

A journey from a culture of intolerance to a culture of cohesion



**Darul Uloom Islamic
High School and College**

Coventry Road, Birmingham

**A report on an effective intervention
and support programme by the School
Development Support Agency.**



Table of Contents

1	Preface	3
2	A message from the Principal	4
3	Executive summary	5
4	Preamble	6
5	First training day: Building community cohesion from an Islamic perspective	9
6	Second training day: Thinking outside the box	13
7	Third training day: Being an outstanding teacher	22
8	Final training day: Supporting trustees and governors	25
9	Evaluation	26
10	Recommendations	26
11	Conclusion	27
12	Postscript	27
13	Appendix One -Promoting Equality & Cohesion Policy	29
14	Appendix Two – Darul Uloom Islamic High School: promoting citizenship, social/cultural awareness, inclusion & cohesion programme	39

1. PREFACE:

The English poet William Cowper (1731-1800) captured it brilliantly in his famous poem, '*God Moves in Mysterious Ways,*' when he wrote:

*'God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform...
His purposes will ripen fast,
unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.
Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.'*

In early 2011, Channel 4 *Despatches*, and a subsequent DfE report, damned the school for its '*culture of intolerance*'. Now, after a number of personnel changes including several head teachers, a series of insets conducted with the SDSA, the appointment and vision of an excellent acting and an excellent substantive Headteacher, and a well thought out action plan; the school stands on the threshold of again becoming a potential model for other Darul Ulooms. This conclusion has not been arrived at lightly. What started as an agreement between the school and the SDSA to deliver three insets and a session for the trustees and governing body has blossomed into something much wider and potentially very valuable. This report goes much further than the original brief in the hope that the lessons learnt here can both sustain the school on its upward trajectory and permit others to learn from and emulate the processes undertaken. The school's openness and willingness to change, the collaborative methodologies it employed, and the courage of its staff, trustees and governing body have indeed transformed *the bitter bud* of public condemnation into *a sweet flower* of success. God does indeed move in mysterious ways!

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2. A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

This report marks a major positive milestone in the life of the Darul Uloom Islamic High School. For us, first came the shock at some of the content shown in the Channel 4 programme and the findings in the subsequent inspection report by HMI. Then came the realization that here was an opportunity to re-define our original aims and objectives which somewhere, somehow, whilst not forgotten, had become somewhat marginalised.

How amazing is the affair of the Muslim! His affairs are all good. If he experiences ease, he is grateful, and that is good for him. If he experiences hardship, he faces it with patience and perseverance, and that is also good for him. (Bukhari)

When we set up Darul Uloom Islamic High School & College our aim was to

Create a generation of talented, educated scholars, who understand the Islamic way of life from its most authentic sources in accordance with Islam's own intellectual heritage.

and to

Create individuals who can become exemplary representatives of Islam whilst contributing to the social, economic and intellectual development of all communities, thus enriching the society at large.

Central to our aim was the concept of enriching and benefitting society as a whole irrespective of gender, race, culture or faith.

The negative reports demonstrated how far we had come from realizing these noble aims. But for every threat there is an opportunity, which was grasped with both hands by the Trustees, staff, parents and pupils. The appointment of a new Head teacher, the complete restructuring of the management team, the formation of a new Governing body and the strategic overhaul of staff combined with the experience and expertise of SDSA in shaping, developing and embedding a 2 year programme that challenged ideologies, questioned opinions and re-defined roles and responsibilities, has led us back to those original aims and objectives.

I would like to thank Khalid and Maurice for their hard work and dedication throughout and very much hope that this programme and the processes which underpin it, developed by SDSA in collaboration with the school staff, can be a model not, merely for us, but for all Darul Uloom.

Dr ASM Abdur Rahim
Principal

3. Executive Summary

This report chronicles what can only be described as a remarkable transformation in the Darul Aloom Islamic High School, Birmingham; a transformation from an institution publicly criticised for its *culture of intolerance* in 2011 to one which, by 2013, has been applauded for its *culture of cohesion*. In February 2011 Channel 4 Despatches broadcast *Lessons in Hate and Violence*. The product of a two year undercover report revealed that the students were subjected to teaching and assemblies which demonstrated intolerance, and contempt for other cultures, religions and mainstream society. Threatened with closure by the Department for Education, the school employed Maurice Irfan Coles and Khalid Mahmood of the SDSA, who had pioneered the internationally renowned *Islam and Citizenship Education (ICE)* programme. Over an 18 month period the SDSA worked closely with three Headteachers and the staff to deliver three staff and one trustees and governing body inset, which helped the school not only plot its own successful course, but also be the author of its own remarkable revival.

Key to this success was the school's willingness to openly engage and enjoy the in-service provision negotiated with the SDSA. Five key principles were agreed upon:-

- **The first was the principle of openness.**
- **The second was the principle of collaboration.**
- **The third was the principle of modelling.**
- **The fourth was the principle of accurate reporting**
- **The fifth and overarching principle was that the training must be delivered within a clear Islamic framework.**

In the first inset, ***Building Community Cohesion from an Islamic Perspective***, staff was asked to examine Quarnic and Sunnah teachings on issues of culture, and harmony and responsibilities. In addition, they directly discussed three of the most contentious statements made in the programme. Their perceptions were fed into the school's action plan. The SDSA and senior management agreed that as the school had dealt head-on, effectively and Islamically with the major issues raised by DfE, the staff would now enjoy a programme which was more creative in outlook and more focused on teaching and learning. Accordingly the second inset, entitled ***Thinking Outside the Box***, aimed to get participants to:-

- Examine their own preferred teaching styles
- Discuss teaching methods they found to be effective
- Look at the habits of creative learning
- Discuss the impact of creative teaching and learning on classroom management and styles
- Draw out the implications for building cohesion.

As a result of what became a truly innovative day, participants concluded that their definition of the best teaching and learning practices and the habits of creative teaching were essentially and fundamentally Islamic, and that employing them within their own practice would enhance pupil achievement, enskill the young people and provide them with a balanced education that would encourage them to live as good Muslims, happily and harmoniously in a society in which they were in minority.

The third and final day, *Being an Outstanding Teacher*, was based upon staff critical review of a videoed lesson of one of their own young and brave Alimi teachers. Prior to viewing staff had discussed and agreed their own criteria for observation which were followed with consummate professionalism. The second part of the inset brought them back to '*What makes a contentious issue and how should they be dealt with?*' The processes and products of the three days were reported to the Trustees and |Governing body; a subset of which then continued to work on a policy for cohesion. Finally, discussion of the outcomes led to a series of recommendations designed to ensure sustainability

The openness and willingness of the staff to engage in these most difficult of issues, the readiness of all the Headteachers to negotiate a comprehensive package; and some excellent pupil directed visits and assemblies have helped the Darul Aloom on this remarkable journey; a journey from which all Darul Ulooms could usefully learn.

