

Father held in France for making death threats over abaya ban

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French police said it was holding a man on Friday for threatening a school principal who turned away his daughter for wearing a traditional Muslim abaya dress.

The man, arrested Thursday, was being prosecuted for “issuing threats designed to intimidate a person charged with an official mission”, the local prosecutor Dominique Puechmaille told AFP.

The man’s daughter was stopped at the entrance of her high school on Thursday and asked to remove her abaya. When she refused, she was stopped from entering, police said. Her father then telephoned the school and spoke first to a guard and then to an educational advisor. He is accused of having issued death threats targeting the school principal in both conversations.

French Education Minister Gabriel Attal called the threats “intolerable and unspeakable”. The principal was now under police protection, he said.

The president of the Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes region, Laurent Wauquiez, added that the school staff had received threats “of death and decapitation”. The authorities had to show “firmness and determination” in the face of such threats.