

How state school admissions policies enable coercive control in religious communities

February 2023

Executive Summary

Should a state school be allowed to control how families dress, what they can view on TV or the internet, what they eat at home or in restaurants, and when they have sex?

One of the most controversial aspects of state-funded faith schools is their ability to prioritise places for children according to their family's religious observance. Unlike the two-thirds of state schools without a religious character, most faith schools can require parents to demonstrate their religiosity in order for their application to be ranked more highly in cases where the school is oversubscribed.

The criticisms of this system are well established. Religion or belief is one of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, which ordinarily means an institution, especially a publicly-funded one like a state school, cannot discriminate against people by favouring members of a particular religion or belief over another. Faith-based criteria in admissions policies would be unlawful, if it were not for extensive exceptions built into the Equality Act to accommodate them.¹

The two most common types of state-funded faith schools are Church of England and Catholic. To be considered for prioritisation if these schools are oversubscribed, parents are usually required to demonstrate religiosity by providing

evidence of regular church attendance and/or the child's certificate of baptism. Criticisms of faith-based admissions at these schools centre on the principle that schools, especially those funded primarily by the taxpayer, should treat families of all religions and beliefs equally.

Additionally, there are concerns regarding ethnic and socioeconomic segregation that may result from religious selection. The middle-class parent who fakes religiosity in order to get their child into the 'good' local school, which happens to be a faith school, is now a familiar trope in British fiction dealing with everyday parental issues.

But there is a less well-known, yet perhaps more serious, issue which arises when faith schools are given free rein to decide which parents are sufficiently religious to be deserving of prioritisation.

Such a system enables insular, fundamentalist religious institutions running schools to push religious requirements in admissions criteria to extremes.

For example, in order to be prioritised in admissions:

- Menorah Foundation School in Middlesex requires parents to observe Jewish 'purity laws' regarding sex and menstruation.

¹ For more information see the NSS's 2020 report, *Faith-shaped holes: How religious privilege is undermining equality law* (URL:

<https://www.secularism.org.uk/defend-equality-laws/faith-shaped-holes-how-religious.html>)

- Beis Yaakov High School in Salford forbids parents from allowing their children to watch television or to visit a cinema or theatre.
- Madani Girls School in Leicestershire requires parents and children to follow a halal diet and fast during Ramadan.

The NSS has been aware of such schools and their oversubscription policies for many years – and we have continually raised them with the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) and the Department for Education. These policies are unreasonable, frequently sexist (particularly regarding dress and sexual taboos), undermine fundamental human rights, and have no place at an institution which functions as part of the state.

Despite this, we have seen very little being done to crack down on such policies. Indeed, the OSA has repeatedly ruled that such policies do not breach the School Admissions Code – the code that it supposed to ensure admissions policies are “reasonable, clear, objective, [and] procedurally fair”.² This issue has even been featured in the press. In 2018, TES magazine reported that the OSA had given the green light to a Jewish state school’s admissions code which required families not to wear denim, leather or lycra, or have access to the internet or television.³

Recently, the issue of coercive control within religions has gained attention, as part of increased focus worldwide on the role religion can play in abuse. Last year, ‘cult’ watchdog the Family Survival Trust published a report drawing parallels between coercive behaviour as defined by the Home Office in connection with domestic abuse, and coercive behaviour observed in high control religious groups.

Disturbingly, many of these behaviours are also readily identifiable within the admissions policies of state-funded faith schools.

This report summarises our analysis of the oversubscription criteria within the admissions policies of 14 state-funded schools – 12 Jewish and 2 Islamic – and identifies aspects which we consider to be clear examples of coercive control and potential breaches of human rights. In doing so, we hope to demonstrate the state’s serious failure to safeguard the basic rights and dignity of families within minority religious communities in perhaps one of the most important setting in anyone’s life: the school.

We believe these failings are due to serious deficiencies within the School Admissions Code, a lack of adequate guidance for the OSA on applying the Code, and the more fundamental issue of allowing any state-funded school to apply admissions criteria which amounts to discrimination on the basis of religion or belief.

We have three recommendations for government to take forward to tackle this issue:

- 1. The School Admissions Code must be reviewed and updated. It must be made clear that schools cannot apply criteria which undermines human rights and/or amounts to coercive control.**
- 2. The Office of the Schools Adjudicator must be provided guidance which clarifies some of the more vague aspects of the admissions code – for example, the term “reasonable”.**
- 3. The role of exemptions in the Equality Act 2010 for faith schools in enabling extreme and unreasonable religious admissions criteria must be examined.**

² School Admissions Code, (URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1001050/School_admissions_code_2021.pdf)

³ Roberts, John. ‘Faith school OK to ban mums from wearing lycra’. TES, 13 August 2018 (URL: <https://www.tes.com/magazine/archive/faith-school-ok-ban-mums-wearing-lycra>).

What is 'coercive control'?

The notion of 'coercive control' has been identified as a strategy for entrapping victims within both personal relationships and groups exhibiting 'cult'-like behaviours. In the case of the former, the use of such coercive control can be a criminal offence. In both cases, coercive control can lead to victims experiencing significant emotional and psychological harm as a consequence.

The report identifies instances of coercive control using the following definitions, which are provided by the government in 'Controlling or Coercive Behaviour in an Intimate or Family Relationship: Statutory Guidance Framework'.⁴ This framework is a reference for police and criminal justice agencies investigating cases of potentially criminal coercive control within the context of an interpersonal relationship.

Coercive Behaviour – “an act or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation, or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victims”.

Controlling Behaviour – “a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour”.

It is our view that, based upon these religious practice requirements and the instances of coercive control they represent, some faith school admissions policies are not compliant with the European Convention of Human Rights, in particular:

- The right to respect for family and private life (Article 8)
- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 9)
- Freedom of expression (Article 10)
- The right to education (Protocol 1, Article 2)

Such requirements are therefore entirely unacceptable in a policy determining a child's ability to access an education at a state-funded institution.

The majority of policies in this report are from schools with an Orthodox Jewish religious character, more specifically those aimed towards members of the Charedi community - a group within Orthodox Judaism “characterised by their strict adherence to halakha (Jewish law) and traditions, in opposition to modern values and practices”.⁵ The report also contains the policies of two Islamic schools. The admissions policies of state-funded faith schools of other denominational characters were also reviewed, but the examples found were not judged to contain criteria that met the definition of coercive control.

The Family Survival Trust

The Family Survival Trust (FST) is a registered charity which works to “prevent, and to provide information on coercive control, cultic behaviour and psychological manipulation”.⁶ The trust also works to support individuals affected by such techniques, as well as to provide education regarding the risks posed to both individuals and society. The FST's work is supported by the contributions of experts in a number of relevant academic fields.

⁴ UK Government 'Controlling or Coercive Behaviour in an Intimate or Family Relationship' - (URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/482528/Controlling_or_coercive_behaviour_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

⁵ Wikipedia – 'Haredi Judaism' – (URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haredi_Judaism)

⁶ Family Survival Trust – Homepage – (URL: <https://www.thefamilysurvivaltrust.org/>)

In July 2022 the FST published a report, ‘Coercive Control In Cultic Groups In The United Kingdom’.⁷ The report is based on a survey conducted by the FST of individuals who have been personally affected by membership of such groups, with the surveyed cases being those where either the individual, or the group, was located in the UK. From these testimonies, the report identifies the routine usage of ‘coercive control’ by groups exhibiting cult-like behaviours.

