

Report into allegations concerning Birmingham schools arising from the 'Trojan Horse' letter

July 2014

*Return to an Address of the Honourable
the House of Commons dated 22 July 2014*

Report into allegations concerning Birmingham schools arising from the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	3
Table of Figures	4
A Executive Summary	5
1 Terms of Reference and Methodology	15
2 The ‘Trojan Horse’ letter	19
3 The Saltley Story	23
4 What are the specific patterns of behaviour observed?	33
5 The ideological agenda in Birmingham schools	48
6 Park View Educational Trust	50
7 The Park View Brotherhood	56
8 Birmingham City Council’s role and their response to ‘Trojan Horse’ concerns.....	75
9 Issues for the Department for Education and other organisations	87
10 Governance – what happens in the schools.....	90
11 Conclusions.....	95
12 Recommendations	98
Annex 1: Text of Direction Under Section 497A(4B) of the Education Act 1996 to Birmingham City Council.....	101
Annex 2: ‘Trojan Horse’ letter	107
Annex 3: Timeline	113
Annex 4: Map of Schools in Birmingham	115
Annex 5: Schools where these behaviours were observed.....	116
Annex 6: Summary of Towards Greater Understanding: Meeting the needs of Muslim pupils in state schools (Muslim Council of Britain, 2007)	123

Table of figures

Figure 1	Behaviours reported at schools over time	47
Figure 2	Local and national connections of Tahir Alam	51
Figure 3	The linkages between key members of the Park View Educational Trust, intolerant discussion groups and schools where an Islamising agenda has been evident	53
Figure 4	'Park View Brotherhood' members' participation in WhatsApp conversations	73
Figure 5	Map of behaviours observed in schools	122

A Executive Summary

Background

In late November 2013, a document that has since come to be known as the 'Trojan Horse' letter was received by Birmingham City Council and passed to the Leader of the Council, Sir Albert Bore. The letter was incomplete, with no addressee and no signature. It was supposedly written to an unnamed person in Bradford, describing a strategy to take over a number of schools in Birmingham and run them on strict Islamic principles. The letter states that:

'Operation Trojan Horse' has been very carefully thought through and is tried and tested within Birmingham'.

It goes on to state that a prime mover behind the plan was Tahir Alam, a well-known figure in education circles in Birmingham and until very recently a director and chair of the Park View Educational Trust, which runs three academies in the city. The supposed author of the document claimed that Mr Alam has:

'fine-tuned the 'Trojan Horse' [operation] so that it is totally invisible to the naked eye and allows us to operate under the radar. I have detailed the plan we have in Birmingham and how well it has worked and you will see how easy the whole process is to get the Head teacher out and our own person in'.

It then describes a five-stage process to remove headteachers and take control of schools:

- *identify your schools;*
- *select a group of Salafi parents;*
- *put our own governor in;*
- *identify key staff to disrupt the school from within; and*
- *anonymous letter and PR campaign.*

The letter concludes that:

'all these things will work towards wearing the head down, removing his/her resolve and weakening their mind-set so they eventually just give up'.

It names schools in Birmingham as examples of the success of the plot. There is a detailed description of a plan by some members of staff at Adderley Primary School to accuse the headteacher, falsely, of forging their letters of resignation. This is currently the subject of an investigation by West Midlands Police, but it is noteworthy that at the time the 'Trojan Horse' letter was received by Birmingham City Council, none of the details of the Adderley Primary allegations were in the public domain, leading to the inevitable conclusion that the author of the letter was someone with detailed knowledge

of what was happening at the school.

The letter also refers to events at Saltley School and Specialist Science College - where, at the time the letter was being considered by Birmingham City Council - the then headteacher, Balwant Bains, was negotiating his resignation. The letter states that *'Balwant Bains will soon be sacked and we will move in'*. Given that the letter was received by Birmingham City Council in late November 2013, it is surprising that the Council continued to negotiate the terms of Mr Bains' resignation, eventually signing a compromise agreement with him on 2 January 2014. The story of Balwant Bains illustrates many of the themes that have emerged during my investigation, and for that reason is dealt with in some detail within the report.

The letter also mentions Highfield Junior and Infant School and the Park View Educational Trust, as well as referencing incidents at Regents Park Community Primary School and Springfield Primary School. Though the incident at Springfield dates back to 1993/94, the evidence I have received, including for schools not mentioned in the letter, suggests that the behaviour described in the 'Trojan Horse' letter has been seen at a number of schools over a long period of time and particularly more recently.

Following receipt of the letter, internal enquiries were carried out by Birmingham City Council and a copy of the letter was passed to West Midlands Police. At the time, the police decided that there was no basis for their involvement in a formal investigation. Birmingham City Council Audit also considered whether the allegations made against Council officers that they were complicit in the 'plot' required investigation, and *'had come to a clear view that there was no basis for these'*.

A briefing note sent to the Leader of the Council concluded that:

'The motivation was seen as an attempt to raise community tension and defusing this threat was seen as more important than speculating on the origins of the letter'.

A report by Birmingham City Council Audit concluded:

'We have not been able to form any conclusion about whether there is any substance to the claims surrounding Operation Trojan Horse made in the document'.

West Midlands Police passed a copy of the letter to the Home Office in December 2013, who in turn passed it to the Department for Education. The Department for Education began to investigate the allegations. Redacted copies of the letter were circulated by unknown hand to a number of headteachers in Birmingham at the end of January 2014 and the beginning of February 2014, and were passed to union representatives who in turn contacted the Department for Education. Organisations such as the British Humanist Association contacted the Department for Education in early 2014 with concerns about the activity and behaviour of the senior management

team and governing body at Park View School: The Academy of Mathematics and Science, whilst a former member of the governing body at Golden Hillock School also contacted the Department with concerns, including about the circumstances under which the former headteacher had left his position.

Media reporting on the letter began at the end of February 2014 and quickly began to dominate the news agenda, with regular articles detailing alleged incidents and concerns of teachers and parents – in particular at the three schools sponsored by the Park View Educational Trust and at Oldknow Academy.

My appointment as Education Commissioner for Birmingham

By 15 April events had moved on to the point where the Secretary of State for Education appointed me as the Education Commissioner for Birmingham, with a remit to investigate what had happened in the schools of concern; to gather and scrutinise evidence from a range of sources; to understand the implications for the school system both in Birmingham and more widely; and to make recommendations.

From the outset, the approach I took to fulfilling my remit was designed to minimise disruption to school students, their families, teachers and the wider community. Cognisant that Birmingham City Council had instigated its own investigation, I proposed to the Council's appointed investigator, Ian Kershaw, that we should adopt a collaborative approach, to share information and work together where possible and appropriate. My reasoning behind this approach included the fact that many students would be preparing for and taking examinations, as well as making school choices for the next academic year.

I made it clear to all interested parties that I saw my task as to establish the facts of what had happened. My investigation commenced in an atmosphere where there was a great deal of rumour, speculation and un-evidenced assertion. I explained to the leadership of Birmingham City Council and to each of the Members of Parliament who represent Birmingham constituencies that I most definitely was not approaching my role from the perspective of looking for evidence of terrorist activity, radicalisation or violent extremism. This has remained my approach throughout the three months of my investigation.

I had a remit that extended across maintained schools, academies and free schools, though the focus of the investigation was on a small number of maintained schools and schools that have converted to academy status in recent years. I have drawn on a wide range of information, using my powers under a legal direction to require information from Birmingham City Council, and also drawing on information held by Ofsted, the Education Funding Agency and the schools and academies themselves. A key source of information has been a series of meetings and interviews conducted personally by me and my team, with a wide range of witnesses. These have

included current and former headteachers and teachers; current and former school governors; central and local government officials; trade union officials; Members of Parliament; Peers and others. I deliberately did not visit schools; nor did I seek to interview children or their families as I felt this could run counter to my intention not to add to the anxiety that young people and their families must inevitably be feeling.

A consequence of the serious allegations that have been made, and the potential implications for the safeguarding of children, is that the timeframe for an investigation of this scale has inevitably been compressed. I have therefore focussed on those areas that were specifically referred to in the 'Trojan Horse' letter, or very closely linked to the core allegations contained in it. It has not been possible to explore every possible line of enquiry or investigate every allegation that has been made in the media, social media, anonymous blogs and by some witnesses that I have interviewed. For instance, a chair of governors told me that he believed the 'Trojan Horse' letter to be a '*Christian plot*'. This allegation has also recently appeared in an anonymous blog. I have seen no evidence to support such assertions, and have stuck to my original objective of following the evidence and keeping an open mind throughout. If such allegations persist, or other issues arise in the future, it is possible that further investigation will be needed.

Despite the challenging timescales, the investigation has been extensive and has been able to reach clear conclusions based on firm evidence. With the assistance of my team, I have gathered nearly 2,000 documents, generated over 2,000 pages of interview transcripts from some 50 witnesses, and drawn on a wide range of material from diverse sources.

The response to the 'Trojan Horse' letter by Birmingham City Council and the Department for Education

At the beginning of my investigation, I decided that it was not a priority to establish who wrote the letter or whether it was what it purported to be. It has been suggested that the letter is a hoax or a fake and the content therefore is irrelevant. This approach misses the point. The important issue is not who wrote it or whether it is a genuine extract from a letter between co-conspirators, but whether the events and behaviours described have actually happened.

It quickly became apparent to me that although there are some factual inaccuracies in the letter, there is also a great deal that is true, some of which had not previously been in the public domain. In light of this, there should have been a concerted effort by Birmingham City Council to discover whether the core allegation – that there had been an organised plan to get rid of headteachers in their city – was also true. This should particularly have been the case had there been any prior suspicion or information that events of the kind described in the letter had taken place.

In fact, there is incontrovertible evidence that both senior officers and elected members of Birmingham City Council were aware of concerns about activities that bear a striking resemblance to those described in the 'Trojan Horse' letter, many months before it surfaced.

As an example, on 19 July 2013 an internal e-mail from a senior officer to councillors and other senior officers said that there were:

'growing concerns amongst head teachers that some governing bodies of schools with large numbers of pupils from an Islamic background, or at least groups of influential governors within governing bodies, were putting unreasonable pressure on head teachers to raise standards and/or address other issues of concern. There was, and is, a view that some head teachers had been hounded out and this was as a result of organised community action focussed on a group of Muslim governors'.

As a result of the evidence gathered by my investigation, I can conclude that senior officers were aware of practices subsequently referred to in the 'Trojan Horse' letter as early as the end of 2012, and discussions on this issue took place between officers and elected members in May 2013. This is some six months prior to the 'Trojan Horse' letter being received by the Leader of the Council. Other than the correspondence of July 2013, I have seen no evidence that concerted action was taken to address headteachers' concerns in the intervening period.

Even after the 'Trojan Horse' letter was received, the significance of the Council's prior knowledge did not influence decision-making in the way it should have. In late December 2013, a senior officer of Birmingham City Council provided an analysis of the letter which concluded:

'The document seeks to imply that there is manipulation of local authority officers to deliver an overall plan. Very few of the facts are accurate. The document reflects the views of some head teachers, who have expressed their concerns to a number of elected members, local authority officers and governors'.

Despite this, some eight weeks after the receipt of the 'Trojan Horse' letter, in a further Birmingham City Council briefing note sent to the Leader of the Council, there is no suggestion that the central allegation – that headteachers were being systematically undermined and driven from their posts – needed further investigation. The focus of the Council was very much on the potential community cohesion impact that the publication of the 'Trojan Horse' letter might have. It was not until the appointment of Ian Kershaw in April 2014 that the Council mounted a full investigation into these serious allegations.

Balwant Bains: an isolated incident?

This is set out in more detail in the following chapters. It tells the story of a newly appointed headteacher who ran into conflict with his governing body soon after he took up his post, and was later accused of racism and

Islamophobia. He asked for support from the Council that appears not to have been forthcoming and was ultimately, he feels, forced to resign from his headship. The enquiry has revealed that what happened to Balwant Bains was far from an isolated incident. In fact, there is a disconcerting pattern reaching across a number of the schools I have looked at.

This includes the following:

- the effective take-over of the governing body by like-minded people;
- nepotism in staff appointments and appointments to the governing body;
- individuals associated with each other holding teaching posts or being members of the governing body (or both) at a small number of local schools;
- rapid advancement of new or inexperienced governors to the role of chair;
- bullying and intimidation of senior teaching staff, and in particular headteachers;
- previously highly regarded headteachers made subject to criticism and complaint by governing bodies;
- interference by the governing body in the curriculum and the day-to-day running of the school;
- the reinforcement of Muslim identity to the exclusion or disparagement of others;
- the introduction of conservative Islamic practices into school life;
- a strategy of harassment to oust the headteacher;
- financial mismanagement; and
- inappropriate recruitment and promotion procedures for favoured staff.

Not all of these features were present at every school, but they occurred with sufficient regularity to warrant a detailed examination, which is set out in the report and in **Annex 5**.

How and why has this happened?

The key question is whether what has happened has been an organised ‘plot’ as described in the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter. By drawing solely upon the evidence gathered during my investigation and making a detailed analysis of it, I have reached clear conclusions.

My starting point was to consider what has actually happened in the schools, which is set out in considerable detail in the body of the report. In summary, there has been a determined effort to gain control of governing bodies at a small number of schools by people who are associated with each other. Once in a position to do so, they have sought to introduce a distinct set of Islamic behaviours and religious practices.

I then went on to consider whether what has happened is simply a case of the schools looking to respond to the wishes and aspirations of their local

communities, or whether it is the case that a group of people who hold a particular ideological position are looking to impose their view of required behaviour for all Muslims into school life. I took particular note of the fact that the schools where it is alleged that this has happened are state non-faith schools and that the local Muslim communities are drawn from various strands of Islam.

There is ample evidence that individuals who hold or have held key positions in the schools have a shared ideological basis to their faith. During the investigation I took possession of the contents of a social media discussion between a group of teachers at Park View School that for much of 2013 was called the 'Park View Brotherhood'. It was initiated and administered by Mr Monzoor Hussain, the Acting Principal, and was joined by influential teachers within the school. The evidence from more than 3,000 messages spread over 130 pages of transcript shows that this group either promoted or failed to challenge views that are grossly intolerant of beliefs and practices other than their own. The all-male group discussions include explicit homophobia; highly offensive comments about British service personnel; a stated ambition to increase segregation in the school; disparagement of strands of Islam; scepticism about the truth of reports of the murder of Lee Rigby and the Boston bombings; and a constant undercurrent of anti-Western, anti-American and anti-Israeli sentiment. Some postings *were* challenged by the administrator, Mr Hussain, but generally only where criticism was made of other Muslim groups. The numerous endorsements of hyperlinks to extremist speakers betray a collective mind-set that can fairly be described as an intolerant Islamist approach that denies the validity of alternative beliefs, lifestyles and value systems, including within Islam itself.

When I interviewed Mr Hussain in July 2014, he acknowledged the existence of the 'Park View Brotherhood' discussion group, but told me its sole purpose was to discuss subjects for school assemblies. He claimed to have closed down the group over a year ago because some contributors were saying things that would be uncomfortable '*with other Muslim groups*'. In fact, in December 2013 Mr Hussain changed the name of the group to 'Park View News' and decreed that from then on '*this group is now only for announcing news and events at Park View School*'. The group was eventually closed down in March 2014.

The role of Birmingham City Council and the Department for Education

A consistent theme that has emerged throughout the investigation is that for many years there has been a perception that Birmingham City Council has been insufficiently supportive of headteachers – and indeed of governors – when problems arise with the conduct of some members of governing bodies. Of the headteachers that I or my team interviewed, the overwhelming majority said they felt unsupported by Birmingham City Council when they ran into difficulties with their governing bodies. I recognise that the headteachers I saw were likely to have a critical view of the Council and were not necessarily

representative of the vast majority of Birmingham headteachers. Nevertheless, the subject was raised with such regularity and with such force that it cannot be ignored.

During interviews with senior officers of the Council, it became apparent that each complaint was approached on a case by case basis. This meant that there was never any serious attempt to see if there was a pattern to what was happening in school governing bodies. One senior officer admitted that with the benefit of hindsight things would be done differently if similar issues arose again. I was also told that there was a perception that, rather than confront misbehaving governing bodies, the Council would move towards reaching a compromise agreement with the headteacher to secure their departure from post. The reason for this is not entirely clear, but one senior officer told me that the Council operated in silos, and it was not always clear whether decision-making was being driven by a wish to maintain community cohesion, or as an issue of education management. Nevertheless, the Council's approach has been variously described to me as 'appeasement' and a failure in their duty of care towards their employees.

So far as the Department for Education is concerned, the allegation has been made that ministers and officials have been aware of issues in Birmingham similar to those raised in the 'Trojan Horse' letter for a number of years, and should have acted sooner. The Secretary of State for Education has directed his Permanent Secretary to conduct an inquiry into this matter, and so I have not pursued this issue as part of my investigation. I have, however, considered the Department's role in the process that allowed the Park View Educational Trust to quickly move from a single school to multi-academy sponsor status with responsibility for three schools. It appears to me that this happened too quickly and without suitable systems for holding the new academies accountable for financial and management issues.

Conclusions

I neither specifically looked for nor found evidence of terrorism, radicalisation or violent extremism in the schools of concern in Birmingham. However, by reference to the definition of extremism in the Prevent strand of the Government's counter terrorist strategy, CONTEST, and the spectrum of extremism described by the Prime Minister in his Munich speech in February 2011, I found clear evidence that there are a number of people, associated with each other and in positions of influence in schools and governing bodies, who espouse, endorse or fail to challenge extremist views.

It has been suggested to me that the ambition of those involved was only to create high achieving schools reflecting the communities they serve, following the wishes of the majority of parents. I do not agree. On the contrary, while the majority of parents welcome the good academic results that some of these schools produce, they do not demand that their children adhere to conservative religious behaviour at school. Indeed, I received evidence that this would be supported by only a minority of parents. I was told how some of those who claimed most loudly that they were acting for the community either

protest alone or co-opt relatives to protest with them. I was also told by many witnesses that the majority do not have the confidence to argue against the articulate and forceful activists who seek to impose their views, for fear of being branded as disloyal to their faith or their community.

I heard the argument several times that the explanation for dysfunctional relationships between staff and governors is that the governors are only trying to improve results at a school. This is, of course, what governors do up and down the country but I found evidence in Birmingham that some governors went beyond this and used the argument about raising standards to justify increasing the influence of faith in those schools.

On behalf of those against whom allegations have been made, I was told that those claiming to witness extreme behaviours were simply disaffected teachers and headteachers. The sheer number and diversity of people wishing to come forward and share their experiences with me disproves this assertion. Two governors at a school of concern told me that the allegations at their school were the work of one member of staff seeking to hide her own nepotism in appointing her relatives to the school. However, the governing body could have investigated this member of staff and taken disciplinary action against her if they believed that there was any truth in this statement.

Throughout this enquiry, it has been abundantly clear to me that, almost without exception, the main concern of so many witnesses has been the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils. Many witnesses who spend their lives in education have told me that they have three deep concerns about the impact on children of what has happened in a number of schools.

First, I have been told by teachers that they fear children are learning to be intolerant of difference and diversity. There is evidence that this is the case both inside and outside school, such as on school trips.

Second, although good academic results can be achieved through a narrowing of the curriculum and a focus on core subjects, it comes at a cost. This is that young people, instead of enjoying a broadening and enriching experience in school, are having their horizons narrowed. They are not being equipped to flourish in the inevitably diverse environments of further education, the workplace or indeed any environment outside predominantly Muslim communities. They are thus potentially denied the opportunity to enjoy and exploit to the full the opportunities of a modern multi-cultural Britain.

Third, the very clear evidence that young people are being encouraged to accept unquestioningly a particular hardline strand of Sunni Islam raises concerns about their vulnerability to radicalisation in the future. I have heard evidence to the effect that there are real fears that their current experiences will make it harder for them to question or challenge radical influences.

I have considered the totality of the evidence gathered during the investigation very carefully, while trying to avoid drawing undue inferences from an evidence base that is inevitably incomplete. The accumulation of evidence

from my own investigation, information received from Birmingham City Council, Ofsted, the Education Funding Agency and numerous other sources lead me to the following conclusions:

At the centre of what has happened are a number of individuals who have been, or are, associated with either Park View School or the Park View Educational Trust. Time and again, people who have been either teachers or governors at Park View appear to be involved in behaviours at other schools that have destabilised headteachers, sometimes leading to their resignation or removal. The tactics used are too similar, the individuals concerned too closely linked, and the behaviour of a few parents and governors too orchestrated for there not to be a degree of co-ordination and organisation behind what has happened. The clear conclusion is that the Park View Educational Trust has, in effect, become the incubator for much of what has happened and the attitudes and behaviours that have driven it.

There has been co-ordinated, deliberate and sustained action, carried out by a number of associated individuals, to introduce an intolerant and aggressive Islamic ethos into a few schools in Birmingham. This has been achieved by gaining influence on the governing bodies, installing sympathetic headteachers or senior members of staff, appointing like-minded people to key positions, and seeking to remove headteachers they do not feel to be sufficiently compliant. Some of these individuals are named in this report; most are not. Whether their motivation reflects a political agenda, a deeply held religious conviction, personal gain or a desire to influence communities, the effect has been to limit the life chances of the young people in their care and to render them more vulnerable to pernicious influences in the future.

I have made a number of recommendations throughout this report (and summarised at the end) and I urge all parties to give them due consideration.

1 Terms of Reference and Methodology

- 1.1 I was appointed as Education Commissioner for Birmingham on 15 April 2014 with the following Terms of Reference:

‘The Commissioner’s five priorities will be to:

- a) Investigate the allegations and representations and evidence received to date so as to further establish what has happened in the schools of concern, with particular reference to governance;*
- b) gather and scrutinise further evidence from a range of sources, also looking beyond governance to the issue of child safeguarding more broadly;*
- c) understand the implications for the school system both in BCC [Birmingham City Council] and in Birmingham more widely;*
- d) identify any necessary actions which should be taken by BCC and more widely; and*
- e) understand what capacity might be needed in Birmingham to undertake any necessary actions identified.*

The Commissioner will need to be able to receive information and evidence from individuals in order to form a considered view of the events that have taken place in each of the schools where concerns have been raised.

The Commissioner’s remit will cover action taken by BCC, and by both maintained schools and academies (including free schools, UTCs and Studio Schools).

The Commissioner’s appointment is supported by a direction under section 497A of the Education Act 1996, requiring BCC to cooperate with him in the fulfilment of his responsibilities and enabling him to receive and review any relevant information held by BCC’.

- 1.2 The Secretary of State required that I should complete the report of my findings in July 2014, before the end of the academic year, giving the opportunity to report to Parliament before the summer recess.
- 1.3 At the same time as my appointment, Birmingham City Council announced that they were appointing Mr Ian Kershaw, the Managing Director of Northern Education, to conduct an investigation on their behalf. I immediately took the view that I would look to collaborate as closely as possible with Mr Kershaw. In my view this was essential in order to minimise the disruption and anxiety that would inevitably be affecting pupils, their families and communities, given the high levels of public comment and media coverage. My objective was as far as possible to avoid duplication of effort, gain a common evidence base from which to draw conclusions and maximise the opportunity to gain insights into what had happened in the schools of concern.

- 1.4 Mr Kershaw and I agreed to share information whenever it was appropriate to do so. The only occasions on which we would not do so would be if a witness, for whatever reason, gave testimony on the condition that it should not be shared with third parties. This happened on several occasions with witnesses that I interviewed, and so it is likely that there will be some differences in the evidence from which Mr Kershaw and I draw our conclusions. However, the vast majority of evidence has been shared.
- 1.5 From the very outset I made it clear to all interested parties that I saw my task being to establish the facts of what had happened. My investigation commenced in an atmosphere where there was a great deal of rumour, speculation and un-evidenced assertion. I explained to the leadership of Birmingham City Council and to each of the Members of Parliament who represent Birmingham constituencies, that I most definitely was not approaching my role from the perspective of looking for evidence of terrorist activity, radicalisation or violent extremism.
- 1.6 A wide range of sources were available to me from which to draw evidence. I reviewed reports from the Education Funding Agency and Ofsted, and in the case of the latter was able to examine the underlying evidence that sat behind their findings. As a result of a legal direction being made by the Secretary of State under section 497A Education Act 1996, I was empowered to require Birmingham City Council to disclose any documentation that I considered relevant to my investigation.
- 1.7 A key source of evidence throughout the investigation has been the personal testimony of a wide range of witnesses. Me and my team have conducted over 50 interviews and numerous other meetings with former and serving headteachers, teachers, other school staff, school governors, local and central government officials, police and others.
- 1.8 Each was offered the opportunity to have the interview electronically recorded. They were then offered a transcript of the recording for their approval, and the recording itself was subsequently destroyed. Only two witnesses declined to have their interviews recorded. Of these, one agreed to having his first interview recorded, but declined the opportunity when he was seen for a second time.
- 1.9 Some of the people who came forward were clearly nervous about doing so, fearing adverse consequences for their jobs, their future employment prospects and their reputations within the local community if the fact that they had spoken to me were to become more widely known. A significant number spoke either on condition of anonymity, or that their information was not shared with Birmingham City Council's inquiry. These wishes have been respected. The levels of anxiety and indeed evident distress shown by some witnesses cannot be overstated. I pay tribute to the fortitude of those who claim either to

have been driven from their careers and livelihoods, or were fearful of that, or worse, happening to them as a consequence of speaking to me.

- 1.10 The evidence that was gathered during the investigation has been collated and analysed by a small team of officials working in support of me in the Department for Education. In view of the tight timescales for the investigation, the strategy has been to maintain a tight focus, concentrate on a small number of schools of concern, and gather sufficient evidence to be able to come to clear and sustainable conclusions. In order to gather evidence from as wide a range of potential witnesses as possible, and obviate the possibility of only receiving evidence from those with a particular viewpoint, I made a public call for evidence. An email address was created through which potential witnesses could contact me and submit evidence. Witnesses were asked to suggest others who might hold useful information for the investigation. Those against whom allegations were made or in respect of whom it was possible that criticisms might be levelled were written to with the potential range of questions and invited for interview. The majority of these responded positively.
- 1.11 As a consequence of the serious allegations that have been made, and the potential implications for the safeguarding of children, the timeframe for an investigation of this scale has inevitably been compressed. I have therefore focussed on those issues which were specifically referred to in the 'Trojan Horse' letter, or very closely linked to the core allegations in it. It has not been possible to explore every possible line of enquiry or investigate every allegation that has been made in the media, social media, anonymous blogs and by some witnesses that I have interviewed. For instance, a chair of governors told me that he believed the 'Trojan Horse' letter to be a '*Christian plot*'. This allegation also appeared in an anonymous blog. I have not seen any evidence to support such assertions, and have stuck to my original objective of following the evidence and keeping an open mind throughout. If such allegations persist or other issues arise in the future, it is possible that further investigation will be needed.
- 1.12 Despite the challenging timescales, the investigation has been extensive and has been able to reach clear conclusions based on firm evidence. With the assistance of my team, I have gathered 2,000 documents, generated 2,000 pages of interview transcripts from some 50 witnesses, and drawn on a wide range of material from diverse sources.
- 1.13 From a personal perspective, my appointment generated some critical comment from those who were concerned that my background in counter terrorist policing between 2002 to 2008 would affect my approach to the investigation and create a negative perception among the affected communities. I have been at pains to explain to everyone I have met during the course of the investigation that I have not

approached my task from the perspective of counter terrorism, nor through the lens of the Prevent strand of the government's counter terrorism strategy, CONTEST. I have neither specifically looked for nor found any evidence of terrorism, violent extremism or radicalisation in any of the schools we examined in detail. I have treated the entire investigation as an exercise in fact finding and in establishing a sound, verifiable and whenever possible, fully corroborated evidence base.

