



LAURUS
TRUST

Modern Slavery Statement

2024

This is a requirement under section 54 (Transparency in Supply Chains)
of the Modern Slavery Act 2015

Contents

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS 3

OUR BUSINESS 3

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION..... 3

POLICIES 4

AUDIT 6

GOALS AND KPIS FROM MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT 2023 6

**2024/25 GOALS AND KPIS TO ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR ACTIONS AND PROGRESS
OVER TIME 8**



Legislative requirements

The Laurus Trust is committed to ethical business practices and policies to protect workers from being abused and exploited. Under the provisions set out within the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the Laurus Trust is required to produce a slavery and human trafficking statement to disclose each financial year what action we have taken to prevent slavery and human trafficking occurring within the Trust or any of its associated activities. The trust's financial year end is 31st August.

Our business

The Laurus Trust is a Multi Academy Trust, providing education across multiple primary and secondary schools in the North West of England. The key belief of Laurus is that the all-round educational attainment of individual students is substantially promoted by their participation in a whole range of activities. From nursery through to sixth form we will strive to provide the best all-round educational experience. We aim for our students to have the choice of accessing the top universities, to have the attitudes and habits to be successful when they get there and the cultural preparation to think, study and lead – or influence those who lead.

The Trust is committed to protecting and respecting human rights and have a zero-tolerance approach towards modern slavery. We are committed to ensuring that there is no modern slavery and human trafficking in any part of our organisation. As an equal opportunity employer, we are also committed to creating and ensuring a non-discriminatory and respectful working environment for our people. Our recruitment and people management processes are designed to ensure that all prospective employees are legally entitled to work in the UK. The Trust is committed to establishing the highest quality of safeguarding practice and promoting the welfare of staff, pupils/students, and volunteers by ensuring full compliance with all statutory duties set out in the DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), and other required legislation such as that for health and safety in the workplace.

We recognise that modern slavery can affect the education sector in several ways; from the contractors we engage with to provide our school services, to the direct impact child sex exploitation and human trafficking can have on our students.

The Trust employs approximately 1,200 employees over 9 schools. The vast majority of our suppliers and contractors are UK based organisations but we do occasionally make minor purchases through Amazon with overseas suppliers operating normal value for money principles. For any large-scale procurement or capital projects, we insist on seeing a tenderer's Modern Slavery statement as part of our due diligence processes.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

As a Trust we believe that the welfare of every child is paramount and we take safeguarding very seriously. All staff working for the Trust have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to the correct persons or services for support and intervention.

Safeguarding training is compulsory for all staff, governors and trustees and delivered through either group induction sessions or 1-1 for all new employees, governors and trustees of the Trust, and refreshed on an annual basis thereafter. Staff, governors and trustees are therefore knowledgeable and well equipped should they have any concerns of a safeguarding nature, they are expected to report, record and take the necessary steps.

We also offer online training courses in Safeguarding, including:

- Safeguarding young people;
- Safeguarding children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities;
- Understanding the role of the Safeguarding Lead.

Policies

The following policies detail our approach to protecting our students and staff from modern slavery and ensuring our supply chains are free from modern slavery.

Policy	Scope	Relevance to modern slavery
Recruitment Policy	Sets out the Trust’s recruitment and selection principles to ensure a fair, consistent and compliant process. A high standard of education, safer recruitment including child safeguarding and scrutiny of documents prevents illegal working.	The Trust undertakes an extensive safer recruitment and onboarding process which minimises the risk of employing a person who may be a victim of slavery or trafficking or engaged in its activity.
Single Central Record (SCR)	The SCR provides a transparent record of the documents and checks evidenced during the recruitment and onboarding process. Records are scrutinised for compliance by senior leaders and external inspectors.	The Trust undertakes an extensive safer recruitment and onboarding process which minimises the risk of employing a person who may be victim of slavery or trafficking or engaged in its activity.
Safeguarding Policy	Sets out the Trust’s commitment to protecting children and young people from harm, including the procedure	The policy highlights how to recognise various forms of child abuse which could include identifying the signs of

