University of Strathclyde
Faculty of Education

Department of Educational Studies

Muslim Education and Education of Muslims: A Scottish Perspective

Akhtar-Saeed Bhutta

Ed.D dissertation
Submitted May 2002

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Shahida and our sons, Osama, Sohaib and Musab for their love, support and understanding. I would like to thank them for not making too many demands on my time while this study was being undertaken.

Acknowledgements

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the assistance of all the people who have helped me to get this work to fruition, in particular:

Professor G.P.T Finn, my tutor, for guiding me through the all the stages of this study. He devoted countless hours, way above the call of duty, correcting and providing vital oral and written feedback, without which this study could not have been completed.

Molly Cumming, the course director, for all her advice, support and encouragement throughout this course.

Zulfiqar Hussain of Iqra Education Trust for allowing me access to Iqra Academy, and helping to arrange interviews with parents and activists of the school.

The Muslim community of Glasgow, especially all those who participated in the interviews and responded to the survey questionnaires.

Colleagues in Abronhill High School for their understanding and support and their assistance in piloting the survey questionnaires.

My son, Sohaib Saeed - a student at University of Edinburgh - for proof reading numerous scripts and suggesting various improvements.

Abstract

This study focuses on the Muslim community in Glasgow, the largest in Scotland. The establishment of the first successful independent Muslim school in Scotland is used as a backdrop to ascertain the Muslim perspective on educational issues. Issues related to Muslim or Islamic education including race, ethnicity, Islamophobia and identity of Muslim children are explored. Mosque-schools and related institutions that supplement the education of Muslim children are discussed and contextualised to appreciate fully the experiences of Muslim children in Scotland. Historical developments pertaining to the establishment of the Muslim school have been explored. Parents who send their children to the Muslim independent school have been interviewed to establish the reasons for their choice as have the parents who have decided not to support the Muslim school by sending their children to it. A survey of a larger sample of the Muslim community was carried out to gauge their opinions about educational issues and determine their priorities. The results should be of interest to those who work in the fields of multicultural education, ethnic minority issues and social inclusion.

Key words: Muslim education, Islamic education, Muslim identity, Muslim schools, Mosque-schools, Islamophobia, multicultural and anti-racist education.

Contents

1 Introduction

Scotland, in common with other parts of the United Kingdom, has a fairly substantial Muslim population. The Muslim community is spread throughout Scotland, but the greatest concentrations of Muslim population are to be found in the larger cities, principally Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee. Although there has been a Muslim presence in Scotland since the nineteenth century, there has only been a significant presence at least since the nineteen sixties (Maan, 1992). The steady increase in the Muslim population in inner urban areas of Scotland has created new dynamics. The Muslims, originally from Pakistan and Bangladesh (Audrey, 2000), have become part of daily Scottish life, with a Member of Parliament and four Glasgow City Councillors in their ranks. They are seen in the hospital corridors as doctors, and in the educational establishments as teachers and students, but little of substance is known about them. There have been some studies (Saeed *et al.*, 1999; Audrey, 2000) that have focused on different aspects of Muslim life in Scotland. Research on education of Muslims, on the other hand, has been prominent only by its absence (Powney *et al.*, 1998).

On the whole Muslims of Britain tend to live in what Bhatti (1999) describes as 'encapsulated' communities where ethnic communities' commercial, social and other day-to-day needs are met from within the ethnic enclaves, for example by Asian-run shops, travel agents, banks and so on. This encapsulation is breaking down, as the younger generations of Muslims have a much greater interaction with the white majority community. Arguably it is in the field of education that the Muslims of Scotland have "the greatest interaction" with other communities, including the white majority population (Neilsen, 1991). For the Muslims, education of their children is one of the most important issues facing them in this country. Most of them have migrated from countries where Muslim culture was all-pervasive, the school, the mosque, in fact the whole society was geared towards supporting the transmission of Islam to future generations. In Scotland, in common with their brethren in other western countries, they are navigating uncharted waters as a minority group (Lewis, 1984). They fear the loss of their future generations to the forces of materialism and secularism in the West (Parker-Jenkins, 1995). They

do not regard the day-schools as providing a comprehensive education for their children, particularly lacking in moral and religious dimensions. This has resulted in the emergence of a supplementary sector of Mosque-schools that attempts to fill the void left by the day schools.

There has been a growing dissatisfaction with day schools and the Mosque-schools in the last decade. Muslims have tried to explore other solutions too, like the establishment of independent Muslim schools in Scotland. There was a short lived Muslim girls' school in Glasgow in the nineteen seventies, an independent Muslim school(Iqra Academy) was established in Glasgow in 1999 (Appendix 1) and there is a boarding school for girls being established in Dundee (Appendix 2). There is unease in the Muslim community: they are in pursuit of holistic solutions to the problem of educating of their children. On the one hand most Muslims of Scotland would subscribe to the state-education of their children but they would like the state schools to educate their children so that they would become good Muslim citizens of Scotland. The attempt of some Muslims to 'opt-out' a primary school in Glasgow was seen as an attempt at the creation of a school that would do exactly that - a Muslim school. The controversies it generated highlighted the fact that the Muslim minority of Scotland have not been able to make their case in the eyes of the majority population. The views and perspectives of the Muslims have largely been ignored. This may be in part due to the fact that the Muslims of Scotland lack an education authority that would monitor/ raise standards in the Mosque-schools and liase with the local and national governments to enhance provisions for the Muslim community. This study explores these complex issues and establishes what the Muslims mean by 'Muslim education' and how does it relate to education of Muslims in Scotland.

Since most of the Muslims of Scotland have originated from Pakistan and other Muslim countries, their presence in Scotland poses many complex issues, among them being questions of race, ethnicity and identity. These issues need to be investigated more fully, to understand the plight of the Muslims in Scotland. Studies of multiculturalism, antiracism and Islamophobia have also been carried out to determine how they affect the thinking and the actions of the Muslims.

The way the Muslims see themselves and the aspirations they have for their community in Scotland differ from the perceptions of the majority white community. The authorities and the majority white community often group the Muslims with other minorities, such as Sikhs and Hindus, as Asians and more recently as Blacks. They are expected to make common cause with other Asian and Black groups but a closer examination reveals the superficiality of this 'common cause'. Although there is some co-operation between Muslim groups and other minority groups of Scotland, the Muslims have charted a different course for themselves. Other minority groups may struggle to preserve their ethnicity, like campaigning for Hindi or Punjabi to be taught to Indian children. The Muslims in essence struggle to preserve their religious identity; they would rather have Arabic taught to their children than Punjabi-, which was the mother tongue of most of the Muslims who settled in Scotland in the sixties. There does not seem to be the same kind of pressure from other minority groups for their own schools. The reasons behind the Muslim demands have to be explored with the help of the Muslim community. From their perspective they are locked in a survival struggle in an environment that is largely hostile to their objectives. The dilemma facing the Muslim minority has been characterised by Lewis (1994) when he argued that Muslims of Europe find themselves in a situation where they differ from the majority among whom they live, not only because they profess a different religion, but also because they hold a radically different concept of what religion means to them. Muslims wish to operate in a religious paradigm, in countries that have drifted away from their religious moorings. Modood reflecting on the Muslim predicament argued that Muslims have to come to terms with the idea that British culture "in its hegemonic arrogance all too readily sees non-European cultures, not least religious, as relics of primitivism" (1993, 72). Their needs and demands are often seen as irrelevant to modern living, rooted in a primitive culture. The 'new orthodoxy' Bishop Richard Londin (1998) talked of, does not leave much room for religious cultures, least of all those of minority groups to develop and be supported by the instruments of government:

> A new orthodoxy in which it is suggested that access to a realm of universal spiritual experience can be achieved by primal intuitions unconstrained by any religious traditions. In this new orthodoxy, Christianity and Islam are represented as local and often limited editions of this Universal Spirituality" (1998: 9).

The Muslim community may be good at talking to themselves, but not across cultural and ethnic boundaries. Within the community there is a major concern for the education of Muslim children, but this concern is not presented appropriately to the education authorities. Their apprehensions are sometimes translated into actions like the provision of prayer rooms, halal meals etc, which the authorities may regard as major indulgences to the minority groups, but are viewed by the Muslim community at best as 'piecemeal concessions' (Halstead, 1986). This gap in understanding can only be bridged if the authorities start listening to the voices in the Muslim community and enable the community to master the complex choreography of power structures in this country. Whereas it is incumbent on the Muslims of Scotland to make and present the case for Muslim education in Scotland, it is equally the duty of those with political or executive power in Scotland to empower their Muslim citizens, in the spirit of social inclusion in Scotland. This study looks at education from a Muslim perspective, documents the fears, concerns and dilemmas of the Muslim community and attempts to understand the reasons behind the demands for Muslim schools in Scotland.

2 Review of Literature

2.1 Scottish Muslims - a background

Muslims in Scotland make up a diverse community. Most of them came from the Indian sub-continent and made their home in Scotland as far back as the First World War, thus producing third or fourth generation of Scottish Muslims. Their numbers remained very small until the nineteen sixties. They did not make many demands on the political or economic system around them (Wahab, 1989). They considered themselves to be "guests" in Britain: here for a short time to seek their fortunes and return to their homelands within a few years (Anwar, 1979). To all intents and purposes they were invisible, perhaps adding a little 'colour' to their neighbourhoods or their places of employment, but essentially "out of sight, out of mind".

In the nineteen sixties, the main influx of immigrants from the West Indies and the Indian sub-continent took place. This was in response to a labour shortage in Britain at that time (Armstrong, 1989; Hewer, 2001). A significant number of these immigrants who settled in Scotland came from West Pakistan and East Pakistan (which became Bangladesh in 1976): countries in which Islam was, and is, the predominant religion or way of life. As Neilsen (1991) rightly observes, Islam governs all aspects of Muslim life.

In the sixties, the vast majority of the Muslims in Scotland were adult males who were earning a living and supporting their families 'back home'. The main debates in Muslim households at the time centred on whether or not to bring families over to the UK. One school of thought considered it inevitable and started to do so. Of the South Asians, the Hindus and Sikhs were the first to bring their families over. It seems that Pakistanis, who were predominantly Muslims, had some reservations about bringing their families into a country that was not Islamic (Maan, 1992). Once the families had started joining their breadwinners in Scotland, the Muslim community had to develop the necessary local institutions, such as Mosques and weekend schools, to preserve and develop their culture and religion.

Powney and her colleagues (1998) estimate that after the 1991 census there were 21,192 Pakistanis and 1,134 Bangladeshis in Scotland. Allowing for population changes since the last census, it may be reasonable to estimate that Scotland has about thirty thousand people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi descent. In the absence of any other firm data, this figure can be taken to represent the Muslim population of Scotland. However, the number of Muslims is boosted by indigenous Scots joining the Muslim community either by inter-marriage or conversion to Islam and by Muslims from other parts of the world like the Middle East. It will be much easier to estimate the population of Muslims in Scotland in the future, as the 2001 census carried questions to determine both religious and ethnic identities.

When a Muslim population of thirty thousand is considered as a proportion of the entire five million population of Scotland, it does not seem to be very significant. However, Bariatser used OPCS statistics to demonstrate that this population is not evenly spread throughout Scotland. There are areas of Glasgow with very sizeable populations:

> The 1991 census shows that nearly three percent of the population of Glasgow describe themselves as belonging to an ethnic minority. Fourteen thousand people living in Glasgow are of Pakistani origin and six thousand are of Indian origin ... (postcodes G41 and G42) where 12.7% of the population identify themselves as Indian or Pakistani (Bariatser,1999: 134).

Thus three quarters of the people of Pakistani origin in Scotland live in and around Glasgow. This high concentration of population in principally Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee is creating new dynamics in the social and political geography of the areas. They constitute the largest "visibly and culturally identifiable" (Bhatti, 1999) minority group in Scotland. Glasgow has elected the UK's its first Muslim MP, and four Muslim City Council Councillors who have Pakistani origins.

Most of these Muslims who have set up permanent residences in the country remain "visibly and culturally identifiable". Some of them seem to be fairly well established in various businesses, primarily wholesale cash and carries, retail shop

keeping, restaurants and hot food carryouts. A number of them are in the professions: teachers, lawyers and doctors. Thus the first generation of Muslims who arrived in Scotland to seek their fortunes, have done reasonably well in the economic field (Maan, 1992).

Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to maintain that most of the Muslims of Scotland are well off, well established and well connected. The vast majority of the Muslim population of Glasgow is concentrated in Areas of Priority Treatment: designated areas of the city with multiple disadvantages. Although most of them live in 'bought houses', they tend to send their children to local state schools. Their children suffer from all the disadvantages that their white neighbours do, along with disadvantages peculiar to their communities as established by Powney *et al.*

> Research shows that factors that correlate with low attainment, such as unemployment, poverty, and poor housing, are more likely to affect minority ethnic populations in Scotland than their white counterparts. (Powney *et al*, 1998: xi).

The variation in geographical spread of the Muslim population in Scotland inevitably means that the population of Muslim school pupils varies from one area to another. Powney *et al* (1998) had estimated that 2% of the total school roll in Renfrewshire comes from minority ethnic groups, whereas in one secondary school in Glasgow, 45% of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups. Calculations from figures provided by Glasgow City Council show that there are at least four primary schools in the City that have an almost exclusive Asian, if not a Muslim clientele.

The age profile of the Muslim population in Britain is also in favour of the younger generations. Parker-Jenkins (1993) maintained that 30% of Muslims were of school age, compared with an overall figure of 13%. Additionally, almost 60% of Muslims were under 25 years old, compared to 32% overall. Although Parker-Jenkins' analyses apply specifically to a region of England, and they are somewhat dated, they can nevertheless be used, to draw a parallel picture in Scotland. The high proportion of school-age children in the Muslim community may partly

account for the deep interest the community seems to have in the education of its children.

Despite their obvious interest in matters educational, it has been very difficult to involve Muslim parents in the education of their children: in PTAs, parents' evenings, school boards and the like (Hart, 1991). The lack of competency in the English language on the part of the earlier parents may explain this lack of involvement. Moreover many of the parents did not have a sound knowledge of the educational system, as they were not educated in Scotland themselves. Bhatti (1999) noted that Asian parents were not fully aware of the different demands that the school made on their children. Many Asian parents, she states, did not go to school in Britain and had little first-hand knowledge of school processes. They were not fully aware of the different sorts of pressures their children experienced. For example, they had never experienced compulsory schooling within a multi-faith and multi-ethnic urban environment, as members who were "visibly and culturally identifiable". Therefore, although they placed a high premium on education of their children, they were not fully tuned in to the processes of education.

It is a very different situation with the second or third generation of Muslims who are sending their children to schools at this time. Having gone through the system themselves they are more confident articulate and vocal. These younger parents are prepared to question all areas of educational provision. On the one hand they may be steeped in traditional Muslim values, such as respect for elders and teachers, while on the other they wish to exercise their democratic rights in this country to educate their children according to their wishes. They would like the provision of education in this country to be responsive to their needs and reflect the multi-cultural nature of modern Scotland. Despite Muslims being Scotland's largest "visibly and culturally identifiable" minority, there has been very little research directed towards their problems and needs in this country (Powney *et al.* , *1998).*

The Muslims of Britain may experience "inadequacies of schools and teachers" but if this experience is not based on "objective research evidence" (Swan, 1985) then it is treated as being of little or no value. If certain topics do not carry favour with the research community or with those who fund and finance education research, then that area suffers from lack of "objective research evidence". The needs of Muslims fall in this area. Maud Blair (1998) debunks the myth of neutrality in education when she writes:

> ...research is...a political activity in which the researcher is heavily implicated, but also because it creates a hegemonic research community. Through this hegemony, not only are the rules of the game decided by an established elite, but alternative voices are likely to be excluded if they do not fit within predetermined criteria for what is deemed to be valid research (Blair, 1998: 14).

Minority ethnic groups in general, and Muslims in particular, have much to say about the education of their children. However, their voices have been marginalized, perhaps because they "do not fit within predetermined criteria for what is deemed to be valid research." Muslim researchers like myself have unique access to, and understanding of, the Muslim community. As a result, issues that concern the Muslim community are being brought into the public domain. This study will focus on the value the Muslim community attaches to education, their perceived needs and preferred solutions to their educational problems.

The situation in Scotland is highlighted by Powney *et al*. in their review of research into education of minority ethnic groups in Scotland. Firstly, they ask the question, "the key issue for research in this area is whether people from minority ethnic groups get a fair deal from the education system in Scotland" (Powney *et al*, 1998: vii), and go on to state that issues that concern minority ethnic groups, such as racism and the development of anti-racist strategies, are largely neglected issues in research in Scotland. Thus there is very little to go on by way of objective data to determine whether or not "people from minority ethnic groups get a fair deal from the education system". Nevertheless, the reviewers cite evidence to demonstrate that Asian pupils are ten times more likely to stay on at school than white pupils. Across the UK, there are higher participation rates in post-

compulsory education from minority ethnic groups as a whole compared with the majority population. This may be a reflection of the desire of the parents to open the doors for their children that were closed to them:

> The research available suggests that parents from ethnic minority groups tend to have high aspirations for their children's education and career choices although information and publicity materials relating to the various education sectors rarely target ethnic minority communities specifically...teachers and other educational professionals are not always aware of the particular concerns and expectations of parents from minority ethnic minority groups (Powney *et al*, 1998: ix).

Neilsen (1991) had no doubt that education had been, and would remain, a major item on the Muslim agenda. Muslims, in common with other groups, value education very highly. They have a long and honourable tradition of educating their children and the rest of their communities, which is often ignored. The experience of Muslim children who learn to adopt situationally-determined multiple identities - Scots at school and Pakistani-Muslims at home or in the Mosque - is not readily understood (Saeed *et al*, 1999). These children juggle two or three languages at home and school: English at school, Punjabi at home and Urdu and Arabic in the Mosque. Most of these children attend evening or weekend schools and are expected to do their best in their day-school work as well (Akhter, 1993). Educational professionals do not readily understand the pressures imposed upon these children, the reasons behind these pressures and the roots and origins of needs and demands of the Muslim community.

2.2 Issues of Identity - Muslims as a minority in Scotland.

The question, of who is a Muslim has exercised the minds of many writers (for examples, Halstead, 1986; Neilsen, 1987; Christie, 1991; Bhatti, 1999). Muslim theologians would say those who "conform to certain moral and spiritual principles of Islam enunciated in the Holy Qur'an and the traditions of Prophet Mohammad" (Anwar, 1982: 20). In practice, the picture is much more complex, as demonstrated by the crisis in Bosnia and later in Kosovo. Despite the "principles of the Qur'an and the traditions of Prophet Mohammad" being thin on the ground, the Bosnians

and Albanian Kosovans suffered because of the fact that they were Muslims, no matter how distant from the teachings of Islam. It is primarily a question of identity: how the Muslims classify themselves, how they are seen by others and how they make sense of these two, sometimes varying realities.

Social psychologists like Henri Tajfel would classify Muslims as a social group that is striving for positive social identity, which is derived from their group membership. In his opinion:

> For a minority to become a distinguishable social entity, there must be amongst some, many, most or all of its members an awareness that they possess in common some socially relevant characteristics, and that these characteristics distinguish them from other social entities in the midst of which they live (Tajfel, 1978: 4).

According to Tajfel, it can be difficult for members of a minority group like the Muslims to achieve a positive social identity. Minorities are usually accorded an inferior status in comparison with the majority. Like many minorities, Muslims will not readily accept an inferior status, and therefore reinterpret and redefine their group characteristics in an effort to transform their social identity into a positive one. This process has indeed forced the Muslims of Scotland to re-examine themselves and redefine their essential characteristics. This was a new phenomenon for the first generation of Muslims, who had come from countries where they were part of the dominant culture and did not have to define who they were. Their migration to Western countries, including Scotland, has made them part of a small minority community.

Parker-Jenkins found that though the Muslims are a diverse community, they are bound by a common feature, which is their defining characteristic: their common faith which "many, most or all" possess. In her opinion:

> It is more useful to perceive Muslim as a generic term, encompassing people who are adherents to the same faith operating within Muslim communities, who differ markedly in cultural, linguistic and socio-economic features, and who have differentiated views on what Islam means to them and how it affects their lives (Parker-Jenkins, 1995: 03).

Neilsen, on the other hand, regards Muslims as a "religio-cultural tradition" that has not yet been secularised to a significant degree. As Muslims possess this common "religio-cultural tradition", he provides what he calls a working assumption: that "Muslims are those whose family background is Muslim" (1987, 386).

Therefore it is generally accepted that, at best, Muslims are a broad church that encompasses within itself a wide spectrum of individuals and communities. They range from those who are very devout in their faith, to those with little faith; from those who devote their lives to the service of their cause, to the ones who occasionally call upon these services. They may argue and debate amongst themselves about the necessary or sufficient qualities of a Muslim (Ahmed, 1988), but are realistic enough to know that not everybody in the community is going to come up to the mark. Christie maintains that, in common with other faith communities, Muslims carry with them those who wear Islam as an "ethnic badge". To understand fully the dilemmas facing Muslims in the West it has to be understood that religious identity supersedes ethnic identity:

> Recent decades have seen a revival of an explicitly Islamic consciousness throughout the Muslim world; it is a key principle of Islam that religious identity should prevail over ethnic identity. Islam, in other words, cannot be treated as a mere ethnic badge, but must be treated on its own terms, if we are to understand properly the dilemmas facing Muslim minorities in a non-Muslim world (Christie, 1991: 457).

Muslims in the West have had to re-examine their belief systems and their practices to ascertain what precisely constitutes the non-negotiable precepts of Islam, which believers have to follow (Wolffe, 1993). This examination is an ongoing process in the community and may result in a British Muslim community that, while having roots in the faith, also has practices that deviate from those of their parent communities. Much of the culturally derived traditions, such as modes of dress or marriage traditions may be transformed in line with British customs while retaining "non-negotiable precepts of Islam". Teasing out culturally derived traditions from those that are religiously derived has never been an easy exercise. As Wolffe puts it, there is an "inextricable entwining with Islam of beliefs and

practices" (1993, 157). Knott and Khoker also emphasised that the division between culture and religion was not always clear in Islam, especially for the young or those who were not particularly learned about the religious traditions of Islam:

> Religious interests and ethnic traditions are both envisaged as part of the home environment over against secular, western alternatives which are on offer at schools. They are not distinguished but viewed as part of the same cultural domain...Culture is not merely reinforced by religion, culture is religion (Knott and Khoker, 1993: 595).

Knott and Khoker (1993), also observed that young Muslim women in Bradford did not consider themselves as having one static identity; rather, their identity was an expression of the young women's negotiation of religious and ethnic factors at a particular point in time. Their place on the perceptual map changed with time as their values and attitudes developed. In other words, identity was not fixed, but changed with the development of the individual. Tajfel (1978) had called this phenomenon "social change and social creativity": individuals changing their group to change the society and seeking new, more favourable ways of looking at themselves. They also had a need to belong to a group they could readily associate with. A number of them had moved away from some of the characteristics that defined them as being members of the Muslim minority group but there were insurmountable barriers to being accepted by the majority community as 'one of their own'.

Anwar (1982) had found that on the one hand, religion was an important and sensitive part of a group's ethnic identity - and in this context the religious needs of the Muslims in Britain are very important - and on the other:

> ...in a pluralistic society, ethnic minority groups want to keep their cultural identity, while adapting to other aspects of the dominant culture such as the language, the educational system, employment patterns and the civic life of the society. For them integration means acceptance of their separate ethnic identity by the majority population and its institutions (Anwar, 1982: 6).

The Muslims of Scotland are constantly making efforts, both as individuals and as a minority group, to get their Muslim identity to be accepted by the majority

community. The wearing of a headscarf, or *hijab*, by Muslim women can be seen as symbolic representation of this struggle on the part of some individuals. Muslim girls in schools and women at work have sometimes used their right to wear *hijab* to challenge the dominant culture, and asserted their right to express themselves as Muslim women. Tajfel (1981) would have seen their actions in terms of a response to the majority's non-acceptance of the Muslim minority, thus putting them in a position to identify with their own culture and its representative symbols even more strongly. Parker-Jenkins had discovered from the responses of Muslim head teachers in her study that:

> The hijab was seen as demonstrating Muslim identity through attire. It represents the negotiation by Muslims of their position and presence in the British setting; the symbol chosen to preserve identity and clearly the visibility of Islam in schools, whether Muslim or non-Muslim (Parker-Jenkins, 1995: 95).

Armstrong (2000) noted that many Muslim women feel that veiling is a symbolic return to pre-colonial period, before their society was deflected from its true course. She maintains that wearing a headscarf:

> ...can be seen as a tacit critique of some of the less positive aspects of modernity. It defies the strange Western compulsion to 'reveal all' in sexual matters (Armstrong, 2000: 146).

Muslims in the West see themselves being overwhelmed by a tide of permissiveness and secularisation that is taking over Western societies (Neilsen, 1987; Sarwar, 1994). They struggle to preserve as much of their religio-cultural tradition as they can, both individually and with the help of their institutions, notably the Mosques and the Muslim schools. As a minority group, their struggle is to preserve the important characteristics of their community, while exploring the boundaries for acceptability by the majority community. Although they may believe that they live in Western countries "where the environment is un-Islamic and unsympathetic" (Anwar, 1982, 9), they have to engage with the majority community to achieve even the most basic of their objectives. They may fear secularisation of their children, but can not cocoon them from the influences of the "un-Islamic and unsympathetic" environment.

Parker-Jenkins (1991) noted this struggle and the reaction of the majority community. She states that the Muslims are often perceived by some as cores of resistance (to integration) in liberal democracies, whereas they see themselves as fighting against the tide of secularisation. She also notes the effect this struggle is likely to have on the Muslim community and their leaders:

> Muslim parents aspire to keep their children faithful in the face of perceived Western materialism and permissiveness. Accordingly, those who remain within the state school system may choose to have their needs advocated by more assertive parents, and community leaders (Parker-Jenkins, 1991: 570).

This disparity between how one group of people see themselves and how they are viewed from 'outside' is one of the defining characteristics of a minority social group according to Tajfel (1981). The other two characteristics being the difficulty experienced by the individuals in moving out from the group, and possessing shared defining criteria such as colour of skin, descent, language and so on. Muslims on the whole fulfil these criteria very adequately. As most Muslims of Scotland are descendants of South Asians, they share common colour of skin, descent and languages and experience difficulties to varying degrees in being accepted by the majority community. This common experience has helped to gel this group together so that it now acts and behaves as a social group. According to Tajfel, "three sets of conditions lead to the appearance or strengthening of in-group affiliations in members of minorities":

1. Common identity: they are at the receiving end of certain attitudes and treatment from 'outside';
2. A group wishing to preserve its separate identity is reinforced by an interaction between the 'inside' and the 'outside' attitudes;
3. When a group's wishes to dilute its separateness are resisted, new and intense forms of common group identity appear (Tajfel, 1981: 314).

