

Islam and Education

Islam in the West

Gary R. Bunt

Sources

Sophie Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain*

Gary R. Bunt – 'Decision−making concerns in British Islamic environments', Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, 1998

Guardian - Islamic schools flourish to meet demand, 28 November 2011

Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck . "The Globalization of Islam: Islamic Education" In The Oxford History of Islam. , edited by John L. Esposito. Oxford Islamic Studies Online, http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/book/islam-9780195107999/islam-9780195107999-div1-124



2011: 140 Muslim schools in UK [Guardian]

Popularity:

20 in 1990

46 in 1996

80 in 2002

115 in 2008

[+ fee paying schools]

The **1944 Education Act** required that the school day should begin with a Christian-inspired assembly or collective prayer, while allowing parents with alternative religious beliefs to withdraw their children from participating in Christian activities.

A **1988 law** made religious instruction obligatory. Muslim requests for parity with other religious groups in Britain, such as Jews and Catholics, who receive state funding to support the operation of their religious schools, were denied. Instead they have been offered a compromise that allows Muslim students to go to single-sex schools.

In several inner-city schools in Britain 80 to 90 per cent of the student body is Muslim. Several confrontations occurred in the 1970s over school uniforms that required girls to wear short skirts.

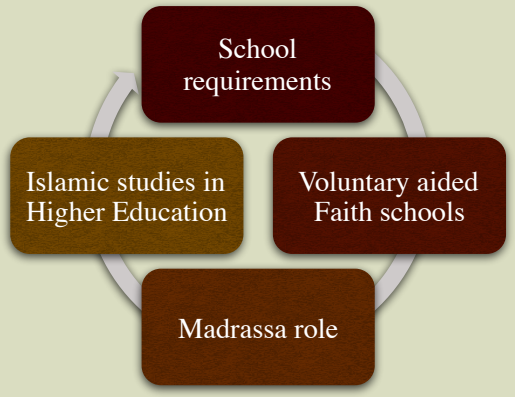
Girls who did not comply with the regulations were expelled from school, and in some cases parents took their daughters out of school over the issue.

Haddad

A **Muslim liaison committee** was formed in Bradford to negotiate with the educational authorities about issues important to Muslims. Compromises were eventually worked out, allowing Muslim girls to wear trousers as long as the trousers match the colours of the school uniform. Girls are generally allowed to put on headscarves and they can wear tracksuits for physical education classes.

Several schools have tried to organize separate swimming classes for boys and girls and allow Muslim students to wear swimming suits in the shower.

The first state Muslim school in Britain opened in early 1998 in London.



A number of key issues need to be addressed when exploring the subject of Islam and Education, especially in UK contexts. These include:

the roles of mosque 'schools' (at various levels)

Islam and religious education in the state sector

the teaching of Islam at university level

resources and the representation of Islam

gender issues and education.

Religious issues in education

- Uniform
- School meals
- Curriculum
- Holidays (i.e. Eids)
- Prayer spaces
- Single-sex education/gender-mixing in classroom
- Religious education
- Orientalist textbooks
- Governors
- 'Radicalisation'
- Standards

Religious Studies

Religions taught from a secular viewpoint = problematic

Religious education

What allowances were made for Islam (and other religions) especially in faith based schools (Church of England, Church of Wales) which might have a Muslim studentship too.

Responses

Local authorities not able/prepared/informed enough to act

Issues of discrimination/racism

Growing place of Muslim children in schools

Key issues

Position of children in state sector

Position of children in faith school, voluntary sector

Role of supplementary schools

Issues of parental input and Islamic organisational input

Can be a preference for the state sector, where standards are perceived by parents as higher

Qualification gap – lower percentages of educational performance in Muslim sector

Curriculum

Sex education issues

How sciences are taught?

Creation teaching.

'Euro-centric' teaching

Issues of communication between home and school

Non-Muslim Teacher perceptions of Muslim students can be problematic

The madrasa, or mosque school (as frequently defined in the UK context), may provide facilities for children and youth to learn about Islam out of school hours.

The term 'school' should be used with caution, because whilst there are many formally organised institutions with purpose built areas in mosque complexes, tuition can take place in public amenity space or individual homes.

Concern has been expressed in Muslim communities regarding the perceived 'low quality' of education provided in some mosques and madrasas, although some people believed that 'something is better than nothing'.

It was identified that there is a need to move away from 'ad-hoc-ism', towards recognisable standards of achievement for students in the madrasas.

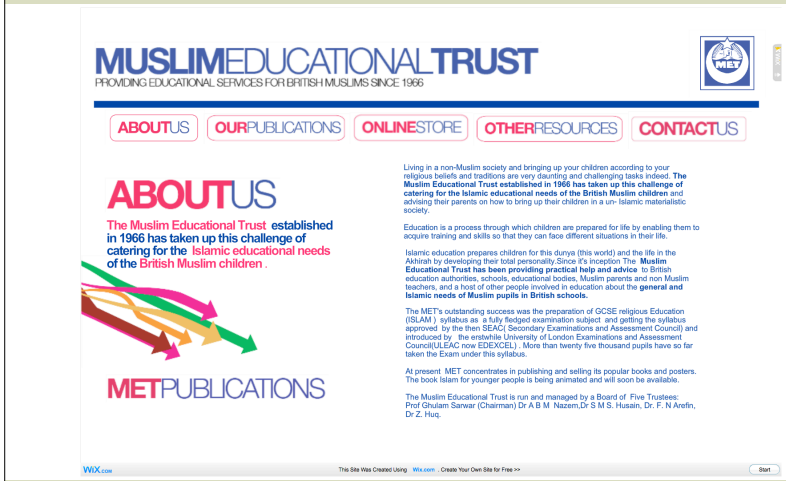
It was also suggested by some that 'understanding Islam' meant more than mastering recitation of the Qur'an, and should incorporate actual understanding of the meaning of texts.

