

Four Wakefield pupils suspended after Quran damaged at school

This is from the [BBC](#). Wakefield is a small city in West Yorkshire, not far from Halifax, Bradford and Leeds. I [went there](#) last year.

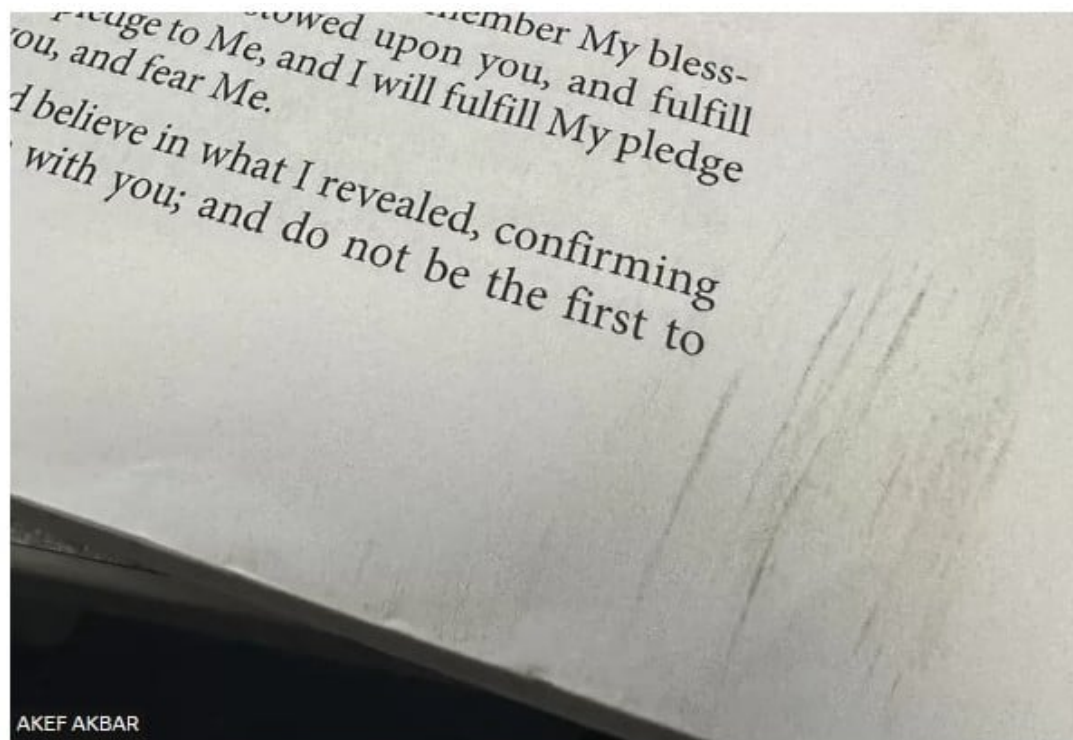
Four pupils have been suspended from a West Yorkshire secondary school after a copy of the Quran was damaged by students. Wednesday's incident at Wakefield's Kettlethorpe High School happened when a copy of the Islamic text was brought in by a Year 10 pupil.

Head teacher Tudor Griffiths said the book remained intact and there was "no malicious intent" from those involved. He held a meeting with concerned community leaders on Friday.

Independent councillor for Wakefield East, Akef Akbar, called the meeting after being contacted by people calling for more information. He said reports the Quran had been burnt or destroyed were untrue, and he had inspected the book himself during the meeting.

Cllr Akbar also said later "A very difficult situation to deal with today but thankfully resolved peacefully and de-escalated."

To which the reply from local men was "[What do you mean 'thankfully resolved peacefully'](#)? Who was threatening otherwise and why weren't the police called immediately?" and "[A book got scuffed](#) and suddenly the police and the council are involved and a 14 yo autistic boy is the centre of a circus. For shame."



AKEF AKBAR

| Some of the pages were smudged with dirt, Mr Akbar said

Mr Akbar said he had been told the book had been taken to school as a dare by a pupil who lost while playing a Call of Duty videogame with other

students.

While at the school it sustained a slight tear to the cover and smears of dirt on some of the pages. Mr Akbar said he understood it had been kicked around on the school premises – a claim denied by the school.

Head teacher Mr Griffiths said in a statement: "We would like to reassure all our community that the holy book remains fully intact and that our initial enquiries indicate there was no malicious intent by those involved. "However, we have made it very clear that their actions did not treat the Quran with the respect it should have, so those involved have been suspended and we will be working with them to ensure they understand why their actions were unacceptable."

A spokesperson for West Yorkshire Police said they were "liaising" with the school.

However that same day another local councillor Usman Ali was [raging on Twitter](#) in a tweet he later [deleted](#).

"...today's events at Kettlethorpe High School where a Koran has been desecrated are a serious provocative action which needs to be dealt with by all the authorities, namely, the police, the school and the local authority.

This terrible action could destroy all the good progress that has been made in Wakefield to highlight and tackle Islamophobia . . . swift and appropriate action . . . this provocation does not set back community relations for years to come" *Is that a threat?*

Two days later the death threats and taunts to one of the boys involved, who is autistic, and suffers from anxiety (and one of the challenges of autism is learning those signals that indicate socially acceptable behaviour in a social setting) are such that his mother felt the need to don a hijab and appear before the local mosque, the Jamia Masjid Swafia, with a self-abasing apology for the sake of her son's safety and well being. Which [5Pillars had filmed and uploaded to twitter.](#)

I found it excruciating to watch. Shades of Soviet confessions during the show trial. But if my child was threatened, anxious and afraid of returning to school would I have done differently? We don't know how the other pupils are faring.

5 Pillars and the mosque concerned have received criticism from other Muslims.

Dr Naveed Iqbal @BeyNaveed [1h](#)

Replying to [@5Pillarsuk](#)

There was absolutely NO need for the mother to be paraded in front of an audience in this manner. Her son is autistic and it's apparently well known. This is how you create further divisions. The mosque committee needs to reflect on their handling of this matter.

and The kid was autistic, cut him some slack. The prophet was kind to the man who urinated in the masjid.

Plus all the criticism, much of it blunt and constructive, from non-Muslims.

It must also be remembered that Wakefield is only 6 miles from [Batley where a teacher](#) (not a pupil) is still in hiding, fearful for his life after a lesson featuring a cartoon of Mohammed.