

A THRIVING HUB OF MINORITY ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN BLACKBURN, ENGLAND

Nurul Hanani
IAIN Kediri, Indonesia
Email: nurulhananimhi@iainkediri.ac.id

Hajer Abdallah Albshkar
University of Zawia, Libya
Email: h.elbshkar@zu.edu.ly

Corresponding Author: Nurul Hanani

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Abstract: This research project examines the learning strategy employed by Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS) in Blackburn, England, in adapting to government policies and minority conditions. The British government policy provides Islamic schools with the autonomy to develop integrated home learning curricula. A qualitative approach was employed, with the data taken from documentary sources, supported by secondary sources in the form of reports. The findings demonstrate that TIGHS has developed a strategy for adapting to the distortive government policies by integrating Islamic teachings into the national curriculum in a home learning environment. In consideration of the individual needs of the students, the learning material is not taught in formal class units and can be used selectively, with the assistance of home tutors. The implications of home education are that students can gain valuable life experience, which is reflected in their mindset and social behaviour.

Keywords: Curriculum, Home Educated, Islamic education.

Introduction

Education is a key pillar in the formation of individual and group identity in society.¹ In England, Islamic education is central to

¹ Muhamad Gina Nugraha, "Development of Web-Based Radioactivity Teaching Materials Oriented-on Character Education for Highschool Student," *ASEAN*

the growing Muslim community.² As the Muslim population in England has grown since the mid-20th century, so has the need for educational institutions that are consistent with Islamic values. This has led to the establishment of Islamic schools, which are now spread across England.

Islamic schools in England first emerged in response to the Muslim community's need for religious education that was not only theologically sound but also relevant to modern life in England. Initially, Islamic schools were limited to madrassas or weekend schools offering basic religious education. Over time, however, the need to provide Muslim children with a more holistic education—one that integrates the national curriculum with Islamic education—became increasingly apparent. This led to the emergence of full-time Islamic schools.³

The development of Islamic schools in England can be seen as part of the Muslim community's efforts to maintain their religious identity in the face of pressure to integrate into a secular and pluralist British society.⁴ On the one hand, these schools serve as a bulwark to protect Islamic values from external influences that could be perceived as harmful. On the other hand, they also serve as a bridge to facilitate the integration of Muslim pupils into British society in a way that does not compromise their Islamic identity.⁵

Journal of Science and Engineering Education 3, no. 1 (2023): 95–102, <https://doi.org/10.17509/ajsec.v3i1.49176>.

² Akhiruddin et al., “The Role of The Sociology Teacher in Implementing Character Education,” *IJOLEH: International Journal of Education and Humanities* 1, no. 1 (May 22, 2022): 71–81, <https://doi.org/10.56314/ijoleh.v1i1.38>.

³ Farida Ariani et al., “Implementing Online Integrated Character Education and Parental Engagement in Local Cultural Values Cultivation,” *European Journal of Educational Research* 11, no. 3 (2022): 1699–1714, <https://doi.org/10.12973/eujer.11.3.1699>.

⁴ Ahmad Tohri et al., “The Urgency of Sasak Local Wisdom-Based Character Education for Elementary School in East Lombok, Indonesia,” *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education* 11, no. 1 (2022): 333–44, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v11i1.21869>.

⁵ Muhammad Yusnan, “Implementation of Character Education in State Elementary School,” *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* 5, no. 2 (June 15, 2022): 218–23, <https://doi.org/10.34050/elsjish.v5i2.21019>. Julia Ipgrave, Joyce Miller, and Paul Hopkins, “Responses of Three Muslim Majority Primary Schools in England to the Islamic Faith of Their Pupils,” *Journal of International Migration and Integration / Revue de l'integration et de La Migration Internationale* 11, no. 1 (February 2010): 73–89, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-009-0119-7>.

The development of Islamic schools in England has not been without its challenges. The main challenge is the often negative public perception of Islamic schools, influenced by Islamophobic sentiments and distrust of institutions perceived as ‘different’.⁶ The media often report on Islamic schools with narratives that focus on the potential for radicalisation or failure to promote state ideology, although the evidence to support these claims is often weak.

In addition, England’s increasingly stringent education policies in terms of academic standards and inspections, such as those carried out by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education), put additional pressure on Islamic schools. Many Islamic schools are struggling to meet these standards while remaining true to their mission of providing authentic Islamic education. In some cases, Islamic schools face challenges in recruiting competent staff to teach both the national curriculum and Islamic religious education.⁷

Islamic schools also provide many benefits to the Muslim community and to British society in general. Islamic schools help to shape a generation of young Muslims who have a deep understanding of their religion and can make a positive contribution to British society.⁸ They also serve as a model for other schools in managing cultural and religious diversity.