The content of such studies are contextual, being focused on culturally, religiously and linguistically specific forms of Islam – there is no set ‘curriculum’ within such educational contexts, and in some cases the focus may not extend beyond engendering a familiarity with the Qur’an and basic Muslim practices

The provision of 'Islamic education' features strongly in demands for Muslim schools, where it can be incorporated into the school curriculum.

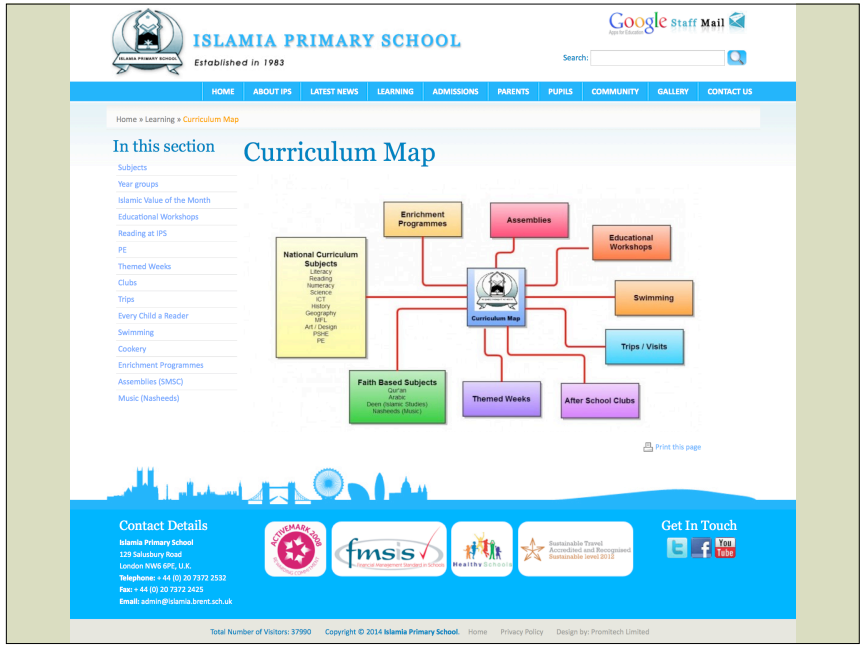
There are a number of examples of Muslim schools in Britain, and the demands of the Islamia Trust for state-funded Muslim schools by Yusuf Islam placed the issue prominently upon the national education agenda.

Several educational platforms exist, within the Association of Muslim Schools, Muslim Educational Trust, Iqra Trust, Islamia Schools Trust, Union of Muslim Organisations, Islamic Foundation, UK Education Waqf, Muslim Parliament, and Islamic Academy.









ISLAMIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Established in 1983

Islamia Primary School is probably the best known Muslim school in Britain, partly due to its founder, Yusuf Islam, who in the 1960s and 1970s was the well known singer/songwriter, 'Cat Stevens', before converting to Islam in 1977. He used his own resources to establish the school after the birth of his first child and has worked tirelessly for the school and the cause of Islamic Education ever since.

Islamia Primary School was the first full-time Muslim school of its kind in England and the first to get recognition from the government after a long and difficult struggle. The School opened in October 1983 at Number 8, Brondesbury Park, NW6. Since then we have moved to what was known as the Kilburn & Brondesbury Secondary School. At first just a Nursery, Islamia Primary quickly grew to an Infant and then a Junior School too.

The school was soon known for its excellent results and was hugely popular and as a result needed to expand. Also there was now a growing demand for a Secondary School. So in 1989, the Islamia Schools Trust bid for the Kilburn & Brondesbury Secondary School site which is now home to Islamia Primary School and the independent Islamia Girls Secondary School … Finally, in January 1998, fifteen years after the school was founded, the



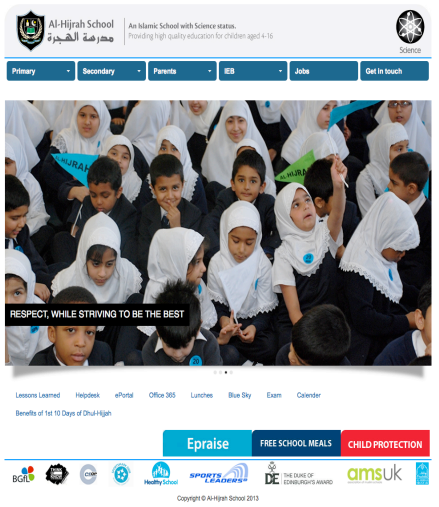
Schools without state support are financially vulnerable, cannot keep staff

Those with good resources have levels consistent or better than national average.

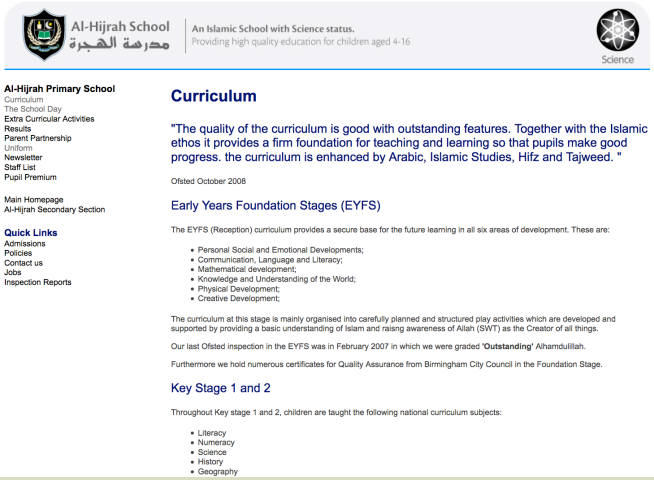
Single sex schools can be a positive experience for Muslim girls.

