

# Khalsa Science Academy

Fir Tree Rise, Alwoodley, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS17 7EZ

## Inspection dates

27–28 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The school's ability to improve is hampered because too much responsibility for doing so rests on the shoulders of the acting principal.
- Significant staff turbulence has prevented the school from sharing out leadership responsibilities and bringing about consistently good teaching. Good teaching practice is not shared effectively among staff.
- Over time, governors have not moved promptly or effectively to ensure that there is a stable complement of staff or to support the acting principal in developing the school.
- Currently, the most able pupils are not doing as well as they could because teaching is not consistently challenging. Pupils do not develop their ideas in sufficient depth.
- The school's identity as a 'science academy' is not well developed. Activities in science do not have a stimulating effect on pupils' experience of and interest in the subject.
- Plans for school improvement do not clearly identify how and when the impact of proposed actions will be measured.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length across the curriculum subjects.

### The school has the following strengths

- The acting principal has high expectations and leads the school well. She monitors its work effectively and so is very clear about what needs to be done to improve the school.
- Good teaching in the early years ensures that children make good progress. Children are well cared for, safe and well prepared for Year 1.
- Over time, pupils have made good progress from their starting points. Outcomes are good, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well. These groups of pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are well behaved. They love school and want to do well. They show positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is improving rapidly.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very strong. They are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils experience a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils are very well cared for and protected. They feel safe at school.
- Parents hold the school in high regard. They appreciate the high level of care it provides.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management, including governance, so that the school has a good capacity to improve by making sure that:
  - governors work quickly to establish an effective leadership team, capable of supporting the acting principal in undertaking a range of leadership tasks
  - increased stability is established among teaching staff
  - rigorous arrangements for the performance management of staff and leaders are in place
  - good teaching practice is shared more widely among staff
  - the school's plans for improvement identify clearly how and when the impact of proposed actions will be measured.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good by ensuring that:
  - pupils, especially the most able, have more opportunities to write at greater length in a range of styles to suit different purposes and audiences across the curriculum subjects
  - teachers use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do to ensure that work is well adapted to pupils' varying needs and abilities
  - teachers' questioning consistently challenges pupils' ideas and thinking
  - activities in science are distinctive, stimulating and interesting for pupils
  - teaching assistants are consistently deployed effectively to improve the pace and depth of pupils' learning
  - all staff adhere to the school's policy for feedback to pupils and the marking of their work.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The school does not demonstrate a good capacity to improve. Despite the strong and effective leadership of the acting headteacher, too much responsibility for driving school improvement rests on her shoulders. Significant staff turbulence has prevented the school from establishing and developing other leadership roles to support her in her quest, including making sure that teaching is consistently good. Governance has not been effective in making sure that the school's leadership is robust. As a result, leadership and management require improvement.
- The acting principal has worked very effectively in challenging circumstances. Almost single-handedly, she has created and maintained a culture of high standards and high expectations at the school.
- Largely due to the underdevelopment of other leadership roles, good practices are not being systematically shared to help improve the consistency of teaching. For example, the effective monitoring practice undertaken by Reception staff of children's progress to inform and focus the teaching of next steps is not regularly shared across the school.
- The school's plans for improvement lack precise information about how the impact of the proposed actions to improve the school will be measured. The plans are also unclear about the timescales for these proposed actions.
- Supported by the local authority and, increasingly, by the local cluster of schools, the acting principal has developed rigorous and effective systems for monitoring pupils' progress. This has meant that she has been able to work with her staff to ensure that pupils who may be at risk of falling behind are quickly identified and helped to catch up. Outcomes remain good as a result.
- The acting principal and governors are dedicated to ensuring equality of opportunities for all pupils. Pupil premium funding is well deployed to ensure that all have equal access to the opportunities the school offers both in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well as a result.
- The acting principal monitors the work of the temporary staff carefully and effectively. Full-time staff are well supported by the acting principal. Training and other staff development opportunities are open to all staff and are linked carefully to the school's plans for improvement. Temporary staff regularly undertake additional training to develop their skills. Despite this, current teaching is too variable in quality.
- The acting principal carefully and effectively monitors the provision and support for the few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. She works closely with parents and with appropriate outside agencies. Additional funding is well deployed.
- The curriculum is generally broad and balanced. It is supplemented by a wide range of extra-curricular activities open to all. However, insufficient weight is given to the science element of this science academy. In addition, the curriculum, although developing, does not give pupils, especially the most able, enough opportunities to develop their skills in subjects such as history and geography.

- Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. They are well versed in the democratic process through their own regular election of school prefects and through regular inputs in assembly time. As a result of the recent coverage the school had given to the general election, pupils demonstrated a high level of knowledge and understanding of the democratic process.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very strong. Pupils have a very well developed sense of their spiritual selves and the link between this and their duty in serving others. Music and dance are a strength.
- The school environment is bright, comfortable and conducive to learning. There are many displays of pupils' work. There are also displays that remind pupils of the world beyond Khalsa and their responsibilities to engage with that world.
- Parents are very complimentary about the work of the school. They welcome the care that staff take of their children and the way in which staff readily communicate and are available.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have a strong vision for the school as a learning community with a Sikh ethos that is open to all. They are very ambitious for the school and have worked tirelessly to establish it on its new site. They have successfully developed an inclusive vision for the school so that it can take its place as part of the family of schools in the area.
- However, governors have not moved promptly, effectively and consistently to ensure that leadership at the school is robust. They have relied too heavily on the acting principal to undertake the full range of leadership tasks. They have not been active in providing her with the support she needs to ensure that there is a full complement of full-time staff.
- Governors now have the skills and understanding to hold the acting principal to account for the achievement of all groups of pupils. Governors check and question the very detailed information supplied to them by the acting principal regarding pupils' achievement, behaviour and well-being. However, they have not ensured that the leadership at the school has a good capacity to assure sustained improvement. They are unrealistic about how much one leader, working alone, can do.
- Governors have not ensured that effective, formal performance management systems are in place for the school's leadership.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and governors ensure that there is a very strong culture of safeguarding at the school. The school's distinctive ethos puts the highest value on care and respect. The acting principal ensures that staff undertake regular and appropriate training which covers all aspects of safeguarding.
- Rigorous checks are made of staff and volunteers before they are allowed to work alongside pupils. The single central record meets statutory requirements.

- There is a comprehensive system in place for staff to record concerns that they have regarding pupils' safety and welfare. The designated safeguarding leaders are trained well and ensure that any families or pupils who require support from outside agencies receive this promptly. Records relating to safeguarding are meticulously kept.
- The acting principal has developed strong and effective relationships with a wide range of external agencies as well as with parents to ensure that pupils are kept safe and their welfare needs are met.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because, at present, there is too much variability across the classes in the school. A high number of teachers are on temporary contracts. Together, the acting principal and supply staff have worked diligently and effectively to minimise any negative impact associated with this. The acting principal checks the quality of teaching very thoroughly and closely. However, approaches to teaching currently are too inconsistent.
- The quality of teachers' feedback is variable. They do not all adhere to the school policy for feedback and marking.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of the need for tidy and well-presented work. Pupils' books show that the activities provided are sometimes mundane and lack challenge. Worksheets, for example, sometimes restrict pupils from showing what they are capable of, especially the most able pupils.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement. Pupils are not routinely encouraged or enabled to write at length or to develop their ideas and resilience as writers and thinkers. Furthermore, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length across the curriculum subjects.
- The teaching of science also requires improvement. Work is not sufficiently distinctive, stimulating and interesting for pupils.
- While most staff are skilled in their use of questioning to develop and deepen pupils thinking, sometimes their questions do not focus on the 'why' and 'how', but rather on the more mundane 'what'. As a result, opportunities are missed to challenge pupils' ideas and thinking. This was particularly the case for the most able pupils.
- Staff, overall, display strong subject knowledge. They plan learning carefully and, despite the temporary nature of a number of their contracts, they know their pupils well. However, teachers do not consistently use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do to ensure that work is well adapted to pupils' varying needs and abilities.
- Teaching assistants are enthusiastic and they too display strong subject knowledge. However, they are not always deployed effectively to maximise their potential in improving the pace and depth of pupils' learning.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and appropriately relaxed. Pupils are eager to learn. They respond well when they are challenged to do their best with work that engages and 'stretches' them.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Staff display skill in the teaching of phonics and address misconceptions promptly. As a result, pupils develop confidence

and pleasure in reading. However, pupils do not have ready access to a wide enough range of books because, due to the recent move into the new accommodation, the school's library is, as yet, undeveloped.

