

Tuesday 16th November 2021 at 3:20pm

Sikh Academy Trust (SAT) meeting with Khalsa Secondary Academy Staff at KSA

In attendance:

Sikh Academies Trust – Jujar Singh (Chair of Trustees) Gurminder Singh (Vice Chair of Trustees), Raminder Singh Vig (Executive Principal), Rajvinder Kaur Gandhum (PA to Executive Principal), Mrs. Sakara Vilataro (KPS SLT), Mrs Monica Bhogal (KPS SLT)

Khalsa Secondary Academy – Introduction from Simon Webb (Interim CEO for KAT). All KAT staff left the meeting after the introduction.

RSV introduced SAT and those in attendance from the SAT Board. The objective of the meeting was to provide confidence and reassurance in the future for parents, children and KSA.

Jujar Singh then introduced himself and said Sikh Academies Trust is a new Academy Trust formed to manage KPS which was converted into an academy and joined SAT on 1st February 2021. Khalsa Primary School (KPS) were re-rated OUTSTANDING in the new framework in January 2020. Trustees of SAT have a wide range of experiences, HR, Finance, Educational, Legal, Business, Banking, STEM education.

Following the DFE's decision to terminate the funding to KAT last year, SAT was chosen as the preferred Trust to take over KSA. SAT have had a productive meeting with KAT and are working together to ensure a smooth transition of KSA to SAT. The due diligence process will be commencing soon.

RSV discussed his experience which included his 8th headship, with 2 headships of 3 - 18 schools. He also mentioned that he was Director of Education of 12 schools of which two were secondary schools. He went on to cover:

SAT's Vision – We help to develop our pupils to become exemplary British Citizens. We foster a stimulating and challenging environment. All members of the school community are respected, motivated and prepared for the challenging world in which we live.

SAT's Values – these are based on Compassion, Truth, Humility, Love and Contentment.

SAT is aware that the teaching and learning at KSA is good. Teachers are very dedicated and supportive. SAT believe this can be further developed and give you the confidence to take yourselves and the school further.

KSA has many strengths including the teaching & learning by the great staff and SAT wants to use those strengths as we go forward. The immediate priorities are safeguarding, SEND and capacity building.

SAT's aim is to move KSA to OUTSTANDING in 4 years. This can only happen if everyone works together with a shared vision. Emotional Health and Wellbeing is the highest priority for SAT.

Two members of the KPS SLT gave a brief account of their experiences of being staff members at KPS.

The session was then opened up to questions from staff.

Questions	Answers
KSA have a capacity issue. When SAT take over will they still occupy the same number of rooms at KAT	This will be reviewed and it is initially perceived that there will be considerably less room required for SAT.
A staff member mentioned no staff survey has taken place since they joined. They are aware that KPS carry out staff and parent surveys on a regular basis and requested for a staff survey to take place	Yes, this will be done, but can only be done once SAT have taken over (likely to be after 1 March 2022)
When will the change take place?	<p>We have discussed a date of 1 February 2022 with the RSC/DfE, but due to the tight timelines and time required for due diligence it may more likely be 1 March 2022. Staff will TUPE straight across to SAT. There will be no change to staff salaries for at least 2 years. Roles could change, but salaries cannot be taken away. SAT follow the burgundy book.</p> <p>Through the Due Diligence process, staff may be approached and asked questions. This is not an Ofsted of any sort, SAT would like staff to be honest and open, so that a true assessment can take place.</p>
A staff member asked if an exam hall could be built.	SAT don't think that they can expand the school yet. Once SAT have taken over an attempt can be made to request an expansion via CIF funding.