4. PREAMBLE

This report chronicles the school's journey and successes and has been written so that any outside reader can follow it, even if they have little knowledge of the school itself. It is divided into the three parts. The first, ***the context***, provides the background to the report in terms of the nature of the institution, the issues facing it after the damning *Despatches* report in February 2011 and the Department for Education's decision to instigate regulatory action against the school for "*a culture of intolerance.*" It briefly provides something of the background to the SDSA. The second, ***the training days*** outlines the processes, content and outcomes of the 3 days and one evening session held over a 12 month period. The final section, ***conclusions and recommendations*** brings the report together. Appendix one is the trustees' final cohesion policy.

The report, therefore, aims to:-

- ✓ Outline the background and the context to the SDSA's work with the Darul Uloom Islamic High School in Birmingham
- ✓ Describe the aims and outcomes of the three training days held with staff
- ✓ Describe the aims and outcomes of the training evening held with the trustees and members of the governing body

- ✓ Arrive at a number of conclusions concerning these outcomes
- ✓ Make a series of recommendations to the school, the trustees and the governing body.
- ✓

PART ONE: CONTEXT OF THE REPORT

The Darul Uloom Islamic High School and College is one of the oldest Islamic schools in the country. It was originally founded in 1985 and has on roll some 175 young men from the ages of 11-16. Its stated aims are:

'...to create a generation of talented, educated scholars, who understand the Islamic way of life from its most authentic sources in accordance with Islam's own intellectual heritage; whilst reflecting the environment and society they are from with appropriate academic knowledge, so that they may benefit the local community and enrich the wider society.'

Innovative at its outset, it became a model for many other Darul Ulooms throughout England. The school's curriculum is divided into two sections - catering respectively for religious and secular academic knowledge. The mornings are devoted to the study of the classical Islamic sciences which include the *Alimi* section (the sciences of Islam) and the *hifz* section where students commit the entire Qur'an to memory through a rigorous routine of memorisation. The afternoon is devoted to the study of national curriculum subjects designed to ensure that pupils can operate effectively in the secular as well as the religious world. The school is managed by a board of trustees and a governing body and forms part of a wider network, the *Majlis al Shura*. This body of Ulama (Islamic scholars) helps govern, guide, and mentor the running of Darul Ulooms. It consists of some of the country's most highly regarded Ulama.

Until early 2011 the school had enjoyed relative success as evidenced through several favourable OFSTED reports and indeed had been praised by inspectors, who recorded that "pupils learn about the beliefs and practices of other faiths and are taught to show respect to other world religions", and that the school was "promoting tolerance and harmony." The school also was one of the first in Birmingham to undertake the successful Islam and Citizenship Education programme (ICE) which explicitly sets out to teach that British citizenship and Islamic education are entirely compatible.

The Channel 4 Despatches programme, *Lessons in Hate and Violence*, broadcast on February 14, 2011 however, projected the school into an unwelcome infamous limelight. Over a two year period Channel 4 filmed undercover inside the school and alleged that some students and teachers preached intolerance. Footage showed an older student leading an assembly as preaching practice, in which he explains that Hindus have no intellect because they "worship cows", and, a teacher warning that pupils with "un-Islamic" hairstyles will be trimmed. The students were told not

to integrate: society is "Shaytan", they should "hate" walking down English streets, and they should "put away" and "forget" non-Muslim friends. Guest speakers were brought in to explain that less rigorous Muslims, defined as having a "less than a fistful" of beard, are of more potential harm than associating with a Jew and that punishment waits.

After the Department for Education (DfE) viewed all unbroadcast rushes filmed at the school, it took regulatory action against the school for "a culture of intolerance" and issued a notice against the school, threatening closure. The DfE ruled that the Dispatches found a "substantial amount of evidence" of intolerance and contempt for other cultures, religions and mainstream society.

The DfE said the "combined effect of these speeches is to emphasise to the pupils that they should not have any contact with people who belong to other religious groups; indeed contact should be hateful... and to discourage them from living in harmony with members of British society." The school's response was to dismiss several senior colleagues who had made some of the more extreme statements and, following a critical Ofsted report, devise and institute a rigorous action plan. They consulted the Association Muslims Schools (AMS) concerning the appointment of suitable colleagues to undertake staff training and were directed to the School Development Support Agency (SDSA). The SDSA enjoys an established track record in school improvement and has been responsible for a number of major projects in mainstream schools, madrasahs and supplementary education.

The agency recommended their previous CEO, now a consultant with them, Maurice Irfan Coles, lead the inset work supported by Khalid Mahmood, Senior Manager, Projects & International Development. Both came with extensive experience of working with madrasahs and schools having successfully run the ICE project over a three year period.

PART TWO: THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Headteacher involved in the Dispatches programme met several times with the SDSA consultants before his departure and began negotiating an innovative in-service programme with the staff, some work with the governing body, and the provision of other support throughout the academic year 2011-2012. This initial work was continued with the incoming acting Head, and then concluded with the substantive new Headteacher.

Five key principles were agreed upon from the outset and became increasingly embedded in the practice as the inset developed:

- **The first was the principle of openness.** Until the first SDSA inset, staff had not discussed the Channel 4 programme and its content. It was stressed throughout that no subjects were taboo-the

only way forward was to operate in a spirit of Islamic openness whilst observing mutual politeness, respect and good manners; that is to say correct Islamic *adhab*.

- **The second was the principle of collaboration.** For inset to work effectively staff must feel they can contribute freely to discussions, proffer advice, be listened to and influence the next inset and the school's wider agendas. In order to do this as effectively as possible **the sessions should be enjoyable.**
- **The third was the principle of modelling.** It was fundamentally important that the whole of the inset be conducted as model lessons as these behaviours were those we wanted to inculcate in our students. We had to practise what we preached.
- **The fourth was the principle of accurate reporting.** If issues were raised with which the providers or some members of staff were unhappy, these must also be recorded accurately. For openness and collaboration to work effectively, staff had to feel their voice would be heard
- **The fifth and overarching principle was that the training must be delivered within a clear Islamic framework.**

5. FIRST TRAINING DAY: Building community cohesion from an Islamic perspective

All organising participants agreed the principles outlined in previous section were fundamentally Islamic and the first inset was accordingly delivered in October 2011. Entitled, *BUILDING COMMUNITY COHESION FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE*, and delivered in English and Urdu; it aimed to engage staff in a robust discussion concerning the major issues that had arisen during the *Despatches* programme. Each of the most contentious statements were discussed in groups from an Islamic perspective which was followed by whole staff feedback and recording. The other sessions were devoted to staff identifying their perceptions of the gaps in the current provision and then action planning their next steps.

Participants were tasked to discuss and feedback on four fundamental questions:-

Question One: What do the Quran and Sunnah teach us about Tolerance towards other cultures and different cultural traditions?

Participants believed that:-

- The Qur'an is permeated by the principle of tolerance. All humans are created from a single soul and created into different tribes and cultures to recognise (not to despise) one another
- Islam does not allow us to force anyone to accept our faith
- Islam does not distinguish between cultures
- Some cultures or traditions have harmful effects on people and the society, so it is our duty to advise where necessary by using knowledge and wisdom
- We are all created unique and we as Muslims recognise this as a sign from our Creator
- Islam has told us to use '*common ground*' in order to promote community cohesion, as is evident from the Prophet's life in Medina
- The criterion for being the best is not race or culture or tradition, but the best in terms of *taqwa* (piety and God consciousness).