The FST defines their use of the term ‘cult’ as follows: “a group formed and controlled by a charismatic, authoritarian leader or leadership body. It is a rigidly bounded, steeply hierarchical, isolating social system, supported and represented by a total and exclusive ideology. The leader sets in motion processes of coercive control (also known as ‘brainwashing’) designed to isolate, control and exploit their followers”.

For the purposes of this document we have utilised the term ‘high-control group’ (HCG) instead of the term cult. Uses of the term cult will be limited to quotations from other sources such as the FST.

The FST’s report also employs the definition for coercive control set out by the government.

Enforcement of rules

The FST’s report identifies how HCGs exert control over their members’ lives through the strict enforcement of demanding rules. The government’s Guidance Framework gives examples of such rules that include taking control over aspects of members’ everyday lives “such as where they can go, who they can see, what to wear and when they can sleep”.⁸ Respondents to the FST’s survey described the existence of “rules and restrictions pertaining to every imaginable life choice” including what they

could eat, watch, study, who they could have contact with, their use of any free time they might be permitted, and who they could marry.

The FST describes how the enforcement of rules and restrictions in a HCG environment is essentially a way of intimidating and controlling its members, for the purpose of replacing the victim’s sense of self and identity with that of the group or its leader. The enforcement of these rules is also intended to create an environment of monitoring and surveillance, a fear of punishment, and of self-policing and judgment of others.

School application processes

Schools in England which receive state funding are required to publish admissions policies, setting out the criteria by which the admittance of pupils to the school will be decided when it is ‘oversubscribed’ – when there are more applicants than places available. Most types of faith schools are permitted to discriminate on the grounds of the parents’ or child’s religious beliefs or practice to varying extents. Faith schools will often set out various criteria by which religious beliefs and practice will be assessed, for example, the frequency at which a family attends a place of worship.

Voluntary aided schools and converted academies that were formerly voluntary aided are permitted to select 100% of their pupils based on religion when oversubscribed. All examples of admissions criteria used in this report are from these kinds of schools. It should be emphasised that the local authority funds all the school running costs and 90% of the building costs (in theory the religious body pays for 10% of the building costs) for these schools. In the case of the schools examined in this report, admissions policies and supplementary

⁷ Family Survival Trust – ‘Coercive Control In Cultic Groups In The United Kingdom’ (URL: https://www.thefamilysurvivaltrust.org/files/ugd/b17260_d78a97d0616d4340a9c282e3a73abc07.pdf)

⁸ UK Home Office – ‘Statutory guidance framework: controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship’ (URL:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-guidance-framework-controlling-or-coercive-behaviour-in-an-intimate-or-family-relationship>)

information forms (SIFs) either required parents to certify their adherence to a list of beliefs and practices, or utilised questionnaires regarding various aspects of religious practice which applicants could answer individually. Applicants either had to meet all the criteria specified by the list or were awarded a score on a points based system.

Admissions policies for all schools need to comply with the School Admissions Code, which requires that oversubscription criteria are “reasonable, clear, objective, [and] procedurally fair”.⁹ Adherence to the code is overseen by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator, which responds to complaints raised about admissions policies at state schools. It can make determinations on whether an admissions policy is compliant with the code, and direct the school to change their policy where necessary.

As we explain in the report, the OSA has proved ineffective at preventing the kinds of policies we have highlighted here. This could either be a fault with the code itself, with guidance provided to the OSA, or both.

Our report compares some of the areas and methods of control which are referenced in the FST’s report with the language and criteria found in the schools’ admissions policies. The contents of the original policies can be found in the appendix to this document.

⁹ Department for Education – School Admissions Code (URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1001050/School_admissions_code_2021.pdf)

Examples of Coercive Control

Deprivation and isolation

The FST's report identifies the deprivation of individual needs of various kinds, including medical care, therapy or education as a key area over which coercive control is frequently exerted.

As the report notes, followers are deprived of "education, cultural resources and social interactions", which is intended to deny them "access to alternative views that could tempt them to leave, doubt or question the cult". The report highlights the importance of this deprivation as a tactic for control, noting that "isolation is a key method used in cults to control and entrap members and enforce exclusive dependency on the cult". Such isolation can either be from friends or family members, or from the 'outside' world more generally.

The limitation of access to resources is also often accompanied by surveillance and monitoring in order to ensure compliance.

Instances in schools' admissions policies

Many of the admissions policies we reviewed included criteria requiring applicants to heavily restrict the ability of their children and wider family to access information, education, or culture which was considered 'inappropriate'. All examples were found in the policies of Orthodox Jewish schools, with such restrictions including:

- Prohibiting or restricting internet access.
- Prohibiting or restricting television access.
- Prohibiting or restricting mobile phone access and ownership.
- The installation of filtering software on internet enabled devices from an approved service provider (Technology Awareness Group).

- Prohibiting attendance at the cinema or theatre.
- Parents applying censorship on all books which are kept in their home.
- Children not being permitted to attend public libraries without close supervision.
- The requirement that internet enabled devices be kept in a communal area of the home.
- The requirement that a single, shared e-mail address be used by the whole family.
- Children forbidden from visiting homes where internet access is unrestricted or unmonitored.
- Prohibiting children from supporting a sports team or club in order to prevent this developing into a "bridge into the outside world".

We believe these criteria are clear examples of the kinds of deprivation and isolation identified by the FST in its report, particularly of the kind relating to the restriction of information and cultural resources which originate from outside the group.

The criteria reflect what students are taught whilst at school. For example, as evidenced by instances such as the 2018 Ofsted report into Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School,¹⁰ school curriculums at some Orthodox Jewish schools can be severely limited in their scope and often do not teach non-religious subjects at all, including maths and English. If non-religious subjects are taught, information is frequently altered or redacted to remove material judged to be problematic, in particular on topics such as biology and reproduction.

These restrictions hold back pupils' personal development, limiting their life opportunities and aspirations. They also create an environment of material deprivation as well as intellectual, as pupils may struggle to access employment

¹⁰ Ofsted – Full Inspection of Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School 2018 - (URL: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50004479>)

opportunities due to their lack of education. Indeed, the aforementioned Ofsted report further noted that “leaders deliberately restrict the options available to pupils” in regards to advice on careers and future academic studies. This kind of material and financial deprivation has also been identified as a method employed by HCGs to increase their members’ dependence on the group’s authorities.

In addition to closing off the life choices available to pupils, these policies are designed to separate children from communities other than their own. The Ofsted report notes that “leaders restrict pupils’ access to members of the public and activities outside of the faith community, both in school and in their social lives”. There are also mentions of ‘the outside world’ in several admissions policies as something to be avoided or kept at bay.

The deliberate restricting of access to information and culture is especially concerning in the context of a school, as it runs entirely contrary to the purpose and principles of education and the advancement of knowledge. Schools should promote curiosity and inquiry, not suppress it.

Taken together, the NSS views the behaviour of these schools as something to be actively challenged, and certainly not funded at the state’s expense.

Control of sexuality and intimate, family, and close relationships

The FST’s report identifies the control of sexuality and of intimate and family relationships as an area integral to the malign influence exerted by HCGs. The report finds: “even the most intimate of human behaviours is controlled by cults. The notion of privacy is non-existent, even regarding one’s own sexual behaviours”.

The purpose of this control is to prevent the formation of close attachments of any kind, which may undermine the controlling influence exerted by the HCG.