2 The 'Trojan Horse' letter

- 2.1 In late November 2013, a letter was sent to the Leader of Birmingham City Council, Sir Albert Bore, which enclosed a partial copy of a document that the sender claimed to have found when '*clearing my bosses files*'. This has since become popularly known as the 'Trojan Horse' letter. The letter was anonymous and undated, although the date stamp from the Leader's Office shows that it was initially received in the Council offices on 27 November. The document attached to the letter is incomplete (there are four pages) and badly photocopied so that some parts of the first page are unreadable.
- 2.2 There were two anonymous letters: one addressed to Sir Albert Bore in November 2013 and another, slightly more detailed one, from '*a concerned council employee*' early in 2014, covering the same partial document.
- 2.3 The Council told the Department for Education that the letter actually arrived with Sir Albert Bore on 6 December. Following official receipt of the letter by Birmingham City Council, some internal enquiries were carried out, and West Midlands Police were notified. The police at that time decided that there was no basis for their further involvement, and Birmingham City Council Audit also considered whether the allegations made against Council officers in the letter required investigation, '*and had come to a clear view that there was no basis for these*'.
- 2.4 A briefing note sent to the Leader of the Council concluded that:
- 'The motivation was seen as an attempt to raise community tension and defusing this threat was seen as more important than speculating on the origins of the letter'.*
- 2.5 The Department for Education received the letter on 13 December from West Midlands Police via the Home Office. Officials started to gather facts and brief Ministers. At the very end of January, they were contacted by a national campaigning organisation that put them in touch with whistleblowers who had information about Park View School. In early February, there was a meeting between education ministers and Birmingham City Council.
- 2.6 Although further copies of the letter were sent to some schools in Birmingham in late January and early February, the first press stories did not seem to appear until a story in the Sunday Times on 23 February, which was then picked up by other media (local, national and international) and has continued to the present day.
- 2.7 From the outset of my investigation, I decided that it was not a priority to establish who wrote the letter or whether it was what it purported to be. It has been suggested that the letter is a hoax or a fake. This

approach misses the point. The important issue is whether the events described within it have actually happened. Many of the people that I spoke to had no opinion on whether the letter itself was genuine but they claimed to have witnessed the behaviours described in the letter in Birmingham schools.

- 2.8 Evidence was found during my enquiry of meetings and email traffic between senior officers of the Council and councillors as long ago as May 2013 where allegations remarkably similar to those in the 'Trojan Horse' letter were discussed. As an example, on 19 July 2013 an internal e-mail from a senior officer to councillors and other senior officers contained the following assertion:

'There was, and is, a view that some headteachers had been hounded out and this was as a result of organised community action focused on a group of Muslim governors'.

- 2.9 A report by Birmingham City Council Audit in March 2014 concluded:

'We have not been able to form any conclusion about whether there is any substance to the claims surrounding Operation Trojan Horse made in the document'.

- 2.10 In late December 2013 a senior officer of Birmingham City Council provided an analysis of the letter which concluded:

'The document seeks to imply that there is manipulation of local authority officers to deliver an overall plan. Very few of the facts are accurate. The document reflects the views of some headteachers, who have expressed their concerns to a number of elected members, local authority officers and governors'.

- 2.11 Some eight weeks after the receipt of the 'Trojan Horse' letter, a further Birmingham City Council briefing note, sent to the Leader of the Council, refers to issues that had arisen in several schools mentioned in the letter. However, there is no suggestion that the central allegation - that headteachers were being systematically undermined and driven from their posts - needed further investigation. It was not until the appointment of Ian Kershaw in April 2014 that the Council mounted a full investigation.

- 2.12 The letter itself was supposedly written to an unnamed person in Bradford, setting out how there had been a long-term plan in Birmingham to take over a number of schools and run them on strict Islamic principles. The letter states that:

'Operation Trojan Horse' has been very carefully thought through and is tried and tested within Birmingham'.

- 2.13 The letter stated that a prime mover behind the plan was Mr Tahir

Alam, a well-known figure in education circles in Birmingham and formerly the chair of the Park View Education Trust, which runs three academies in the city. The supposed author of the document claims that Mr Alam has:

'fine-tuned the 'Trojan Horse' [operation] so that it is totally invisible to the naked eye and allows us to operate under the radar. I have detailed the plan we have in Birmingham and how well it has worked and you will see how easy the whole process is to get the Head teacher out and our own person in'.

2.14 The letter went on to describe a five-stage process to remove headteachers and gain control of schools. These stages are:

- *identify your schools;*
- *select a group of Salafi parents;*
- *put our own governor in;*
- *identify key staff to disrupt the school from within; and*
- *an anonymous letter and PR campaign.*

2.15 The letter concludes that:

'All these things will work towards wearing the head down, removing his/her resolve and weakening their mind-set so they eventually just give up'.

2.16 The letter uses examples from named schools in Birmingham to illustrate the success of the plot. There is a detailed description of a plan by some members of staff at Adderley Primary School to falsely accuse the headteacher of forging their letters of resignation. This is currently the subject of investigation by West Midlands Police, but it is worthy of note that at the time the 'Trojan Horse' letter was received by Birmingham City Council, none of the details of the Adderley Primary allegations were in the public domain, leading to the inevitable conclusion that the author of the letter was someone with detailed knowledge of what was happening at the school.

2.17 The document refers to action taken or underway at Regents Park Community Primary School and to Springfield Primary School. This last reference is incongruous as the description, which suggests that this activity was occurring at the time the document was written, appears to describe events of 1993 to 1994. This might cast doubts on the motives of the originator of the letter but does not invalidate the description of the behaviours (and, in fact, raises the issue of how long this behaviour has been observed).

2.18 There is also a section in the letter that refers to events at Saltley School and Specialist Science College, where at the time the then headteacher, Balwant Bains, was negotiating his resignation. The letter states that *'Balwant Bains will soon be sacked and we will move in'.*

Bearing in mind that the letter was received by Birmingham City Council in early December 2013, it is concerning that the Council continued to negotiate the terms of Mr Bains' resignation and signed a compromise agreement with him on 2 January 2014. The story of Balwant Bains illustrates many of the themes that have emerged during my investigation, and is dealt with in some detail within the report.

3 The Saltley Story

3.1 The following is a summary of Balwant Bains' account of his time as headteacher of Saltley School and Specialist Science College. It encapsulates many of the features identified in other schools examined in this report, including:

- take-over of the governing body by like-minded individuals;
- nepotism in appointments to staff and governing body;
- division along racial lines;
- bullying and intimidation;
- modifications to the curriculum;
- the reinforcement of Muslim identity to the exclusion of others; and
- a strategy of harassment to oust a headteacher.

Passages in italics are direct quotes from Mr Bains' testimony.

Chronology

September to December 2012

3.2 When appointed in September 2012 Mr Bains had been teaching for 23 years. He had served as deputy and assistant headteacher, as governor and as local authority advisor. He applied for Saltley on the advice of his mentor on a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) training programme. His mentor was friendly with the then chair of governors at Saltley, and told Mr Bains he had been invited to take over the school himself but had recently taken on another headship. The school needed shaking up and he wrote a reference for Mr Bains.

3.3 Mr Bains was excited by his new post. Saltley had performed poorly, with results lower than the local average for the previous three years, and he hoped to turn the school around. Pupils were overwhelmingly from minority ethnic backgrounds, the staff and governing body were both Muslim and non-Muslim, and Mr Bains is Sikh.

3.4 From the start, Mr Bains found relations with the then chair of governors, difficult. This was partly, he thinks, because he refused a permanent job on the teaching staff to the chair's cousin. Mr Bains believes that the chair subsequently asked the Council to investigate him; the chair also refused to sign Mr Bains' appraisal document.

January to February 2013

3.5 From January 2013 until he left the school in November 2013, Mr Bains experienced a campaign of '*harassment, bullying and intimidation*'. This was driven principally by three men: the then chair of governors and his immediate successor (from April 2013) and a former teacher at the

school who joined the governing body in June 2013 and subsequently chaired it from December 2013 until its dissolution in June 2014.

- 3.6 On 15 January Mr Bains attended a sub-committee with governors and two colleagues to agree changes to the curriculum which included the introduction of the vertical tutoring system (used with success in other Birmingham schools and widely consulted on before Mr Bains arrived). A governor aggressively challenged the teaching of citizenship, claiming it was taught only in BME schools. He was described by a staff member as making *'belligerent, highly offensive comments about BME schools'* and as adopting a *'hostile and negative'* tone. The meeting became so unpleasant that Mr Bains halted the presentation, proposing that it should be considered at a full governing body meeting.
- 3.7 When the teacher in charge of the presentation arrived at school the following morning he was questioned by other staff about his alleged *'grilling'* at the meeting. This became a pattern: *'when things happened at governing body meetings, they were very quickly shared by governors, a small group of governors, with friends and relatives who were on our staff'*. Both staff and the governing body became increasingly divided along racial and religious lines.
- 3.8 Mr Bains invited a Council officer to witness the full governing body meeting on 31 January. The vertical tutoring system was again discussed and, after four hours, rejected. This was a result, Mr Bains believes, of intimidation of governors who supported it. The sole female governor was asked how she would feel if her daughter had to share tutor groups with 15-year-old boys and a staff member complained that the staff representative on the governing body had been *'intimidating staff to ask them to reverse their decisions about vertical tutoring'*. Advised by Birmingham City Council Human Resources (HR), Mr Bains later suspended the staff representative but found he continued to make mocking, critical and divisive remarks about the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- 3.9 At the same meeting Mr Bains was told by the chair *'that I had to provide a justification for every decision that I had made between September and January to him, and all governors at that meeting, which resulted in a 300 page document for every single governor, with me actively going and having him giving me a list of the things he'd understood that I did and I had to print those out, and distribute them to every single member of the governing body'*. This included such day-to-day decisions as cleaning contracts and whether children should walk on the left or right. All decisions were now to be referred to the full governing body and governors would determine the curriculum as well as the roles and responsibilities of staff. Mr Bains' role in staff recruitment was challenged.

- 3.10 The governing body also refused a request from a local Church of England clergywoman to fill one of the vacancies on the grounds that *'she was not representative of the community'*.
- 3.11 After the meeting Mr Bains told the Council officer that the governing body was incapable of deciding in the best interests of the school and recommended that it should be replaced by an Interim Executive Board (IEB). He followed this up in writing, copying this and subsequent correspondence – including a four-page document describing the events of the previous month – to other Council officers. He wrote that the the governing body *'are making decisions not in the best interests of the school and the pupils, but in the interest of relatives and friends of the school. They are unable and unwilling to declare interests in decision making or distance their personal relationships with teachers and relatives in these schools'*.
- 3.12 Council officers informally agreed with Mr Bains that urgent action was needed and promised to discuss dissolving the governing body. He also received supportive comments from some governors and staff. He kept his union, NASUWT, informed via its local representative.

March to April 2013

- 3.13 On 4 March the Council's HR department told Mr Bains that, *'You're not the only school that they [the Council] are worried about'*. He was also told that a NASUWT representative had discussed Saltley and other schools at a joint Council/union meeting. This led Mr Bains to conclude that *'this was a bigger agenda than I was facing and that actually the local authority were aware of a lot more'*.
- 3.14 He continued to attend local headteacher meetings and to keep the Council informed. On 12 March, the day of another governing body meeting, he wrote to the effect that the chair of governors *'is actively engaging other governors and staff to undermine me in my attempts to move this school forward'*, detailing intimidation and saying, *'I'm writing to you constantly about the kind of things that[...] the chair of governors, is doing, why are you not doing anything?'* In his own words, *'They kept saying things like, "Well, we haven't got enough evidence", despite the fact that they'd been in on those meetings'*.
- 3.15 He also continued to campaign for vertical tutoring, arranging for governors to meet parents and visit other schools so that they could see it working – *'Of course, none of them took up that option to go. So they would make excuses'*.
- 3.16 The 12 March governing body meeting also discussed vacancies for community governors. Two local imams were invited onto the governing body but not the local Church of England clergywoman, whose cause Mr Bains had championed on the grounds that she was

keen, local, was already a school governor and was an accountant by profession so would be useful on the finance committee.

- 3.17 The governing body used a clerk from the Council for minute-taking. Mr Bains assumed her evidence would be taken into account by the Council but *'all they kept saying to me was, "I just don't think we've got enough evidence", and I'm clearly asking them to dissolve the governing body, so that I can get some sort of grip on my school which is now being influenced internally and externally'*.

May 2013

- 3.18 On 9 and 10 May the school underwent a Section 5 Ofsted inspection. During the second day the HMI (Her Majesty's Inspector) told Mr Bains that the school was on course to be graded 'good' but that the governing body chair had requested a private meeting. Having studied the governing body minutes, the HMI also said, *'We need to have a conversation. Please let me know what's going on'*. Mr Bains described his difficulties.
- 3.19 He subsequently discovered that the chair had told the inspector that behaviour and academic standards had worsened during Mr Bains' tenure. The HMI did not accept this, pointing out that there were fewer exclusions and improved results. However, he warned Mr Bains that he might have to review the school's probable 'good' grading, *'having experienced what I've just experienced there'*.
- 3.20 Mr Bains warned the Council that the school might now be put into the 'requires improvement' category, but later persuaded the inspectors to restore their 'good' assessment on the grounds that the governance problems they highlighted had no impact on school performance. He now believed that the governing body *'wanted the school to go into a category so that they could say the head teacher had taken the school backwards, and they could dismiss me'*. Under Mr Bains' tenure, the school's 2013 GCSE results were the best in its history.
- 3.21 He also confided his feelings to one Council officer, saying, *'I can't do this anymore. I'm going to have to apply for another job. I need to get out'*. At his request, she wrote him a reference for another job (he attended an interview but decided it wasn't for him). The Council officer also suggested he discuss his difficulties with another local headteacher, in whom the headteacher of Golden Hillock School had confided before his own departure.
- 3.22 He did so on 16 May, when that headteacher showed him emails that had been sent by the Muslim Parents Association (MPA) advising governors on how to influence the appointment of SLT members, remove children from religious education, change the menu and modify the curriculum. On seeing these, particularly a reference to the teaching of citizenship, Mr Bains recognised *'the same things that my*

governors are saying to me at governing body meetings'. The emails also reminded him of a demand from the chair for job descriptions of all SLT members 'to make sure that they're doing their jobs'.

- 3.23 Mr Bains drew attention to these similarities in a note to the Council of 16 May, repeating his concern that his governing body had been *'overtaken by governors with an agenda'*. He also joined another union, ASCL, telling them what was happening.
- 3.24 Again on the recommendation of the Council, he talked to a headteacher associated with the Park View Educational Trust. The meeting brought little benefit: *'She is saying to me like, "Why don't you just co-operate with them?" "Co-operate with who, what? I'm a community school. What are you asking me to co-operate?" "Well, you know, some of the things that we'd probably want you to put in the curriculum"'*.
- 3.25 By this time there were tentative discussions as to whether Mr Bains should leave under a compromise agreement. The attitude of the Council, he recalls, was that he should not. On 28 May he sent an email reporting a telephone call from a NASUWT rep, *'telling me that the local authority[...] had expressed that they did not want me to compromise'*.
- 3.26 On 30 May there was another governing body meeting, with a Council officer present. The Ofsted report was discussed, particularly its criticisms of governance which the governors blamed on Mr Bains. He was disappointed that *'Nobody challenged it. She didn't challenge it'*. He was left to challenge it himself. Afterwards, the Council officer said, *'That was a difficult meeting but you've dealt with it very, very well'*.

June to July 2013

- 3.27 One day in June a boy threatened six other children with a knife, demanding money. The incident was picked up on CCTV cameras and the six children – Muslim and non-Muslim – gave statements. It was never established who brought the knife into the school but it was handed in by another boy who was associated with the first, though he took no part in the threats. Mr Bains recommended permanent exclusion of the boy who had wielded the knife.
- 3.28 A meeting of the Exclusions Committee, involving governors and the Council, was arranged. Before it Mr Bains received emails from, amongst others, a particular governor, querying procedural details - *'Have we had an interpreter? Have we done this, have we done that? How confident are we that the boy has done this?'* Their tone and nature was such that, *'Even before that meeting I knew that that wasn't going to go ahead, that they wouldn't – they were going to reinstate that boy. I knew it!'*.

- 3.29 And so it proved. Mr Bains' recommendation was overturned without (at the time) reasons being given, despite the fact that Council representatives had described the case as watertight and the overturning as unprecedented. Mr Bains was instructed to take the boy back but managed to put him into a referral facility pending discussions with parents of the threatened children, some of whom were themselves threatening retribution.
- 3.30 He subsequently received an email from the chair with a letter which he was told to read out – *'I'm instructing you to read this out to the staff'*. Apart from pointing to errors in the exclusion procedure paperwork, the letter suggested that the reason for ordering reinstatement was that Mr Bains was Islamophobic and racist because he had excluded the (Muslim) boy who wielded the knife but not the (non-Muslim) boy who surrendered it. Mr Bains refused to read out the letter but copied it to the Council and to the National Union of Teachers (NUT). He also gave it to NUT staff members. By this time there was increasing pressure from parents who wanted to transfer their children and from unions seeking assurances over staff safety. The letter then appeared on the school noticeboard and *'somebody had copied all the documents and put it in everybody's pigeon hole'*.
- 3.31 The letter was not, however, copied to governors other than those on the Exclusions Committee. Mr Bains concluded (by tracing its origin as a Word document) that it originated not from the chair, the sender, but from another governor.
- 3.32 Seeing his staff increasingly divided and warned by his deputy of growing tensions, Mr Bains called an emergency meeting at which he gave a full explanation of what had happened. Some staff thanked him but others, he discovered, continued to say that *'he's racist basically. He's Islamophobic'*. This division was now reflected in where the two groups chose to sit in the staff room.
- 3.33 The NUT and NASUWT threatened to order their members not to teach the boy if he returned (in fact, he never did) and some parents prepared to remove their children. Mr Bains was next instructed by the governing body to review school procedures with regard to equality laws, being told that the governors had commissioned an outsider to conduct the review.
- 3.34 In July 2013 two parents of the threatened children requested a meeting with the chair. His response to one was that they meet outside the school, on Alum Rock Road, at 6:00pm. The parent was reluctant and asked the head of her child's year to accompany her. A meeting outside school was felt by the teacher to be improper but the teacher took a detailed statement dated 17 July of her concerns and the chair's response to them.

- 3.35 Also in July, Mr Bains' former mentor and referee for Saltley was invited by the governing body to advise on governor training. Mr Bains, though he had kept in touch with him, knew nothing of this and was therefore surprised to find him at meetings. *'I've been asked to be there to support them in governance'* his former mentor told him.

September 2013

- 3.36 After the school reopened in September there were two well-publicised knife killings in Birmingham which heightened concern about the incident in Saltley. News media, including the BBC, ran stories on the incident and reported that teachers were refusing to teach the excluded boy. At the same time the governing body's equality reviewer, a private consultant, appeared at the school. Mr Bains did not know him but believed he used to work with a governor. In one conversation he said to Mr Bains, *'I worked with government and if you make it past this next couple of days, nothing will happen'*.
- 3.37 On the evening of 23 September Mr Bains was informed of a Facebook posting about him which read: *'Racist Headteacher. Saltley School's Headteacher is a racist. He suspended a Muslim pupil and does not suspend non-Muslims. He suspends not guilty Muslim teacher and does not suspend guilty non-Muslim teachers. A Muslim girl's headscarf is called balaclava. The pupil reported to the headteacher. What does he do? Nothing. Muslim pupil is sexually assaulted by a non-Muslim teacher, reported to the headteacher. What does he do? Nothing. Are you going to let this racist Islamophobic headteacher Balli Bains get away with it. If you believe in justice and that everyone should be treated equally, join the demonstration. Friday 27 September, outside the school at 2.45pm'*.
- 3.38 By the following morning the posting and other allegations had been texted around many in the school community, including some children. Mr Bains concluded that a governor was responsible because details of the incidents referred to were known to few. One of the complainants was also related to the previous chair of governors. Neither incident was serious and both were resolved with the help of HR and the Council safeguarding team. Subsequently, someone informed local councillors and sent evidence from the enquiries to the Council. The chair told Mr Bains that, with regard to the alleged sexual assault, the National Governors Association *'said I've got to suspend this member of staff, so I'm instructing you to suspend him'*. Finding that what was reported was no more than what the school, HR and the Council had already assessed and acted upon, Mr Bains refused to suspend the teacher.
- 3.39 Since some of the texted information was confidential, Mr Bains informed the police, asking for the texts to be investigated. The police liaison officer endeavoured to see if their origins could be traced and in October Mr Bains registered the texts as a race hate crime. He recalls

subsequent emails from the police to the effect that it was not in the public interest to pursue an investigation.

- 3.40 On 25 September Mr Bains addressed parents who were protesting about the proposed reinstatement, witnessed by a Council officer. Mr Bains explained that the governors had the right to act as they had. He summarised parental reaction as, *“Well, what about the local authority? What about the safety of our children?” and so on, and, you know, the local authority didn’t say anything other than “Well, they’ve got the right to do that.” Then I’m sent home’*. Also on that day, under the misapprehension that the demonstration was to be that afternoon, the school was visited by Liam Byrne MP, who Mr Bains had informed of his problems, and by Councillors Shah and Iqbrat.
- 3.41 Before the demonstration on 27 September, Mr Bains arranged for some staff to visit local mosques to explain what had been going on. One of the communications urging people to demonstrate included the sentence, *‘Don’t just target SLT, target the white staff as well’*. At 3:30am on 27 September the chair sent him an email saying that police involvement should be subject to governing body approval and that *‘In the interim I am taking chair’s action that all police involved needs to be approval by me, the chair’*. With the health and safety of staff and children his main concern, Mr Bains ignored the email. During the day he was told by a police officer that the chair had visited local mosques that morning urging people to come to the demonstration. In at least one of the mosques the elders apparently refused to let the chair address the congregation without advance notice.
- 3.42 Despite BBC coverage, the demonstration was poorly attended. Members of the Green Lane mosque came in support of Mr Bains, saying, in his words, *‘Look, if there’s problems, we’ll try and move people on and give them the full facts of what’s been happening’*. About ten people from a local mosque attended, although one refused to talk to Mr Bains because he is a Sikh. One parent came but, so far as Mr Bains recalled, no governors. The event passed off peacefully.

October 2013

- 3.43 On 10 October HR and NASUWT representatives visited the school to tell Mr Bains that the governors had asked the Council to investigate him. He understood the Council now to be recommending that he should leave the school and seek a compromise agreement, a change from their previous position. The NASUWT representative took notes: *‘she basically says there, “We’re advising you to leave. The local authority is advising you to compromise”*. If he did not, the governors would find some way to discredit him or force him to leave some other way. It was clear that the NASUWT also thought this was the way forward and he suspected that the idea of a compromise agreement had originated with the union. He was reluctant, preferring to resign because what was happening was scandalous, but the union urged,

'Look, at least you'll get something out of it. It won't be the end of your career'. There was still no indication that the Council would accede to his request for the governing body to be replaced by an IEB – *'It was always words, it was always, "Okay, Balli, we've told them they've got to cooperate with you. We've told them that we're going to put a plan together"'*. Nothing happened and he reluctantly concluded that he would seek a compromise agreement. He did not inform his staff.

- 3.44 On 17 October he was telephoned by an Ofsted inspector, who said there had been a complaint and that the school would undergo a Section 8 inspection on 5 November. The inspectors asked probing questions about governance but Mr Bains believed the source of the complaint was a parent concerned about the knife incident. He told the inspectors how agendas he put up for governing body meetings were routinely disregarded and discussions transformed into *'something completely different into things that they wanted to talk about'*. He hoped that the inspection would result in changes to the governing body – *'That Section 8 inspection was my last throw'* – but when a senior Council officer attended the feedback session she said, *'Despite this, Balli, nothing will change and you should not change your mind about your compromise to leave the school'*. When he pointed out that the report was highly critical of the governors and supportive of him, she said, *'No, not necessarily'* and pointed to a statement to the effect that the headteacher had failed to provide a strategic plan for the governors.
- 3.45 This was particularly upsetting for Mr Bains because not only were his agenda suggestions ignored but *'towards the end, I was not allowed to have the minutes of the last meeting or the agenda for the next governing body meeting[...]specifically instructed by the chair of governors'*.
- 3.46 On the same day Mr Bains discovered that the governors had commissioned another private consultant as their education adviser. The consultant attempted to attend the Section 8 feedback meeting, having been signed in as *'acting governor'*, but was prevented by the inspector. Also present was Mr Bains's former mentor, the adviser to the governors on governor training. Mr Bains asked him to tell the inspector what he had witnessed at governing body meetings. He assured him he had described the governing body as dysfunctional.

November 2013

- 3.47 On 7 November Mr Bains discovered that the governing body had approved a budget of (he believed) £20,000 for a solicitor to draw up the compromise agreement. He was surprised because such agreements are usually drawn up between the Council, the person concerned and the union. The message that day from a governor, which reached him via HR, was, *'You either leave or we're going to*

have a vote of no confidence in your solicitors acting on our behalf to do your compromise agreement’.

- 3.48 Mr Bains sent a long email to his former mentor, setting out his position and his complaints. The following day, he left Saltley School for the final time, on gardening leave. The mentor was appointed interim executive principal – *‘Basically, they got the man they wanted two years ago [...] they’ve got their Muslim head teacher [...] and he’s their friend [...] he’s their social friend [...] the local authority is quite happy with that relationship because it keeps the staff quiet, keeps the governors quiet and it keeps everyone off their back’.*

January to February 2014

- 3.49 The end of Mr Bains’ tenure at Saltley was not the end of his story. The compromise agreement was not signed until 2 January 2014, until which date he was still being paid and could in principle have continued to work. Later, when the letter known as the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter was published in *The Times*, describing him as “leaving” Saltley, he discovered the letter had been known to the Council since late November. As he said, *‘Who knows he’s leaving? There’s only two people who know he’s leaving, myself and the chair of governors, the solicitor they’ve got and a few other people [...] this is a very confidential thing’.* The terms of his supposedly confidential compromise agreement had clearly been broken before it was signed, with the result that *‘it’s just ruined my career [...] I can’t seem to secure another headship or even anything at the moment’.*
- 3.50 Mr Bains remains unemployed and is considering leaving the teaching profession.