- Pupils respond very positively to the opportunities the school offers to engage with the arts. For example, Year 3 pupils threw themselves very enthusiastically into an Indian dance session in the hall. This was expertly led by staff, funded by the additional sports and physical education (PE) funding.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils talk very confidently and excitedly about school. They enjoy school and learning and the activities they experience both in and out of the classroom. They are thoughtful about each other and about their responsibility in ensuring that others are happy.
- Pupils are alert to the needs of others. They notice when someone appears to be lonely, sad or upset during school breaks and lunchtimes and, without prompting, show kindness and help. They show mutual respect for other pupils whatever their age or background. They extend this engagement with humanity beyond the school gates with regular charity events, raising money for charities across the United Kingdom and the world.
- The school ensures that pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities. For example, each class elects prefects whose key role, according to the pupils, is 'to help each other' and ensure that 'everyone is happy'. Prefects take their duties very seriously. The pupil lunchtime helpers are a positive presence during the midday meal.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the school day. They are polite and courteous to each other and to visitors. In class, they behave sensibly and, generally, work hard. They concentrate well most of the time, although they sometimes become inattentive and call out, especially when overexcited about their work.
- Pupils feel safe and are kept safe because of the actions of the school. There are regular assemblies and visits by outside speakers, such as the NSPCC, to alert pupils to possible risks and the steps they need to take to keep themselves and others safe.
- Pupils have strong and positive attitudes to learning. They want to succeed but not at any cost. They are confident and self-assured.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's emphasis on the 'Golden Rules' and the service of all humanity are a very strong and central driving force. They inform pupils' attitudes to learning, to each other and to all humankind. Pupils are able to articulate how this ethos informs all that the school does.

- Pupils know the various forms that bullying can take. They report that bullying is very rare. They told the inspector that when it does occur, they know how to tackle it and are confident that it will be dealt with swiftly and effectively by adults at the school.
- There is a whole-school approach to rewards and behaviour which the pupils understand and welcome. They say that poor behaviour is rare and good behaviour is appropriately rewarded.
- Pupils are punctual to school in the morning and move purposefully between learning and play sessions during the day. They are thoughtful, kind and polite as they move around the school.
- The acting principal keeps very detailed and effective logs of behaviour at the school; these show very few incidents of poor behaviour.
- Attendance is improving rapidly across the school and is now close to national averages. This is because the acting principal, working with attendance staff, has put in place detailed support for the small group of pupils and their families who, from time to time, find regular attendance challenging.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Over time, all groups of pupils have made good progress from their below-typical starting points in Reception. By the end of Year 2 in 2016, an above-average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Provisional results, moderated by officers of the local authority, indicate that there will be a further improvement in 2017's outcomes in Year 2, particularly in reading and writing.
- In 2016, at the end of Year 1, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check was similar to the national average. Inspection evidence shows that phonics is well taught. Provisional information about the current year's phonics check indicates that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard will be close to last year's national average.
- Different groups of pupils have also achieved well over time. The relatively small numbers of disadvantaged pupils, for example, make very similar progress to their peers as a result of the school's actions. The few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make generally good progress from their starting points. Support for these pupils is well deployed and focused in the classroom. It is carefully monitored by the acting principal.
- The most able pupils achieve well in reading and mathematics. In Year 2 in 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching greater depth in their learning was above average in these subjects. However, fewer reached this higher level in writing. Pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects or in a range of styles for different purposes and audiences. This prevents pupils, especially the most able, from reaching their full potential.
- Current outcomes continue to be strong. This is because the acting principal monitors the quality of teaching and pupils' progress regularly and carefully. This regular



monitoring has meant that, despite the weaknesses in teaching, staff are able to act promptly and effectively if pupils show signs of falling behind.