Question Two: What do the Quran and Sunnah teach us about how we should contribute towards the life of the community and promote harmony between different cultural traditions?

Participants considered that the Qur'an and Sunnah teach us that Muslims should:-

- "*Help one another in goodness and piety*"
- Get to know another community which affords one the opportunity to learn where possible, and avoid what should be avoided
- Follow the hadith that says, "*The best of people are those who benefit others*"
- Be an example to others by having the best of manners and conduct, as the family and community are at the heart of any society
- Promote and enjoin good and forbid evil, which in turn promotes harmony
- Present the teachings of Islam amongst the people
- Establish equality and justice among all as this will promote harmony
- Respect the values of others as this too will promote social harmony.

Question Three: What do the Quran and Sunnah teach us about how we should help our young people to prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life?

Participants argued that:-

- A good education is the best way forward for youth and for everyone – the best of education is the knowledge of the Quran, which is inclusive of all knowledge

- Through many stories from the seerah we are taught and encouraged to bear responsibility and earn a living and support oneself, rather than rely on the state
- Life is there to be enjoyed, so do so in moderation AND remember your Lord, but do not forget your purpose
- Teach them the moral values of Islam, by for example, drawing on the accomplishments of the sahaba both in their pre-Islamic and post-Islamic days
- Practically give them responsibility according to age.

Question Four: What do Quran and Sunnah teach us about how we should help our young people distinguish between right and wrong and respect the law of the land?

Participants maintained that we should teach the pupils that:-

- The life of the prophet (SAW), contained many examples of how we dealt with non-Muslims
- Citizens of a country are obligated according to Islam to adhere to the law of the land
- Right and wrong is clearly described in Islam and fearing Allah means the law of the land does not have to worry about you
- We should Integrate but NOT assimilate.

In addition, participants directly discussed three of the most contentious statements made in the programme.

a) Should we avoid Muslims who don't have a fistful of beard?

Participants responded:

- 'No' because many east-Asian & Mongoloid 'races' and African Caribbean peoples have short beards
- Islam has given different views regarding this matter; we can follow different madhabs
- Vehemently disagree, the Quran and Sunnah does not say we should be doing this
- The degree and priorities of deen need to be comprehended
- If we do what the question says then in fact we are opposing Islam
- There is no ayah in the Quran nor any prophetic Hadith regarding this matter
- This was a practice of our Prophet (SAW), BUT it is not obligatory
- Disagree; a fistful of beard is a characteristic of the prophet (SAW) which a Muslim is free to practice. If one doesn't practice this, it is his own free choice and we must respect his decision
- Muslims with a beard less than a fistful are NOT a potential danger to anyone, so this statement is baseless and unfair
- Statements such as these create divisions among people, when in fact there should be brotherhood

- They shouldn't be avoided rather be a friend to them, and when through yours and Allah's guidance, they increase their love for the Prophet (SAW) they will act upon this sunnah accordingly
- Teachers within the madrassa have varying sizes of beard and this has not been an issue
- This is unislamic and innovation and also may be used by certain individuals as a means to encourage them to keep beards
- The notion has a 'backwards mentality' and can be considered as a 'destructive' comment. It can be considered as a divisive theory and is not tolerant with in Islam at all
- Does having a beard mean you behave like a Muslim?
- What if (like Muslims in South East Asia) you cannot grow a beard?
- "Actions are but by intentions" – some people naturally keep the beard but their actions and intentions are anything but Islamic
- Many reasons are behind why fist length beards are not common. Cultural, social and educational reasons are but a few. Yet we must work with all people to educate and explore their understanding and ideas.

b) We should only teach the Deobandi school of thought

Participants maintained that:-

- Islam should be taught regardless of any sect
- The Prophet (SAW) was not a Deobandi
- There is no Deobandi school of thought – the question has no basis
- There are 4 schools of thought, these are Hanafi, Shafi', Malaki' and Hanbali'. We teach them all based on Quran and Sunnah
- This notion is incorrect; Islam is not limited only to Deobandi. Deoband is a village in India. How about the rest of the world who has not heard of Deoband?
- As Deobandis we believe and preach according to Quran and Sunnah, so we trust the Deoband ideology
- Different groups of people have different opinions, BUT this must not lead to hatred
- If Deobandis are teaching according to true Quran and Sunnah then by all means continue, personally I would 'cherry-pick' the best from all 'big organisations'
- YES – because there is not enough time in the day to teach all the other schools of thought, respectfully
- Quran and Hadith are the true teachings, so it should be that we follow this method
- We should be aware of all the madhabs and remember that the Quran and Sunnah are a light for humanity and we should act accordingly
- We should differentiate only from what is morally right and wrong
- It is important to teach your own aqeedah, however we need to bear in mind the importance of us as Muslims to be aware of all our denominations. We are too closed off as it is, this does not promote unity

- If you only teach one school of thought, what message will that send out?
- Why shouldn't I have the choice? If I go into an Indian restaurant I expect Indian food. Likewise people should have the choice to choose an ideology as they choose food
- Disagree, we must if the opportunity arises, teach the whole of humanity, even if they are not Muslims.

c) It is our duty to keep the boys away from the non-Muslims?

Participants considered that:-

- Humans have good and bad traits, we should encourage our children to learn from good people
- We live in an integrated society
- It's unavoidable as well as undesirable. We should be sociable and avoid being reclusive
- Would it be possible in a society full of multi-culturalism?
- I think that they can learn from Muslims and vice-versa and that mixing up will aid our efforts to show them guidance
- Surely it is our duty to make the boys good Muslims in this society
- Isn't this asking for the impossible anyway?
- Very hard to know who it and isn't a believer. Many non-Muslims do good deeds where as many Muslims do bad deeds
- This statement is very extreme, Islam is about peace and harmony, this statement is clearly against this
- In the past Muslims, Jews and Christians have lived together
- Disagree with the above statement. Islam says "*call towards the path your lord with wisdom.*" This cannot be achieved by keeping away from others.

6. SECOND TRAINING DAY: Thinking outside the box

Prior to the second training day on March 19th 2012, the school acted with rigour to enhance their action plan by including many of the issues raised in in the first day's training. The SDSA and senior management agreed that as the school had dealt head-on, effectively and Islamically with the major issues raised by DfE as a result of the programme, the staff would now enjoy a programme which was more creative in outlook and more focused on teaching and learning. Accordingly the second inset, entitled **THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX** aimed to get participants to:-

- Examine their own preferred teaching styles
- Discuss teaching methods they found to be effective
- Looked at the habits of creative learning
- Discuss the impact of creative teaching and learning on classroom management and styles
- Draw out the implications for building cohesion.

In the course of the day therefore colleagues began by going back to basics in discussing the purpose of education. They then looked at their learning and teaching styles. This prepared them for a wider debate about creative teaching and learning, the results of which were fed into a discussion about their own practice. The session ended with a synthesis of the thinking and its impact.