4 What are the specific patterns of behaviour observed?

4.1 The investigation has looked across a number of schools to see if patterns of behaviour are evident. This is important in helping with the assessment of whether there is an element of co-ordination and deliberation in what has happened. The evidence is drawn from a combination of Education Funding Agency and Ofsted reports and interviews with a range of witnesses, including those who have spoken to me, my team or Ian Kershaw. I have reached the conclusion that clear patterns of behaviour have emerged in the leadership and management of schools relating to:

- irregularities in employment practices;
- bullying and intimidation;
- changes to the curriculum and educational plans;
- inappropriate proselytizing in non-faith schools; and
- unequal treatment and segregation.

Irregularities in employment practices

4.2 A significant body of staff testimony has alleged inappropriate recruitment practices in the selection and appointment of headteachers, senior staff and teachers. Examples include:

- Failure to advertise headteacher and senior leadership posts nationally (and sometimes even locally) when a candidate, often a friend or relative of the governing body members or headteacher, had already been identified. Sometimes posts have been offered without sight of two references and despite unexplained gaps in employment history.
- Non-Muslim staff and Muslim women have reported that they have been denied opportunities for promotion: they have been unaware of the post being advertised; or they have been told by senior leaders or governors that they should not apply; or they have been warned by the preferred candidate that the job has already been earmarked.
- Appointment of staff at a higher point on the pay scales than might be justified by their experience and skills; frequent increases in salary even within the same year; awarding retention pay, backdated without explanation.
- The award of Qualified Teacher Status to unqualified employees.
- Moving inexperienced staff into posts of responsibility across different phases of education. Frequently moving staff between schools, each move involving a promotion, and so achieving senior leadership positions in a very short period of time.
- Nepotism; governing body members and senior staff insisting their relatives and friends are recruited.
- Members of recruitment panels which include friends and / or relatives of one of the candidates.

- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks have not always been completed. Some of the Single Central Records (SCR), where schools must record details of staff, governors and volunteers involved with children at the school, were incomplete. The SCR plays a vital part in a school's safeguarding procedures. The database records personal details, such as the address of the member of staff, their DBS check number, qualifications, reference details and permissions to work in the UK (if a foreign national). The SCR at Park View School had 45 missing references for staff. At Nansen Primary School and Oldknow not all the details of governors are recorded. One chair of governors has had no DBS check, despite holding keys to the school. At another school, the DBS record of a candidate's conviction was signed off by an acting headteacher without him recording the reason for allowing the appointment to go ahead.
- Intimidation and bullying of existing headteachers or senior staff to secure their removal. Even if it could be demonstrated that the reasons for seeking removal were justified, the types of behaviour exhibited by members of the governing body and, in some cases, senior leadership staff, have been unacceptable. A number of cases, however, have followed clashes between the governing body and headteacher over such matters as the introduction of excessive faith practices in a non-faith school; the celebration of Christmas; and whether pupils should receive guidance in Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and tolerance of homosexuality. There was also criticism the senior leadership was "too white".
- Staff report that the former chair of the Park View Educational Trust, Tahir Alam, manipulated appointments largely by influence, rather than attending interviews, and that he dominated all decisions.

4.3 There have been numerous examples to illustrate these irregularities provided to the investigation. However, I have not included the details here because to do so would inevitably make them identifiable.

Recommendation 1

The Department for Education should review the process by which schools support individuals to gain and award Qualified Teacher Status to ensure that there are no systemic vulnerabilities to abuse.

Bullying and intimidation of headteachers

4.4 It is often the case that a headteacher leaves a school if it goes into special measures, although usually only if the headteacher has been in place for several years and is therefore held responsible for poor performance. In Birmingham, there are a number of cases of headteachers forced to leave schools which are not only not failing but

indeed, in some cases, have been outstanding. Headteachers and other senior leaders have frequently been removed from post or forced to resign. In recent years, headteachers have either resigned or been dismissed from Oldknow, Golden Hillock, Nansen Primary, Adderley Primary, Saltley, Washwood Heath, Moseley, Anderton Park, Ladypool and Springfield Primary schools.

- 4.5 There appears to be a pattern in this process. People who have been described to the enquiry as holding views that could be categorised as 'Islamist' join the governing body and sometimes volunteer to bring other governors with them. In time, the headteacher makes a decision which the new governors dislike, for instance, refusing to:
- alter a scheme of work;
 - separate boys from girls in lessons;
 - ban Christmas celebrations;
 - appoint an applicant related to a governor; or
 - remove staff whom the governors think should be dismissed.
- 4.6 In one case the fact that a fire alarm was not working properly was used as a pretext for suspending a headteacher.
- 4.7 The pattern then continues with the headteacher being subjected to harassment and bullying, which has included governors leading protests at the school gate or social media campaigns. Eventually, the headteacher is so worn down and distressed that he or she feels the only way to restore their mental and physical health is to resign.
- 4.8 One school's current headteacher has reported the circulation of rumours about her, including that she is sexually promiscuous. She is subject to abuse, which includes parents swearing and hissing at her in the playground, as well as calling her a 'kaffir' (a derogatory term for non-Muslims). At Oldknow, the headteacher was put under relentless pressure to remove members of her leadership team, although at the time the school was rated outstanding. When the two members of staff resigned, they were immediately successful in securing appointments to senior posts at other schools. The head was asked to take gardening leave.

Changes to the curriculum and education plans

- 4.9 My enquiry has identified a very clear pattern in changes to the curriculum and education plans across a number of schools.

Increasing the faith component

- 4.10 Learning programmes have been restricted, subjects removed from the timetable and teachers constrained in the resources they are allowed to use. Schemes of work and subject content have been curtailed by

governing bodies and teachers told what they may and may not discuss with students in class. In some cases, a secondary school model has been introduced wholesale into a primary school without consultation with staff and parents. These changes have been made either at the insistence of governors or following the appointment of a senior leader who has been parachuted into the school by influential governors.

- 4.11 At Nansen Primary, a secondary model has been introduced and primary teachers have become subject teachers. The curriculum, particularly in Key Stage 2, is not broad and balanced. Each week Year 6 children study maths for over seven hours, English for nine hours and science for almost two hours, from Monday to Thursday. On Friday, they have a carousel of Arabic, RE (Islamic syllabus), ICT, PE and Friday prayers. There are no lessons in the humanities, arts, music or PSHE. The Year 5 balance is similar but also includes three hours of creative curriculum during which there may be a wider range of study, for example, the Greeks and the Egyptians. However, some of this work is studied through the Islamic perspective. Younger children, including those in Key Stage 1, have a similarly restricted and unbalanced curriculum.
- 4.12 Efforts were made to arrange for whole school activities and wider experiences but these were reported to have been regularly challenged by Tahir Alam and the chair of the governing body, who both tried to force the cancellation of events. Staff expressed concern about the curriculum, its lack of breadth and balance, and the Islamic direction it was taking. They did not think that the imposed secondary model, with subject-only specialist teaching, was appropriate in the primary setting. Parents were reportedly unhappy with these changes.
- 4.13 In a number of schools RE has become a central core subject. At Park View and Golden Hillock it is a compulsory GCSE, which is unusual in non-faith state secondary schools. Only modules in Islam are studied from Years 9 to 11. The five students at Golden Hillock who opted to study the Christianity paper at GCSE sit separately in RE classes and teach themselves. In the primary schools that have been inspected by Ofsted, RE is taught largely from the Islamic perspective.
- 4.14 At Park View and other schools, governors have over-stepped their responsibilities by restricting schemes of work and insisting on an Islamic approach to such subjects as PSHE, science, RE and SRE. Park View students speak openly about the fact that boys and girls should not study certain matters together. In biology GCSE, Year 11 students had been told to study the reproduction topic at home. Evolution is mentioned only briefly and students are simply directed to the page in the textbook. A teacher who did this went on to tell students that they were looking at the textbook merely to comply with the syllabus but that *'that was not what they believed'*.

Modern language teaching

- 4.15 The choice of modern language has been restricted to the study of Arabic or Urdu at several schools. At Oldknow, Arabic was implemented following a government initiative to have a modern foreign language on the curriculum, although only 30% of parents responded to the questionnaire about it. The governors put pressure on the headteacher to introduce Arabic so that children could learn the Qur'an. No other language was considered and a teacher was employed to teach the subject across all year groups. As a result, other lessons were either removed or reduced; for instance music, art and design technology. Following the appointment of a new vice-principal, there was increased promotion of Islamic education, with children having to learn the Qur'an by heart.

Pressure to restrict or not deliver SRE and other sensitive topics

- 4.16 Schools, including academies, must provide SRE for their students. This is often delivered as part of the PSHE course. Ofsted inspectors look at PSHE provision when inspecting and make enquiries into how the school is addressing extremism (the Prevent strand of the Government's counter terrorist strategy, CONTEST) and safeguarding its students. Matters such as female genital mutilation, marital rape and forced marriage should also be discussed. In practice, however, restrictions have been placed on teachers in several schools by governors insisting that SRE and the Prevent strategy are either not taught at all or only from an Islamic perspective.
- 4.17 At Park View Educational Trust academies - Park View, Golden Hillock and Nansen Primary - and at Oldknow Academy, teachers have been told that they may not use images and resources in any subject which show even the slightest intimacy between the sexes. Sex education and discussion concerning sexual orientation have been removed from all lessons. The use of technical words, such as condom, the pill and so forth, has been banned. One female senior leader was challenged inappropriately and with great disrespect when she was asked to present the SRE curriculum to governors for approval. She was shouted at and told that she was *'trying to get our boys to masturbate'*. The meeting was suspended and she was told by a governor that he would not continue speaking to her because she was a woman. Some limited aspects of sex education were eventually permitted in an occasional SRE lesson, however, only because of the determination of the female teacher that it should happen.
- 4.18 Governors in several schools restricted discussion of topics such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation. At a governing body meeting at Saltley, a male governor asked if the word 'sex' could be removed from the SRE policy and suggested the school call it 'relationship studies'. The governing body at Anderton Park decided

that *'girls be taught about girls' issues and boys taught about boys' issues'* in SRE. The children were not taught anything about sexual intercourse. Some of this pressure came from a few individuals who claimed to be speaking on behalf of the community, yet of the 180 children taught SRE last summer, only two were withdrawn.

- 4.19 At Oldknow, where the Cornerstones humanities scheme is being introduced, the co-ordinator decreed that the scheme would not cover all the requirements of SRE education. Boys and girls may be taught that there will be changes to their bodies at puberty, but separately, and they would not be taught details of sexual reproduction. As late in the year as March, Year 6 children had not had any SRE education in this school year.
- 4.20 At Park View, three Muslim men were selected to teach SRE to boys: the Pupil Leadership Coordinator, the Head of Modern Foreign Languages and the acting headteacher. Ignoring the scheme of work prepared by the co-ordinator, they prepared their own materials. The lessons for boys centred on the rights of men and women within marriage. On the lesson worksheets it was written that if a woman said 'No' to sex with her husband, the Angel Gabriel would strike her down and condemn her to an eternity of hell. Following these lessons, there was commotion in the corridors, with boys telling girls that they couldn't refuse them and saying *'We have been told this'*. An assembly following the lessons was supposed to put right the SRE teaching but again the boys were in effect told that *'this is what it says in Islam but it is different in the eyes of British society'*. Staff reported that one of the teachers who gave the lessons said:

'Luckily we were able to hide all the controversial worksheets very, very quickly and managed to get rid of all of them between the two Ofsted inspections'.

Recommendation 2

The Department for Education should ensure that the governing body of every school extends the responsibilities of the teacher designated Child Protection Officer to include Prevent within his/her role. The mandatory Child Protection bi-annual update training undertaken by these responsible teachers should include the Prevent strand of the Government's counter terrorist strategy, CONTEST. This training should then be cascaded by the Child Protection Officer to every member of staff, governor or volunteer as an adult involved in the protection of children at the school.

Safeguarding and exclusion on enrichment activities

- 4.21 Muslim children have been taken to Saudi Arabia as part of a school trip paid for in part by school funds. Oldknow has organised ten-day school holidays for the last three years to Saudi Arabia, open only to

Muslim children. The trips were organised by an Arabic teacher who had formerly taught at Jeddah International Preparatory School, and they were described by the chair of governors as a foreign language holiday. However, the letter to parents stated that it is also for 'Umrah', a form of pilgrimage. Days were spent in Jeddah, Medina and Mecca (only Muslims may visit the latter two). A small group of senior staff selected children from the list of those who applied, but there was no protocol. The trips cost £1,000 per child and a letter was sent to parents stating that the school would pay 40%. However, the accounts show that some children travelled free.

- 4.22 A governor who took part in the trip in 2013 flew out to Saudi Arabia but did not return with the children, instead flying on to Pakistan before returning to Birmingham. The school paid for all of his aeroplane journeys. His brother, who lives in Saudi Arabia, joined the group in Mecca and slept over with the staff for two nights. He took part in activities with the children, although he had not been vetted. Staff said that this was an 'Umrah' journey and that it was exclusive as it was not open to all children and staff at Oldknow. Two years ago (in 2012) children were apparently left unaccompanied in the Jeddah International Preparatory School whilst the staff went out shopping.
- 4.23 If the trips were indeed intended to be modern languages holidays then there are countries nearer to Birmingham which would welcome non-Muslim children and where they could participate in the entire visit, unlike in Saudi Arabia. However, it is clear that the trips have had a significant and explicitly religious component. At £1,000 per head, the trip is very expensive, while the £400 subsidy from tax payers' money is unacceptable. Safeguarding appears to have been inadequate.

Teaching belief as fact

- 4.24 Staff have said that creationism has been taught as fact in science lessons and in assemblies at Park View School. A member of staff at Park View reported that pupils had said: *'I'm made of clay[...]There is no evolution. I'm made of clay because that is what Mr Hussain [the acting headteacher] told us in assemblies'*.

Changes to the learning environment

- 4.25 In Park View, Oldknow and some other schools, Islamic posters, slogans and instructions were openly displayed in many classrooms, including instructions to say short prayers before and after lessons. Posters also promoted attendance at Friday prayers, using quotations from the Qur'an. Senior staff have called students and staff who do not attend prayers 'kaffir'. In some schools, dinner menus and labels on some doors are written only in Arabic, for example, toilet doors and an office at Oldknow. Prayer mats and copies of the Qur'an are in many rooms in Nansen Primary, with posters for charities such as the Ummah Welfare Trust, Syria SKT and Islamic Relief. At Oldknow, a

wall in the main corridor headed 'Saudi Arabia' is covered in a large display of photographs showing children and staff at prayer on the school trip in Mecca and Medina. By December 2013, the school had installed 'wudu' (washing) facilities stating that it was to meet the demand of 150 pupils who were attending Jummah prayers on Friday.

The introduction of conservative Islamic practices into school life

- 4.26 I have noted already that some governors and newly appointed senior staff have implemented conservative Islamic practices into schools. Examples of this include altering the curriculum and schemes of work so that children are not allowed to hear musical instruments and are not allowed to sing, and changing the art curriculum so that they may see and draw only designs but not full faces or images considered immodest, such as paintings by Gustav Klimt. Drama lessons have been removed from the timetable, after school clubs cut down, measures taken to ensure boys and girls do not mix, and children bullied into prayer.
- 4.27 Until this year, Oldknow had a range of annual activities which both staff and children state were very enjoyable and to which everyone looked forward, including parents. These were the pantomime, the annual play, the fair and the Christmas, Eid and Diwali celebrations. The fair was always well attended by parents. During the fair there was a raffle in which parents took part. This year, however, the fair was stopped by the governing body because '*Muslims do not gamble*'. The children and staff had been rehearsing for the annual production, *The Wizard of Oz*. Late into rehearsals, the children told their teachers that they were not allowed to sing because it was Ramadan. The teachers believed the children had been put under pressure because they had always used music in the past. After much persuasion they performed the play without accompaniment.
- 4.28 At Golden Hillock, we were informed that boys and girls sat separately for assemblies. After the assembly, boys shook hands with a male teacher and girls with a female when exiting. Staff state that senior leaders checked their classrooms and removed Islamic display materials before the Department for Education visited.

Ambassadors (prefects)

- 4.29 At Park View a senior leader introduced a prefect system known as 'Park View Ambassadors'. Three members of the Senior Leadership Team selected the students into this group. Other staff allege that the ambassadors were selected because they are known to belong to strictly observant Muslim families. In the 2013/14 academic year 160 students were selected out of a total school roll of around 600. They have been described as the '*religious police*' by some members of staff, although this is vigorously denied by the Acting Principal, Mr

Hussain. Ambassadors have been trained to deliver prepared assemblies in each classroom every day. They are also alleged to report to the headteacher the names of staff and students who exhibit behaviours which are deemed unacceptable by conservative Muslims. These include behaviours such as boys and girls talking to each other or touching each other; boyfriend and girlfriend relationships; staff who speak out of turn; staff who wear inappropriate dress and Muslim women staff who may not be sufficiently covered.

Assemblies that have an anti-Western theme

- 4.30 Some staff at Park View invited a religious preacher known for his extremist views, Shaykh Shady Al-Suleiman, to speak with Year 10 and 11 students. Shaykh Shady was mentioned on the 'Park View Brotherhood' discussion group (featured in more detail later in this report) in June 2013 when he was billed to address a meeting in Birmingham. The June event was described by the teacher who made the posting as *'An epic journey featuring prolific speakers'*. He visited Park View and spoke to the students in November 2013. I spoke to Mr Hussain about this event and he told me that Shaykh Shady had given a talk to students about revision for exams. However, I was told that students were quite shocked on leaving the assembly by the nature of his speech. Some students made comments to staff along the lines of *'Oh my God I can't believe what he has just said - there are people dying in Afghanistan'* and talked about it for days afterwards. Some students wondered why he had been talking about them being oppressed in this country. Mr Hussain admitted to me in interview that the school had no policy for vetting speakers.
- 4.31 Staff reported that on another occasion Mr Hussain addressed an assembly in anti-American terms. This allegation is denied by Mr Hussain. I understand from an interview with a former pupil that Mr Hussain led assemblies with a similar theme some years ago. It is also alleged that he told students that *'your white teachers do not have your best interests at heart because they're [...] non-believers. We have your best interests at heart because we're Muslim; we are brothers and sisters in Islam'*. Mr Hussain denies that any of his assemblies have contained inappropriate material. Another member of staff who led an assembly at Park View School reportedly told pupils that, because of the colour of their skin, no-one would ever employ them in this country. In a classroom setting, students at Golden Hillock were reportedly shown images of jihad, involving a battlefield and rocket launches.

Intolerant behaviour and homophobia

- 4.32 There is witness evidence of intolerance in several schools towards those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT). Park View governors and staff have displayed openly homophobic behaviour, using terms such as 'the gays' in meetings. The 'Park View Brotherhood' discussion group transcripts also reveal homophobic

attitudes going unchallenged by staff members. Senior staff have been shouted at in governing body meetings when they attempted to discuss the LGBT agenda. Male and female staff have reported that they have to hide their sexuality. Students say that their teachers do not talk to them about such matters. At Nansen Primary, staff state that they were told to teach that homosexuality was a sin.

Use of the call to prayer and compulsion to pray

- 4.33 Friday prayers have been introduced at a number of schools. Their part in the central life of the school is growing, as is the pressure on students and staff to attend. We have been told by staff at Park View that a tannoy to broadcast the 'adhan', the Muslim call to prayer, was installed. It could not only be heard across the whole school site, but also by residents in the local community, and was used every day to call students and staff to prayer. However, it was switched off immediately before Ofsted visited the school and also on the days when the Department for Education and Education Funding Agency officials visited. I was informed that a member of staff at Park View used a microphone from a high window to shout at students who were in the playground, not attending prayer. Some girls were embarrassed when attention was drawn to them because girls who are menstruating are not allowed to attend prayer. But still, the teacher called to them.
- 4.34 A member of Park View staff, who had been seconded to Golden Hillock, held Friday prayers outside in the main playground, making a point by using a central space. Photographs of the event were posted on the school's website but were removed the day before the Department for Education officials visited. Students who did not wish to attend prayers have pressure put on them by staff and other students.

The reinforcement of Muslim identity to the exclusion or disparagement of others

- 4.35 Christmas was banned by governors at Nansen Primary in December 2013. The staff and children had prepared their usual nativity play, the school was decorated with trees, presents were bought, and the post box was in place for the usual posting of cards. However, the headteacher was severely reprimanded for making such arrangements and allowing the school to celebrate the feast. She argued with the governors and eventually they told her that the nativity could take place without a baby Jesus, but that everything else must go. Parents attended the nativity play as usual and the whole school came together. Neither staff nor parents think that words such as 'Christmas' should be banned within the school.
- 4.36 Also in 2013 the governors at Oldknow agreed that the celebrations for Christmas, Diwali and Easter would not take place, and that the focus would be on teaching. A governor objected to an afternoon of

Christmas celebrations. There were no trees to be ordered and no parties and the Birmingham City Mission speaker was cancelled, despite complaints from parents. The school was closed for two days to celebrate Eid.

- 4.37 Other headteachers were also pressured to ban Christmas. At Adderley Primary a small but aggressive group of parents objected to their children learning about other faiths. Parents withdrew their children while a Hanukah display was in reception. One parent pushed over the Christmas tree, and called the Muslim headteacher a non-believer.
- 4.38 Adderley Primary leadership reported that they received identical or near identical complaints and requests. After Christmas, they received 15 letters with similar templates in the space of 36 hours, all withdrawing their children from RE. Another ten were received shortly afterwards. A former headteacher told me that the governing body asserted that assemblies should be '*much more Islamic*'. He therefore recruited someone from a nearby Islamic organisation, who gave inclusive assemblies with an Islamic focus. His decision was overruled by the governing body and, instead, Tahir Alam appointed a staff member who has been described as '*singularly unqualified and incapable of doing the job*'. The former headteacher and another Adderley Primary headteacher described similar experiences of four or five members of staff, whom they feel incite the community and are led by Tahir Alam. Both say that Mr Alam's advice has been quoted at them. They also say that complaints and issues increased after they had positive Ofsted feedback. One headteacher also talked about workshops run by Mr Alam, Razwan Faraz and another prominent local chair of governors, which encourage parents to complain to schools about matters such as SRE.
- 4.39 Oldknow started a madrassah as an after-school club following a proposal by one of the governors. A teaching assistant was employed from the school budget to deliver it. It only lasted a year because safeguarding issues arose when parents complained that she was asking children to massage her feet. Although the madrassah closed, the teaching assistant is still employed at the school.
- 4.40 Before Christmas 2013, one of the teachers at Oldknow led two assemblies. These were not held on Friday and were not expected to be Islamic. During the assemblies he made statements such as '*Jesus wasn't born in Bethlehem, was he?*', to which the children were expected to reply 'No'. He allegedly carried on '*We don't celebrate Christmas do we?*'. Again, the children were expected to reply 'No'. Staff in attendance stated that the children were looking around at each other, uncertain what to do and reluctant to shout out. Staff, including senior staff, walked out of the assembly, leaving the children.
- 4.41 Staff at Golden Hillock reported that a teacher leading prayers gave a

sermon during which he said that Christians and Jews were ignorant.

- 4.42 Anderton Park has reported incidences of intolerant attitudes. A three year-old in nursery said recently that his family was poor because, *'All the Jews and Zionists have all the money'*. A ten-year-old was aghast when his friend drew some stars by overlapping two triangles saying, *'You can't draw that! It's haram [sinful] because it's Israel'*. There was a racist incident in Year 6 involving 40 pupils against two Somali boys. The school contacted all parents and was alarmed that some parents did not understand what was wrong with their children's behaviour. When the school enrolled a white child 18 months ago, a Muslim parent told staff to *'Get a white chair and a white desk and put the white kid in a white corner with a white teacher and keep him away from the others. If that fails, get rid of the white kid. It's what the community want you to do'*.

Unequal treatment and segregation

- 4.43 There is evidence that women and girls are not treated as equal to men and boys in schools. Inequalities for female staff include lack of progression and promotion, lack of opportunities for training, attacks on their manner of dress and being ignored or disrespectfully treated by senior male staff and governors. Female pupils also suffer inequalities.
- 4.44 Non-Muslim men and women, along with Muslim women, have complained that women are treated unfairly. Female senior leaders, already in post before the nature of their schools changed, speak of being talked down and shouted at during governing body meetings. At Golden Hillock some governors will not shake the hands of female senior leaders.
- 4.45 Directors at the Park View Educational Trust have held meetings to bring together the Trust's headteachers, introducing men by name but not the female headteacher. Women have said that they see no point in applying for leadership posts or promotion at any level in their schools because they know that they will not be appointed. Women and men on the same management tier in the Park View Educational Trust are treated differently, with men being invited to meetings when women are not.
- 4.46 Muslim women have also told us that they have been pressured to wear conservative dress. Senior male staff encourage students to tell their teachers how they must dress. Even in a primary school, the children were told to tell their non-Muslim teacher that she wore too much make-up. A Muslim woman teacher was ridiculed by a Muslim male teacher for showing her neck.
- 4.47 Muslim adults who were previously students at Park View said that there were no such pressures at that time; girls could dress as they wanted. They are shocked by recent changes and surprised to see so

many heads covered. At the recent Year 11 Prom, staff report that they were surprised to see the girls arriving with their heads uncovered. They expected them to be covered, as they had been at school, and realised that this was really their normal way of dressing.