The report notes that “control of relationships may be obtained by making rules and requirements for sexuality and reproduction”, with such requirements including forced celibacy and the use or prohibition of contraception being controlled by the group.

Family purity laws (‘tahas hamishpacha’)

Amongst Orthodox Jewish communities, observance of ‘family purity laws’, or ‘tahas hamishpacha’,¹¹ is considered one of the central characteristics of Orthodox Jewish religious practice.¹²

Although there are different interpretations of practice, the rules concern when a married couple may or may not have sexual intercourse or come into physical contact with one another.¹³ Whether this is permitted or not is based upon the timings of the menstrual cycle, with sexual activity prohibited on certain days depending upon whether a woman is menstruating (during which she is described as niddah), the proximity to the period of menstruation, or if she experiences other kinds of vaginal bleeding.¹⁴

¹¹ Spellings for this term differ.

¹² Bionity Encyclopaedia – ‘Niddah’ – (URL: <https://www.bionity.com/en/encyclopedia/Niddah.html>)

¹³ Wikipedia – Niddah – (URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niddah>)

¹⁴ Channa Lockshin Bob – ‘A Detailed Explanation of Niddah, or “Family Purity”, Laws’ – (URL: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-laws-of-niddah/>)

We believe that such ‘family purity laws’ are a clear example of ‘rules governing sexuality and reproduction’ as identified by the FST, with the intimate relationship between married couples also subject to a set of rules determined by the group.

As part of the practice, women can also be required to submit evidence of their vaginal discharges to religious authorities in order to determine their ‘purity’ status, and consequently what rules they are obliged to comply with.¹⁵ This is highly intrusive and is also instance of an authority figure exerting control over the one of the most intimate aspects of a person’s life. It is also a practice which is specifically identified in the FST’s report as an example of ‘group humiliation or degrading acts’, a form of emotional abuse, and can be deeply distressing as testimony from members of the Orthodox community demonstrates.¹⁶

Instances in schools’ admissions policies

The following are taken directly from either the admissions policies or supplementary information forms of the named schools.

Menorah Foundation School – “Do you observe the halachos of taharas hamishpochah in accordance with Jewish Law?”

Menorah Primary School – “Do you adhere to the laws pertaining to family purity for married couples?”

Pardes House Primary School – “Adherence to the Laws pertaining to Family purity for married couples” (with options for applicants to register a yes / no answer).

Each of these schools also requires either a written confirmation from a Rabbi that the family adheres to these and other laws, or for the

contact details of a Rabbi to be provided as a more general reference. This additional requirement, for a family’s adherence to these purity laws to receive validation from a source of authority, is of further concern in light of the highlighted use of surveillance and monitoring by HCGs as referenced in the FST’s report.

We believe it is entirely inappropriate for such requirements to play any sort of role in deciding a child’s placement at a school, and that they also represent a gross intrusion on the human right to a private life which the state should play no role in facilitating.

Dress codes

The FST’s report identifies control being exerted over one’s clothing as a common experience of those within HCGs, with 82% of those surveyed for the report saying that rules were enforced by the group relating to what they could wear. Government guidance also describes attempts to control the clothing a person wears as a potential example of coercion or control within the context of a personal relationship.

Tznius and shatnez

In Judaism, ‘tznius’ or ‘tzniut’ describes both a general “character trait of modesty and discretion” and “a group of Jewish laws concerned with modesty of both dress and behaviour”. In regards to clothing, those seeking to act in accordance with the requirements “should not dress in ways that attract undue attention” or “that overly emphasises their physical appearance”.¹⁷

Though there are various interpretations of the laws in relation to dress, in Orthodox Jewish / Charedi communities women are generally expected to wear clothing that conceals both their elbows and collarbones, as well as skirts

¹⁵ Nishmat’s Women’s Health and Halacha – ‘Bedikot’ – (URL: <https://www.yoatzot.org/becoming-tehorah/603/>)

¹⁶ Katia Aryeh - ‘I Had To Take My Dirt Panties to a Rabbi, and So Has Every Orthodox Jewish Woman’ – (URL: [https://richarddawkins.net/2016/11/i-](https://richarddawkins.net/2016/11/i-had-to-take-my-dirty-panties-to-a-rabbi-and-so-has-every-orthodox-jewish-woman/)

[had-to-take-my-dirty-panties-to-a-rabbi-and-so-has-every-orthodox-jewish-woman/](https://www.yoatzot.org/becoming-tehorah/603/))

¹⁷ Wikipedia – ‘Tzniut’ – (URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tzniut#Dress>)

that cover their knees whilst both standing and sitting. Tznius also “requires married women to cover their hair when in the presence of men other than their husband or close family members”. Expectations for men differ, but might include covering the head in some fashion whilst outside the home, or wearing long-sleeved shirts and trousers.

Requiring women to adhere to higher modesty standards than men is inherently sexist. But the OSA have appeared either unwilling or unable to penalise policies that force women and girls to cover themselves up more than men and boys.

The term ‘shatnez’ refers to a cloth containing both wool and linen which, under Jewish law, is prohibited from being worn as an item of clothing.¹⁸

It should be stressed that, in many cases, families are expected to adhere to these policies even when outside the school premises.

Islamic dress requirements

Many interpretations of Islamic law judge there to be certain requirements on how Muslims should dress, with distinct sets of rules for both men and women. Although these interpretations vary significantly, most take the general view that it is a religious duty to dress “modestly”, that is, areas which are judged to be “sexual in nature must be hidden from public view”.¹⁹

Instances in school’s admissions policies

- Requirement for “mothers and girls” to dress “at all times in accordance with the strictest standards of tznius (modesty)”, including the complete covering of hair at all times, for skirts to cover the knees when walking and sitting, and for there to be no slits in skirts under any circumstances.

- Stipulation that the way parents dress in public generally complies with the school’s dress code.
- Requirement for men to wear a jacket, and a kippa or hat.
- Various requirements stipulating that the elbows, the top of the spine, the top of the sternum and collar bone must be concealed.
- Requirement that “au-pairs, nannies or anyone else collecting children” from school dress in a “manner that shows respect” for the ethos of the school.
- Requirement to avoid “dress which emphasises or unduly exposes the body”, and “tight-fitting materials”.
- Requirements relating to the wearing of sheitels (wigs) and what types are permitted.
- Prohibition on wearing bright colours.
- Restrictions on the wearing of make-up and nail polish.
- Prohibition on wearing “casual garments and footwear”.
- Requirement that the “overall mode of hair-style, dress-style and colour” of clothing for men and boys be in “accordance with the Charedi ethos of the school”.
- Requirement that mothers and daughters dress modestly in accordance with guidelines set out by a particular Rabbi.
- Requirement that skirts be of a specific length, 4”-10”, below the knee.
- Requirement that “fashions from the outside world” are avoided at all costs, and that nothing “out of the norm” or “eye-catching” be worn.
- Questions asking parents whether they observe the rules of “sha’atnez”, with options for yes or no.

¹⁸ Wikipedia – ‘Shatnez’ – (URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shatnez>)

¹⁹ Wikipedia – ‘Islamic Clothing’ – (URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_clothing)

- Requirement that parents and children adhere to an “Islamic dress code” by dressing “modestly and appropriately”.

These examples of rules regarding clothing and dress should be considered instances of controlling behaviour, particularly viewed in light of their function in determining a child’s placement at a school.

Prohibition of clothing ‘from the outside world’ is of additional concern, as it suggests the intention of the rules is to cut off adherents from those outside the faith group - in this case the Charedi community.