Competition for places is intense:

“One highly regarded Muslim school, the Al-Hijrah school in Birmingham, has introduced a lottery system to allocate places because up to 25 parents are competing for each one.” Guardian







Islamic Education

As part of Islamic Education, we teach Islamic Studies, Arabic Language and Hifz from Reception to year 6. The main areas of Islamic Studies are:

- Aqidah and Ibadah
- Seerah
- Islamic Social Studies

At Al-Hijrah School, we believe that children are able to absorb much more than the national guidlines dictate. We provide classes in oral and written Arabic and Qur'an recitation. All students have two Arabic lessons a week and two lesson of Hifz (Qur'an memorisation).

The Qur'an programme, details of which are lsited below, is designed to ensure every student will complete most of the 30th Juz (section) of the Qur'an by the time they leave school.

Qur'an Programme KS1

Reception

Surahs: Al-Fatihah, An-Nas, Al-Falaq, Al-Ikhlas, Al-Kauthar, Al-Asr and An-Nasr.

Year 1

Ayat Al-Kursi, Surahs: Al-Masad, Al-Kafirun, Quraish, Al-Ma'un, Al-Fil, Al-Humazah.

Year 2

Surahs: Al-Takathur, Al-Qari'ah, Al-Zalzala, Al-Duha, Al-Qadr, Al-Alaq and Al-Shahr.

Qur'an Programme KS2

Year 3

Surahs: At-Tin, Al-Adiyat, As-Shams, Al-Aa'la, Al-Lail, Al-Bayyinah.

Year 4

Surahs: Al-Balad, Al-Ghashiah, At-Tariq, Al-Buruj, Al-Fajir.

Year 5

Surahs: Al-Inshiqaaq, Al-Mutaffifin, Al-Infitaar, At-Takwir.

The relative academic success of female Muslim students contributed to changing parental attitudes, together with parents' own experience within the educational system: this had increased opportunities for female students to achieve at higher academic levels, such as college and university

Education within state schools remains the predominant issue, given that many parents do not have access - geographically or financially - to privately-run Muslim schools: the majority of Muslim students are in state education.

One interviewee stated that Muslims should seek greater participation within general education provision, and encourage the training of more Muslim teachers.

Within UK Islamic environments, the status of teachers has been undermined by cultural pressures, and because of the relatively low income of teachers compared with other professionals. .

The contents of the National Curriculum have been a cause of contention and discussion between Muslim educational lobbyists and educational authorities. The dialogue included conferences and the establishment of a consolidated charitable platform of (select) interested parties - the United Kingdom Islamic Education Waqf, chaired by Yusuf Islam of Islamia Schools Trust.

The founding all-male board of twenty trustees included representatives from several Muslim educational platforms, in addition to educationalists and teachers.

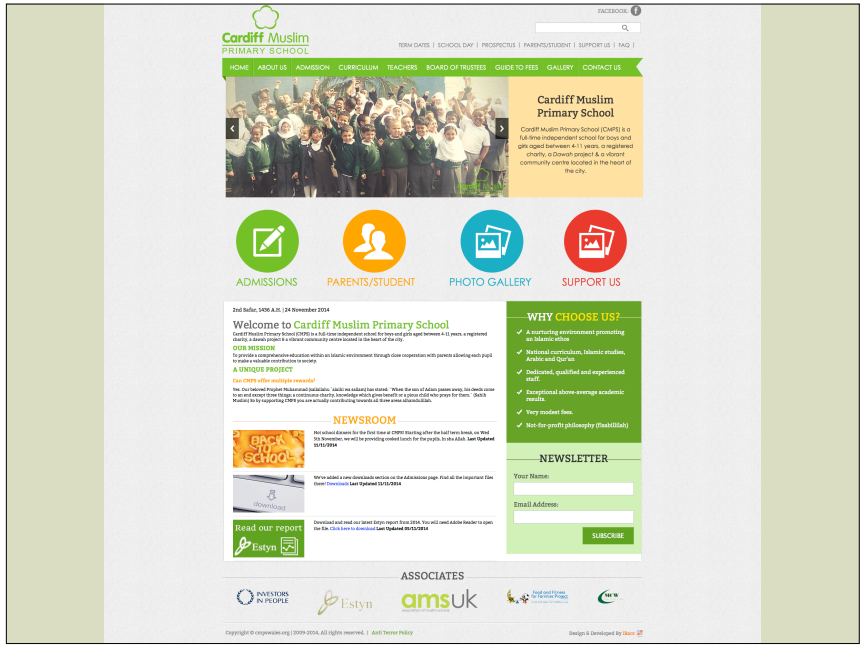
Amongst the issues of concern within the Muslim agenda, one priority has been provision of 'appropriate' sex education.

There is no single 'Islamic' viewpoint regarding sex education. Views of interviewees ranged from parents/interested parties not wanting children and young adults to receive sex education, through to acceptance that it is part of the National Curriculum and has to be covered within a Muslim school (teachers also having to be trained to answer questions appropriately).