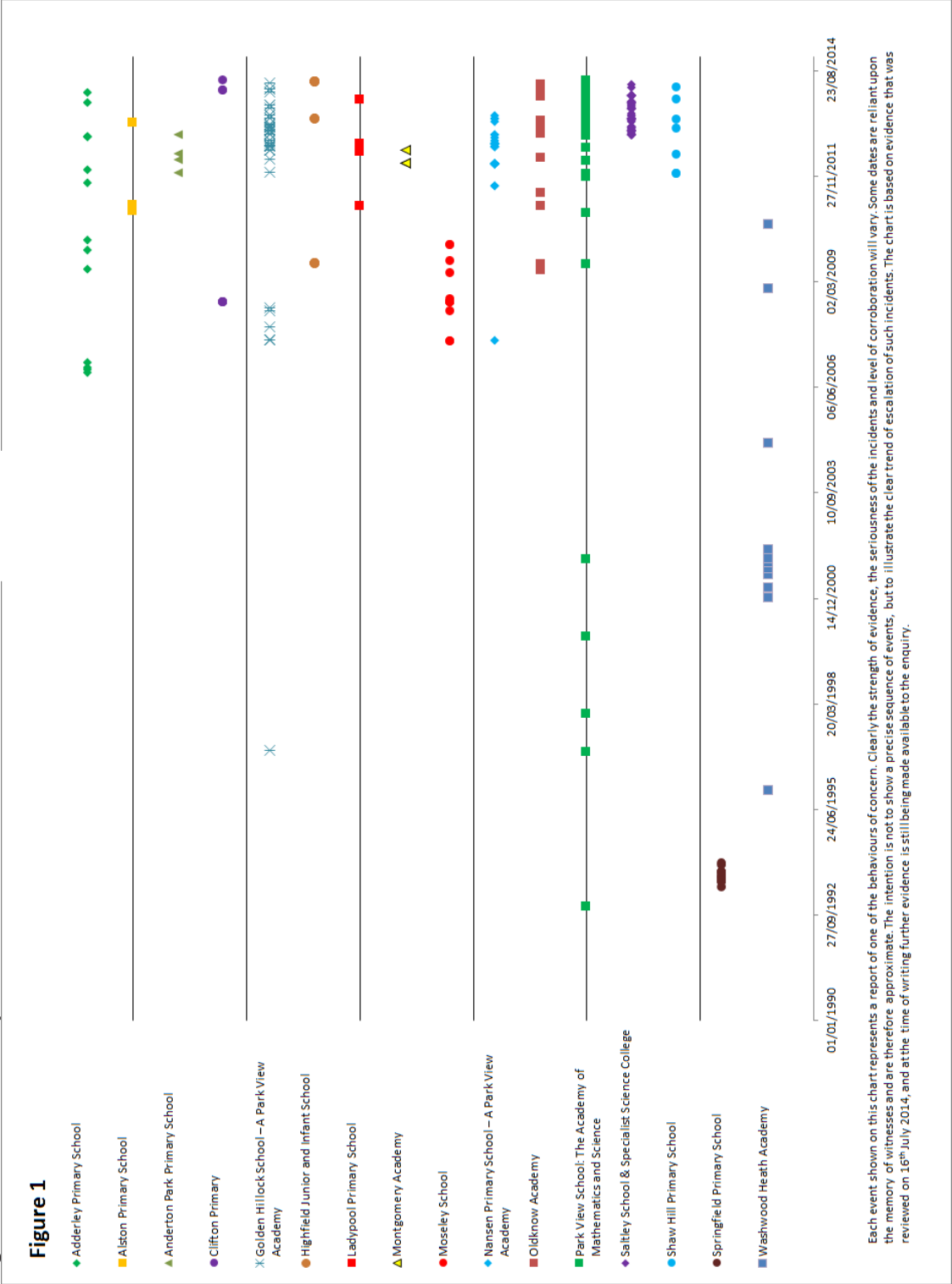
- 4.48 Girls at Park View complained to staff that their parents are too readily contacted if they are seen speaking to a boy. They also say that conclusions are drawn about conversations which are completely unfounded. They feel that they are being harassed.

Segregation of pupils

- 4.49 In Park View and other schools, there are classes where boys and girls are required to sit separately. In Park View maths lessons, where all the teachers are men, the girls were separated at the sides and back of the classroom, while the boys sat in the centre, towards the front. In many other subjects, students sat on different tables with boys and girls segregated. Single sex classes exist across the entire age range in PE, RE and PSHE at Park View. Even young children in primary education are sometimes segregated. Some school governing body minutes record that they have tried to enforce single sex teaching, particularly in PE and swimming. Several headteachers have resisted the pressure to segregate and have been bullied by governors or rebuked by a handful of parents.
- 4.50 The Park View girls' tennis team was taken to a local schools' tournament by PE staff after school. When they arrived they found men present. The teacher had to return the girls to school and was suspended by governors until she had written a letter of apology. When interviewed, Mr Hussain explained to me that the girls had to return to the school because it was tennis 'coaching', where there would inevitably be physical contact between the male coaches and the female pupils.
- 4.51 Not all of the behaviours and practices noted above are present at every school, however, there is a consistency in the way they have been introduced. The schools themselves are closely linked, not only geographically, but by the personal association of many of the governors and senior teachers, who have worked at or transferred between the schools. The nature of the changes and behaviours are indicative of a particular view of what is appropriate behaviour for Muslims, and there is clearly pressure to conform to it. The regularity and similarity of the behaviours indicate that these are not spontaneous or coincidental events.
- 4.52 The data gathered during the course of the enquiry shows that there have been instances of the types of behaviour described in this report for many years. Clearly, witness evidence and indeed that which is available from documentary records will tend to focus on more recent events. Nevertheless, **Figure 1** shows that in recent years the number

and spread of such behaviours across schools has not diminished but, on the contrary, would appear to be intensifying. When taken together with other evidence about the involvement of key individuals, their links with each other, their links to the affected schools, their shared view of the place of faith in schools and the similarity of the tactics that have been used to bring about change, the conclusion has to be that what has happened is deliberate and in accordance with a pre-determined plan.

Figure 1 – Behaviours reported at schools over time



5 The ideological agenda in Birmingham schools

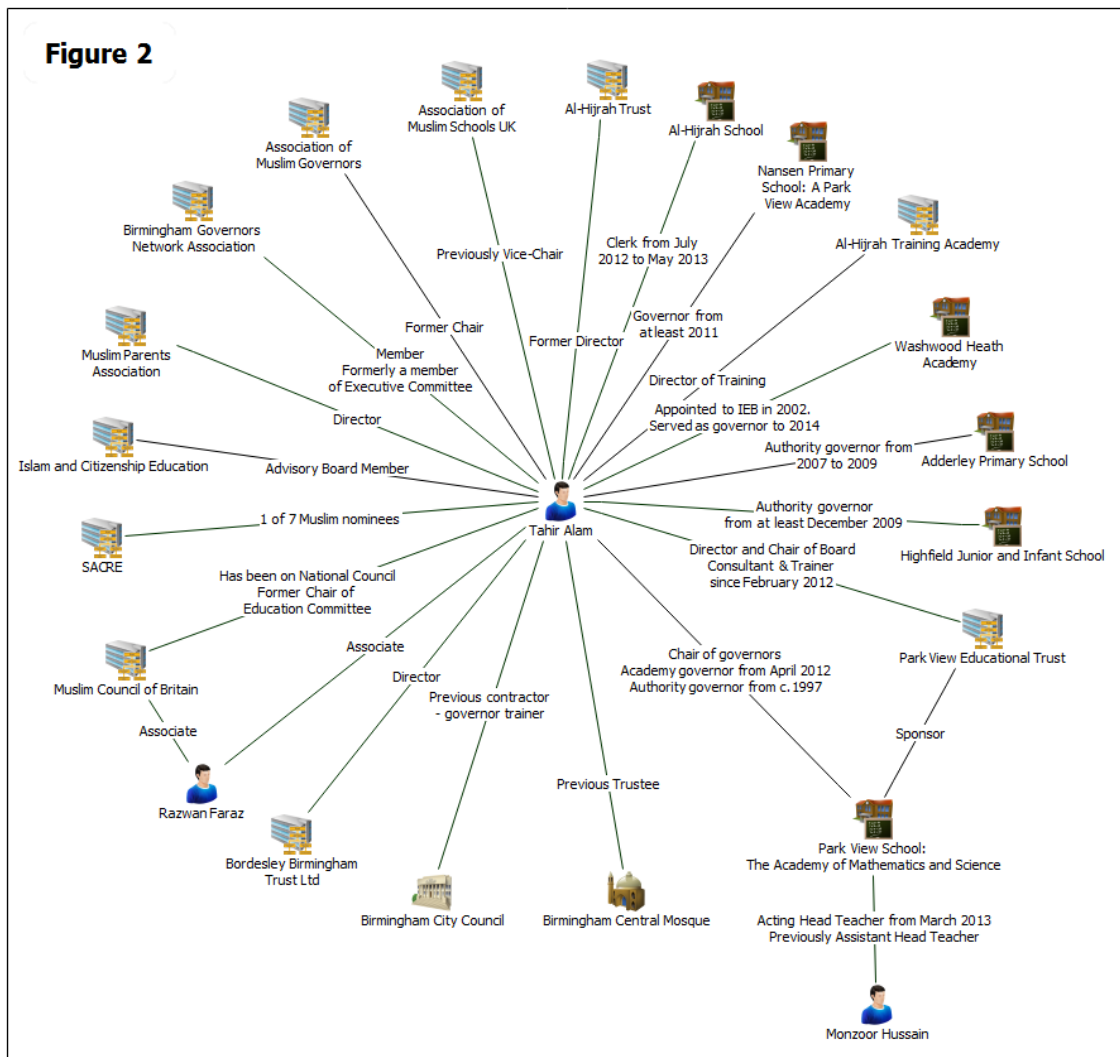
- 5.1 This investigation has revealed a sustained and coordinated agenda to impose upon children in a number of Birmingham schools the segregationist attitudes and practices of a hardline and politicised strand of Sunni Islam. Left unchecked, it would confine school children within an intolerant, inward-looking monoculture that would severely inhibit their participation in the life of modern Britain.
- 5.2 In the context of schooling, it manifests itself as the imposition of an aggressively separatist and intolerant agenda, incompatible with full participation in a plural, secular democracy. Rejecting not only the secular and other religions, but also other strands of Islamic belief, it goes beyond the kind of social conservatism practised in some faith schools which may be consistent with universal human rights and respectful of other communities. It appears to be a deliberate attempt to convert secular state schools into exclusive faith schools in all but name.
- 5.3 This agenda, though not necessarily the tactics involved, appears to stem from an international movement to increase the role of Islam in education. It is supported by bodies such as the Association of Muslim Schools–UK (AMS-UK), the International Board of Educational Research and Resources (IBERR), the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and the recently closed Muslim Parents Association (MPA). The movement provides practical advice and religious legitimisation to those who, in the words of the IBERR, seek to '*Islamise the provision of educational services*'. Some of the individuals who have featured in the investigation were associated with, or held positions in, these bodies.
- 5.4 For example, in 2007 Mr Alam co-authored a report for the MCB entitled *Meeting the needs of Muslims in State Schools*, also contributed to by Razwan Faraz. Assuming the many Muslim pupils in the UK to be a cohesive group defined by their religion, the report urges schools to do more to respond '*positively to the educational concerns and aspirations of Muslim pupils and their parents*'. Some of its recommendations have been exceeded in the schools investigated; others can be seen in place, or in embryo. (See **Annex 6** for a summary of the MCB report.)
- 5.5 Although such publications often address Muslim schools specifically, the movement aspires to promote Islam more widely within secular and other faith schools. Essentially, the ideology revealed by this investigation is an intolerant and politicised form of extreme social conservatism that claims to represent, and ultimately seeks to control, all Muslims. In its separatist assertions and attempts to subvert normal processes, it amounts to what is often described as Islamism. Manifestations noted in Birmingham schools include:

- anti-Western rhetoric, particularly anti-US and anti-Jewish;
- segregationism: dividing the world into 'us and them', with 'them' to include all non-Muslims and any other Muslims who disagree;
- perception of a worldwide conspiracy against Muslims;
- attempts to impose its views and practices upon others;
- intolerance of difference, whether the secular, other religions or other Muslims.

6 Park View Educational Trust

- 6.1 The Park View Educational Trust, its former trustees and several former and current staff members of Park View School appear to be closely linked to many of the issues we have investigated in Birmingham schools. A central figure is Tahir Alam, who has extensive contacts within the education field in Birmingham. A significant body of testimony attests to his influential role in decisions that have led to the changes we have observed in the ethos of several Birmingham schools. He has been closely involved with the running of Park View School for many years, having been a governor since the 1990s. He has also exerted influence at other schools as a member of several governing bodies, and more recently at schools that have become part of Park View Educational Trust.
- 6.2 The extent of Mr Alam's extensive local and national connections can be seen from **Figure 2**. It also shows how he has had ample opportunity not only to influence at the policy level, but also to bring about change at the local through delivering training and membership of governing bodies.
- 6.3 Tahir Alam promoted the concept that schools can (and should) be changed to accommodate the faith needs of Muslim pupils by increasing Muslim representation on governing bodies and then insisting on changes to the ethos, policies and processes of the school. Several of the governors who have caused the most difficulty on governing bodies have connections to Mr Alam and Park View School; some are staff or former staff of the school.
- 6.4 Mr Alam was the key person determining the policies and activities at Park View School. Most of these appear to be recommendations from the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) report he co-authored in 2007. For example, in the teaching of modern foreign languages, pupils were encouraged to study Arabic to reflect their background and provide greater access to their religious and cultural heritage (despite the fact that the majority of Muslim pupils in Park View School are from a South Asian background). Sex and relationship education is being taught with reference to an Islamic moral framework under which boyfriend/girlfriend relationships as well as homosexual relationships are not acceptable.
- 6.5 Park View School sought to export its Islamising blueprint. Several members of Park View staff moved onto other schools in the area. This was often accompanied by attempts to change the school ethos and introduce compulsory faith practices into a non-faith school, in many cases without the approval of the headteacher. The linkages between key members of the Park View Educational Trust, intolerant discussion groups and schools where an Islamising agenda has been evident, or incidents similar to those described in the Trojan Horse letter observed,

Figure 2 – Local and national connections of Tahir Alam

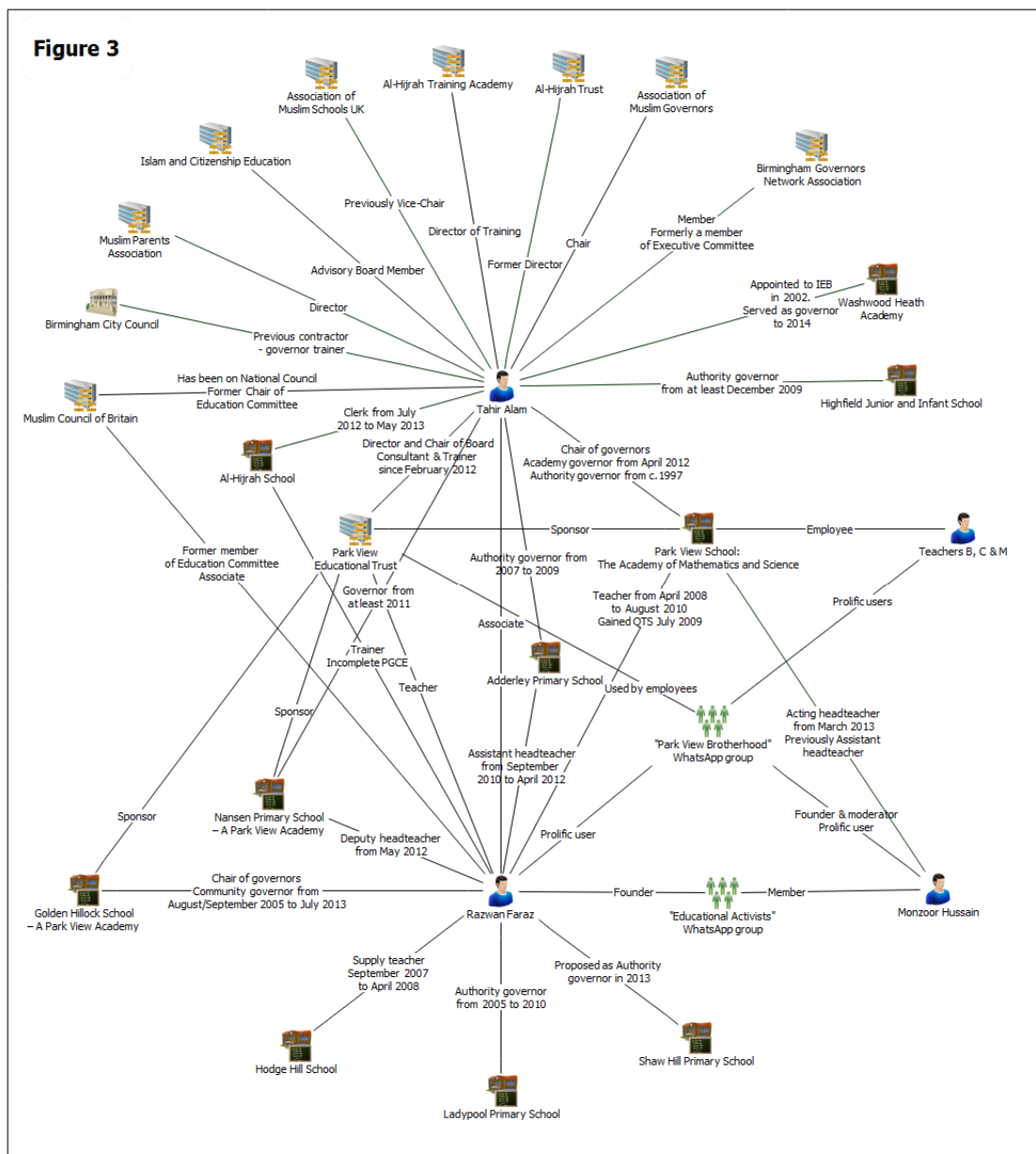


can be seen from **Figure 3**.

6.6 It has been alleged that Park View School exhibits many of the most concerning features reported to this investigation. It is only fair to point out the Trust disputed most, if not all, of the following allegations:

- IT technicians recording what appeared to be Al Qaeda terrorist videos into a DVD format;
- an established system of prefects, which some staff felt were trained almost as religious and moral police, reporting on pupils who offended against Islam;
- a proposal for teaching about Saudi Arabia to be included in the citizenship curriculum (despite very few, if any, pupils having a Saudi Arabian background);
- the only three staff allowed to deliver Sex and Relationships Education to boys refusing to discuss AIDS on the basis that a good Muslim only had sex with his wife and therefore did not need to know about safe sex;
- anti-American assemblies;
- an assembly where pupils were told that if they did not pray they were worse than a kaffir (a derogatory term for non-Muslims), supported by a poster with the same message;
- anti-Christian and anti-Israeli indoctrination of children at assembly
- assemblies led by speakers known to extol extremist views (as well as Shaykh Shady al-Suleiman, the school invited a rabbi from an anti-Israel ultra-orthodox Jewish group 'Neturei Karta' to deliver an assembly to Year 10 and 11 pupils);
- segregation according to gender in some lessons;
- the removal of girls' teams from a local tournament because of the presence of external male staff;
- denouncement of Muslim staff who are not sufficiently covered;
- peer and staff pressure on girls to cover their heads;
- a narrowed curriculum which heavily features maths and English teaching, to the exclusion of other subjects;
- schemes of work in other subjects narrowed to reflect the school's Islamic ethos;
- financial mismanagement, with staff being paid for trips over and above their salaries;
- funding of trips for certain staff accompanied by numerous family members;
- gender and faith discrimination in the treatment of staff and discrimination in employment practices;
- racist attitudes promoted in assembly;
- attempts to stop Christmas celebrations; and
- a culture of fear and intimidation of all staff (primarily non-Muslim men and all females) considered to be outside the inner circle. Staff fear they will be victimised if they speak out against any of the excessive practices and were also told not to co-operate with this investigation.

Figure 3 - The linkages between key members of the Park View Educational Trust, intolerant discussion groups and schools where an Islamising agenda has been evident



- 6.7 When I interviewed Mr Alam on two occasions he strongly denied that he has had a role in what happened in the Birmingham schools, as described in the 'Trojan Horse' letter. When I asked him about this, in our first interview which he agreed could be recorded, he said:

'So let's look at the claim – the other assertion is that I actually have been in a very stealthy fashion, in a very smart fashion, I sort of like the feeling, if you know what I mean that I was sophisticated and powerful and whatever, and all the rest of it. My ego was raised by that of course, but unfortunately, none of the facts are true really, so there you go'.

- 6.8 As we have seen, the description of the majority of events described in the letter have turned out to be factually accurate. It is simply not right to say that *'none of the facts are true'*. As Mr Alam has spent many years working in education in Birmingham, not only as a governor at six schools but also as a governor trainer on behalf of the Council, it is perhaps surprising that he should fail to recognise any of the contents of the 'Trojan Horse' letter as being accurate.

- 6.9 In fact, Mr Alam is widely known for his energetic promotion of Islamic education. He has been an executive board member of the Association of Muslim Schools UK (AMS-UK) since 2003 - on which he represented Al-Hijrah School - and until recently was its vice chair. He was Director of Training for the Al-Hijrah Academy and was also, along with the chair of governors of the Oldknow Academy and two others, a director of the recently dissolved Muslim Parents Association. He has addressed a large number of Islamic educational conferences.

- 6.10 Throughout the enquiry I have been interested to try to understand what has driven the success of Park View School in recent years. Mr Alam was certainly very clear when he explained his ambitions:

'I am a critic of under-achievement, underperformance and education failure in the inner city ring schools. And I've been a critic of that for a very long time and the model that we created at Park View School in terms of transformation and the success of the school, you know, we wanted to break the perception. The myth that has been operating for probably half a century maybe, or 30 or 40 years at least, that schools in the inner city ring they're going to fail, they're going to underachieve and this is a well accepted fact by the establishment and so on and I've been challenging these facts for a long time. And at Park View, you know, we have proven that this thesis, actually is a myth'.

- 6.11 However, during the course of the enquiry some very disturbing evidence came into my possession. This showed that within the staff of the Park View Educational Trust, of which Mr Alam was a director and chair of the Board, there existed a deep strand of intolerance and attitudes that are totally inappropriate for those who aspire to educate

young people. This came to light with the discovery of the 'Park View Brotherhood'.

7 The Park View Brotherhood

- 7.1 In order to understand what has influenced the implementation of what have been described as conservative religious behaviours and practices within Park View School, a non-faith state school, I have been careful not to rely upon mere assertion or speculation. The mind-set of those who have held positions of influence within the school and their close associates is potentially an important indicator in this respect.
- 7.2 I came into possession of a print-out of the postings on a WhatsApp social media discussion group during the course of the enquiry. This group was known as the 'Park View Brotherhood' and it has been possible to identify that the core contributors were mainly teachers at either Park View School or at other schools within the Park View Educational Trust.
- 7.3 The material covers the period from April 2013 until the group was closed down in March 2014. The group was set up and administered by Monzoor (Moz) Hussain, who is the Acting Principal at Park View School. The print-out of the material contains 3,235 separate postings from a number of contributors.
- 7.4 The two most prolific contributors are Teacher C, with 469 messages, and Razwan Faraz, with 423 messages. Mr Faraz was formerly a teacher at Park View and Adderley Primary School, has been a chair of governors and governor at two other local schools, and is now the Vice-Principal at Nansen Primary School.
- 7.5 Mr Faraz has been confirmed by multiple sources as the user of a particular telephone number. In addition, in a statement that he has provided to the enquiry, he admits to making specific comments on another social media group called the 'Educational Activists'. Those comments are made using the same telephone number. I have also received evidence that Mr Faraz was using the same number in 2012. Within the 'Park View Brotherhood' material there is one occasion when an entry from the phone number is signed 'Razwan Faraz' and nine further occasions when the number is either addressed as, or responds to, 'Razwan'. There can therefore be no doubt that he is the author of the contributions that are ascribed to him in this account of the 'Park View Brotherhood' discussions. For him to deny that he is the contributor, he would have to assert that someone else, presumably without his knowledge or authority, used his telephone to make contributions on no less than 423 occasions while he was a member of the group between 5 April 2013 and 6 November 2013.
- 7.6 Monzoor Hussain has confirmed in an interview that he set up, administered and eventually closed down the discussion group. It should be noted that on 5 December 2013 the administrator changed the name of the group from 'Park View Brotherhood' to 'Park View

News'. He also announced that *'This group is now only for announcing news and events at Park View School'*.

7.7 The identities of the contributors referred to in this account as Teachers A to M are known to the enquiry.

7.8 The group is exclusively male. An exchange on 27 July 2013 shows this:

Teacher H	27/07/2013 18:53	No sisters here then eh?
Razwan Faraz	27/07/2013 18:54	They're in the kitchen
Monzoor Hussain	27/07/2013 18:54	Not here yara?
Razwan Faraz	27/07/2013 18:54	Getting iftari ready :)
Teacher D	27/07/2013 18:54	The name should give it away!
Razwan Faraz	27/07/2013 18:54	Perpetual role serving men:)
Teacher H	27/07/2013 18:55	mashallah, a true brotherhood then

7.9 When interviewed on 4 July 2014, Monzoor Hussain agreed that he had set up the discussion group and described how contributors were added by him as the administrator. He said that the purpose of the group was solely to discuss items that could be included in school assemblies. He added that he had closed the group down *'one or two years ago'*, but could not remember exactly when. According to Mr Hussain, there was another discussion group called the *'Park View Sisterhood'*, but I have not had sight of any communication within this group.

7.10 Within the 3,000+ messages, there are many that are relevant to

events within the school, as well as discussions about school life. The majority of the postings are innocuous and often mundane. Some of the messages are relevant to the content of school assemblies. However, a number of topics are discussed, often by a small group of contributors, which reveal the members' attitudes towards education, homosexuality and gay marriage, and a proposal to use their schoolchildren in a political campaign. There is also an undercurrent of anti-Western sentiment, explicit antagonism towards the British military, a sceptical reaction to news of terrorist attacks (Lee Rigby and the Boston bombings), and numerous links posted to extremist speakers. On two occasions – 7 May 2013 at 22:27 by Teacher G, and on 10 May 2013 at 20:18 by Teacher J – an offensive image of a lavatory roll imprinted with the Israeli flag was posted. On neither occasion was this image challenged by any of the discussion group members. On the second occasion, the very next posting was made by Monzoor Hussain himself on a completely unrelated topic.

- 7.11 Before looking at some of the content of the discussions in detail, it is perhaps worth reminding ourselves of the definition of extremism in the Prevent strand of the CONTEST strategy:

'Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the deaths of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'. (Prevent Strategy, 2011)

- 7.12 There are many subjects covered by the group, and what follows is a selection that demonstrates the intolerant attitudes laid bare by some of their discussions.

Education

- 7.13 In May 2013 a discussion took place between a group of teachers about the possibility of introducing separate forms for boys and girls in the school. Teacher C, who initiated the conversation, states that he wishes to increase segregation during form time and to decrease the amount of time available for *'unnecessary conversations'*.

Teacher C	29/05/2013 08:25	Instead of 5 forms (m/f), what if we had 6 forms/year group? 3 boys & 3 girls! pros and cons please bros...
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Teacher F	29/05/2013 10:47	Staffing.... 5 extra form tutors... Rooms....
Teacher C	29/05/2013 11:03	got both, we have "support" form tutors who can be given their own form
Teacher C	29/05/2013 11:05	I suppose if there were loads of sickies it could potentially be problematic
Teacher B	29/05/2013 11:20	Depending on boy girl ratio u may not need six forms.... But that will fluctuate year on year i guess...
Teacher C	29/05/2013 11:31	not by much I don't think, don't think alum rock is 50-1 just yet ;-)
Teacher G	29/05/2013 11:33	I'm not saying that this isn't something we could try, but what we don't want to do is inadvertently make the problem worse. Other schools that have stricter segregation rules have worse pupils than us.
Teacher C	29/05/2013 12:07	true, anything we try needs to be part of a comprehensive holistic approach
Razwan Faraz	29/05/2013 12:51	Segregating has much more advantages than disadvantages, some of the best private schools are single gender. However it does bring additional challenges and so long as those are handled with care and depth then it should be okz
Teacher G	29/05/2013 12:54	Again I agree, but there's a difference between a single gender school and a mixed school that attempts to segregate. It would be very easy for the kids to rebel at our school.
Razwan	29/05/2013	What you dont want is boys girls seperated and then to create a situation where the children develop an unhealthy longing for the

Faraz	12:57	company of opposite gender
Teacher C	29/05/2013 13:06	<p>excellent contributions. i am only proposing additional segregation during form times, (PE, RE and cit are already segregated)</p> <p>I think it would be eliminate 25/30 mins of what is usually unstructured time and minimise unnecessary conversations that have led to some of the issues we had before half term. I think in most of the Muslim teachers watch out for flirtatious behaviour, that just leaves break and lunch times.</p> <p>Not on our watch!</p>
Razwan Faraz	29/05/2013 13:22	It is important to teach boys and girls to know how to interact with opposite gender in a healthy manner
Razwan Faraz	29/05/2013 13:23	Equally important to create an environment that doesnt promote sexual promiscuity

7.14 Also in June 2013, a link was posted to an article about pro-European bias in accounts of world history:

Teacher B	16/06/2013 20:45:01	Amazing article. May Allah have mercy on us all. In tutor time next year there is scope for some history of islam and the wider world content. One contribution each (two if u feel generous) pleas... Who do our young people need to know about and why?
Razwan Faraz	16/06/2013 20:46:22	Ibn Khaldun
Teacher B	16/06/2013	MaashaAllah

	20:50:05	
Razwan Faraz	16/06/2013 21:09:32	Studying him will straighten the crooked debased backs caused by this eurocentric education system
Razwan Faraz	16/06/2013 21:11:13	It will inspire our youth to stand upon his shoulders
Razwan Faraz	16/06/2013 21:12:06	So that they can contribute like he did, to the world and not just Muslims, a young aspiring hafidh whose goal was to be the Imam of the Haram.

