The British Sikh School Report for 10th March 2016

During this recent review

- A wide range of written evidence was considered including the school self-evaluation, the school development plan, information on student performance, monitoring of teaching and learning, management of performance and information linked to the assessment of the curriculum.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the headteacher of school, the assessment coordinator, the SEN coordinator, the pastoral coordinator, the science coordinator, leader of teaching and learning and a governor.
- Four lessons were jointly observed with the leader of teaching and learning and one with the assessment coordinator. A reading intervention was observed with the headteacher.
- Discussions took place with students about their learning as well as looking at their books. A lunchtime and breaktime was observed. Students were asked for their views on the school. Some students were heard reading. In addition ,samples of students work in English, mathematics, history, science and student portfolios were scrutinized.
- The school website was observed.
- The consultant took into consideration the staff questionnaire and the school's own survey of children's views.
- The most recent school DfE report was taken into consideration.

Information about the school

- This is a smaller than average school and currently has only Year 7 children. It opened as an academy free school in September 2015
- Many more students than usual speak English as an additional language. A number of these join the school speaking little or no English. Students are mainly from the Indian heritage background with a very small number of White British.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is below average.
- There are a number of languages spoken at the school with a large proportion speaking Punjabi.
- The proportion of disadvantage students who are supported by the pupil premium is low.

- The academy has not yet had any students in Key Stage 4. Consequently the government's minimum floor standards do not apply.
- The school is currently in temporary accommodation and is likely to move to a new building in April 2017.
- This school is one of three schools being part of the Khalsa Academy Trust. One teacher is leaving in April. A new headteacher has been appointed for April 2016.
- From September 2016 the school will have students in Year 7 and Year 8. There is already a waiting list for places in Year 7.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- The leadership of the school is outstanding. The headteacher has a passion for success along with a desire to give positive learning experiences. He is unrelenting in his vision. Through a collaborative approach, all members of the school community share his vision and as a result morale is high. Within a very short time, he has established a culture of ambition and drive so all students have an opportunity to succeed.
- Leaders are well aware of the quality of teaching. Teaching is monitored regularly and robust observations are in place, by checking students work and speaking to students. Underperformance of individual students or groups is tackled effectively. This is accomplished by ensuring students achievement is a major part of all staff management of performance.
- Subjects are monitored and tracked exceptionally well, with clear plans to provide academic or other support where necessary. Any barriers to learning are being quickly removed for students to make good progress.
- The special educational needs coordinator has good support from outside agencies to access and provide appropriate support to help students who have additional needs such as various therapists.
- Safeguarding is effective and plans to extend staff knowledge are already in place. Convincing policies and procedures are in place to keep students safe. Procedures to check staff suitability are systematic and robust.
- Curriculum areas are constantly expanding in order to meet the curriculum requirements. There are number of stimulating enrichment activities provided on a regular basis. Activities include weaving, Taekwondo and a homework club which are well attended by students.
- Leaders of curriculum areas are effective. The quality of teaching, for their subjects, is monitored regularly and robustly through lesson observations, checking work in books and by speaking to pupils about their learning. The curriculum provides real life experiences in order to make learning come alive and relevant for the students.

- Governors are developing and have been strengthened significantly. Governors are acutely aware of the issues and inconsistencies in a small number of pupil performance. Governors share the ambition, vision and determination of the headteacher. Along with the executive headteacher, they ensure the headteacher management of performance has the necessary targets to eradicate underperformance of pupils. Governors have a good understanding of the current financial implications and the need to monitor effectively. Governors recognise they need to have additional members, in order to meet the needs of the school. A number of ways are being utilised to ensure governors, with the essential skills, are being recruited to hold the school to account. Governors fully support the executive headteacher and headteacher in expecting nothing less than good or better teaching.

Areas for development

- Enhance the SEF in order to show the impact the staff have had on student performance.
- Ensure the SDP has clear success criteria and appropriate costings.
- Ensure those responsible for a subject across the school are able to identify whole schools issues and strengths.
- Ensure safeguarding training is up to date in relation to the Prevent /radicalization strategy and FGM.
- Establish that all leaders use the language of learning when discussing their role.
- Make sure action plans are reviewed regularly, keeping them up to date to show impact on learning.
- Identify where there are opportunities to show that mathematics and English skills are taught across other subjects and can that all leaders articulate the impact on learning.
- Strengthen and expand the number of governors to ensure they are able to hold the school to account further.

Teaching and Learning and assessment

Strengths

- Teaching and learning is good. A few inconsistencies remain. The large majority of teachers are meeting the needs of students.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it effectively to meet the needs of most pupils. Pupils experience success criteria for achievement.
- The teaching of reading is strong. Student skills are rapidly improving particularly those new to England. This is giving a secure foundation they are able to read and write in English successfully. Students enjoy the reading groups activities. Students tackle challenging texts to develop a depth of understanding to accelerate their learning.