Tzinus is considered important to marriage and “healthy sexual relations between husband and wife”.²⁰ The rules around modesty must be viewed in this context and, given the difference in requirements for men and women which the admissions policies specify, along with the more extensive rules which are listed for women, should therefore arouse concerns regarding whether they are in accordance with requirements around gender equality.

It is entirely unacceptable for schools to require parents to comply with requirements of this kind in order to access a place at the school for their child. Whilst it is not inappropriate for a school to have a uniform policy for its pupils, the imposition of a dress code for pupils at times when they are not in school also represents an unreasonable intrusion on family and private life.

Requiring parents to comply with such restrictions is similarly unacceptable and, as described previously, must be considered in light of the need for the application forms on which these requirements are found to be signed off by an authority figure such as a Rabbi or Imam. The permanent sense of being watched and monitored that this must create is also an

unacceptable invasion of an individual’s private life.

Control of diet

The FST’s report also identifies the enforcement of rules over what an individual may eat as a feature common to the control exerted by HCGs. A number of testimonies from survey respondents specifically reference their diet being controlled in some way, such as not being allowed to eat certain food or a prohibition on eating food prepared by those outside the group.

Kashrus / Kosher

Kashrus is the aspect of Jewish law relating to what foods are permissible to eat and how those foods must be prepared. Foods which comply with such laws and that may therefore be consumed are deemed kosher.²¹

Islamic dietary requirements

Under Islamic law, food and drink can either be judged halal (permissible) or haram (forbidden).²² Although there are different interpretations of these laws, there are various requirements regarding both the types of food that may be consumed and how they should be prepared.²³ Additionally, during the month of Ramadan, Muslims are generally expected to observe a period of fasting between sunrise and sunset.²⁴

Instances in school’s admissions policies

- Requirement for observe ‘kashrus’ (dietary rules) inside and outside the home.
- Requirement to eat only in restaurants that are supervised by an Orthodox kashrus authority.

²⁰ My Jewish Learning – ‘Modesty (Tzniut)’ – (URL: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/modesty-tzniut/>)

²¹ Wikipedia – ‘Kashrut’ – (URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kashrut>)

²² Wikipedia – ‘Halal’ – (URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halal>)

²³ Wikipedia – ‘Islamic Dietary Requirements’ – (URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_dietary_laws)

²⁴ Wikipedia – ‘Ramadan’ – (URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramadan>)

- Requirement for parents and children to only consume halal food and drink.
- Requirement for parents and children to observe fasts during the month of Ramadan.

These rules concerning diet should be viewed in the context of the controlling behaviour exhibited in other requirements in the admissions policies. Understood in this way, the restrictions around diet can be seen as another problematic intrusion into an individual's private life and as an unreasonable standard by which to judge the granting of a child's placement at school.

Control over free time

The FST identifies the control of members' time as a feature of HCGs, which is intended to ensure members are "focused solely on the cult's objectives". The report says that those who responded to the survey "felt overwhelmed by this constant, forceful and all-encompassing monitoring of their time". Eighty-eight per cent of survey respondents reported restrictions being placed on their free time as a feature of their experience within a HCG.

The demands placed upon how an individual uses their time should also be understood in light of the tactics of deprivation employed by HCGs. By limiting the free time available to members, groups suppress their capacity to access information or pursue employment opportunities which might reduce their mental, emotional, and material dependence upon the group.

Instances in school's admissions policies

- Requirement that men attend a synagogue up to three times a day for prayers, in addition to all prayers on the sabbath and high holidays. Women are

also expected to attend prayers, though far less frequently.

- Set times for the daily study of religious texts.

The requirement for such attendance to be three times daily should, in the context of the other instances of controlling behaviour which have been highlighted thus far, be seen as an unreasonable demand on an individual's free time.

Control and monitoring of speech

In its description of the activities of HCGs, the FST sets out how the critical thinking of individuals is suppressed at every opportunity in order to limit their ability to question the group or undermine its authority. The environment of self-policing and judgement from fellow members that this creates is so intense and oppressive that those who do manage to leave the group often experience mental health difficulties such as post-traumatic stress disorder, disassociation, and depression. HCGs seek to remove members' capacities to think independently and share information or ideas which would undermine the group's power or authority.

Shmiras Haloshon

Of the admissions policies reviewed by the NSS, one included the requirement to observe 'shmiras haloshon' - a set of rules in Jewish law governing speech. The rule forbids the speaking of 'lashon hara' - a "term for speech about a person or persons that is negative or harmful to them, even though it is true. It is speech that damages the person(s) that are talked about either emotionally or financially, or lowers them in the estimation of others".²⁵

In light of the controlling behaviours which have already been illustrated by the previous requirements found in the admissions policies,

²⁵ Wikipedia – 'Lashon Hara' – (URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lashon_hara)

rules which place limitations on an individual's ability to speak become of additional concern. It could even present additional safeguarding concerns, discouraging children or their families from reporting concerns regarding teachers or other staff to the school.

In the particular context of a faith school, one can imagine a situation where criticism of the school itself is in some way judged to break this requirement, even if factual or justified. Some interpretations of the rules do make an allowance for the vocalising of negative comments if done for a positive or constructive means, but this is presumably a matter for an authority figure to pass judgement on, and therefore insufficient as a defence against the right to speak freely.

It is not acceptable for the speech of parents to be monitored as a condition for a child's entry into a school.

Office of the Schools Adjudicator

The Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) is the government body responsible for deciding on “objections and variations to admission arrangements, appeals from schools directed to admit pupils, significant changes to schools and ownership of school land”.²⁶

The OSA determines whether a school’s oversubscription criteria is compliant with the School Admissions Code, which is “statutory guidance that schools must follow when carrying out duties relating to school admissions”. The purpose of the code is to ensure that all school places for state funded schools (maintained schools and academies) are allocated and offered in “an open and fair way”.²⁷

A number of the schools identified in this report have previously been the subject of inquiries by the OSA in regards to their admissions policies, generally following complaints from members of the public in relation to the religious practice requirements such policies contain. The NSS has documented numerous cases where the OSA has dismissed such complaints, instead judging such religious practice criteria to be acceptable under the admissions code.

One such case involved Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School in January 2022.²⁸ The nature of the complaint concerned criteria in the school’s admissions policy which required mothers and girls to dress modestly, arguing that the requirements were discriminatory against

women and girls. The OSA did not uphold the complaint on the grounds that: “It is not uncommon for religions to impose different requirements for men and women, not only in relation to dress but to roles that may be held as leaders in faith matters or in requirements to take part in public prayer”.

However, in the same judgement, the adjudicator did uphold the objection against prohibitions on “brightly coloured clothing” contained in the admissions arrangements, arguing that this criteria had no objective standard and was therefore not permissible. Such judgements illustrate the limits of the OSA’s powers – whilst standards which lack sufficient clarity are not acceptable, those which may be judged discriminatory, coercive or controlling are permitted under the code.

There are numerous other instances where the OSA has similarly judged restrictive religious practice criteria to be acceptable inclusions in admissions policies. These include another complaint concerning Yesodey Hatorah in 2018²⁹; Beis Yaakov Jewish High School in February 2021³⁰; Avigdor Hirsch Torah Temimah Primary School in 2018³¹; Pardes House Primary School in 2018³² and again in 2019.³³ This list should not be taken to be exhaustive.