Political activity

- 7.15 In June 2013 a conversation took place between two teachers about the English Defence League (EDL). It was initiated by Teacher K, who was soliciting support for an e-petition that called for the proscription of the EDL. The reply from Teacher G suggested that *'the kids'* could be asked to engage in political activity and write letters to the government as part of their lessons:

Teacher K	09/06/2013 20:41	Very important brothers. Sign this and pass this on. An e-petition with the title 'Proscribe English Defence League (EDL)' has been set up asking the government to ban the EDL under the current anti-terrorism legislation. Plz sign the e-petition (link below) and support the banning of this racist & fascist group. Forward to all your contacts. http://t.co/EgcRI5kd7j
Teacher G	09/06/2013 22:57	How about if we talk to the kids about how we can legally do something about the EDL and racism? Ie we could get them to write letters to the government to voice their concerns etc. I think this would fall under citizenships remit?

Homophobia

- 7.16 In May 2013, Razwan Faraz posted a link to a *Guardian* article about gay marriage. He preceded the link with a comment, as shown below. The comment went unchallenged by any other members of the discussion group:

Razwan Faraz	26/05/2013 08:57	<p>These animals are going out full force. As teachers we must be aware and counter their satanic ways of influencing young people</p> <p>Gay marriage: news and teaching resources round up</p> <p>http://www.guardian.co.uk/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2013/may/26/gay-marriage-teaching-news-resources?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=twitterfeed</p>
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- 7.17 In September 2013 a discussion took place when Teacher A posted a link to a BBC news magazine item. The title of the item was 'Gay Pakistan: Where sex is available and relationships are difficult'. Part of the article described how a shrine in Karachi is used as a meeting place by gay men. The full discussion is as follows:

Teacher A	01/09/2013 13:14	<p>IF YOU HAVE JUST EATEN READ AFTER 2 HOURS ... CAUTION ADVISED</p> <p>http://m.bbc.co.uk/news/23811826</p> <p>This is what happens at some shrines in Pakistan!</p>
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Teacher B	01/09/2013 13:23	<p>BBC propaganda... File under "why don't they use the space to name our brothers and sisters murdered by British funded Israeli owned American sanctioned drones in Northwest Pakistan?"</p> <p>This stuff is disgusting and must happen but we should try to lift our Iman in these difficult times rather than buy into this type of cheap sensational garbage...</p> <p>(thanks for the info XXXXX, thats jus my personal view)</p>
Razwan Faraz	01/09/2013 13:41	I agree that the BBC will exploit any situation however the problem of homosexuality is rife in Pakistan both in the village and the cities
Razwan Faraz	01/09/2013 13:43	Sign of the end of times
Teacher B	01/09/2013 13:43	May Allah swt safeguard us all
Razwan Faraz	01/09/2013 13:44	May Allah further expose this and give us the strength to deal and eradicate it
Razwan Faraz	01/09/2013 13:47	Eeman when tested grows only when the actual reality of our surroundings are made apparent to us. One cannot live in an illusory state and expect his/her eeman to grow. By it's very nature eeman must embrace the reality even if it is riddled with fahisha because only then can the fahishah be eliminated and subsequently eeman grow inshAllah
Razwan Faraz	01/09/2013 13:48	So I say jazakAllah XXXXX for sharing this

Teacher B	01/09/2013 13:50	MaashaAllah u r right Razwan. I guess my weakness is i fear i am not strong enough to stay focused whilst in the midst of such darkness. May Allah swt increase us all to be ready and prepared through these tests to forever increase our Iman, in shaa Allah
Razwan Faraz	01/09/2013 13:53	Ameen, this is the challenge in these testing times. The end of times are near. I pray we remain conscious of what we are here to do and are guided to the path of our beloved Prophet (sas)
Teacher B	01/09/2013 13:54	Ameen bro, my mum always says "United we stand divided we fall" Alhumdulliah we got some gd bros here
Razwan Faraz	01/09/2013 14:02	Ameen:)
Razwan Faraz	01/09/2013 14:32	<media omitted>
Teacher A	01/09/2013 14:35	<p>It's not nice infact quite disgusting to know that these filthy cime is happening in the land that our parents belong to.</p> <p>However, this is the disgusting and frightening reality in Pakistan. Acts of innovation at graves is obviously quite common but the practice of homosexually is certainly the signs of the end of times.</p> <p>This agenda is also being promoted by our government in the UK, therefore, it's imperative that we as educators don't shy away from this - but address our youth in a tactful manner inshaAllah.</p>

Sceptical reaction to reports of terrorist attacks

7.18 There are also a number of postings in the discussion group giving links to conspiracy theorist videos about the murder of Lee Rigby and the Boston bombings.

Teacher C	19/04/2013 07:35	Watch "PROOF! Boston Marathon Bombing is Staged Terror Attack" on YouTube - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axQtAFtmtVA&feature=youtube_gdata_player
Teacher D	21/04/2013 01:34	Boston bombing shocking truth, see the link below: http://youtu.be/axQtAFtmtVA
Teacher C	23/05/2013 15:51	Watch "WOOLWICH FALSE FLAG BULLSHIT. MASSES ARE IN A TRANCE" on YouTube - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zfa3gXTqOH8&feature=youtube_gdata_player
Teacher K	23/05/2013 21:06	This video on youtube goes into more detail n facts about the hoax: Watch "London Soldier Killing Hoax Plus Sandy Hoax News" on YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDd9cwqoni8&feature=youtube_gdata_player Was the London machete killing of a British soldier 'terrorism'? Glenn Greenwald http://t.co/lr2cnQieJo
Teacher L	24/05/2013 20:28	ATTACK ON ISLAM! Plz watch and share ASAP before they remove it!!!! London butcher incident; It's is a hoax And this is the link to reveal it http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDd9cwqoni8&f

		eature=youtube_gdata_player Check this out and forward to all your contacts.
Monzoor Hussain	24/05/2013 20:52	Welcome XXXXX, to the PVET brotherhood
Teacher D	24/05/2013 22:53	Watch "WOOLWICH FALSE FLAG BULLSHIT. MASSES ARE IN A TRANCE" on YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zfa3gXTqOH8&feature=youtube_gdata_player
Teacher J	25/05/2013 11:31	Watch "Boston Bombing: What You Aren't Being Told" on YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wpu6_kArb9U&feature=youtube_gdata_player
Teacher J	25/05/2013 11:32	Watch "PROOF: Boston Bombing Suspects Were FBI Patsy Operatives "Then Executed"" on YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVpIElj-C74&feature=youtube_gdata_player

- 7.19 There are other postings which state quite clearly that what happened in Woolwich '*has no place in Islam*', and also a press release from the Green Lane Masjid and Community Centre on 23 May 2013 unequivocally condemning Lee Rigby's murder. However, it remains of concern that members of Park View School staff, judging from their own comments, believed that the murder of Lee Rigby was some kind of staged event or hoax, and exhorted their colleagues to spread the conspiracy videos promulgating this view to '*all your contacts*'.

Disparagement of British armed forces

- 7.20 There are two discussions on the subject of the British armed forces, and both are revealing not only of the attitudes of those who take part in the discussions, but also of those who failed to challenge them.
- 7.21 The first, in May 2013, was initiated when a teacher posted a link to an article about a Birmingham mosque that raising funds for the 'Help for Heroes' charity:

Teacher K	30/05/2013 10:21	Mosque fundraising for 'help for heroes' http://www.5pillarz.com/2013/05/29/birmingham-mosque-to-hold-controversial-help-for-heroes-event/
Razwan Faraz	30/05/2013 10:25	These uncle Toms were bound to get exposed, even if it were by their own doing!
Teacher K	30/05/2013 10:32	Quote from the article. Mosque Committee member, Mohammed Yaseen said: "We are holding the event to show our support for British troops".
Teacher K	30/05/2013 10:33	Don't know whether to laugh or cry.
Teacher F	30/05/2013 10:37	A mosque Fundraising for EDL probably on the way sometime soon!!!
Teacher M	30/05/2013 10:40	How about a fundraiser to equip the soldiers with more condoms so they don't leave our sisters pregnant after ravaging them!
Razwan Faraz	30/05/2013 10:42	These people have always existed and will continue to exist. It should strengthen our resolve to further the truth of Islam.
Teacher M	30/05/2013 10:50	We as muslims can't be apologetic for some fools actions in woolwich! What that guy did has no place in Islam so we don't need to defend muslims as a community.
Teacher K	30/05/2013 10:53	That's true [Teacher M] but people with an inferiority complex will always exist. If plans for the fundraising event are true and it goes ahead it will be interesting to see how much money they raise.

- 7.22 The second discussion on this topic was prompted by a news article referring to the 'Troops to Teachers' scheme, designed to generate opportunities for personnel leaving the armed services to join the teaching profession:

Razwan Faraz	12/06/2013 16:17	So the government wants killers to now teach our children Former soldiers to qualify as teachers in two years under government scheme http://m.guardian.co.uk/education/2013/jun/07/former-soldiers-qualify-teachers-government
Teacher A	12/06/2013 17:40	Absolutely shocking!

Anti-Israeli Images

- 7.23 On two occasions, offensive images that can only be interpreted as anti-Israeli were posted on the discussion group. I have not reproduced the images in this report, but they portrayed lavatory rolls imprinted with the Israeli flag. These images are available on the internet, but it is significant that they did not attract any form of challenge from other forum members or the administrator on either occasion that they were posted. When interviewed, Monzoor Hussain pointed out that he challenged contributors who posted comments that he did not feel would sit comfortably with '*other Muslim groups*', and that he eventually closed down the group because of these comments:

'So as soon as I got something like that, which wasn't the intention of what the group was, I told those members of staff off and deleted the group'.

No such challenge was mounted to these images.

Speakers and groups

- 7.24 The balance of speakers and events promoted in the WhatsApp discussion weigh heavily towards the hard-line Salafi, Deobandi and occasionally Islamist spectrum. For example, out of the 19 speakers that are mentioned, we judge that only two fall outside of these groups.

7.25 Speakers include the following individuals:

- **Shaykh Yusuf Estes** – a speaker who has caused controversy in the past for reportedly advocating wife beating and the killing of homosexuals.
- **Shaykh Shady al-Suleiman** – a preacher who has reportedly called on God to ‘*destroy the enemies of Islam*’. Al-Suleiman has also asked God to ‘*give victory to the Muslims in Afghanistan and Chechnya*’, to ‘*give victory to all the Mujahideen all over the world*’ and to ‘*prepare us for the jihad*’.
- **Ustadh Hamza Tzortis** – a speaker who has reportedly said that Muslims ‘*reject the idea of freedom of speech and even the idea of freedom*’

7.26 Some of the groups promoted in the discussions include the following:

- **UK Islamic Mission (UKIM)** – an organisation established in Britain in 1962 and inspired by members of the Islamist Jamaat-e-Islam party in Pakistan. Amongst other things, the group works to promote the teachings of the Islamist ideologue Abul A’la Mawdudi. UKIM’s website makes available various books for free download. One such book currently available is *Jihad in Islam* by Abul A’la Mawdudi. In it, the author describes Jihad in the following words:

‘It must by now be obvious that the objective of the Islamic Jihad is to eliminate the rule of an un-Islamic system, and establish in its place an Islamic system of state rule. Islam does not intend to confine this rule to a single state or to a handful of countries. The aim of Islam is to bring about a universal revolution. Although in the initial stages, it is incumbent upon members of the Party of Islam to carry out a revolution in the state system of the countries to which they belong, their ultimate objective is none other than a world revolution. No revolutionary ideology which champions the principles of the welfare of humanity as a whole - as opposed to upholding national interests - can restrict its aims and objectives to within the limits of a particular country or nation’ (Chapter 3: ‘A World Revolution’, http://ukim.org/ukimdata/1/24_jihad-in-islam.pdf).

According to the WhatsApp group, UKIM’s Alum Rock Islamic Centre has also organised lectures by Shaykh Shady Al-Suleiman and Ustadh Hamza Tzortis.

- **Al Hikmah** – an organisation which has given and continues to give platforms to speakers considered to be extreme. For example, its upcoming conference on 10 August 2014 will feature: Taji Mustafa, the UK Media Representative of Hizb-ut-Tahrir, Shaykh Haitham Al-Haddad, a controversial Salafi preacher, Shaykh Shady Al-Suleiman and Ustadh Hamza Tzortis.

- 7.27 All of this would appear to indicate that the WhatsApp group members are, at the very least, sympathetic to the speakers and groups listed above. Some of these speakers and groups would also fall into the extremist category as defined by the Prevent strand of the CONTEST strategy.

Closure of the Group

- 7.28 It is certainly true that Monzoor Hussain challenged some posts to the discussion group, for example in September 2013:

Teacher D	10/09/20 13 19:45	A sisters first hand experience of the evil of Abu Khadeejahs 'boys' (These pseudo-salafis are no different to shia who practice mutah marriages). Spread this far and wide to all your women folks, so they could stay far away from the harm of these evil men. What the sister is saying is absolutely true we've been hearing these cases for years now... http://refutingmadkhalis.wordpress.com/2013/08/04/marriage-divorce-marriage-divorce-marriage-divorce-the-madkhali-cycle/
Monzoor Hussain	10/09/20 13 20:11	[Teacher D], this group is not the place to vent your anger or warn people against any particular Muslim group. Please refrain from such activities in the future.

- 7.29 When interviewed on 4 July 2014, Mr Hussain said that because of some of the comments that were being posted on the WhatsApp group, he closed it down.

Peter Clarke: Oh right. The brotherhood group, was that used for you to help with assemblies?

Monzoor Hussain: That was only for assemblies. People used to give me ideas for stories to stay in assemblies, moral stories. There's a lot of Buddhist good stories that have come from there. Not [unclear] Islamic but just moral stories. So people said, look, this is a good story or this is a good YouTube video you can use in assemblies. That's what it was used for. But then I think toward the end, about a year, two years ago, one or two things, people started to give stories that would not sit comfortable with other Muslim groups.

So someone gives a story in which the Sufis or the Barelvis weren't comfortable with. My main - well one of my main roles in school has been to make sure that no particular group starts - we're not pushing any particular group. We're not a faith school. We talk about moral issues that every single group is happy with. So when I had one or two comments of this sort of nature, I deleted the group over a year ago and I created Park View News where we can just - I thought it's good to use WhatsApp to communicate what's going on in school.

Peter Clarke: Can you just - you said you deleted the group, when was it about?

Monzoor Hussain: About a year ago.

Peter Clarke: About a year ago.

Monzoor Hussain: About a year ago when - because there was more and more staff coming into school and people adding one or two of the staff in and they don't understand that we're in a state school. People making a comment that will upset someone else. So it could be a comment about - it could be a story that is talking about not listening to Pirs. I don't know if you know what Pirs are? The Sufis believe in Pirs and sainthood and that sort of thing.

So as soon as I got something like that, which wasn't the intention of what the group was, I told those members of staff off and deleted the group. I deleted everyone in the - because the way that WhatsApp happens is, if you delete the group from your phone, you're just deleting yourself, the group is still there. So I deleted one by one everyone off the group and then deleted the group so that group is non-existent.

Peter Clarke: So it's all gone now.

Monzoor Hussain: It's all gone, over a year ago, because I found it - I didn't want to start creating animosity between people. They start pushing their own particular group.

Peter Clarke: Right, okay, and you're sure it was over a year ago that was...

Monzoor Hussain: Yeah, it's over a year ago.

7.30 The name of the group was actually changed from 'Park View Brotherhood' to 'Park View News' by Monzoor Hussain at 23:10:47 on 5 December 2013, roughly coinciding with the timing of the 'Trojan Horse' letter's receipt in Birmingham City Council's offices. The renamed 'Park View News' group was closed on 11 March 2014.

Commentary

7.31 The 'Park View Brotherhood' WhatsApp discussion group gives a clear and disturbing insight into the attitudes and mind-set of a group of teachers within the Park View Educational Trust. Some of the worst examples of intolerant attitudes have been highlighted above but, in

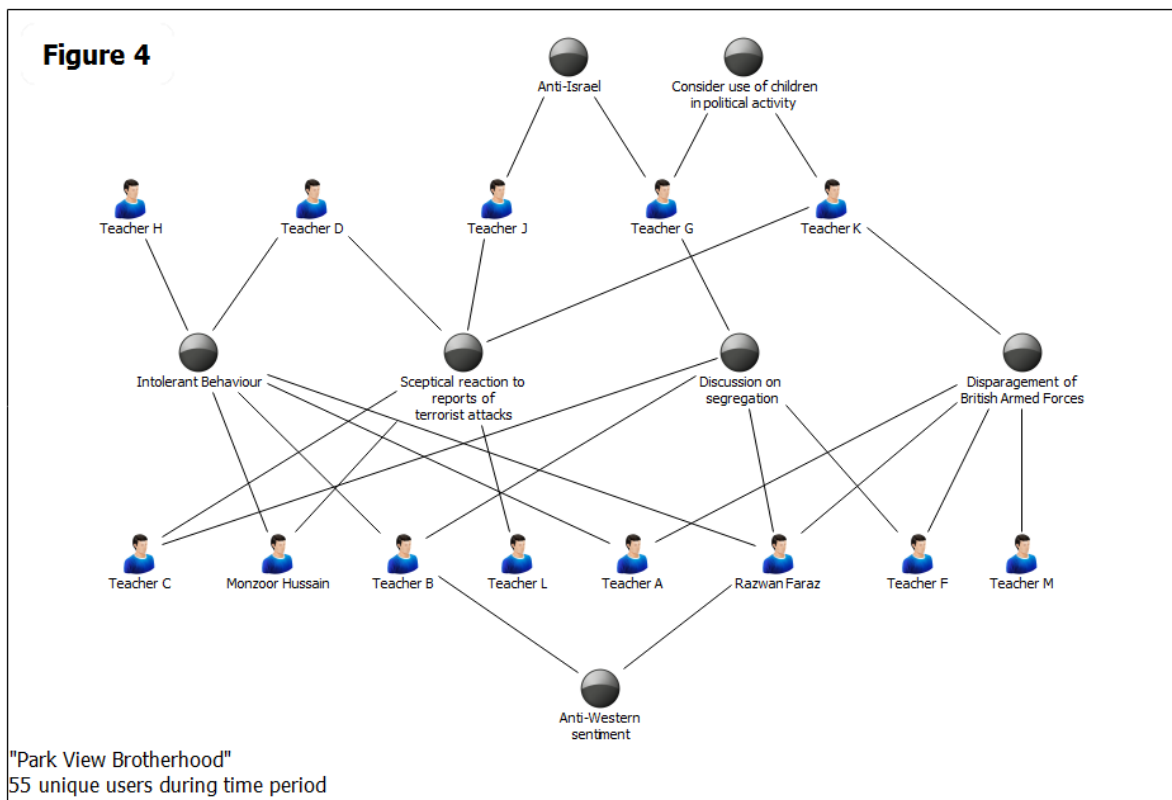
addition to the specific extracts, the overall tone of the group discussion is instructive. The contributions, in terms of links to both news items and images, are overwhelmingly anti-Western, anti-American and anti-Israeli. There are numerous references to the politics of conflicts in Syria, the Middle East and South Asia. This may not be surprising, given the heritage of the contributors to the forum, but unequivocally takes the scope of the forum beyond Mr Hussain's claim that it was only for use in considering material that could be used in assemblies. There is without doubt a considerable amount of discussion that could be used in that way, but there is also a large amount of other material. The discussion about increasing segregation in the school is but one example. There are also a large number of notifications of teaching jobs becoming available at local schools, a great deal of political discussion and general social discourse.

- 7.32 The total lack of challenge to any views, however intolerant or obnoxious, unless they are critical of other Muslims, is telling. Mr Hussain, in interview said that:

'people started to give stories that would not sit comfortable with other Muslim groups'.

- 7.33 Implicit in this statement is a suggestion that Mr Hussain sees himself and the other members of the 'Park View Brotherhood' as belonging to a Muslim 'group' themselves. He is not explicit as to what this might be, but from the material in the discussion group, the lack of challenge to intolerant behaviours and attitudes, and the overall tone of the conversations, one is driven to the conclusion that the common mind-set of the contributors is that of a group of people who sympathise with extreme views. Virtually every issue - political, educational or social - is addressed and judged from a religious perspective. This approach is usually taken to confirm a Salafist or Islamist ideological standpoint.
- 7.34 An analysis of the participants in those conversations that were particularly inappropriate and which of course went unchallenged by group members, shows that the problems lie with more than just one or two prominent figures within the Park View Educational Trust. **Figure 4** shows which members of the group took part in the discussions and the only possible conclusion is that intolerant attitudes are deeply embedded within a significant number of staff at the Park View Educational Trust.
- 7.35 It has been suggested to me that the ethos of the staff at Park View School is no more than one might expect from a group of people who are seeking to reflect the wishes of the communities that the school serves and from which the pupil and parent body is drawn. Tahir Alam, the chair of governors of the Park View Education Trust told me in an interview that he believed that Monzoor Hussain reflected the educational attitudes and aspirations of the community. This cannot be right, since it would be absurd and deeply offensive to argue that the

Figure 4 – ‘Park View Brotherhood’ members’ participation in WhatsApp conversations



Muslim communities of East Birmingham share the intolerant views put forward by those who contributed to the 'Park View Brotherhood', and which were largely left unchallenged by Mr Hussain.

- 7.36 The only sensible and appropriate conclusion is that Mr Hussain and his associates who display such intolerant attitudes are not representative of the communities whose children they teach.

Recommendation 3

Department for Education should consider taking action against teachers who may have breached the teacher standards.

8 Birmingham City Council's role and their response to 'Trojan Horse' concerns

- 8.1 My Terms of Reference state the representations received by the Department and allegations covered by the media prior to my investigation raised serious questions about the capacity and capability of Birmingham City Council, particularly in relation to its support for and services provided to schools. The fact the Secretary of State has exercised his powers under Section 497A of the Education Act 1996 compelling the Council to disclose information further demonstrates the feeling the Council has been inadequately performing a number of its statutory functions.
- 8.2 It is also worth noting the 'Trojan Horse' letter makes reference to an officer at the Council and claims the officer is complicit in the plot.
- 8.3 Despite these references to the Council's capacity and capability in the documents which underpin my appointment and the reference to an officer in the 'Trojan Horse' letter, I approached the assessment of the Council's role and response to events with no preconceptions, as with all other aspects of my investigation.
- 8.4 Two of the priorities in my Terms of Reference are to fully understand what happened in the schools of concern and to understand why this happened. The majority of the schools I looked at are, or were for the period in question, Council-maintained schools. This means that in the majority of the schools I have investigated, where wrongdoing and malpractice has been identified - such as events described in preceding chapters - the Council had a mandate and a range of powers to intervene.
- 8.5 It is quite clear that the Council was aware of the core allegations outlined in the 'Trojan Horse' letter long before the letter came to light in December 2013 and has failed to intervene appropriately when such issues have arisen.
- 8.6 As has already been noted in the report, the enquiry obtained an email dated 19 July 2013 sent by a senior officer (Senior Officer 1) addressed to two elected members of the Council copying in other senior officers. The email amounts to formal escalation of a concern which is almost identical to a central tenet of the 'Trojan Horse' letter. Specifically the opening paragraph refers to:

'growing concerns amongst headteachers that some governing bodies of schools with large numbers of pupils from an Islamic background, or at least groups of influential governors within governing bodies, were putting unreasonable pressure on headteachers to raise standards and/or address other issues of concern. There was, and is, a view that some headteachers had been hounded out and this was as a result of

organised community action focussed on a group of Muslim governors’.

- 8.7 To support her email, the officer refers to specific concerns about Saltley School and Specialist Science College. The email also refers to a meeting that took place between Senior Officer 1, another senior officer (Senior Officer 2), and the two elected members to discuss these issues. It has since been made known to me that this meeting took place in May 2013. The email concludes with Senior Officer 1 inviting any ‘*advice/intervention*’ from the two elected members.
- 8.8 It has also been confirmed to me that officers were aware of these headteacher concerns as early as late 2012 through attendance at a local headteacher forum. The concerns were raised again through the same forum in 2013, at which point the officers escalated the matter to elected members in the aforementioned meeting in May 2013.
- 8.9 It was apparently agreed at this meeting that the issues should be monitored through the prism of ‘community cohesion’. Irrespective of which angle the issue was approached from, it does not appear to be the case that any substantive action was taken to address the concerns raised by respected members of the teaching community in Birmingham prior to the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter appearing.
- 8.10 I have also seen a letter from a former governor at Golden Hillock School sent to Senior Officer 2 in February 2013 (which was prior to its academy conversion in October 2013) outlining their concerns about the behaviour of Muslim governors. The Council did not respond to this letter, and only pursued the matter with the (by then ex-) governor in question, when the individual wrote to them again over a year later. The Council was of course in possession of the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter by this time.
- 8.11 From this I can conclude that senior officers were aware of practices subsequently referred to in the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter as early as the end of 2012, and discussions regarding this issue took place between officers and elected members in May 2013. This is six months prior to the anonymous ‘Trojan Horse’ letter being received by the Leader of the Council and, other than the correspondence of July 2013, I have seen no evidence that concerted action has been taken to address concerns in the intervening period. On the contrary, the examples cited below show that the Council chose not to intervene firmly in cases where headteachers were put under pressure by their governing bodies. What is less clear is why they chose not to do so, seemingly on a repeated basis. A witness offered one view of why this might be:

‘Authorities have prioritised the pleasing and appeasing of groups of adults - who are not necessarily representative of the wider parent bodies - over the entitlement of children’.