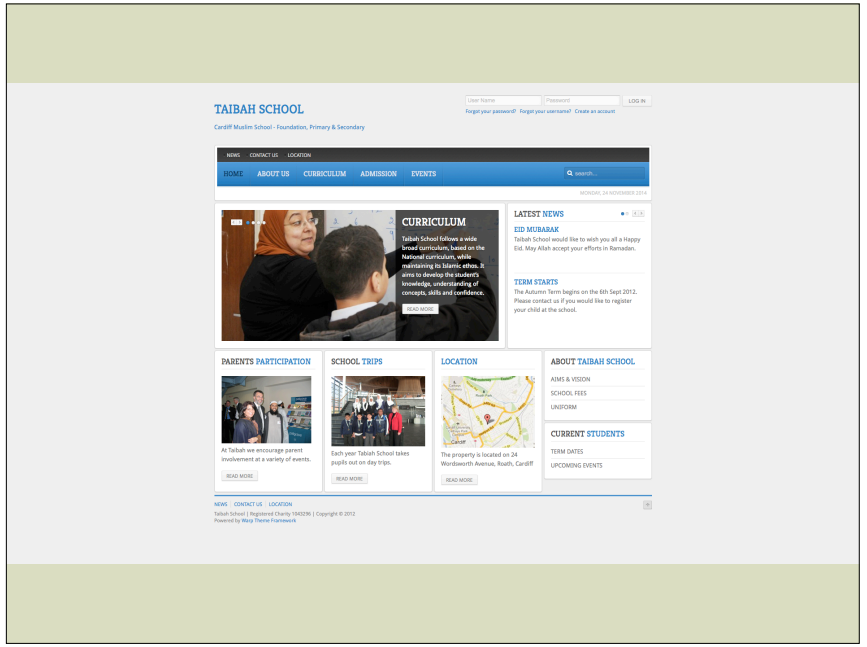
The realisation that compromise is necessary - accommodating and balancing National Curriculum demands, the needs for awareness on sexual issues, the pragmatism of living in Britain, and the requirements of Islam - has led in some cases to conflict.