Recognising this, Tauheedul Islam Girls’ High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS) in Blackburn, England, has made a breakthrough in thriving amidst minorities and the demands of maintaining state ideology through a home education curriculum. Home education among Blackburn Muslims reflects the efforts of the Muslim community to adapt to a less favourable environment while maintaining their Islamic identity. Parents who opt for home education seek to create a curriculum that combines a high level of academic education with in-depth religious education, so that their

⁶ Rahmah Hidayati et al., “Character Education and the Rise of Mental Health in Muhammadiyah Boarding School,” *International Journal of Public Health Science* 11, no. 1 (2022): 170–78, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijphs.v11i1.20889>.

⁷ Hijrawatil Aswat and Khaerun Nisa Tayibu, “Teacher Managerial Strategy in Building Character Education During The Covid-19 Pandemic,” *International Journal of Education And Humanities* 1, no. 1 (2022): 82–94.

⁸ M Wilkinson, “Prison as a Site of Intense Religious Change: The Example of Conversion to Islam,” *Religions* 12, no. 3 (2021): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12030162>.

children can grow up as Muslims with knowledge and integrity, able to participate actively in British society.⁹

This research aims to explore the home-based learning strategies used by the Muslim community in Blackburn as a creative solution to educational challenges. By analysing the successes and obstacles faced by families who choose this route, it is hoped that recommendations can be made to help improve the effectiveness of home education, both for the Muslim community and for British society as a whole.

Previous research studies have not explored learning strategies in home education as a tactical step, whether its application to leadership, methods, teacher professionalism and final output. Tabrani and Zulmuqim show that the government holds the mainstream of education policy, including Islamic education.¹⁰ The state requires a value link in the curriculum unit. The Islamic education system in England is secular and autonomous, but Islamic education is given ad hoc authority, so Islamic education uses integration patterns in formulating the system. Qurratu Akyuni believes that Islamic education in England is developing rapidly because of Islamic values that religious communities can accept. However, Islamic education has not been able to compete with state education. These studies have not discussed the strategy of development in the midst of minority conditions, especially in terms of the curriculum. This is where the importance of this study lies.

This research reveals the phenomenon of leadership as part of a development strategy, including curriculum setting and sustaining existence. For this reason, this research is qualitative in nature in order to provide in-depth findings.¹¹ Primary data was taken from a literature review at Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS). Secondary data was taken from books, articles and news on official websites and cross-checked. The data

⁹ Shaima Mohamed Hassan et al., "A Qualitative Study of Healthcare Professionals' Experiences of Providing Maternity Care for Muslim Women in the UK," *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth* 20, no. 1 (December 2020): 400, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-020-03096-3>.

¹⁰ Tabrani, Zulmuqim, and M. Zalnur, "Pendidikan Islam Di Inggris," *Jurnal Kolaboratif Sains* 7, no. 1 (January 20, 2024): 219–37, <https://doi.org/10.56338/jks.v7i1.4843>.

¹¹ Muhammad Ramdhan, *Metode Penelitian* (Surabaya: Cipta Media Nusantara, 2021).

was then analysed using triangulation methods, such as combining literature sources and interviews, to maximise the final result.

Muslim Minority Communities in England

After the Second World War, Britain faced a severe labour shortage, prompting the government to open its doors to immigrants from former colonies. During this period, the number of Muslims in England grew rapidly, particularly from Pakistan and Bangladesh, with the peak of immigration in the 1960s and 1970s.¹² The need for places of worship and formal religious education was increasingly felt, leading to the construction of larger mosques and Islamic schools.

As the Muslim community has grown, challenges have emerged, particularly in terms of maintaining Islamic identity in the face of pressure to assimilate into the dominant Western culture.¹³ Tensions related to racism, discrimination and Islamophobia further complicate the situation. The emergence of a second and third generation of more educated British Muslims adds to the complexity as they face an identity dilemma between their parents' culture of origin and the wider British culture.¹⁴

At the start of the 21st century, the Muslim community in England has become an integral part of society, with a population estimated at over three million.¹⁵ However, challenges such as Islamophobia, exacerbated by global events, and controversial anti-terrorism policies continue to cast a shadow over its development. In the midst of these challenges, the Muslim community plays an active role in various social, educational and interfaith dialogue initiatives.

Education has been a major focus in the development of the Muslim community in England. Despite the growth of Islamic schools, many families choose to send their children to mainstream

¹² Alison Scott-Baumann and Simon Perfect, *Freedom of Speech in Universities: Islam, Charities and Counter-Terrorism*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429289835>.