ACTIVITY ONE: EDUCATION'S PURPOSE

The purpose of education:

Participants considered the purpose of education. Their responses have been divided into 3 clusters: relationship with Allah, moral values and active citizenship, and knowledge, skills and attitudes.

1) RELATIONSHIP WITH ALLAH

Participants considered that education's purpose was to:-

- Lead one to the purpose of creation *اقرا بسم ربك الذى خلق*
- Help develop a relationship with Allah and with all people
- Make good people who will be successful in both worlds
- Elevate the individual's status within Islam and within society.

2) MORAL VALUES AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Participants considered that education's purpose was to:-

- Develop moral values and make pupils capable of living in the world
- Help pupils differentiate between good and bad
- Create good, creative serving citizens
- Seek and apply knowledge in positive ways to impact on society
- Support pupils in effective participation in society
- Guide pupils so that they become good Muslims and thereby good citizens.

3) KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

Participants considered that education's purpose was to:-

- Seek knowledge and apply it positively
- Understand the world
- Develop control and critical judgement skills
- Be critical and so that pupils can make their own judgements
- Become Informed and eradicate ignorance
- Learn skills to improve life-long learning
- Become equipped to take on life challenges.

ACTIVITY TWO: THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EDUCATED MUSLIM

Participants were asked to describe the characteristics of an educated Muslim. ***They considered that an educated Muslim would:-***

- Be full of God consciousness
- Be God fearing
- Be strong in their conviction and in the application of faith
- Be a reflection of the Quran and Sunnah in life
- Aim for success in this life and in the next
- Be a strong moral compass point for others.

An educated Muslim would have the following personal characteristics:

- Balanced in intellect with a strong moral fibre
- Integrated in personality
- Tolerant
- Respectful
- Humble, Pious
- Approachable
- Just
- Learned
- Well dressed
- A good time keeper
- Clean and wholesome
- Excellent in manners
- Holistic in world view.

In addition, an educated Muslim would:-

- Seek and apply knowledge
- Be Inspirational and influential
- Make a positive contribution to the society
- Be able to pass knowledge to others
- Be respectful to elders
- Prohibit corruption AND enjoin good
- Benefit all humankind
- Practice Islamic values
- Uphold, promote and deliver justice
- Be loving to the young and to neighbours.

ACTIVITY THREE: THE ADDED VALUE OF THIS MADRASAH

Participants considered that the value added by the madrasah was that it:-

- Provided a greater emphasis on tarbiyya (up-bringing)
- Taught Islamic ethics
- Allowed for salah to be performed
- Gave pupils a clear moral compass by which to live their lives

- Offered a dual syllabus which allowed for a balance between secular and deeni knowledge
- Taught pupils knowledge which would encourage them to contribute to society
- Taught pupils about wider links with the mosque and allowed them to perform communal acts on the premises
- Allowed pupils to experience a high quality of teaching in a segregated environment
- Provided a number of potential career outcomes:
 - A`lims
 - Graduate from British universities
 - Professionals with understanding of Din and Dunya.

ACTIVITY FOUR: THE NATURE OF LEARNING: LEARNING STYLES

During this activity participants were asked to complete a questionnaire to ascertain their own learning style. Broadly, according to V. Chislett & A. Chapman 2005, (taken from www.businessballs.com) learning styles can be divided in to three categories:

➤ **Visual Learning:**

Someone with a Visual learning style has a preference for seen or observed things, including pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, displays, hand-outs, films, flip-chart, etc. These people will use phrases such as 'show me', 'let's have a look at that' and will be best able to perform a new task after reading the instructions or watching someone else do it first. These are the people who will work from lists and written directions and instructions.

➤ **Auditory Learning:**

Someone with an Auditory learning style has a preference for the transfer of information through listening: to the spoken word, of self or others, of sounds and noises. These people will use phrases such as 'tell me', 'let's talk it over' and will be best able to perform a new task after listening to instructions from an expert. These are the people who are happy being given spoken instructions over the telephone, and can remember all the words to songs that they hear!

➤ **Kinaesthetic Learning**

Someone with a Kinaesthetic learning style has a preference for physical experience - touching, feeling, holding, doing, and practical hands-on experiences. These people will use phrases such as 'let me try', 'how do you feel?' and will be best able to perform a new task by going ahead and trying it out, learning as they go. These are the people who like to experiment, hands-on, and never look at the instructions first!

This task, although completed individually, demonstrated that although everybody had a preferred learning style the reality was that generally we used all three styles at certain times, depending on context and preference. The trick for teachers was to know something of their pupils preferred styles and to employ a variety in the classroom setting. Activity five therefore was to get participants to discuss teaching methods

ACTIVITY FIVE: THE NATURE OF TEACHING: TEACHING METHODS

Colleagues were asked, 'What was the best lesson you have ever received?' Answers ranged from examples of individual lessons to preferred teaching styles. The aim was to summarise the best in order to use them as a self-evaluation checklist.

The best were:-

- Macbeth – starting with a dynamic practical example, followed by a group discussion, then feedback
- A new lesson, simple and practical
- One delivered with humour, passion, knowledge and with high pupil expectation and aspiration
- A lesson which clearly followed the requirements of the subject
- One that was very well planned
- Where we had to undertake self-assessment
- One that was reassuring
- Where we modelled and trialled.

Colleagues placed themselves in 'subject' groups to discuss their preferred best teaching styles through the use of practical examples. The outcomes are listed below

- A lesson on Arabic words practically shown
 - It was new
 - Was presented interestingly
 - The teacher was encouraging
- Group learning of hifz
 - Enjoyable because in groups
 - No boredom
 - No external force used
- English
 - Inspirational
 - High aspirations
 - Personalised
 - Powerful
- Geography
 - Practical
 - Fun
 - Interesting

- Science
 - Experimental
 - Doing things
 - Interesting
 - Group work
 - Clear explanation
- Tafsir
 - Enjoyable
 - Teacher always explains. He had travelled the world and explained the Quran via his travel. It was as if we were there when he explained
 - A life experience
- Fiqh
 - Group discussion
 - Practical

And

- Working individually through a maths book
- Teacher would show me a new skill and allowed me to do it
- P.E. because of activities
- Educational trips
- Lecture on primary education, lecture was good
 - Lecturer knew his stuff
 - Energetic
 - Enthusiastic
 - Engaged
- Practical group working.

ACTIVITY SIX: WHAT TEACHING METHODS YOU ENJOY AND WHY?

Participants listed the following methods as those they really enjoyed as a student. Key was a learning environment that was safe and allowed for the variety listed. **Colleagues felt that the lessons they enjoyed most were those that:**

- Were fun and used repetition
- Were modelled by the teacher
- Were collaborative
- Were pupil centred
- Were explained clearly with hand outs that then allowed pupils to have a go
- Were team teacher taught
- Were project based
- Were auditory providing the material was interesting
- Were visual/kinaesthetic for the not so interesting subjects
- Were practical and employed Interactive activities

In addition they,

- Encouraged discussion and the formulating of ideas
- Encouraged debate
- Encouraged plenty of questions and answers
- Encouraged note taking and the development of Research skills
- Encouraged students to explain their own views and ideas about the subject
- Encouraged independent work, and catered for individual needs
- Encouraged working individually, in pairs and in bigger groups
- Encouraged experimentation

And which

- Used the board effectively
- Used Quizzes and Competitions
- Used field trips and learning outside the classroom.

