

Inspection of Khalsa Secondary Academy

Pioneer House, Hollybush Hill, Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire SL2 4QP

Inspection dates: 3–4 December 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils are very happy at Khalsa Secondary Academy (KSA). Pupils typically work hard at KSA, enjoy their time there, and feel safe. However, leaders have not made sure that pupils are safe. Leaders at trust and school level have not followed essential safeguarding processes when recruiting staff. The designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) care about pupils but have not helped some vulnerable pupils as quickly or effectively as they should.

Leaders express high ambition for pupils and, overall, pupils do well in their GCSEs. However, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not do well because they do not get the support that they require. Teachers do not know what pupils' specific needs are and so do not make adjustments for them. Some pupils with SEND do not have access to the range of subjects available to others.

Pupils focus on GCSE examinations from Year 7. They follow a reduced two-year key stage 3. This does not provide them with similar breadth of learning to the national curriculum.

Pupils behave well and are polite and welcoming to visitors. They do not see bullying as an issue and feel that the school deals well with any instances that arise. Pupils appreciate the wide range of enrichment activities which teachers put on for them. Those who are elected to the school council are proud to represent their peers.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders say that they want to provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum. However, in key stages 3 and 4 the focus is very much on GCSE results. From Year 7, pupils work on examination questions. Pupils have a condensed two-year key stage 3, learn the examination content in Years 9 and 10 and then spend Year 11 revising for their GCSE examinations. This approach narrows the curriculum in some subjects, for example geography, because teachers cannot fit the full key stage 3 curriculum into the time available. Overall, pupils do well in the GCSEs that they take, but their overall learning is limited.

Leaders have not ensured that all pupils receive a curriculum of the same ambition and quality. Pupils with SEND are not given the support they require because teachers do not know what their specific needs are. Leaders have given teachers lots of information about Year 11 pupils but have not done so for pupils lower down the school. Teachers do not know how to meet these pupils' needs. Some pupils with SEND follow a limited set of GCSE courses.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is aware that the school's approach to identifying additional needs is not effective. The school does not engage well enough with external experts who could provide the required advice and

support. Overall, expectations of pupils with SEND are low and their needs are not accurately identified, assessed or met.

Leaders have not prioritised reading in the school. There is no library, so English teachers have created classroom book boxes with their own and donated books. However, these are of varying quality and are uninspiring. To address this gap in provision, subject leaders have constructed a reading list, delivered assemblies about reading and arranged commercial book fairs at school. They plan to introduce further resources in 2020 but recognise this is currently a significant gap in provision for pupils.

In the sixth form the quality of education is stronger than in the main school. Students follow relevant and ambitious study programmes. All have work experience or work-related learning that will help them to achieve their goals and to move on to their next steps. Students are happy with their decision to stay at KSA, with one saying they are 'comfortably challenged' to work hard. The acting head of school is still leading the sixth form, alongside his many other responsibilities. He has supported staff training and ensured that teachers visit other providers. This helps leaders to check that, during these first years of teaching post-16 students, staff have the right level of knowledge and are appropriately demanding of students.

Pupils' personal development is strong. They enjoy a wide range of enrichment activities as well as assemblies and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). These opportunities help to create confident, articulate young people who think carefully about their role in the world. Leaders of careers are passionate and ambitious for pupils. They understand the work still required to ensure that all pupils receive the careers advice and guidance they are entitled to, especially pupils with SEND.

Pupils display positive behaviour and attitudes overall. There is very little disruption to learning and they are proud of their work. They are respectful and are very clear that prejudice and bullying are not allowed at the school. Although pupils feel safe and trust their teachers, leaders have not ensured a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. As a result, pupils are unaware that they are not, in fact, being kept safe.

Leaders at trust level have not ensured that required policies and procedures, such as that covering the use of CCTV, are in place. Some documents presented to inspectors were incomplete or referred to another school. The lack of these policies is part of the reason there is confusion about responsibilities and processes at the school.

Leaders at the school are working hard. Many have stepped up to try to fill gaps in leadership. However, they do not have the training or support that they need to be effective in these roles.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders at trust and school level have not followed national requirements, referenced in their own policies, to ensure that they keep pupils safe. Despite knowing that the acting head of school was not trained in safer recruitment, governors did not stop him from undertaking the recruitment of staff or check his work. When inspectors arrived at the school we found that some required recruitment checks had not been completed. Steps were taken to remedy these failings during the inspection but only once inspectors pointed them out.

Not all staff have received safeguarding training. Many that we spoke to have a superficial knowledge of safeguarding.