Therefore, though the Muslims of Scotland may not be a racial minority for they do not all belong to one racial group; nor are they an ethnic minority for they do not share or wish to preserve their ethnicity, they are a group "that has to be treated on its own terms" (Christie, 1991). Muslims view Islam as all-pervasive and unifying force in every aspect of life. They do not separate their religion from

everyday events of their lives, whereas this is an increasing trend in western liberal democracies. While western scholars grapple with questions regarding whether religion affects ethnicity or is merely a part of it (Knott, 1986), Muslims regard Islam not only as a religion but also as "a regulating agency for all aspects of life..." (Anwar, 1980). This fundamental point has to be borne in mind at all times in order to understand the views of Muslims on various aspects of Scottish education, which will be discussed below.

2.3 Multiculturalism - Muslim viewpoint

Development of Multicultural Education

As Asian and Afro-Caribbean children started enrolling in British educational institutions in fairly large numbers in the mid-sixties, the institutional response was to reach out to the minorities and attempt to assimilate them into the majority (Massey, 1991). The education system, which was almost exclusively white at the time, conferred inferiority on minority cultures by not valuing them, and provided the channels for people to 'escape from their inferiority' by assimilating with the majority. It was expected that these new pupils would be hungry for what was on offer in British schools and would therefore give up their cultural baggage in favour of new British uniformity. Britain had been the colonial power for most of these people. British culture had been the dominant culture in all colonised lands for many years. 'Social mobility' was achieved by emulating the colonial masters (Altbach and Kelly, 1984). It was thus anticipated that "the immigrants" in Britain would show the same kind of 'social mobility'. That was indeed the case in early nineteen sixties, when these minority groups were relatively new to Britain, in awe of the system that had dominated their homelands for so long and were yet stabilising their feet on the first rung of the economic ladder. Classically, the authorities interpreted silence or inactivity on the part of these groups as acquiescence to their treatment.

Tajfel had observed that students from the West Indies had a perception that on coming to Britain, they would be reaching the shores of the 'mother country' and that:

> A common language, a similar education, and a social background similar to that of many indigenous British students, would ensure their immediate acceptance and an easy adaptation to their new surroundings (Tajfel, 1978: 4).

These students soon discovered that they were "in white man's country, (where) black skin happens to be a socially relevant criterion for distinguishing between groups of people" (Tajfel, 1978), thus giving rise to 'black consciousness' amongst the Afro-Caribbean groups: being rejected by the majority and asserting their own values and culture.

The Asian groups had even less in common with the indigenous white population. Their different languages, education systems and cultural background all pointed to difficult times ahead. Whereas some of them may have tried to emulate the customs and practices of their white neighbours, most were very reluctant to tread the assimilation path, criticised by Finn as:

> The incorporation of the minority into the dominant group so that it conforms (or is made to conform) to the customs and practices of the majority (Finn, 2000-b: 72).
>
> In practice this meant that there would be no change for the white population, but that the black population should be divested, ideally voluntarily, of any of those features that culturally defined them as different (Finn, 1987: 41).

The Asians were not willing to be "divested" of their languages, their culture or their religious traditions, merely to "become indistinguishable from the majority". The example of the West Indians, who were seen as 'white' in all but skin colour, did not bode well for the Asians. They would also have to assert their own identities to preserve and protect what they valued in their own cultures. While the white population erected barriers to keep these extraneous influences of the 'immigrants' out, the minority groups became willing partners in this process by erecting walls around their own communities as well. The response of the educational system was to cross these hurdles by shifting the emphasis from "assimilation" to "multiracial tolerance". The culture of the immigrants could be tolerated as long as it did not pose any challenge to the majority white culture. The newcomers were still expected to give up their 'distinctiveness' but they could take

their time. Parker-Jenkins believes an ideological shift took place in the late nineteen sixties, from assimilation to equal opportunities, but this did not produce a substantial change on the ground.

> The development of multiculturalism denotes an important stage in the ideological shift away from the cultural imperatives of assimilation and integration to one of cultural pluralism. Generally acknowledged as originated in 1966 as a result of a speech by the then Home Secretary Roy Jenkins, the government called for the ideology of assimilation to be replaced by a policy of equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity (Parker-Jenkins, 1995: 17).

Society had been changing quite radically, especially in larger urban concentrations of population. Anwar quotes David Lane, then MP, later Chairman of Commission for Racial Equality, while giving evidence to the Standing Committee on Race Relations Bill acknowledged in 1976:

> Compared with the 1960s, when two previous Acts were passed, the situation has now changed considerably. One aspect of this is the growing prominence of the extra non-European religions, and the effect of that on religious education in schools. In many schools, the majority of children come from non-Christian families (Anwar, 1982: 6).

As the minority ethnic groups, like Gujarati Muslims in Preston and Dewsbury (Naylor, 1989) and Pakistanis Muslims in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee (Maan, 1992) tended to congregate in certain areas of some cities to be close to their relatives and friends; some schools were already acquiring a 'majority from non-Christian families' in the nineteen seventies. Neilsen (1991) believes that the principle that some form of accommodation to addressing the needs of Muslims was necessary had long been accepted in the majority of educational circles, under the heading of "multiculturalism". Thus multiculturalism was a philosophy that arose out of necessity, to prepare a more tolerant environment in which the minority groups could more easily shed their cultural baggage. However, they had to know their place, lest they start challenging the traditions of the majority community. Commenting on these developments Finn (1987) put it succinctly:

> Instead of cultural superiority, there was now to be cultural tolerance...blacks were not now expected to jettison all their cultural

heritage, but those values and customs that challenged this apparently liberal and tolerant value system could not be tolerated (Finn, 1987: 41).

Limits of multiculturalism and Muslim reservations

Critics of multiculturalism (Mullard, 1981; Troyna, 1986) point to the inadequate attempts at addressing cultural diversity through the curriculum in the schools. For them, the reinforcing of stereotypes (e.g. Afro-Caribbeans will be good at athletics while Asians will have difficulty with English) and superficial discussion of culture (celebration of festivals etc.) negate everything that multiculturalism is supposed to stand for. Moreover, such negative assumptions can affect minority children's sense of self-worth, devaluing their mastery of their own languages and treating bilingualism as a problem. Emphasising the superiority of a set of values and learning of the 'white' curriculum amounted to social control. Failure to confront racism was far removed from the atmosphere of equal opportunity, mutual tolerance and cultural pluralism that the multiculturalists wished to create.

Multiculturalism seemed to be a device to placate the minority ethnic groups. Some recognition was given to their culture and values in the educational system. Minority ethnic groups were expected to be quite happy with this provision that their children, who were few in number in some schools, were being provided for in some little way by the state. What happens when the tables are turned - when the white children were in a minority in some school - was vividly demonstrated by the Dewsbury case: a group of white parents in Dewsbury, Yorkshire, petitioned Strasbourg claiming that the predominance of Asian students in the only elementary school available to them, resulted in their children "suffering cultural deprivation" (Naylor, 1989). What kind of cultural deprivation the Asian children had been suffering in all other schools, where the white children were predominant, is not the subject of any petition. Multiculturalism was an appropriate response for minority Asian children in a predominantly white school; on the other hand, a minority of white children in a Church of England school where Asian children were in the majority, would suffer "cultural deprivation". The multicultural education model, which drew its rationale, inspiration and support from white, middle-class, professional understandings of how the

education system best responds to the "needs and interests" of black students and their parents (Troyna, 1987) did not challenge or change the perceptions of the white population.

Jeffcoate (1984) noted that when a similar situation arose in Southall in 1963, the Minister of Education at the time felt obliged to make a hurried visit to the area. The result of this was that the proportion of ethnic minority children in Southall schools became limited to thirty percent, thus initiating the official policy of 'bussing' ethnic minority children to other areas: a practice that lasted up until the late nineteen seventies in some local authorities. This one way bussing of ethnic minority children from their localities to spread them more evenly and thinly over a greater area did not win many friends in the multicultural education camp. American researchers were puzzled how bussing could be "liberal" in the United States and "illiberal" in Britain (Jeffcoate, 1984). This bussing of white and black children in the USA was for the purpose of exposing some whites-only schools to children of Afro-Caribbean minority and demonstrating that children of various backgrounds could successfully learn together. On the other hand, bussing in Britain was as a consequence of a perceived threat from the ethnic minority children. It was considered that the very presence of these minorities affected the education of the white children: pandering to such sentiments led to the "Dewsbury case" a few years down the line. Jeffcoate explained the British experience of bussing as:

> Of course, that two-way 'bussing' on American lines was politically inconceivable in Britain since it was not a matter of integrating black and white natives, as in the United States, but of integrating white natives and black immigrants (Jeffcoate, 1984: 23).

Therefore there was a white protectionist element in this development. The black immigrant children had to give up the right to go a local school, the right to learn about the ways of their forefathers and the right to think about a future as equal citizens in this country. The policy may not have been designed for the purpose, but had the effect of putting the minorities in their place, "establishing their inferior position" (Tajfel, 1978). It is questionable how much has truly changed

since then, though there is use of alternative terminology of 'multiculturalism' and 'equal opportunities'. Marina Foster warns the weary:

> Equal opportunities as a principle has become widely accepted as an objective to regulate relations at work or in school. That is until any one challenges inequality or tries to invoke the principle as many have learnt to their cost...It would appear that equal opportunities is an entitlement but not a right in the sight of the law. While this dichotomy continues between rights and entitlement, the principle is not secured for anyone (Foster, 2000: 196).

Asians in general have learnt to their cost that multiculturalism did not live up to its promises. Muslims in particular have been unhappy about the fact that the supposed policy of pluralism did not have room for any other culture. Muslim criticisms of multicultural education centre around arguments of inappropriate curricula in schools, lack of appreciation of Muslim culture in general, and the fear that the whole policy is about assimilation, albeit by another name. Powney *et al.* admit that in Scotland:

> ...curricula largely ignore minority ethnic experience and culture and there may be covert or overt forms of discrimination. Students from minority ethnic groups can feel isolated (Powney *et al.*, 1998: viii).

The policy may bear the title "Multicultural Education", but there is little in the core educational process that is multicultural. The curricula take little or no cognisance of the fact that Muslim children bring with them learning of their faith and culture and they may be fluent speakers of more than one language. The rich heritage of their folk tales, songs and rhythms are at best tokenised and at worst ignored, sending clear messages to the children about what is to be valued in the West. Parker-Jenkins had found that the national curriculum (implemented in England and Wales) "appear at best Eurocentric and at worst Britocentric but rarely multicentric" (Parker-Jenkins, 1995:109); though she had earlier pleaded:

> There needs to be a selection of curricula which reflect cultural heritage rather than the perceived tokenism of festival celebrations grafted onto an ethnocentric syllabus. In this regard, Islamic studies could be made available to all students, thus providing a more balanced curriculum (Parker-Jenkins, 1991: 575).

The Muslims of Scotland are disappointed that Islamic studies is not even available to Muslim children in spite of the multicultural policies of education authorities (Yaseen, 1983). Their demand for Islamic studies is often mistaken for more Islam in Religious Education in schools, whereas in reality, the parents seek an incorporation of Islamic history into the history courses, and the inclusion of the achievements of Muslim scientists, mathematicians and explorers elsewhere. The parents feel that Muslim children are being cut off from their roots and are being provided with a completely new set of perspectives that are not in harmony with their world outside the school.

Muslims teach their children about Muslim countries and about Muslim heroes, past and present. To some extent, this learning remains a kind of secret or underground study, not always in favour with those devising official curricular guidelines. Anwar (1982) stated that Muslims were disappointed that multicultural education did not put an end to this tradition but the children were still exposed to differing values at school and in the home:

> If family and friends emphasize values that are different from those a child is learning at school, then the child may experience special problems in adapting to life both in school and at home (Anwar, 1982: 15).

Muslims may have been under the misapprehension that multicultural education would have incorporated teachings of their culture and traditions too. They have lived with multiculturalism since the nineteen sixties. They have seen their children grow up steeped in white culture and not learning very much of their own in the schools. They have seen their children bring into their homes views that are alien to Islamic traditions, challenging the authority of elders of the family, disregard for religious and cultural traditions and becoming self-centered without much regard to the community at large. They are horrified that instead of 'nurturing faith' their day-school education is about 'questioning faith' (Wahab, 1989). Muslims do not see themselves as partners in this multicultural process where the tide of secularism is sweeping away all that they hold sacred. Parker-Jenkins encapsulated their sentiments thus:

> What multi-culturalism has come to mean to many Muslims, however, is that the liberal approach to multi-cultural education does not adequately address the convictions of the religious adherent: the secular has survived at the expense of the sacred (Parker-Jenkins, 1991: 570).

Multicultural education has lacked credibility amongst minority communities, particularly the Muslims, who have treated it at best as an irrelevance, and at worst as a tool in the hand of the secularists who would like to "divest" Islam from the Muslims. Liberal notions of multicultural education have been transforming into what Fyfe (1993) terms as a more radical, harder edged response to racism and inequality: anti-racist education. The "harder edge" may be attributed, in part, to the greater involvement of younger generations of minority ethnic groups in the process. However, it should be noted that in Fyfe's opinion, the difference between the two concepts of multiculturalism and anti-racism is more semantic than substantial when he states, "Conflict between these supposedly polar opposites has perhaps generated more heat than light..." (Fyfe, 1993: 38).

2.4 Anti-racist education - a Muslim perspective

According to Neilsen (1992), Muslims in Britain have to contend with widespread racism and a maze of anti-immigration policies. Powney *et al.* define racism as being discrimination against individuals from a particular racial or ethnic group, on the basis that that group is, in some way, inferior. Muslims may not consider themselves as a racial or ethnic minority; they nevertheless suffer from "widespread racism" as the majority white population sees them as different. All minority groups, including the Muslims of Britain, suffer this kind of discrimination. There is an added prejudice that has come to be termed as *Islamophobia*: directed, of course, only at Muslims. Thus Muslims see themselves as doubly disadvantaged in Britain. Anwar attempted to rationalise this phenomenon, when he wrote:

> In a minority-dominant group approach, the ideology behind the concept of "assimilation", "absorption" or "integration" reflects the ideology of the dominant group and , therefore, any group which remains unabsorbed, or not

> assimilated, is usually considered to upset the equalisation of social relations in the society (Anwar, 1982: 09).

The first generation of Muslims, who came from countries where they were the majority group, had positive self-images of themselves. They seem to have coped well "with widespread racism and a maze of anti-immigration policies". The second and now the third generation of Muslims in this country are finding it increasingly difficult to contend with the disparity between how the Muslims see themselves and how they are viewed by the majority community. The racism these young Muslims have to contend with in Britain is a "demeaning and dehumanising experience", the effects of which combine to produce marginality for Muslim children in schools (Bhatti, 1999). The Scottish experience is not any different from the rest of Britain. Powney *et al.* (1998) recorded the fact that, the racism experienced by pupils from minority groups at school in Scotland could be an obstruction to their learning and to their parents' expectations being realised.

Muslim parents have had to tend to emotional and psychological wounds inflicted by racist jokes, name-calling and offensive remarks which, part of the everyday 'banter' on the playground though they be, nevertheless leave an indelible mark on the child. The girl who wears a hijab to school, either on her own initiative or to placate her parents, has to balance her commitment against peer pressure and ill-informed wisecracks, as well as enquiries - at times genuine - of teachers and other adults. Not all girls can withstand such pressures, thus many join the ranks of defaulters, who can then be held up as examples of "moderate behaviour". Kelly notes that in spite of years of immigration from the former British Empire in which Scots played a prominent part:

> Scotland has not devised the robust infrastructures which are required if there is to be effective challenge to racism and integration of minorities (Kelly, 2000: 18).

Though lacking "robust infrastructures" racism is nevertheless challenged in Scotland. The anti-racist movement in Scotland also evolved from the multicultural tradition in the nineteen eighties (Finn, 1987). Currently, almost all education authorities have Multicultural Anti-racist Education policies (Arshad

and Diniz, 1999). However, Powney *et al.* recognised that there had been little progress with these initiatives:

> In the anxiety to cope with implementing 5-14 as well as the many other changes affecting the school sector over the last decade, anti-racist education in Scotland, as in England, has reached a standstill. (Powney *et al,* 1998: 29)

Scotland has a long tradition of complacency among school staff and headteachers, who believe that there is "no problem here" (Finn, 1987) and consequently fail to tackle these issues. While discussing different forms of racism, Finn (1998) points to the other "myth that Scotland has no racism, but has 'sectarianism' instead". Sectarianism in Scotland is the name given to the historic prejudice that exists between followers of Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions. Since many of the Roman Catholics are of Irish descent, sometimes a century or so ago, there are elements of racism and prejudice against them that have parallels with the Muslim predicament. The case of a major football team in Glasgow refusing to sign a Roman Catholic player reflected a wider employment practice. Normally the school a young person went to, Catholics going to Roman Catholic schools and Protestants attending non-denominational schools, was used to determine the religion of the children. The proportion of Catholics denied other jobs because of the school they went to is not known. Similarly, the proportion of Muslim youngsters who have not realised their educational or vocational ambitions has not been calculated. Relating to Muslim experiences, Parker-Jenkins wonders whether religious and racial bigotry is fully understood by educational professionals:

> Do non-Muslim teachers fully understand the difference between religious and racial bigotry? Both need to be understood by teachers and both should now be considered within policy on discrimination (Parker-Jenkins, 1995: 128)

Action against overt racism, such as use of abusive language or denial of equal opportunity, is well established in the educational tradition of Scotland. A notable example was the adoption of the "Tackling of Racist Incident within Educational Establishments" initiative in Strathclyde in the nineteen eighties, along with similar policies by the Unitary Authorities. Covert racism - not giving equal weight

to the culture or tradition of others, and regarding one's own way of life as superior or the only valid tradition - has yet to be tackled seriously. Even among 'enlightened' people, there is a lot of tokenism: doing a little for the ethnic minorities, often as an afterthought. Schools which have tomes of 'Equal opportunity' and 'Anti-racist' policies to demonstrate their commitment to the minorities, still manage to schedule examinations on Eid days, or hold parents' evenings in the month of Ramadhan.

Anti-racist education has somewhat different aims and objectives from those of multicultural education. Anti-racists emphasise the existence of widespread racial prejudice in the country, in every facet of life. They demand practical measures to be put in place to address the grievances of minority ethnic groups. Racism ought not to be a taboo subject: it should be discussed openly in and out of classrooms, to endow students with the language and the tools to combat racism wherever it raises its ugly head. In educational institutions, it is no longer enough to document that children of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin are underachievers (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). The anti-racists would like the reasons for this underachievement to be explored and corrective measures to be taken. Powney *et al.* summarise the arguments for anti-racist education as:

> Anti-racism starts with recognition that racist and discriminatory behaviour are widespread throughout society and promotes strategies to combat this. Within schools or colleges, such strategies operate at various levels, including monitoring to ensure that students are achieving their potential, identifying the causes of underachievement (if any) and dealing with these, developing clear policies and procedures to deal with racist incidents and harassment, teaching explicitly about racism in society and empowering students to combat discrimination wherever they encounter it (Powney *et al,* 1998: 07).

Multicultural education was rooted in the need of the white middle class to know more about all the "factors in school and out of it that bear on achievement and underachievement, and the creation of a better and fairer society for our ethnic minorities" (Swann., 1985, 5). The patronising language used by Swann amply demonstrates this. Modood (1993) maintains that anti-racism is akin to the Black Power ideas of the USA. It takes the form of rediscovering and reasserting

identities undermined by colonial oppression, maintaining that anti-discrimination legislation and enforcement mechanisms such as the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) were 'designed to fail'. Anti-racism has a much harder edge: it is owned to a much greater extent by the minority groups themselves, who bring their own experiences with them and challenge the establishment in a much more radical manner. Chris Mullard, the black academic hailed as the father of anti-racist education in Britain, as described the changes that were forced onto the Institute of Race Relations (IRR) by black activists as:

> A transformation in which 'a white racist world in a white racist IRR became a black anti-racist Institute in a white racist world' (Troyna, 1987: 99).

Race relations' policies in Britain have been based on the principle that there is an overriding unity of interest among the ethnic minority communities, particularly those from the Third World (Christie, 1991). This unity of interest can be very superficial, as far as various communities are concerned. Muslims have some common causes with other minority groups, and formulate 'alliances of the afflicted' with them; on the other hand, they are separate from other minorities because the things they value and wish to preserve are different from those of other minority groups. For the Muslims, the preservation of community languages is not of paramount importance, whereas the teaching of Arabic - the language of the Quran - is. They devote little or no time in their Mosques or other institutions to the propagation of their ethnicity; all the attention is focussed on the propagation of their way of life, which is based on Islam.

Muslims are a multicultural community in their own right. They carry with them teachings of racial equality. Prophet Muhammad stated in his celebrated last sermon that "People should only be ranked in matters of piety, otherwise fair skinned people do not have superiority over black skinned people, nor do black skinned people have superiority over fair skinned people". Moreover, Islam is a missionary religion: it seeks converts in all communities and races. Anwar (1982) referred to Muslims as an "ideologically-orientated community". Thus Muslims see themselves as an ideological minority, struggling to preserve their ideology and to transform themselves into an ideological majority. It is not in their interest

to be isolated or to be painted into racial or ethnic corners. They would rather play on the main stage and influence 'social and political behaviour' in this country.

> An Islamic identity also implies an agenda and an outlook, based on Islamic principles, that inform the behaviour of a Muslim minority community (Christie, 1991: 462).

Muslims may see themselves engaged in a hopeful struggle, practising their faith and inviting others to do the same, though in practice they find it very difficult to break out of their communities. Muslims on their part do not accept the separation of the sacred and temporal affairs, which is fudged in the Western traditions. The Western man does not understand why Muslims will not get off their religious hobby horse, like any other community, when discussing important issues like education, social affairs or politics. Since Muslims are guided in all aspects of their life by their way of life, they derive their inspiration from Islam. There is a growing interest in Islam and Muslims in this country, what Neilsen calls "an explosion in the interest in the general awareness of the existence of Muslim communities of some significance" (1991, 465). This interest in Islam and Muslims does not always lead to a better understanding of either the religion or the community. The tabloids keep churning out stereotypical images of Muslims (Conway, 1997), which form the basis of a layman's knowledge and understanding of Islam and its followers. These issues will be discussed in the sections that follow.

2.5 Fundamentalists and Islamophobia.

Islamic revival

To understand the Muslim psyche - the resentment they feel, the scars of injustice they carry - one has to delve into the recent history of the Muslims with respect to the West (Ahmed, 1988). Muslims are engaged in a struggle to rediscover and revitalise their heritage (Ahmed, 1993). This struggle is not limited to any particular part of the globe: it is a universal struggle, elements being found in Iran, Pakistan, Egypt, Algeria and the West (Kepel, 1997). The Iranian revolution in the

nineteen seventies provided this struggle the impetus it needed to become a universal phenomenon.

The Iranian revolution underwent the convulsions such revolutions normally go through, overthrowing a well-established pro-western Shah and putting the clergy of the Shi'a sect of Islam in charge. These Muslim clerics were seen going about executing their revolution with total disregard to how they were perceived by others. As a consequence, the title of Ayatollah, which some of the Muslims held in supreme respect, came to be mocked and reviled in the West. Muslims in Britain who had no say in either the revolution or the way it was portrayed in the West once again felt very aggrieved. It confirmed for them, if confirmation was needed, that the Western press and media would do all in their power to present Islam and Muslims in a negative manner.

> English representations of events in the Iran of Khomeini, and in the Gulf War have been unambiguously detached from their geography and translated into the popular imagery of Islamic fundamentalisms as a feature of the British Pakistani communities (Husband, 1994: 81).

Pakistanis in Britain have been passive observers of these events, which have been shaping their attitude to living as Muslims in the West. They have been passive, essentially out of necessity. They exercise little or no power in the corridors of government. Werbner (1994) underlined this point when she talked of how swings between temporary "utopian hope for Islamic dominance" and a sense of "communal failure and total powerlessness" are more evident in British Muslims' attitudes.

Muslims throughout the world consider themselves to be of a common nation (*Ummah*), therefore they are duty bound to go to the aid of fellow Muslims across language, cultural or ethnic boundaries. Werbner was reflecting on the Muslim sentiments when she wrote that:

> Islam is a universal transnational ideology, and Muslims are concerned with affairs of Muslims living beyond the narrow limits of their immediate community (Werbner, 1994: 105).

Although this principle is as old as Islam itself, it has achieved some prominence in the last few decades. According to Christie (1991), recent decades have seen a revival of an explicitly Islamic consciousness throughout the Muslim world. The dilemma facing the Muslims in Britain is how to construct what is essentially a religious society in a country, which is only nominally Christian. Paradoxically, Muslims consider that their task would have been much easier, had the practice in the country, as opposed to the rhetoric alone, been "essentially Christian in character". Muslims are being asked to join this secularist tradition, by giving up the fundamental beliefs and practices of Islam. Local and central governments hide behind a plethora of regulations, demonstrating their inability to support and finance any 'religious organisations'. Thus Muslims have been marginalized and from this marginalisation has grown a steadily stronger perception that only by looking after their own interests themselves can they expect to achieve their goals (Neilsen, 1991).

This tradition of 'looking after their own interests' is much stronger in the second and third generation of Muslims in this country. Even Muslim academics like Modood (1993) are surprised to note that British-born Muslims are often likely to be more religious than their parents, "for whom Islam was part of an ethnic identity". Muslims in Britain feel they have to make a special effort to preserve their religion and traditions in this country. Many things that were taken for granted in their homelands have to be organised consciously and systematically by them, e.g. religious education of their children, celebration of festivals etc. It is also a chance for the young people to reflect on these practices, and improve on them wherever possible.

A lot of British-born young Muslims speak only English and are not well versed in the community languages; thus they cannot communicate directly with Islamic scholars, who on the whole speak little or no English. The youth have been forced to 'return to the basics': research resource books of Islam, Quran and *Hadith* (teachings of the Prophet Muhammad). The practice of their parents was predominantly based on cultural traditions and less to do with Islam as such. For example, the marriage ceremonies of the South Asian Muslims are only slightly at

variance with the Hindu traditions. The Muslim youth have attempted to redress this imbalance, to shift more to the practice of Islam rather than the reverence for all things pertaining to the culture of the homelands. Neilsen also referred to this phenomenon to explain stricter adherence to Islam by the younger generation of the Muslims compared to that of their parents:

> When they [the young Muslims] look to a resource in Islam [they] resort to Quran and *hadith,* reading them as documents speaking directly to their own situation. As a result they become critical of the views and concepts propounded by their parents' generation, on the one hand, and, on the other, of the 'orthodox' standpoints of the representatives of the Islamic scholarly tradition (Neilsen, 1997: 392).