In order, however, to get a sense as to what turned participants off learning they were asked to describe the activities they least enjoyed.

ACTIVITY SEVEN: WHAT TEACHING METHODS YOU LEAST ENJOY AND WHY?

Colleagues did not like lessons that were:

- Overly teacher directed
- Involved no interaction with one way teaching
- Exclusively book work conducted in silence
- Exclusively answering from textbooks
- Simply Chalk and talk
- Conducted in silence
- Overly focused on talking
- Held in total in silence
- Lecture style, just question after question, note taking
- Focused on unorganised groups.

The pet hates were teacher talking incessantly and lessons which lacked any meaningful interaction, i.e. lessons which were in no way creative. Colleagues were introduced to the habits and sub habits of creative learning which was based upon research conducted for the arts based charity, Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE).

CREATIVE LEARNING HABITS AND SUB-HABITS OF MIND

Habit of Mind

Sub-Habits of Mind

1. Inquisitive

Wondering and Questioning
Exploring and Investigating

	Challenging assumptions
2. Persistent	Tolerating uncertainty Sticking with difficulty Daring to be different
3. Imaginative	Playing with possibilities Making connections Using intuition
4. Disciplined	Crafting and Improving Developing techniques Reflecting critically
5. Collaborative	Cooperating appropriately Giving and receiving feedback Sharing the 'product'

Colleagues discussed these from an Islamic perspective and in groups were asked to provide examples of the habits drawn from our Islamic tradition.

ACTIVITY EIGHT: CREATIVE LEARNING AND ISLAMIC TEACHINGS

For colleagues creativity implied:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| ➤ Curiosity | ➤ Freedom |
| ➤ Exploration | ➤ Expression |
| ➤ Imagination | ➤ Non-systematising |
| ➤ Innovation | ➤ Emotion |
| ➤ Imagery | ➤ Passion |
| ➤ Initiative | |

And they felt that the benefits of creativity involved thinking outside the box which enhanced the learning of basic skills and were fundamentally Islamic.

*Participants outlined examples of creative learning habits from the Quran and the Sunnah in each of the 5 areas. **They felt that:***

- **In terms of the Inquisitive**
 - The Quran asks us to ponder and reflect
 - The Quran encourages us to ask people with knowledge
 - Being inquisitive is encouraged in the Quran
 - Ask if you don't know talk to the qualified people
 - The cure for ignorance is to ask questions
 - Surah Ar Rahman
 - Surah Al Ghashiya

- Surah Bani Israel
- Transmission of hadith – disciplined
- Commandment in the Quran to wonder and reason
- Ponder upon the scientific nature of earth
- Challenging ideology as a belief system.
- **In terms of the Persistent**
 - Best action is one done consistently
 - Quran and sunnah encourage us to be steadfast
 - Continuous action is preferred
 - Suffering/difficulty serves of a reminder of humility to Allah. Whenever Allah intends good for a person, he puts us through tribulations
 - Surah Maidah
 - Surah Ar Rum
 - Surah Taubah – If a nation do not change themselves we will not change them
 - Faith in the unknown
 - Reward for the patient is unrestricted.
- **In terms of the Imaginative**
 - Imagination, heaven and hell
 - Inheritance law
 - All knowledge of the world
 - Ponder on the criticism
 - Justifiable after occurrence
 - Normally be adaptable
 - Story of Maaz going to Yemen
 - Consensus
 - Intuitive
 - Fiqh
 - Differences
 - Freedom of thinking
 - Alignment of opinions/views
 - Applications of teaching
 - Judging right from wrong.
- **In terms of the Discipline**
 - Total discipline and tolerance
 - Body parts and their use
 - Muraqba – meditation
 - Muhasba – weighing up/pondering over actions/taking account
 - Take account of yourself before your account is taken
 - Surah Al` Imran – Reflection
 - Surah Al` Anfal
 - Tomorrow has to be better than today
 - Personal development

- Salah
- Repentance.
- **In terms of the Collaborative**
 - Zakah – Alms giving
 - Sharing
 - Battle of Badar, direct feedback
 - Help educators on good ideas
 - The ummah is like a body if one part feels pain so does the whole body
 - A believer is a mirror of another believer
 - Talking about facts
 - Surah Hujaraat, made you into tribes and nations.....
 - Battle of Uhad – full feedback by Allah
 - Sadaqah
 - Congregational prayers
 - Shura/scholarly advice
 - Obligation to pass on the message.

Participants concluded that their definition of the best teaching and learning practices and the habits of creative teaching were essentially and fundamentally Islamic and employing them within their own practice would enhance pupil achievement, enskill the young people and provide them with a balanced education that would encourage them to live as good Muslims happily and harmoniously in a society in which they were in minority. The session ended by requesting that they put forward ideas for the final session.

Ideas for the next training session: they decided that they would like:-

- A sample lesson to implement creativity habits – a lesson for actual classroom
- How to teach controversial issues
- Lesson planning (scheme of work) for Alim classes
- Raising aspiration of teachers towards pupils
- Creating a model of behaviour management.

7. THIRD TRAINING DAY: Being an outstanding teacher

Accordingly, the SDSA and Head planned the third training day, BEING AN OUTSTANDING TEACHER, which took place in June 2012. The overall shape was agreed with the Headteacher but the key innovation was securing the permission of a young Alimi teacher who courageously agreed to have one of his lessons videoed so that his colleagues would be able to offer some comments as to his performance. This viewing was however, to be preceded by a discussion of the nature of outstanding

teaching. A comparison between the Darul Uloom's criteria and that used by OFSTED would provide a clear benchmark for further action and the school's own criteria could then be used for future lesson observation.

The Intended Outcomes of the day were, as in all the sessions, explicitly stated:

'By end of the session we hope COLLECTIVELY to have:-

- **Developed** our own criteria for quality of teaching
- **Discussed and agreed** what makes an outstanding lesson
- **Viewed and Discussed** a pre-recorded lesson
- **Discussed** the teaching of controversial issues
- **Summarised** our collective achievements.

What makes outstanding teaching?

Participants agreed that outstanding teaching was that which:-

- Was well and constructively planned
- Was based upon assessment of prior pupil learning
- Used assessment as a tool to measure in-lesson progress
- Was based upon sound subject knowledge
- Was delivered in an engaging and friendly manner but within clear ground rules for pupil behaviour
- Was Interesting
- Catered for every student
- Was differentiated
- Included some independent work
- Included a number of activities
- Was interactive
- Was well paced and effectively timed
- Offered both breadth and depth of knowledge
- Encouraged questioning and discussion
- Was motivating to students and based upon high pupil expectation.

Colleagues were asked to decide upon the school's own Rules of lesson Observation:

They resolved that the observer should:

- Be A Critical friend
- Be Unbiased
- Be objective
- Check the books
- Join in the group work
- Engage with the teacher being observed
- Examine the lesson plans in advance
- Feedback to teacher after class and that this feedback should _ -
 - Be Supportive
 - Be Positively phrased

- Suggest areas of improvement.