¹³ Christy Kulz, "Mapping Folk Devils Old and New through Permanent Exclusion from London Schools," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 22, no. 1 (January 2, 2019): 93–109, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2018.1497961>.

¹⁴ Harvey White et al., "Historical Overview of Person Centered Medicine," in *Person Centered Medicine*, ed. Juan E. Mezzich et al. (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023), 29–51, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-17650-0_2.

¹⁵ Faheem Hussain Sabzali and Farid Panjwani, "Rear-Mirror View: Representation of Islam and Muslims in the RE Textbooks," *British Journal of Religious Education* 46, no. 4 (October 2024): 520–33, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2024.2385104>.

schools while continuing to provide religious education through madrassas or religious education programmes at home.¹⁶ Islamic schools now follow the national curriculum with the aim of producing a generation that is highly educated and contributes positively to society, although challenges remain in overcoming stigma and meeting national standards.

The Islamic community in England has undergone significant change and has become an important part of England's multicultural landscape. Despite facing considerable challenges, the Muslim community continues to adapt and thrive, playing an important role in shaping the future of the country. The Islamic community in England is very diverse, reflecting a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, cultures and sects within Islam.¹⁷ The typology of the Muslim community in England can be seen in terms of ethnicity, sect, educational and economic levels, and approach to integration into British society.

Ethnicity is one of the main factors shaping the typology of the Islamic community in England. The majority of Muslims in England are from South Asia, mainly Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. There are also Muslim communities from the Middle East, North Africa and other countries such as Turkey and Somalia.¹⁸ Each of these ethnic groups brings its own traditions and cultures, which influence the way they practice their religion and interact with the wider society.¹⁹

Religious sects also shape the typology of the Islamic community in England. The majority of Muslims in England are Sunni, but there is also a significant Shia community, as well as

¹⁶ Martin Ejnar Hansen and Steven David Pickering, "The Role of Religion and COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in England," *Vaccine* 42, no. 13 (May 2024): 3215–19, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2024.04.006>.

¹⁷ Marimba Carr et al., "Testing a Faith-Placed Education Intervention for Bowel Cancer Screening in Muslim Communities Using a Two-Group Non-Randomised Mixed-Methods Approach: Feasibility Study Protocol," ed. Khin Thet Wai, *PLOS ONE* 19, no. 3 (March 15, 2024): e0293339, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0293339>.

¹⁸ Leni Franken and Bill Gent, eds., *Islamic Religious Education in Europe: A Comparative Study*, 1st ed. (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429331039>.

¹⁹ Ina Ter Avest, "An Innovative Research Instrument for Youngsters to Explore Their Life Orientation," *Religions* 12, no. 2 (January 29, 2021): 88, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12020088>.

smaller groups such as Ahmadiyya and Sufi.²⁰ These sectarian differences sometimes affect relations between Muslim communities in England, but in general they coexist peacefully and often work together on issues of common concern.

In terms of educational and economic levels, there are considerable differences within the Muslim community in Britain. Some groups, particularly those who have been in the UK for a long time, have managed to achieve a fairly well-established position in the economic and educational spheres. On the other hand, there are groups that continue to face socio-economic challenges, particularly in areas with high concentrations of Muslims, such as parts of London, Blackburn and Bradford. Educational and economic levels often affect their access to public services and their ability to participate in England's social and political life.²¹

The approach to integration is also one of the determinants of the typology of the Islamic community in England. Some groups are very open to integration and seek to merge their Islamic identity with British identity. They are often involved in political, social and economic activities at the national level and promote interfaith dialogue and pluralism. However, there are also groups that are more conservative and tend to distance themselves from Western culture and focus on preserving Islamic values and traditions within their own communities. This approach is often reflected in their preference for Islamic education, the language spoken at home and other social choices.

In addition, within the typology of Islamic societies in England there is a younger generation who play an important role in shaping the future of Muslim communities.²² This generation often faces complex identity challenges as they seek to reconcile their inherited religious teachings with the values of wider British society. They are

²⁰ İrfan Erdoğan, "İngiltere'de İslam Eğitimi: Fırsatlar ve Tehditler," *Cumhuriyet İlahiyat Dergisi* 24, no. 2 (December 15, 2020): 687–714, <https://doi.org/10.18505/cuid.703185>.

²¹ Mehdi Bozorgmehr and Philip Kasinitz, *Growing up Muslim in Europe and the United States*, Studies in Migration and Diaspora (Abingdon, Oxon New York, NY: Routledge, 2018).