The young Muslims have set up their own organisations, bypassing all the petty feuds of their parents' generations, to concentrate on achieving Muslim objectives in this country. Wahab had observed that:

> The trend in inner cities...is towards a strong adherence towards Islam, sometimes stronger with the younger generation than with the older. The growth of the Young Muslim Organisation in East London and the Bradford Mujahedin are two examples of how young Muslims are continuing to strive for the retention and promotion of Islamic values. (Wahab, 1989: 12)

Since then, The Young Muslims has become a national organisation with branches in almost all major British cities. Islam is growing amongst the younger generation who are increasingly identifying their Muslim identity as their defining characteristic (Saeed *et al.*, 1999). This trend may bring some comfort to the Muslims of this country - that their beliefs and traditions are being rooted in the younger generation - but it alarms the majority community. The Friday congregation of any mosque in Britain is composed predominantly of males in their early twenties, in contrast to the congregation of most churches on Sundays. These young men congregating outside a Mosque after Friday prayers can seem threatening to outsiders: reinforcing their stereotypes of 'Muslim fundamentalists'. They are seen as 'threats' to the imagined cultural, political and religious homogeneity of white British society (Husband, 1994).

This dread of Muslims and perceived 'threat of Muslims' grew into full-blown fear of Muslims and all things Islamic - Islamophobia - in the nineteen nineties.
It was crystallised by the Rushdie affair, which polarised Muslim and non-Muslim opinion in Britain. The Muslims of Britain discovered, somewhat to their surprise, that British law did not afford their religion the same protection as it did Christianity. Their inappropriate response in the streets, burning the books and effigies of the author added to the Islamophobia which the authoritative report of the Runnymede Trust defined as " dread or hatred of Islam - and, therefore, fear or dislike of all or most Muslims" (Conway, 1997: 2).

Although there may be some truth in the fact that this 'dread of Islam and Muslims' has historic roots (Lewis and Schnapper, 1994), going back to the Crusades and the adventures of the Ottoman Empire into the heart of Europe, most people in Britain do not take their cue from medieval history. Halliday (1999) argues that "it is tempting but misleading" to link contemporary hostility to Muslims to the "long history of conflict between Islam and the West". It is to be hoped that increasingly, the way in which Muslims present themselves in the streets, across the shop counter or in the corridors of schools and hospitals will determine how they are seen by the majority community. Sadly, the populist print and broadcast media continues to portray Muslims as alien to the civilised ways of the West. Husband had also come to the conclusion that it was difficult to convey the vehemence of the political assault upon Muslims, "in particular the lurid propagandising of the press" (1994, 96).

The media seems to have its own preconceived ideas of what the Muslims are and what they stand for. Lack of Muslim representation in print and broadcast media may be a contributing factor. Some, otherwise rational liberal thinkers can coolly and calmly justify being Islamophobic, as vividly illustrated in the Runnymede report (Conway, 1997). The effect on the Muslims can range from being excluded from the economic and social life of the nation to being frequent victims of discrimination and harassment. Muslims have suffered in silence previously, but are now discovering a new found confidence in the last few years. Neilsen noted that:

> Muslim community leadership, who have felt that the structures of white British society are, at best, blind to the existence of a Muslim community in this country or, at worst, ignoring it by insisting on what are, from a Muslim point of view, divisive concepts of ethnicity or assimilations concepts of race (Neilsen, 1987: 384).

It should be noted that Neilsen had made this observation in the pre-Rushdie era, negating the arguments of those who wish to suggest that Muslims gave rise to Islamophobia themselves by their demonstrations against Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*. This is another version of the classical ploy of shifting the causes of racism onto the victims. There can be little doubt that the Rushdie affair - the publication of *Satanic Verses* in 1989, which the Muslims considered sacrilegious; the stance taken by the machinery of the state, protecting the rights of Rushdie at the expense of the whole Muslim community; the consequent issuing of a *Fatwa* by Ayatollah Khomeini, and subsequent publicity surrounding the issues - was a watershed experience for the Muslims of Britain. At the height of the crisis, Werbner described it as the confrontation between the Muslim community and the British nation-state and went on to observe that the legacy:

> ...is now a permanent part of the mythic history of the community in this country. It has created its own trajectories into the future (Werbner, 1991: 344).

Muslims had to take stock of where they stood with respect to the institutions of Britain when they failed in their legal challenges and petitions to the Parliament. They had to re-evaluate their position in Britain; a few took the *hijra* option - migration from a land of conflict to land of peace (Christie, 1991). The majority view has been to equip themselves with the tools and skills so that they can make a more appropriate response in the future. There is recognition that the whole debacle was a public relations disaster for the Muslims and their institutions were seen wanting. The crisis in the Muslim community is summed up by Lewis as:

> The dilemma of a minority, most of them from the less modernised parts of their own societies of origin, who now find themselves in a situation where they differ from the majority among whom they live, not only because they profess a different religion, but also because they hold a radically different concept of what religion means, demands and defines (Lewis, 1994: 18).

The Muslims are frequently and collectively labelled as 'fundamentalists': a slur now in common currency, which is used even in official circles to raise all sorts of irrational fears according to a Muslim report (UKACIA, 1994). Parker-Jenkins (1995) argued that the term was used in a derogatory, racist manner during the Rushdie affair. It continues to be employed by certain media, fuelling a climate of specific anti-Muslim racism in Britain. She had previously talked of Muslim needs being expressed as demands and an "increased agitation of an increasingly more politicised and assertive Muslim community" (Parker-Jenkins, 1991: 574). This can explain partly the rise in Muslim consciousness amongst the youth and what Modood (1993) calls "new Muslim activism" and "new Muslim assertiveness". Wahab argued that:

> Only after the Salman Rushdie affair have we seen Muslims across the country act in unison, indeed seen them act on any issue that went further than their local demands. For the first time we can talk more accurately of a 'Muslim point of view' of a Muslim community (Wahab, 1989: 7)

2.6 Supplementary Muslim Education

The day schools cannot meet the cultural and linguistic needs of Muslim children (Halstead, 1986). The Muslim community has responded to this situation by setting up a supplementary sector of education, which plays a very important part in the life of the community; however, very little research has been carried out in this area. Muslims supplement the education of their children by providing evening or weekend classes in languages and Islamic Studies. Some of these classes are organised in the Mosques, commonly called Mosque-schools or *Madrasas*. In some areas, these classes may be held in public halls, local schools or even private houses of some Muslim activists. Some parents prefer to employ private tutors rather than send their children to these classes. Another reason for the support of these classes was what Anwar (1991) called "the myth of the return": parents' desire for their children to be well versed in community languages and religious teachings so that on their return to the countries of their origin, they would fit in well into those school systems. In the early nineteen eighties, local education

authorities like Glasgow introduced plans to teach 'community languages' in schools with a high concentration of minority ethnic pupils. Their position has been summarised by an HMSO publication:

> A modern foreign language is a National Curriculum foundation subject at a secondary level. A choice of language includes the working languages of the EU, together with Arabic, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Mandarin or Cantonese Chinese, Modern Hebrew, Punjabi, Russian, Turkish and Urdu. All schools must offer at least one working EU language and may in addition offer one of the other listed languages
> (HMSO, 1997: 58).

This provision is not freely available to all Urdu speakers in Glasgow, as it is concentrated basically in three secondary schools and some of their associated primary schools. The provision of Urdu by local authority schools has had a knock-on effect on the evening and weekend schools. They underwent a major change in the nineteen eighties. It was thought that children should be taught about their religion and culture in the English language, and Urdu to be taught as a second language. The Muslim Education Trust and other educational bodies encouraged the Muslim community to shift their emphasis from language provision to Islamic Studies by the publication of their syllabi for these schools.

Ashraf (1986) had urged the Muslim community leaders to inculcate religious knowledge in their children and help them grow up as committed Muslims. He believed that the establishment and running of supplementary schools was a duty of Muslim parents. Sarwar, the Director of the Muslim Education Trust - one of the main providers of Muslim education for decades - argued for the need for these schools:

> British Muslims recognise that an education system which is grappling to come to terms with the needs of a pluralistic society cannot be expected to provide a full Islamic education for their children within maintained schools. Hence the establishment over the past 50 years of the supplementary schools (Sarwar, 1991: 28).

Glasgow has more than ten Mosque-schools, with pupil rolls ranging from fifty to five hundred. They provide teaching of Islam along with community languages like Urdu and Bengali. Glasgow Central Mosque houses one of the oldest and

amongst the better run of these schools. It is run for both boys and girls, every evening for three hours. At lower stages (until the age of around ten) it is co-educational, older children are separated into single-sex classes. Curricula of these Mosque-schools can vary considerably. Some concentrate almost exclusively on the teaching of the Quran: learning to read Arabic script, memorising various sections of the Quran etc. Others have started teaching the meaning of the Quranic texts, i.e. English translations and related Islamic disciplines such as learning about the life of the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic history. Therefore, there has been a gradual development of these Mosque-schools from exclusively teaching Quran to attempting to fill a much wider gap in the knowledge and development of Muslim children.

Muslims in Scotland are beginning to compare and contrast their situation with those of other minority groups in the country such as the Gaels. Bilingual education for Welsh and Gaelic speakers has been well established in the UK, but there has never been a serious proposal for bilingual education for children from ethnic minority backgrounds: although "more pupils sat Standard Grade exams in Urdu than Gaidhlig - i.e. Gaelic for native speakers - in 1998" (Powney *et al.*, 1998: 35). Scottish Muslims are observing the establishment of the state-funded Gaelic-medium school in Glasgow with keen interest. Finn states that the establishment by the state of denominational schooling for minority communities can be seen as an important sign of the majority's acceptance of the minority's right to be both different and simultaneously part of the society. Making the connection between this provision and the demands of the Muslims, he argued:

> The establishment of the first Gaelic medium school to protect another form of Scottish identity is an important addition to this pluralistic provision. There is no reason why, under the same guidelines, that opportunity should not be offered to Scotland's Islamic community, if that community desires the establishment of Islamic schools (Finn, 2000: 77).

One of the major arguments for the establishment of "Islamic schools" is the teaching of Quranic Arabic. Although most Muslim children of Scotland may be able to read the Arabic script of the Qur'an, only a tiny minority would be able to

understand the language and meaning of the Arabic scriptures. The majority rely heavily on the translations and interpretations of others. It is thought that as Arabic is the language of most of the Muslim world, the teaching of Arabic would establish a working link with fellow Muslims worldwide. As one of the objectives of the Mosque-schools is to strengthen the Muslim identity of the children, there is a growing consciousness in the Muslim community that they should be promoting the teaching of the Arabic language rather than their own community languages. Kepel observed the absence of Urdu and other Indian languages, and the insertion of Arabic in their place, in the curriculum of some Muslim schools in England. He tried to rationalise the situation thus:

> The languages of the Indian subcontinent do not appear on the curriculum, as if to emphasize the school's intention to move beyond the conception of Islam inherited from the country of origin and towards an ideal community entity, using Arabic as the vehicle (Kepel, 1997: 124).

Yaseen (1983), an active Muslim community worker in Glasgow in the nineteen eighties, maintained that the Islamic identity of a Muslim child could be protected through English and Arabic exclusively. The demand for Arabic language, although in its embryonic stage, is bound to grow. Local and central governments will then have to come to terms with having to make provision for the teaching of a language which is not the mother-tongue of those who wish to learn it, while being a working language of the Muslim world. Akhtar (1993) goes a step further and argues for a place for Arabic in the day schools of the Muslim children:

> As Muslim parents, it is our duty to ensure that teaching of Arabic takes place within a statutory timetable...in that way, Arabic will be seen as a respectable and even prestigious subject of study... (Akhtar, 1993: 21).

Whereas the Mosque-schools do satisfy some needs of the Muslims, they also present various problems for the Muslim community. Muslim children have to be rushed to these classes almost every working day as soon as they have arrived from their day schools. The kind of mental and physical strain that is put both on parents and on their children is an area worth researching. The effect this extra schooling has on the children's day school, homework etc. is another area worth

exploring. Bhatti (1999) briefly alluded to this topic when she described problems facing Pakistani children and talked of "pressure on children having to devote more time and attention to Urdu and Arabic". In the same vein, Parker-Jenkins (1995), whilst giving advice to teachers about Muslim children, pleaded for:

> ...flexibility in setting homework for children attending Madrassa or supplementary school in the evenings... (Parker-Jenkins, 1995: 87).

Moreover, the children in these Mosque-schools are exposed to what are euphemistically called 'traditional teaching methods'. Ashraf (1986) referred to the shortcomings of such schools as the lack of trained teachers who understand modern methods of teaching. Most of these schools are also under-financed and poorly resourced. Akhtar had called them "run down Mosque schools" (1993, 21). It is not uncommon to see a class of thirty to forty children crouched on a carpeted floor, repeating after the Imam some chapter of the Quran or even taking dictation to make a note of some point of learning. Halstead noted three major shortcomings of these schools:

> They are an additional financial burden on the community and academic burden on the pupils; their approach and methods...compare unfavourably with the state system; and, most importantly, they leave the children exposed to "secular" schooling for most of their school day, and thus drive a wedge between religious and non-religious learning which is alien to the spirit of Islam (Halstead, 1986: 15).

Most Muslims would like the two traditions to merge: all the needs of the Muslim children to be met in the day schools, thus rendering the Mosque-schools redundant. They are not satisfied with the performance of the Mosque-schools and would like their children to receive a unified, truly comprehensive education. This is how the Muslim independent school in Glasgow has been presented to the Muslim community: that its pupils would receive an education of their religion, culture and all other subjects. Some Mosque-schools have also responded to the demands of the parents to upgrade their institutions. They have started introducing extracurricular activities and some have also mooted that they would like to help their pupils with day-school homework etc.

On the other hand, some of the Mosque-schools are attempting to become full-time centres of traditional Islamic learning, *Dar-al-Uloom*. A number of Mosque-schools in England have already gone down that path, bolstering statistics of Muslim independent schools in their regions. Although they may teach some familiar subjects like English, maths and the sciences, they concentrate on Islamic disciplines of Quranic and related studies. Whereas it would be true to say that these traditional schools may fulfil a particular need in the community, they are not always the first choice of education, even for the most devout. The "secular" education system has acquired status and prestige since its graduates can go to universities and enter the professions and lucrative jobs. *Dar-al-Uloom* meet the needs of a very tiny proportion of the community and as such do not make any major contribution to the ongoing debate about provision for Muslim needs in this country. They are of minority interest and will remain relevant only to a very small number of Muslims in this country, though some are showing considerable imagination, such as a boarding school for Muslim girls in Dundee.

2.7 Demands for Muslim day schools

The demand for Muslim day schools has been well known in educational and political circles since the nineteen seventies. The Swann committee had examined a range of problems, amongst them language education, religious education, separate schools and the concerns of the smaller ethnic minority groups. Thus the issue of "separate schools" had already arisen in the nineteen seventies. Significantly, Swann's emphasis was on language considerations rather than the issues of religion and religious education, which are at the heart of Muslim concerns. Ashraf (1986), the founder of the Islamic Academy in Cambridge, that has been promoting Muslim education in the UK, stated that the Muslims want their children to grow up as good Muslims and they find the "secularist state schools creating non-believers in spite of religious education" (Ashraf, 1986: 6). In his opinion, all subjects were taught from a secularist point of view. Children were encouraged to be critical of their own traditions and values and even their faith. Parker-Jenkins (1995) articulated these concerns, writing:

> Some Muslim parents perceive educational provision in British schools as a semi-secular Christian encounter in which Islamic faith and culture is undermined. In the absence of state funding for private Muslim schools, the situation remains that Muslim parents will aspire to keep their children faithful in the face of perceived Western materialism and conflict of cultural values. Those who remain within the state school system expect advocacy and accommodation of their needs, and enlightened educationalists who have some knowledge of Islam (Parker-Jenkins, 1995: 20).

This perceived threat of "Western materialism and conflict of cultural values" has been the driving force behind the establishment of many of the independent Muslim schools in Britain. More than fifty of these schools are listed on one Internet site (www.ukiew.org), which by no means is an exhaustive listing. Some of these schools are nothing more than a handful of parents pooling their resources under a common roof to educate their children according to their wishes, while others, such as Islamia Primary School in London and Al-Furqan Primary School in Birmingham, are comparable to local comprehensives. Interestingly, these were the first Muslim schools to receive official recognition, being awarded Grant Maintained status in January 1998. Sixty other Muslim schools in England (Times Education Supplement, 16th Jan. 1998) are vying for this status, which would relieve the financial burden on the Muslim community, as staff and building costs would be paid by the state. Ashraf (1985) summed up the shortcomings of modern Western education from a Muslim perspective when he wrote:

> Modern Western education places an exaggerated emphasis upon reason and rationality and underestimates the value of the spirit. It encourages scientific enquiry at the expense of faith; it promotes individualism; it breeds scepticism; it refuses to accept that which is not demonstrable (Ashraf, 1985: 02).

Similar sentiments were echoed by Halstead:

> ..... the West has lost its religious moorings and has allowed secularism to creep into its understanding of the world in two stages: first, the separation of religious and secular learning, which is implicit in the new Testament and has been encouraged particularly by Protestantism in the last two centuries, and secondly the devaluing of religion in the face of scientific progress and material prosperity (Halstead, 1986: 21).

Looking at these lists, it ought not to be surprising that Muslims wish to establish their own schools: the surprise should be in the fact that they have participated in "modern

Western education" at all. Their subscription to common schooling has been out of necessity rather than conviction. They have fundamental differences in aims and outcomes of education. They would prefer the educational system to reflect their convictions and their way of life, which as a minority they would find increasingly difficult to do, overcoming Islamophobia and other reactions of the majority community. They would like the state schooling system to give way to a system that would be more sensitive to their requirements, as suggested by Callan:

> The common school in particular has come to be widely regarded as an institutional anachronism that must give way to educational arrangements more responsive to private preference and cultural diversity (Callan, 1997: 162).

Halstead (1986) has articulated the arguments for Muslim schools from a Muslim perspective. The call for Muslim schools, for him, reflects a Muslim concern about the decline in moral standards and in religious commitment in the UK. He maintains that Muslims are trying to establish two principles for their children when they call for Muslim schools:

> Access to the opportunities offered by a general education, which include living as full British citizens without fear of racism or other forms of prejudice...enjoying the benefits of modern scientific and technological progress. The preservation, maintenance and transmission of their distinctive Islamic beliefs and values... (Halstead, 1986: 16).

These two principles have to be borne in mind while trying to understand Muslim thinking behind the whole concept of their own day schools. They wish to teach their children scientific knowledge and technological know-how "to become full British citizens" while maintaining their roots in "their Islamic beliefs and values". Ashraf would like to see the Muslims of the UK to be the heirs of the great Muslim scientists and mathematicians who were also scholars of Islamic disciplines:

> Knowledge and virtue used to go hand in hand in the traditional education system. Not only did the students acquire worldly knowledge, they were also trained intellectually and emotionally to be religious. There was no objection to scientific knowledge but the scientist believed that by acquiring knowledge about the phenomenal world they were only strengthening their belief in the greatness and power of the Creator (Ashraf, 1985: 11).

Muslims wish to establish schools, based on the teachings of Islam, which is a world religion and not a regional cult. These schools would teach all the normal school subjects but within an Islamic ethos (Ashraf, 1985; Halstead, 1986). These schools would have an open enrolment policy and they would not discriminate on basis of "race, social class, religion, or first language" nor would they encourage only people "who belong to groups that are distinguished by such criteria" to support the schools thus falling well short Callan's definition of "separate schools":

> A school is separate if it welcomes only members of the society who belong to groups that are distinguished by such criteria (religion, ethnicity, or the like) A school that discriminated on the basis of race, social class, religion, or first language would be a separate school... (Callan, 1997: 163).

Muslims do recognise that the non-Muslim establishment may find it difficult to support Muslim day schools in the first instance regarding them as "divisive schools". Akhtar (1993) noted that in 1991 there were 9936 Church of England schools, 2245 Roman Catholic schools, 31 Methodist schools and 22 Jewish schools in the state sector in England and Wales. None of these schools were considered to be divisive, only that every application for a Muslim voluntary-aided school had been rejected, until 1998. Commenting on policy-makers who claim to defend "equality and justice" and in reality sought to defend old "inequalities and privileges", he writes:

> There are double standards of assessment here. When Muslims ask for their own schools, it is said that they are asking for 'separate' or 'segregated' schools; but Christian and Jewish schools are 'denominational'. Muslims, it is said, will foster 'fundamentalism' and oppress their girls in such schools; Christians and Jews, however are entitled to bring up their children according to their preferences as parents (Akhtar, 1993: 23).

Non-Muslims in reality may choose not to send their children to a Muslim school. Indeed as the Dewsbury and Cleveland cases have demonstrated (Halstead, 1994), some white non-Muslim parents did not wish to send their children to a school that

was not predominantly white, in spite of one of the schools (in Dewsbury) being a Church of England school. Muslims have been sending their children to schools in this country where the culture and ethos is either secular or Christian or even "semi-secular Christian". It would be the non-Muslims who would endow Muslim schools with separateness by choosing not to have anything to do with them. Even those who occupy the moral high ground of "parental choice in education" (Patricia White in Halstead, 1994) can find it within themselves to argue against Muslim day schools as:

> The case is not against parental choice as such but against certain kinds of parental choice, namely that of separate schools for different groups... People from minority and majority groups need to hear each other speaking with their own voices rather than some media-filtered, or even teacher-filtered, version of that voice. It is one thing to be told about Muslims and their beliefs; it is quite another to work and play with Muslims in the framework provided by a common school (White, 1994: 89).

The right of the parents to educate their children according to their wishes has been enshrined in almost all post-war educational legislation. Cumper (1994) argued that the government was committed to the individualist rights approach - the view that stress should be placed on the individual parents' school requests without regard for general policy concerns - and wonders why this right does not seem to extend to "minority faith groups to establish their own state-funded schools?" (Cumper, 1994: 171). Williams (1998) also goes out in search of the most appropriate and democratically defensible arrangement to accommodate young citizens who come from different religious and ethnic/cultural backgrounds. Citizens of these (minority) religions, he maintains, are entitled to have schools, which are linguistically and culturally distinct from those of the majority. His arguments in favour of "inclusive schools" are summarised below: statements, which have been used historically to argue against Catholic schools, are now used against the establishment of Muslim day schools:

1. Educating all children together regardless of their gender, class, cultural backgrounds or beliefs of the parents. "To unite in one system children of different creeds" - Lord Stanley.
2. Civic/social aspect. Publicly funded schools should seek to embrace all the children of the heterogeneous population. Any polarisation within the adult

population will be reinforced. Educating children together should therefore serve to promote social cohesion and provide a sound basis for an extensive and widely shared civic and political culture.

3. Educational/personal aspects. Emphasis on experience in learning: if we wish young people to develop sympathy with, and tolerance of, those from different backgrounds from theirs, the best way to do it is by allowing them to encounter such children naturally on a daily basis in school where sensitive and professional pedagogic guidance is available.
4. Enlarging the understanding and views of children whose views differ from others - leading to deeper sympathy and respect for others. Translation of knowledge to virtue.

Halstead argues that the call for Muslim day schools has been opposed due to three reasons:

> The first relates to the dangers of isolating the Muslim minority community from the culture of the majority ethnic community in U.K.
> The second relates to the limits that are placed on minority rights in a democracy. The third relates to specific religious beliefs and practices and whether it is realistic for a minority group to expect to preserve, maintain and transmit these freely and without any restrictions (Halstead, 1986: 17).

It would be wrong to give the impression that the Muslim community is unanimously in favour of establishing their own day schools. The arguments given above are used by Muslims themselves in their forums to debate this issue. Neilsen (1987) commented on the areas of disagreement in the Muslim community, especially over the issue of Muslim schools, "an issue which split the Muslim community in Bradford and about which there is also disagreement in Birmingham's Muslim Liaison Committee" (Neilsen, 1987: 389). Commenting on the current situation, where nearly all Muslim schools are private (fee-paying) schools, Neilsen pleaded for conflict resolution when he wrote:

> The weakness of Muslim campaign for 'separate' schools has always been that they in practice concentrate efforts on the minority fortunate enough to find a place in such a school. The majority of Muslim children will have to continue to be educated in the state system - simple demography dictates this. The state system and the Muslim community will have to find ways of working together instead of continuing in mutual conflict as too often seems to be the case (Neilsen, 1991: 473).

3 Methodology

The aim of this study is to explore the role education plays in the life of the Muslim community in Scotland, the problems confronting them in this field and the solutions they adopt to overcome these difficulties. A range of strategies was adopted to gain knowledge and build up a picture of the community that the Muslims themselves would recognise as a more accurate representation of the Muslims of Scotland. The views and opinions of the Muslim community were taken to represent the lived reality of their situation. Apart from having lived within the Muslim community of Glasgow for over three decades, further knowledge of this community was built up by reflecting on the data produced by interviews and questionnaires. Viewed from this perspective, this can be seen as a phenomenological study exploring the experience of the Muslim community in the field of education in Scotland. Cohen and Manion described phenomenology as:

> In its broadest meaning, phenomenology is a theoretical point of view that advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value; and one which sees behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience rather than by external, objective and physically described reality (1995, 29).

A multi-strand strategy was employed to investigate "the phenomena of experience" in order to build up a picture of the Muslim perspective on education.

3.1 Social history and retrospective analysis of the Willowbank affair

Ten years ago, Willowbank Primary School in the Woodlands area of Glasgow was the focus of attention as it tried to opt-out of local authority control. It attracted national attention as it was perceived as a backdoor attempt at the creation of the first Muslim school in the state sector in Scotland. Retrospective analysis to what came to be known as the "Willowbank affair" was carried out using archival documents,

published literature, newspapers and personal records. I had a peripheral role to play in the affair, as the chairman of an ad-hoc committee of the Muslim community that produced the Muslim response to the opt-out proposals. Thus, not only were all the main players in this drama known to me, I could also reflect on documents and developments within the Muslim community that were not in the public domain. Walker (1985) lists the advantages of the research technique of document analysis:

a) It is superior to interviewing for collecting retrospective data;
b) Information obtained from documents is often more credible;
c) Documents are convenient to use and easily available;
d) Documents are non-reactive;
e) Records save time and money that original data collection requires.

The fact that documents reflect the mind of the recorder(s), lending them a particular bias, was not ignored. The establishment of an independent Muslim school in Glasgow (Iqra Academy), has to be understood in the wider context of the Willowbank affair. Chapters on the Willowbank affair and the development of Iqra Academy have been included in the results section.

3.2 A case study of Iqra Academy in Glasgow.

A case study of the Muslim independent school in Glasgow, Iqra Academy, was undertaken. Stake (1995) had defined case study as:

> Case study is the study of the particular and complexity of a singular case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances (1995, xi).

Some of the activities undertaken to study this particular case were:

Participant observation

a) Visiting the Muslim school regularly, since before its inception, to keep abreast of the developments and observe classes, talking to staff and pupils about the school to enlist their views.

b) Spending much time with the activists of the school, lending a hand with some educational tasks, building relationships and gaining their confidence.

c) Informal talks with all who were directly involved with the Muslim school: getting their views and documenting their reasons for getting involved with the project.

