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3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of both the Summer Term and the academic year, I am keen to write to you to provide detail on the many developments and improvements you will no doubt already have noticed have been taking place at Khalsa Secondary Academy over the last six months.

### **Safeguarding**

You will be pleased to know that a great deal of progress has been made in relation to safeguarding since January. Anchored Schools, in their external audit of safeguarding in March 2020, stated that *"the school's safeguarding is effective"*, that *"the school is compliant with its safeguarding duties"* and that *"the school and the Trust have the capacity to ensure rapid and sustained improvements within all aspects of safeguarding."*

Over the last six months, both before and since the external audit in March, we have implemented appropriate procedures within school to ensure we respond swiftly and comprehensively to any safeguarding issues or concerns that might arise, and we are now on a strong footing for the return of Ofsted or any other inspecting body at any time. Since March, we have also taken additional steps to demonstrate we are adhering to and fulfilling all our statutory responsibilities in relation to safeguarding practices and procedures, which include us ensuring staff training and development is even more comprehensive, and us ensuring that students' awareness of safeguarding matters is even greater (despite all schools having been in lockdown). We confirm that all adults involved with the school have been trained in safeguarding to the required standard.

I would like to thank Mr Roopra (Assistant Headteacher and the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead), the DSL team, and the whole staff team, for their absolute commitment to ensuring we are safeguarding our students to the highest standards and expectations. We have also benefitted greatly from expertise in this vital area by the Trust Board's Vice Chair of Standards and Safeguarding Trustee, the Trust Board's Director of School Improvement, the Chair of the IEB, the Local Authority, Anchored Schools, SSS Learning and other external agencies.

### **SEND provision**

Over the last six months, much work has gone on to ensure our students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and all students on the SEND Register, are provided with the highest standard of provision and support, both before and during lockdown. Staff have also received additional training and development on a range of SEND matters, including robust approaches to the identification of students' needs and the adaptation of teaching to meet these needs. This staff training and development will continue throughout the coming Autumn Term and beyond. I would like to thank Ms Rowe (Assistant Headteacher, Inclusion) and her team for leading on these matters, and for striving to make the school a model of best practice in SEND provision. Thank you also to the Local Authority and to our School Improvement Partner for the high quality advice and guidance they have provided.

## **Quality of Teaching and Learning**

I would like to express my thanks, as well as the thanks and appreciation already expressed by many parents and carers, for the quality of teaching and learning that has been provided by KSA staff from late March to now, throughout the lockdown period. The breadth, depth and quality of the online learning, interactive sessions, and the more recent recorded lessons, along with the regular pastoral engagements with students and form groups has been second to none. Having spoken with other Headteachers and senior staff locally and further afield, I am satisfied that the students of KSA have been provided with a richer remote learning and pastoral experience than many students in a lot of schools have had over the last three months. That is a credit to the professionalism, dedication and commitment of our whole staff team. I would like to thank Mr Keshani (Assistant Headteacher) and his team for all their hard work on upskilling staff and students in the use of online learning platforms such as Google Classroom in such a short space of time.

This week, we have held one to one academic progress meetings with our Year 10 and Year 12 students, as per government guidelines. These meetings have gone very well, and we were delighted by the high attendance of our students and by their excellent attitude and conduct. Some students were unable to attend the meetings with their subject teachers this week, so they will be invited to a second series of meetings which are due to take place in the last week of term (w/b 13<sup>th</sup> July).

Mr Keshani has also been working with all staff on their deeper understanding of Rosenshine's Principles and Sherrington's Strands, which will form the basis of KSA's and the Trust's approach to teaching and learning from September onwards. These approaches to teaching and learning are based on a strong bedrock of research and are well regarded by Ofsted and other inspecting bodies. I will ask Mr Keshani to provide parents with additional detail on Rosenshine's Principles and Sherrington's Strands so that you are aware of the approach that this school and Trust, and that many other schools and Trusts, are now taking in relation to how subject matter is taught, learnt and understood in the classroom.

## **Staff Recruitment**

I am pleased to inform you that we have a full complement of teaching and support staff in readiness for September, and that we will be reliant on no regular supply or agency staff. We have attracted a number of high quality, specialist staff with expertise in Maths, English, Science, Computer Science, Business, Social Sciences and Spanish.

## **Curriculum Design**

Since January, we have been working on building a curriculum that is inclusive, highly aspirational, broad and balanced, and that is based on Sikh values and British values. The design of our curriculum has been focused on providing students with an enriched experience that will greatly enhance their life chances by embedding cultural capital across and throughout their academic journey. KSA staff have also been working closely with colleagues from our two sister schools, in Wolverhampton and at Atam, as well as seeking appropriate advice and guidance from our School Improvement Partner and other educational experts, to ensure the very best curriculum experience for all students across the Trust.

