

Ten more independent faith schools issued warnings by DfE

Posted: Thu, 18 Oct 2018

An Islamic school that breached the Equality Act by treating boys and girls unequally was among 10 failing independent faith schools recently issued warning notices by the government.

The Department for Education (DfE) published 25 [warning notices](#) to independent schools last Friday. The schools included five Christian schools, three Islamic schools and two Jewish schools. The notices were sent between June and August.

Schools that receive warnings must improve within a specified period or they will be removed from the independent schools register.

One school, Leicester Community Academy, was deregistered at the beginning of September. Its failures included its "unlawfully discriminatory" curriculum delivery, "narrow curriculum and insular ethos" that left pupils "ill-prepared for life in British society", and resources that "undermine the fundamental British values", according to its [January 2018 Ofsted inspection](#).

An Islamic school with a capacity of 150 pupils, Leicester Community Academy routinely treated male and female pupils unequally and on multiple occasions was found to be "in breach of the Equality Act 2010". Boys and girls made "uneven rates of progress in different subjects", and while girls had the opportunity to study art, boys did not. Girls were also given opportunities to visit museums that were denied to boys.

Furthermore, while the boys had access to a "well-appointed" library, the girls were not allowed to use the library because it was "located in the boys' section". Instead, the limited reading material available for girls was stored in a filing cabinet within a classroom that could not be accessed during lessons.

The boys' library contained books that condoned violence towards women by their husbands, encouraged men to divorce wives who "refuse to bear a child", and incorrectly stated that women who use contraceptives are "at risk of becoming barren".

The school's report noted that teachers failed to challenge "stereotypical and belittling views about women" in lessons. And while the girls' section of the school had displays celebrating the fact that women have equal opportunities to men in British society, there were no such displays in the boys' section.

Two other Islamic schools, Mazahirul Uloom London School and Read Academy in Essex, were also sent warning notices for failures in teaching standards and safeguarding.

At Talmud Torah Bobov Primary School, one of the two Jewish schools issues warnings, inspectors [found](#) that the quality of teaching and learning was "weak", apart from in religious studies. They also found that the teaching and curriculum are "confined to religious studies" in Year 8, impeding pupils' development of English communication.

At the other Jewish school, Talmud Torah London, pupils' experience of art, music, technology and

PE is "limited", according to its [Ofsted inspection](#) in April. Additionally, plans for teaching PSHE "do not exist", and pupils do not have enough opportunities "to learn about the diversity of the United Kingdom".

All five Christian schools sent warnings had failed on issues relating to safeguarding of pupils.

National Secular Society education and schools officer Alastair Lichten said: "It is unacceptable for any independent school, regardless of its faith ethos, to breach the Equality Act by treating pupils unequally because of their gender.

"It is right for the DfE to hold schools promoting sexist attitudes to account, and to use its powers to close them if they fail to change their ways.

"Our concern now is that the pupils who attended Leicester Community Academy are re-located to suitable schools. It would be a great failing if those pupils ended up in illegal unregistered schools."

Since the introduction of new independent school standards in 2014, which the NSS [supported](#), there has been a [marked increase](#) in independent faith schools failing inspections. In May the NSS [supported](#) revisions to the Independent School Standards to secure all young people's "rights to an open future".

In July the NSS [reported](#) that seven Christian and four Islamic schools were among 26 private schools served with warning notices in the last round published by the DfE.

[**Discuss this story on Facebook**](#)

While you're here

Our news and opinion content is an important part of our campaigns work. Many articles involve a lot of research by our campaigns team. If you value this output, please consider supporting us today.

P.S. make sure to check out the related campaigns below.

- [Support us from just £1 a month](#)
- [Share on What's App](#)
- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Share on Twitter](#)
- [Share on Email](#)
- [Subscribe to RSS Feed](#)

Tags: [Education](#), [Independent schools](#)

Related Campaigns

-

Education and Schools

Join our campaign for an inclusive and secular education system.

[Read More](#)