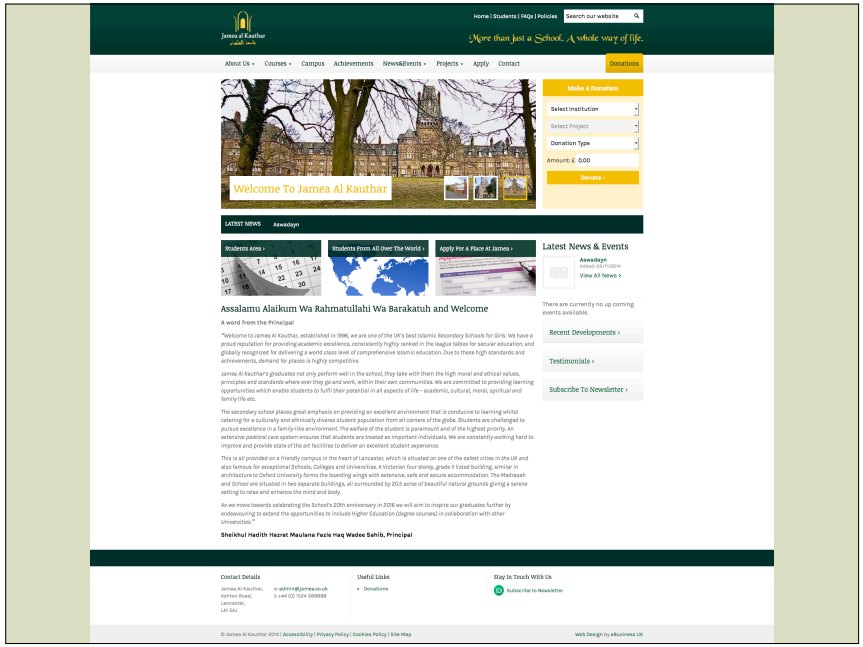
Further examples

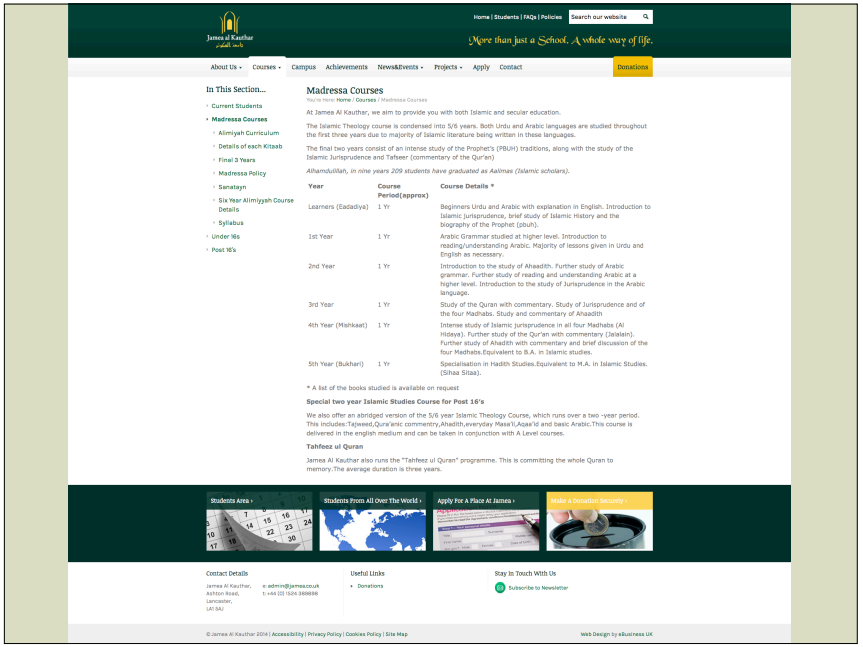


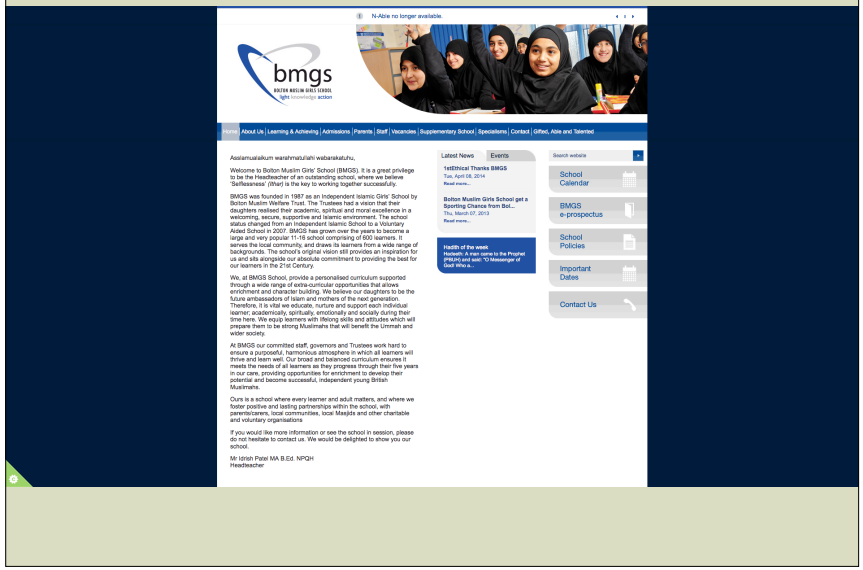







Jamea al Kauthar
More than just a School. A whole way of life.
Welcome To Jamea Al Kauthar
Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh and Welcome
Latest News & Events


Jamea al Kauthar
More than just a School. A whole way of life.
Madressa Courses
In This Section...


bmgs
Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu,

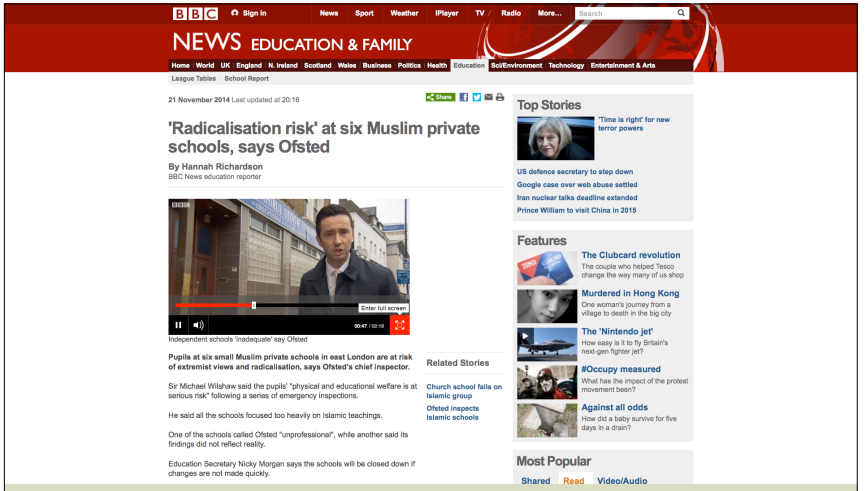

Slough & South Bucks
OBSERVER
Community encouraged to stand up against radicalisation at groundbreaking conference

Schools Issues

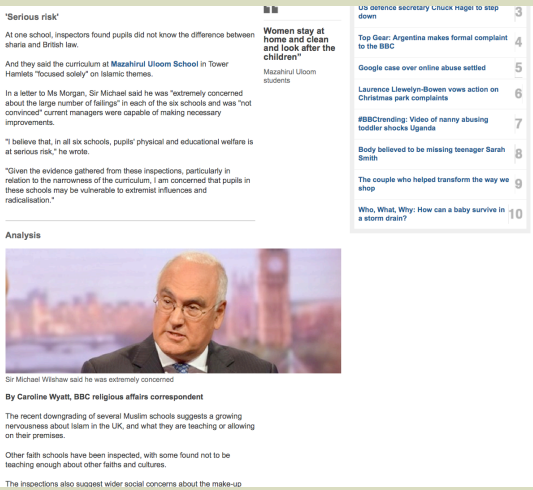
Ofsted
- East London Islamic Schools under criticism for curriculum
- Sir John Cass school under special measures re. radicalisation and Facebook

Trojan Horse
- Five Birmingham schools condemned for governors' approach
- Criticised by inspectors – ongoing issues

Radicalisation
- General concerns re standards in schools
- Some school initiatives against radicalisation



http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-30129645


'Serious risk'

At one school, inspectors found pupils did not know the difference between sharia and British law.

And they said the curriculum at Mazahirul Uloom School in Tower Hamlets "focused solely" on Islamic themes.

In a letter to Ms Morgan, Sir Michael said he was "extremely concerned about the large number of failings" in each of the six schools and was "not convinced" current managers were capable of making necessary improvements.

"I believe that, in all six schools, pupils' physical and educational welfare is at serious risk," he wrote.

"Given the evidence gathered from these inspections, particularly in relation to the narrowness of the curriculum, I am concerned that pupils in these schools may be vulnerable to extremist influences and radicalisation."

Analysis

Sir Michael Wilshaw said he was extremely concerned

By Caroline Wyatt, BBC religious affairs correspondent

The recent downgrading of several Muslim schools suggests a growing nervousness about Islam in the UK, and what they are teaching or allowing on their premises.

Other faith schools have been inspected, with some found not to be teaching enough about other faiths and cultures.

