

22nd July 2020

Sikh Community Concerns for the Future of Sikh Ethos Academy

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh

Sikh Assembly is conscious of the ongoing disruption related to the future governing body at Khalsa Secondary Academy (KSA) in Stoke Poges near Slough. Our concern is in light of the notice served by the Academies Minister Baroness Berridge on 4th June, to terminate the funding of the current administration, the Khalsa Academy Trust (KAT).

We feel it our responsibility to keep the Government informed of the Sikh community aspirations concerning the future of the school and the continued quality of education and opportunity provided to the students.

The uncertainty is creating a sense of concern and anxiety among the parents and pupils alike. The accumulative effect of the pandemic, the lockdown and lack of satisfactory governance on their current education, aspirations and ultimately their careers is our primary concern, and we urge the Government to consider these the principal factors when awarding the school to a new governing body. We believe the Government is entirely cognisant of the potentially adverse, but yet unquantifiable, impact of COVID-19.

We understand that despite attempts by KAT to address the concerns and recommendations by Ofsted last December, Baroness Berridge has recommended that the Academy should be transferred to a new education Trust, setting 30th October as a deadline for the termination of funding to the current Trust.

Although disappointing for KAT, Sikh Assembly considers that a more objective option would have been for the school to be given an opportunity for a follow-up assessment and updated report by Ofsted, allowing for potential improvements at KSA to be recorded.

We are encouraged to remain positive by Baroness Berridge assuring the Sikh community of her intention that, "The preference of the department is for the academy to transfer a strong performing sponsor that will reflect the Sikh ethos of the school".

The continuity of a Sikh ethos at the Academy would provide the necessary stability to pupils, parents, and members of the community. The Sikh ethos is a determining factor for the students and families in choosing the school for study. The KSA Parent Group have expressed their familiarity with the educational quality, emphasis on emotional health and wellbeing provided to their pupils by local Sikh ethos-based school Khalsa Primary School (KPS), which is considered a natural feeder school to KSA.

Sikh Assembly encourages and supports Sikh led Trusts with a faith designation bidding to manage KSA. We understand the chosen Trust will have a proven track record showing experience in good governance, financial integrity and an acute awareness of safeguarding processes and procedures.

Sikh Assembly anticipates a positive outcome for this Sikh ethos-based Academy, to improve and continue providing the highest standards of education, ensuring a successful future for its students, creating people that enhance British society, our economy and culture.

Community Development Team
Sikh Assembly