²² Savita Rajurkar et al., "A Review of Significant Aspects Contributing to Curriculum Development," *International Journal of Research in Medical Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2018): 317, <https://doi.org/10.18203/2320-6012.ijrms20185185>.

more connected to the digital world and tend to use technology to express their views on both religious and socio-political issues.²³

This typology of Muslim communities in England shows that they are not a monolithic group, but rather a diverse community with different perspectives and approaches to life in England.²⁴ This diversity enriches their contribution to British society as a whole, but also presents challenges in terms of how they interact with each other and with wider society.

Islamic Education Curriculum at TIGHS

The Islamic school curriculum in England aims to combine academic education with the principles of Islamic teachings, providing a holistic approach to teaching and learning.²⁵ Amidst the diversity of the Muslim community in England, Islamic schools have developed curricula that seek to meet national educational standards while preserving religious values.²⁶

Since their inception, Islamic schools in England have sought to follow the national curriculum set by the government, which includes core subjects such as English, mathematics, science and social studies. This curriculum is designed to ensure that students receive an adequate academic education and are prepared to compete at a national level. Beyond the core subjects, students also study additional areas such as the arts, technology and foreign languages, with the aim of providing the broad knowledge and practical skills needed in the modern world.²⁷

²³ Hamzah et al., “Effectiveness of Blended Learning Model Based on Problem-Based Learning in Islamic Studies Course,” *International Journal of Instruction* 15, no. 2 (April 2022): 775–92.

²⁴ Maulana Ira, “Urgensi Pendekatan Sosiologis Dalam Studi Islam,” *Journal of Legal and Cultural Analytics* 1, no. 2 (August 22, 2022): 89–98, <https://doi.org/10.55927/jlca.v1i2.916>.

²⁵ Holger Daun and Reza Arjmand, “Globalisation and Islamic Education,” in *Third International Handbook of Globalisation, Education and Policy Research*, ed. Joseph Zajda (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 451–63, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66003-1_25.

²⁶ Mohamad Abdalla, Dylan Chown, and Nadeem Memon, “Islamic Studies in Australian Islamic Schools: Educator Voice,” *Journal of Religious Education* 70, no. 1 (March 2022): 25–42, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40839-022-00164-y>.

²⁷ Zuleyha Keskin and Mehmet Ozalp, “Islamic Studies in Australia’s Universities,” *Religions* 12, no. 2 (February 1, 2021): 99, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12020099>.

What distinguishes Islamic schools from state schools, however, is the integration of religious education into the curriculum. Islamic Religious Education is an essential component designed to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the teachings of Islam. It includes the study of the Qur'an, the Hadith and the principles of Sharia, as well as the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the historical development of Islam. This religious education aims not only to deepen students' spiritual understanding, but also to form their character in accordance with Islamic teachings.²⁸

In addition, Islamic values are integrated into various aspects of school life. Islamic schools strive to inculcate Islamic ethics and behaviour in the daily activities of students, encouraging them to behave with honesty, responsibility and care for others.²⁹ This is also reflected in the way schools manage their environment, emphasising the importance of respect and integrity in interactions between students, staff and the community.

Extracurricular activities also play an important role in the Islamic school curriculum. The school offers various activities to support students' personal development, such as religious, sports and arts clubs.³⁰ These activities help pupils to explore their interests, develop new skills and build their sense of community and Islamic identity.

Islamic schools in England face the challenge of balancing religious and academic education while meeting national educational standards set by Ofsted and other regulatory bodies.³¹ One of the main challenges is to ensure that the curriculum meets academic

²⁸ Fella Lahmar, "Islamic Education: An Islamic 'Wisdom-Based Cultural Environment' in a Western Context," *Religions* 11, no. 8 (August 2020): 409, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11080409>.

²⁹ Mariam Alhashmi and Jase Moussa-Inaty, "Professional Learning for Islamic Education Teachers in the UAE," *British Journal of Religious Education* 43, no. 3 (July 3, 2021): 278–87, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2020.1853046>.

³⁰ Arif Anas, Askar Askar, and Hamlan Hamlan, "The Roles of Islamic Education Teachers Strategy in Embedding Multicultural Values," *International Journal of Contemporary Islamic Education* 3, no. 2 (October 31, 2021): 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.24239/ijcieid.Vol3.Iss2.36>.

³¹ İrfan Erdoğan, "İngiltere'de İslam Eğitimi: Fırsatlar ve Tehditler," *Cumhuriyet İlahiyat Dergisi* 24, no. 2 (December 15, 2020): 687–714, <https://doi.org/10.18505/cuid.703185>.

expectations and provides a thorough religious education.³² To meet this challenge, some Islamic schools are innovating by developing more modern teaching methods and using technology in the teaching and learning process.

In addition to these challenges, Islamic schools also see opportunities to enrich their curriculum. Some schools have established links with state schools for exchange and integration programmes, and are involved in social activities and interfaith dialogue. This not only improves the quality of education, but also strengthens the relationship between the Muslim community and the wider society.