The inspections also suggest wider social concerns about the make-up

Women stay at home and clean and look after the children"
Mazahirul Uloom students

US defence secretary Chuck Hagel to step down 3
Top Gear: Argentina makes formal complaint to the BBC 4
Google case over online abuse settled 5
Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen vows action on Christmas park complaints 6
#BBCtrending: Video of nanny abusing toddler shocks Uganda 7
Body believed to be missing teenager Sarah Smith 8
The couple who helped transform the way we shop 9
Who, What, Why: How can a baby survive in a storm drain? 10

Mazahirul Uloom, a small secondary boys' school that professes to teach the National Curriculum and Islamic Sciences, faces the most criticism.

Inspectors said too much of the curriculum "focuses solely on Islamic themes" and judged it inadequate.

They said pupils believed it was wrong to learn about other religions, were not taught art, music or drama and had a "narrow view" of women in society.

Some students told inspectors: "Women stay at home and clean and look after the children. They cook and pray and wait for us to come back from school with homework."

'Preposterous'

But the school said that during a two-day inspection in October, Ofsted asked pupils "vaguely worded questions which produced vague responses".

"To make sweeping generalisations on the basis of their response is utterly unprofessional," it said in a statement.

"As some of these students had just begun their schooling, it is preposterous to suggest their views somehow reflect the school's curriculum."

Suggestions that children were not protected from extremist views were "completely unfounded", it said, adding that Ofsted's findings regarding the role of women did not "reflect the school's attitude".

The school said it was "natural" for an Islamic school to have a "primary ethos" based on Islam, but that did not mean it taught children that other faiths and traditions were "antithetical to Islamic teachings".

An emergency inspection of the 185-pupil boys' secondary **Jamiatul Ummah** found good opportunities to study and practise the Islamic faith but pupils were not provided with a broad and balanced curriculum.

It was previously judged outstanding but has been downgraded to inadequate.

'Mutual respect'

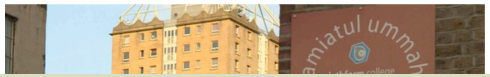
The report said: "The narrowness of the curriculum means that students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, in particular their understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance, is underdeveloped."

Students also lacked opportunities to learn about music and art, or to be creative in PE.

A statement from Jamiatul Ummah said it was disappointed with the findings but that it would work hard to address concerns.

"Ofsted has given disproportionate emphasis to certain issues which do not reflect the real characteristics of the school and has not portrayed accurately the school or given appropriate weight to the varied educational experiences, including National Curriculum," it said.

It stressed that it had 100% of pupils getting five good GCSEs in English and maths last year.



> **Ofsted has given disproportionate emphasis to certain issues "**
>
> Jamiatul Ummah statement

The findings of the other four Ofsted inspections included:

- **Ebrahim Academy** - (secondary) pupils not prepared for modern British life and curriculum said to be too narrow;
- **London East Academy** - (secondary) rated inadequate. Curriculum is not broad and balanced, and students have insufficient understanding of how other people live in Britain and abroad. Also school's work to keep children safe is inadequate. Most of the school library books are in Arabic;
- **Al Mizan** - (primary) rated inadequate. Work in religious studies books shows many pupils have learned only about Islam. Systems for keeping children safe are weak - public have open access to school;
- **East London Islamic School** - (primary) rated inadequate. The majority of lessons focus on Islamic or Arabic studies. All pupils learn to recite religious texts by memory and repetition. Teachers adopt a similar teaching style in other lessons.

The publication comes a day after details leaked of a report on another school, Sir John Cass Foundation and Redcoat, in Stepney, east London.

This is the only state and non-Muslim faith school in the group to be inspected as part of the same set of seven snap inspections and failed for not safeguarding and monitoring pupils adequately.

'No jurisdiction'

The report highlighted the segregation of boys and girls in indoor and outdoor play areas and the risk of extremism.

The six private schools are all in Tower Hamlets, where the council said it had no jurisdiction over teaching and standards at independent faith schools and that its powers were limited to offering training and advice to schools.

19 November 2014 Last updated at 22:08

1.3K Shares

Church school fails inspection on Islamic society

By Sean Coughlan
BBC News education correspondent



Tower Hamlets in east London: Ofsted is to reveal the findings of reports on seven schools this week

A Church of England school previously graded outstanding is expected to be put into special measures over concerns about a sixth-form Islamic society.

Sir John Cass Foundation and Redcoat school, in Stepney, east London, is believed to have failed for not safeguarding and monitoring pupils.

It is believed the society's Facebook page had links to a radical preacher.

Ofsted has carried out a series of unannounced inspections in Tower Hamlets.

Top Stories



'Time is right' for new terror powers

US defence secretary to step down

Google case over web abuse settled

Iran nuclear talks deadline extended

Prince William to visit China in 2015

Features



The Clubcard revolution
The couple who helped Tesco change the way many of us shop



Murdered in Hong Kong
One woman's journey from a village to death in the big city



The 'Nintendo jet'
How easy is it to fly Britain's next-gen fighter jet?



#Occupy measured
What has the impact of the protest movement been?



Against all odds
How did a baby survive for five days in a drain?

Most Popular

Shared | Read | Video/Audio

BT and Telefonica in 'preliminary' talks over O2 deal 1

The no-notice inspections were carried out at the request of the Department for Education and are not part of the standard inspection regime.

It follows the Trojan Horse investigations into allegations that schools in Birmingham were being targeted by groups promoting a hard-line Muslim agenda.

It is also claimed that the sixth form society set up a YouTube channel which was not adequately monitored.

Allowing the segregation of boys and girls in play areas has also been highlighted - but this has been in place for several years.

Sir John Cass school is a Church of England school but serves an area of east London with a large Muslim community.

'Excellent behaviour'

The previous Ofsted report commended how students from "diverse cultures work so well together, having developed excellent codes of behaviour and respect for one another in and out of lessons".