Interviews

Interviewing two groups of parents: firstly those who were sending their children to the Muslim school and secondly those who had decided not to send their children to the Muslim school, to ascertain the reasons behind the decisions of each group of parents. Re-interviewing the group of parents with children at the school after eighteen months to review, evaluate progress and record some views about how the new Muslim school had developed in the community.

These interviews were semi-structured "to encourage people to talk at some length and in their own way" (Drever, 1995). Hitchcock & Hughes had also commended semi-structured interview as they allow "depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses" (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989: 83). The interview questions were thus designed to be fairly open, to allow the interviewees to shape the content of the interview. An interview schedule (Appendix 3) was structured around the set of research questions:

Set 1:

- What is the understanding of each interviewee about Muslim Education?
- What do Muslims mean when they talk about Muslim education?

Set 2:

- How well are the needs of Muslim children met by state provision?
- What needs are not met by the system?

Set 3:

- How are Muslim schools viewed by each interviewee?
- How do they see future developments?

Prompts and probes were built into the schedule to encourage interviewees to answer the questions in their own words but to remain focused on the main topics being discussed. Furthermore, the prompts and probes helped the interviewees to expand on

some points, to explain further some points and to provide more details. According to Drever:

> This gives the interviewer the initiative to structure the interview in advance by planning the main questions to be asked, and to control the interview as it happens by prompting, accepting or probing the answers (Drever, 1995:10).

These interviews were the primary source of data collection for this study. Other techniques (informal discussions and a survey questionnaire) were used to complement and explore the interview data further as Bogdan and Biklen had suggested that:

> In qualitative research, interviews may be used in two ways. They may be the dominant strategy for data collection, or they may be employed in conjunction with participant observation, document analysis, or other techniques. In all of these situations the interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subject's own word so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992: 96).

The Trustees of the Muslim school were requested to provide the names of five parents of their pupils, who would be willing to be interviewed. A draft interview schedule was provided to give the Trustees and the volunteer parents an idea of the scope of the questions to be asked. The Trustees forwarded the names of three females and two males who had shown a willingness to participate in this study. Two of these interviews were carried out on the school premises, within earshot of the Trustees. This was essential for confidence-building and gaining further access to other school documents and personnel. Three parents, recommended by the school, chose to be interviewed at their homes or in the Mosque committee room.

This group of five parents was interviewed again after about eighteen months into the life of the school. By then, three of the parents had withdrawn their children from the school. The second interview presented some difficulties, as the Muslim School had no further contact with the parents who had withdrawn their children. Nevertheless, they were kind enough to provide their telephone numbers to allow personal contacts to be made. It was heartening to find that all parents were very willing to talk about their experiences. Their sentiments were taken into account while drawing conclusion.

A group of Muslim parents who had decided not to send their children to the Muslim school had to be chosen for interview. While selecting this group of parents, it was essential to establish some basic criteria to make the selection easier, apart from the fact that they had to be willing to participate in the study:

i) They had to have young children, preferably of primary school age,

ii) They had to be representative of different socio-economic groups,

iii) They had to come from different areas of the city: a geographical spread.

Many parents were spoken to with a view to enlisting their support for the study. A number of them showed marked reluctance to be interviewed on tape, citing their lack of confidence as the main reason. Eventually four fathers were selected who met all the criteria. Two of them were very knowledgeable about Islam – they held senior honorary posts in Muslim organisations – while the other two could be described as lay members of the community. As far as socio-economic conditions and the geographical spread, one was a BBC computer engineer from the west end, one was a deputy-Imam of a Mosque from Govanhill, one was a laboratory technician from Denniston and one was a prosperous Jeweller from the south side of the city.

Some activists, those involved in setting up the Muslim school, were interviewed, giving them a chance to put on record their views on Muslim education and explain the reasoning behind the establishment of the Muslim school. A number of people were spoken to on the school premises before the school opened in August 1999. Once again, it was essential to gain the confidence of the Trustees, lest they think their authority or confidentiality was being compromised. A fine balance had to be maintained between idle curiosity and sensitive questioning to build up a picture of the current developments. The Trustees declined to be interviewed formally, though a number of informal conversations were held with the Chief Executive. Notes were taken, with his permission, for the sake of accuracy. It was disappointing not to be able to persuade him to participate more fully in the study but much of what he said privately was repeated by other activists; therefore it could be reported in the study.

Four other individuals also putting a lot of effort into the establishment of the school were interviewed. One of them was the right-hand man of the Chief Executive, therefore it was hoped he would convey the philosophy behind the school. Another was the designated head teacher of the school, who was putting many extra hours into his work to get the school to a reasonable start. The other two were volunteers: a newly qualified schoolteacher and a university student who was computerising the school records and producing a database of parents who had shown some interest in the Academy.

Every effort was made to make the interviews consistent. The same interview schedule was used all the time and the interviewees were put at ease by explaining to them the purpose of the study and welcoming their contribution. Each interview lasted about twenty-five minutes and was recorded on audiotape, after obtaining the consent of the interviewee. The interviewees were invited to speak in Urdu, Punjabi, Arabic or English. With the exception of one parent, everyone spoke in English, making the task of transcription that much easier. The sole interview in Urdu was translated and then transcribed.

3.3 Survey of Muslim opinion

A survey of the Muslim community of Glasgow was carried out, using a questionnaire to ascertain their opinions and priorities on educational issues. Published literature and the interviews carried out for this study had highlighted some questions that needed further exploration: issues such as the teaching of the Arabic language or Islamic studies as school subjects in Scottish schools were raised in the interviews. To what extent did the Muslim community support them? Moreover, it was felt that those parents and activists who were interviewed may not have been representative of the Muslim community in general, since two-thirds of them had a direct interest in the Muslim school: they were either involved in establishing it as activists or were supporting it by sending their children to the school. Although their views on Muslim

schools may have been very valid, the views of the wider Muslim community had also to be taken into account. Cohen and Manion (1994) had recommended that for the conclusions to be valid, they must be true for a wider community to which the results might be generalised. Therefore it was essential to test these opinions on the wider Muslim community:

> Internal validity is concerned with the question…external validity, on the other hand, asks the question, given these demonstrable effects to what populations or settings can they be generalised (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 170).

On the other hand, Hammersley (1998) had criticised the "distinction between internal and external validity". He had cautioned against making "causal claims that cannot be validated". For him, validity was indivisible: even "reliability measures are an indirect means of assessing validity". Fink (1995) on the other hand had defined reliability as "the extent to which a measure is free from random error". Therefore, the items on the survey were checked for reliability, posing the questions in draft formats to small groups of potential respondents in order to improve the consistency of the responses. Verbal feedback from the respondents helped to improve validity – to ensure the items were measuring what they were supposed to measure . Litwin had defined validity as:

> To ensure that it includes everything it should and does not include anything it should not (Litwin, 1995: 33).

A list of ten items was drawn up to be put to the Muslim community in the form of a survey questionnaire. To facilitate the completion of these survey questionnaires, each statement carried a five point ordinal scale with it. Respondents were invited to indicate their agreement or otherwise by placing a tick in the appropriate box in front of each statement (Appendix 4).

While discussing the needs of Muslim pupils, many issues were highlighted by the interviewees. For some, provision of prayer rooms was of crucial importance, while for others, provision of single-sex schooling was of paramount importance. A list of ten 'issues' was drawn up, based on the interview data and references to published literature (Appendix 5). This list was to be put to the Muslim community, asking them to arrange the issues in order of priority for each respondent. Fink had suggested that:

> Survey data also take numerical form. For example, in some surveys, respondents may be asked to rate items on ordered or ranked scales, say, with 1 representing a very positive feeling and 5 representing a very negative one (Fink, 1995: 52).

The questionnaire was piloted on a group of eleven people (six men and five women) to iron out any difficulties. The objective was to design a questionnaire that could be completed by a layperson, without any assistance, within ten minutes or so. The piloting exercise revealed that ten 'issues' was too large a number for the respondents to handle; therefore they were reduced to five in the final version of the questionnaire. Munn and Drever had summarised four advantages of using questionnaires as:

- an efficient use of time
- anonymity (for respondent)
- the possibility of a high return
- standardised questions (Munn and Drever, 1995: 2).

The questionnaire was further refined in light of the piloting exercise. The final version of the questionnaire was to be circulated fairly widely in the Muslim community to obtain at least fifty male and fifty female returns. It was decided not to translate these questionnaires into Urdu or Arabic, as it would have led to difficulties in interpretation and non-standardisation, compromising the validity of the conclusions. Thus the questionnaires could only be given to individuals who were fairly competent in English. Although every effort was made to circulate the questionnaire widely and evenly over all age ranges, it had an inherent difficulty: it could only be completed by people who were well versed in English, thus the sample was skewed towards the younger age group.

Gatherings of Muslims in Glasgow, at which speeches in English were to be delivered, were targeted, as it was hoped that most participants would be fairly proficient in the English language. For example, the questionnaires were distributed at a convention held in the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall in February 2001 and at a meeting in the Glasgow Central Mosque, where a visiting dignitary from Pakistan was to deliver an address. The Convention was useful for gathering data from younger male Muslims (under thirties) whereas the latter proved useful for getting more returns

from the older males. A few questionnaires were also given to other male acquaintances for completion. In most cases the questionnaire was given to a respondent, and he was asked to complete it there and then. Most respondents returned the completed questionnaires within ten minutes, whereas some took it with them to be returned later. Very few – no more than three or four – were received by post from these individuals. Most respondents found the first page very straightforward and completed it very quickly. A number of respondents either did not complete the reverse page or did not enter numbers 1 to 5 as requested, instead entering either 1 in every column – perhaps showing that all issues were of the highest priority for them – or entering various other combinations. All these variants were excluded from the final analysis. In all, sixty-eight males completed the questionnaire and returned it for analysis.

Muslim women, in similar gatherings, were asked to complete the questionnaires. Islamic etiquette demanded that only ladies could approach the females to complete the questionnaires. Attention to such detail maximised the return of these questionnaires. Assistance of the ladies in the family was sought for this task. The ladies who were helping out were briefed about the objectives of the study and the scope of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were given out, completed and collected in single sessions. In all seventy-eight females completed these questionnaires.

Before completing the questionnaire, each respondent was asked to fill in a preliminary 'self information' section to facilitate data analysis. They were asked to indicate their gender and age group (within 10 years) to ensure a wide spread of the sample and, if need be, to analyse the data according to gender and age groups. They were asked to indicate whether they had any children of their own, to ensure that the sample had a majority of people who had school age children: people who were expected to have the greatest stake in educational issues.

At the end of the questionnaire, a catchall statement was included, inviting the respondents to make any comment on the questionnaire, the study or any other aspect of Muslim education. A number of respondents (mainly females) took up this offer

and made, on the whole, some positive comments, which have been recorded in appendix 6.

3.4 Data Analysis

The Interviews

As soon as an interview was transcribed, a transcript was forwarded to the interviewee for checking and confirmation. This was done for two reasons: firstly to confirm that what they had wished to convey in their interviews had been noted down, and secondly to assure them that their "words would not be twisted," a prospect at which some had expressed concern. It proved to be a valuable exercise as some minor corrections were made by two of the interviewees.

The transcripts were prepared for analysis by highlighting the pertinent points before applying a three-stage process of further data analysis. Firstly, the interview scripts were re-arranged according to the research questions, i.e. all answers to set-one questions were grouped together, and so on for sets two and three. At this stage it was essential to give each interviewee a code, to keep track of future analysis:

- Parents with children at the school were given code 'a'.
- Parents with no children at the school were given code 'b', and
- Activists of the school were given code 'c'.

Within each category, each person was allocated a number, which was kept constant throughout the study (Appendix 7).

Secondly, summary sheets containing only essential points made by the interviewees were compiled (Appendix 8). Thirdly, these summaries were used to draw out the main themes of the interviews, which have been commented upon in the results section of this study. The points raised by the interviewees were checked with references in the published literature to locate the enquiry in established knowledge and to tease out the points that may be specific to the situation in Glasgow or to the Scottish education system. These were of particular interest, adding to our knowledge and experience.

The first set of parents, those who were sending their children to the Muslim school were re-visited to review the progress of their children in the Muslim school. It was felt there was nothing further to be gained from re-interviewing the parents who had chosen not to send their children to the Muslim school or the activists, as they had indicated they had nothing further to add to the previously recorded discourses. The second set of interviews were carried out almost eighteen months after the inception of the school, to allow the parents to comment on the workings of the Academy with some knowledge and experience.

A new interview schedule (Appendix 9) was drawn up to reflect the changing circumstance of the Academy. There had been a major upheaval in the Academy towards the end of the first academic session. The headteacher, along with the whole staff, had been removed. A number of parents had removed their children from the school, including three out of five of this sample. It was only appropriate that these circumstances be explored and the parents be allowed to comment on their decisions either to keep their children in, or remove them from, the school. Once again, these interviews were audiotaped and transcribed.

Analysis of Survey Data

Once all the questionnaires had been received from the respondents, spreadsheets were set up to enter raw data for both set of questions. Entering data from the questions with the ordinal scale in front of them was straightforward, as the questionnaire had been designed with this task in mind. Some trends could be observed from the raw data. In order to make fair comparisons between various sets of data, it was decided to convert each response into a percentage figure. Accumulated figures for each question were also produced by adding together those who "agreed" and "strongly agreed" with a statement; similarly, those who "disagreed" and "strongly disagreed" were accumulated. The spreadsheets enabled clear comparisons to be made between those in favour of a proposal and those against.

Bar charts were produced for each set of data: for the males, the females and the totals. These were then placed next to each other for ease of comparison. A bar

chart for each item on the questionnaire was produced to present the data in a graphic format. A summary of the survey questionnaire and the priority data was also produced to assist with drawing final conclusions and discussion (see the results section).

A spreadsheet with an ordinal scale had to be designed to hold data from the "priority" questions. Data for male and female respondents were entered in separate spreadsheets, with a third spreadsheet that received data from both the 'male' and 'female' spreadsheets and produced totals. This generated three sets of data: for males, for females and totals of both groups. This was done in order to allow a comparison between male and female respondents and also to observe the overall trends.The spreadsheets with the "priority" data produced figures for each priority:
Priority No. 1 was the issue that had the highest figure in the first column. This figure was highlighted. and subsequent figures in that row were then ignored. No further data analysis was necessary to identify this priority, as one figure in each set of data was clearly much greater than the others. It happened to be the same one for both the male and the female groups.

To identify the order of the other priorities, an accumulated table of results was generated. Figures in Column 1 were added to those in Column 2 to produce an accumulated figure in the second column. This was done in order to adjust the figure in Column 2 by taking account of the number of respondents who had given that issue a higher priority rating in Column 1.
Similarly, adding the figures in Columns 1, 2 and 3 produced a new accumulated third column. The fourth accumulated column was generated by adding the first four columns. As percentage figures were being added in these columns, the fifth column also acted as a check on the data, as it was expected to show a result of one hundred in each case.

The highest figure in each of these accumulated columns was highlighted as the identified priority of the group. The order of priorities for the male group was different from that of the females (see the results section).

3.5 Research Ethics

All research studies should be conducted in an ethical manner though the common concern about ethics is frequently poorly articulated (Pimple, 1995). This study involved dealing with people in some very sensitive situations therefore it was essential that the anonymity of the subjects, confidentiality and positionality of the researcher be handled very carefully. Cohen and Manion had warned that:

> Ethical concerns encountered in educational research in particular can be extremely complex and subtle and can frequently place researchers in moral predicaments which may appear quite unresolvable. (Cohen and Manion, 1994 : 347).

Most of the people taking part in the interviews or the community survey had not taken part in a research project previously. It was vital, therefore, to explain to the participants at all stages the purpose of the study and the contribution they would be making to the project in order to obtain their informed consent. They were not only thanked for their participation in the study, they were also made to feel that their particular perspective was important in aiding understanding of the complexities associated with Muslim education. The trust and confidence of the people involved had to be gained as recommended by Bell (1987):

> Teachers, administrators, parents and keepers of documents will have to be convinced of your integrity and of the value of the research before they decide whether or not to co-operate (Bell, 1987:42).

In carrying out the case study at Iqra Academy, due recognition was given to all the relevant authorities. The Chief Executive was approached to obtain permission to carry out the study. He had to agree to a variety of forms of access to the academy were acceptable. He had to give his approval in the first place that it would be appropriate to attend staff meetings, to interview some parents and to talk to other activists. Although he had indicated that he, personally did not wish to take part in the interviews, he was nevertheless kept fully informed about the progress of the study. Care was also taken not to associate the study too closely with the Chief Executive

and his office as this could have compromised what others had to say about the school or the authorities running the school.

The participation of these others had also to be negotiated personally and directly. While, in the first place, it was essential to gain the approval of the formal authority structure of Iqra Academy for the study, it was equally important that the participation of all others was also willingly offered. That also helped convey the important message that the study was an independent exercise, and was not being carried out on behalf of the school authorities. Moreover, the confidentiality and anonymity of participants would be respected. Although most interviewees were very open and had no qualms about their names being associated with their comments, Walker (1995) had advised against disclosure:

> Even if subjects and researcher agree to publish, there is no telling what the consequences might be for the subjects in terms of future career prospects, in terms of continuing to work in situations that have become exposed, or even in terms of a wider public response (Walker, 1995: 25).

Thus the interviewees would be referred to by a code and the survey questionnaires were to be presented in an anonymous format. The decision of those who had indicated that they did not wish to participate was respected. As a result, their reasons for non-participation are unknown.

The fairly prominent position in the community occupied by the researcher posed some complex issues. Murphy and Dingwall referred to these as the "power relations between the researcher and the researched" (Murphy and Dingwall , 2001: 343). They highlighted the potential for exploitation of the subjects but recognised that exploitation only occurs when researchers use their superior power to achieve their objectives at real cost to those they are studying. Therefore use of "superior power" was meticulously avoided by working with the school authorities and only proceeding with their agreement. Whereas it is true that on the one hand it was relatively easy for a person who has been working in the Muslim community for decades, to enlist the support of the community for an educational project that examined issues associated with Muslim education. At the same time the researcher had to be careful while

enlisting the opinions of the community, to explore the issues thoroughly, and avoid people merely telling the researcher what he would have liked to hear. The probes and prompts built into the interview schedule were used to focus the attention of the interviewees on the research questions. In part this was achieved by choosing the sample very carefully, avoiding the inclusion of too many acquaintances, and by building the interviews on set criteria.

During the course of the study some strain was put on the position of the researcher, when Iqra Academy went through its staffing crisis, at the end of the first academic session. Some of the major players in the drama were keen to brief the researcher with their version of events and were perhaps looking to the researcher to play a more proactive role to resolve the crisis. These pressures posed some difficulties for the researcher. Yet it was important to remain apart from the developments, and simply observe and record what was going on. As a result, the role of the researcher had to be explained again to some participants to remind them of the detached role that had to be adopted by the researcher.

However, Bell (1987) recognised that there were definite advantages in being the 'inside' researcher. Amongst the important advantages she highlighted were the researcher having intimate knowledge of the context, being aware of the micropolitics of the institution and knowing how best to approach the subjects while appreciating some of their difficulties. She also alluded to some of the disadvantages of this role as the discomfort some subjects (and in some cases the researcher) may feel being interviewed by somebody they know well, confidential knowledge gained during the research may affect the relationship with colleagues and the researcher may experience some difficulty maintaining objectivity when there is very close involvement with the subjects. Observing a formal routine during the interviews minimized these effects. The subjects were made aware of the fact that the study was a part of a university degree emphasising the adherence to a set routine. The subjects, on the whole, were very co-operative, helping to make the study ethical.

4 The Results

4.1 The Willowbank Affair

In 1988 the Parliament approved School Boards (Scotland) Act, which required every local authority school to establish a School Board to "exercise the functions assigned to them by this Act, and any functions delegated to them under section 15 of this Act". The School Boards were expected to start their work modestly performing "assigned functions" but in due course would also carry out "delegated functions" which were much more wide ranging. It was widely accepted from the onset that this legislation would bring about a fundamental change in educational administration, especially how schools were run, in this country. It would give the parents, who were to in the majority on the Boards, a much bigger say in the affairs of the schools. This was the desired outcome of the then Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher.

When the Parliament approved Self-governing Schools etc. (Scotland) Act. 1989, it was evident that the Government was giving a clear signal to local authority schools to "opt-out" of local authority control. A Scottish Office booklet - *How to become a self-governing school: Guidance for school boards* - explained the Act as:

> Self-government offers a new approach to the management of individual schools within public education in Scotland. A school which becomes self-governing is no longer managed by the education authority. It is run independently by its own board of management made up in much the same way as the school board. The school receives funding directly from the Secretary of State (1990:01).

The local authorities in Scotland were not very keen to allow schools to opt-out of their control. It was argued that the direct funding these self-governing schools would receive from the central government would result in a proportionate reduction in local authority funding. It was also mooted at the time that these self-governing schools would receive extra-funding, thus would be divisive in the community. Those in favour of opting-out of local authority control highlighted this extra funding as a major advantage. They argued that this extra funding could be used to address any shortcomings and raise achievement. An association of self-governing schools in

England produced prolific literature to that end. The School Board and Self-governing Schools legislations were implemented somewhat grudgingly in Scotland. The school boards were slow to get off the ground, while only two schools in Scotland successfully opted-out of local authority control.

Willowbank Primary School, in the Woodlands area of Glasgow was one of those that tried but failed at the first hurdle. A number of other schools also tried to opt-out of local authority control when the schools were facing imminent closure, usually due to falling school rolls. The Secretary of State of Scotland routinely turned down such requests. Willowbank, though it did not even make it as far as the Secretary of State, lives on in the mythology of Glasgow, because it had an added "Muslim" dimension to it.

In 1990 Willowbank Primary School had a roll about 240 pupils, over seventy percent of whom were Muslims of various nationalities, predominantly of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins. The School Board had a parents' majority, most of whom were Muslims. An Iraqi medical practitioner, Dr. Saad al'Dhami, whose three children attended the school, chaired the Board. The Vice-Chairman of the School Board was Geoffrey Clarke, a Welsh-Muslim who was undertaking a postgraduate degree at Strathclyde University. He was co-opted onto the School Board due to his 23 years of teaching experience in Britain and oversees and his claimed expertise in multicultural education.

The School Board was petitioned by a group of parents to apply for self-governing status. Mrs. al'Dhami was actively collecting signatures in the community on the petition, though Dr. al'Dhami distanced himself from it in public. There was nothing wrong with a School Board chairman providing a lead for his school community, but his persistent denials led others, even some members of the school board, to suspect his motives. Nevertheless he had the confidence of the majority of the Board, and was backed by at least the group of parents who had petitioned it. In the summer term of 1991, the school board resolved to hold a ballot of the parents on the question whether to apply to the Secretary of State for self-governing status, as required by the Act.

This is when the Press picked up the story, and brought it into the public domain. Dr. al'Dhami was totally unprepared for the onslaught of reporters and TV crews knocking on his door. He refused to speak to the press. He was often photographed seemingly "running away" from the cameras. He failed to appreciate the interest of the wider community in the school. He preferred to see the issue in somewhat simplistic terms: that it only concerned those who had a vote on the issue, i.e. the parents of Willowbank Primary.

The Scottish TV news led with a story about " An attempt to establish the first Muslim School in Scotland". The Glasgow Herald set the tone by declaring Dr. Al'Dhami "a Moslem fundamentalist" in its front page lead story (20th June 1991). Most Scottish papers, tabloids and broadsheets carried similar negative stories. Barclay McBain writing in the Glasgow Herald was representative of the comments of the press at the time:

> ...Willowbank opting out of local authority control and a Moslem school - possibly, eventually - being established in its place...two men - one from Wales , one from Iraq- had no right to meddle in the affairs of, or indeed seek a fundamental change in, an education system which they had limited knowledge of (The Glasgow Herald, 22nd June 1991).

It should be noted that at that time considerable mileage could be gained by pointing out that Dr. Al'Dhami was an Iraqi, as it was just after the Gulf war where Iraq was the villain. That Dr. Al'Dhami opposed all that Saddam Hussain stood for, was not reported anywhere. Merely to mention that he was an "Iraqi and a Moslem fundamentalist" was enough to establish the context in which future debate would be conducted. The issue now was not about an elected school board holding public meetings with the parents of the school to debate the pros and cons of "opting out", instead it was all about a "Moslem school - possibly, eventually" - being established in its place.

A Leader comment writer compares and contrasts Muslim aspirations for educating their children in their traditions with those of the Catholics in Scotland (Appendix 10). The writer concedes that:

> By an arrangement stretching back to 1918, Catholic education is provided in separate schools. The original dispensation came about when west of Scotland Catholics were a self-conscious minority anxious to preserve their religious identity in a society, which was overwhelmingly Protestant... When Catholics want their own schools, no one should doubt their right to have them (Glasgow Herald 20th June 1991).

The leader writers could not appreciate that the Muslims of west of Scotland may also wish to preserve their religious identity in 'in a society that was overwhelmingly non-Muslim'. It was nothing more than a thinly disguised racist attack on the Muslim community. Instead of questioning the motives of those who would not send their children to a self-governing school popular with the Muslims, thus effectively isolating them, he advised, "Moslems should think twice before they opt for more social isolation in the name of education". There was no advice for the white parents not to take flight at the mere mention of Muslims on the management team of a Primary school. Instead of highlighting the value Muslims placed on the education of their children, and the contribution they could make to Scottish education he turned the argument around to make Muslims into the problem. It was not considered possible that the parents of Willowbank Primary may wish to exercise more control over their school, as the government legislation had permitted them to do so, or even that the Muslims may have something to contribute to the education process in Scotland. Accepting that any drawbacks to opting out were more "social rather than educational" he reveals his own hidden agenda for Scottish education:

> It would make integration and acceptance that much harder just at the very time when Scots have been made aware that these developments are much less advanced than we would all like (The Glasgow Herald, 20th June 1991).

"Integration and acceptance" in this context could be read as euphemisms for "assimilation and absorption". It could be argued that the parents of Willowbank felt so well integrated in the Scottish society that they tried to exercise a bit more democratic control over their own school. It is the preachers of 'acceptance', the establishment, the press and the local authorities who found it very difficult to accept that the minority groups could exercise more control over their own affairs.

The Muslim community of Glasgow was caught unprepared when the Press broke the Willowbank Primary story. Hurried executive meetings were called by the major Muslim organisations of Glasgow to formulate a response to the issue. At the time I was the General Secretary of The U.K. Islamic Mission (UKIM) in Glasgow that had its headquarters, in Carrington Street, around the corner from Willowbank Primary. The UKIM was the largest and the most well established Muslim organisation in the west end of Glasgow, running a supplementary school and a Mosque in the area. The Muslim House, situated in Queens Crescent, was a federation of various Arab bodies: Dr. Al'Dhami was a member of the Muslim House. The Muslim community of Glasgow was looking to the UKIM and the Muslim House for information and guidance. As the General Secretary of UKIM it fell upon me to chair an ad-hoc Willowbank Committee, composed of some teachers, some parents of Willowbank Primary and some people with influence in the local community and interested parties from other local Muslim organisations.