- 8.12 The interviewee, an experienced ex-headteacher, makes an

accusation, which is supported by evidence received during the course of the investigation. That is to say, as an institution, the Council's response to events where practices identified in the 'Trojan Horse' letter have been apparent has too often been to fail to confront governors, frequently at the expense of the headteacher. The lack of support shown by the Council for headteachers facing intimidating opposition from members of their governing bodies has been a recurring theme. Where this has been the case, it has left the headteachers isolated and therefore vulnerable to aggressive governors. Where the Council was seemingly left with the choice of exploring the removal of either the headteacher or the governing body because the relationship had broken down, the Council frequently opted for the former.

8.13 Events at three particular schools exemplify this approach by the Council:

- Moseley
- Golden Hillock
- Saltley

8.14 The response of the Council to events at these three schools is described in more detail below. It is worth noting, however, that I have seen evidence of the Council failing to respond sufficiently to similar concerns occurring at a number of schools, with comparable behaviours witnessed as far back as the early 1990s.

8.15 The common features in each of the three examples are as follows:

- the issue of the treatment of the headteacher by the group of governors is raised directly with the Council (often through more than one channel);
- the school is underperforming and this is used by the governors to identify the headteacher as the root of the problems at the school. Where the school does not have serious performance concerns, the governors try to manipulate the perception of performance - or another similar strategy - to seemingly highlight why the headteacher is not doing their job well;
- the relationship between the headteacher and governing body breaks down to the extent that the Council is faced with the option of intervention to remove the headteacher or to remove the governing body; and
- the Council is seemingly unwilling to pursue the option of an Interim Executive Board (IEB) or to confront the governing body, and pushes the option of removing the headteacher through a compromise agreement (that is, a financial offer to step down from their post in return for an agreement on both sides not to pursue any further action, including talking to external parties about the circumstances surrounding the departure).

Moseley: 2007-2010

- 8.16 The events in question at Moseley relate to a three year period, beginning in 2007, during which three governors were at the centre of concerted action to destabilise and intimidate two successive headteachers until an IEB was eventually imposed in March 2010.
- 8.17 Moseley encapsulates many of the features identified in other schools in terms of the challenges faced by the headteachers. It is the Council's response to the problems of the first of the two headteachers which is most alarming. Indeed, in this instance the headteacher raised concerns directly to the Council on several occasions and particularly advocated an IEB solution. However, the Council seemed unwilling to confront the governing body in an effective manner. The relationship deteriorated to such an extent that there was apparently a choice between removing the headteacher on the grounds of attainment (Moseley was below the 30% 5A*-Cs 'floor standard' at the time) or recognising that governance was the issue and therefore opting to begin the process of installing an IEB.
- 8.18 Tellingly, a senior Council officer (Senior Officer 3) was sent in to observe a governing body meeting in October 2008 and witnessed the mistreatment of the headteacher. The officer recommended an IEB as an appropriate course of action to their line manager (Senior Officer 4). However, this was not pursued during the headteacher's tenure.
- 8.19 It is worth noting that, despite the school's results, the headteacher's year-on-year performance had been deemed strong enough at the end-of-year performance review to warrant pay progression. Nevertheless, a compromise agreement was presented to the headteacher by Senior Officer 4 and it was signed in November 2008.
- 8.20 An interim headteacher succeeded the deposed headteacher in 2009 and experienced a similarly turbulent relationship with members of the governing body. An IEB was eventually installed in March 2010.

Golden Hillock: 2012-2013

- 8.21 A similar sequence of events relating to the Council's inaction can be seen more recently at Golden Hillock School. The headteacher presided over a significant dip in GCSE results in 2012, at which point the governors led a protest against the results outside the school gates.
- 8.22 Prior to this incident, the Council was very aware from other governors, staff at the school and the headteacher of the adverse behaviour shown over time by a group of Muslim governors towards the headteacher. I have already mentioned the letter sent to the Council by a then governor at the school in February 2013 outlining concerns about a group of Muslim governors, to which the Council did not

respond.

8.23 As in the case of Moseley, the relationship between the headteacher and the governing body had broken down beyond repair. The Council did not seem prepared to take seriously the view that the governors were the issue and, subsequently, did not strongly consider an IEB or any other suitable measures against governors as an option. Interviews with senior officers suggested that they were keen to use the attainment of the school as a pretext for not having to address the issue of the disruptive governing body. This is despite the fact that, until the dip in 2012, the headteacher had been leading the school on an upward trajectory, in terms of results. The chair of governors at the school aggressively pursued the dismissal of the headteacher and there appears to have been little or no resistance from the Council.

8.24 This is evident from a document in my possession dated 27 December 2013, produced by Senior Officer 1, which states:

'[...] governors challenged the headteacher in inappropriate ways [...] Local authority officers' view was that the headteacher had failed to address issues of underperformance over a number of years. He had not however received appropriate performance management, and governors were reluctant to follow due process, although they did so in the end. The headteacher resigned'.

8.25 Tellingly, the same document states:

'The LA received concerns from some governors who believed that there was a concerted effort from a majority of governors (whom they perceived to be Muslims) to remove the headteacher. They also perceived influence from the Chair of the Park View Educational Trust'.

8.26 The headteacher left the school on a compromise agreement which was signed in March 2013.

Saltley: 2012-2013

8.27 As mentioned in the chapter covering the story of Balwant Bains, a prominent theme in his account was the lack of support he received from the Council, and his belief that it was afraid to confront the governing body (and in this case, the wider community). Further, the Council did not sufficiently consider the possibility of establishing an IEB, reasoning that Mr Bains had indicated that he wished to leave the school.

8.28 In an interview with Senior Officer 2, I was told that the Council's legal department advised that there was insufficient evidence to support an IEB solution. This was despite the fact the Ofsted report had been positive of the school overall but critical of the school's governance.

- 8.29 The Council appears to be overcritical of Mr Bains' inexperience (although it endorsed his appointment) and perceived inability to work effectively with governors. The same document I refer to above in respect of Golden Hillock sets out the following stance:

'Mr Bains eventually decided to leave the school, even though he had taken it through a successful Ofsted inspection and an increase in GCSE results, because of constant criticism from governors[...]It is the opinion of local authority officers that Mr Bains had very little experience of working effectively with governors prior to his appointment, and that this led to the breakdown in relationships with governors at an early stage'.

- 8.30 It is also surprising that the 'Trojan Horse' letter, received by the Council at the end of 2013, makes reference to Mr Bains being forced to leave his post, even though he did not sign his compromise agreement until 2 January 2014 (although he was absent from the school from November 2013 onwards).

- 8.31 In an interview with a senior officer, I asked about this. In particular I queried whether it was appropriate to continue the negotiation of the compromise agreement in light of this reference in the letter, particularly when coupled with the concerns Mr Bains had been repeatedly raising to the Council:

Peter Clarke: You've obviously seen the Trojan Horse letter.

Senior officer 1: I have, yes.

Peter Clarke: Within that - and this is in early December - there's a reference to Balwant Bains saying Balwant Bains will soon be sacked'.

Senior officer 1: Yes.

Peter Clarke: Then he signed his compromise agreement on 2 January. When that letter was received, was consideration given as to whether it was appropriate to continue with the process of negotiating that compromise agreement, given what Mr Bains had been saying, given what was in the letter?

Senior officer 1: Mr Bains at that point had expressed a wish to go and was continuing to do so through his professional association. [...]but the view was that Mr Bains wanted to go and he was pursuing it via his professional association and the governing body had taken up external legal advice.

Peter Clarke: So even though he'd been saying throughout the year effectively that he was being bullied and intimidated by the governing body, and even though the 'Trojan Horse' letter then says effectively we've managed to get him out, he's going to be sacked soon, there wasn't any consideration as far as you know about whether it was appropriate to carry on with that process?

Senior officer 1: I think I wasn't involved in a discussion about whether that would continue, but there would have been a risk

assessment in HR about that. I think there would have been a risk assessment in HR around that.

Peter Clarke: Do you now with hindsight think that it was appropriate?
Senior officer 1: My judgement about the beginning of the issues at Saltley were that an inexperienced head teacher had naive views of how governing bodies would behave. They had shown themselves very early in what the governors interpreted as a lack of respect and as a result relationships had broken down completely. I appreciate that with hindsight it may not be shared, but that was my judgement at the time, that Mr Bains did not understand the complexities and the sophistication of managing, working with, being in partnership with a governing body.
I did not see - do not entirely agree with the description that Mr Bains was bullied and intimidated, because I was also hearing from the governors words like "Islamophobia" and "disrespect".

- 8.32 This response, in my view, shows that the Council did not take a balanced view of the situation. Mr Bains wanted to leave because he had been bullied over a sustained period of time and the Council had done little to support him in spite of his repeated pleas. Then, even when the reference in the 'Trojan Horse' letter suggested that there had been a successful plot to force Mr Bains out of the school, the Council did not think to review whether pursuing the compromise agreement was appropriate.
- 8.33 The officer also remains adamant that the issue was not the governing body's clear-cut bullying, but the headteacher's inexperience, apparent inability to handle a challenging governing body, and his willingness to leave. The officer even doubts that the treatment of Mr Bains could be qualified as bullying and intimidation.
- 8.34 In considering these three cases, it seems to me that the Council did not act as an organisation that treated what was happening as anything other than isolated incidents, and thus missed the opportunity to address what was becoming a growing problem. In the case of Moseley, it chose to remove the first headteacher on a compromise agreement in spite of a senior officer recommending an IEB prior to the headteacher's departure, and despite the headteacher's insistence that it should be strongly considered. The Council's decision proved to be the wrong one, as the succeeding headteacher experienced similar adverse behaviour, and it was eventually left with no choice but to pursue the removal of the governing body.
- 8.35 From 2012, when faced with two similar scenarios occurring almost in parallel, the Council did not draw on its prior experience at Moseley nor did it look at the striking similarities of the experience of both Mr Bains and the headteacher at Golden Hillock. Instead it repeated the same course of action that failed at Moseley.

8.36 The effect of this failure to respond in a balanced way is that the opportunity does not appear to have been taken to consider whether what was happening was co-ordinated or organised in any way. In an interview with a senior officer, I posed the question:

Peter Clarke: There's the broader issue, the core allegation if you like, that this is organised. Was anything to your knowledge done within Birmingham City Council at the time to try to get to the bottom of that, to investigate whether that allegation, that it was somehow an organised series of events, was undertaken?

Senior Officer 2: I think, certainly internally, we'd started to look at whether or not things, or incidents, that had happened in the past had been organised. So, there was a fair amount of retrospective looking back at what there was; whether we could have, or should have seen any patterns that there might have been in the past. So, we looked at a whole range of issues that had been around specific schools and how we dealt with the achievement issues of individual schools. Perhaps, hindsight is a wonderful thing, and maybe there were some patterns. But, our view was, or my view was, that we dealt with everything on an individual basis as it occurred.

Peter Clarke: So, on a case by case basis.

Senior Officer 2: On a case by case basis. That's certainly been the way I've been involved in school improvement school work directly for a local authority, other departments, since 1999 and have tended to look in terms of intervention in individual schools on an individual school basis. I'm not sure I'll ever do that again actually.

8.37 The response from the officer highlights three key points:

- The Council treated events on a case by case basis;
- The officer concedes that only retrospectively did it begin to look seriously at whether the action was organised; and
- The Council's 'case-by-case basis' approach was, in hindsight, the wrong way of looking at the issue; going forward the officer felt the Council ought to be doing things differently.

8.38 I also wanted to understand if there was an institutional culture that sat behind the Council's actions. To this end, I revisited the decision mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, that when the concerns shared by headteachers were escalated by senior officers to elected members, the issue was one that should primarily be viewed as a matter of 'community cohesion'. This raises a question as to whether the Council felt pressurised not to confront the actions of governing bodies for fear that this would give rise to community tensions.

8.39 I posed the question of community cohesion in two separate interviews with senior officers at the Council to understand from their perspective how this has driven the Council's actions:

- Peter Clarke* I've seen an internal BCC briefing document, which was sent to the leader, which suggested that, on reflection, the view - this was from a very senior official here - the view was that the motivation behind the writing of the letter was an attempt to destabilise communities and to raise community tension. Was that a view that you heard expressed at the time, or was it one you would agree with, have a view on?
- Senior officer 2:* There was certainly a concern within the council, well certainly from the Equalities Division within the council that it could destabilise relationships across the city and that that was of concern. I think...
- Peter Clarke* Is that Senior Officer 5's department?
- Senior officer 2:* Yes. Senior Officer 5's area. That continues to be a concern for [Senior Officer 5]. I think - it's also a concern for me in terms of the whole of the school community because I think for many years, the school community here has been relatively cohesive, that people have been willing to work together to offer their support to each other. Results in the city have always - have been good and have improved over many years.
- So, a concern that would this both polarise various parts of the city and does it have the potential to demonise certain people who are working in the city as well? I think that - we have a small number of people who have senior positions within schools within the city, who are very concerned about how they are viewed currently. We don't, as a city council, we're not a reflective workforce of the population of Birmingham actually. My view is that we're predominantly white and we're predominantly ageing as well.
- So, there are very few young people who come in and work for the council and we're not reflective of the make-up of the ethnicity of the city.
- I think I've possibly gone off the point a bit really of what you were asking.
- Peter Clarke* No, it's interesting.
- Senior officer 2:* Yeah, you were asking - yes, about social cohesion.
- Peter Clarke* It's about whether it's a community cohesion issue or an education management issue, I suppose, is what is really behind the question.
- Senior officer 2:* I think we, within Children's - the People's Directorate have been looking at it from an educational management perspective rather than a community cohesion perspective. I think perhaps other parts of the council have been looking at it from a community cohesion bit. Maybe that's

symptomatic of - maybe we should have been spending more time pooling our collective knowledge rather than it sitting in silos within the Council.

8.40 And in an interview with Senior Officer 1:

Peter Clarke: Did you ever feel under any pressure not to ask for or suggest firmer action because of the concerns about community cohesion?

Senior Officer 1: No, I didn't actually. I haven't felt under pressure. I felt it's a very great weight in the sense that it had huge implications, hence the sharing of it. But no, what I do feel is that the different weights, the legalities around governance, the community cohesion issues, the view that engaging politicians in order to keep those community cohesion issues in check, I felt that the complexity of the city and interpretation of what the local authorities can do in terms of its powers, has made the decision-making slower than it needed to be and that's at a number of schools.

8.41 It therefore seems clear that prior to the 'Trojan Horse' letter emerging, headteacher concerns were treated as more of a community cohesion issue than a school intervention issue. It also appears to be the case that officers responsible for community cohesion and education respectively did not work closely enough to pool expertise and arrive at an appropriate plan of action. It also seems very likely that nervousness around raising community tensions affected education officers' appetite to take firmer action against governing bodies.

Recommendation 4

Birmingham City Council should review its systems, processes and policies regarding the support it provides to maintained schools to ensure that they are more strategic and joined-up across the range of functions (including HR, governor support and school improvement). In particular, it should ensure that:

- concerns are considered not just on a case by case basis, but reviewed to ensure that any emerging trend is identified and addressed;
- intervention is considered in all cases;
- the appropriate balance is struck in all cases where there is an actual or perceived tension between community cohesion concerns and educational or safeguarding issues, and that decision-making is not overly influenced by a vocal minority; and
- there is effective information sharing – including on criminal issues and safeguarding concerns – between all parts of Birmingham City Council and with other agencies such as the police, the Education Funding Agency and the Department for Education.

Recommendation 5

Birmingham City Council, Department for Education, Education Funding Agency and Ofsted should review their respective existing channels for raising issues of concern and ensure that they:

- are robust, responsive and provide proper protection for those coming
- judge properly whether there are indications of extremism, and refer the cases to the relevant authority to consider.

In particular, Birmingham City Council should consider the establishment of an independent process for teachers and governors to raise concerns. The Department for Education should ensure that the receipt of sensitive complaints forms part of the new Regional Schools Commissioners' responsibilities, and that the Regional Schools Commissioners are able to refer complaints and concerns to the relevant agency for further investigation.

Recommendation 6

Birmingham City Council should review all compromise agreements signed with headteachers in the last five years to consider whether they were appropriate and whether Birmingham City Council should have done more to exercise their duty of care.

9 Issues for the Department for Education and other organisations

Department for Education

- 9.1 During my investigation, a number of people questioned what the Department for Education knew and when. I have not looked into this as I am aware the Permanent Secretary at the Department has been commissioned to conduct a separate enquiry into this question.
- 9.2 However, my investigation has found issues for the Department for Education. Many of the inappropriate behaviours identified in Birmingham took place in a number of academies. It is worth noting that these behaviours began before the conversion to academy status, according to witnesses that we interviewed. They also accelerated after academy status was granted, as we were told by the same witnesses. The autonomy granted to those who run academies is generally a welcome development yet can make those institutions vulnerable to those without good intentions. Academies are accountable to the Secretary of State but that accountability can prove inadequate in circumstances where the governors are pursuing an inappropriate agenda but where the educational and financial performance of the academy indicate that everything is fine. I would not want to generalise about the governance of academies but this enquiry has highlighted that there are potentially serious problems in some academies. The Department's systems need to be more sensitive to detecting changes in governance and more effective in responding to warning signs to ensure that academies deliver the provision for which they are contracted.
- 9.3 Whistle-blowers have been important to this enquiry, both in giving the Department for Education early warning of problems at the academies and providing extremely valuable information to my team as this investigation has continued. Those whistle-blowers had to take, and are still taking, risks in coming forward. It is not right that the Department for Education and the Education Funding Agency should be so dependent on whistle-blowers for spotting serious problems. The Department for Education should consider its response to complaints and whistle-blowers regarding academies, and use its powers to investigate more quickly and effectively where allegations about governance are made.

Recommendation 7

The Department for Education should review the process by which schools are a) able to convert to academy status; and b) become Multi Academy Trusts, to ensure that appropriate checks are conducted on the group and key individuals and that there is an accurate assessment of the trust's capability and capacity. It should also consider urgently how best to capture local concerns during the conversion process, and review the brokerage (and re-brokerage) system through which schools are matched with academy sponsors to ensure that the process is transparent and understood by all parties.

Recommendation 8

The Department for Education should consider the benefits of requiring academies to notify changes in the governing body to the Department, along with stronger powers for the Secretary of State to bar an individual from taking part in the management of any type of school (including maintained schools and academies).

Professional associations

- 9.4 The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) has been particularly active, especially since learning of the 'Trojan Horse' allegations. By contrast, the other associations have not been proactive in assisting my enquiry and, indeed, in some cases, have been overtly critical of both the enquiry and my appointment. We know that the associations have been active in securing compromise agreements for their members where professional relationships have broken down with governors in particular schools, but consideration of more systematic problems affecting their members appears to have been put to one side.

Ofsted

- 9.5 I have been told that issues at some of these schools might have been detected earlier had the Ofsted inspection framework been more sensitive to changes in governance and its impact on the character of the school. Witnesses also informed me that there were some gaps in child protection knowledge at schools and that some did not teach children about the risks they may encounter.
- 9.6 Prior to my appointment the Secretary of State commissioned Ofsted to inspect 15 schools in connection with the allegations in the 'Trojan Horse' letter. Ofsted also inspected a further six schools – including the three academies sponsored by the Park View Educational Trust – on the basis of information and concerns passed to them. All of the

reports, along with an overarching advice note from HM Chief Inspector, were published on 9 June, and many of them highlight a number of concerns in the governance, leadership and safeguarding within certain schools.

- 9.7 I have not sought to review Ofsted's conclusions in either the recently published reports or those from previous inspections, though I am of course aware that concerns have been raised about apparent inconsistencies in the conclusions reached. Nothing in the evidence I have received contradicts the most recent findings, particularly in the schools that have gone into special measures (Saltley School and Specialist Science College, Oldknow Academy, Park View School, Golden Hillock School and Nansen Primary School), and I note in Figure 1 that the changes and behaviours seen in a number of schools appears to have accelerated in recent years. Nevertheless it is clearly important that Ofsted is able to conduct robust inspections that are alert to the issues and behaviours that I detail in my report, and that they are also able to identify any concerning patterns that may emerge, particularly where schools are close together or have other connections.

Recommendation 9

Ofsted should consider whether the existing inspection framework and associated guidance is capable of detecting indicators of extremism and ensuring that the character of a school is not changed substantively without following the proper process. This includes ensuring that the appropriate boundaries for a non-faith school are not breached. It should also ensure that headteachers' responsibility for ensuring that bi-annual Child Protection training is undertaken is reflected in the inspection process.

10 Governance – what happens in the schools

- 10.1 I have seen no evidence to suggest that there is a problem with governance generally; however, there appears to be a problem with certain governors in some Birmingham schools. The evidence in the rest of the report identifies particular behaviours by governors and governing bodies that do not appear to be in the best interests of the schools which they should serve.
- 10.2 In some cases it may simply be that they do not understand the respective roles and responsibilities of governors and those employed to operate schools; in others, it appears that they are using their position as governors to advance a particular agenda. Those giving evidence to me also suggested that, in the case of Golden Hillock School, governors formed cliques with different agendas, none of them supportive of the headteacher or his staff.
- 10.3 If one sets aside the allegations of extremist behaviour, there is still an issue of competence: can governors support their schools to become outstanding institutions. And can they do it acting as “critical friends” rather than just critics? This is an issue for those who train governors in Birmingham because it appears from the evidence that some governors are not clear about their roles, or they exceed their responsibilities. I note that Tahir Alam has been contracted for some years as a governor trainer for Birmingham City Council and was a director of the Muslim Parents Association (MPA), which has recently been dissolved as a company. I heard and saw evidence during the investigation that Mr Alam has led training sessions for the MPA about how parents can work with schools as governors. I was told, though, that some of these sessions focussed on rights more than responsibilities, a mind-set that can lead to some of the problems that we have heard about in Birmingham schools. For example, I was told that one governing body debated whether to seek a further determination and had voted by a narrow margin in favour.¹ The governor then passed this information to a fellow member of the local Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) who spread the news in a triumphal fashion to the members of his WhatsApp network (the so-called ‘Educational Activists’) claiming that *‘a battle was fought and won tonight at a large inner city primary school where governors voted by a majority of 8 to 7 in favour of Collective Worship that is wholly or mainly of a broadly Islamic character therefore overturning five years of ‘children pray in their own way and language’! The GB [governing body] is now polarised on faith grounds’.*

¹ The law requires that daily collective worship in school should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. The “determination” procedure allows the requirement to be lifted in respect of some or all of the pupils in a school where it is inappropriate.

- 10.4 It was also noticeable that, when looking across the schools in this investigation, there was considerable cross-over; some governors served on different governing bodies and staff governors at one school might be parent governors of another. This is not in itself harmful; I am aware that Birmingham has a problem recruiting governors and it is important to encourage the public spiritedness of local people to serve as governors. However, this needs careful monitoring by whoever is tasked with governor services since these arrangements can leave schools vulnerable to the spread of poor governance practice and undue (and sometimes opaque) influence of a small number of individuals.

Financial management

- 10.5 The investigation identified some weaknesses in the financial management of some schools and decisions taken on expenditure where it was questionable whether they had been made in the best interest of the school.
- 10.6 At Saltley School and Specialist Science College (which was visited by Birmingham City Council Audit in June 2014) after the Interim Executive Board replaced the governing body, the team saw evidence of weak financial practices, including poor cash management in the school office, which could make the school vulnerable to fraud; out of date bank mandates; and an incomplete register of pecuniary interests. In addition, I have seen invoices for expenditure of more than £60,000 to a local firm of solicitors, which had been incurred by the governing body and approved by the interim executive headteacher. It was unclear what services were covered by this expenditure, as many invoices only state '*general advice/ employment advice*'. We have, very recently, discovered that this included advice on threatened industrial action, the departure of a member of staff and interim headship arrangements. There is no evidence that this represents value for money since I understand the school had already bought into Birmingham City Council's legal services. My team found no explanation for why the previous governing body at Saltley should have purchased advice from an additional source.
- 10.7 I also found evidence at Saltley that the governors purchased consultancy services from H.M Limited for the appointment of the chair of governors at Al-Hijrah School as a consultant governor. However, there appears to be no evidence of approval of these services by the full governing body, nor any discussion of why they were required. It is hard to understand this appointment when Al-Hijrah School is currently in 'special measures'. The contract represents expenditure of over £10,000 but I have not seen any evidence that quotations were received for this consultancy service, or that the governors gave any consideration to value for money. Orders were set up on the school's financial system after the invoice had been received, rather than being

raised in advance of expenditure, as is good practice. There is also the case of the use of a private investigation firm. The invoice, which featured the name '*Operation Saltley*', carried the chair of governors' name and was approved by the interim executive headteacher, yet there is no evidence that approval was given by the governing body before the investigators were hired, or that legal advice had been sought.

- 10.8 I noted that the Education Funding Agency visited Oldknow Academy in April and discovered significant expenditure on annual school trips to Saudi Arabia dating back to 2012. This expenditure included a large subsidy for parents and, because the trip included stays in the holy cities of Medina and Mecca, could only be accessed by Muslim pupils and staff. The references to 'Umrah' strongly suggested the primary purpose of the trip was a religious one, which would be incompatible with the school's non-faith status. The Education Funding Agency reported that the headteacher had proposed visits to other Arabic speaking countries, such as Morocco and Tunisia, which would have been better value for money, but she was '*slapped down*' by the governors.
- 10.9 I also recently became aware of invoices at Oldknow for large sums of money (£4,000 and £5,000) paid out for crisis management training to an organisation that is not a registered company and appears to have no track record in training. While academies may rightly spend money for the benefit of their school and the pupils within it, they also have a responsibility to the public purse to use those resources carefully and not for unrelated purposes. The lack of transparency around this expenditure is concerning.
- 10.10 A failure to observe sound financial practices may be an indication of carelessness or of something more concerning. Both cast doubt on an organisation's suitability to control public funds. The evidence base is too small for me to reach a conclusion on the financial probity of the schools under investigation in Birmingham, but there appears to be sufficient indication of poor financial management to warrant further investigation and audit of academies and schools by the Education Funding Agency and Birmingham City Council.

Recommendation 10

Birmingham City Council should take immediate steps to improve the running of its governor support services, so that it makes effective appointments following a suitable vetting process, and provides effective support to governing bodies where issues arise. In particular, it should ensure that:

- training is suitable and delivered by appropriate individuals, so that new governors in particular understand the role of the governing body in setting the strategic direction of the school and holding the head to account in appropriate ways; and
- it is able to intervene effectively where the governing body is failing to conduct itself in the expected manner, including where it is making unrealistic demands on the headteacher or seeking to make fundamental changes to the character of the school without proper consultation with relevant parties or statutory permission.

This work should be completed before it reinstates the process for making Local Authority governor appointments.

Recommendation 11

The Department for Education should review guidance on governor appointments to make clear the expectations of the role, including:

- the difference between setting the strategic direction and running the school; and
- the skills and expertise required, and what appropriate training to improve these skills should look like.

The Department should also consider the benefits of an accreditation scheme for governor training providers.

Recommendation 12

Unless there are genuinely exceptional circumstances, there should be a presumption that an individual will only be a governor at a maximum of two schools at any one time. All local authorities and multi-academy trusts should review their current governor arrangements, and where they identify an individual holding multiple positions they should consider the appropriate steps to ensure that a wider range of people are able to hold governor positions and that no single individual has undue influence over a number of schools.