Through all these efforts, Islamic schools in England are committed to providing a well-rounded education that combines academic knowledge with spiritual and moral development.³³ They strive to prepare students to become well-rounded, morally upright individuals, ready to face the challenges of the modern world, while maintaining their Islamic identity and values.³⁴

Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS) in Blackburn is an example of an Islamic school in England that effectively integrates academic education with Islamic teachings. Established with a vision to provide a high quality education while upholding Islamic values, TIGHS has become a model for the development of a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum.³⁵

The curriculum at TIGHS is designed to provide a balance between academic and religious education. The school follows England's National Curriculum, which includes core subjects such as English, mathematics and science, as well as social studies, the arts

³² Syamsul Ma'arif et al., "Islamic Moderation in Education and the Phenomenon of Cyberterrorism: A Systematic Literature Review," *Indonesian Journal of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science* 31, no. 3 (September 1, 2023): 1523–33, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijeecs.v31.i3.pp1523-1533>.

³³ Nadri Taja et al., "Character Education in the Pandemic Era: A Religious Ethical Learning Model through Islamic Education," *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 20, no. 11 (November 26, 2021), <https://www.ijlter.org/index.php/ijlter/article/view/4519>.

³⁴ I Diallo, "Introduction: The Interface between Islamic and Western Pedagogies and Epistemologies: Features and Divergences," *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning*, 2012, <https://doi.org/10.5172/ijpl.2012.7.3.175>.

³⁵ Tahir Abbas, "Traditional and Modern Muslim Education at the Core and Periphery: Enduring Challenge," https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-319-64683-1_13.

and technology. By following these national standards, TIGHS ensures that its students are prepared to meet the academic challenges of the national curriculum and to continue their studies at a higher level.

Alongside the academic curriculum, religious education is a key element of the TIGHS curriculum. The school offers a comprehensive Islamic education programme that includes the study of the Qur'an, Hadith and Sharia.³⁶ The purpose of this religious education is not only to impart Islamic knowledge, but also to form the students' character in accordance with Islamic values. The religious curriculum is integrated into the daily activities of the school, reinforcing Islamic principles in all aspects of students' lives.

TIGHS uses a variety of teaching methods to achieve its curriculum objectives. These methods include interactive and project-based approaches which encourage students to be actively involved in their learning. The use of technology in the teaching and learning process is also an integral part of the curriculum, enabling students to use digital resources and modern learning tools.³⁷

The school also emphasises the importance of developing critical and analytical thinking skills. Through project-based and problem-solving approaches, students are encouraged to explore different solutions and think creatively. This not only helps them achieve academic standards, but also prepares them for future challenges.

Outside the classroom, TIGHS offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities to support students' personal development. These activities include religious clubs, sports, arts and leadership programmes. These extra-curricular activities are designed to complement academic and religious education by giving students the opportunity to explore their interests, develop new skills and build a sense of community.³⁸

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Rahmad Hidayat and Yuyun Widara, "Mitigation Model for Risk Handling in Islamic Education Institutions," *Proceeding of International Conference on Education, Society and Humanity* 1, no. 1 (May 30, 2023): 1102–10.

³⁸ Fitria Damayanti et al., "The Excellence of Lecturer HR in Increasing Competition in Research-Based Higher Education Services," *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 4, no. 1 (January 27, 2023): 37–57, <https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v4i1.292>.

One of the key strengths of the TIGHS curriculum is the integration of Islamic values into every aspect of school life. The school not only teaches Islamic principles, but also applies them in daily practice. This includes an emphasis on ethics, honesty, responsibility and caring for others. A school environment that supports these values helps students to internalise Islamic teachings and apply them in their daily interactions.

Overall, TIGHS in Blackburn is a successful example of how an Islamic school curriculum can be designed to provide a well-rounded education that combines academic excellence with Islamic character development. With a focus on quality teaching and the integration of Islamic values, TIGHS is committed to preparing its students to become knowledgeable, moral and future-ready individuals.

The Home Educated Strategy Developed by TIGHS

TIGHS in Blackburn is an Islamic school that uses innovative approaches to education, including home education strategies. The school uses home education as part of its curriculum to enrich pupils' learning experiences and to ensure that both religious and academic education can be tailored to individual needs.

At TIGHS, home education is seen as an important component that complements formal schooling. This strategy is designed to provide flexibility in learning, allowing students to learn in a more personalised environment and at their own pace. Home education at TIGHS focuses not only on religious education, but also on academic aspects and personal skills development.