Will KSA undergo rebranding?	Nothing is planned initially, but this may take place at a later date. Too early to say if/when/how this may happen.
Will the school be inspected after take over. A staff member mentioned the section 48 was due in the summer 2021.	Upon transfer, the school receives a new URN, effectively meaning it is 'new' school and as such no Ofsted is likely to take place for the first 3 years. This should apply to the section 48 too but SAT will check.
What plans are there for Careers?	Mr Vig suggested staff to express what they would like to see and to liaise with Mr Keshani, so that this can be considered for our proposal to the DfE.
A member of staff asked what the current state of the budget was?	It is unhealthy on the face of it, but at this stage, without completing the due diligence figures cannot yet be disclosed. However, there should be no concerns over jobs. GS mentioned that post transfer the deficit will not be inherited by SAT, as per our discussions with DfE.
Is the department budget available for staff to see in advance?	Yes, staff will be able to discuss/see the budgets at any time. Mr Vig has an open-door policy. At KPS, staff and leadership team come to him and discuss the budget regularly.
Sikhi is a real concern at KSA. The Gurdwara is disrespected, staff and students aren't able to use it regularly. There is no Granthi on site to undertake daily duties for Guru Granth Sahib ji.	During the walk around, the Gurdwara was locked and the staff did not have the key to unlock it at the time. This was really surprising. RSV would like to introduce ½ hour each in the Gurdwara for KS3 and KS4. This should be a daily morning routine, with the intention of starting the day in the right manner. GS mentioned the Slough Sikh School Trust employ their own Granthi and would ensure there is a Granthi also for KSA.
SEN is a big priority in the school and is failing	The job for SENDCo has been advertised. Once transfer is complete, there may be a possibility for someone to be seconded from other schools to help. Slough and Eton and Upton Grammar School are SAT's supporting partners.
What is SAT's experience with secondary schools	RSV mentioned he has worked in 3 different schools from 3-18.

	SAT have trustee on the SAT board who is secondary school experienced head. In addition, SAT will be using expertise from Upton Grammar School.
Will there be a site change for KSA	Externally the building for KSA is OK, but internally there may be some changes required, to make it more child friendly. At this stage there is no intention of relocating. In addition, a significant change such as this would require a consultation amongst other considerations.
KSA currently have teams to support HR, SENDCo, Safeguarding. What are plans for SAT?	At the moment it is perceived that for 2 schools, SAT would require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Director for 2-3 days • CEO for 2-3 days • Safeguarding - full time • HR, SENDCo will likely be done inhouse.
How will the Mental Health of students be considered?	It was noted that there was a counsellor on site and there would be discussion with them to ensure mental health of student is being considered. Gurdwara time is also important for children's mental wellbeing, so it is important for this to be incorporated into the school's daily routine.
There is no bursar/HR on site	At KPS, we use Strictly Education as our HR Provider and they will be supporting both schools.
Staff room is too small	RSV was surprised to see the size of the staff room. SAT intend to look at relocation after transfer.
Will the CCF Army provision continue?	Yes this will continue. This is a fantastic provision and good for the children.
Will there be a change to curriculum	If there are any changes, this will only happen once staff suggestions have been considered, because it's about teamwork. Nothing will be changed unnecessarily. Curriculum at KSA should be broad and balanced.
Are SAT are affiliated with AKJ and what maryada will be followed at KSA?	Slough Sikh School Trust follows the Akal Takhat Sahib Rehat Maryada and have always done so at KPS. This is on the KPS school website and policies. Staff said that's not what they were told.

	<p>The SSST and the Trustee board are made up of a number of different Trustees/Members from all different backgrounds and affiliations but when it comes to SAT, these affiliations are secondary and the schools follow the Sikh Code of Conduct from Sri Akal Takht Sahib.</p>
How will the CEO listen to staff	<p>RSV (the CEO) will sit with all the teams including admin. Doesn't matter what role anyone plays – every role deserves to be heard.</p> <p>The LAB's for the school contains teaching and non-teaching staff.</p> <p>RSV has an open-door policy and there is no need to make an appointment.</p> <p>Email addresses of CEO and his PA were made available to staff to contact them directly at any time.</p>
Can we bring back horse riding and archery?	<p>This will need to be considered, may be not straight away. It depends on what the children and staff want.</p>
Will the time of day for children be reviewed?	<p>This will be looked into as it was noted that children arrive early, from 7:30am.</p>
Will there be a uniform change	<p>No intentions at this present time.</p>
Plans for KSA sixth form	<p>RSV noted the sixth form staff and children have not been involved in the design of the building and would like to ensure they are consulted going forward. A meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday 24th November, in which RSV would like KSA sixth form staff to be involved.</p> <p>A nest of bats has been found at the site so works will no longer take place in January 2022, this will delay the sixth form start date which was due start in September 2022.</p>