have read and understood the policy. In addition, FRMAT also 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.

We evaluate our processes for raising concerns to ensure that there are clearly identified ways to report concerns of whistleblowing or modern slavery which are available to all users of our estates.

Reporting

To date, no referrals have been made in relation to modern slavery or child sexual exploitation.



Signed: **(CEO/Chair of Trust Board)**

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 17 December 2024