

# Revealed: new 'Trojan Horse plot'

*From the Sunday Times, [Mail on Sunday](#)*

[When Trish O'Donnell took the headship of Clarksfield Primary School](#) – a vast Edwardian building rising amid the rooftops of east Oldham – one council officer told her that she had inherited the town's "poisoned chalice". That was, if anything, an understatement.

According to Ofsted, O'Donnell rose to the challenge of educating her almost entirely British-Pakistani pupils, many of whom were "at an early stage of learning to speak English" and so started school with "skill levels well below those typical for their age". By the end of their time at Clarksfield the same children's attainment had "risen sharply", taking them to the UK average. There were outings to football matches and celebrations of the Queen's birthday. The school is now graded "good" and inspectors praised "strong leadership that motivates staff and pupils to do their best".

A confidential report on Clarksfield by Oldham council this month, seen by The Sunday Times, said O'Donnell had reported that she had been subjected to a long campaign involving "death threats", "threats to blow up her car" and "aggressive verbal abuse". She had even been physically attacked by one parent, the report said.

In 2013 a parent governor, Nasim Ashraf, hosted "Islamic teaching sessions" on school premises. His wife, Hafizan Zaman, ordered female staff to cover their heads. Ashraf, whose sister,