The Willowbank ad hoc Committee had very limited objectives: to understand the issues involved in opting-out and to give appropriate advice to the Muslim community. Committee Meetings were held almost everyday, in view of the developing situation. Dr. al'Dhami and Mr. Geoffrey Clarke were invited to explain their case for opting out. It was evident from their submissions that though they had a good grasp of the legal processes they had a very limited understanding of the long-term effects of their plans. Both of these gentlemen were well-respected members of the Muslim community; therefore it came as no surprise that they had the backing of a good number of parents of the school.

It was also clear from the reactions of the parents who were caught in the middle of a controversy, which was not of their making, that they were horrified at being labelled as "fundamentalists and extremists". The affair was having a detrimental effect on race relations in the City of Glasgow. Racial tension in the west end of the city was on the increase. Parents' meetings in the school were turning into rallies, attended by press and TV crews. Community leaders had to act fast to diffuse the situation. Muslim community leaders had not been consulted by the Willowbank activists but they were looking for support from the community now that the affair was acquiring national

prominence. Muslim opinion was polarising, some were supporting Dr. Al'Dhami while others were calling upon UKIM and Muslim House to show leadership and clarify their positions. The Willowbank committee had to tread a fine line, to assert the authority of the Muslim organisations without alienating their own brethren in the front line of the Willowbank controversy.

After due deliberations, a statement was drawn up to declare support for the principle of opting out but to advise the Willowbank community to consider opting out on "educational grounds" only. Dr. Al'Dhami had called a press conference, belatedly on 21st June 1991, to clarify his position. I was delegated by the UKIM and The Muslim House to issue the statement to the Press. The press conference was supposed to be held inside Willowbank Primary School, at the end of the school day. The chairman of the School Board and the press were barred from the school "as Dr. Al'Dhami did not have a school-let", according to the Janitor. The statement was read out to the press conference, which eventually took place in the grounds of the school (Appendix 11). The statement effectively put Dr. Al'Dhami on notice that he did not have the wholehearted support of the Muslim community on this issue. This was widely reported, on the radio, TV news and the print media on the following day (e.g. see Glasgow Herald 22nd June 1991).

Once the position of the UKIM and the Muslim House became known in the local community, the petitioners and Dr. al'Dhami were persistently asked about 'educational grounds' for their decisions. A week earlier, Jamiat Ittihad-ul-Muslimin, the organisers of the Glasgow Central Mosque had issued a press release on 14th June 1991(Appendix 12) entitled: "View of the Islamic Centre Glasgow On The Issue Of Separate Schools" in which they had declared:

> Majority of Muslim community are not in favour of separate schools. There is though a strong desire for the establishment of Muslim denominational schools.

Here the term 'separate school' was used for 'Self-governing' or opted-out schools. The press release goes on to state that if Muslim religious instructions were started in state schools, then:

> The demand for denominational schools will disappear from the Muslim community...The provision of single sex schools, however, is very dear to the heart of the majority of the Muslim people... If there was no provision of religious education in state schools and no single sex schools then the agitation and action for denominational as well as separate schools would increase.

The Glasgow Central Mosque administrators were not directly involved in any way in the Willowbank affair. They had, though set up a short lived independent school for Muslim girls in a converted church building in the south side, in the seventies. Echoes of that venture could be detected in their press release. They had clarified their position with respect to various Muslim educational issues, in response to press demands.

Dr. Al'Dhami was seen as a very lonely figure in the summer of 1991. It could be argued that the Muslim establishment took fright and could not stomach a confrontation with the authorities of the day. After a couple of stormy public meetings, in which Dr. al'Dhami tried to get all the parents on his side, things were brought to the point of resolution. The issue, whether to ask the Secretary of State for self-governing status, had to be resolved by a ballot of the parents in August 1991. The parents eventually voted overwhelmingly to reject the proposal. Dr. Al'Dhami resigned as chairman of the School Board to "allow the parents to exercise their wishes" and Willowbank Primary started getting back to normal.

Ten years later, the school has a roll of about eighty children, a two-thirds drop from 1991; almost all of the pupils are from Muslim backgrounds. The UK Islamic Mission uses the premises for their supplementary school in the evenings.

The Muslims of Glasgow learnt a valuable lesson that there were many barriers to their participation on the main educational stage. Although the majority community publicly adopted the position that Muslims should not be isolated, they were very reluctant to give them control over anything substantial. Overall there was no appetite for self-governing schools in Scotland. Although "self-governing schools" was the official Tory government policy - but the Tories were in the minority in Scotland. The door to self-governing status was shut tight; no one even tried to open it in the

following decade. Muslims of the city were resigned to the fact that the local authorities would not make any special provision for Muslims in schools. If the Muslims wished to establish a school with Muslim ethos then they would have to do so at their own expense. It took ten years for the next step, in the form of Iqra Academy to be taken by the Muslims of Glasgow.

4.2 From Willowbank to Iqra Academy

After the dust on the Willowbank affair had settled, the Muslim community started analysing and scrutinising that traumatic episode in the history of the Muslim community of Glasgow. The general consensus that developed as a result of a lot of soul searching was that the Muslim community would have to satisfy the demand for Muslim schools by establishing independent schools, which could be 'opted-in' to the state system at a later stage. A number of such schools had been established in England and were at various stages of their developments and were negotiating with the government for funding. Although the Scottish law is somewhat different on these matters, there is a precedent of a Jewish school on the outskirts of Glasgow having been funded by the government in this manner. None of the major Muslim organisations of Scotland found themselves in a position to lead such an initiative. It was generally understood that such a move would drain the coffers and they would have to deal with the controversy, which may play a major role in its ultimate success. Although there were a number of people in the community who were interested in the project, they were scattered in different Muslim organisations.

A catalyst was needed to tap into the goodwill of the community and organise these interested people into a working party of sorts. Mr. Zulfiqar Hussain, a local businessman and a devout Muslim took on this cause and set the wheels into motion. A steering-group, which came to be known as *The Glasgow Islamic Academy Committee* was set up to look into the possibility of setting up a Muslim school in Glasgow in the mid-nineties (Appendix 13). Most of the people in the group had the

intention of establishing a Muslim school, but were unclear about all the processes involved.

Muslim teachers and others from the field of education were asked to share their experience and expertise with the group. I attended some meetings of this group and was always impressed by the enthusiasm of the participants. Though most of the participants had no particular expertise in education, they more than made up for it in the zeal to get on with the project. The discussions of "The Islamic Academy" proceeded at a steady pace until a building in the south side of the city was identified as a suitable site for the location of this project.

Glasgow City Council had declared Bellahouston Academy annex in the south side of the city, surplus to their requirements in 1997 (Appendix 14). This provided the Committee with an ideal opportunity to put their ideas into practice. Zulfiqar Hussain, by now the Chairman of the Committee, persuaded his brother Maqbool Rasool, a well-known Muslim entrepreneur in Glasgow, to back the project with their family fortune. Maqbool Rasool is a Justice of the Peace and a magnanimous supporter of Muslim charitable causes. He runs a video-rental business with his brothers. They decided to invest substantial amounts of money into this project. They regarded it as a worthwhile investment, as in the Islamic tradition any money spent on educational projects is an example of the "continuous charity". Every child benefiting from the education provided by the school would be a testimony to their charitable deeds.

The Committee decided to ask Maqbool Rasool and his brothers to pay for the building and underwrite the development costs, instead of fund-raising in the community. This strategy was adopted as it assured success. A number of projects in England had fallen at this hurdle due to lack of funding from the community. Thus what started off as a community project was transformed into a family Charitable Trust. The brothers paid Glasgow City Council for the building and then underwrote all refurbishment expenditure. Within a few months, an old dilapidated building was transformed into modern fresh looking classrooms. No expense was spared in providing the best furniture and surroundings for the first proper Muslim school in

Glasgow. A couple of the rooms were even networked for Internet usage, with a host of latest PC's available for pupil use that would have been the envy of any school in Scotland. Iqra Academy - the first independent Muslim school in Scotland - rose from the rubble of Bellahouton Academy annex on Paisley Road West in Glasgow.

Iqra Academy, the first Muslim independent, full time co-educational school is essentially a testimony to Mr. Zulfiqar Hussein's commitment to this cause. He has devoted almost every waking hour of his life, for the last three years, to the project. He has taken upon himself the role of the Chief Executive, placing all orders and overseeing all work being carried out in the building. He has taken all decisions on the floor: engaging contractors and prioritising the work. A section of the building has been developed, which is being used as classrooms, assembly hall, offices etc, while other sections are still being developed. Some sections, like the top floor and the swimming pool, have been mothballed - to be developed in the future. In all there are twenty-three classrooms, two gymnasia, an assembly hall and a swimming pool.

All monies have been channelled through Zulfiqar Hussain, who is a Trustee of Iqra Education Trust, along with his brothers Maqbool Rasool and Mohammad Hussain. To date all funds for the school have either come from school fees or subsidies from the Trust. In the first session there were about seventy-five pupils on the roll of Iqra Academy, the Education Trust subsidised the school to the tune of about a thousand pounds for each pupil. As the pupil roll of the Academy rises, the subsidy from the Trust will decrease. According to their estimations they need a pupil roll of at least one hundred and fifty to break even.

It was certainly expedient to allow the brothers to underwrite all costs till the Academy opened for business in August 1999. It can be argued that funding the Academy would have been a lot more difficult through raising funds in the community but it would have transferred ownership to the community too, which is an essential ingredient for long term health of the Academy. Some in the Muslim community have argued that if the Trustees were to withdraw their support, the whole venture could collapse. This narrow ownership of the school was to play a role in later crisis at the school.

As the ownership and control of the school rested with one set of individuals, it was essential for the purposes of this study to build a close relationship with the Trustees to gain access to the Academy. This proved to be much more difficult and time consuming than had been envisaged. The Chief Executive declined to be interviewed on tape. He is essentially a very reserved man, shuns personal publicity and is very uncomfortable in formal situations. He did lend his co-operation though by allowing some of school staff to be interviewed, arranging interviews with some parents and use of Academy premises. He also talked informally on various topics related to the school, the essence of which has been included in this study without reporting directly the conversations.

The Academy opened in August 1999 with an intake of thirty-four, primary-one and primary-two pupils. It was regarded as a very healthy start. Similar schools in England had started with only a handful of pupils. The pupil roll rose steadily, but not as much as the Trustees had expected to, as more and more people came to know of the Academy. By the end of the first session the school roll was almost seventy-three children, half of them being in upper primary school.

The school had been very fortunate to acquire the services of a very able and highly qualified head teacher, Mr. Aziz Ahmed. Though originally from U.K, he had been teaching in U.S.A for a few years. He happened to be visiting his family in England when he spotted the post of headteacher being advertised in the Times Education Supplement He was appointed in July 1999 to prepare the school for opening its doors in August 1999. He had previously taught in The Islamia School near London, (the school that was granted voluntary aided status in 1998). It was thought that he would set the Academy on course to receive state funding too. He proved to be a valuable asset for the school. He had a clear vision for a Muslim school and had the educational expertise to put it into practice. He devoted his summer holidays to preparing the launch of the school. He inspired confidence in those who were a bit hesitant in enrolling their children in the school. The rest of the staff were appointed with his consent, and were put under his charge. His wife also taught in the school and their daughter was one of the pupils in the school.

The head teacher became a very popular figure with the parents and the rest of the Muslim community. A lot of the parents related to his easy manner, his command of Arabic language (which was appreciated even more as he was an Englishman). His piety and devotion to duty (he was seen most weekends working in the school) left nobody in any doubt that the Academy had made the right choice. He was the line manager for all staff and responsible for all matters pertaining to education.

Since the Academy was still in its formative stages, the Chief Executive Zulfiqar Hussain took all decisions pertaining to finances of the school and effectively decided the priorities for the Academy. A fault line had been established that would develop into a fissure later. The head teacher was in charge of everything, except the money - thus his control of the school was at best superficial. The Chief Executive ran the Academy with the consent of the head teacher on most occasions, but was known to implement decisions that were obviously taken elsewhere. The head teacher had his own priorities, to do with repair of parts of the building and requisition of certain educational materials - that were not being met. The head teacher was feeling aggrieved which was not helped by the fact that some members of staff went to the Chief Executive with their suggestions/complaints, instead of the head teacher. The Chief Executive had no previous experience of dealing with professional staff, which did not help the situation either.

A few weeks before the end of the first session, June 2000, the academy hit its first real crisis. Tensions between the head teacher and the Chief Executive had reached a breaking point. The headteacher wrote to the Trustees asking them to carry out some work on the building and to resolve the issue of who was in charge of the staff, as matter of urgency. His letter to the Trustees implied that he would not remain in post unless these issues were resolved satisfactorily. The Trustees treated his letter as an ultimatum, which could not be negotiated, which resulted in the resignation of the head teacher. When the parents learnt of this resignation they asked the Trustees to establish a Management Committee for the school that would include the parents. A number of parents threatened to withdraw their children from the school unless the head teacher was re-instated. As the trustees showed no signs of doing this, some

parents started withdrawing their children from the school in the last week of the term. The Trustees reacted by closing the school three days early for summer holidays, to allow the management to come to terms with rapidly deteriorating situation.

The Muslim community held their collective breath; they had seen too many well-intentioned projects fail in the past. It seemed that Iqra Academy was about to go the same way. In the last week of the term the roll had fallen from seventy-three to about sixty. A number of parents had held back, they were expected to take a final decision whether their children would continue their education at Iqra academy, by the end of the summer holidays. Some elders of the Muslim community tried to bring the head teacher and the Trustees together for a compromise, but found both sides were well entrenched and would not move towards a resolution. The Trust advertised the post of the head teacher in the summer holidays and subsequently appointed an Englishwoman, Mrs. Beverly Jones. She was not though in a position to take up her post in August 2000, as she had to work her notice in an English school. This was another period of turmoil, as most of the staff was new and the head teacher was not in post.

The Trustees appointed a Board of Governors in October 2000 to run the school. The Governors, six men and one woman, include an accountant, two schoolteachers, a civil engineer, two Trustees and other businessmen. The Trustees had demonstrated considerable political naivety about the management of a primary school. They had little or no experience of dealing with professional staff and responded to the developments in the school in a business paradigm. In fact the solution they applied: accepting the resignation of the head teacher and effectively replacing the rest of the staff shook any confidence the community had in them.

The Trustees have learnt a crucial lesson, that money - important though it is - is not the only contributing factor to the success of the school. They have started widening the base; they have made conscious efforts to involve outsiders in the management of the school. The Board of Governors meets once a month to take almost all tactical decisions. Day to day running of the school has been delegated to the new head

teacher along with the Trust Chief Executive who acts as the Bursar. An effort is being made now to involve members of the community at large as well. A parent-teacher association is in the making. It started functioning in June 2001 and had started supporting the activities of the school in the normal way. A public meeting was held in the school on Saturday 17th March 2001, (Appendix 15) to celebrate the achievements and to publicise the school. Most dignitaries of the Muslim community were present, who were asked to lend their support to the venture, by various speakers. The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Akram-Khan Cheema, a retired OFSTED inspector from Yorkshire. He informed the house that prior to establishing the school, a feasibility study had been carried out in Glasgow to ascertain the necessity of a Muslim school in Glasgow. Over a hundred people had shown an active interest in the project; by putting the names of their children down as potential pupils of the School. In reality about 10-15% of these potential candidates had materialised. He urged the public to support the school by "walking in through those doors, with your children".

Footnote

The Trustees of Iqra Academy tried very hard this year -session 2001/2002 to build up the school roll, but failed to meet their own target of a hundred pupils. They realised that they had sustained some damage to their reputation, which would take time to recover. In essence this would mean that that they would have to subsidise the school for a longer period which could be up to ten years. They decided to cut their losses and sold their interest in the school to an organisation called The Islamic Academy, which is an educational charity that runs a number of Muslim schools - Madrassas and Darul-Uloom in England. They have assured the community that they would continue to maintain the current status of Iqra Academy as a co-educational Muslim day-school. In fact they have been carrying out a feasibility study of starting secondary school, and boarding facilities, very shortly. Some in the community still fear that Iqra Academy may be transformed into a specialist Madrassa or Darul-Uloom as the leaders of the Islamic Academy are religious scholars rather than modern educationalists.

4.3 Thematic interview results

4.3.1 An understanding of Muslim education

At a superficial level, the interviewees equated Islamic education with the teaching of the religion of Islam. Almost all parents and activists were concerned about the teaching of the basics of Islam to their children. When asked to explain their concerns a little further, it became clear that there was a conceptual hierarchy. First and foremost, they desired knowledge of the religion to be imparted; secondly, they wished this knowledge to be delivered in the context of Muslim culture and civilisation, or at least in such a way as to encourage understanding and appreciation of it; thirdly, they envisaged Islamic values permeating throughout the school curriculum. Some interviewees tried to distinguish between "Islamic education" and "Muslim education." The former was seen as "...connected to the concept of Islam: education which is built on the principles of Islam" (Activist, 3c), whereas the latter was envisaged as education of Muslims, in secular as well as religious subjects. The majority of the interviewees did not abide by this fine distinction. They tended to use the two terms synonymously. That practice has been followed throughout this discussion.

One of the parents, who was well versed in Islamic knowledge, provided a working definition of Muslim education. He first of all defined "normal" education, taking place in schools up and down the country, as a "process of acquiring knowledge to be functional and fruitful citizens of the state". He saw Islamic education as an addition to this "normal" education, a process that would enable the children to preserve and protect their heritage and also make them purposeful and productive members of the Muslim community.

> Islamic education is normal education plus establishing a relationship between man and his Creator. It prepares him for realising the objectives of the religion: protecting his beliefs, his life, property, intellect, and his progeny (Parent 2b).

To prepare the children for realising the objectives of their faith was also put forward as the objective of Islamic education by other parents. They shared this objective with

other faith schools, the Catholic schools promoting Catholicism and Jewish schools inculcating Judaism in their children (Miller, 2001). Beyond that, they wrestled with the dilemma of projecting Islam as not merely a religion but as a way of life in a society that was becoming increasingly secular. Whereas Catholicism and Judaism have developed their schools to cope with the secularisation of their children, Muslims have yet to come to terms with these trends. They wanted Islamic culture, Islamic history and Islamic etiquettes to be incorporated in the school curriculum. A number of parents showed their frustration at both the incapability of the authorities to accept Islam as anything other than an alternative set of rituals and their own inabilities to project Islam as a way of life. One mother expressed her frustration thus:

> I want my children to be brought up with the awareness of Islam, which is a way of life. I want them to live a life in way that God wants us to live. There are so many external factors that go against that (Parent 1a).

Muslims would like the education process to reflect the fact that Muslims actively seek the direction of Islam in all walks of their lives. They would like the school to re-enforce the moral and ethical values they teach their children at home. When one of the activists stated that "state schools have lost sight of their religious or moral roots" (Parent 2b), he was speaking for a large proportion of Muslims and followers of other faiths in the country. It was commonly believed that state schools do not teach moral or ethical values to any appreciable extent, thus leaving the children to devise their own codes of behaviour. Muslims, in common with other communities, tend to blame the schools for most of the ills of modern youth culture. They would like the school to play a much more proactive role in strengthening traditional family relationships and "teach respect for parents and other adults". They would also like schools to develop a sense of accountability and responsibility in the children, nurturing a sense of sacrifice, selflessness and sympathy for others, in contrast to materialistic and competitive teachings. They do not wish these teachings to be restricted to the slot of religious and moral education in the curriculum either: they would rather have these values discussed and re-enforced in all subjects. As one mother put it:

> The thing about Islamic education is that it should be taught in every subject. If you are teaching English, Islam can be taught in English, if you are teaching Science, there is definitely a lot of Islam that revolves around it (Parent 4a).

Although there was a basic agreement in the Muslim community about the utility of Muslim education for their children, there were numerous differences about the processes and the scope of this education. A major debate in the community centred around the issue of whether it was the environment/ ethos of the school that was more important, or the content of the curriculum. There were some who believed that the ethos of a school determined what learning and teaching took place in it. If the whole atmosphere of a state school was deemed to be un-Islamic, where the values of Muslims were hardly ever mentioned, then introducing academic topics of study on the subject of Islam in such an environment would not produce any worthwhile results:

> The biggest factor in education is the environment. If you cannot provide an Islamic environment for the children, no matter how many things are taught to them, they will not acquire Islamic values. Unless you *demonstrate* sacrifice and selflessness in practice, how can they learn about sacrifice and selflessness (Parent 2b)?

Thus the demand for more Muslim teachers was part of the environment the Muslims wished to create to deliver this education. It was thought these teachers would not only understand nuances of Islamic faith but also provide practical role models for their pupils, demonstrating "sacrifice and selflessness". A number of parents were particularly pleased about sending their children to the Muslim school because the Muslim teachers in the school were "knowledgeable about their religion, who genuinely love the children, who are interested in the children's well being" (Parent 1a). One of the activists pointed out that the Muslim teachers would find a new vocation in an Islamic environment, where they would also be more comfortable with their own beliefs and impart knowledge and understanding with conviction to their Muslim pupils.

Even those Muslims, who on the whole supported state schools, maintained that the Muslims as a minority community could only have a marginal influence on the environment of these schools. They tended to concentrate on seeking some changes in the content of the school curriculum to incorporate Muslim demands. On the whole they regarded the schools as providing a good education, with the reservation that the

Islamic dimension was missing from it. For them, modifying the system to incorporate an Islamic perspective in the curriculum was all that was needed to satisfy the demands of the Muslim community. These parents who did not support the creation of Muslim schools tended to highlight the low standards in Mosque-schools. They feared that the day schools established by the Muslim community would be similar to the Mosque-schools. These parents, though in the minority in the Muslim community, were satisfied with status quo: the day schools providing secular education and the Mosque-schools (with all their weaknesses) supplementing it with Islamic education in the evenings.

Virtually all the parents wanted the schools to be more sensitive to the needs of the Muslim children, but some were happy that the schools responded favourably to parental requests. They wanted their children to do well in school subjects to lay the foundations for their future careers. Some of the parents who wanted their children to learn more about Islam in addition were then faced with the difficulty of how to add an Islamic dimension to the good education they wanted their children to achieve in the state schools:

> I think what Muslim parents want is not just their children to be good Muslims, but to excel in education...If I could ensure that my children received good basic education and moral guidance about their religion, I would be happy for them to have that in the normal schools rather than any specialised schools (Parent 3b).

This group of parents regarded the role played by the day school in the development of a Muslim child to be a very limited one. They saw the child spending only a small fraction of the day in the school; the rest of the time the child would be under the direct supervision of the parents. They considered it unrealistic for Muslims to expect the day schools to deliver a totally Islamic curriculum when the schools were struggling with basic skills such as literacy and numeracy. They put the onus very much on the parents themselves to play a greater role in the education of their children, to accept more responsibility and provide an Islamic environment at home, where the children would observe their parents practicing what they preached. In this

context, one mother was quick to point to a well-known Muslim tradition that the lap of a mother is the first educational institute of the child.

While not denying the influence of the home and the parents on the education of a Muslim child, some of the parents and activists emphasised the role played by the school and the teachers. One father stated that it was in the nature of his son that he "took more from the school than the home", while a mother was frustrated at her daughter constantly saying "but my teacher said this" to counter anything taught at home. Another mother stated that she had to re-teach her children the Muslim version of stories of the Prophets after they came home and related Biblical narratives. She also pointed out that not all parents had the skills: therefore some Muslim children were "never corrected". A father complained that his son learnt "weird and wonderful" things at Christmas time when some teachers, who were unaware of Muslim sensitivities, engaged Muslim children in nativity plays. This placed the parents in a dilemma: on one hand they wished to inculcate a deep respect for the teachers and on the other they had to contradict those very teachers in front of their children:

> Teaching her one thing at home and going to the school. Occasionally she would come home, at the young age of five or six and saying "but my teacher said this". This kind of thing...further up the school you go, the more you find that. The older the child gets, they always think, the teacher is always right rather than their parents (Parent 4b).

This fear of losing their children to the school or the western culture was expressed by a number of parents, though they recognised that various components of the school curriculum, including sex education, were essential for their children. Most of the parents did not dwell upon the teaching of sex education, thus implicitly endorsing the practice in state schools. One mother criticised the lack of consultation: she did not know what the school was teaching and had found her children were too embarrassed to talk about what went on at school. Contrary to popular belief (Akhtar, 1993), this issue was not a very contentious one in the community. Only one activist, who was very closely involved in the setting up the independent Muslim school in Glasgow, brought it to prominence when he stated that in the Muslim school, the boys would be separated from the girls. Moreover, the school would not be teaching sexual education

and "there are some things the boys will be taught and some things the girls will be taught". The vast majority of the parents accepted sex education as a legitimate part of the curriculum but wanted it to be delivered in the context of Muslim family values. Similarly, teaching about other faiths was an area that might have been expected to be controversial in the Muslim community, but it was not. On the contrary, a number of Muslim parents positively wished their children to be exposed to other faiths and beliefs but only after they were secure in their own faith. They did not want their children to be "confused" by a plethora of beliefs and rituals of all faiths before they had acquired a solid foundation in their own. From a Muslim perspective, when children were offered a brief encounter with various religions, they did not acquire a deep insight into any. The issue for the parents was when and how to expose their children to other faiths, especially the dominant faith in the community, Christianity, without "confusing" them:

> I want them to be aware of what our religion says. I don't want them to have their ears shut off from what goes on outside either. They shall obviously see that on television, at school and other places. They will become aware of that. Of course I talk to them about other things as well. I don't want them to be narrow minded either. I want them to have a wider vision of things, of what reality is: not just about what our religion teaches us (Parent 1a).

Another mother had responded in a similar manner:

> Personally, I have taught my children about other religions, about Christianity, about Judaism, so that they don't grow up with a kind of bigoted idea, there is them and us. There is not, we are supposed to be respectful of each other. I just wish it would work both ways (Parent 2a).

The mother may have wished it to "work both ways" but was realistic enough to know that the minority communities are usually more knowledgeable of the majority than vice-versa (Tajfel, 1978). They have to learn about the culture and ways of dealing with others out of necessity. The fact that the majority community can operate without knowing much about the minorities, including the Muslims, gives rise to feelings of frustration and anger in the Muslim community. Moreover, Muslims have to refer to Christianity and Judaism as they are constantly mentioned in their scriptures as the precursors of Islam.

The debates in the Muslim community revealed the fact that the Muslims were not an amorphous mass of people totally united on all issues. Like the Jews or the Catholics, they displayed a range of opinions and complexities of views, which have to be explored thoroughly in order to build up a more informative picture of the community. These debates may play a very significant role in determining future developments in the Scottish Muslim community. Those who see the content of the curriculum to be central to the whole argument, may wish to see more Islamic Studies to be delivered in the state schools, whereas those who believe ethos of the school is the key to the delivery of Muslim education may settle for nothing less than Muslim schools. Although these were sometimes presented as polarised extremes of the educational debate in the Muslim community, there was also the recognition that one could not exist without the other. It was acknowledged that correct ethos could only be created by getting the curriculum right, which would only bear fruit in an appropriate environment.

