

The British Sikh School

Wolverhampton Road East, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV4 6AP

Inspection dates

18–19 April 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- There has been a high turnover of senior staff in the short time the school has been open. However, governors and the multi-academy trust (MAT) have ensured that pupils' education has remained good.
- Teaching is good and helps pupils make strong progress. Well-motivated pupils and excellent relationships mean that pupils do well in their studies.
- Leaders use moderation to make sure that their assessments are accurate. However, this moderation is not yet consistently well developed across the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Exclusions are rare and pupils enjoy school. They gain confidence in their time at school and become increasingly articulate and thoughtful.
- Leaders have developed a varied and interesting curriculum. It allows pupils to do a range of interesting subjects and gain valuable experiences.
- There has been recent turbulence in science staffing. However, pupils' progress has not suffered.
- Governors are improving their effectiveness through skills audits, training and inviting new governors with specific knowledge onto the board.
- Very recently, new leaders have been appointed to some key positions. These leaders require support and development to ensure that they are fully effective in their roles.
- Safeguarding is effective because staff are well trained, vigilant and diligent in following up safeguarding issues. Recent changes to safeguarding staff mean that leaders need to review this area of their work.
- The difference between disadvantaged and White British pupils' progress, and that of their peers, is diminishing over time. However, leaders' strategic planning for the use of pupil premium funding needs to be improved.
- Pupils' attendance overall is in line with the national average. However, disadvantaged and White British pupils' absence is above the national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that:
 - safeguarding checks are always accurately recorded on the single central record
 - the roles of the designated safeguarding leaders are clarified so that all staff know their responsibilities
 - leaders check that these improvements are consistently maintained.
- Continue to improve leadership across the school. Do this by ensuring that:
 - the school benefits from a period of stability in leadership
 - new senior and middle leaders are fully supported as they develop their skills
 - job roles are clear so that leaders at all levels understand them
 - the skills and knowledge of new governors and trustees are used fully.
- Improve assessment, by developing more consistent moderation practice across the school.
- Ensure that the recent changes to staffing in the science department do not negatively affect pupils' progress in the future.
- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged and White British pupils.
- Improve the strategic planning of the use of pupil premium funding, by:
 - more accurately identifying the barriers to these pupils' progress in planning documentation
 - planning for the use of these funds in advance of their spending
 - making sure that the use of these funds is fully evaluated in line with national guidance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the school's opening, there has been much turbulence in the senior leadership team. The school has had four principals in just over two years. While this has, in some ways, hampered leaders' ability to develop the school as quickly as they would like, the MAT has not allowed it to have a negative impact on pupils' progress. It has not stopped the few leaders who have been consistent since the opening of the school from creating a calm and purposeful learning environment where pupils feel safe and work hard.
- The MAT has recently appointed a director of education who is effectively supporting the newly appointed leadership team.
- Currently, most senior leadership positions are filled. There is an acting principal, and the governors are seeking to appoint a vice-principal imminently. All involved in the school are looking forward to a longer period of stability in the future. The director of education and acting principal are ensuring that, at a time of turbulence, the school is managed well and pupils' progress is not negatively affected.
- Many of the leaders in the school are new to the school or new in post. They have accurately identified the key issues. They are swiftly and effectively addressing these issues. However, because of their newness in post, in some areas their analysis of information is not as sharp as it needs to be. The acting principal has identified a general training need for this new leadership team and plans are in place to make sure that their skills develop quickly.
- Leaders have recently appointed a new leader to coordinate the school's work for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. This leader has put appropriate systems in place and provided all staff with the appropriate information with which to plan learning for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teachers generally use this information well.
- In 2016, staff performance management targets were not appropriately challenging, nor did they enable leaders to be held to account effectively. The performance management process for 2017/18 has been considerably strengthened. Staff targets are now more appropriate, measurable and challenging.
- In the past, leaders' planning for the use of funding for disadvantaged pupils was very weak. Their evaluation of the impact of this funding was similarly weak. Planning for the use of this funding in 2017 to 2018 is improved but still needs some development. For example, it does not identify that disadvantaged pupils' behaviour is not as strong as that of other pupils in the school. However, disadvantaged pupils' progress is not currently of concern.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors, the MAT and leaders share a vision of excellence. They understand that as the school grows, the challenges facing it are changing. They have audited their skills so that they know where they need to improve, participated in

training when required and visit the school regularly to gain first-hand evidence of how the school is developing. Governors know that their skills need to develop as the school develops.

- Governors have dealt adequately with the high turnover of principals, turbulence in the senior team and delays in moving to the new building. They have ensured that senior leadership positions have been filled, albeit with temporary or short-term leaders.
- The MAT has recently appointed more governors and trustees with educational experience. This has resulted in their improved ability to understand pupils' attainment and progress and hold school leaders to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Documentation shows that leaders respond appropriately when safeguarding concerns arise. They keep careful notes and records, and make sure that they work with other agencies to keep pupils safe. Safeguarding records show that staff are vigilant, have up-to-date training, and know what to do if they have concerns. Governors regularly check on safeguarding referrals to make sure that they are being properly handled.
- Leaders' work to improve pupils' knowledge about keeping safe is very strong. Pupils enjoy participating in a range of activities, many with external providers and in workshops. Pupils say that they enjoy this active approach. For example, pupils have had workshops, assemblies and lessons on child sexual exploitation, online safety, radicalisation and extremism, sexual consent, road safety and gang crime. As a result of the varied and active approach, pupils remember the key messages from these activities and can talk confidently about them.
- Leaders acknowledge that there are some elements of their safeguarding practice that could be improved. Due to recent changes in the safeguarding team, roles and responsibilities around safeguarding are not yet clear enough. During the inspection, some minor clerical errors needed to be put right on the single central record. All appropriate checks on staff had been carried out but occasionally these have not been recorded in full on the single central record.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent and there are extremely strong relationships between teachers and pupils. This means that lessons are typically highly focused on pupils' learning. Many pupils are very reflective about what they are learning. They can explain what they do well and what they need to improve, and are proud to talk about their work. For example, in an art lesson, pupils explained to inspectors how their skills were developing and what impact this was having on their pieces of art.
- Across the school, teachers make it clear to pupils 'what went well', and how work could be 'even better if...'. Pupils value this consistency of approach and it has become part of their vocabulary. This means that they regularly challenge themselves to do better. As one pupil commented: 'We are challenged all the time but teachers support us to do our very best.'

