

Batley Grammar teacher showed Prophet Muhammad image next to Donald Trump, Pope Francis and Boris Johnson, pupil claims

From the [Mail on Sunday](#)

A teacher who sparked fury by showing cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed to pupils during a lesson about blasphemy is living in a 'safe house' with his wife and children because of fears they will be attacked. More than six weeks after fleeing his home following angry demonstrations outside Batley Grammar School in West Yorkshire, the teacher and his family are still being given police protection. The threat to their safety is judged so severe that even their relatives have not been told where they are living.

The windows of the family's council flat, where they had lived for more than eight years, were this weekend covered with white sheets. Neighbours understand they have moved out permanently, with one friend claiming their children have been unable to attend school.

First statement from pupil in controversial lesson that has left teacher under police protection for months . . .

Speaking through his father, a 14-year-old Muslim pupil said that cartoons depicting the Prophet were shown on an overhead projector along with other images of the former US President Donald Trump, Pope Francis and Boris Johnson.

The Prophet cartoons were first published by the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten in September 2005 and again in the

French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, later the target of a gun rampage that left 12 members of staff dead. The schoolboy said pupils were unaware of who was shown in the cartoons until the teacher spelled out it was the Prophet and asked for their reaction. 'No one said anything. I was just gobsmacked. But no one raised their hand to say anything,' the pupil said.

He also told the Daily Mail that the teacher (a declared atheist) was "popular" with other students and had never "shown any disrespect" towards Islam but was known for "challenging pupils minds".

The pupil says the teacher was expecting complaints and said "who's going to tell their parents?" as pupils left the lesson.

He claims a complaining parent was told by the now exiled teacher that "he had freedom of expression under his British values" and that he got consent from the children beforehand.

Though controversy around the teacher's 'blasphemy' lesson remain, some local Muslim leaders – including those who took part in initial demonstrations outside the school in West Yorkshire – believe that the teacher should be reinstated as matters have "spiralled out of control". . . . those supporting the teacher that has been suspended have criticised the school for the slow pace of the investigation, which has left the man without a job. The other two teachers that are being investigated are understood to have not been suspended by the school.

Sources say the probe is unlikely to conclude before the end of the month – leaving the teacher and his family in fear of Islamic extremists and their lives in ruins. Imam Adil Shahzad, who travelled to Batley from Bradford to join the protests, wants the teacher dismissed. 'A precedent has to be set. Suspending the teacher was in the right direction and we won't accept anything less than a sacking.'

One of the results of last week's elections means that the constituency of Batley and Spen will be a by-election in the next few months. Their MP was Jo Cox who was murdered by a man (who shouted 'Britain first' as he stabbed her, which defines him as a right-wing extremist, although I don't believe he ever divulged his motive in court) days before the Brexit vote in 2016. She was replaced (with a reduced majority for Labour) by former soap actress Tracey Brabin. She was elected as Mayor of West Yorkshire last week (I don't know why she stood. Maybe being Mayor pays even better than being an MP; maybe it's a better stepping stone to power. Sadiq Khan took the same route in London). So as being in two different places at once is a bit difficult she should be stepping down as MP. And with the Red Wall of northern towns (for US readers our political colours are the opposite of yours; Labour is red and the Conservatives are blue) crumbling at every turn [Labour's battle](#) for re-election.