"This is reflected in the very low level of racial incidents and exclusions for a school of this size," said inspectors.

Ofsted says more than 90% of pupils at the school are from ethnic minority groups, with the majority from Bangladeshi backgrounds.

Tower Hamlets council said it could not comment until the reports for all the schools are published.

But director of education Robert McCulloch-Graham said: "We note that of the schools inspected, only one is a publicly-funded maintained school.

"As is common practice, we will work with the leadership of this school to address any issues identified by Ofsted.

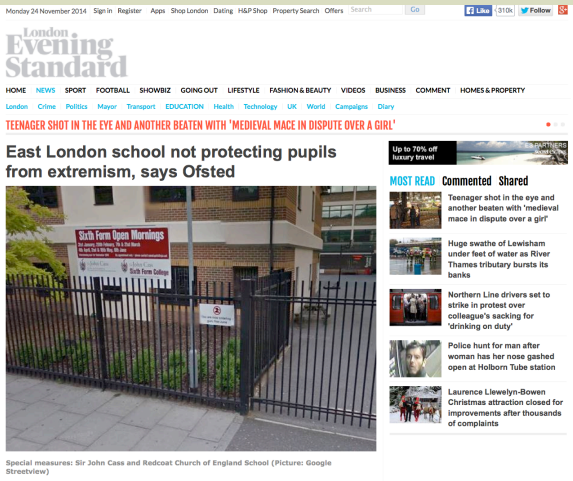
"As a local education authority, we have no jurisdiction whatsoever over teaching and standards at independent faith schools. This is Ofsted's area of responsibility.

"We do, however, have responsibility for safeguarding all children in the borough and have always exercised our safeguarding duties to the full.

Smith

The couple who helped transform the way we shop 9

Who, What, Why: How can a baby survive in a storm drain? 10



London Evening Standard

TEENAGER SHOT IN THE EYE AND ANOTHER BEATEN WITH 'MEDIEVAL MACE IN DISPUTE OVER A GIRL'

East London school not protecting pupils from extremism, says Ofsted

Special measures: Sir John Cass and Redcoat Church of England School (Picture: Google Streetview)

MOST READ Commented Shared

Teenager shot in the eye and another beaten with 'medieval mace in dispute over a girl'

Huge swathe of Lewisham under feet of water as River Thames tributary bursts its banks

Northern Line drivers set to strike in protest over colleague's sacking for 'drinking on duty'

Police hunt for man after woman has her nose gashed open at Holborn Tube station

Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen Christmas attraction closed for improvements after thousands of complaints



Birmingham Mail

Trojan Horse: Oftsed chief condemns Birmingham City Council over its response

Sir Michael Wilshaw said it was 'astonishing' the authority still had no action plan in place

Recommended in News

Improve these suggestions

Giving evidence to the Commons public accounts committee, Sir Michael also revealed the schools watchdog would be conducting more inspections of academies run by chains in the New Year.

Four separate investigations were conducted earlier this year into allegations of a plot by hardline Muslims to seize control of a number of school governing boards in Birmingham.

In June, Ofsted issued a damning verdict on the running of a number of Birmingham's schools and declared five failing, placing them into special measures.

These schools were Golden Hillock School, Nansen Primary School and Park View Academ[illegible] run by the Park View Educational Trust (PVET) – as well as Oldk[illegible] Acad[illegible]

Birmingham Schools in 'Trojan Horse' Controversy

Golden Hillock School, Nansen Primary School and Park View Academy – all run by the Park View Educational Trust (PVET) – as well as Oldknow Academy and Saltley School.

Schools

Trojan Horse affair: remaining disciplinary proceedings dropped

NCTL decision means only one in 15 teachers who faced action banned from classroom in Birmingham schools furore

Richard Adams, *Education editor*

Fri 28 Jul 2017 17.27 BST

364



▲ The proceedings centred around staff at the Park View academy group and were sparked by an anonymous letter claiming there was an Islamist conspiracy to takeover state schools. Photograph: Christopher Furlong/Getty Images

The government has given up its two-year-long attempt to ban teachers caught up in the Trojan Horse affair in Birmingham, after those in the remaining cases were told disciplinary action against them has been halted.

Schools

Five teachers accused in Trojan horse affair free to return to classroom

Panel cites repeated failure on part of government lawyers to share crucial evidence in case of alleged Islamist takeover of schools in Birmingham

Richard Adams *Education editor*

Tue 30 May 2017 19.40 BST

This article is over 10 months old

3,235



▲ Park View secondary school was one of the schools involved in the Trojan horse controversy in Birmingham. Photograph: David Sillitoe for the Guardian

Five senior school leaders accused of involvement in the Trojan horse controversy

SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Research is limited

Function: classes for children (often in mother-tongue)

Homework support

Basics of Islam

Recitation teaching

After-school: can be 2_ hours instruction, often gender separated

Mukatib = sing. Maktab

Madaris = sing. madrasah

Criticism

Can put pressure on children

Different teaching and learning methods (compared with school)

Very strict – rote learning – punishment

Some evidence of changing practices

Social capital of memorisation to acquire hafiz status: transferable skills i.e. public speaking, self discipline

R. Gent, PhD on Redbridge: http://core.kmi.open.ac.uk/download/pdf/1383936.pdf

Higher Education Issues

Islamic studies emerges in diverse disciplinary contexts

Can mean different things to different parties

Fragmentation of scholars and approaches

Identified in UK as strategically important subject in 2007 (post 7/7)