	for anyone to raise a concern.	someone who is a victim of slavery or trafficking, how staff can respond and report any concerns.
Bullying and Harassment Procedure	The policy details the expectation of staff with regard to their treatment of others, the complaints procedure and encouragement for employees to raise any concerns	The Trust's robust policies provide staff with assurance that concerns about the treatment of an employee can be raised and dealt with appropriately.
Complaints Procedure	The procedure sets out the Trust's formal process to enable external parties (parents/carers) to make a complaint or raise concerns they have with the school.	The Trust's robust policies and procedures provide parents/carers and students with assurance that concerns and complaints will be dealt with appropriately.
Whistleblowing Policy	This Laurus Trust is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. Any employees of the Trust who have serious concerns are encouraged to come forward and voice those concerns. They will be able to do so in confidence and without fear of reprisal.	The Trust's robust policies and procedures provide employees and students with assurance that concerns and complaints will be dealt with appropriately.
Laurus Trust Terms and Conditions of Employment	Laurus Trust terms and conditions of employment set out the employee rights to terminate their contract.	Laurus Trust terms and conditions of employment allow employees the freedom to terminate their employment with the Trust within contractual timescales.

We work closely with and have established relationships with our teaching and non-teaching Trade Unions alongside working within the nationally agreed pay and conditions frameworks of the National Joint Council and Teachers Pay and Conditions. All Trust employee terms and conditions are in adherence with national legislation and the UK government’s statutory requirements. We also practice the advisory and statutory requirements of the UK Government’s Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance for safeguarding and safer recruitment.

Audit

All aspects of the Trust’s working practices are audited periodically throughout the year, both internally and externally. We undertake internal staff surveys; including employee engagement and wellbeing allowing staff the opportunity to comment freely about the organisation and we share the feedback received. Our financial and safeguarding operations undergo internal audits periodically throughout the year, we are subject to an annual external audit and as a provider of state education we are subject to external Ofsted inspections.

Goals and KPIs from Modern Slavery Statement 2023

The following goals and KPIs were set by the Trust in the 2023 Modern Slavery Statement, please see below the progress against these targets:

KPI	Progress
<p>Consultation of a full Trust policy regarding Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking.</p>	<p>This Trust introduced a Modern Slavery policy in September 2022.</p>
<p>Introduction of formal training ‘Raising Awareness of Trafficking and Modern Slavery’ to all contracted staff, raising awareness of what modern slavery is, how to spot the signs and report concerns.</p>	<p>We have introduced a ‘Raising Awareness of Trafficking and Modern Slavery’ course for all contracted staff, trustees and governors. This course covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What modern slavery and trafficking are • The Modern Slavery Act 2015 • Types of trafficking

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busting myths about trafficking • Who does trafficking affect? • Why is trafficking possible? • Internal trafficking and county lines • Spotting signs of trafficking • Reporting concerns about a trafficked child or adult • Advice and support
<p>Update of our Financial Manual (which contains our Procurement policy) to ensure we do not enter into business with any organisation which knowingly supports, or is found to be involved in slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.</p>	<p>This has been completed and will continue to be updated in line with the relevant legislation.</p>
<p>During the Trust’s annual review of employee policies, we will ensure consideration is given to the risks and prevention of modern slavery and incorporate these within our policies.</p>	<p>We have reviewed our existing policies and procedures in light of the Act. We are confident that our policies promote good behaviour among our colleagues at work and within our Trust. Our policies and procedures are kept under review to make sure that they reflect the changing needs of the Trust and of the staff, students/pupils and the communities it serves.</p> <p>The policies listed below set out the work of the Trust in protecting pupils and staff from modern slavery and ensuring our supply chains are free from modern slavery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying and Harassment • Grievance Policy • Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure • Recruitment Policy • Safeguarding • Code of Conduct

	As a Trust we operate a policy framework that is refined and refreshed to enable the Trust to embed best practice and mitigate risk.
Ensure that our largest suppliers and contractors have an up-to-date modern slavery statement.	This has been completed and for any new suppliers the Trust actively seeks to obtain this information.

2024/25 goals and KPIs to ensure effectiveness of our actions and progress over time

Throughout the year ahead we are committed to taking the following action:

- Continuously updating our procurement and key policies across the Trust.
- The Trust will establish relevant functions to target for training on modern slavery and ethical employment practices. This process will be scoped and applied by April 2024.



Wendy Mason, CFO and Trustee

On behalf of the Board of Trustees



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Laurus Trust
Woods Lane
Cheadle Hulme
Cheshire
SK8 7JY

t: 0161 549 7000
e: enquiries@laurustrust.co.uk
w: laurustrust.co.uk