

Christian girl fostered in Muslim home can rejoin family, judge rules

[Family court judge Khatun Sapnara](#) reportedly said it was in the girl's best interests to live within a family which could meet her needs in relation to "ethnicity, culture and religion". She is expected to issue an order in relation to the case later.

Judge Khatun Sapnara, herself a Muslim, allowed a reporter to be admitted after security staff initially tried to remove the journalist from the building.

The judge said newspaper reports had raised "very concerning" matters of "legitimate public interest". The lawyer representing the local authority told the court that when the girl first became the responsibility of the council there had been no white British foster carers available.

Tower Hamlets Council said it disputed some of the claims in the case, including that the family spoke no English, and it said that the family was of mixed race, but was "legally restricted" from discussing them further.

In a statement on Tuesday, the local authority said: "Tower Hamlets Council has the welfare of children at the heart of what we do. The decision to choose foster carers for a child is based on a number of factors, including cultural background and proximity to promote contact with the child's family and the child's school in order to give them as much stability as possible. We have always been working towards the child being looked after by a family member and we continue to do so."