As the inset programme had started with a discussion about the most serious controversial issues surrounding the school, it was perhaps fitting that, at the request of the staff, the final session should involve a discussion and about the teaching of controversial issues. Colleagues were asked to discuss what they thought were controversial issues, why they considered it important that such issues were covered and to provide examples of controversial issues from your practice and how they dealt with them.

For the teaching staff of the Darul Uloom a controversial issue was:

- Something which is regarded as sensitive and dangerous or has a stigma attached to it
- Taking people outside their own comfort zone on particular issues
- Bringing up issues which we feel are controversial to some people
- An issue which is against the grain of ethical views of Darul Uloom
- An issue where there was a difference of opinion
- An issue which appears displeasing
- An issue where there was no common ground
- An issue where different schools of thought might conflict.

They listed the following as type's examples of issues that may be deemed controversial:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| ➤ 9/11 | ➤ Promiscuity |
| ➤ Jihad | ➤ Regime change |
| ➤ Derogatory words e.g. Kafir | ➤ Hijab wearing |
| ➤ Disrespect for other religions | ➤ Beard issues |
| ➤ Sects in Islam | ➤ Equality issues |
| ➤ Western values democracy | ➤ 'Sodomites' |
| ➤ Paedophilia | ➤ Gay marriage |

Importance of dealing with controversial issues:

Colleagues believed controversial issues must be covered because it was important to:-

- Obtain a clear understanding from an Islamic point of view
- Give a balanced point of view
- Ensure pupils do not have misconceptions
- Offer critical thinking and establish boundaries
- Challenge any prejudice and dogmatic thinking
- Know, rather than to be in dark or hear from an unreliable source
- Learn to speak with evidence
- Become Informed adults and better citizens

- Clear up any misconceptions
- Promote thinking, reflection and decision making.

Participants offered the following examples of controversial issues from their school and described how they had dealt with them:

- Discussing promiscuity within literature: tried to maintain a balanced debate
- Drugs and smoking: relating the issues and then paving a positive path as an alternative
- Mujahid/terrorist, Muslim/terrorist, extremism: discussed with examples and history
- From fiqh point of view: discussed the issues 20 or 8 taraweeh, masah over socks, taqleed
- Religious conflict: taught that according to our religion equality prevails, without being judgemental
- Schools of thought: provided information on all schools without making inferior one over the other
- Derogatory words: used more appropriate terms, explain to them according to their context
- Gay Marriages: taught from an Islamic point of view including issues like haram and the death penalty
- Democracy: taught that it generally better than so called 'Islamic' countries because of freedom of complaint and speech.

9. FINAL TRAINING DAY: Supporting trustees and governing body
The final session, held in September 2012 **was with the trustees and the governing body**. The SDSA and the Headteacher had discussed the shape of the session and its intended outcomes with the founding principal and chair of trustees. He agreed to proceed on the programme as outlined. The session aimed to:-

- 1) Briefly summarise the achievements so far
- 2) Discuss the formation of the first section of a policy for cohesion
- 3) Agree an overarching policy framework
- 4) Discuss the next Steps.

The meeting was divided into two parts. The first, with all the trustees, heard the good news about the training and its outcomes, received the rationale for the package both in terms of content and processes and then discussed the need for a wider and comprehensive policy. Trustees then delegated the detailed responsibility to a small group of governors who worked with the Head and the SDSA. An outline policy for cohesion was discussed and it was agreed that:

- As an organisation the Darul Uloom needed a defined path to follow. This would ensure limits and boundaries are delineated. It will

enable pupils to interact with people in the community. A friendship approach with others should ensure harmony.

- The policy should be aimed at all members of the school community including the Trustees, Governors, school senior leadership, teachers, and pupils and other staff members
- The school needs an equality policy addressing all 8 legally protected characteristics. Equal opportunities would feed into an overarching cohesion policy
- The school's Islamic principles and values need to be explicitly stated, as well as how the school actually implements its policy. Cohesion needed to be defined at various levels of school life, and governors need to be clear as an institution how they fit in the wider British society
- The Headteacher and the SDSA were charged with reviewing the draft and then presenting a final version to trustees and governors for final amendment and ratification.

8. Evaluations:

All written and oral were all complimentary and wonderfully positive about the three sessions. Participants maintained that they had been great fun, interactive, informative and modelled teaching behaviours. They particularly liked the style and mannerisms of both the presenters and applauded the inclusive and shared model. Linking the Islamic viewpoint to the habits of creative teaching and learning provided some excellent new learning. Colleagues discovered that Islam provides the ideal model for teaching and learning.

As to the future the staff wanted such insets more often. They requested more videos of good lessons and suggested that links be made to other Darul Ulooms to see what they were doing. The last word however goes to one brother who said that **the presenters 'had put their heart, mind and soul into the training events'**-no greater accolade for any teacher!

10. Recommendations:

On the basis of working with the Darul Uloom High School we would like to make the following recommendations which we believe will both sustain the many excellent improvements already undertaken and enhanced the school's reputation yet again as a market leader in the field of Darul Ulooms:-

1) The schools should:

- Continue with their practice of lesson observation
- Continue with their practice of developing external links with others schools of different constituencies

- Continue with the CPD programme ensuring the processes involve as many staff as possible in determining agendas.

2) The trustees and the governing body should:

- Accept and endorse this report
- Annually monitor their cohesion policy
- Utilise their new School Improvement Partner, Maurice Irfan Coles, so that he keeps a running brief on all these areas
- Seek to update various web based reports to ensure that they adequately reflect the school's current positive position
- Clarify the relationship between the governing body and the trustees so that each is clear about their respective powers and responsibilities
- Institute a training programme for the governing body so that they may best serve the school
- Consider, via the Majlis al Shura, offering the type of inset undertaken with the SDSA to other Darul Ulooms
- Consider opening discussions concerning moving towards an agreed and accredited syllabus for all Darul Ulooms
- Consider nominating a member of staff to act as an Active Liaison with other Darul Ulooms.

11. Conclusion:

For all participants, staff, trustees and governors and the SDSA team itself **the journey from a culture of intolerance to a culture of cohesion has been a pretty miraculous one.** The in-service itself, based as it was upon the five principles of openness, collaboration, modelling accurate reporting-all within a clear Islamic framework, provide an ideal springboard for all Darul Ulooms. The policy for cohesion, the lesson observation schedules and the innovative materials employed in some of the training sessions-if acted upon by the school should ensure the school's progress over time. The Head's undoubted organisation skills, his vision and drive coupled with a great staff willingness to continue to develop, make the school a model for others in this area. Engagement of this nature should lead to better teaching and learning for the students. Finally, the great beauty of the exercise is that, over the year, it has become increasingly clear that all that developments have been within a clear Islamic framework, supporting all these involved in perhaps becoming better Muslims and in taking our place as good citizens of the UK. Allah does move in mysterious ways indeed!