- Good questioning takes place and encourages students to develop their own ideas. Students respond to teachers feedback, both verbal and written. Time is given for pupils to mark their own and each others work and in most cases help their peers to improve their work.
- Prior learning is evident. For example in an English lesson, students recall the relevant language related to a poem such as stanza and rhyming couplets. Through discussion students could demonstrate the features of what a poem should include.
- There is a consistent marking policy shared across the school where the students have an opportunity to respond to the next steps in their learning.
- During lessons students respond to praise. Teachers use it effectively so students are eager to do well in their learning.
- Teachers set regular homework that supports the wide range of subjects. Students are eager to complete their work to get relevant feedback to extend and improve their learning.
- A small number of teaching assistants contribute well to students learning, working in class or with small groups outside the classrooms. They question pupils well to reinforce learning.

Areas for development

- Ensure those responsible for English and mathematics have an opportunity to extend their knowledge of their subject across other areas of the curriculum and can share the impact on their subject area.
- Make sure there are consistently high expectations for more able students.
- Ensure that all teachers meet the needs of students in lessons so that work is completed.
- Extended writing opportunities, other than just homework to prepare students well for their next stage of learning.
- Ensure feedback from students is relevant to the learning they respond to.

Personal development and welfare

Strengths

- The promotion of personal development and welfare is outstanding. A high priority is in place to meet the students welfare needs. It is at the heart of the school's work.
- A welcoming, caring and nurturing environment, where excellent relationships have been established between staff and students.
- The overwhelming majority of students report the staff are very caring and support their needs. Students believe the headteacher is extremely humorous, supportive and understanding. Regular meetings between

him and students take place in his office. They recognise he treats them as adults. They discuss how they can make the school an excellent place of learning, whilst sitting on his comfortable sofas and having refreshments. One student remarked, 'where else would I be given such a voice?'

- Student voice is encompassed in assemblies. They take a leading role exceptionally well. The students have opportunities to have several roles within the school. The prefects, school council members and house captains take their roles very seriously, making sure they perform their duties diligently.
- Students spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted highly effectively through the schools 'SEVA' values and beliefs. Pupils are reflective. They are involved in local and national charities. One recent event supported raising money for cancer.
- Students who have recently arrived from Italy are integrated well. These students feel they are having tremendous opportunities to extend and improve their learning.
- Students are extremely aware of how to keep safe on line and are intensely aware of how it is unacceptable to cyber bully. Students have an excellent understanding of the types of bullying and voiced that they were positive it did not take place at the school.
- The school works effectively with primary schools to support the students in a smooth transition to their next stage of learning.
- Competent volunteers support the school well. They regularly contribute to students learning and their welfare needs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of the students is outstanding. Students behaviour around the site is exemplary. They are kind and polite to each other and guests of the school. They go out of their way to make people feel very welcome.
- Currently attendance is high. The school is likely to be in the top 10% of schools nationally for attendance. There is effective monitoring of attendance. As a result some of those who had poor attendance has improved.
- All pupils, without exception, behave well in lessons. In the very few lessons where the teaching slows the progress of the students, they remain on task, eager to learn and keep motivated.
- Students know who to turn to if they have any worries or concerns. They speak highly of the support given teachers who organise the 'hub' and know that members of staff will endeavor to sort their issues.

Areas for development

- Ensure that attendance is robustly analysed ensure no group dominates the figures for absence e.g. Pupil premium or SEN.

- Ensure case studies can be provided to show how successful interventions have support individual students.

Outcomes for children

Strengths

- The outcomes for the students are good. Assessment is accurately aligned to the new curriculum and so this is likely to continue. Records of students work, the tracking of performance and observations of students learning all confirm that the large majority make at least good progress.
- The school is reflective and quickly analyses student needs including those who have more than one barrier to learning. Appropriate targets for their next steps are given to each student to accelerate their learning.
- Students who come into school other than at usual times make progress, although it is important to establish how well they have done since attending the school.
- Leaders have correctly identified pupils who need to make faster progress and as a result the gap is closing between groups in almost all subjects.
- The school has clearly identified the small number of students who are entitled to the pupil premium funding. They are making good progress from their starting points in most subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. The extra support they receive is well organised and closely checked to make sure that it is meeting their needs effectively.
- More able pupils make good progress due to the high expectations of the staff but a few lessons lack sufficient challenge.

Areas for development..

- Make sure those new to England are tracked effectively in order to show the progress they have made since attending school as well as identifying the next steps in their learning.
- Ensure that progress measures and achievement is externally validated to ensure accuracy of pupil performance.
- Make sure that school leaders and staff have established internal validation of standards via moderation process.
- Ensure the small number of pupil premium students accelerate their progress in mathematics, in order to close the gap.
- Embed the high expectations for English across all subjects for the more able.

Conclusion

- There some developments that need to be put in place to ensure this school could potentially be outstanding. Some are quick wins but there are others, which need to be implemented immediately because they will take time to embed. That said, I have no doubt the drive and ambition of the leadership will make sure areas of development will be tackled immediately. The school needs to build on the systems already established while the school expands. The areas of development will support the school's journey towards reaching the goal of being outstanding overall.

Janeeel Massu

Thank you for a really enjoyable, hospitable and informative day.

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go further, faster