- Pupils are achieving well in reading. Inspection evidence shows that pupils demonstrate both good competence in their ability to read, but also a developing delight and pleasure in reading. The recently introduced whole-school reading scheme, which involves pupils reading every day, has helped to engage pupils' interest and excitement about reading. However, the comparatively recent move to the new building has meant that the school library is not yet available to pupils.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Most children enter the school's early years provision with knowledge, skills and understanding that are below those that are typical for their age. As a result of good teaching in the Reception Year, they make good progress. In 2016, a proportion very similar to the national average achieved a good level of development. In 2017, provisional outcomes, moderated by officers from the local authority, suggest a slight improvement on the 2016 figure. These provisional outcomes suggest an improving picture, particularly in reading. This constitutes good progress.
- Over the past months, the acting principal has developed and significantly improved the early years provision through her own diligent monitoring and the targeted support from carefully selected external advisers. As a result, the early years provision is now good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teacher and support staff know the children well and use this detailed understanding to ensure that their teaching is focused on what children need to do next to improve. As a result, children make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for Year 1.
- The early years learning environment is well resourced, purposeful and lively. The staff demonstrate a good deal of care for the children. Displays are bright and the layout of the space is carefully considered, making it a calm and inviting place to enjoy learning.
- Phonics is taught well. The sessions are well planned and contain purposeful resources that engage and enthuse the children. Misconceptions are addressed quickly. For example, in a session seen by the inspector, a member of staff made sure that the children saw, heard and understood the difference between 'f' and 't'. The most able children were successfully applying their phonics knowledge in the same session by accurately writing simple sentences.
- Children's personal and emotional development is a particular focus and a highly successful aspect of the provision. Early years staff are adept at identifying and successfully addressing any underdeveloped speech and language skills so that children make good progress.
- Children feel safe and secure and are able to explore and develop their skills rapidly. Children show high levels of confidence. They were keen to talk with the inspector about their work and how they felt about their time in the Reception class. They show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.



- Children behave well and take care of each other. Carefully supervised by staff, children move seamlessly and confidently around the early years area, choosing activities and working well together.
- Relationships between children and between children and adults are warm and friendly, laying the foundations of respect and mutual care.
- The early years staff have formed very good and mutually respectful and supportive links with the parents and families of the children they teach. Parents reported that communications are very good and staff are always available if parents had a query or a request about their child.
- Staff track children's progress and development carefully and their achievements are recorded in staff records and the children's learning journeys. Children who may be at risk of falling behind are identified quickly and extra help is offered promptly. Staff assessments of how well children are doing are accurate and have been recently confirmed as such by the local authority.

## School details

Unique reference number	139688
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10032015

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	Currently 4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Palvinder Singh
Principal	Davender Kaur Bahi (Acting Principal)
Telephone number	0113 8873680
Website	<a href="http://www.khalsascienceacademy.org.uk">www.khalsascienceacademy.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@khalsascienceacademy.org.uk">info@khalsascienceacademy.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	June 2015

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has single classes in the Reception Year, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3. As the school grows, the other classes will be added until the school reaches its capacity as a 4–11 primary school in 2019/20.
- The school has been led by an acting principal since January 2017. All but one class at the school are taught by staff on temporary contracts.
- The school moved to its new, permanent, newly built site in January 2017. It has occupied two different temporary sites since it opened in September 2013.
- The academy is part of the Khalsa Education Trust.
- The majority of pupils are from Indian backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than the national average.

- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school is well below average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average.
- The school is a member of the Alwoodley, Roundhay and Moortown cluster of schools.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the impact of pupil premium funding and the curriculum on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited all classes and saw all staff teach. In approximately 50% of these visits, he was accompanied by the acting principal.
- The inspector talked with pupils in lessons and around the school. He also looked at a significant sample of their work. He listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 3. He also spoke more formally with pupils from Year 3 to explore their attitudes to learning and safety.
- The inspector met regularly with the acting principal, twice with the whole staff and with three members of the governing body. He also met with the Department for Education (DfE) adviser attached to the school. He spoke with officers of the local authority on the telephone. The inspector took into account seven responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to register any results; however, the inspector did take into account the results of the school's own surveys of parental satisfaction and 10 free-text responses from parents online. The inspector also met with parents informally at the start and end of the school day.
- The inspector scrutinised documents, including minutes of governing body meetings, the school's self-evaluation, the development plan, monitoring and assessment information, school policies, behaviour and safety records, safeguarding policies and procedures, and the single central record.
- The inspection was accompanied by the chair of Ofsted, Professor Julius Weinberg, on the first day of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Mark Evans, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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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. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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