

United Learning Modern Slavery Act Statement

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. This statement sets out the actions taken by United Learning to understand all potential modern slavery risks related to our Charitable Group and to put in place steps that are aimed at ensuring that there is no slavery or human trafficking in our own operations and our supply chains.

About United Learning

United Learning is the trading name of the Charitable Group which comprises **United Church Schools Trust** and **United Learning Trust**. **United Church Schools Foundation Ltd**, which is also a charitable company, is the ultimate owner of the United Learning charities. All the Trustees of ULT and UCST sit together as a Group Board, to which the Trustees of both entities have delegated their powers and functions. As of 1 January 2022 United Learning comprises 13 independent schools, 75 state sector academies and a central office function that serves our schools.

The overall aim of the Group is to promote excellent education, providing strong schools which enable all young people to make a success of their lives. The roots of our charity can be traced back over 130 years, and we have founded and developed a large number of schools, focusing on the most important social and educational challenges of the day. Our strength lies in our unique collaboration between state and independent schools, in our national reach and in our continued determination to learn, improve and achieve excellence.

Risk Management

Directors and Senior Executives have formally identified and documented the major risks to which United Learning is exposed. Those risks are reviewed by the Group Board, the Risk and Audit Committee and the Executive Board. Risk management strategies have been implemented to ensure risk management is embedded in our day-to-day processes.

Protection of pupils and employees has been identified as one of the principal risk areas for United Learning. Systems and procedures to minimise these risks are constantly being reviewed and updated.

Our internal auditors carry out regular testing of internal procedures and controls including adherence to policies and procedures. Any non-compliances are included in internal audit reports, which are communicated to senior management and the Risk and Audit Committee. As part of the whistleblowing policy the internal audit team will investigate any allegations of impropriety.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

United Learning has Safeguarding and Child Protection policies in place which focus on the need to ensure that its pupils are safe, feel safe and are fully supported in this respect by their School. These policies provide a framework for our schools to develop secure processes for identifying and



United Learning Modern Slavery Act Statement

supporting pupils at risk of abuse. The Group Safeguarding Policy specifically identifies modern slavery and trafficking as forms of harm and provides guidance for staff who believe a child is at risk of harm.

Headteachers, together with Designated Safeguarding Leads, are required to ensure that staff and governors have safeguarding and child protection training that is regularly updated. Staff also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates and have access to up to date, relevant information in relation to forms of neglect and abuse.. Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked forms a part of this training. Our schools have processes in place to ensure that the voice of the child is heard and that pupils are able to disclose any concerns they may have. If children are persistently absent from school the reasons for this will be investigated.

The centre employs a Safeguarding Lead who carries out audits to provide assurance that safeguarding policies and procedures are adhered to and that training has been delivered.

HR Policies

In accordance with our aim of providing an excellent education for children and young people across the country, United Learning intends at all times to act and be seen to be act with the utmost integrity and expects all colleagues to act in the same manner. United Learning is committed to the provision of an open, honest and transparent working environment for all colleagues, prospective colleagues, and others working in or visiting its premises. We are committed to ensuring all colleagues are treated with dignity and respect and are able to carry out their job role free from conflict, risk, harassment or any other behaviour perceived to be compromising, demeaning or demoralizing. The Group has a number of HR policies in place which ensure that this ethos is put into effect. New staff receive appropriate training regarding United Learning's policies and procedures.

It is a statutory requirement for all schools and academies to undertake certain recruitment and vetting checks on individuals working within their establishment and to maintain a live Single Central Record of these checks. Therefore, all our schools and the central office are able to demonstrate that that vetting checks, including proof of right to work in the UK, have been carried out for all staff.

Whistleblowing policy

The United Learning Whistleblowing Policy places a duty on all employees to report instances of impropriety, including but not limited to criminal activity and improper conduct. The policy sets out a clear process for reporting such concerns and provides protection for individuals who do so. United Learning is committed to ensuring that any concerns of this nature are taken seriously and investigated. Our Whistleblowing Policy specifically mentions the risk of modern slavery and stresses that a report of concern in relation to those matters can be made under the protection of the policy.

Procurement

We have identified that some of our procurement takes place within sectors where modern slavery offences could occur, such as the construction industry and within our catering, grounds



United Learning Modern Slavery Act Statement

maintenance, cleaning, school uniform and ICT supply chains. Our current catering contractors are required to check an individual's right to work in the UK and carry out a DBS check prior to hiring staff to work in our schools. Tenders for supply of services and or goods include a requirement for the supplier to report on their ethical trading including ensuring they also comply with Modern Slavery Act 2015. When one of our schools is selecting a new school uniform supplier, we will consider potential suppliers' ethical trading policies and review their code of conduct for suppliers as part of the selection process. When engaging contractors for construction projects our contracts require the contractors to comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and ensure compliance by all sub-contractors. During this year our Head of Procurement has undertaken ethical training delivered by the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply and has implemented new supplier terms and conditions, which allow us to terminate an agreement with immediate effect if a supplier breaches our requirements in relation to Modern Slavery Act compliance.

We will continue to seek assurances seek from suppliers as to their avoidance of modern slavery and human trafficking.

During the academic year 2021/22 we will continue to raise awareness amongst central office colleagues and school business managers of the risks of modern slavery occurring within our supply chains

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 August 2021.

Signed Richard Greenhalgh

Date: 7th February 2022

Richard Greenhalgh

Chair of the United Learning Group Board and Trustee of United Church Schools Foundation Ltd, United Church Schools Trust and United Learning Trust.