Along with many other schools throughout England, KSA has now moved back to the model of a three-year Key Stage Three followed by a two-year Key Stage Four. This is the model now favoured by Ofsted and other inspecting bodies. As a result, students will be choosing their GCSE options in Year 9 from now on.

I would like to thank Mr Williams (Deputy Headteacher), all Heads of Department and Subject Leads for the incredible amount of work they have put into their departmental and Trust-wide collaborations and into the refinement of the programmes of study that have been composed as a result.

## **Departmental Resources and Equipment**

I am delighted that we have been able to provide additional resources and equipment to all academic departments and subjects, and to maths, science, IT, PE, art and DT in particular. This will enable teachers to provide an enhanced learning experience in both academic and practical settings. This additional resourcing

is the first part of a three-year programme of targeted investment in our academic departments, and is also in response to the curriculum changes that we are bringing about at Key Stage Three in particular.

Items purchased include:

- mathematical games and equipment for Maths Mastery, including multilink cubes, Dienes blocks, geoboards and Cuisenaire rods, as well as board compasses and protractors, new textbooks for KS3 and KS4, and maths software packages and question banks
- science practical equipment for all required GCSE and A Level practical experiments, as well as new sets of textbooks and revision guides
- a new class set of laptops for use in IT, computer science and across the wider curriculum
- movable basketball stands and hoops, allowing basketball to be introduced to the PE curriculum, along with a range of additional supplies for outdoor PE and games
- a pillar drill in DT, enabling students to construct much more substantial projects, and improved organisation and storage facilities for tools and equipment, promoting students' independence whilst working in a practical setting
- easels and drawing equipment in art, allowing students to produce larger canvas work and larger items of intricate artwork, as well as a new library of specialist art books and portfolios

### **The School Library**

We are excited to be launching the new School Library in September, after a major investment in books, furniture, computers and equipment. This will support us in our aim to empower our students to become avid readers, to read for pleasure, to improve in their command of vocabulary and to be able to access the entire curriculum.

The library will be staffed by a dedicated librarian and a team of teaching and support staff who are keen to support this important venture. We are grateful to the Bucks Library Service for the loan of a large supply of new, age-appropriate and inspiring fiction and non-fiction books, and to the school's governors and the Trust Board who have allocated a substantial sum for the purchase of a wide range of new books, handpicked by Askews and Holts Library Services in Preston. The school has also purchased the well regarded Accelerated Reader reading and review programme and the necessary library management and security software. I would like to thank Mr Beeston (Assistant Headteacher and Head of English) and the whole English department for their active support in bringing this new and important facility to fruition.

### **Careers and Work Experience Hub**

Another development currently underway is the design of a new Careers and Work Experience Hub, which will be located close to the library, and which will become a one-stop shop for all careers and work experience related enquiries and resources. Students will be encouraged to use the hub to learn about industry and the many opportunities that are available to them beyond school. I would like to thank Mr Hague (Assistant Headteacher and i/c Careers) and Ms Basra (the school's independent careers adviser) for all their work in developing this exciting new provision.

### **Students in Years 11 and 13**

Although the school year ended rather abruptly for our students in Years 11 and 13, we remain fully committed to ending their respective years of study in a proper manner, as soon as it is safe to do so. Mr Roopra has plans afoot for a social gathering and/or a Prom for each of these year groups and we have put provisional dates in the diary. Further details will follow, in accordance with the government advice and guidance at the time.

### **Students in Year 6, joining us in Year 7 in September**

We very much look forward to welcoming our new cohort of Year 7 students in September. We recognise that the last three months have been very unusual, and that secondary schools have not been able to operate all their normal induction arrangements, but we will ensure all the necessary information is provided to our new students and their families prior to the summer break. Thank you to Mr Beeston (i/c Transition)

and other staff for their continued communication and liaison with our Year 6 students and families throughout the lockdown period.

### **My grateful thanks**

I would like to express my grateful thanks to all parents and staff for making me feel so welcome as KSA's new Headteacher. I have been delighted with the high level of support and professionalism I have enjoyed since February from the Trust Board and CEO, the Local Advisory Board, the IEB, the Parents Forum and the Local Authority. I look forward to leading KSA over the months and years to come, and to lead it on a journey of restored confidence, achievement and success. You also know that my clear preference is for the school to remain very much part of the existing Trust. We are on a very pleasing trajectory of recovery and improvement.

### **And Finally....**

In conclusion, I would like to thank all students and families for coping 'as best you can' over the last fourteen weeks. It has been such a strange and uncertain time for everyone, although I hope that we are now beginning to see a transition to a more settled and predictable phase.

The new Autumn Term begins for students in all year groups on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September, apart from students in Year 12 who will start the new term on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September. You are reminded that the government has stipulated compulsory attendance from all students in all year groups.

With my very best wishes to each of you for the summer break that lies ahead.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Chris Drew  
Headteacher