

East London: Barking school asks pupils about their periods if they don't attend prayers, says Ofsted report

From the [emergency Ofsted report](#) on this private fee-paying Muslim girls school was published earlier this month.

Staff at Lady Aisha Academy ask girls if their menstrual cycle is the reason they don't attend prayers after a certain number of days, pupils told an inspector. Under Islamic law, menstruating women and girls are forbidden from praying.

"This personal questioning does not promote pupils' self-esteem and confidence," inspector Carolyn Dickinson wrote in her report, which was published on November 15. "Nor does this practice encourage respect for women, as set out in the Equality Act 2010."

The findings are despite the school – which is on the same site as the Al Madina Mosque – supposedly banning the practice after a visit from the council in April.

The head teacher says he didn't know it still happened.

The Ofsted report was an emergency one made to deal with this particular issue. The inspector found that the school did not meet all of the Independent school standards.



Leaders have not ensured that staff follow guidance regarding the appropriate questioning of pupils. As a result, standards relating to pupils spiritual, moral , social and cultural development and to the promotion of pupils welfare are unmet .

Will Ofsted and the local authority do anything about this? Or will the Labour party controlled, highly Islamic local council turn a blind eye, maybe secretly approving? A former resident would like to know.