The parents who wished to influence the curriculum in Scottish schools, to make it more 'Muslim-friendly' could be seen as wishing to work within the system. Some wanted to win concessions like prayer-rooms or halal food for their children, while others would liked to see major changes, such as Islamic studies being introduced as a school subject. Nevertheless, they wished to be engaged and involved with the educational and political machinery of the state to achieve their objectives. They were under no illusions about the ease of their undertaking. They perceived the struggle for the inclusion of Islam and Muslims in this country as a long-term strategy. On the other hand, those who wished to create an environment that was totally Islamic, conducive to the delivery of Muslim education, could almost be seen as having given up on the state schooling, wishing to set up their own institutions. Paradoxically even these activists wanted their institutions to be 'opted-in', for the state to fund them at some stage. Although opinions in the community may be seen to be polarising in these supposedly extreme positions, there were many who would have liked to reconcile these extremes to a more tenable alternative: state schools with an Islamic ethos.

These issues will be explored further in the next chapter.

4.3.2 Multicultural and Anti-racist education

Muslim opinion seemed to be divided on the issues of multicultural education and anti-racist education. A number of the parents regarded multicultural education as the vehicle that delivered some of the needs of the minority groups. Therefore, some of them expressed fairly positive sentiments, noting the changes that had taken place in schools since the nineteen sixties. The concept of multicultural education was widely known in the community; the same could not be said about anti-racist education. On the whole, the parents were neither familiar with, nor used the terminology of anti-racist education. Nevertheless, they were quick to point out the lack of understanding of Islam and Islamic institutions amongst the majority community. In fact, most of the negative sentiments expressed about multicultural education could be interpreted as pleas for more anti-racist education.

The parents on the whole recognised that though things were not perfect at the chalk face, the efforts of some schools to accommodate Muslim needs were to be appreciated. They applauded Multicultural and Anti-racist (MCARE) policies of the local authorities as a good starting point. They readily accepted that as a result of these policies there was some, though not enough, enlightenment in the schools. Various parents highlighted the provision of prayer-rooms and halal meals and concessions on rules of uniform as multicultural education in action. One of the young fathers, who attended school in the west end of Glasgow in the nineteen seventies and is now bringing up his children in one of the suburbs of the city related his personal experiences. He was able to contrast his own schooling with that of his children. Whereas in the seventies, the Muslim children had considerable difficulty meeting their cultural and religious needs (Appendix 16), that was not the case in the late nineteen nineties. The local education authorities had taken on board the fact that the Muslim children had diverse and specialised needs, which were met to some extent within the framework of multicultural education.

> In my days we did have some problems. During Christmas we had these dance classes, we took letters from our parents. We did not want to take these classes; the teachers wouldn't accept that, but only with a letter. But now,

> people, particularly teachers, have become accustomed to our Muslim needs and our cultural needs. They are not so strict on that. They don't insist on letters from parents: they accept that Islam does not permit that kind of dance with girls and so on. In our days we did not have halal meals. Now the education authorities are addressing this need. There are meals available, which are halal, for our needs. They are more versed with our Eid festivals: they gladly give one day on occasions two days off for celebrations (Parent 1b).

Some parents showed a deeper commitment to the whole notion of multicultural education. They did not merely subscribe to it as a device for gaining concessions for the Muslims but went so far as to say that the Muslim schools would have to become multicultural schools. This was a positive influence of multicultural education on the evolving concept of Muslim education in this country. At one time it may have been thought that Muslim schools were for Muslims only who would be steeped in Islam, but a number of parents and activists were at pains to point out that they viewed Muslims schools differently. They would not only expose their children to other faiths but also actively encourage non-Muslims to attend their schools.

> The teachers in state-run schools have learnt, to some extent, to cater for all religious backgrounds; the teachers in Muslims schools will also have to do this and be able to do this (Parent 4a).

They wanted their schools to be multicultural, but were not sure whether the MCARE policies of local authorities had done enough in creating a climate where that may be possible. They would have preferred to have children from varied backgrounds in the Muslim school in order to facilitate effective teaching about other cultures and religions. They were very conscious of the fact that they did not wish to cut off their children from the majority community:

> The state schools now teach about other people's religions, in some schools about other culture and so on. It is important in a Muslim school they are educated about what is happening outside that school, other beliefs and other cultures as well so that they are not totally oblivious to them (Activist 2c).

Those who criticised multicultural education regarded the provision of halal meals and the like as peripheral to their needs: as one mother put it, "these are bonuses". For them, the fault line in MCARE lay in the lack of progress made by the community in

establishing an Islamic ethos even in the schools where the Muslim pupils were an overwhelming majority. They regarded MCARE as creating a climate where Muslims were merely tolerated rather than encouraged to be Muslims. Muslims had to make demands that were processed by the education authorities before they issued appropriate circulars and initiatives. The authorities did not consider it their duty to provide for their Muslim citizens as a matter of course; they only made an effort where they had no choice. That had been the case when some of the parents were being educated in the suburbs of Glasgow where the small number of Muslims in the schools did not spur the education authorities into action. The situation had not changed at the end of the century. MCARE policies were only seen to be implemented with any enthusiasm in schools with large ethnic minority populations.

Other schools blissfully still adopted a 'no problem here' policy and sidelined MCARE, despite one of the tenets of multicultural education being that multicultural education should affect the lives of all citizens of this country, not to be treated as a concession to the minority groups. One mother put her negative experience of multicultural education down to living in an area outside Glasgow, an area without a big Muslim population. In her experience, the teachers in schools without a significant minority group population did not subscribe to the MCARE policies of the local authorities. They made no effort to learn about other cultures and expected the minority group children to assimilate with the majority.

> I live in an area outside Glasgow, without a huge Muslim community, where they (the teachers) don't feel they need to learn about other communities. I constantly met a lot of ignorance, just assumptions made about what Muslims do and what Muslims don't do…No effort was made by the teachers to research. They couldn't be bothered. I know there are places they can go to, there are bookshops, they have budgets, they can go to find out a wealth of information, but they didn't want to…It was actually put to me with those words "We have had other Muslim children in the school, they just did as the others did, why can't yours?" (Parent 2a).

That was not an isolated incident or the experience of only one individual. Most parents could relate such experiences where the schools modified their inappropriate stances only when they had to. The Muslim children were still regarded as a 'problem' in predominantly white schools. As and when various issues arose, the school

authorities dealt with them, without having a clear and comprehensive policy in place. Some of the activists were of the opinion that even if the teachers had the knowledge and were aware of the culture of the minority groups, they did not treat other traditions the same as the majority culture. Minority cultures were held up as examples of the exotic and the novel, contrary to anti-racist policies of the education authorities. The Muslim activists viewed it thus:

> It is very much focussed on the perspective of the West, and their viewpoints. It doesn't really take into account the minority needs and their perspectives and their opinions...Facilities are not provided, the teachers are not sensitive to Muslim needs (Activist 2c).

> The problem is respect for other cultures. State schools don't have that. That is a serious problem for the parents. We need to respect all cultures, be it Muslim, be it Jewish, whatever...I think the Government should take us on board, give us the opportunity to show them what we can do as a community in this multicultural society (Activist 1c).

It was generally recognised that in spite of multicultural education for the last forty years or so, the increase in the understanding of minority ethnic group cultures on the part of the majority community was woefully insignificant. Islam and Muslims were routinely misrepresented in the print and broadcast media extenuating Islamophobia, which presented various challenges to Muslim identity in this country.

4.3.3 Islamophobia and Muslim Identity

Islamophobia, an irrational fear of Muslims, is a product of a society that has made little or no attempt to understand the Muslims living in their midst (Powney *et al.*, 1998). Muslims see it is as an onslaught of the majority community on the Muslims, who react to this blitz in different ways. Some polish up their Islamic credentials for public display. While more and more women don the *hijab*, the men cast off their westernised clothes and start wearing "traditional Muslim" attire like *shalwar kamiz* and sport flowing beards. The children are also encouraged to emphasise their Islamic identity to the extent that it becomes irksome for some schools and other service providers who have to make seemingly endless adjustments to their schedules and menus to accommodate renewed demands from these Muslims.

Other Muslims responded to this Islamophobia beating a hasty retreat, suppressing their Islamic identity in varying degrees. The majority community often interprets this reaction, which is a cause of major concern for Muslim parents, as integration. One mother was very concerned that her son was suppressing his Muslim identity, to the extent that he did not even use his proper name, but preferred the nickname given by his non-Muslim peers:

> My older boy, who is ten, he went to another school, five years in that school, he lost his confidence in his religion. As he spent most of his waking hours at school, where he was the sole Muslim, this had a very detrimental effect on his esteem. Even right down to the fact that he was embarrassed to say his name. His name is Abdur-Rehman, he would say "My name is Abbi". He felt ashamed. He wanted to blend in (Parent 2a).

As well as causing Muslim children to suppress their Islamic identity, Islamophobia had a profound effect on how Muslims saw themselves in their current environment and their future plans in this country. Islamophobia in the community left Muslim parents and children alienated. They did not feel any ownership; at best they felt tolerated as clients of the system. They felt it would be extremely difficult to influence the system to accommodate Islamic education within the state schools:

> Whenever Muslims mention their religion, they are immediately labelled as fundamentalists, and it is pushed down their throats that this is Britain, you should not be talking like this, behaving like this. When anybody tries to have any Islamic education in normal state schools, as it happened some time ago in one of our primary schools here (reference to Willowbank affair), the whole of the secular world is together, and rams down the throat of Muslims, "No! You cannot do this!" (Parent 3b).

From a Muslim perspective there was very little factual and accurate information in the print and broadcast media to educate the community about the Muslims. In fact, Muslim parents often complained of negative propaganda and misinformation in the press. These negative images had a deep impact on the self-image of Muslim parents and their children. Lack of self-esteem and confidence in their own religion was also a reason given by another mother for removing her children from an otherwise satisfactory school, to enrol them in a Muslim school where they acquired more knowledge of Islam and become more confident believers:

> They feel inhibited; they feel quite shy about it. I think they are not confident about their religion. Of course they are young, they don't know much about their religion. By the grace of God, as our children learn more about their religion, they will become more confident than what we were at school (Parent 1a).

The headteacher of the independent Muslim school discussed how Islamophobia manifested itself in practice. He complained about the prejudiced opinions of some people concerning the Muslims. Education officials and other visitors often assumed that he would have little or no command of English language, or appropriate qualifications for the job. This was even more ironic since he was an Englishman from Nottingham who had held senior posts in the state sector. He talked of the Islamophobic climate that he had to battle against, which distracted him from his primary task of educating the children in his school. A lasting impression conveyed by some of the parents was that of unfairness from the majority community, who nevertheless had an unwavering belief in their even-handedness. To bridge this divide, one mother advocated special "classes for everybody" to offset the lack of education in the community about Islam:

> They need a special class in Islamic education, quite honestly, not just for Muslim children but for all the children. It is not to teach them about Islam but to make other people aware of what Islam really means instead of all this propaganda about Islam. Just because someone makes a mistake, they say, "A Muslim did this", instead of saying, "A person did this"...If there were classes for everybody, they would understand why we don't go out at night, why we don't do this and that (Parent 1a).

Muslim children were often questioned about their beliefs and practices by their peers and others in the schools. The children had to become "defenders of the faith" at a very early age. They were persistently asked about the meanings of their names, the reason for fasting or the importance of *hijab*, not only by other pupils but also by teachers and other adults in the school. These may well be genuine information-seeking enquiries, but they often had an ill effect on the children. Many children came home and made further enquiries about the issues raised in the school. If the parents were not capable of giving satisfactory answers – and many were not – the children were left questioning their own beliefs and practices. The children of the majority community were not expected to know anything about their faith, whereas

minority community children, be they Muslim or Jewish, they were expected to be 'experts' in their faiths. When a young mother was asked why she had chosen to send her children to the independent Muslim school, she dwelled on this theme and said:

> For a start , there is no-one questioning why someone is fasting, "How can you live without food all day?"...There is no one questioning why girls are wearing *hijab*, why the children pray. Because people are not used to it, they say "How can you pray five times a day?" You manage to do everything else, why can't we pray five times a day. Whereas here (in the Muslim School) there is no such questioning (Parent 1a).

The personalities of Muslim children were shaped to some extent by these questions from their peers and adults around them. Some parents were adamant that their children had lost self-esteem and self-confidence in the face of this barrage of questions from all quarters. They also had to respond to a lot of misinformation put out by the print and the broadcast media. Muslims felt especially aggrieved as they considered themselves to be closely related to the majority Christian community. They talked of their common heritage with the Christians but did not feel the Christians reciprocating this sentiment. In fact, a mother who had entered the Muslim fold after marrying a Muslim maintained that paradoxically, as Islam was closer in its beliefs and traditions to the Christians, the latter felt a threat from the Muslims. This also gave rise to Islamophobia, though its roots lay buried in history:

> People have all sorts of views, sometimes I don't blame them, because what they see on TV, that's where they get their information...You could say it goes back to maybe the cold-war ending: there is a new cold-war against the Muslims. You could say it even goes back to the Crusades. There is a whole difference between people being afraid more. If you notice, people are more friendly to Buddhists or Sikhs, who are so far away from the (Christian) religion: that it is an exotic thing. They can look at it and be interested in it, without feeling that they need to go that way (Parent 2a).

Muslim children learnt about their faith and their culture in the supplementary schools or from their parents. The things they held dear about their faith and culture were routinely challenged and trivialised in their day schools. It was a cause of a lot of confusion, and presented the young minds with very complex situations to resolve. As the culture of the home was not valued in the day schools, it resulted in multiple identities in Muslim children. A number of Muslim children in state schools did not

wish to be identified as Muslims in the schools. They acted and behaved in one manner in the school to blend in with their peers and displayed a completely different character when at home or the Mosque. One of the activists confessed to being one kind of person in the house and adopting a different persona in the school. She attributed this to "peer pressure", which she argued was not always Islamic peer pressure even if it came from Muslims. Thus the Muslim children encouraged other Muslims to conform to the conventions and not to "rock the boat". Another young activist, who had been schooled in Scotland, was able to relate this to his own experiences. He talked of a "negative outlook on Islam", which in its more extreme forms is Islamophobia:

> When I was at school, religious education had a very negative outlook on Islam. Even doing History, doing the Crusades, we were told from the Western perspective. For Muslims it looks like indoctrination, trying to make everybody the same, not taking into account individual beliefs and convictions (Activist 2c).

Another activist described how he had to modify the language used to present the Muslim school to the majority community which has almost an "allergic reaction" to anything Islamic. He maintained that he had to use euphemisms to make his case more presentable and palatable to the education officials. Mere mention of Islam brought the shutters down and provoked severe reactions amongst supposedly enlightened officials. Some parents spoke of institutional Islamophobia. They found it difficult to comprehend that while there were Catholic, Episcopalian and Jewish schools in the Scottish state system, there was no room for Muslim schools. They were familiar with the answers given by the authorities, but remained unconvinced.

The activists who had lobbied the Scottish Office and local authorities for state funding of the independent Muslim school in Glasgow drew a parallel between the Jewish community and the Muslim community. He also pointed out that the Government had chosen to fund a Gaelic school in the Woodlands area of Glasgow where there were more Urdu speakers (mainly Muslims) than Gaelic speakers. When faced with such concrete realities, they could only rationalise it as institutional Islamophobia on part of the Scottish education authorities. This reaction not only

modified the language used by the Muslims to convey their case, but had an impact on their actions too.

> We are active in our work. Some are outspoken on issues, clearly we can make a noise: that makes a difference. That may be frightening for some sections of the society as well, that these people want to do something about changing society…They certainly never catered for me as a Muslim. I didn't know I was a Muslim at school to be honest! Islam was never mentioned… (Parent 5a).

Reconciliation of these multiple personalities into one wholesome Muslim identity was one of the reasons given by Muslim parents and activists for the establishment of Muslim schools. They wished to create a climate where Islam was valued as a part of everyday experience; an environment where they would feel confident to be Muslims. This, in their opinion, could only be created in Muslim schools. These issues will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.3.4 Muslim Schools

There was a discernible trend in the Muslim community towards establishing Muslim schools. The reasons for this trend were much more complex than would appear on the surface. When Muslim parents were asked about the reasons for establishing Muslim schools they give a whole range of answers. One of the major concerns of the advocates of Muslim schools was the need for an Islamic ethos in schools. The activists often complained about the prevalent atmosphere in state schools, which was not conducive to the transmission of teachings of Islam. Some of them believed that the state education system had been designed to undermine religious teachings, including Islam. The Muslims, in their opinion, had to extricate themselves (Islamic concept of *hijra*) from the system and establish their own institutions. Although not hostile to multicultural education, they wished to remedy the situation that was leading their children away from their faith. These activists tended to criticise the state schools most vigorously and sought a justification for the establishment of Muslim schools in these criticisms. For example:

> In the state school there is degradation. Moral values are disappearing; ethical values are disappearing; as well children are not disciplined. Teachers are

> having problems, children are running wild. These things were playing on our minds when we were looking at the school (Activist 1c).

Most parents, whether they sent their children to the independent Muslim school or not, were not particularly hostile to state education, although they had found it to be wanting in many areas. They expressed fears that the staff in state schools had little or no knowledge of Muslim traditions and paid little or no regard to the culture of the Muslims in their care, thus creating conflicts in the minds of the Muslim pupils. These children had to resolve complex issues like the place of religion in their lives or how to deal with parents and other adults appropriately, on their own. The Islamic teachings at home were central to their lives, whereas the school marginalized religious teachings to the occasional assembly or RE periods. The teachings at home stressed that children should respect and obey the adults, whereas the school promoted individualism, encouraging children to speak out for themselves, even in front of their elders. The parents often saw this as teaching their children disrespect and irreverence of any authority. The Muslim parents were often thrown on the horns of a dilemma. They regarded their local state school as making a valuable contribution to the academic education of their children but they were critical of the system that did not take on board the cultural heritage of the Muslim children. Nevertheless they did not regard the state school as a partner in bringing up their children. Whereas schooling is generally perceived as a 'supportive activity' for the majority community – the school underpinning the values of the parents and the society at large by the formal and the informal curriculum – it was not seen as 'supportive' by the Muslim community. Non-denominational schools were seen as 'secular' institutions by most Muslim parents. As such, the parents had come to expect no religious or moral lead from these schools. While one mother who sent her children to the Muslim school maintained, "In an ideal world, there wouldn't be a need to be a separate Muslim school"(Parent 2a), another was adamant that:

> If there was enough (teaching of Islam) in other schools, there wouldn't be any need for separate schools. Because there is a general ignorance, we had no choice (Parent 1a).

The reasons for supporting the Muslim school varied from hesitant acquiescence to reluctant experimentation with the new scene. Most of the parents were not very

enthusiastic about the project: they constantly stated that they sent their children to the Muslim school because they had no choice. The state schools were not moving fast enough or far enough to provide a consistent, cohesive and coherent learning experience for their children. They were left with no choice but to throw their lot with the new Muslim school that had been set up. They argued that the state schools lacked in important curricular areas such the delivery of Islamic studies, which was borne out by the survey results. There was near unanimity on the subject: they wanted their children to be taught about Islam in their day schools. Unfortunately very little, if any, cognisance seems to have been given to this very basic demand of the Muslim community. The parents seemed to explore various avenues to meet the needs of their children in the state schools to avoid removing their children from them. A number of them narrated tales of frustrating encounters with schools and other education authorities, who were only too willing to make token gestures but not to change anything of substance. On the whole these parents still subscribed to the theory of comprehensive education, maintaining that the ideal situation would have been to provide suitable education for all children under one roof, but they found the practice wanting.

It was by no means easy for the parents to resolve the dilemma of removing their children from tried and tested schools which some of them described as "really superb" and send them to a school they knew to be lacking in some of the basic resources. Some of them talked in glowing terms of their previous schools. They talked of "extremely good school" and "fantastic school" but they nevertheless withdrew their children from these schools. The 'good' the schools were able to do was not good enough for these parents. They yearned for something more which the state sector had singularly failed to provide: an education that would reconcile home and school teachings. The parents did not wish to be too critical of the state system but took active measures to mitigate the shortcomings of state schooling. These measures varied according to the circumstances of the parents, from providing supplementary education to withdrawing their children from the state sector altogether. Nevertheless, the dilemma facing the parents when thinking about withdrawing their children from state schools to enrol them in the newly established independent Muslim school was a real one. They wrestled with the dilemma of providing their children with an "Islamic

education" against a "good academic education". Those who were not satisfied that the Muslim school would be able to provide at least as good an academic education as any state school did not send their children to the school, though some were willing to wait for the school to reach the required standards. This was demonstrated by the father who was prepared to "pay the price" while a mother agonised over the difficult decision she faced when she thought about enrolling her daughter in Primary four in the Muslim school. Though she was satisfied that the school would be able to provide her with a reasonable academic education, it was a "very difficult decision" nevertheless:

> Taking her out of a very good state school, I must say, it was an extremely good school she was in, it was a very difficult decision to take...(what was lacking was) literally, the Islamic atmosphere. It was almost going from one culture to another, putting her into an ordinary state school (Parent 4a).

Another father weighed various options and was prepared to "pay the price":

> It is a new school, there is always the possibility that it is not going to succeed, all the staff there are new, they don't have the experience...they feel a bit segregated from the entire environment surrounding them. But if you were to ask me if this is a price worth paying, I would say without any hesitation, "Yes!" (Parent 3a).

In essence, these parents were prepared to make some sacrifices to subscribe to the Muslim school. They wished the school well, but were not prepared to pay *any* price: some of them withdrew their children from the school after the first session because it was not deemed to be challenging their children academically. One mother, who withdrew her children, argued that her daughter in P1 had not progressed well in literacy and numeracy, though she had found the Islamic atmosphere very supportive. Despite feeling that the informal curriculum in the Muslim school was important, they thought it could not replace success at the formal curriculum. On the other hand, these parents had no major complaints against the formal curriculum of the state schools (apart from lack of Islamic studies) but had shown their dissatisfaction with the hidden or informal curriculum when they had withdrawn their children to enrol them in the Muslim school.

The parents who had overcome all these difficulties were still unhappy about the representation of the Muslim school to the public at large. They were satisfied that the school was receiving some publicity in the Muslim community, but the majority community around the school were unaware of the nature of the school being set up. A number of Muslim parents, primarily those who had decided not to send their children to the Muslim school, were also unhappy about isolating Muslim pupils in a single school. They were concerned about the development of the young people in the Muslim schools: one parent even described the development as "ghetto mentality". There was some concern that a concentration of Muslim pupils in a single institution may provoke an unfavourable reaction in the neighbouring community. They feared an Islamophobic reaction that could be exploited by some extremist elements. While one mother feared "non-Muslims might take an aggressive stand point", another speculated, "It might become malicious: someone might set the place on fire". At the time there was only the prospect of one independent Muslim primary school for the foreseeable future in Glasgow, where the intake was destined to remain a tiny proportion of the Muslim pupils of Glasgow, the vast majority of Muslim pupils would still remain in the state schools. Nevertheless, parents who did not send their children to the Muslim school tended to raise the subject of 'isolation' more than others. Although it was often presented as a reason for not supporting the Muslim school, it was often a rationalisation of the decision taken on other grounds. One of them even extrapolated it to paint a scenario in which all Muslim pupils would be separated from all non-Muslim pupils:

> The disadvantage that has been expressed is that Muslims will be isolated, bringing up a generation in two different ways. You will not be able to develop multiculturalism in them. They will have difficulty in understanding each other's values and culture. It may become difficult to live in peace and harmony with each other (Parent 2b).

Some of the parents discussed other, more practical, disadvantages or shortcomings of sending their children to the Muslim school in Glasgow, expressing their concerns without treading on too many toes. The parents who had chosen to send their children to the Muslim school talked of three main issues: the relative newness of the school, financial considerations and the Islamophobic reaction of the majority community. Some of these issues were also mentioned by the parents who had chosen not to send

their children to the Muslim school, along with talking about their perceived isolation of Muslim children, the age group of their children and their lack of confidence in the administrators of the school.

Any school starting afresh would have faced an uphill struggle to attract support from a community used to exercising a fair degree of freedom and choice in matters of selecting schools for their children. The new Muslim school had an added disadvantage in that the Muslim community had memories of previous failed experiments. In fact one of the parents described it saying, "all these schools, wherever they are, they are only experimental". They were not sure that the school would last long enough for their children to complete their education in it. Some parents were prepared to take risks while others were looking for further assurances: "People are very cautious about anything new", said one. This was borne out by the comments of one of the activists of the school, who had, surprisingly, chosen not to send his children to the Muslim school in the first year. He was honest enough to state that apart from having some financial difficulties he felt that "the school was new: I knew their educational skills were still limited". The Trustees of the school were aware of these sentiments and had built it into their projected intakes for the next five years. They envisaged a slow start but were hopeful of a gradual build up to a respectable intake within five years. They knew that the community would be looking beyond the rhetoric, at results, before they would subscribe to the school in greater numbers.

> A lot of people are initially cautious and hesitant. They want to see how the school turns out, how it performs before they make a decision on it... if they are meeting or surpassing those targets then that will obviously affect (their decisions), because at the end of the day people want their children to get as good an education as possible in all areas (Activist 2c).

The second major shortcoming of the Muslim school mentioned by the activists of the school and some parents was relating to the fees charged by the school. As the Muslim school was an independent school, not receiving any state funding, it had to meet all its costs from the school fees. The survey also demonstrated that the respondents who had indicated that Muslims should be establishing their own schools were also of the

opinion that the fees structure of independent schools would be an impediment to their success. Although the fees charged by the new Muslim school (Appendix 17) were heavily subsidised by the Trustees to make the school more attractive for the community, it was still regarded as a 'hefty sum' by some parents. A fee of about a thousand pounds per annum for the education of a primary child may have been very competitive but it imposed an extra burden on the Muslim community. The vast majority of Muslim parents in Scotland sent their children to local state schools. The Muslim school embarked on a mission to publicise the advantages of the education provided by the school but they recognised that "getting money out of a community, not used to paying for education in this country is difficult" (Activist 2c). More parents could afford the school fees if they had only one child to send to the Muslim school but most families had three or four children as the norm. "It puts a burden onto the community, we all need to make sacrifices" as suggested by the headteacher. A mother who could afford to send her daughter to the school summarised the bigger picture very succinctly:

> A lot of Muslim families have a number of children, they don't want to send one child and not be able to send another child. That has a lot to do with it as well. They can afford to send one, not necessarily afford to send three or four children (Parent 4a).