The School Admissions Code requires that oversubscription criteria are “reasonable, clear, objective, [and] procedurally fair” and compliant with “all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation”.³⁴

²⁶ OSA – (URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator>)

²⁷ UK go)

²⁸ OSA – OSA Decision ‘Yesodey Hatorah’ 10.1.22 - (URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/yesodey-hatorah-senior-girls-school-hackney-10-january-2022>)

²⁹ OSA – OSA Decision ‘Yesodey Hatorah’ 8.8.18 (URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/732714/ADA3361_Yesoday_Hatorah_Senior_Girls_School_Hackney_-_8_August_2018.pdf)

³⁰ OSA – OSA Decision ‘Beis Yaakov’ 23.2.21 (URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/965042/ADA3723_Beis_Yaakov_Jewish_High_School_Salford_23_February_2021_1_.pdf)

³¹ OSA – OSA Decision ‘Avigdor Hirsch’ 3.12.18 (URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/761101/ADA3362_Avigdor_Hirsch_Torah_Temimah_Primary_School_Brent_-_3_December_2018.pdf)

³² OSA – OSA Decision ‘Pardes House’ 3.12.18 (URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/761307/ADA3380_Pardes_House_Primary_School_Barnet_3_December_2018.pdf)

³³ OSA – OSA Decision ‘Pardes House’ 16.8.19 (URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/825842/ADA3530_Pardes_House_Primary_School_Barnet_16_August_2019.pdf)

³⁴ Department for Education – School Admissions Code (URL: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1001050/School_admissions_code_2021.pdf)

Many of the admissions policies examined in this report represent clear infringements upon human rights, in particular the right to a private or family life. As the admissions code specifies the Human Rights Act 1998 as a piece of relevant legislation oversubscription criteria must comply with, such flagrant violations of legislation show that current arrangements are not sufficient. The admissions code must therefore be revised to include specific prohibitions on human rights violations, or the OSA provided with further guidance upon the code's application.

The same argument can be applied to the code's requirement that oversubscription criteria are 'reasonable'. As it stands, this requirement is either too weak or too vague, as there is no possible interpretation of reasonable under which the sex lives of parents can be considered a legitimate basis upon which to allocate places at a state-funded school. That such criteria are possible therefore demonstrates either that a more comprehensive definition of 'reasonable' is necessary, or that the OSA is in need of more extensive guidance on how to interpret the code's requirements.

It must be noted that these issues are ultimately caused by permitting the inclusion of religiously discriminatory criteria in admissions policies. It is in some respects unfair to expect the OSA to decide upon what aspects of religious practice are reasonable or not - this is not their area of expertise and any such decision may be interpreted as passing an ethical or theological judgement upon religious practices. Without very specific prohibitions, the legitimacy of *any* religious criteria facilitates the inclusion of *all* religious criteria. In light of this, the exemptions to the Equality Act 2010 which enable such discrimination should be reviewed.

We believe these cases demonstrate that the current admissions code is not fit for purpose. As the cases show, religious criteria very similar to those which have been identified as examples of coercive control have been previously judged to be in compliance with the code. Any response to

these identified cases of coercive control which relies upon the code or OSA guidance as it currently is will therefore be insufficient. New, targeted measures are required to prevent admissions policies being used as instruments of coercive control.

Conclusion

Our research has demonstrated how exceptions granted to state-funded faith schools to discriminate on religious grounds in admissions are enabling human rights infringements and instances of coercive control. As it stands, the UK taxpayer is funding educational institutions engaged in these harmful practices via their religiously discriminatory oversubscription criteria. The fact that the state is facilitating such practices and that families are being subjected to coercive and controlling behaviour in order to access an education for their child is of deep concern.

If the instances of coercive and controlling behaviour perpetuated by these schools were displayed by an individual within the context of an interpersonal relationship, there is a significant possibility that the individual would be committing a criminal offence. Whilst such practices do not have the same legal status within an organisational context such as a school, they should be regarded with similar ethical disapproval.

That such unethical practices are facilitated by the state education system must be urgently addressed.

It is essential that the function of the School Admissions Code and the OSA is reviewed and updated in order to tackle the harmful practices identified by this report. Policies which breach human rights or amount to instances of coercive control must be explicitly prohibited. However, given the religiously fundamentalist nature of many of these schools, it is likely they will attempt to continue in such practices. Further attempts to circumvent the spirit of the admissions code should therefore be monitored closely moving forward, and substantially expanded guidance provided to the OSA in order to better enforce the revised code.

The OSA must be empowered to challenge unreasonable criteria rather than feeling obliged to give way to religious sensibilities – a consequence of the undue influence granted to religion in the UK education system, which must also be investigated. Specific recommendations should be created to guide the OSA in regulating admissions policies which do not comply with human rights or other reasonable standards.

Our 3 recommendations for Government:

- 1. The School Admissions Code must be reviewed and updated. It must be made clear that schools cannot apply criteria which undermines human rights and/or amounts to coercive control.**
- 2. The Office of the Schools Adjudicator must be provided guidance which clarifies some of the more vague aspects of the admissions code – for example, the term “reasonable”.**
- 3. The role of exemptions in the Equality Act 2010 for faith schools in enabling extreme and unreasonable religious admissions criteria must be examined.**

Appendix

Avigdor Hirsch Torah Temimah Primary School	
Address: Parkside, Dollis Hill, London, NW2 6RJ	Website: http://www.torahtemimah.wordpress.com/
Policy Documents Admissions Policy: https://torahtemimah.files.wordpress.com/2022/07/admissions-arrangements-2023-24.pdf	
Issues Summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children must not have access to the internet or a television. • Families are required to dress modestly, though details are not specified. 	
Screenshots: The commitment to the Faith will be determined by a parent of the applicant verifying both that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the family of the applicant and (if different) the home in which the applicant spends most of his time abides by the standards of <i>tzenius</i> (modesty in dress, speech and behaviour) and all aspects of religious observance at home specified by the code of Jewish law, published under the title, <i>Shulchan Aruch</i>; and b) the applicant (meaning the child for whom the application is being made) does not have access to the internet or television. 	

Beis Yaakov High School

Address:

69 Broom Lane, Bury New Road, Salford, M7
4FF

Website:

www.byjhs.org

Policy Documents**Admissions Policy:**

https://www.byjhs.org/files/ugd/9f8df0_7aa62ad30182491a8e065eac7b429c1a.pdf

Issues Summary:

- Restrictions on internet and television access.
- Requirement to provide a certificate from the local TAG that any internet access has been adequately filtered.
- Children are not permitted to own mobile phones.
- Children are not permitted to attend the theatre or cinema.
- Dress requirements.
- Other restrictions on media / books that a child may read – children should not be permitted to attend public libraries alone.
- Required activities or demands placed upon free time.

Screenshots:

Charedi homes do not have TV or other inappropriate media, and parents will ensure that their children will not have access to the internet and any other media which do not meet the stringent moral criteria of the Charedi community as laid down below.