Recommendation 13

All schools should include details on their website of their governing body. This should include the full name of the individuals, along with any committees they attend; the method of appointment (eg whether a local authority appointment or an elected parent governor); and the expected period of the appointment, in order to promote transparency over the running of schools.

Recommendation 14

Department for Education should consider whether there is a case for preventing certain individuals from being involved in the management of schools.

11 Conclusions

- 11.1 I neither specifically looked for, nor found, evidence of terrorism, radicalisation or violent extremism in the schools of concern in Birmingham. However, by reference to the definition of extremism in the Prevent strand of the Government's counter terrorist strategy CONTEST, and the spectrum of extremism described by the Prime Minister in his Munich speech in February 2011, I found clear evidence that there are a number of people, associated with each other and in positions of influence in schools and governing bodies, who espouse, sympathise with or fail to challenge extremist views. Three are named in this report but there are others of significance who are not.
- 11.2 The existence of a common ideological stance among key linked individuals in this enquiry, the taking of control of governing bodies and the implementation of conservative religious practices in the schools where these individuals have influence, means that there can be no doubt that what has happened has been driven by a desire to instil a particular style of religious ethos into these state non-faith schools.
- 11.3 It has been suggested to me that the ambition of those who were involved was to do no more than create schools that are reflective of the communities they serve and are following the wishes of the majority of parents. I find that this is not the case. On the contrary, while the majority of parents welcome the good academic results that some of these schools produce, they are not demanding that their children adhere to conservative religious behaviour at school. On the contrary, I received evidence that it is a minority of parents who want this to happen. I have been told by many witnesses, however, that most parents do not have the confidence to argue against the articulate and forceful people who seek their imposition, for fear of being branded as disloyal to their faith or their community.
- 11.4 I have received evidence from witnesses who express three key concerns about the impact on children of what has happened. First, I have been told by teachers that they fear children are learning to be intolerant of difference and diversity. Second, although good academic results can be achieved through a narrowing of the curriculum, it comes at a cost. The cost is that young people, instead of enjoying a broadening and enriching experience in school, are having their horizons narrowed. They are not being prepared properly to flourish in the inevitably diverse environments of further education, the workplace or life outside predominantly Muslim communities. They are thus being potentially denied the opportunity to prosper in a modern multi-cultural Britain. Third, the very clear evidence that young people are being encouraged to adopt an unquestioning attitude to a particular hardline strand of Sunni Islam raises real concerns about their vulnerability to radicalisation in the future. I have heard evidence to the effect that

there are real fears that their current experiences will make it harder for them to question or challenge radical influences.

- 11.5 At the centre of what has happened are a number of individuals who have been, or are, associated with either Park View School or the Park View Educational Trust. Time and again, people who have been either teachers or governors at Park View, appear to be involved in behaviours at other schools that have destabilised headteachers, sometimes leading to their resignation or removal. The tactics that have been used are too similar, the individuals concerned too closely linked and the behaviour of a few parents and governors too orchestrated for there not to be a degree of co-ordination and organisation behind what has happened. The clear conclusion is that Park View Educational Trust has, in reality, become the incubator for much of what has happened and the attitudes and behaviours that have driven it.
- 11.6 I have considered the totality of the evidence gathered during the investigation very carefully, and been careful to avoid the temptation to draw undue inferences from an evidence base that is inevitably incomplete, given the urgent need to establish what has happened in schools so that stability can be restored and children safeguarded. The accumulation of evidence from my own investigation, information received from Birmingham City Council, Ofsted, the Education Funding Agency and numerous other sources lead me to the following conclusion.
- 11.7 There has been co-ordinated, deliberate and sustained action, carried out by a number of associated individuals, to introduce an intolerant and aggressive Islamic ethos into a few schools in Birmingham. This has been achieved in a number of schools through gaining influence on the governing bodies, installing sympathetic headteachers or senior members of staff, appointing like minded people to key positions, and seeking to remove headteachers who they do not feel to be sufficiently compliant with their agenda. Their motivation may well be linked to a deeply held religious conviction, but the effect has been to limit the life chances of the young people in their care and to render them more vulnerable to pernicious influences in the future.
- 11.8 Birmingham City Council was aware of the practices and behaviours that were subsequently outlined in the 'Trojan Horse' letter long before the letter surfaced. Officers have conceded that it did not consider carefully enough nor soon enough the question of whether there was a pattern in what was happening across a number of schools. Instead, the Council persisted in approaching incidents on a case-by-case basis. Further, the officers looking at the issue from a community cohesion and education management perspective respectively did not appear to be sufficiently joined up.
- 11.9 The Council has not supported headteachers faced with aggressive and inappropriate governor behaviour. This has led to the perception

that the Council has relied too readily on the solution of a compromise agreement and that it has failed in its duty of care towards their employees. The Council not being proactive enough in confronting the type of governor practice described in preceding chapters has led to a perception that it has ‘appeased’ governors.

Recommendation 15

The Department for Education should continue to review and analyse the evidence gathered during the investigation; take further steps to understand issues of concern (including potential financial malpractice); and consider appropriate further actions. It should also consider whether other areas of the country may be similarly vulnerable, and respond promptly and effectively if concerns are raised, ensuring that there is sufficient resource and capacity to do so.

12 Recommendations

1. The Department for Education should review the process by which schools support individuals to gain and award Qualified Teacher Status to ensure that there are no systemic vulnerabilities to abuse.
2. The Department for Education should ensure that the governing body of every school extends the responsibilities of the teacher designated Child Protection Officer to include Prevent within his/her role. The mandatory Child Protection bi-annual update training undertaken by these responsible teachers should include the Prevent Strategy. This training should then be cascaded by the Child Protection Officer to every member of staff, governor or volunteer as an adult involved in the protection of children at the school.
3. The Department for Education should consider taking action against teachers who may have breached the teacher standards.
4. Birmingham City Council should review its systems, processes and policies regarding the support it provides to maintained schools to ensure that they are more strategic and joined-up across the range of functions (including HR, governor support and school improvement). In particular, it should ensure that:
 - concerns are considered not just on a case by case basis, but reviewed to ensure that any emerging trend is identified and addressed;
 - intervention is considered in all cases;
 - the appropriate balance is struck in all cases where there is an actual or perceived tension between community cohesion concerns and educational or safeguarding issues, and that decision-making is not overly influenced by a vocal minority; and
 - there is effective information sharing – including on criminal issues and safeguarding concerns – between all parts of Birmingham City Council and with other agencies such as the police, the Education Funding Agency and the Department for Education.
5. Birmingham City Council, the Department for Education, the Education Funding Agency and Ofsted should review their respective existing channels for raising issues of concern and ensure that they:
 - are robust, responsive and provide proper protection for those coming forward with sensitive concerns; and
 - judge properly whether there are indications of extremism, and refer the cases to the relevant authority to consider.

In particular, Birmingham City Council should consider the establishment of an independent process for teachers and governors to raise concerns. The Department for Education should ensure that the receipt of sensitive complaints forms part of the new Regional Schools

Commissioners' responsibilities, and that the Regional Schools Commissioners are able to refer complaints and concerns to the relevant agency for further investigation.

6. Birmingham City Council should review all compromise agreements signed with headteachers in the last five years to consider whether they were appropriate and whether Birmingham City Council should have done more to exercise their duty of care.
7. The Department for Education should review the process by which schools are a) able to convert to academy status; and b) become Multi Academy Trusts, to ensure that appropriate checks are conducted on the group and key individuals and that there is an accurate assessment of the trust's capability and capacity. It should also consider urgently how best to capture local concerns during the conversion process, and review the brokerage (and re-brokerage) system through which schools are matched with academy sponsors to ensure that the process is transparent and understood by all parties.
8. The Department for Education should consider the benefits of requiring academies to notify changes in the governing body to the Department, along with stronger powers for the Secretary of State to bar an individual from taking part in the management of any type of school (including maintained schools and academies).
9. Ofsted should consider whether the existing inspection framework and associated guidance is capable of detecting indicators of extremism and ensuring that the character of a school is not changed substantively without following the proper process. This includes ensuring that the appropriate boundaries for a non-faith school are not breached. It should also ensure that headteachers' responsibility for ensuring that bi-annual Child Protection training is undertaken is reflected in the inspection process.
10. Birmingham City Council should take immediate steps to improve the running of its governor support services, so that it makes effective appointments following a suitable vetting process, and provides effective support to governing bodies where issues arise. In particular, it should ensure that:
 - training is suitable and delivered by appropriate individuals, so that new governors in particular understand the role of the governing body in setting the strategic direction of the school and holding the head to account in appropriate ways; and
 - it is able to intervene effectively where the governing body is failing to conduct itself in the expected manner, including where it is making unrealistic demands on the headteacher or seeking to make fundamental changes to the character of the school without proper consultation with relevant parties or statutory permission.

This work should be completed before it reinstates the process for making Local Authority governor appointments.

11. The Department for Education should review guidance on governor appointments to make clear the expectations of the role, including:
 - the difference between setting the strategic direction and running the school; and
 - the skills and expertise required, and what appropriate training to improve these skills should look like.

The Department should also consider the benefits of an accreditation scheme for governor training providers.

12. Unless there are genuinely exceptional circumstances, there should be a presumption that an individual will only be a governor at a maximum of two schools at any one time. All local authorities and multi-academy trusts should review their current governor arrangements, and where they identify an individual holding multiple positions they should consider the appropriate steps to ensure that a wider range of people are able to hold governor positions and that no single individual has undue influence over a number of schools.
13. All schools should include details on their website of their governing body. This should include the full name of the individuals, along with any committees they attend; the method of appointment (eg whether a local authority appointment or an elected parent governor); and the expected period of the appointment, in order to promote transparency over the running of schools.
14. The Department for Education should consider whether there is a case for preventing certain individuals from being involved in the management of schools.
15. The Department for Education should continue to review and analyse the evidence gathered during the investigation; take further steps to understand issues of concern (including potential financial malpractice); and consider appropriate further actions. It should also consider whether other areas of the country may be similarly vulnerable, and respond promptly and effectively if concerns are raised, ensuring that there is sufficient resource and capacity to do so.

Annex 1: Text of Direction Under Section 497A(4B) of the Education Act 1996 to Birmingham City Council

WHEREAS

1. The Secretary of State for Education (“the Secretary of State”) is satisfied that Birmingham City Council (“BCC”) are failing to perform to an adequate standard or at all the functions set out in Annex A, being functions to which section 497A of the Education Act 1996 (“the 1996 Act”) applies (“the relevant functions”).
2. The Secretary of State has appointed Peter Clarke, the Education Commissioner (“the Commissioner”), in accordance with, and for the purposes set out in, the terms of reference at Annex B (“the Terms of Reference”).
3. The Secretary of State, having considered representations made by BCC, considers it expedient, in accordance with his powers under section 497A of the 1996 Act, to direct BCC as set out below in order to ensure that the relevant functions are performed to an adequate standard.

NOW THEREFORE

4. Pursuant to his powers under section 497A(4B) of the 1996 Act, the Secretary of State directs that BCC shall, in particular, do the following in order that the Commissioner can carry out the responsibilities set out in the Terms of Reference, to the extent that those responsibilities relate to the exercise of the functions specified in Annex A:
 - a. provide such assistance as the Secretary of State or the Commissioner may require;
 - b. cooperate with the Commissioner, including, upon his request:
 - i. seeking from any school which they maintain information or documents;
 - ii. facilitating access by the Commissioner or persons acting for him to the premises of any school which they maintain or any member of staff or pupil at any such school;
 - c. on request, allow the Commissioner at all reasonable times, access:
 - i. to any premises of BCC;

- ii. to any document relating to BCC; and
- iii. to any employee or member of BCC,

which appears to him to be necessary for achieving the purpose and carrying out the responsibilities set out in the Terms of Reference;

- d. provide the Commissioner with such reasonable amenities, services and administrative support as he may reasonably require from time to time for the carrying out his responsibilities in accordance with the Terms of Reference, including:
 - i. providing officers' time or support;
 - ii. providing office space, meeting rooms or computer facilities;
- e. cooperate with government officials in relation to implementing this Direction.

Signed on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education

Andrew McCully
A Senior Civil Servant in the Department for Education

Date:

Annex 1A: Relevant Functions

EDUCATION ACT 1996

Section 13 (Duty, so far as their powers enable them to do so, for local authorities to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of their area's population).

Section 13A (Duty for local authorities to ensure their relevant education and training functions are exercised with a view to promoting high standards; ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training; and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by persons under the age of 20).

SCHOOL STANDARDS AND FRAMEWORK ACT 1998

Section 59 (Duty to ensure no discrimination with respect to staff in certain maintained schools due to their religious opinions).

Section 69 (Duty for local authorities to exercise their functions with a view to securing that religious education is given in accordance with the provision for such education to be included in a maintained school's basic curriculum by section 80(1)(a) of the Education Act 2002).

EDUCATION ACT 2002

Section 35 and The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 (SI/2009/2680) made under that section (Functions of local authorities as the employer of staff in community, voluntary controlled, community special schools and functions with respect to the appointment, discipline, suspension and dismissal of teachers and other staff).

Section 79 (Duty for local authorities to exercise their education functions with a view to securing that every school which they maintain satisfies the requirements of having a balanced and broadly-based curriculum under section 78).

Section 175 (Duty for local authorities to make arrangements for ensuring that their education functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children).

CHILDREN ACT 2004

Section 10 (Duty for local authorities to make arrangements to promote the well-being of children).

Annex 1B: Education Commissioner in Birmingham – Terms of Reference

Context:

- The Secretary of State has issued a Direction to Birmingham City Council (BCC) dated 9 June under section 497A(4) of the Education Act 1996. He is satisfied that BCC is failing to perform to an adequate standard or at all the functions set out in the Annex to that Direction.
- Representations and evidence received by the Department for Education and media coverage arising from the “Trojan Horse” document (purporting to be a letter setting out the process for Islamists to gain control of schools) have renewed the focus on BCC’s capacity and capability to support schools in the city and to ensure that all children are able to receive a good education.
- As more individuals come forward to share their experiences, the uncertainty in the local community rises. There is a compelling need to establish a clearer understanding of what has happened and what should happen next.
- Although the school landscape is varied, with increasing numbers of academies (both those sponsored by chains and those who choose to move away from the maintained sector and set up their own academy trust) and free schools in Birmingham, BCC still retains responsibility for the majority of schools in the city. BCC also retains responsibility for the provision of governor services to maintained schools and may provide these to academies and free schools as a bought in service.

Purpose:

- To further investigate the allegations and the representations and evidence received to date, and by drawing on a range of further material and evidence, to establish fully what has happened in the schools of concern; to understand the implications for the school system both in Birmingham and more widely with a view to making recommendations to ensure that schools in Birmingham are well-governed and that Birmingham’s children are adequately safeguarded from exposure to extremist views or radicalisation.

Responsibilities:

- The Commissioner’s five priorities will be to:

- a) Investigate the allegations and representations and evidence received to date so as to further establish what has happened in the schools of concern, with particular reference to governance;
 - b) gather and scrutinise further evidence from a range of sources, also looking beyond governance to the issue of child safeguarding more broadly;
 - c) understand the implications for the school system both in BCC and in Birmingham more widely;
 - d) identify any necessary actions which should be taken by BCC and more widely; and
 - e) understand what capacity might be needed in Birmingham to undertake any necessary actions identified.
- The Commissioner will need to be able to receive information and evidence from individuals in order to form a considered view of the events that have taken place in each of the schools where concerns have been raised.
 - The Commissioner's remit will cover action taken by BCC, and by both maintained schools and academies (including free schools, UTCs and Studio Schools).
 - The Commissioner's appointment is supported by a direction under section 497A of the Education Act 1996, requiring BCC to cooperate with him in the fulfilment of his responsibilities and enabling him to receive and review any relevant information held by BCC.

Support:

- The Commissioner will be supported by a small team of DfE officials and will be able to seek expert opinion and advice as necessary, including from Press Office, Legal Advisers and Ofsted.
- The Commissioner will be able to draw on funding to be provided by the Department for Education.

Accountability:

- The Commissioner will be accountable to the Secretary of State for Education.
- A report will be prepared by the Commissioner by mid-July, with the expectation that this will be published by the Government.

Timeframe:

- The Commissioner will take up post for an initial period of four months, with the possibility of an extension if the Secretary of State agrees that this is warranted based on the initial findings.

Annex 2: ‘Trojan Horse’ letter

VERY IMPORTANT
CONFIDENTIAL

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL
LEADER'S OFFICE

27 NOV 2012

Albert Bore
Birmingham City Council
Council House
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B1 1BB

Mr Bore

This letter was found when I was clearing my bosses files and I think you should be aware that I am shocked at what your officers are doing.

You have 7 days to investigate this matter after which it will be sent to a national newspaper who I am sure will treat it seriously.

AN

...bigger agenda. It was Tahir Alam who wrote the 'Meeting the
...in state schools' publication and he fully believes that without
...faith of Muslim pupils will break down, there will be disaffection, drugs,
...sexually-transmitted diseases amongst our children.

...is never as black and white as you think. We have an obligation to our
...to fulfil our roles and ensure these schools are run on Islamic principles.
Consider it as your calling in life, if you fail, our children will suffer and that will come
back to haunt us if we are not careful.

Operation 'Trojan Horse' has been very carefully thought through and is tried and
tested within Birmingham, implementing it in Bradford will not be difficult for you,
especially if you replicate the same relationship that we have with [REDACTED]. I not
sure if [REDACTED] is of the same mindset as [REDACTED] but if she is keen on the Academy
route then she will support your plan. [REDACTED] has been very supportive and has helped
our agenda progress, in return we will give her the Academies she wants.

Tahir and I will be happy to support your efforts in Bradford. This is a long term plan
and one which we are sure will lead to great success in taking over a number of schools
and ensuring they are run on strict Islamic principles. In Birmingham the benefits are
only being seen now.

The process behind 'Trojan Horse' is simple. It is about people seeing our intentions as
respectable and our being accepted by the key stakeholders such as the Director of
Education and the City Council. The long-term nature of the plan means that we have
to have very close relationships with stakeholders and Tahir has managed this so much
so that he is trusted by [REDACTED] and others.

He has also fine tuned the 'Trojan Horse' so that it is totally invisible to the naked eye
and allows us to operate under the radar. I have detailed the plan we have in
Birmingham and how well it has worked and you will see how easy the whole process is
to get the Head teacher out and our own person in.

Tahir and I will talk you through the process when we meet next week, we are also
meeting [REDACTED] in Manchester as we want him to lead the same plan in
Manchester.

We have caused a great amount of organised disruption in Birmingham and as a result
now have our own Academies and are on the way to getting rid of more Head teachers
and taking over their schools. Whilst sometimes the practices we use may not seem the
correct way to do things you must remember that this is a 'Jihad' and as such using all
means possible to win the war is acceptable. The poor performing schools are easy to
target, the better performing with strong Head teachers is much harder and so we have
to manufacture a strong enough reason, but rest assured we have not failed yet, no
matter how difficult removing the Head teacher may be, you just have to be clever and
use the appropriate way to deal with the school. Also you must only target a
school in the same area and with a large Muslim community. For example:

We have almost removed a Head teacher who has been in post 15 years and who has an outstanding Ofsted report. As her performance was so strong her reason for dismissal had to be linked to her results and as such we had to plant the seed of her cheating in order to get the results that she has. This put her whole performance under scrutiny and once you scrutinize you will always find something, however small it may be, and by that time the damage is done and as such most people will resign before they are pushed. [REDACTED] will soon be forced to resign, or will be sacked from Regents Park Community school, once she goes we will slowly move in with [REDACTED] help.

The same with the Head teacher at Adderley School, she is not a good Muslim and was not open to our suggestions of adhering to strict Muslim guidelines. She is very procedurally strong and so we had to find a reason for her to be sacked linked to procedures. Three of our Muslim sisters and a governor have been disrupting the school and causing issues with [REDACTED] since she took over the school. These sisters are a great example of what can be achieved by only three people, they along with an English woman who is their close friend, have raised an allegation of fraudulent resignation letters against the Head (even though they did actually write the letters themselves), they got the whole movement of the letters witnessed by not one but three witnesses just to be sure there was no chance of comeback on them. The letters were witnessed from the moment they were written to the time they were delivered to the school so that no one could doubt their word when they say there were no resignation letters in the envelopes, only other health related letters.

[REDACTED] who is a governor at the school delivered the letters to ensure there was no doubt that her sisters were telling the truth and now very soon this Head teacher will also resign, or be sacked. [REDACTED] has also been key to keeping us informed as to what the governing body and Head are discussing etc and as a result we have been able to execute this perfectly, she will soon be moved into another school as a Governor and over time will instigate the same process there.

As the English woman dropped her letter off in the Heads staff box it adds another angle of fraud against the Head and because she is English it will take the focus off the other four Muslim sisters. If all goes wrong everyone is briefed and will blame the English woman for planning and implementing the whole campaign to cause disruption amongst the Muslim staff and the Muslim Head teacher.

At Saltley School we had a Sikh Head running a Muslim school. This was perfect as we have been able to play the religion and India / Pakistan card and stirred up a real fuss about a Pakistani boy who had been excluded whilst an English boy had not. Bakwamt Bains will soon be sacked and we will move in. The aim is to bring Highfield, Saltley and Adderley into the Parkview Trust and again [REDACTED] has agreed this will be supported and done.

This is all about causing the maximum amount of organized chaos and we have fine-tuned this as part of Trojan Horse. You must identify what the Heads strengths are and build a case of disruption around that.

I can give you so many more examples Brother but I think you will be able to understand yourself how important this has been to put this plan together. I have outlined the general basis of 'Trojan horse' but Tahir will talk you through it in more detail and will give you more examples of how it has worked in other schools.

The Five Steps are as follows:

STEP 1 Identify your Schools - Identify the schools that are based in Muslim areas that you want to target then break the list down into the Ofsted performance categories. Start with the poorest performing first as they will be easiest for you to influence and take over.

STEP 2 Select a group of Salafi Parents - Identify any Salafi parents within the school community. They are always the most committed to the faith and are hardliners in that regard and once charged up they keep going for longer. Sunnis are too soft and have no fight in them. Plus they have deviated away from Islam and we cannot trust or rely on them for such an important task. There are exceptions but very few.

When the parents have been identified, we start to turn them against the Head teacher and Leadership team. The only way to do this is to tell each parent that the school is corrupting their children with Sex education, teaching about homosexuals, making their children pray Christian prayers and mixed swimming and sports. Once you do this the parents will be fired up and ready to give the head teacher a very difficult time on a daily basis. If you can get them to be very vocal in the playground as they drop off, or pick up their children that will stir up other parents.

The Parents MUST be given direction and told not to discuss this with anyone, you only need a maximum of 4 parents to disrupt the whole school, to send in complaints, to question their child's education and to contact their MP and local Authority. We did this perfectly to [REDACTED] from Springfield School. However the Governors reappointed her so now we have another plan in place to get her out.

It is important to understand the basis of how a few simple steps can cause so much havoc for a Head teacher and as a result, the school. The Education Authority goes into panic mode each time a parent, or teacher complains directly to them. But we ourselves should not complain as this weakness is important to us.

STEP 3 Put our own Governor in - Once you get the parents going then we sometimes will parachute in our own governor as we have done on several occasions. This is key as it lets us know what the Head and Governing body are thinking and planning and allows us to stay one step ahead of the school at all times. The Governor also drip feeds our ideal for a Muslim school so we can ascertain the schools appetite for the Salafi agenda.

When the mission is accomplished we take the Governor out of the school and place him/her into a another school this is done to; a) distance them from the troubles so they

cannot be linked in anyway b) to allow them to refresh before they do the same again in a new school. We have a core of these brothers and sisters in Birmingham who have caused problems and moved on and no one is the wiser. You will need to get the same Governor set up in Bradford, maybe [REDACTED] will be able to assist you in finding good Governors.

STEP 4 – Identify key staff to disrupt the school from within - The Governor and parents will help identify weak and disgruntled members of staff, normally TA's are better as they are less educated and from the local community so are much more easily influenced. You must be careful to ensure they are fully befriended and supported so that their loyalty cannot be questioned.

They will work from the inside over a period of time to disrupt the school, to get other staff aggrieved against the leadership team and to eventually accuse the head of doing something wrong so that an investigation is launched and the head resigns, or is sacked. It is also important where possible to ensure you have an English face amongst the group as this makes it so much more believable and other teachers cannot accuse the Muslim staff of being the instigators of trouble at the school.

To add credibility to the issue it is always better to push for an external council investigation. We have [REDACTED] here who always pushes on our behalf and she has helped us a lot. The council are not good at all in this regard so even though their investigations can be fixed and are flawed, its better to have the tag that the council have launched an investigation, as it adds a lot of credibility and puts doubt into the parents minds. [REDACTED] wants as many of these schools to become Academies and so it suits everyone.

She has agreed with Tahir a list of measures which include going in hard when an issue is raised, to avoid putting key advice to the school in writing so that there is no record of the conversations between the head and the Education dept and to where possible instigate an investigation.

As you will see Tahir's contact base is second to none in the Local Authority and more importantly he is liked by many.

STEP 5 – Anonymous letter and PR campaign

Instigate an anonymous and named letter campaign to the Governors, local authority, the local MP'S, Education Authority, Ofstead, Grosvenor support, the local paper and the Dept for Education. This is a very good method of placing doubt in the minds of the Stakeholders concerned and to keep a lot of pressure on the Head as the school will be bombarded with requests for information etc etc which they have to deal with.

All these things will work towards wearing the head down, removing his/her resolve and weakening their mindset so they eventually just give up.