The implementation of home education at TIGHS involves several key elements. Firstly, a well-structured curriculum programme tailored to the needs of each individual student is required. This includes material from key academic subjects as well as in-depth religious education.³⁹ The programme is designed to complement the learning that takes place in school so that students can continue their studies at home with the guidance of parents or tutors.

The school also provides the learning materials and resources needed for home education. These include textbooks, learning modules and access to digital platforms to support the learning

³⁹ Jenny Berglund, "Islamic Education in the West," in *Routledge Handbook of Islam in the West*, by Roberto Tottoli, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2022), 374–88, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429265860-33>.

process. In addition, TIGHS often organises training sessions for parents to enable them to support the home education process more effectively.⁴⁰ The training covers teaching techniques, time management and how to motivate students.

One of the main challenges of home education is to ensure that pupils keep up with the expected academic and religious standards. At TIGHS, monitoring and evaluation are an integral part of the home education strategy. Students in the home education programme are expected to undergo regular assessment, both through formal testing and informal assessment. This helps to ensure that they are achieving their set educational goals.⁴¹

In addition to formal assessments, TIGHS also conducts evaluations through regular interactions between students, parents and teachers. Regular consultation sessions are held to discuss students' progress, identify challenges and plan next steps. Home teaching is also supplemented with constructive feedback from teachers to ensure that students stay on track.

Parental involvement in home education is very important at TIGHS. The school emphasises the active role of parents in supporting their child's education. Parents are expected to be involved in learning activities at home, monitor their child's progress and provide feedback to the school. TIGHS provides a range of resources and support to assist parents in this role, including parenting guides and access to a community of educators.⁴²

The school community also has a role to play in supporting home education. TIGHS often organises community meetings and activities involving students and parents. These activities not only strengthen the bond between school and family, but also provide opportunities for students to interact with their peers outside of the formal school environment.

⁴⁰ Talip Küçükcan, "Community, Identity and Institutionalisation of Islamic Education: The Case of Ikra Primary School in North London," *British Journal of Religious Education* 21, no. 1 (September 1998): 32–43, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0141620980210105>.

⁴¹ Achmad Zaini, "Modernizing Islamic Education in the Most Populated Muslim World," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 16, no. 1 (June 1, 2022): 175, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2022.16.1.175-196>.

⁴² Khalid Arar, Deniz Örcü, and Jane Wilkinson, eds., *Neoliberalism and Education Systems in Conflict: Exploring Challenges across the Globe* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2020).

The home education strategy at TIGHS has several advantages. Flexibility in learning allows students to organise their own time, which can increase motivation and engagement in learning.⁴³ This approach also allows for the tailoring of teaching materials to the individual needs of students, supporting the development of more in-depth skills in specific areas.

However, there are challenges. One is maintaining consistency in the quality of education, especially when students are learning at home without direct teacher supervision.⁴⁴ TIGHS addresses this challenge with a rigorous assessment system and ongoing support for parents. Adapting to new teaching methods and the use of technology in home education also requires adequate resources and training.⁴⁵

The home education strategy at Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS) in Blackburn is an example of how home education can be integrated with formal education to support holistic learning. With a structured approach, support for parents and a rigorous assessment system, TIGHS aims to provide a high quality education that meets the academic and religious needs of pupils. Despite the challenges, this strategy offers opportunities to enrich students' learning experiences and support their holistic development.

Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS) in Blackburn is an example of a school taking an innovative approach to education by incorporating home education strategies as part of its curriculum. At TIGHS, home education is seen as an important element that complements formal education and provides beneficial flexibility for students.

At TIGHS, the home education curriculum supports and enriches the students' learning experience by integrating academic and religious education. As students continue their studies at home, they have access to learning materials designed to meet national education standards and Islamic teachings. These materials include textbooks,

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Farid Panjwani and Lynn Revell, "Religious Education and Hermeneutics: The Case of Teaching about Islam," *British Journal of Religious Education* 40, no. 3 (September 2, 2018): 268–76, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2018.1493269>.

⁴⁵ Franken and Gent, *Islamic Religious Education in Europe*.

learning modules and digital resources to assist them in their learning process.⁴⁶

As part of this approach, schools provide ongoing support to parents. Parents are an important link between formal education and home education. They receive training and guidance to help them support their children's learning at home. This training covers teaching techniques, time management and student motivation, enabling parents to act as effective facilitators in their child's educational process.⁴⁷

The evaluation system at TIGHS plays an important role in ensuring that home education remains in line with educational standards. Regular assessments are carried out to measure student progress, both through formal tests and informal evaluations. There are also regular consultation sessions between students, parents and teachers to discuss progress, challenges and next steps.⁴⁸ This creates an open dialogue that helps to adapt teaching methods and materials to meet the individual needs of students.