- School aged children do not own, have access to or use an Internet enabled device. School aged children may not use an internet enabled device for any other purpose unless its internet has been blocked effectively.
- Parents will be required to bring a certificate from TAG Manchester (Technology Awareness Group) that all Internet Enabled Devices they own have been filtered. School aged children may not own any type of mobile phone, including one without internet or text capability. This applies even if the internet access has been blocked. On those occasions where parents or guardians feel that for reasons of safety there is a need for their daughter to have access to a mobile [e.g. if their daughter will be away from home for an extended period] then, at their discretion, she may borrow the parent's / guardian's phone and hand it back on return home. It goes without saying that this phone must likewise have no internet access.
- School aged children do not watch television.
- School aged children never attend theatre or cinema.
- School aged children are not permitted to view unsuitable videos / films. Unsuitable material refers to videos that contain romance, nudity, drugs, discrimination, violence, hate, crime, racism or adult content.
- Parents exercise censorship on all material entering their homes (books, magazines, videos etc.). School aged children are not permitted to view, listen or read material that contain romance, nudity, drugs, discrimination, violence, hate, crime, racism or adult content. As unsuitable material is available in public libraries, school aged children should not go to public libraries unless supervised by an adult.
- Parents should always know where their daughters are, what time they will be coming home and who they are with.

Mothers and girls will dress at all times in accordance with the strictest standards of Tznius (modesty) as outlined below;

A. Dresses & Skirts

- Dresses and skirts should cover the knees even when walking or sitting.
- A dress or skirt may not have any slits, even if the slit only starts below the minimum length.

B. Sheitels / Hair

- Mother's hair must be completely covered at all times.

C. Necklines must not be open below the collarbone.

D. Sleeves must cover the elbows at all times.

E. Tights should be worn at all times and it should be apparent that they are being worn. Ankle-length socks are unacceptable even over tights. Leggings may not be worn, even under a skirt.

F. Coloured nail varnish should not be used. School aged girls should not wear makeup.

Fathers must belong to a Charedi synagogue and attend all prayers on Shabbos, Yom Tov and the three daily prayers. Likewise attendance in synagogue should be appropriately dressed i.e. with a jacket and hat. Set times for daily Torah sessions are an essential part of a Charedi environment.

Mothers must attend the following services each calendar year on the following occasions and for the durations indicated: Purim (full duration of evening and morning Megilla readings); Simchas Torah (half an hour during either evening or daytime Hakofos); Rosh Hashono (full duration of Tekias Shofar).

Broughton Jewish Cassel Fox Primary School

Address:

Legh Road, Salford, Manchester, M7 4RT

Website:

<http://bjcfps.co.uk/index.html>

Policy Documents**Admissions Policy:**

<http://bjcfps.co.uk/media/files/policies/Admissions%20Policy%202022.pdf>

Issues Summary:

- Dress code requirements.
- Dietary requirements.

Screenshots:

We are delighted to welcome children whose families are understanding and supportive of the Torah ethos of our school. We emphasise the importance of "Shemiras Shabbos", "Kashrus", "Middos Tovos" and "Tznius", (modesty in style of clothes and everyday life.

The school caters for children of families who conduct their lives in accordance with the laws of the Shulchan Aruch particularly in relation to the areas of Shabbos Observance (both privately and publicly) and Kashrus and Tznius.

Independent Jewish Day School

(Note: Despite its name, this school is state-funded).

Address:

46 Green Lane, Hendon, London, NW4 2AH

Website:

<https://www.iids.co.uk/>

Policy Documents**Admissions Policy:**

https://www.iids.co.uk/files/ugd/814442_b72e0feee84a4b4e9a1050f4b006e6b6.pdf

Issues Summary:

- Dress requirements.

Screenshots:***The IJDS DRESS CODE states as follows:***

We educate our children to live according to Torah values. These values specifically include behaving and dressing Be'Tzniut. With this in mind, we request that all parents and visitors to the School premises respect the fact that we are an orthodox School and dress appropriately.

Gentlemen should wear a Kippa and dress respectfully. Cycling shorts are not acceptable.

Ladies are expected to wear tops with sleeves that extend half way down from the shoulder to the elbow, with necklines which are no more than 2-3 inches down from the collarbone. Leggings and cycling/gym shorts are not acceptable. Ladies who come into the School building during the day, for any reason, are expected to wear a skirt or dress to the knee.

We do not expect au-pairs, nannies or anyone else collecting the children to adhere to the same standards of Tzniut as our parents, however we would ask that they do not come to school in shorts and sleeveless tops and that they dress in a manner which shows respect for our ethos. Adults who are dressed inappropriately will be asked to leave school premises.

Will you ensure that, when on school premises or at school events, the way you dress complies with school's dress code?

Yes / No

Will you instruct anybody representing your family at the school to comply with this dress code?

Yes / No

Does the way you dress in public generally comply with the school's dress code (for men this includes wearing a kippa or hat when not at work or in sensitive/dangerous situations)

Yes /No

Menorah Foundation School

Address:

2-8 Abbots Road, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 0QS

Website:

www.menorahfoundation.co.uk/

Policy Documents

Admissions Policy:

https://www.menorahfoundation.co.uk/docs/admissions/School_admission_arrangements_policy_2022.pdf

Supplementary Information Form:

<https://www.menorahfoundation.co.uk/docs/SIF.pdf>

Issues Summary:

- Requirement to observe ‘Taharas hamishpacha’ - the ritual ‘family purity’ requirements around menstruation.
- Requirement to observe ‘Shmiras haloshon’ - the avoidance of derogatory or damaging communication, in some sense, a restriction on speech.
- Dress requirements.
- Dietary requirements.

Screenshots:

Menorah Foundation School was created to provide the highest standards of secular and religious education within an Orthodox Jewish environment. Priority in admission is given to children of families who are able to demonstrate the highest levels of commitment to the observance of Orthodox Jewish laws, traditions, practices and ethical standards including:

- Adherence to Jewish laws including Shabbos, kashrus, tefilla, tznius and taharas hamishpacha
- Involvement and participation in Jewish adult education and further studies

**Answer
Yes/No**

1. Kashrus

Do you eat only kosher food (as defined by the London Beis Din from time to time)?	
Do you eat only in restaurants that are supervised by a recognised Orthodox <i>kashrus</i> authority (this question does not apply to drinks)?	

5. Tznius

For men: Do you keep your head covered (except in circumstances where Jewish Law does not require this)?	
For women: In public, do you only wear skirts or dresses which cover the knee and tops which cover the elbow?	

6. Taharas Hamishpochah

Do you observe the <i>halachos</i> of <i>taharas hamishpochah</i> in accordance with Jewish Law?	
--	--

7. Sha'atnez

Do you observe the <i>halachos</i> of <i>sha'atnez</i> in accordance with Jewish Law?	
---	--

Section 3 – Additional religious expectations

You will be awarded a point for a positive answer to each of the following.
To meet the religious criteria, you must score at least 4 for this section.

**Answer
Yes/No**

1. Do you <i>toivel</i> all <i>kelim</i> as required by Jewish Law?	
2. Do you spend time with your child each week on the <i>Sidra</i> or a Torah-related subject?	
3. Do you read <i>Krias Shema</i> with your child each night?	
4. Are you actively involved on a voluntary basis in one or more charity or <i>chesed</i> organisations or causes?	
5. Do you strive to observe the <i>halachos</i> of <i>shmiras haloshon</i> in accordance with Jewish Law?	

Menorah High School for Girls

Address:

105 Brook Road, London, NW2
7BZ

Website:

<https://www.menorahhigh.com/>

Policy Documents

Admissions Policy:

https://www.menorahhigh.com/docs/admissions/admissions_information_for_2023/MHSG_Admissions_Arrangements_2023-24.pdf

Supplementary Information Form:

https://www.menorahhigh.com/docs/admissions/admissions_information_for_2023/SIF_Supplementary_Information_Form_2023-24.pdf

Issues Summary:

- Dress requirements.
- Restrictions on access and use of the internet.
- Restrictions on use of phones.

