

Government warns Islamic school with pro-Taliban book in library

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An Islamic school which stocked books promoting support for the Taliban, anti-semitic and anti-Christian messages and misogyny is among nine independent faith schools which have been warned over failings in newly-published [notices](#).

The Department for Education sent Jamia Islamia Birmingham, an independent Islamic school for boys aged 11-19, a warning notice after the school [failed](#) an inspection in June.

School inspectorate Ofsted found one book in the library that set out aims including "to help the Taliban government in the accomplishment of enforcement of Shari'ah in Afghanistan" and "to struggle for the creation of Islamic states".

The book's front page also said "Don't make the Jews and the Christians your friends".

Other books contained "misogynistic messages" and condoned physical punishment, Ofsted said. The books were stamped with the school's name.

The school was also criticised for:

- Having a "poorly designed" and "too narrow" curriculum. Pupils studied religious education for three hours every morning and the key stage 4 curriculum did not include opportunities to study art, music, drama, technology, history or geography.
- Excluding students with special educational needs and disabilities, which is not compliant with the Equality Act 2010.
- Giving pupils no opportunities to socialise outside and leaving pupils to sit on the floor with no planned activities during their lunch break.
- Having a "poorly maintained" and "damp" school building and a "dangerous" playground area.

In total 28 independent schools were issued warning notices in July, including two Jewish schools and six Christian schools. The notices were published online last week.

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

At [Gateshead Cheder Primary School](#), an Orthodox Jewish school for boys, the curriculum was "narrow" and at Year 10 pupils studied only English, maths and Hebrew. The school was not registered to educate Year 10 pupils. It also did not ensure secondary-aged pupils had access to impartial careers advice.

[Leeds Menorah School](#), also Jewish, was criticised over the lack of time allocated to secular subjects. Its admissions register was also incomplete because the destinations of pupils who had recently left were not recorded.

Both Jewish schools refused to teach about LGBT+ people.

All but one of the six Christian schools that received warning notices failed in their safeguarding duties. They included [Ampleforth College](#), a Catholic boarding school where "serious incidents of peer-on-peer abuse" were not always treated according to the safeguarding policy.

In 2018 the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse [found](#) that children as young as seven were sexually abused at Ampleforth College since the 1960s.

National Secular Society education and schools officer Alastair Lichten said: "This latest round of warnings issued by the government to independent schools once again reveals how too many faith schools put religious ideology above the education and wellbeing of their pupils.

"It is truly alarming that we've got to the point where some of these schools are promoting intolerant and extremist messages in the name of religion.

"No child, regardless of their background, should be educated in such an environment."

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