Parental involvement is highly valued at TIGHS. The school believes that the active involvement of parents can improve the educational outcomes of students. Therefore, parents are not only asked to be involved in learning activities at home, but are also invited to participate in community activities organised by the school.⁴⁹ These activities include regular meetings, social events and community programmes that link the school with families and the community.

Home schooling at TIGHS offers a number of advantages. The flexibility provided allows students to study in an environment that supports their own learning rhythm. This can increase their motivation and engagement with the material being studied. In

⁴⁶ Najwan Saada, "Islamic Education in the Postmodern and Postsecular Europe: A Pedagogical Blueprint," in *Migrants and Comparative Education*, ed. Zehavit Gross (BRILL, 2020), 67–86, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004417014_005.

⁴⁷ Martin van Bruinessen, ed., *Producing Islamic Knowledge: Transmission and Dissemination in Western Europe*, 1. publ, Routledge Islamic Studies Series 14 (Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting, London: Routledge, 2011).

⁴⁸ Fella Lahmar, "Islamic-Based Educational Leadership in UK Higher Education," in *Islamic-Based Educational Leadership, Administration and Management*, by Khalid Arar et al., 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2023), 105–26, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003360070-9>.

⁴⁹ Mehmet H. Tuna, "The Professionalisation of Islamic Religious Education Teachers," *British Journal of Religious Education* 44, no. 2 (April 3, 2022): 188–99, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2021.1999905>.

addition, this approach allows for a more personalised approach to education, meeting the academic and religious needs of the student as a whole.

Implications of Home Educated: An Integrated Islamic Curriculum

Home education at Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS) has had a significant impact on the development of the school's curriculum. By integrating home education into the formal curriculum, TIGHS has been able to create a more flexible and personalised approach to education. The curriculum designed for home education includes not only academic material but also religious education, allowing students to gain a deeper and more balanced understanding of the subject.⁵⁰

However, the integration of home education also requires constant adjustments in curriculum design. TIGHS must ensure that the materials used in home education remain relevant and in line with national education standards and Islamic teachings. This requires regular evaluation and updating of the curriculum, which has implications for the planning and development of educational resources.

Parental involvement in home education at TIGHS has a major impact on the dynamics of the students' education. By providing training and support to parents, TIGHS strengthens their role as facilitators of home education. The main effect of this is to increase parental responsibility in the educational process, which can affect the balance between home and school education.⁵¹

The extra burden on parents is also a challenge. They have to manage their time and resources to support their children's education.⁵² TIGHS should continue to provide effective training and adequate resources to help parents meet these challenges so that they can function well in their role as home educators.

⁵⁰ Naïma Lafrarchi, "Assessing Islamic Religious Education Curriculum in Flemish Public Secondary Schools," *Religions* 11, no. 3 (March 2, 2020): 110, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11030110>.

⁵¹ Franken and Gent, *Islamic Religious Education in Europe*.

⁵² Farah Ahmed, "Authority, Autonomy and Selfhood in Islamic Education – Theorising Shakhshiyah Islamiyah as a Dialogical Muslim-Self," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 53, no. 14 (December 6, 2021): 1520–34, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2020.1863212>.

Home education at TIGHS has a direct impact on the quality of education that students receive. This approach provides flexibility, allowing students to learn at their own pace and style.⁵³ This can increase student engagement and motivation, as well as allowing materials to be better tailored to individual needs.

However, there are challenges in maintaining consistency and quality of education. TIGHS has to ensure that, although students are studying at home, they are still meeting the academic and religious standards set. A rigorous assessment and grading system helps to mitigate this risk, but requires resources and constant attention. Home education at TIGHS strengthens the link between school and community.⁵⁴ By involving parents in the educational process and organising community activities, TIGHS builds a bridge between formal education and family support. This creates a more cohesive community and supports student development.

On the other hand, the different educational experiences at home and at school can present challenges in establishing consistency and harmonisation between the two. TIGHS must continue to work to maintain effective communication between schools and families and to ensure that community activities support overall educational goals.⁵⁵

The use of technology in TIGHS home education has a significant impact on the way students learn and interact with learning materials. Technology provides access to digital resources and learning platforms that support the home education process. This can enhance students' digital skills and prepare them for an increasingly technology-based world. Reliance on technology also requires attention to accessibility and the digital divide. TIGHS should ensure that all students have equal access to technology and digital resources and provide additional support for those who may experience difficulties.

⁵³ Vicente Llorent-Bedmar, Lucía Torres-Zaragoza, and Encarnación Sánchez-Lissen, "The Use of Religious Signs in Schools in Germany, France, England and Spain: The Islamic Veil," *Religions* 14, no. 1 (January 11, 2023): 101, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14010101>.

