

Muslim bullying at the Belfast Girls Model School

I have been following this for a couple of weeks but not posted while I watched developments. This morning the [BBC has a Northern Ireland](#) headline

School tells Muslim girls it's 'not safe' for them

Three young Muslim girls at the centre of a racial bullying row have been told by their north Belfast school it is "not safe" for them to return.

The children, aged under 16, have not been back to the Belfast Model School for Girls since an alleged assault there in November.

A statement from the board of governors of the school said "the safety and wellbeing of all our students remains our highest priority".

Complaints were made concerning the girls to police, who are now investigating the incident as a hate crime.

The background is in this report by the [Belfast Newsletter](#), which is Northern Ireland's main daily newspaper, first published in 1737.

The mothers of two girls who have reportedly suffered significant violence at the Girls Model School in Belfast have told their stories to the News Letter.

(In November) 150 people protested outside the school, saying they would not be sending their daughters back until the issue is resolved.



The MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly – Brian Kingston) said the playground incident involved two ethnic minority pupils and two white pupils, but that he now understands there have been “around five incidents” since the start of the school year. He said the incident was witnessed by teaching staff and that the area commander has seen CCTV footage of it. Police and the school have firmly rejected claims that knives have been present in school.

Lynsey (not her real name) says her 13-year-old daughter was hurt in the playground incident.

“The whole thing has been mishandled by the school,” she told the News Letter. “My daughter was attacked and I didn’t even get a phone call from the school. She was kept in a room alone with an ice pack and was not allowed a phone call. I was alerted by another pupil about an hour after the attack. She came home crying.”

She said that three teachers were hit as they tried to stop the violence.

“My daughter’s friends intervened to save her. She was repeatedly punched and kicked and had hair pulled out and her head banged off the ground three times. I took her to hospital to have her checked over. The school has said that everyone involved was in the wrong.

...I told the school at 9am on Tuesday (November 12) that my daughter was on a hit list and was going to be attacked. Then at 1pm she was attacked. She was top of the hit list.”

She said the alleged playground assault began when her daughter’s friend approached someone and asked if her name was on the hit list. (The News Letter has seen the alleged hit list).

Her daughter’s black Muslim friend was beaten several weeks ago and her daughter attempted to defend her. She said that attack was not carried out by a white pupil. Lynsey added: “My daughter is not racist”.

She believes there is an attempt among some ethnic minority girls to stop others mixing with white girls. “The bullies say: ‘They [black girls] shouldn’t be talking to white people – you need to be in our gang’. They challenge Muslim girls: ‘Why are you friends with the white people?’”

According to [posts on X](#) a group of 4 core girls call themselves the Alphas or the Alpha 4.

Another mother, Suzanne (not her real name), told the News Letter her 13-year-old daughter was attacked last month by four girls wearing hijabs.

“They all beat her up and pulled her hair out. But the school didn’t contact me.”

She said her daughter had been receiving threats. “There are other girls wearing hijabs who are petrified of them [bullies] and are afraid of being blamed for what is going on.”

Suzanne claimed that the violence was initially justified by the alleged bullies with a claim that her daughter “had tried to pull [a pupil’s] hijab off . . . But CCTV showed that this was not true.”

Suzanne said there is a ‘hit list’ of 10 girls that are being

singled out for attack.

“As children are beaten up they are marked off the list.” She believes the list is genuine because she says that girls named on it have been beaten up in the order in which they appear on the list. This disproves any suggestion that these are simply random school fights.”

The News Letter presented the testimonies of both mothers in full to the school, Education Authority and the PSNI (*Police Service Northern Ireland*) None of them challenged any aspect of what the two mothers said, either on or off the record.

A friend (*of the four Muslim girls*) who was speaking anonymously due to concerns for their own safety, said prior to the incident at the school, the girls claimed to have experienced racial bullying.

“Hitting on the shoulder, calling names, calling them monkey, calling them black, saying they’re here for the money of this country – benefits – and asking them to go back to their country,” they said. “Pulling their hijabs, calling their hijabs ugly, and calling them ugly. They felt very, very isolated. Fearful.”

[The Muslim Council of Britain](#) are calling for Government Action at Growing Hate Crime in Northern Ireland We are deeply concerned about the rise in hate crimes in Northern Ireland, including the racial bullying and hate crime targeting several young Muslim girls in North Belfast.

Others take issue with the MCB and the BBC regarding the Muslim girls as victims.

I won't attempt to unravel The Troubles and generations of incidents of sectarian aggression. What I will say is that Ireland, be it Northern Ireland or the Republic is not England and the Irish are not the English. They have a history, and a current attitude of standing up for their various communities.

If they feel under attack, rightly or wrongly, they will defend themselves vigorously. Whether against outsiders or a neighbouring community. They are generous and friendly, but take liberties with their good nature, take advantage and they are not the push-overs the English can be.