12. Postscript:

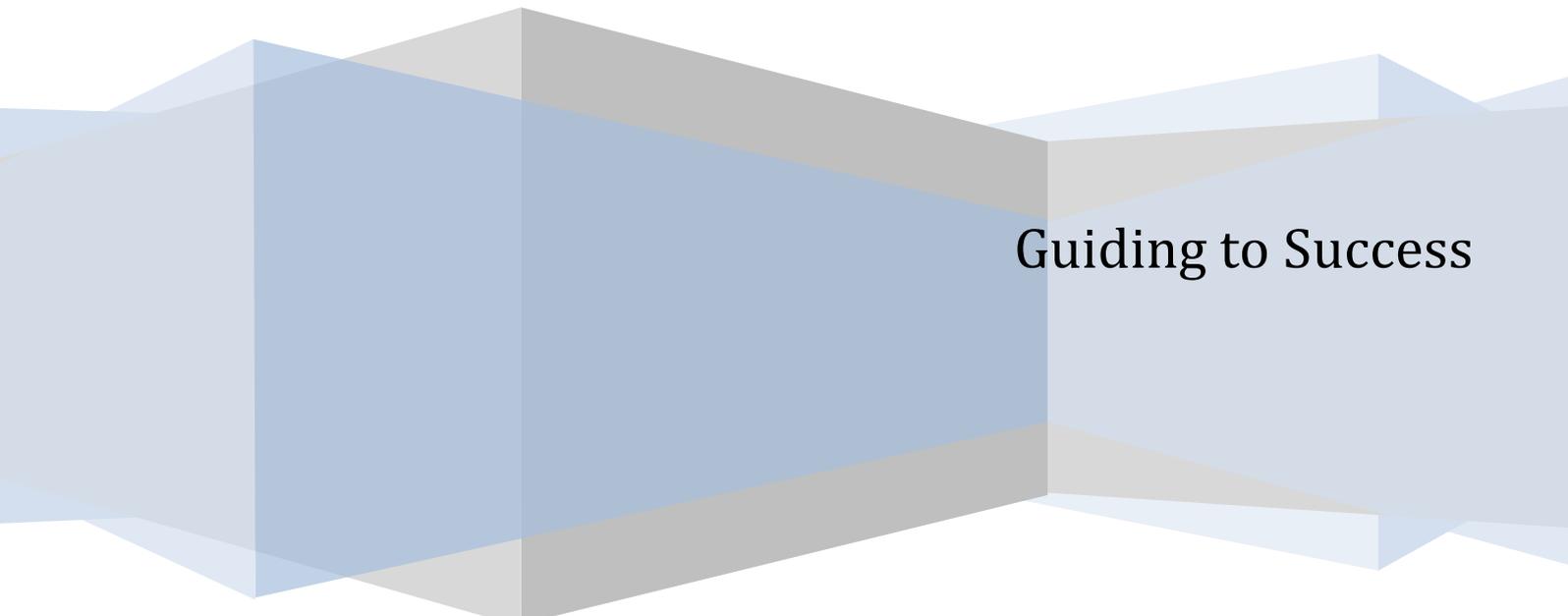
The Head undertook the bulk of this onerous task of reworking the cohesion policy, and having received comments from the SDSA, produced the penultimate draft which was ratified by the trustees and governing

body and appears as appendix one. In addition throughout his tenure the Head has implemented a large range of measures designed to ensure that a culture of intolerance could never happen again. This list is outside the remit of this report but includes a programme of rigorous lesson observation, organised visits to a range of other religious institutions and joint working with other mainstreams schools. (Appendix two offers his detailed Promoting Citizenship, Social/Cultural awareness, inclusion and cohesion programme) In addition, the trustees have approved the appointment of Maurice Irfan Coles as their school adviser for five days per annum. The precise agenda for his work will be subject to negotiation between the Headteacher and Maurice Irfan.

Darul Uloom Islamic High School Birmingham

Promoting Equality & Cohesion Policy

To be reviewed: January 2014



Guiding to Success

1. Introduction

This Policy on *Promoting Equality & Cohesion* has been developed in collaboration with SDSA and in response to issues raised by the school inspection by OFSTED (May 2011).

The Principle, management, trustees and Governing Body are all unanimously agreed upon the need for a clear, coherent document outlining the guiding principles held by the school in relation to the promotion of equality, tolerance and cohesion.

It should be understood as a matter of fact that a central belief of the Islamic faith focuses on tolerance, respect and equality. The document therefore, begins with a reference to this Islamic viewpoint with a specific focus on the rights of the neighbours – defined not only as those close to us in proximity but also our neighbours across our community, city and country.

It then reports on the legal perspective and stresses several guiding principles which have been adapted from the model *Equality & Diversity Policy* developed by In-service Training and Development.

2. Islamic framework

From the Qur'an:

O people, We have created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may recognise one another.

Certainly, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most God-fearing. Surely, Allah is all-knowing, all aware.

Verily in the sight of Allah, the most honoured amongst you is the one who is most God-fearing. (49:13)

Serve Allah, and join not any partners with Him; and do good –to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet). (4:36)

From the Sirah and Hadith:

There is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab and for a non-Arab over an Arab, nor for the white over the black nor for the black over the white except in God-consciousness. (Last sermon at Ara'faat)

Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day let him treat his neighbour well. (Bukhari and Muslim)

Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him not harm or annoy his neighbour. (Bukhari)

Abdullah ibn Amr had a sheep slaughtered and asked his servant, Did you give some meat to our Jewish neighbour? For I have heard the Messenger of Allah say, 'Jibreel kept on enjoining the good treatment of neighbours to the extent that I thought he would include neighbours as heirs'
(Bukhari and Muslim)

'He is not a believer. He is not a believer. He is not a believer.'
The people enquired 'Who, O Messenger of Allah?' He said 'The one from whose evil (or troubles) his neighbour does not feel safe.'
(Bukhari and Muslim)

3. Legal framework

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and belief.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

4. Guiding principles

In fulfilling the Islamic and legal obligations cited above, we are guided by eight principles:

4.1 Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all our learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender

- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background

4.2 Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice is recognised and respected
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised and respected
- religion, belief or faith background

4.3 Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote within our staff and students:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

4.4 Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all our staff and students, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status

- whatever their gender and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

4.5 Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between our staff and students and:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men

4.6 Principle 6: We aim to consult and involve widely.

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We aim to consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and both girls and boys.

4.7 Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit.

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of our staff and students.

4.8 Principle 8: Measurable objectives

We formulate specific and measurable objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted.

The objectives which we identify take into account school, local and national priorities and issues, as appropriate.

5. Promoting Cohesion

We will work towards a society with a common vision based on core Islamic moral values and a strong sense of belonging for all, where diversity is valued and where everyone recognises what all human beings share in common, that all human beings are of equal worth and where relationships across all individuals and groups are positive.

We understand that we can only promote cohesion effectively through recognising the inextricable links with Equality and Diversity in our policy and practice and through our policies on teaching and learning.