Siddiqui Report

Islamic Studies has role to inform public debate

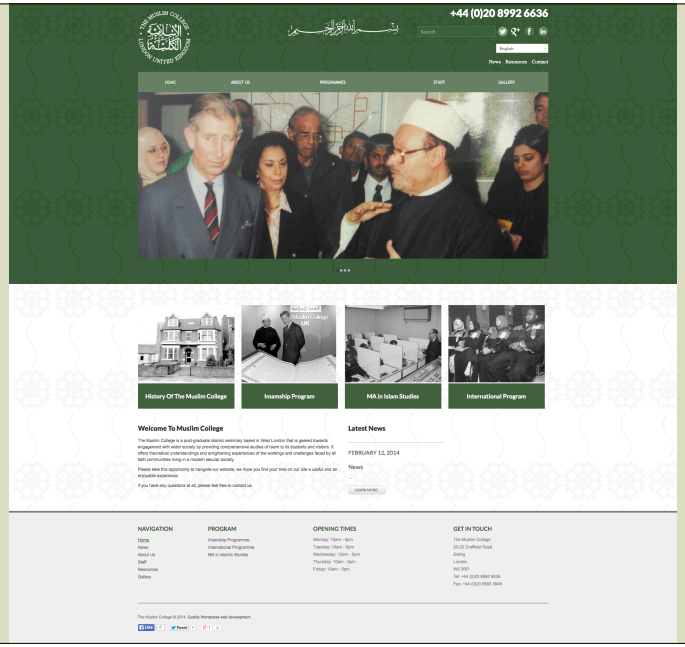
Address issues affecting Muslims in the UK

Siddiqui sought great involvement of Muslims in Islamic Studies

Scott-Baumann comment: Islamic studies in 'two parallel worlds': Muslim seminaries, colleges, etc (not accredited) and universities

Muslim College in Ealing sought to bridge gap with PG course for imams

Other Islamic institutions offer degrees



a. Islamic Studies teaching is concentrated in a small number of pre-92 institutions, but limited provision can be found at most institutions surveyed.

b. Although a large amount of teaching takes place within a core of disciplines and departments traditionally associated with Islamic Studies, provision also takes place in a wide range of disciplines and departments.

c. Most Islamic Studies teaching takes place at level 2 and above. In terms of numbers of modules, the greatest provision is at Masters level.

d. A relatively small proportion of the modules identified contribute to named degrees in Islamic Studies.

e. Although a large number of modules are devoted entirely to Islamic Studies topics, Islamic Studies is also taught in many modules for which Islam is not the primary focus.

tion

Institution Name	Modules*
School of Oriental and African Studies	88
University of Oxford	82
University of Birmingham	77
University of Exeter	71
University of Manchester	48
**Islamic College, London (validated by Middlesex University)	41
University of Edinburgh	40
Birkbeck College	32
University of Cambridge	32
University of Leeds	31
University of St Andrews	25
Durham University	24
Lancaster University	21
**Al-Maktoum Institute (validated by University of Aberdeen)	19
London School of Economics and Political Science	19
**Markfield Institute (validated by University of Gloucestershire)	18
University of Wales Lampeter	17
University of Nottingham	16
University of Warwick	16
University of Glasgow	15
Keele University	12
Canterbury Christ Church University	10
Heythrop College	10
Newcastle University	10

Figure 2 Islamic Studies provision by type of institution

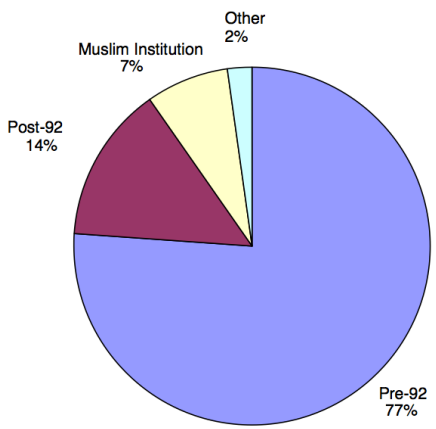
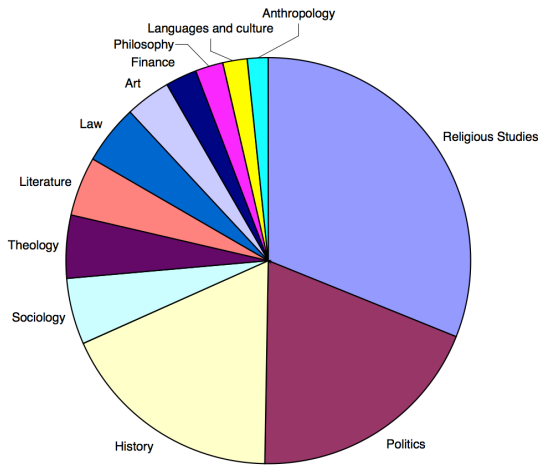


Table 3 Islamic Studies modules by discipline

Discipline	Modules	Percentage
Religious Studies	383	28%
Politics	238	17%
History	220	16%
Sociology	65	5%
Theology	64	5%
Literature	59	4%
Law	56	4%
Art	46	3%
Finance	30	2%
Languages and Culture	26	2%
Philosophy	26	2%
Anthropology	20	1%
Cultural Studies	18	1%
Gender Studies	16	1%
Education	15	1%
Media and Communications	15	1%
Archaeology	14	1%
Architecture	14	1%
Economics	14	1%
English	5	<1%

Figure 3 Disciplines with 20 or more modules in Islamic Studies



Further reading

Bernasek, Lisa and Bunt, Gary (eds.) (2008) International approaches to Islamic studies. Bristol, GB, Higher Education Funding Council for England, 92pp.

http://eprints.soton.ac.uk/172443/1/rd07_08.pdf

Bernasek, Lisa and Bunt, Gary (eds.) (2010) Islamic Studies Provision in the UK

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2010/rd0610/rd06_10.pdf