Some of the parents did not wish to admit that the fees was the main problem for them or that they wished to wait for the school to prove itself before they made their personal commitments. One of the issues used to mask the real reasons behind their choice was that their children had already started their primary education in a state school thus their transfer to the Muslim school would have been disruptive to their education. Although there was some truth in their statements, they tended to qualify their statements by veiled criticisms of the school, betraying deeper concerns. Some of them had greater reservations about the Muslim school but they did not feel it was correct to be too critical of it, as they may eventually subscribe to the school. They resolved their dilemma by saying things like "If my child was starting at primary one level, I would have been willing to send him". Another parent talked of the "handicap" his daughter would have suffered had she gone to a Muslim school in P2, as she had completed P1 in a state school. As this parent went on to talk, at length,

about his lack of confidence in the management of the school, it was clear that the age of the child was merely a mask, concealing other reservations. This was also evident from the comments of another father who could well afford to send his sons to the Muslim school. He combined the issue of the age of his sons with the school not being well established:

> If they were going into, lets say P1, and I knew that the school was well established, I may have taken a chance and said "Fine" (Parent 1b).

Some of the lack of confidence in the Muslim school stemmed from the history of such schools in Glasgow. Some parents were sceptical about the success of the current venture, as they linked it to the previous attempt in the nineteen seventies. Others had some negative experience of Muslim schools in England. One parent in particular talked of the "harsh conditions and strict regimes" in such schools. Others complimented the Muslim schools in England and made unfavourable comparisons between the provision in those schools and the one being established in Glasgow.

> I have seen some schools down in England, the way they have been organised. They may not be as professional as normal state schools, but they go a good way towards it. Our school here (Glasgow), unfortunately, in my opinion so far, I don't think is anywhere near that, in organisational level. The background of the people who are involved is not suitable, and standard of education not up to anywhere near where I would want my children to achieve (Parent 3b).

A few other parents also questioned the credentials of the people establishing the Muslim school. It was thought that although their intentions were sincere and noble, they lacked the expertise to set up a viable Muslim educational institution. The lack of people with educational expertise among the activists and the Trustees of the school was there for everyone to see. This did not inspire confidence in many people whose sentiments were summarised by one of the parents:

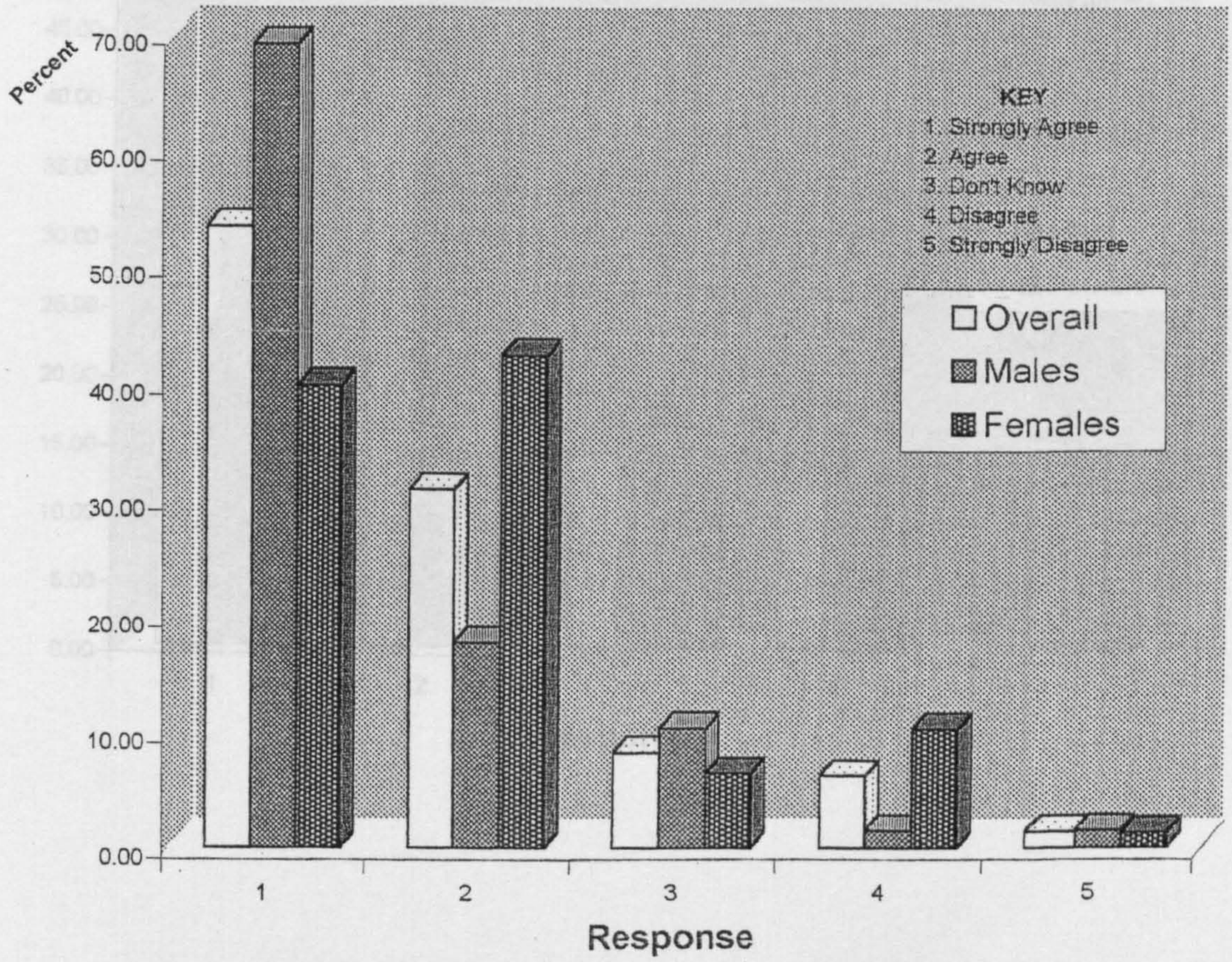
> When the school was set up, although the intentions were very good, but the people who were involved in the School Trust, none of them are educationalists. Unless the operators of any system are experts in their field, they will face tremendous difficulties. Unless they involve educationalists, experts in education, it shall be very difficult to run the school (Parent 2b).

4.4 Results of the Survey

The survey of the Muslim community proved to be a rich source of data. On the whole the results confirmed the views expressed by the interviewees.

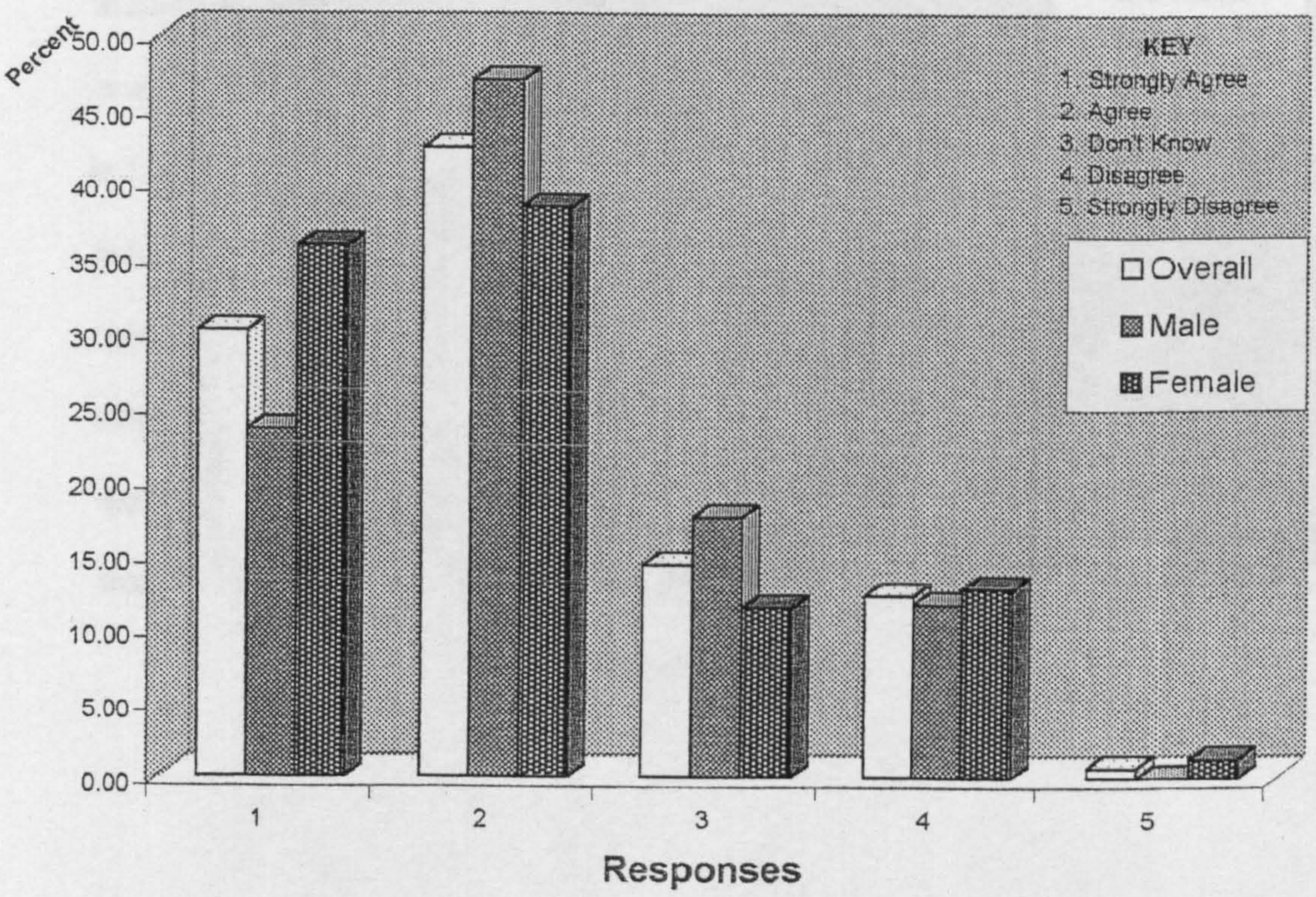
Over 84% of the respondents either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the proposition that Muslims should establish their own Schools in Scotland. Only 2.94% males and 11.54% females disagreed with the proposition. The larger percentage of females disagreeing with the proposal was an interesting observation. Apparently the Muslim males held stronger views on the subject than the females: more males "strongly agreed" and fewer males showed any disagreement with the proposal. Nevertheless it shows a clear ground swell of Muslim opinion in favour establishing their own schools (Chart 1).

Chart 1 Establish Own Schools



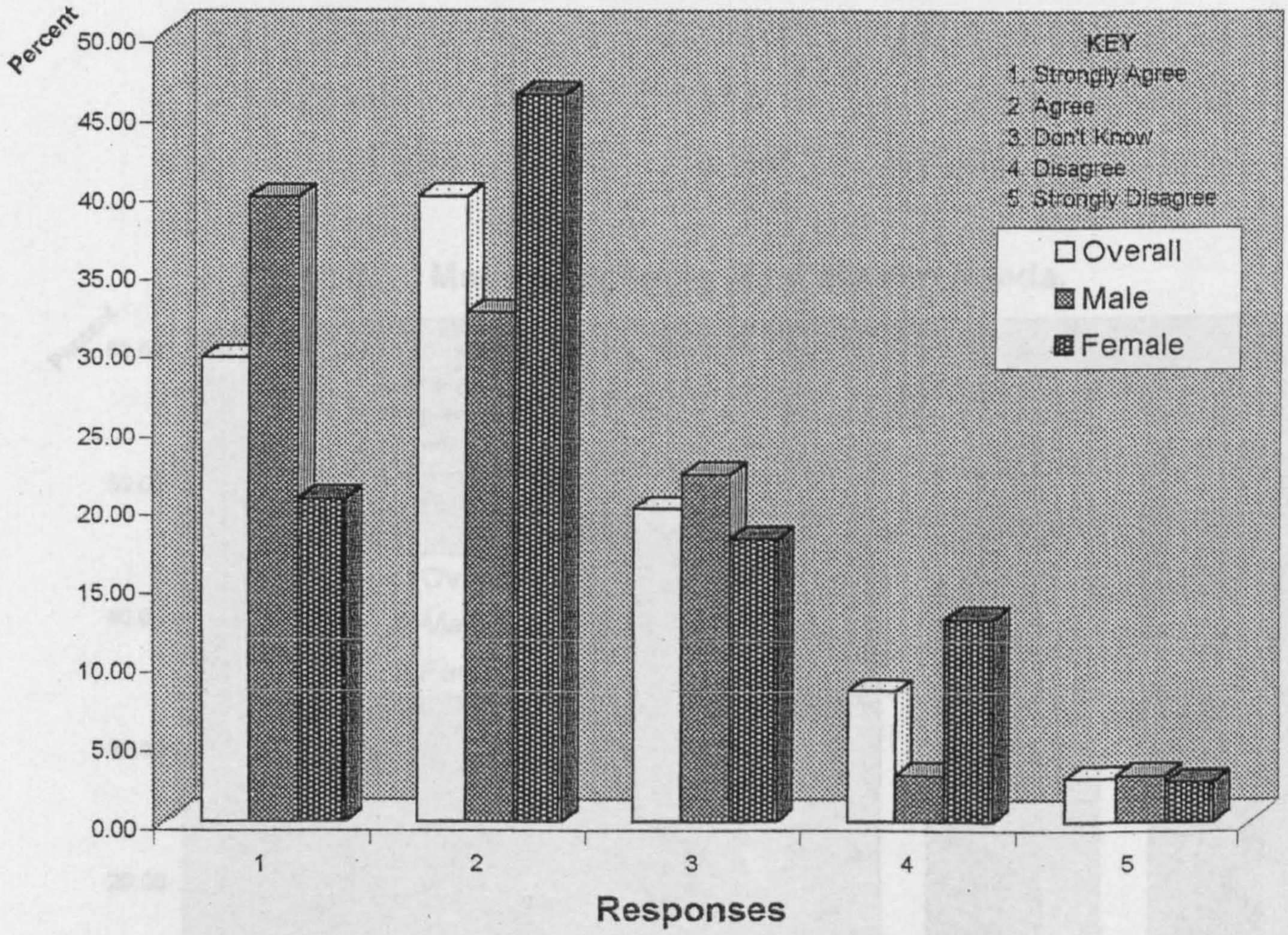
However, over 72% of the same respondents believed that the fees charged by independent Muslim schools would be a major drawback of these schools. More females "strongly agreed" (35.98%) with this notion than the males (23.53%), though the trend was evened out with the males showing a higher percentage in "agreed" column (47.06%) than the females (38.46%). Coupled with the higher percentage of Muslim females "disagreeing" in the previous chart, there was perhaps a distinctive view that the females held that is worth exploring further. Only 13% of the respondents disagreed that the fees would be an impediment to the success of Muslim schools. Thus a very large proportion of the community believed in Muslim schools but did not regard the establishment of fee-paying independent schools as a viable solution for the bulk of the community (Chart 2).

Chart 2. School Fees is a Drawback



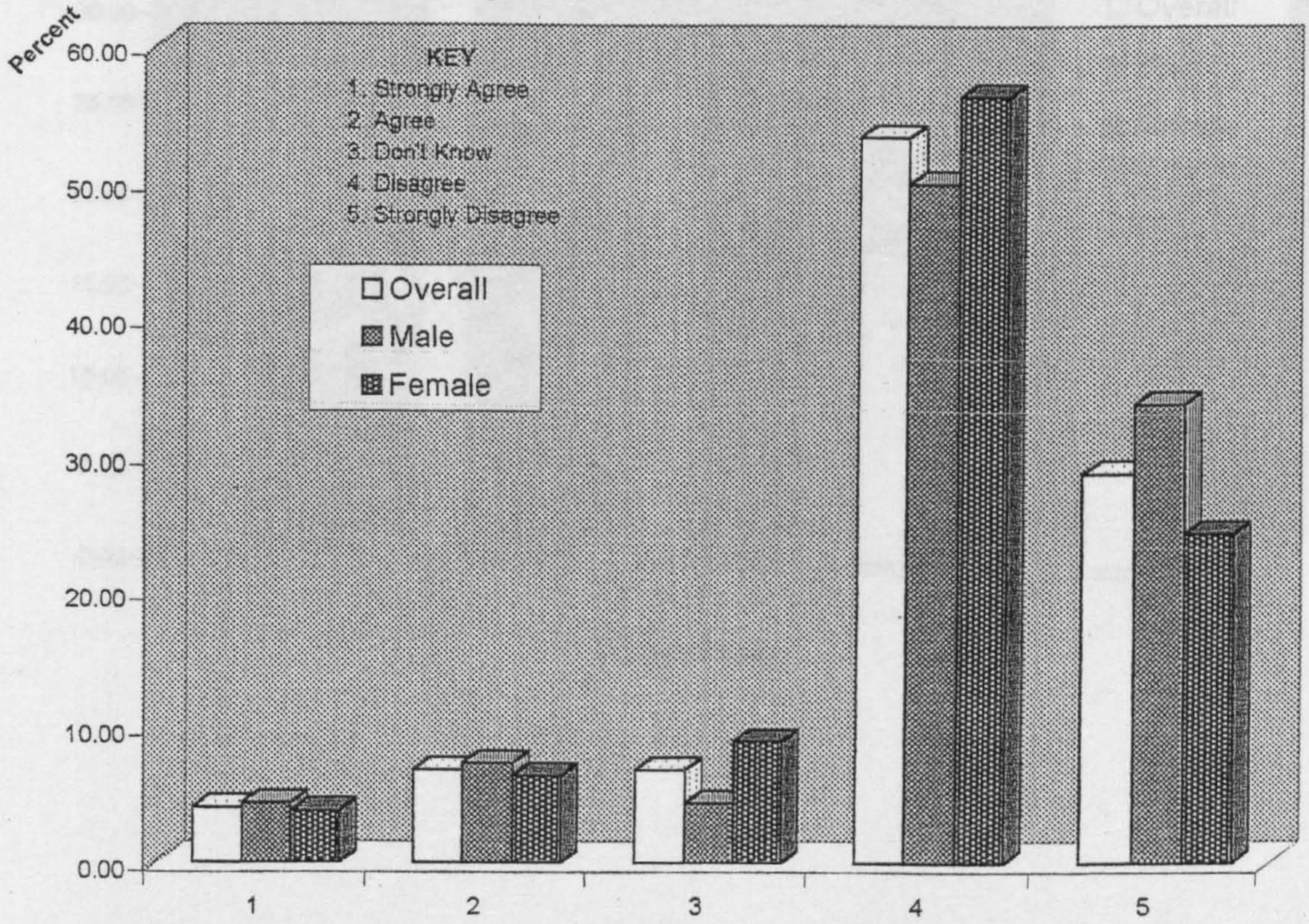
There was considerable agreement amongst the respondents that Muslims of Scotland should be campaigning for Muslim state schools: 72% of males and 66.6% of females. Instead of establishing fee-paying independent schools they would rather campaign to transform state schools with a majority of Muslim pupils into Muslim state schools (Chart 3).

Chart 3. Campaign for Muslim State Schools



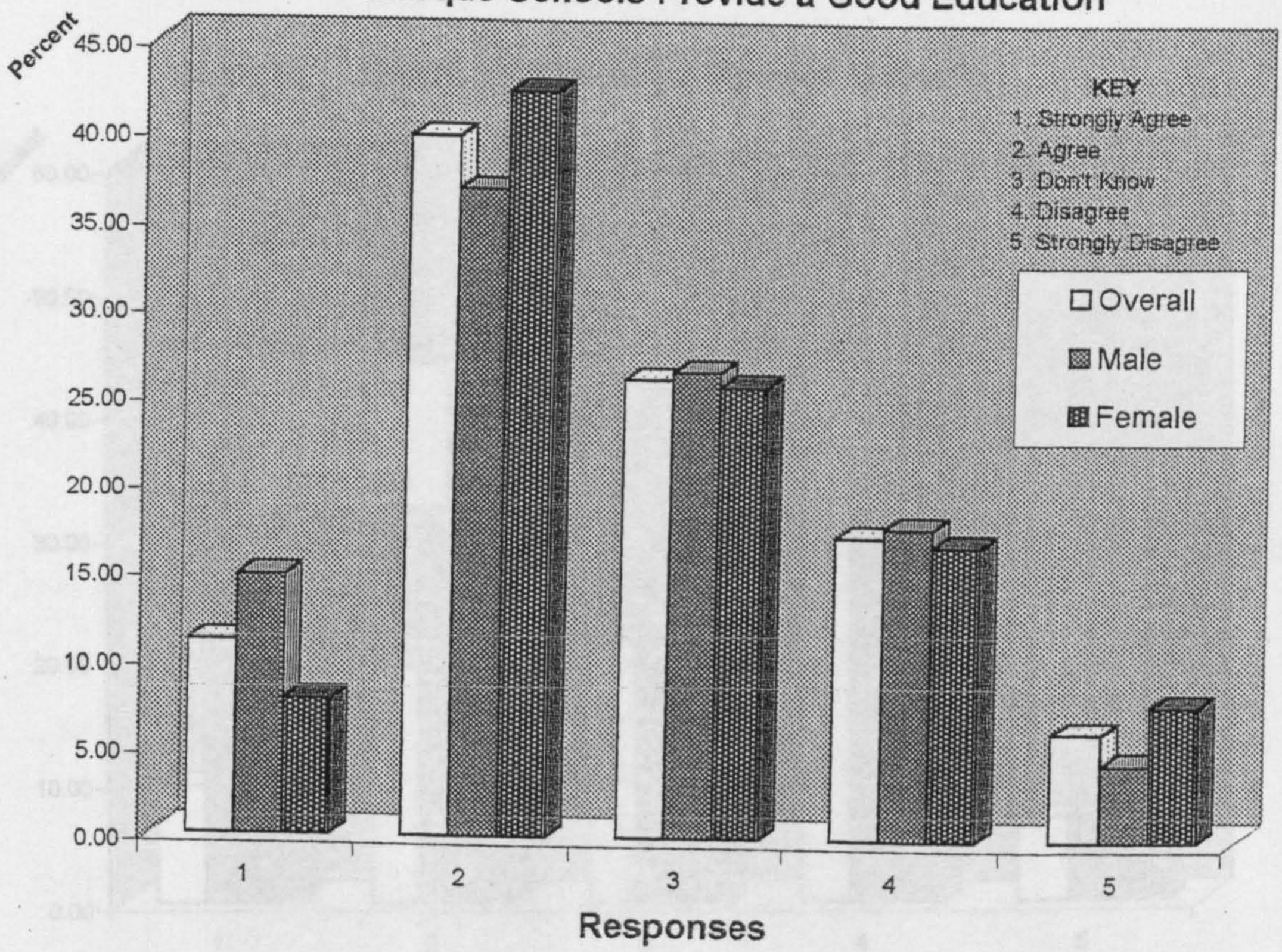
Mosque-schools or *Madrassas* have been supplementing Muslim needs in this country. They have been teaching Islamic studies, Arabic and other community languages since the nineteen sixties. When the proposal "There is no need for separate Muslim schools, because Mosque schools fulfil the needs of the Muslim children", was put to the respondents, 33.82% of the males "strongly disagreed" and another 50% "disagreed" with the proposal. Amongst the females 24.36% strongly disagreed and another 56.41% disagreed. Only 11.76% of males and 10.26% of females "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the proposal. Clearly a very large proportion of the community did not feel that the Mosque-schools met their needs any more, at best, these schools were seen as a stop-gap measure supplementing the needs of the children (Chart 4).

Chart 4. Mosque Schools Meet Muslim Needs.



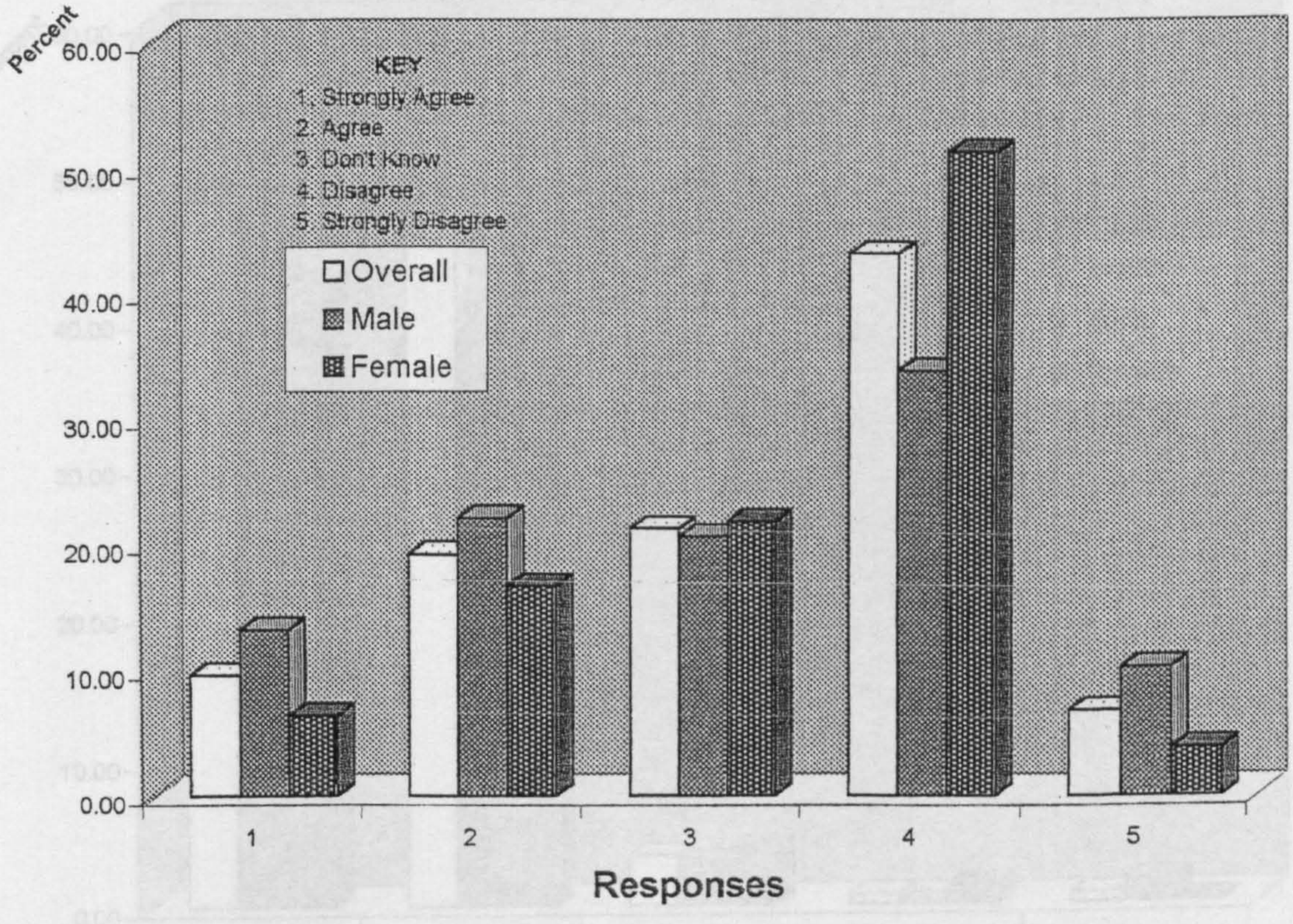
Most of the respondents did not give the Mosque-schools a clean bill of health. When it was put to the Muslim community that "Mosque schools are educating Muslim children to be productive citizens of this country", a very mixed response was received from the respondents. 14.71% of males strongly agreed and 36.76% agreed whereas 7.69% of females strongly agreed and 42.31% agreed with the proposal. That shows just about half of the respondents in agreement. The other half seemed to be split almost evenly between those who disagreed and the "don't know" column (Chart 5).