More specifically we see the promotion of cohesion as involving:

- Equality of opportunity
- Social inclusion
- Respect for diversity
- Shared moral values
- Active engagement with others to understand what we all hold in common
- Countering extremism

This will be implemented across the whole school through three key areas of our practice:

- Teaching, learning and curriculum
- Equity and excellence
- Ethos & Community Engagement

5.1 Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

In meeting our duty to promote cohesion, we will strive to ensure that all our staff and students will enjoy opportunities to:

- Develop pride in their own identity and to learn about and develop respect for the identities of other learners, of groups in the local community, of groups in the wider UK and in the wider world based on ethnicity, socio-economic circumstances, gender, lifestyle, disability, age, faith and world view
- Develop a strong understanding and appreciation of what all human beings hold in common as well as respect for differences
- Develop a positive vision of a diverse, just and equitable society
- Learn about their own community, UK society including communities which contrast with their own and global society, including the challenges faced by the whole global community
- Learn about the major world faith traditions as well as non-religious moral world views, including the commonalities across faiths and world views as well as the diversity within individual faith traditions
- Develop skills of critical thinking including the ability to recognise and challenge myths and stereotypes about people and places and to appreciate how people may see things from different viewpoints
- Enjoy at first hand cultural experiences that reflect and celebrate the diversity within UK society
- To learn about how inward and outward migration have shaped UK society and how movement of people has been an enduring feature of human history

- Develop the ability to empathise with the feelings and experiences of others, including those from different backgrounds from themselves

We will continue to strive to establish a learning environment in which all our staff and students:

- Enjoy the right to full, active participation knowing that their views and ideas are taken very seriously and where their voice is heard
- Feel safe, valued and respected and develop a strong, positive sense of belonging
- Have frequent opportunities to collaborate with others, sharing experiences, ideas and perspectives
- Develop skills of mediation and conflict-resolution
- Develop the skills of democratic decision-making

5.2 Equity and Excellence

We will continue to strive to ensure that all staff and students develop their abilities and talents to the full and enjoy equality of opportunity to participate fully in the life of the school.

To this end, we will:

- Regularly monitor and evaluate the academic, personal and social development of each child and of all the diverse groups that are represented in the school, taking effective steps where necessary to address any differences in outcomes across groups
- Use assemblies, classroom time and meetings of staff and trustees to maintain a high profile for our commitment to equality of opportunity and social inclusion
- Ensure that all sections of the school community, including parents, are aware of our commitment to equity for all, of our procedures for promoting these principles and for dealing with infringements; this involves ensuring that all sections of the school community have confidence in our arrangements for tackling all forms of bigotry, racial and other prejudice, discrimination, bullying and harassment
- Regularly monitor patterns of discipline, including any exclusions by pupil group and take any action necessary to ensure equity and inclusion
- Promote the value of linguistic diversity and celebrate the diverse language skills of the school community, including heritage languages
- Take steps to enable pupils to encounter a range of positive role models including those that do not conform to stereotypes of age, gender, ethnicity, disability and social class

5.3 Ethos & Community Engagement

Our school is fully committed to promoting cohesion within the local community and wider UK and global society. Therefore, we will:

- Communicate our core values and vision of inclusion and equality to the whole school community and the wider local community
- Ensure that as a school we have full and accurate knowledge of the backgrounds of our children and their families and of the main socio-economic features of our local community and its relationship with wider UK society, using this knowledge to inform our provision
- Ensure that all pupils have opportunities to engage with members of their local community, from contrasting parts of the UK and from countries around the world; at each level, reflecting the diversity of these communities
- Ensure that the school is aware of changing patterns of migration into and from the local community and take steps to engage with and support groups that are new to the community
- Take rigorous steps to ensure that all parents and carers regard the school as open, welcoming and accessible and explore all possible ways of engaging all parents and carers and involving them in the life of the school

6. Policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation

The trustees and Governing Body are fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to our duty to promote equality and cohesion and a named trustee leads on this issue. The trustees will review annually the extent to which we have been successful in implementing our action plan.

The head teacher will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities through appropriate professional development and guidance and a member of the senior management team has lead responsibility for cohesion.

Our process of monitoring and evaluation will include:

- Analysis of data on pupils' academic achievement
- Detailed review of pupils' personal and social development
- Analysis of pupils' involvement and participation in voluntary activities
- Analysis of parents' and carers' involvement, participation and attendance at events including meetings to review pupil progress
- Pupil-led questionnaires and group interviews
- Questionnaire to parents and carers
- On-going review of the curriculum (bi-annual)
- Report to trustees

7. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

There is guidance for all staff on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

8. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

A senior member of staff (M Hussain) has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy. All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 above
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

9. Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

10. Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

11. Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

12. Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and governing body.

13. Monitoring and review

We collect study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status and gender.

DARUL ULOOM ISLAMIC HIGH SCHOOL: PROMOTING CITIZENSHIP, SOCIAL/CULTURAL AWARENESS, INCLUSION & COHESION PROGRAMME

WEST MIDLANDS COUNTER TERRORISM UNIT

PC James Sommers and PC Sarah Mutter have worked with the staff and students of Darul Uloom in the academic year 2012-2013. Initial meetings with the Principal, Trustees and the head teacher resulted in a plan of workshops for staff and students around the PREVENT agenda.

All staff received the WRAP training around extremism and extremist behaviour indicators and all students in years 9,10 and 11 have participated in the ACT NOW workshop which explored impact of potential terrorist activity.

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE

Belonging to a community, understanding the roles of the emergency services and advice on careers in the fire service were explored with the members of the Red Watch from Hay Mills Fire Service.

ASSEMBLY

Weekly assemblies exploring controversial issues continue to be conducted by the Head teacher. The topics covered to date have included *Identity, Jihad, Terrorism, Homosexuality* and *Views on women –Muslim and non-Muslim*.

SPEAKERS

John Hemmings MP

The Rt. Hon John Hemmings MP conducted a whole school assembly and question & answer workshop around civic participation, the role of the MP and steps to making positive change.

Jehan Muhammed

Jehan presented a seminar titled *The Role of Muslim Soldiers from the Indian Sub-continent in World War 2*, exploring historical links between Britain and the Indian sub-continent, the liberation of Africa from Nazi Germany and common misconceptions surrounding the identity of young British Muslims.

Mufti Waseem Khan

Mufti Waseem, Principal Darul Uloom Trinidad, led an assembly titled *How to be model citizens* exploring perceptions of Muslims in the wider community and representing Islam through positive practical role models.

Dr Henry Cohen

Dr Cohen discussed Jewish beliefs and faith through workshops and visits.

Muslim Aid/ Acorns/ Restless Beings

These charities explored how our actions can affect change, empathy toward humanity and involvement and participation in social change.

ASDAN & WORK EXPERIENCE

All year 10 students have been involved in a 10 week assessed ASDAN course on work, careers and employability and all will be involved in work experience week.

RELIGIOUS/ CULTURAL VISITS

Visits and trips to religious and cultural places of interest and importance have been ongoing for almost 2 years. Understanding and empathizing with other faiths and communities, promoting tolerance and respect and appreciating our roles within the larger community our outcomes from visits to places which have included *Birmingham progressive Synagogue, Church of England and Catholic Churches, Gurdwara, Hindu and Buddhist temples, Warwick Castle, Cotswolds, London Tower and local museums.*