Screenshot:***Tznius* Guidelines for Mode of Dress**

Menorah High School for Girls is a *Beis Yaakov* school catering for girls from *Charedi* families. As such, the school expects both students and their parents to adhere to all aspects of *Halocho* and accepted custom at all times even when on holiday.

The following are the school's requirements in regard to female mode of dress and *tznius* in general:

1. Skirts must be long enough to cover the knee at all times, including when seated.
2. Skirts must not have a slit.
3. Plain tights or pop socks must be worn at all times.
4. Leggings may not be worn even under skirts.
5. Necklines must not be open below the collar bone.
6. Sleeves must cover the elbows at all times.
7. Mothers' hair must be completely covered at all times.

Men are expected to dress according to traditional standards of modesty, to include as a minimum:

1. No excessively fitted top without a jacket.
 2. *No excessively fitted trousers.*
 3. Head covering at all times.
 4. Socks or closed shoes to be worn during prayer.
 5. Sleeves above the elbow are fine but not exposure of a significant part of the upper arm.
 6. Shirts or t-shirts do not expose the chest.
- Generally speaking, the laws of “*Yichud*” (never to use the Internet when alone) must be adhered to.
 - All internet-connected computers and devices must be kept in a communal area of the home.
 - Parents must be absolutely clear about what constitutes inappropriate material.
 - Appropriate filters must be installed on all computers in accordance with TAG guidelines. Preferably this should be done by TAG personnel.
 - Children should not have their own e-mail addresses, but rather, one communal e-mail address should be shared by the whole family.
 - Access to chatrooms, online games, playstore, snapchat, instagram, facebook, youtube and all similar sites is absolutely forbidden.
 - Children must be made aware that passwords, addresses, PIN numbers, credit card details, phone and e-mail details are all private and should **never** be given to anyone.
 - Children must be made aware that files from unknown sources must never be opened or downloaded.
 - Children must be made aware that attachments from strangers must be deleted and should not be opened under any circumstances.
 - Never may any inappropriate material be passed on in any way.
 - Entry into Internet Cafés and the like is forbidden at all times.

 - Pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 may not own their own phones. Regular use by pupils of parent’s smartphones is likewise forbidden.
 - Students in years 10 and 11 are not permitted to own or make regular use of smartphones.
 - It is against school policy for children under 16 years of age to belong to a Whatsapp group. In general, the school strongly objects to the use of Whatsapp.
 - Any phones brought into school must be handed into the office immediately on arrival and may be collected at the end of the day.

Menorah Primary School

Address:

The Wohl Campus, 1-3 The Drive, Golders Green, London, NW11 9SP

Website:

www.menorahprimaryschool.org.uk

Policy Documents**Admissions Policy:**

[https://www.menorahprimaryschool.org.uk/docs/Admissions/Admission arrangements Reception September 2023.pdf](https://www.menorahprimaryschool.org.uk/docs/Admissions/Admission%20arrangements%20Reception%20September%202023.pdf)

Supplementary Information Form:

[https://www.menorahprimaryschool.org.uk/docs/Admissions/Reception 23 SIF - application form.pdf](https://www.menorahprimaryschool.org.uk/docs/Admissions/Reception%2023%20SIF%20application%20form.pdf)

Reference Form:

[https://www.menorahprimaryschool.org.uk/docs/Admissions/Rabbi Certificate - Reception.pdf](https://www.menorahprimaryschool.org.uk/docs/Admissions/Rabbi%20Certificate%20-%20Reception.pdf)

Issues Summary:

- Requirement to observe the 'family purity' requirements around menstruation.
- Dress requirements.

Screenshots:

Orthodox Jewish for the purpose of the Admission Arrangements means persons who answer 'YES' to all the following questions and whose main Rabbi also answers 'YES' to each of the questions on the Rabbi's certificate provided that where the child is being brought up by the mother alone, questions 3 and 4 need not be answered.

		YES	NO
1	Do you have a Rabbi or Rabbis to whom you ask questions about Jewish Law?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Do you follow the advice given in response to such questions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Does the father attend synagogue or other communal service for communal prayers at least twice a day whenever possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Does the father study Torah each day and at least 3 hours in each week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Do you observe the Jewish dietary laws both within and outside the home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Do you observe the Jewish Sabbath?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Do you adhere to the laws pertaining to family purity for married couples?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Do you comply with Jewish law regarding to modest dress? <i>For men this means wearing a head covering at all times (other than if not worn for periods at work). For women this means in public keeping your hair fully covered, wearing skirts/dresses that reach below the knee and do not contain slits, wearing tops with sleeves that reach below the elbow and, at the neck, cover the collar bones.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pardes House Primary School

Address:

Hendon Lane, London, N3 1SA

Website:

www.pardeshouseprimary.com

Policy Documents**Admissions Policy:**

<https://pardeshouseprimary.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Admissions-Policy-for-admissions-year-2022-2023.pdf>

Supplementary Information Form:

<https://pardeshouseprimary.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/pardes-house-primary-sif-2021-3.pdf>

Issues Summary:

- Dress requirements.
- Requirement to observe the 'family purity' requirements around menstruation.
- Restrictions on internet and television access.

Screenshots:

The designation of Orthodox Jewish (Charedi) comprises an ethos, lifestyle and practice that demonstrates a commitment to Torah study and Mitzvos observance, and the fundamental tenets of Yiras Shomayim, Emunas Chachomim, Middos Tovos and Tzenius in dress, speech and behaviour.

Such commitment is principally characterized by

- Daily attendance at communal prayer, when possible in a recognised Shul (synagogue)¹
- Daily Torah study¹
- Observance of Kashrus (Dietary Laws) within and without the home
- Observance of Shabbos
- Adherence to the Laws pertaining to Family purity for married couples.
- The avoidance of coarse speech
- The avoidance of dress which emphasises or unduly exposes the body
- Respect for the Torah, teachers of the Torah and fellow men and women

A suitable filter, preferably a Technology Awareness Group (TAG) approved filter, must be deployed on all internet enabled devices. The filter must be capable of blocking https websites

In order to verify your Orthodox Jewish (Charedi) practice you will need to self-certify the following

I have read and understood the designation of Orthodox Jewish (Charedi) as described in the Introduction to the Pardes House Primary School admissions policy.

I/We and my/our immediate family observe Orthodox Jewish (*Charedi*) practice as described in the Introduction to the Pardes House Primary School admissions policy (see note below)

The child for whom this application is made does not have access to internet enabled devices or to television

Shalom Noam Primary School and Nursery

Address:

East Road, Edgware, HA8 0AJ

Website:

<http://noamprimary.org/>

Policy Documents

Admissions Policy:

<https://www.shalomnoam.org/assets/Admissions/Admissions-Policy-Shalom-Noam-Primary-School-23-24.pdf>

Supplementary Information Form:

<https://www.shalomnoam.org/assets/Admissions/Shalom-Noam-Primary-SIF-2023-24.pdf>

Issues Summary:

- Dress requirements.
- Dietary requirements.

Screenshots:**1. Kashrus**

Do you eat only food which is kosher as defined in accordance with Jewish law?

Do you eat only in restaurants that are supervised by an Orthodox kashrus authority?

5. Tznius

Do you comply with Jewish law with regard to modest/religious dress? For men, this means wearing a kippah and/or hat (other than if not worn for periods at work). For women, this means, in public, keeping your hair fully covered, wearing skirts/dresses that reach below the knee and wearing tops that reach below the elbow and, at the neck, cover the collar bone?

Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School

Address:

Egerton Road, Stamford Hill, London, N16
6UB

Website:

<https://www.yesodeyhatorah.org/>

Policy Documents

Admissions Policy:

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/351101f9/files/uploaded/Admission-Arrangements-2023-24-with-SIF.pdf>

Issues Summary:

- Dress requirements.
- Access to the internet and television is forbidden.

Screenshots:

Charedi homes do not have TV or other inappropriate media, and parents will ensure that their children will not have access to the Internet and any other media which do not meet the stringent moral criteria of the Charedi community. Families - mothers and girls will dress at all times in accordance with the strictest standards of modesty as laid down by the Rabbinate of the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations. Fathers, where applicable, overall mode of dress, style and colour will be in accordance with the Charedi ethos of the school; must pray at a Charedi synagogue and attend all prayers on Shabbos, Yom Tov and the three daily prayers. Likewise, attendance in synagogue appropriately dressed i.e. jacket and hat. Set times for daily Torah study sessions are an essential part of a Charedi family environment.

1. SKIRTS

- Dresses and skirts may not be shorter than 10cm / 4 inches below the knees, a length that ensures the knees remain covered at all times.
- Very straight or figure-hugging skirts are forbidden.
- A slit in a skirt or dress is absolutely forbidden even if it is completely below the knee.

2. SHEITELS

- Sheitels that fall below the base of the neck or do not conform in any other way to the religious laws are forbidden to be worn.
Sheitels that are designed to appear as one's own hair (e.g. lace-front and lace-top) have been ruled as against religious law by the Rabbinate of UOHC.
- Hatfalls and Bandfalls are not in keeping with the standards of modesty. If snoods are worn because of rabbinical guidance one's hair must be completely covered.

3. COLOURS

- The wearing of brightly coloured clothing is forbidden. For the avoidance of doubt, bright is defined as any colour which contains fluorescent/neon tones.

4. NECKLINES

- Blouses, jumpers or dresses must fit closely to the neck. This ensures that:
 - a. The shoulders
 - b. The top of the spine and downwards
 - c. The collar bone and below are covered.

5. SLEEVES must cover the elbows at all times.

6. MAKE-UP/NAIL POLISH should be used in a limited way which does not draw attention to its use and is consistent with a modest and natural appearance.

7. CASUAL CLOTHES

- Casual garments and footwear, denim or other clothing made from leather and lycra, are related to the casual free way of life of the street culture *and* as such are not permitted.

8. TELEVISION / INTERNET

- The television is absolutely forbidden.
- Access to the internet is forbidden except within the guidelines issued by the Rabbinate of UOHC in Elul 5772 - please refer to the SIF.
- Home entertainment is strictly not allowed by the UOHC. "Home entertainment" means any entertainment accessed online via any computerised device.
This includes online gaming or any online presence for personal social use (e.g. social forums and social media accounts).

In compliance with ADA3781, to qualify for Charedi ranking, applicants must have adhered to the Charedi guidelines for 12 months prior to application and continue to do so without any lapse in compliance.

Yesoiday Hatorah Boys Academy

Address:

Sedgley Park Road, Prestwich, Manchester,
M25 0JW

Website:

www.yhba.org.uk

Policy Documents

Admissions Policy:

<https://www.yhba.org.uk/wordpress/admission-policy/>

Supplementary Information Form:

<https://www.yhba.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/YHBA-Supplementary-Info-Form.pdf>

Issues Summary:

- Dress requirements.
- Restrictions on internet access and visiting houses which have televisions or access to the internet.
- Supporting sports teams is forbidden.

Screenshots:

1. Parents accept on themselves to inculcate into their children the need to act and speak in a refined manner at all times.
2. Parents undertake not to allow their children to play in a house that has television or unsupervised access to the internet or other unacceptable "entertainment". Parents undertake to adhere to the תקנות of the העיר רבני in relation to the internet.
3. Children should not be exposed to any unacceptable films etc by way of DVD, CD or any other means.
4. Whilst we endorse and encourage games and sport amongst children, we do not endorse this developing into a bridge to the outside world of sport e.g. support of a team and being מחשיב sports players. It follows that all types of sport insignia, stickers and cards are strictly forbidden.
5. Fathers and boys overall mode of hair-style, dress-style and colour will be in accordance with the Charedi ethos of the school.
6. Fathers will normally wear a jacket and hat (טלית) for every תפילה.
7. Mothers and daughters will dress modestly in accordance with the guidelines set out in עוז והדר לבושה by Rabbi Falk זצ"ל.

DRESS CODE FOR MOTHERS

8. Skirts should be of required length that when sitting the knees are properly covered (as a guide 4" – 10" below the knee).
9. Skirts should not be too long that they reach further than the ankles (as a guide 4" – 10" below the knee).

10. Skirts should not have any slits at all (even below the knee).
11. Particular care must be taken, whether wearing snoods or sheitels, that ALL hair is covered at ALL times with no hair protruding as this is against הלכה.
12. Sheitels should not be too long (about shoulder length).
13. Clothing should not be tight-fitting.
14. Clothes should not be see-through.
15. No "faded" material.
16. No writing on clothing.
17. Footwear should be refined.
18. Fashions from the outside world, which are inappropriate, should not be allowed to penetrate our mode of dress and should be avoided at all cost e.g. leather skirts, maxi dresses, etc.
19. No dark or bright nail polish should be worn.
20. Jewellery should be discreet and conservative; no large hoop earrings.
21. Generally, nothing should be worn that is "out of the norm" and thereby eye-catching.

Yesoiday Hatorah Girls Academy

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Supplementary Information Form:

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21. Generally, nothing should be worn that is “out of the norm” and thereby eye-catching.

Madani Boys School

Address:

77 Evington Valley Road, Evington,
Leicester, LE5 5LL

Website:

<https://madaniboys.school>

Policy Documents

Supplementary Information Form:

https://madaniboys.school/data/documents/20/MSF_Forms_-_2023-24_SIF.pdf

Issues Summary:

- Dress requirements.
- Dietary requirements.

Screenshots:

Do you and your child adhere to all of the following principles of Islam: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• belief in the oneness of God (Tawhid)• belief in the finality of the Prophet Muhammad, Peace be upon Him• respect of all the companions of the Prophet Muhammad, Peace be upon Him• declaration of the Shahadah (Proclamation of Faith)	
Do you and your child observe the laws of <i>Islam</i> ?	
Do you and your child consume halal food and drink?	
Do you and your child commit time to <i>Qur'anic</i> and/or Islamic Studies?	
Do you and your child attend/listen to Islamic lectures?	
Do you and your child seek <i>Islamic</i> guidance about issues relating to the faith?	
Does your child attend an after school <i>madrrasah</i> regularly?	
Do you and your child follow the Quran and Sunnah and have understood the principles of faith and belief?	
Do you and your child pray salah five times a day? (where applicable)	
If health permits, do you and your child observe fasts during the month of <i>Ramadan</i> ?	
Do you and your child adhere to an Islamic dress code by dressing modestly and appropriately?	

Madani Girls School

Address:

77 Evington Valley Road, Evington,
Leicester, LE5 5LL

Website:

<https://madanigirls.school/>

Policy Documents

Supplementary Information Form:

https://madanigirls.school/data/documents/24/MSF_Forms_-_2023-24_SIF.pdf

Issues Summary:

- Dress requirements.
- Dietary requirements.

Screenshots:

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