

# Police are called in after primary school is 'intimidated' into dropping a ban on Muslim girls wearing hijabs

[Mail on Sunday](#)



Police have been called in after a top-rated primary school was 'intimidated' into dropping a ban on Muslim girls wearing hijabs. St Stephen's in Newham, East London, was bombarded with thousands of emails – many allegedly abusive or threatening violence against staff – after it ruled that girls aged under eight should not wear headscarves.

However, insiders said staff had been bullied by an 'orchestrated' campaign of up to 500 emails a day from across the country, with some messages falsely branding head teacher Neena Lall, 50, a 'paedophile' who 'deserved what she had coming'.

The ban was imposed before Christmas to help five- and six-year-olds integrate better after staff noticed they were often reluctant to join in playground games because their headscarves were cumbersome. The campaign against the ban

gathered momentum last week after locals began a petition opposing it, and Islamic activists and Left-wing Newham councillors criticised the decision.

According to well-placed sources, Mr Qawi, 54, felt he had to step down because staff were becoming frightened to come into school. He told colleagues in an email: 'I wish the school continued success and am truly sorry that my actions have caused any harm to the reputation of the fantastic school.'

Sources blamed Islamic activists MEND, who have faced accusations of extremism, for encouraging the email campaign.

Dr Usama Hasan, an imam and Islamic expert at the Quilliam think-tank, said: 'There is no religious requirement for under-eights to wear the headscarf. It is valid to raise health and safety, which is an Islamic requirement, as is encouraging children to play. But there's nothing wrong with parents dressing their daughters like them. Consultation is encouraged in Islam, so the school should consult widely.' *Ie, even the so-called 'moderates' tacitly support the hijab on even the tiniest of little girls.*

But Mr Qawi's resignation was welcomed by the Muslim Council of Britain, which said the 'appalling' ban was discriminatory as it did not target the dress of pupils of other faiths.

*The police will do nothing except warn the headmistress to watch her step and not antagonise people. And the Department of Education will do nothing as our government is led by Theresa the Appeaser.*