⁵⁴ Arif Mahmud and Maisha Islam, "Intersectional Oppression: A Reflexive Dialogue between Muslim Academics and Their Experiences of Islamophobia and Exclusion in UK Higher Education," *Sociology Compass* 17, no. 2 (2023): e13041, <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.13041>.

⁵⁵ Berglund, "Islamic Education in the West."

In general, the home education programme at Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS) is facilitating the creation of opportunities for the development of a more personalised and flexible approach to education. Nevertheless, in order to guarantee that the advantages of this methodology are fully actualised, it is essential that the home education strategy is subject to continuous evaluation and adaptation, in order to align it with the requirements of students and their families. The long-term impact of this strategy may include enhanced academic outcomes and character development for students, as well as reinforced connections between the school, family, and community.

The utilisation of technology in the context of home education at TIGHS has a considerable impact on the manner in which students learn and interact with learning materials. The utilisation of technology provides access to digital resources and learning platforms that facilitate the home education process. This can enhance students' digital skills and prepare them for an increasingly technology-based world. However, there is a need to consider the accessibility of technology and the potential for a digital divide to emerge. TIGHS should ensure that all students have equal access to technology and digital resources and provide additional support for those who may experience difficulties.

At Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS) in Blackburn, the practice of home education has become an integral component of the institution's educational approach. This incorporates a flexible and supportive learning system. The implementation of home education at this school has resulted in notable implications for various aspects of school education and interaction.

The implementation of home education at TIGHS represents an effort to adapt the curriculum in a manner that is more personalised and responsive to the needs of the students. The integration of home education at the school serves to emphasise not only academic achievement, but also the reinforcement of religious values. The programme is designed to enhance the learning experience at school by affording students the opportunity to learn at their own pace and in their own way at home. This enables a more comprehensive and tailored approach to the curriculum,

encompassing both academic and religious subjects, thereby facilitating a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding.

The role of parents in home education at TIGHS has also undergone significant transformation. Parents assume the role of primary educators within the home, with the school providing the requisite training and resources to facilitate this function. Parents' active involvement in supporting their child's educational process has the dual benefit of strengthening family relationships and ensuring that the education received by students at home is consistent with the standards expected by the school. While this offers flexibility, challenges emerge in the form of additional burdens on parents who must balance educational responsibilities with other commitments.

The quality of education at TIGHS is also influenced by the implementation of home education. The school's decision to permit students to study at home is intended to enhance their engagement and motivation. This flexibility permits students to investigate the material in greater depth and at their own pace, which may facilitate more comprehensive understanding and more robust academic outcomes.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, ensuring consistency in the quality of education across multiple learning environments represents a significant challenge. TIGHS addresses this challenge by implementing a rigorous grading system and ensuring regular feedback, thus enabling the monitoring and, if necessary, the adjustment of home learning.⁵⁷

Furthermore, the implementation of home education at TIGHS serves to reinforce the bond between the educational institution and the surrounding community. By engaging parents in the educational process and organising a range of community activities, the school establishes a connection between formal education and familial and community support. Such activities serve to reinforce the relationship between the educational establishment and the local community, while also reinforcing the sense of community surrounding the school. Nevertheless, discrepancies between the learning experiences obtained at home and those obtained at school may give rise to inconsistencies. It is therefore essential that TIGHS maintains an

⁵⁶ J Arthur, "Extremism and Neo-Liberal Education Policy: A Contextual Critique of the Trojan Horse Affair in Birmingham Schools," *Education, Security and Intelligence Studies*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315109978-3>.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

open and collaborative approach to communication with parents, while ensuring that community activities are aligned with the school's overarching educational objectives.

The implementation of home education at Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School and Sixth Form College (TIGHS) presents an opportunity to create a more flexible and integrated educational experience. With the provision of suitable assistance to parents and the implementation of ongoing assessment, this approach has the potential to enhance educational outcomes and reinforce the connections between the school, the family, and the wider community. Notwithstanding the difficulties, TIGHS remains dedicated to employing home education as a means of aiding students' comprehensive academic and moral growth.

Conclusion

The fundamental objective of the home-educated curriculum is to instill academic values in alignment with the directives of the British government by integrating Islamic teachings and values into the educational framework. The unification of academic values with Islamic teachings represents the fundamental premise of the curriculum at Tauheedul Islam Girls' School. The implementation and strategy of home education are realised in the curriculum, whereby students are afforded the opportunity to study, explore and develop academic knowledge and Islamic teachings at home under the guidance of tutors, thus ensuring that no conflict arises with government policies. Such an approach has implications for students, enabling them to gain insights into life experiences that shape mindsets and social behaviour in society.

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