



Department
for Education

Regional Schools Commissioner's
Office for North West London South
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Members and Trustees of Khalsa Academies Trust
Pioneer House
Hollybush Hill
Stoke Poges
Bucks
SL2 4QP

By email to Inder Singh Uppal – Chair of Trustees

2 December 2019

Dear Mr Uppal,

Minded to Terminate Letter to the Members and Trustees of Khalsa Academies Trust (KAT) in respect of Khalsa Secondary Academy.

In accordance with section 5B of Khalsa Secondary Academy's Supplemental Funding Agreement (SFA), the Secretary of State may serve a Termination Warning Notice where the safety of pupils or staff is threatened and there has been a serious breakdown in governance.

My office has been informed of significant concerns about safeguarding and governance. As the Regional Schools Commissioner acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, I need to be satisfied that KAT has the governance capacity to ensure the safety of its pupils and staff. You may take this letter to constitute a written notice on behalf of the Secretary of State that the department is concerned:

- i. The Academy Trust has breached the Master Funding Agreement, namely a failure to comply with Independent School Standards regulation 7, and clause 5B (a) of the SFA. Following our meeting on 29 October 2019, we received a report from Buckinghamshire County Council that demonstrated the trust had failed on a number of occasions in its duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils at the school.
- ii. That there has been a serious breakdown in the way the academy is managed or governed (clause 5B (c) of the SFA) which has led to an inadequate response or challenge from the Trust when safeguarding concerns have been raised by members of staff in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) and the Trust's whistleblowing policy; and
- iii. That the safety of pupils or staff of the academy is threatened (clause 5B (d) of the SFA). Safeguarding practices at the academy are limited by the

Trust's approach to safeguarding and there is evidence that key members are not sufficiently familiar with safeguarding processes and principles.

The role of the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is to hold Trusts to account for their governance, financial management, and compliance with their funding agreements irrespective of the school's Ofsted rating. Where safeguarding concerns or governance failure is identified, as the Regional Schools Commissioner, I will take appropriate action to challenge academy trusts to improve. Acting on the behalf of the Secretary of State I need to be satisfied that this academy can ensure pupils and staff are safe. If I am not satisfied this can be achieved, I will consider issuing a Termination Warning Notice (TWN).

I would be grateful for the following evidence to assist me in deciding whether to issue a TWN:

- Minutes from the Trust's board meetings from September 2018 – October 2019.
- Minutes from the Trust's board meetings reviewing Health and Safety and safeguarding policies from September 2018-October 2019.
- An action plan outlining how the Trust intends to prevent serious safeguarding incidences occurring in the future.
- A response by Friday 13 December to the questions sent to you from the ESFA on Friday 29 November.

I would like to proceed in the following way:

- Arrange a meeting with the Trust to conclude our discussion held on 29 October.
- Arrange an External Expert visit to focus on the areas of concern and to review your plans to ensure robust safeguarding is in place. My office will be in touch to arrange this and a follow up Trust review.

Please respond to me within fifteen working days of the date of this letter, copied to [REDACTED] outlining the actions that you will be taking to remedy the matters identified above.

I am copying this letter to the National Schools Commissioner.

Yours sincerely



Dame Kate Dethridge
Interim Regional Schools Commissioner for North West London South Central
cc Dominic Herrington, National Schools Commissioner –
National.SCHOOLSCOMMISSIONER@education.gov.uk

CC: Nick Kandola, Trust Leader