All the deputy DSLs' training is out of date. Along with the DSL, they care deeply about pupils and try to respond to safeguarding concerns. However, their recording system is hard to use and ineffective, and communication is poor. Consequently, they have failed to act in a timely fashion; pupils who needed help have not received it. The trust has purchased a system to support this aspect of work in their other schools but had not considered putting it into KSA until the inspection.

When the lead DSL first trained, in summer 2019, he became concerned about the poor quality of safeguarding at the school. He commissioned the local authority to come to do a 'healthcheck'. This did not start until October and the findings had only been presented to the DSL three weeks before this inspection. Leaders did not act swiftly and comprehensively on the concerns in the meantime.

Leaders, including those at trust and governance level, have not learned from serious safeguarding failures. They have not acted with the urgency required.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Safeguarding is not effective and statutory procedures are not followed so that pupils are kept safe. Leaders at trust, local governance, and school level need to ensure that all requirements for safeguarding set out in their own policies are met fully and consistently. This includes undertaking mandatory checks during recruitment, recording these checks on the single central record, and ensuring that those responsible for undertaking these tasks are properly trained and qualified to do so.
- Required policies are out of date, incomplete or missing. The trust needs to remedy this. Policies must be made personal to KSA and staff must be given the time and training to understand them. Leaders need to monitor how well they are implemented.
- Some staff are not safeguarding trained and leaders did not know this until the

inspection. All adults involved with the school must be safeguarding trained as a matter of urgency. Leaders need to check that this happens as a matter of routine and make sure that any individuals who miss training catch up with it quickly.

- Some of those working as DSLs have out-of-date training and qualifications. This must be rectified. Those responsible for governance must check that this is done routinely.
- Communication and record-keeping about pupils who are vulnerable or at risk are poor. The DSLs need to improve this urgently so that there are no gaps and pupils' needs are not missed.
- There is confusion about responsibility for safeguarding and the trust's scheme of delegation is not followed. This means important actions have fallen through the cracks. The trust must provide clarity about responsibility and accountability. All involved with the school and its leadership need to understand who is responsible for each aspect and how this will be monitored.
- Leaders at the school have not had the training or support that they need. Trust and local governors need to ensure that school leaders are given the training, time, resources and support to be able to do their jobs properly.
- Provision for pupils with SEND needs to be improved so that their needs are met. Teachers need to have information about pupils' needs so that they can make the required adjustments and support their learning. Leaders need to engage with external experts and make use of their advice.
- Leaders want pupils to follow a broad and balanced curriculum that is as ambitious as the national curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is implemented as they intend and that it is not narrowed or limited in the quest for strong examination results.
- It is recommended that the school does not appoint newly qualified teachers.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government

pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	139897
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10131798
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	427
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	64
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mr Inder Singh Uppal
Headteacher	Mr Julian Williams (Acting Head of School)
Website	www.khalsasecondaryacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	13–14 September 2017

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection there have been several changes to school and trust leadership. The chair of the Khalsa Academies Trust (KAT) has changed. The principal moved to another KAT school on a full-time basis in January 2019. She returned (as executive principal) in October 2019 after the director of education left the trust.
- The current acting head of school joined the school in September 2018 as vice principal to set up the new sixth form. In January 2019 he was asked to be acting head of school. The then director of education supported him until October 2019.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It first admitted students to its sixth form in September 2018.
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection that a serious incident that occurred at the setting since the previous inspection is under investigation by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate

incidents of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the incident were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- The inspection was carried out following a complaint made to Ofsted that raised serious concerns. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish whether leaders had robust safeguarding processes and had established a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. They were also focused on how well leaders had responded to serious safeguarding incidents to ensure that they were not repeated.
- This inspection was carried out without notice. The lead inspector telephoned the school at 8am and the team arrived on site to start the inspection 15 minutes later.
- We evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by examining leaders' knowledge, records and actions, alongside the impact of that work in the practices undertaken by staff. Inspection activities included checking the school's single central record, the recruitment procedures and records of staff training. We spoke with the DSLs and reviewed a sample of case files. We spoke to representatives from the trust and to the chair of the local governing body, who oversees safeguarding at the school. We also discussed safeguarding with staff and pupils.
- We held meetings with the acting head of school, the executive headteacher from another school that is part of the trust and the chief executive officer. We also met with other senior leaders, including curriculum leaders and the SENCo. We met with groups of staff and teaching assistants.
- The lead inspector spoke to a trustee by telephone.
- We spoke to pupils about the school and took account of the 90 responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- We considered the views of staff from conversations and the 30 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- We considered the 60 responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including 29 written responses.
- We took account of several emails submitted by a range of people associated with

the trust.

- We did deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography and PSHE. This involved discussions with the leaders of each of these subjects, visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, and discussions with pupils and teachers from the lessons visited about the subjects.

Inspection team

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