



BY EMAIL

Monday, 19 October 2020

Mission Statement

To strive to provide the best education,
in a secure Islamic environment,
through the knowledge and application of the Quran and Sunnah

Assalamu Alaikum (*Peace be with you*)

Dear Parents & Guardians of Islamia Girls School,

RE: Autumn Half Termly Review & Future Announcements

May this letter reach you all in the very best of health and iman, InshaAllah.

As some of our existing families will know, upon the departure of our previous Headteacher who relocated overseas, that I was tasked with a somewhat personal job to come into Islamia Girls School and assess the situation on the ground before we looked to appoint a new replacement Headteacher. A key question that I was asked to pay particular attention to was: *'Are our Schools actually achieving what it was established to achieve - that is to instil the spirit and love of Islam in the hearts and minds of our young influential Students - or have we become academically driven Schools?'*

Although my background was not as a trained Educator or Headteacher, rather it was in Management mainly within the Entertainment, Media and Charitable sector, I was appointed out of duty towards my Parents, the Founders of the Islamia Schools group of Schools (namely IGS and BCB), to ensure that a frank and unbiased analysis was carried out within the Schools. The main objective for this task was so that they could understand if their niyah (intention) for establishing such Schools was being fulfilled 30+ years on. The outcome of this assessment was then intended to guide the Trust on how it needed to move forward with the intention of building on existing strengths and improving on weaknesses.

From the history of our Schools, you will undoubtedly be aware that Islamia Girls School (IGS) is a very personal project of my Parents who founded this School back in 1989 following the success of their first Muslim Primary School, Islamia Primary School which was founded back in 1983. It was later in 1996 that Brondesbury College for Boys (BCB) was established, again following the success of the IGS and following the growing demand from within the Muslim community at that time.

Back in those days there was a desperate need from within the Muslim community to create an ongoing level of education which transitioned naturally from the primary years to the secondary years particularly for young Muslim girls - hence the reason for establishing IGS first. Due to the non-existence of Muslim Schools at that time, families were eager to ensure that their daughters in particular continued to thrive from being within a Muslim environment, which offered a safe and secure Islamic atmosphere that celebrated and embraced the spirit of Islam whilst working with Parents towards nurturing the conduct and wellbeing of our Students both spiritually (through character development) and academically.

As we all appreciate and have observed over the years, today's generation of children are very different to the generation in which we grew up in or earlier generations of our Parents and Grandparents. There are greater challenges and tests that our children face today, not only in relation to academic challenges but more so to do with the overall social, emotional and psychological challenges that are bombarding our children through various forms. As a result of this natural change overtime, it is clear that our Schools today are serving a different type of Student with different needs and aspirations in life compared to Students we served 30+ years ago. In addition, we have also found that some of our families have joined our Schools with particular expectations and needs, some of which places a particular emphasis on the academic achievement of their children within a sheltered environment.



Alhamdulillah although the past two years presented certain practical challenges in trying to assess the School whilst running it, I can honestly say that a lot has been learned during my time within the establishment.

Having now completed the assessment I was assigned, and returning back to the key question being: *'Are our Schools actually achieving what it was established to achieve - that is to instil the spirit and love of Islam in the hearts and minds of our young influential Students - or have we become an academically driven school?'*, it became clear that Islamia Girl School had great strengths in its academic performance of its Students whilst Brondesbury College for Boys had great strengths in the Islamic character development of its Students.

From speaking to Families and Staff over time, particularly the older members of our School community, these observations have been echoed by others which has been reassuring to hear. This is simply because it helps to focus the minds of the leadership team whereby both Schools can work together in adopting and building on each others strengths while supporting each other to address any weaknesses identified. That was one of the key reasons as to why we decided to revert Islamia Girls School back to becoming a 1-Form entry School despite the demand that was there to operate a 2-Form entry School. What we found was that it had become impossible when dealing with double the number of Students within the School to implement the wider objective in holistically nurturing and developing its Students in accordance with its Mission Statement. Furthermore, the physical absence of the Founders meant that the focus of the School had shifted towards becoming an academically driven School albeit catering to Muslim families. Although there is nothing wrong with such a demand in the mainstream field of Education, in fact it is something that many schools aspire towards, in our case when we return back to the *niyah* (intention) in which our Schools were established, we found that we were lacking the main focus which realigns the hearts and minds of our young Students and our Staff back to our purpose in this life (*Duniya*) and in the hereafter (*akhirah*).

To that end I would like to share some exciting new developments that we will be introducing across both our Schools as part of our mid to longterm plan moving forward, InshaAllah.

As of last week an official handover began between myself and Mr Amzad Ali who has been the Headteacher at Brondesbury College for Boys for over 7 years now. Although Mr Ali has been assisting me greatly behind the scenes with regards to the continuation and monitoring of the academic offerings at IGS, it very much was behind the scenes. Moving forward, I would like to officially welcome Mr Ali to Islamia Girls School as our Acting-Headteacher. Alhamdulillah he has accepted this new role for the current Academic Year where he will be supported by an Acting-Deputy Headteacher at IGS, namely Mr Ayari, as well as a Deputy Headteacher at BCB. On that note, I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Mr Ayari who will also continue to teach Arabic to our Students.

Over the course of the next term and a half, Mr Ali will be able to better assess the practicalities of running two independent Schools across two separate sites. If it is mutually felt that this responsibility can continue effectively with serving the communities that both our Schools serve, then the Trust would look to formalise this role permanently from September 2021 as the appointed Headteacher.

In addition and so as to offer greater targeted support to both our Schools with regards to the spiritual nurturing and development of our young Students the Trust is looking to introduce a dedicated Religious Dean to our structure within this Academic Year. The intention of appointing a Religious Dean is to serve as a pillar of support to our Students, Parents and Staff and to focus on realising our Schools Mission Statement and realigning our objectives so that we have a greater chance in seeing the holistic growth within our Students both spiritually and academically by the end of their 5-years with us, InshaAllah.

Due to practical challenges that our Schools have had to address following our return to School since the lockdown that was imposed on all back in March 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we would like to ensure that the steps we take moving forward are steady and purposeful. In normal circumstances we would have preferred to have invited you to a Coffee Morning / Afternoon so that we could have presented the contents of this letter more personally. Alhamdulillah we accept the circumstances we find ourselves in and will be utilising this time objectively in working towards a more engaging future, InshaAllah.



On a personal note, I would like to thank all our families for your continued support during my time at Islamia Girls School. Although I appreciate that there was limited engagement with Parents during the course of my time within the School due to objective reasons, it goes without saying that a School relies heavily on a close Home-School partnership. As a School, our success relies greatly on the triangulation of a tight partnership between the School, the Parents and the Students. With the appointment of Mr Ali alongside his Deputy and with the imminent introduction of a Religious Dean within our School, we look forward to what the future presents, InshaAllah. We place our trust in the Almighty to realise and reward all the efforts that all members of our School community is making towards the success of our Schools - Schools that were founded and established in the name of the Almighty to serve our British Muslim community. We pray that through our Schools we are able to effectively nurture and develop our young Students into successful pioneers of the future, who stand tall with confidence and pride in calling themselves British Muslims while positively contributing to the communities and the country in which they reside and the world at large, InshaAllah.

I would like to end with the simple yet beautiful du'a:

And there are men who say: "Our Lord! give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and defend us from the torment on the fire!"

Ameen
(Surah 2, Ayah 201)

Kind Regards,

Mrs. Hasana Islam
Principal