- Pupils talk about their attainment grades in detail. They understand what these grades mean and how they relate to their targets. As a result, they know when they need to ask for more help, put in more effort or focus on a particular piece of knowledge to improve.
- Over 70% of pupils speak English as an additional language. However, the vast majority are proficient in English and need little extra help. Where pupils' English language skills are emerging, staff support them effectively to make progress.
- Teachers typically plan lessons well so that one lesson links to the next. The clarity of this planning means that teachers are clear when pupils are a little behind, and they can plan interventions which are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Leaders, rightly, see checking of the accuracy of assessment as very important in the school. Different subjects are at a variety of stages in the security and breadth of this moderation. In some cases, moderation has a strong positive impact on assessment, in others it is less well planned and so not as effective. Leaders know this and have plans to create a more coherent system of moderation across the school.
- Recently, in science, many pupils have had a new teacher. This is because some science teachers have left the school mid-year. This very recent situation has resulted in some pupils being taught by a non-specialist in science. Science teachers have worked hard to minimise disruption to pupils' progress, but acknowledge the need to ensure that pupils do not fall behind in their learning as a result.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to their studies.
- Leaders have developed a 'virtues curriculum'. This curriculum enables pupils to explore fundamental British values alongside Sikh values. Around the school are displays about role models who display the values of courage, compassion, discipline, service and gratitude. Assemblies, reminders from staff, lessons and events reiterate these values and pupils understand them well.
- Leaders understand the importance of using national career guidance standards and have begun to assess the school's careers guidance against these standards, improving careers guidance as a result. They have ensured that pupils have access to information about the many paths open to them, including apprenticeships and other local education providers. Then, before choosing their GCSE courses, staff held individual consultations with their pupils and their parents. As a result, pupils made informed choices about their options. Leaders have planned a further careers event that will give pupils impartial advice about all of the local options available to them, including university technical colleges.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have high expectations of pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school.

Pupils typically meet these expectations without being asked or reminded. In corridors and around the school pupils speak respectfully to one another and adults. They greet each other warmly and concern themselves about others' well-being. Pupils say that one of the best things about their school is that their peers are a tight-knit community who are kind to one another.

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is also very positive. They say that disruption in lessons is very rare. Records of behaviour issues support this and inspectors observed no incidents of low-level disruption during the inspection.
- Exclusions are low. Fixed-term exclusions are effective in helping pupils to behave well, and repeat fixed-term exclusions are almost non-existent. Leaders also use internal exclusions, but these are also very rare.
- While absence and persistent absence are around the national average, attendance has dipped as the number of pupils grows. Parents increasingly, and against the school's advice, decide to take holidays during term time, which has a negative impact on these pupils' progress. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance and that of White British pupils is lower than the national average for all pupils. In the relatively small number of behaviour incidents the school has logged, disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately represented. Leaders know about these challenges and are beginning to address them.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- No pupils in the school have yet taken external examinations. Therefore there is no externally validated attainment and progress information for the school.
- Leaders have designed an assessment system, which takes pupils' starting points, sets ambitious targets based on exceeding national expectations, and assesses their progress regularly.
- The school's own information about pupils' progress shows that the vast majority of pupils are making secure progress towards their targets. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work over time supports this. In mathematics and English, pupils' progress is good. Across all other subjects, pupils' overall progress is generally in line with their targets.
- Leaders have identified that White British and disadvantaged pupils' progress is a little behind that of their peers. However, as a result of targeted teaching, over time, these pupils' progress is improving.
- The school uses an online reading assessment tool to improve pupils' literacy skills. Teachers also take regular opportunities to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy in lessons. As a result, those pupils who arrive in Year 7 not yet ready for the secondary curriculum are swiftly helped to improve their skills.

School details

Unique reference number	142080
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10048375

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	331
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Sally Thompson
Principal	Anita Notta
Telephone number	01902 558655
Website	www.khalsaacademiestrust.com
Email address	info@tkaw.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in temporary accommodation in 2015. Its current site is a former school.
- The school has a new site being built. The site is not yet ready and governors expect it to open in September 2018.
- The governors recently decided to rename the school 'The Khalsa Academy Wolverhampton'. Its official name currently remains The British Sikh School.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- No pupils have yet sat GCSE examinations and there is no published attainment and progress information for the school.
- In 2016/2017, around 8% of pupils were removed from the school roll. In 2017/2018,

11 pupils have also left the school roll. The majority of these pupils left because the journey from their home to school was too far.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of lessons and scrutinised pupils' work over time. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors met with the acting principal, her senior team, governors and members of the trust. They also held meetings with other staff, and spoke with non-teaching staff.
- The views of pupils were evaluated through the 53 responses to an online questionnaire, meetings with pupils from all year groups and informal conversations during lessons and social time.
- The views of staff were evaluated through the 35 responses to an online questionnaire. The views of parents were evaluated through the 35 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 22 free-text responses.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

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