Please keep this report confidential and take no copies of it but shred it after reading. Any questions you may have can be raised with Tahir at the meeting. I would also like

Annex 3: Timeline

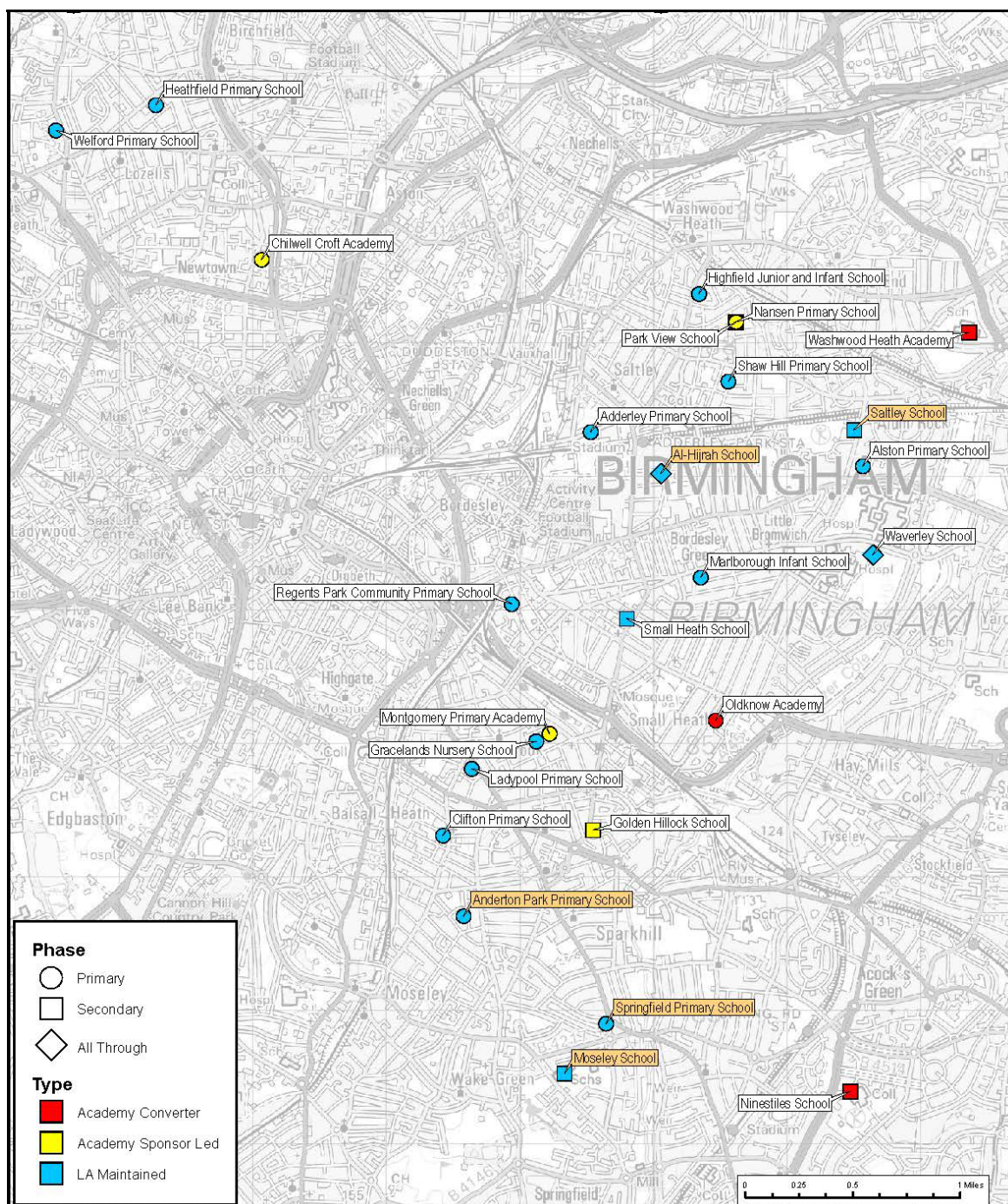
This timeline shows key events between the receipt of the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter by Birmingham City Council and the appointment of Peter Clarke as Education Commissioner.

2013		
Nov	27	Letter and document that has now become known as the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter, sent to Sir Albert Bore at Birmingham City Council, is date stamped as received in the Leader’s Office.
Dec	6	Birmingham City Council claims that the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter arrives with Sir Albert Bore. Letter is copied to Cllr Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services, Chief Executive and other Birmingham City Council staff. Internal review begun.
	12	Birmingham City Council Chief Executive copies ‘Trojan Horse’ letter to West Midlands Police.
	13	West Midlands Police pass ‘Trojan Horse’ letter to Home Office, who forward it to the Department for Education (DfE).
	16	Birmingham City Council chaired meeting, including West Midlands Police, concluding there is a “credibility gap” with the document.
	18	Birmingham City Council meeting concludes there is no basis to allegations against Birmingham City Council staff.
	Until Jan ‘14	DfE officials and Birmingham City Council officers are in communication about the progress of the enquiry – Birmingham City Council confirms an ongoing internal audit of the issue.
2014		
Jan	31	The National Association of Head Teachers contacts DfE to inform officials that members have received copies of the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter.
	31	The British Humanist Association contacts DfE saying that they have received allegations about “inappropriate teaching and leadership behaviour” at Park View School from former members of staff.
Feb	3	Birmingham City Council receives copies of ‘Trojan Horse’ letter that have been sent to headteachers in Birmingham.
	3	The British Humanist Association complaint about Park View School is forwarded to Ofsted by DfE.
	4	Further schools receive copies of ‘Trojan Horse’ letter.
	5	DfE official talks directly to whistleblower about concerns that they raised via the British Humanist Association about Park View School.
	6	‘Trojan Horse’ letter reviewed in Birmingham City Council Cabinet Member briefing.
		Meeting between the Secretary of State for Education and Sir Albert Bore is arranged.

	7	Letter received from Sir Albert Bore enclosing briefing on chronology, context and current plan.
	10	Detailed allegations from former Park View staff sent to Ofsted for consideration by DfE.
		Meeting between Secretary of State and Sir Albert Bore takes place in London.
	23	Sunday Times publishes first story on the 'Trojan Horse' letter.
March	2	Sunday Times story on Park View School and 'Trojan Horse' allegations.
	5-6	Ofsted conducts a no notice section 8 inspection at Park View School.
	6	The National Association of Head Teachers indicates to DfE that its members have raised issues of concern with the association akin to the 'Trojan Horse' allegations.
	7	Birmingham Mail runs a five page story on 'Trojan Horse' letter. BBC runs story confirming that they have seen the 'Trojan Horse' letter.
		DfE hear concerns from a former governor at Golden Hillock School.
	17-18	Ofsted conduct full section 5 inspection at Park View School, prompted by concerns about what they saw on their section 8 inspection.
	19	Secretary of State chairs meeting with other government departments, West Midlands Police, and officials.
	20	Secretary of State meets two Birmingham MPs.
		NAHT raises concerns about Nansen Primary School and Oldknow academies with DfE.
	21, 24-25	Education Funding Agency (EFA) visit academies within the Park View Educational Trust: Park View School, Golden Hillock and Nansen Primary to monitor compliance with Funding Agreement and Independent School Standards.
	24	Secretary of State chairs meeting with three Birmingham MPs plus MP's researcher.
	27	Secretary of State commissions Ofsted to conduct batch inspection of 15 schools.
April	2-10	Ofsted conduct batch inspections of 15 schools (a mixture of section 8 and section 5 inspections depending on school circumstances).
	8	The ten Birmingham MPs write to SoS.
	10-11	EFA/ DfE visit to Oldknow Academy.
	14	Announcement by Birmingham City Council that Ian Kershaw will lead a widened investigation, with Stephen Rimmer providing oversight through a new Birmingham City Council Review Group.
	15	Appointment by Secretary of State of Peter Clarke as Education Commissioner announced.

Annex 4: Map of Schools in Birmingham

The map shows the 21 schools inspected by Ofsted between April and May 2014. It also shows additional schools (shown with orange labels) where issues of concern (some historic, some current) were reported during the course of my enquiry.



Annex 5: Schools where these behaviours were observed

Overview

The behaviours described in the 'Trojan Horse' letter have taken place at a number of schools in East Birmingham. The destabilisation of headteachers by aggressive governing bodies can be seen as far back as 20 years ago in 1993-94, but has accelerated in recent years. None of the schools investigated has been designated as a faith school.

Included in this Annex are the following:

- summaries of behaviours observed at some of the schools in respect of which I received evidence during the course of my enquiry; and
- a grid which demonstrates that many of these schools have experienced the same types of behaviours. The grid covers 14 schools, focussing on those mentioned in the 'Trojan Horse' letter. I have also included some other schools where there is strong evidence.

I am still receiving information about some of these schools, and a number of other schools. The full picture is therefore not yet complete.

I have not investigated Al-Hijrah School in detail, even though it has links to some of the schools covered during my investigation and a number of individuals of concern. This is because it is different to the other schools in that it is a Muslim faith designated voluntary-aided school and therefore it is able, where appropriate, to introduce elements of faith. It is also currently under investigation by Birmingham City Council (separate to the investigation being conducted by Ian Kershaw) and has recently had an Interim Executive Board (IEB) put in place.

Summary of behaviours at schools

Adderley Primary School

Adderley Primary has 605 children on roll, 56.9% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 99.4% of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 9.7% speak English as a first language².

² All data provided below for school characteristics, such as number of children on roll, have been taken from RAISEonline. For primary schools the data was published on 27 February 2014 and for secondary schools on 27 March 2014. For those schools without a 2013 RAISEonline document, data was taken from EduBase.)

It has had eight headteachers since 2000 and I have received information which suggests an unhappy history of allegations of bullying, intimidation, hostility and fraud. There is currently a police investigation into various issues at the school, and details cannot be given here. However, it can be said that headteachers have reported aggressive and intimidating behaviour.

Anderton Park Primary School

Anderton Park has 708 children on roll, 42.9% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 99.8% of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 5.6% speak English as a first language.

Anderton Park exhibited many of the behaviours seen in other schools, with the key reported issues arising between 2007 and 2011. I have seen information which suggests that there were attempts to undermine the headteacher and to introduce elements of belief inappropriate to a non-faith school.

Golden Hillock School – A Park View Academy

Golden Hillock is a secondary school with 880 students on roll, 68.3% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 99.8% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 8.4% speak English as a first language.

It became a Park View Educational Trust academy in October 2013. By then new governors had already joined the school, including Razwan Faraz who was Chair in 2008 and 2009. Following a dip in results in 2012 there was then what appears to have been a sustained campaign from a group of governors to get rid of the headteacher, involving unreasonable and time-consuming demands for detailed information. The teaching of SRE was suspended and the governors reportedly asked the assistant head to organise a school trip to Mecca.

Ladypool Primary School

Ladypool Primary has 485 children on roll, 52.4% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 100% of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 5.3% speak English as a first language.

I have seen information which suggests that in 2011/2012 the head teacher experienced problems with the governing body when it began to set unachievable targets for her performance review. It has also been suggested that in the summer of 2012 there were problems with the election of a new Chair. These issues involved Razwan Faraz when acting as an interim clerk and resulted in the return of the old Chair. The headteacher left in December 2012.

In September 2013, a new headteacher was appointed, and we have seen suggestions that since the appointment there has been a desire to introduce a more Islamic character in the school.

Montgomery Primary Academy

Montgomery has 661 children on roll, 39% of whom are eligible for free school meals. All of the children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a low proportion speak English as a first language.

Montgomery became a sponsored academy under the Academies Enterprise Trust in October 2012 and has a history of underperformance, having been placed in 'Special measures' in April 2012.

Following the 2012 Ofsted report, it seems that nearly 200 parents petitioned the governing body for the removal of the headteacher, who resigned along with the Chair of the governing body. The campaign is said to have been organised in part by a governor who, when on the governing body at Golden Hillock, agitated for the removal of the headteacher there.

Moseley School

Moseley has 1,275 students on roll, 61.4% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 99% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 16.9% speak English as a first language.

I have seen evidence which suggests that from 2007 onwards three governors started to exert a strong influence and were at the centre of concerted action to destabilise and intimidate two consecutive headteachers over a three year period until an IEB was eventually established in March 2010. Both headteachers seem to have been subjected to adverse behaviour from these three governors, including repeated unreasonable demands. It has also been suggested that the governors attempted to impose a more Islamic character on the school, with the governors in question trying to engineer inquorate meetings to discuss such matters. Both headteachers raised their concerns with the Council and felt insufficiently supported.

Nansen Primary School – A Park View Academy

Nansen Primary has a capacity of 750 but has 871 children on roll, 51.1% of whom are eligible for free school meals. A high proportion of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a low proportion speak English as a first language.

Razwan Faraz was appointed deputy headteacher in 2011. Following a rapid expansion of the school and a consequent decline in the 2011 SATS results the Park View Educational Trust launched a sponsorship take-over which was not received well by staff or parents but which succeeded in October 2012, and was supported by Mr Faraz. Soon after there was an incident with the fire alarm which led to the headteacher's suspension and then resignation in

December 2012. A teacher from Park View was made acting head. The acting headteacher and the deputy introduced Islamic practices and narrowed the curriculum. There are reports of bullying and intimidation.

Oldknow Academy

Oldknow caters for children from years 3 to 6 and has 601 students on roll, 53.4% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 99.3% of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 5.5% speak English as a first language.

Oldknow became an academy on 1 April 2012. I have received evidence of elements being introduced to the school to ensure a more Islamic character, such as the removal of urinals. There are also reports of exclusionary activities such as Muslim students being taken to Saudi Arabia, part funded by the school. In 2013, the governors reportedly decided to cancel activities around Christmas, Diwali and Easter, upsetting parents, whilst the school closed for two days for Eid.

I have also seen information which suggests that the Chair of Governors had uncontrolled access to the school and subjected the headteacher to abuse. The headteacher left in January 2014.

Park View School: The Academy of Mathematics and Science

Park View is a mixed 11 to 16 secondary school which has 615 students on roll, 72.7% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 99.8% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 7.5% speak English as a first language. The school received an 'Outstanding' Ofsted judgement in 2012 and converted to academy status that same year in April.

The ethos and culture at the school changed considerably over recent years under the Chairmanship of Tahir Alam. Patterns of behaviour have emerged in the leadership and management which suggest irregularities in employment practices. There have also been changes to the curriculum and educational plans and the rapid introduction of elements of belief inappropriate to a non-faith school. It appears to act as a blueprint for others, exhibiting all the behaviours which cause concern. Staff who were students there in recent years do not recognise the school, attributing the changes to a group of Muslim male staff, closely related by family, friendship and ideological belief.

In 2012 Park View Academy set up the Park View Educational Trust, which was also chaired by Tahir Alam. Since that time it has grown into a multi-academy trust and is the sponsor for Nansen Primary and Golden Hillock Secondary Schools.

Regents Park Community Primary School

Regents Park has 542 children on roll, 50% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 98.7% of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 5.1% speak English as a first language.

The school has formed part of my investigation as it was mentioned in the original 'Trojan Horse' letter. It was last inspected in 2011 and received a rating of 'Outstanding'. The results of the 2013 key stage 2 SATs for pupils in Year 6 were annulled by the Department for Education following information from the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) about the school's results. A Council officer claims that it had been alerted to concerns by a teacher at another school. Test papers were forensically examined by the STA and evidence was found that the papers had been altered.

The then headteacher and deputy headteacher resigned in October 2013. The school is currently being led by an interim executive headteacher and an interim head of school.

Saltley School and Specialist Science College

Saltley is a mixed, 11 to 16, community school based in Bordesley Green. There are 952 students on roll, 70.1% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 96.5% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 14.5% speak English as a first language.

The story of Balwant Bains is covered in detail in chapter 3 of the report. More recently I have seen evidence that problems with the governing body continued after the headteacher went on gardening leave. An interim executive principal is said to have been appointed without open competition. In January 2014, the governing body used school funds to appoint private investigators in an attempt to monitor senior leaders' emails. A number of senior leaders resigned in June 2014 and the governing body also resigned later that month following an Ofsted inspection which judged the school inadequate and requiring special measures. The school now has an IEB in place.

Small Heath School

Small Heath has 1,333 students on roll, 58.4% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 99.8% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 9.0% speak English as a first language. The school was inspected in 2014 and received an 'Outstanding' judgement. The current headteacher is due to leave in August 2014 and the governors have already appointed a successor.

Although Ofsted recently found that the school's leadership and management are 'Outstanding', it also noted that the headteacher will be retiring at the end of this academic year. I have seen text from a Whatsapp discussion group (the 'Educational Activists') transcript celebrating the appointment of a new Muslim headteacher and suggested that the group plan to pressurise the head into introducing an Islamising agenda.

Springfield Primary School

Springfield Primary has 673 children on roll, 37% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 100% of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and

1.9% speak English as a first language.

The school is known to have had problems in the past. A new headteacher was appointed in May 1993 – she was also mentioned in the ‘Trojan Horse’ letter. In August 1993 the Council made the governing body aware of an audit report into the financial mis-management of a Muslim Women’s training centre with which the headteacher was involved. Apparently governors decided that an investigation into the report was not necessary and that the headteacher could still start in the September. Over time disagreements between the governors and the headteacher developed, involving complaints to the Council, disciplinary proceedings and suspension. We have been told that the Council worked together with the governing body to effect the headteacher’s dismissal by February 1994.

Washwood Heath Academy (formerly Washwood Heath Technology College)

Washwood Heath is a secondary school with 1,332 students on roll, 61.2% of whom are eligible for free school meals. 99.2% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 29.8% speak English as a first language.

Events reported from the school are historic, dating from 1996 but encapsulating many of the features identified in other schools – for example the take-over of the governing body by like-minded individuals who then displayed unacceptable behaviour towards the headteacher and staff, including a strategy to smear the name of and oust the headteacher. The first significant reported incident at Washwood Heath occurred in 1996 when a Muslim teacher is said to have launched a tirade at a carol rehearsal, criticising the pupils for singing Christian carols.

In 2002, Ofsted inspectors put the school in special measures. Tahir Alam was appointed onto an Interim Executive Board (IEB) in 2002 and left the governing body in 2014.

Figure 5 – Map of behaviours observed in schools

School	Bullying and intimidation towards staff	Complaints made to BCC but not acted on	Unusual or inappropriate staff appointments, remuneration and promotion	Attempts to introduce a more Islamic character in the school	Discriminatory policies/practices or intolerant views	Inappropriate use of school funds	Inappropriate governing body behaviour	Sympathy to extremist views
Park View Academy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Golden Hillock	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nansen	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Saltley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Washwood Heath	✓	✓		✓			✓	
Oldknow	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Adderley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Moseley	✓	✓		✓			✓	
Regents Park								
Springfield	✓	✓		✓			✓	
Anderton Park	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ladypool		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Highfield	✓				✓			
Shaw Hill	✓	✓		✓				

Annex 6: Summary of Towards Greater Understanding: Meeting the needs of Muslim pupils in state schools (Muslim Council of Britain, 2007)

This is a brief summary of the Muslim Council of Britain's (MCB) information and guidance for schools as set out in their 2007 publication, *Towards Greater Understanding: Meeting the needs of Muslim pupils in state schools*.

The paper's foreword is signed by Dr. Muhammad Abdul Bari, Secretary General of the MCB, and Tahir Alam, chair of the Education Committee. It acknowledges help and suggestions from, amongst others, Razwan Faraz, Akram Khan Cheema, Bradford and Birmingham local authorities, the Al-Hijrah Trust UK (an educational charity), Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid.

Themes and Assumptions

The paper defines pupils by their religion and, while acknowledging variations within Islam, treats the estimated 400,000 Muslim pupils in the UK as a cohesive community. Although it acknowledges that most Muslim pupils are of Asian origin, it prefers them to be defined by religion rather than ethnicity on the grounds that *'Asian and Muslim needs are not necessarily the same'*. It calls for *'an inclusive ethos'* in schools so that *'more progress can be made in responding positively to the educational aspirations and concerns of Muslim pupils and their parents'*, leading to better school performance by Muslim children. There is significant emphasis throughout on meeting the concerns of Muslim parents, in support of which it quotes the 1944 Education Act on the desirability of pupils being educated *'in accordance with the wishes of their parents'*.

In stressing the importance of tackling Islamophobia in schools, it quotes a 2003 Department for Education endorsement of the Commission for Racial Equality's definition of institutional racism as *'organisational structures, policies and practices which result in ethnic minorities being treated unfairly and less equally, often without intent or knowledge'*. It also argues that religion and faith in schools should not be regarded as matters of private and personal concern, since this may result in failure to recognise and confirm Muslim values which may in turn compromise a Muslim's sense of identity.

Dress Codes and Food

The paper accepts that while a variety of clothing may be worn by Muslim pupils, boys should always be covered between the navel and the knee and *'girls should be covered except for their hands and faces, a concept known as 'hijab'*. It adds that this latter requirement may by some Muslims be interpreted as the jilbab, *'a long outer garment reaching down to the ankles'*,

quoting the Department for Education guidance on uniform as permitting variation for cultural, racial or religious reasons. The growing of beards should also be respected. Food for Muslim pupils should be prepared, stored and served according to halal requirements.

Prayers

Of the five obligatory daily prayers, two – Zuhr and Asr – fall within the school day and normally *'need to be accommodated by schools'*. Zuhr falls within the lunchtime or afternoon break and must always be observed; Asr does not coincide with the school day during summer but may fall within the school afternoon in the winter. Each prayer should be accompanied by ritual washing and the whole process should take about twenty minutes; prayer rooms are desirable but a Muslim may pray anywhere that is clean and pure, which means that prayer mats are normally used. Prayer rooms should not display distracting imagery i.e. posters of the human body in a science lab. Furthermore, *'Schools should be aware that some pupils may request separate prayer facilities for boys and girls, as they may feel more comfortable praying in a single-gender group'*.

Friday prayer is particularly important. It replaces Zuhr, must be performed in congregation, and is obligatory for males but optional (though recommended) for females. Including washing and the sermon, it should take up to 30 minutes. In this context, the paper points out that *'under the terms of the 1988 Education Reform Act, children are allowed to leave the school premises to receive religious education'*. Parents may therefore take children to the mosque on Fridays, although the paper argues that, subject to suitable arrangements within school, such requests should be unnecessary.

It also points out that the purification consequent upon ritual washing is nullified if the pupil goes to the toilet or breaks wind. In the event of a visit to the toilet, Muslims are required to wash their private parts; hence there needs to be convenient storage space for water cans or bottles.

Ramadan

Fasting during the month of Ramadan should *'continue with the normality of everyday life'* but staff should encourage pupils to avoid excessive exertion during physical education. Fasting is not obligatory until puberty and younger children may fast for only part of the day. More students are likely to pray in school during Ramadan, which schools should recognise when making arrangements for prayer. Schools should also give appropriate consideration when scheduling internal examinations and should try to avoid scheduling swimming lessons in case pupils swallow water. Sexual relations are forbidden during Ramadan and Muslims are expected to avoid sexual thoughts and discourse – *'Schools are therefore advised to avoid the teaching of sex and relationship education, including aspects that are part of the science curriculum, during Ramadan'*.

Islamic Festivals

The festivals of Eid are based on the lunar calendar, which can make the planning of holidays difficult. The paper advises schools to liaise with local mosques and to *'allow at least one day off for each of the Eid celebrations as obligatory religious observance. Eid holidays should be marked as authorised absences [...] schools with a high proportion of Muslim pupils can alter school holidays to have time off for Eid without prejudice to their pupils and the school's attendance record'*.

Physical Education

The paper asserts the value of Physical Education (PE) and encourages full participation while saying that schools *'need to be more responsive and sensitive to the moral values of the children and communities they serve'*. This means that primary schools should be equipped with portable partitions for boys and girls to change separately in classrooms. In secondary schools changing facilities, though single-sex, are almost always communal, which *'compromises the Islamic modesty requirements'* and *'naked communal showering [...] involves profound indignity'*. There should be individual cubicles for changing and *'Muslim children should not be expected to participate in communal showering'*.

As for sports, schools should ensure that contact sports are always in single-gender groups. Swimming, though desirable in itself, should also be single-sex with teachers and pool attendants of the same gender as the children. Ideally, girls should be able to wear full leotards and leggings in the pool. In the absence of such arrangements Muslim children should have *'the option to be excused from swimming on religious grounds'*. Overall, the most suitable sportswear for both sexes is a tracksuit; girls may wear a special hijab or a headscarf tied securely.

Dance

Most curriculum dance activities *'are not consistent with the Islamic requirements for modesty [...] most Muslim parents will find little or no educational merit or value in dance or dancing after early childhood'*. Dancing before mixed gender audiences may be objectionable and parental requests for children to be excused from dance *'should be treated as an issue of religious conscience and respected accordingly'*.

Religious Education

The paper encourages the understanding of faiths other than one's own, pointing out that Religious Education (RE) is taught in secular maintained schools according to a syllabus agreed locally by the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE). Although this should take into account the religious backgrounds of pupils, many schools with significant Muslim representation do not adequately reflect the religious background of

their pupils, with too little time devoted to the study of Islam. Allowing pupils to take the double Islam option (Islamic Studies) in GCSE leads to improved exam results.

At the same time, schools should respect the rights of parents to withdraw children from RE and, in schools where there are no Muslims, it is important that children should learn about Islam.

Collective Worship

Noting that the 1996 Education Act (sections 386 and 387) compels a daily act of collective worship '*wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character*,' the paper asserts that although this does not preclude non-Christian acts of worship '*The vast majority of Muslim pupils in the maintained sector do not receive any act of collective worship appropriate to their family and faith background*'. This applies equally to schools which attempt multicultural or non-faith assemblies, a breach of the law since schools are not allowed to obtain a determination in favour of non-religious assemblies. The paper calls for acts of worship appropriate to pupils' faith background, pointing out that it is '*not permissible for Muslims to actively participate in non-Islamic acts of worship*' and that schools can legally obtain a determination in favour of acts of worship not of wholly or broadly Christian character. This is what should happen in schools where most pupils are Muslim. Worship should be conducted by someone of the same faith background as the pupils.

Sex and Relationships Education

The paper stresses the role of marriage in Islam, which means that '*girlfriend/boyfriend as well as homosexual relationships are not acceptable practices according to Islamic teachings*'. Pointing out the Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is optional in primary schools (a decision for governors), the paper warns that Muslims may find the teaching of SRE without clear reference to a moral framework offensive, along with objects (as teaching aids), graphic diagrams and '*discourse and debate*'. It quotes the Department for Education's Circular 0116/2000 on urging schools to teach SRE in a way that '*reflects the parents' wishes and the community they serve*'. Islamic moral perspectives should be included whenever Muslim pupils are taught but SRE should be suspended altogether during Ramadan. Schools should also take account of the right of parents to withdraw children from SRE.

Modern Foreign Languages

The paper recommends that Muslim pupils should have the opportunity to study Arabic '*and/or other languages relevant to their family background*'. This would provide them with wider linguistic skills and offer '*greater access to their religious and cultural heritage, thus giving them a stronger sense of self-esteem and achievement*'.

Expressive Arts

The paper acknowledges the cultural diversity among Muslims with regard to music. Referring to what appears to be pop music (though without calling it such), it notes that aspects may be un-Islamic and that some parents may not wish their children to participate in lessons that use it. It notes, however, that there is no parental right to withdraw from music and urges that schools '*show great understanding by providing alternative musical learning opportunities*'.

In drama lessons, schools should avoid placing Muslim pupils in physical contact with someone of the opposite sex '*to whom one could legally be married*'. Gender role reversal and plays based on aspects of other religions should also be avoided. In art, 'schools should *avoid encouraging Muslim pupils from producing three dimensional imagery of humans*', focussing instead on calligraphy, textiles, photography, mosaics etc.

Libraries and School Trips

Libraries should be culturally inclusive with adequate and accurate Muslim material chosen in consultation with Muslim teachers and parents. Mixed gender groups should not be taken on educational visits involving overnight stays and Muslims on farm visits should not stroke, touch or feed pigs.

Further Issues

The paper gives advice on Islamic customs with regard to names, shaking hands, the need to recruit more Muslim governors, the need for teaching and support staff to be representative and for schools to establish good relations with local mosques. There are no references to science teaching in general or to evolutionary theory in particular, except in Appendix 3 where www.harunyahya.com is listed as '*A useful website for exploring Islamic perspectives on aspects of science and intellectual enquiry, for example in relation to theories of evolution*'.

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