Chart 5. Mosque Schools Provide a Good Education



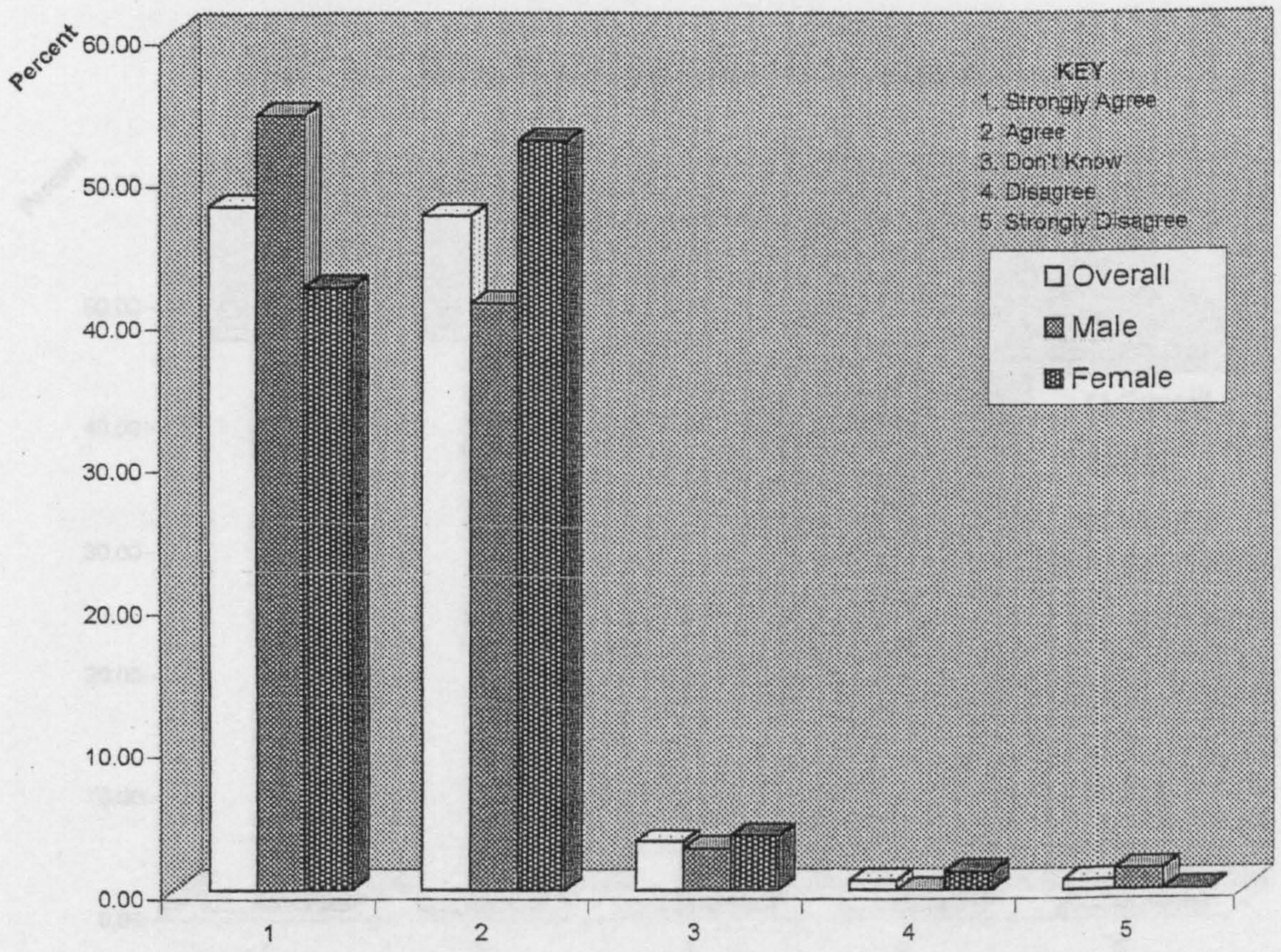
There were moves afoot in the Muslim community to transform the Mosque-schools into specialist full time Muslim schools -*Darul-Uloom,* for the teaching of Islamic subjects along with some traditional school subjects like English and Mathematics. These specialist schools usually train Islamic scholars and Imams for the Mosques. The community was clearly divided on this issue, half of them either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the proposal that instead of establishing Muslim schools, Muslims should be establishing Darul-Uloom. Less than 30% of the respondents were in favour of the proposal thus the Muslim community was looking for mainstream schools where all the regular subjects were taught, perhaps in an Islamic context (Chart 6).

Chart 6. Establish Specialist Mosque Schools



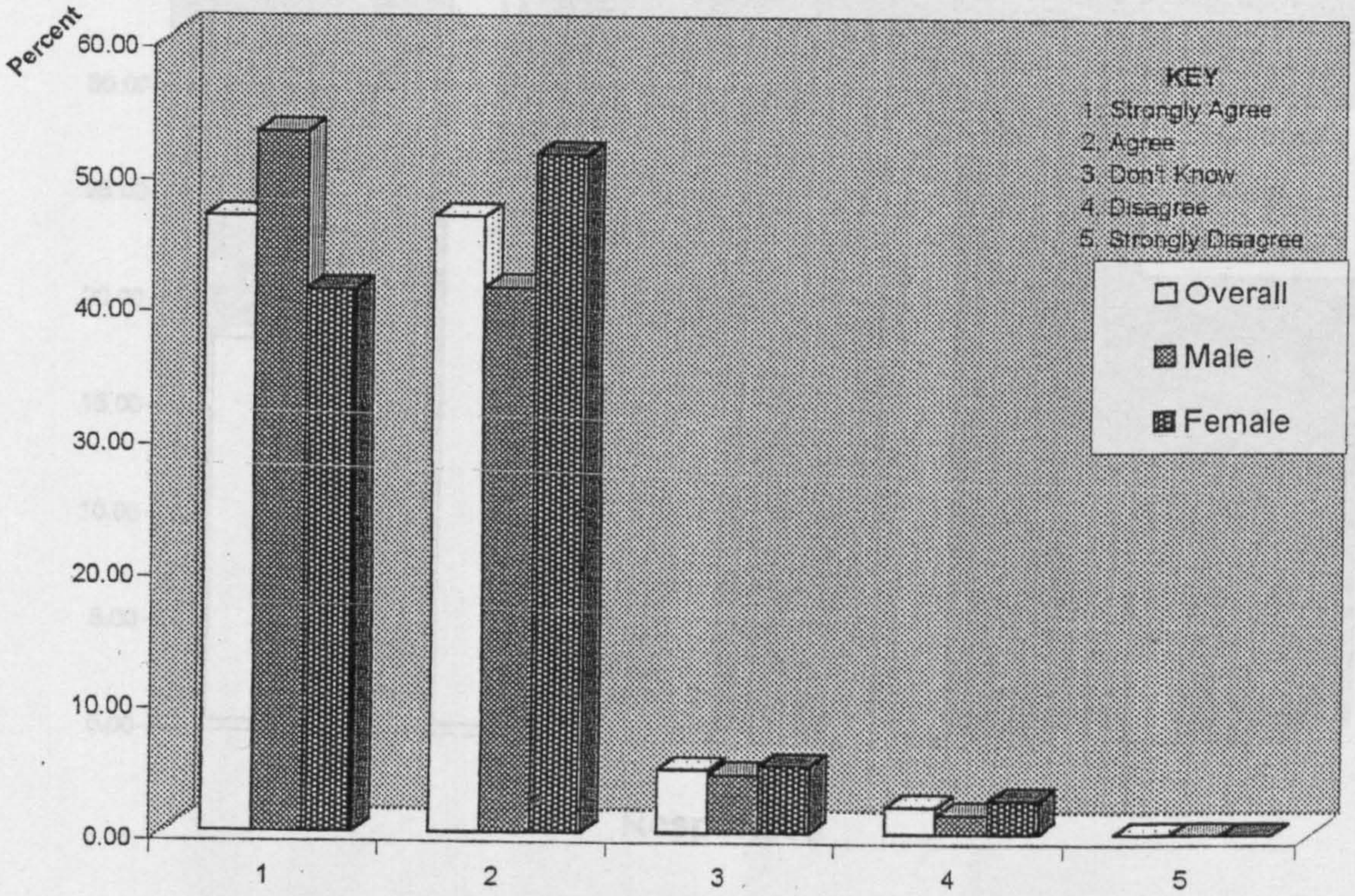
A major concern expressed by Muslim parents was that their children were not taught enough about Islam and their culture in the day schools. When the proposal that "Islamic studies should be taught in schools with a high proportion of Muslim children" was put to the Muslim respondents, 54.41% of males "strongly agreed" with another 41.18% showing agreement. This result was also reflected amongst the females, with 42.31% responding "strongly agree" and 52.56% agreeing with the proposal. Less than 5% of the respondents showed any disagreement or did not have an opinion. It was an over whelming desire of the Muslim community that their children be educated about Islamic culture in their day schools (Chart 7).

Chart 7. Teach Islamic Studies in State Schools



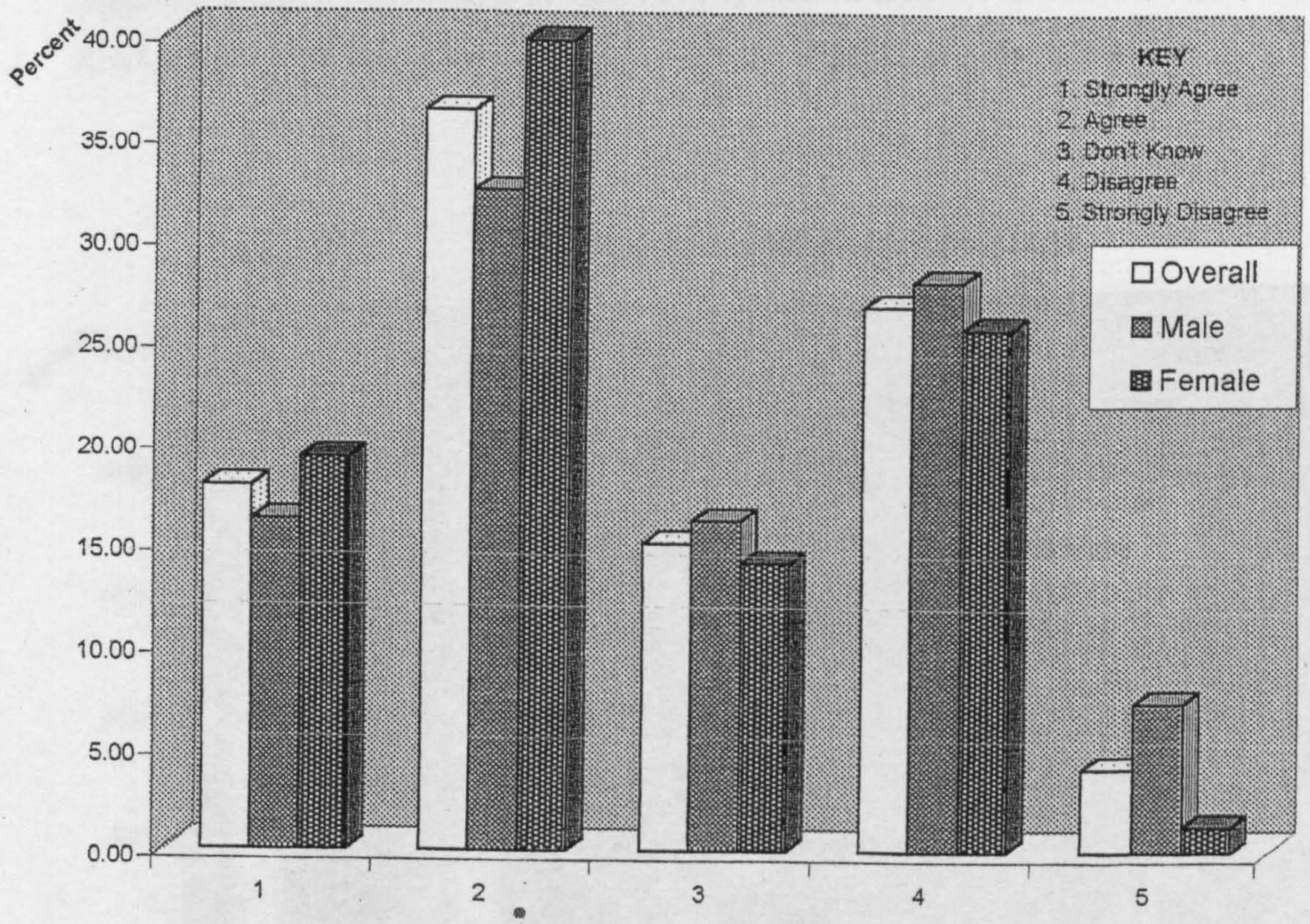
Arabic language is an essential part of any course on Islam or Islamic studies, for it is the language of the Quran.. When the proposal that "Arabic should be offered as an alternative modern language in Scottish state schools" was put to the Muslim community, 54.41% of the males "strongly agreed" and another 41.18% "agreed": amongst the females, 41% "strongly agreed" and another 51.28% "agreed" with the proposal. This shows that there was considerable support for the proposal in the Muslim community. A very small percentage of respondents disagreed with teaching of Arabic: 1.47% of males and 2.56% of females. If this were reflected in the whole of the Muslim community in Scotland, it would have serious implications for language provision in Scottish school (Chart 8).

Chart 8. Offer Arabic as a Modern Language



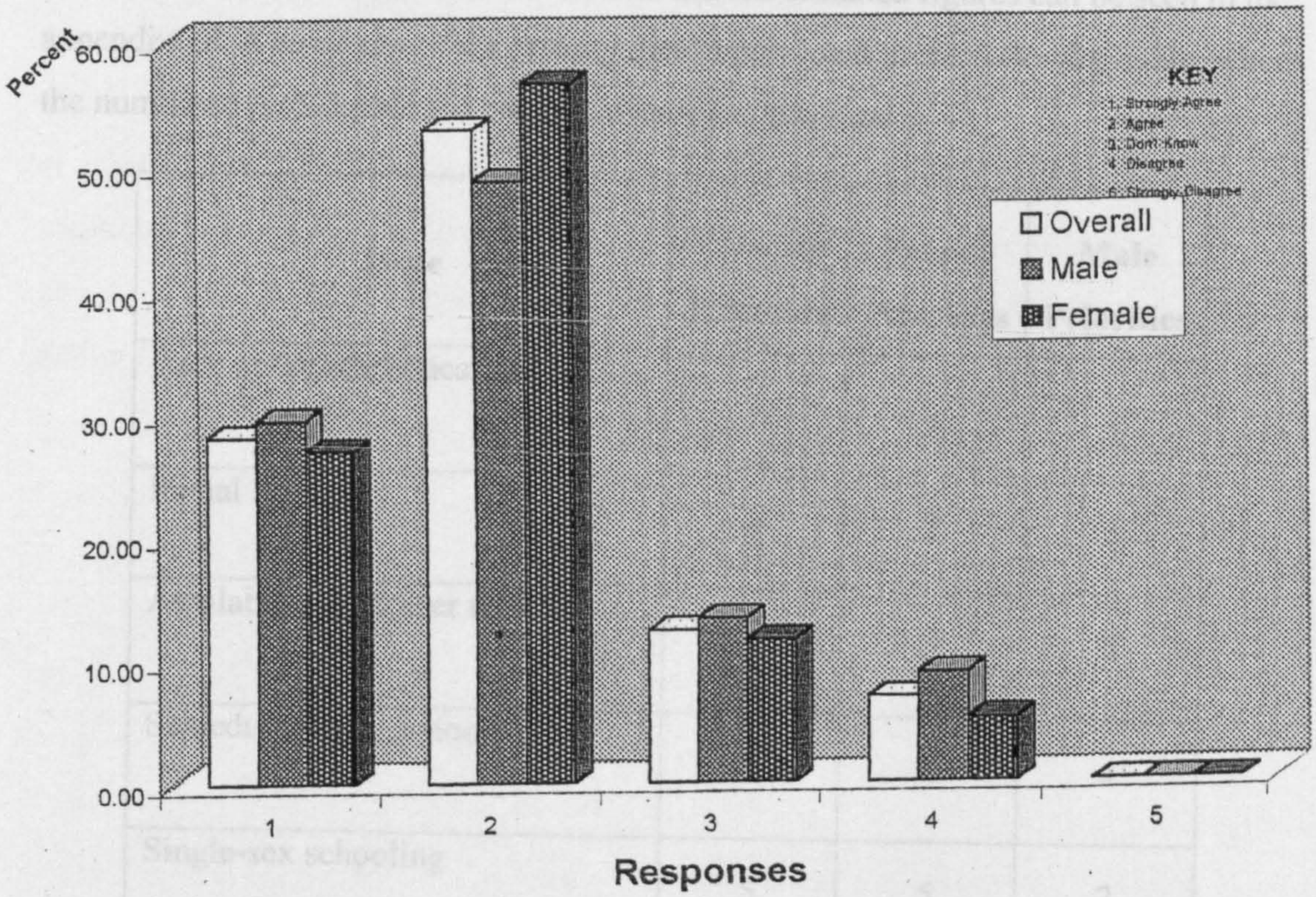
It was thought that Arabic and Islamic studies on the curriculum in state schools would reduce the demand for Muslim schools. When this proposal was put to the respondents, a very mixed response was received. Amongst the males, 16.18% "strongly agreed" and 32.35% "agreed": amongst the females 19.23% "strongly agreed" and 39.74% "agreed" with the proposal. That is, a much greater proportion of the female respondents were of the opinion that if the state schools made an effort to address Muslim curricular needs, by including Arabic and Islamic studies in the curriculum, the pressure for the establishment of Muslim schools would be reduced (Chart 9)

Chart 9. Arabic and Islamic Studies Will Reduce Demand For Muslim Schools



Arabic is not the mother tongue of most of the Muslims in Scotland, Urdu is. When the community was asked about the provision of "Urdu and other community languages" as alternative modern languages in Scottish state school, 29.41% of the male respondents, "strongly agreed" and another 48.53% "agreed" that Urdu should be taught to Muslim children. Amongst the females, 26.92% "strongly agreed" and another 56.41% "agreed". Thus there was substantial support for the proposal in the Muslim community. Although a very large proportion of the respondents (80%) wanted Urdu and other community languages to be offered as alternative modern languages in Scottish state schools, it was interesting to note that the figure for Urdu was less than that for Arabic (93%). The Muslim parents seemed to be sending the message that though they wished to preserve their heritage by wishing their children to be conversant in Urdu, they would rather have Arabic taught to preserve their religious identity. This is an important development in the Muslim community, which will have ramifications in corridors of education for years to come (Chart 10).

Chart 10. Offer Urdu As a Modern Language



Priority data

The five issues that the respondents were asked to arrange in order of their priority were derived from the interviews of this study and the literature (Appendix 4). They were presented to the respondents to test whether all of the issues were of equal importance to the Muslim community or were some issues more important than others. Had all the issues been of equal importance similar figures would have been produced for all the issues. This was evidently not the case; there were clear trends in the priority data.

Lack of Islamic education was rated as the highest priority both by the males (54.9%) and the females (30.43%). The figure for the males was 37.25 percentage points away from their second priority (single-sex schooling) whereas the figure for the females was only 7.24 percentage points away from their second priority (racial problems). Apart from the fact that Muslim males and females emphasised different issues as their second priority, it could be argued that lack of Islamic education was much more of an issue for the Muslim males than the females. Detailed figures can be seen in the appendix 18. A summary of the priority data is presented in the following table, where the numbers 1 to 5 denote the priority awarded to the issue:

Issue	Overall Priorities	Female Priorities	Male Priorities
Lack of Islamic education	1	1	1
Racial Problems	2	2	3
Availability of prayer rooms	3	3	5
Sex education in schools	4	4	4
Single-sex schooling	5	5	2

Table 4.1

It was also noticeable that single-sex schooling was given a much higher priority (second) by the males than by the females who placed it fourth in a list of five. It could be argued that a high proportion of the females in the sample could relate to their positive experiences of mixed-schooling in this country. They did not feel threatened by the atmosphere in the state schools and had managed to preserve their Islamic identity. Therefore these females placed the issue of single-sex schooling at the bottom of their priority list. The fathers on the other hand are traditionally, Muslim fathers being no exception, more protective of their daughters, thus attributed it much higher priority. Once again the divergence of Muslim opinion on gender lines was apparent. Further research needs to be carried out to explore these differences and establish the reasons behind these variations.

Muslims are often thought of as opposed to sex-education in schools (Sarwar, 1994; Halstead, 1997). Muslim attitudes to sex education in schools sometimes receive adverse publicity in the press but both male and female groups placed it fourth in importance, in a list of five items. This survey demonstrated that this issue was of fairly low priority for the respondents. Both Muslim males and females recognised the importance of imparting sex-education to their children, but they would have liked it to be contextualised in the family set up. They may object, at times, to some of the materials being used or have reservations about related messages being passed on to their children, but they were not overtly worried about sex-education in schools. This is an important message for education authorities to take on board.

4.5 Eighteen month review

The five parents who were sending their children to the Muslim school were interviewed once again, in the middle of the second session, eighteen months into the life of the new school. The objectives of these interviews were to see whether the aspirations of the parents had been met and to review how the children had progressed in the Muslim school, both academically and in their Islam.

The school had gone through a very difficult period towards the end of its first session in June 2000. The headteacher had resigned as the tension between staff and the Trustees of the school came to a head. The parents were also demanding a say in the running of the school, to be involved in the decision making processes or at least to be represented in the decision making bodies. They had started removing their children from the school when they saw that their demands would not be conceded. To avert a total collapse, the Trustees had closed the school three days before the end of the term. Throughout the summer months the elders of the Muslim community had tried unsuccessfully to bring various parties together to resolve their differences. The Trustees decided to restructure the school by replacing most of the teaching staff and by appointing a new head teacher. The new head teacher had contractual obligations to fulfil in London, before she could join the Muslim school in the middle of the first term. This created a vacuum in leadership, which did not do anything to enhance the reputation of the school.

Some of the parents commented that, once the new head teacher was in her post, as from October 2000, she was able to inspire confidence and things seemed to return to normal. To some extent the damage had been done, a number of parents had removed their children from the school and were not likely to bring them back to the school. Others in the community had heard about the turmoil in the school and had decided not to enrol their children, not just yet at any rate. According to the Chief Executive the school roll fell from eighty-five to sixty three during this period. The school was finding it very difficult to regain its earlier momentum. The school roll had risen fairly steadily almost every month in its first session but now the school was struggling to keep the roll constant.

Three of the parents in the sample had also removed their children from the school, while the other two had come very close to removing their children as well. When asked about the reasons behind their decision, they recalled the dilemma facing them at the end of the first school session. They had made a total commitment to the new Muslim school by removing their children from state schools and casting their lot with the new Muslim school. In some cases this also involved considerable financial sacrifice, which they felt was not always appreciated by the Trustees of the school. They did not feel any ownership of the Muslim school, being kept in the dark about any developments, and not being involved in any decision-making processes. Even the mother who was a volunteer helper in the school did not feel part of the school management team, complaining that the management of the school was very autocratic. The father, who was keen to get parents involved in the running of the school, was frustrated at the lack of progress. That was indeed the common factor in the second set of interviews; all the parents complimented the teaching staff including the head teacher and vented their frustration at the Trustees of the school. They appreciated the contribution the Trustees had made in establishing the school, but they did not want to see them playing an active role in the day-to-day running of the school. They wanted the management of the school to be left to the professional staff - the Trustees concentrating on the financial health of the school.

Evaluating the academic achievement of the pupils, most of the parents were fairly satisfied that their children had made some progress in the school. One mother distinguished the progress made by her son who was in the upper primary with the lack of progress of her daughter who had joined the school in primary one. She was unhappy that her daughter had not learnt to read in her first year at the school. Another mother also believed that academically her daughter (in primary 3) had "regressed as she had lost all interest in schooling". A third mother also expressed some concern at her six-year-old son's writing ability. The parents were prepared to put up with this relatively slow rate of progress, confident that as the schoolteachers grew in confidence and the school acquired more teaching resources standards would rise. They tended to balance the lack of academic progress against the greater advantage of sending their children to the Muslim school where they did not have to "worry about

things that do not coincide with our faith". Most of the parents were happy to state that their children were very happy in the school, gained in confidence and acquired good habits and a tremendous amount of Islamic knowledge. This deal of satisfaction added another dimension to the dilemma facing the parents who eventually removed their children from the school. They agonised over their decision, and wanted the Trustees to show some sign of compromise, to allow them to keep their children in the school. Demonstrating this dilemma, one mother said:

> All through the summer we applied to another primary school to take our children out...I thought I'll take them out, but still all through the summer we were worried and thought, maybe it is better than what is on offer at other schools. We hung on and ...tried to establish some form of communication between the powers at the school (Parent 2a).

Some of the parents expressed considerable sadness at how the school had gone through a convulsion at the end of the first session. Some of them had seen other ventures rise with grandiose designs (like the Muslim school for girls in the seventies) and fall at the first hurdle. As one mother put it " It was unbelievable... we wanted to get away from this sort of thing" and she went on to say " I am sure if we had seen all that, we would have thought twice about the whole thing." This was not the general sentiment. When the parents were asked whether they would have still sent their children to the Muslim school "knowing what you know today" the general answer was in the positive. Most of them expressed no regret at having participated in the experiment, and wished the school well. The removal of the head teacher, who was a very popular with the parents and the children, had caused them the greatest anguish. Some parents could not see the Muslim school that they had subscribed to, surviving under any other leadership. They associated all the good the school was doing with the head teacher. With him not on the scene any more, there was hardly any reason for sending their children to the Muslim school.

5 Conclusions and Discussion

The Muslims of Glasgow demonstrated a versatile understanding of Muslim education. While grappling with complexities of life in Scotland, they were keen to preserve their distinctive culture and belief systems. It was evident from the interviews that without the sureties of traditional value-systems, the Muslims of Scotland were examining their own communities more critically to re-evaluate complex concepts such as what makes a Muslim and how to relate to the rest of the Muslim *Ummah* worldwide. Education of the Muslim children about the ways of Islam and their link with the rest of the Muslim world community was seen as a central tenet of Muslim education. This core belief was always there in one form or the other in the interviewees' attempts to define Muslim education. A whole range of opinions was expressed by the individuals when asked to explain what Muslim education had come to mean to them. Thus on one end of the continuum were some who saw the Mosque-schools as the embodiment of this education, where the children learnt about Islam; at the other end were those who saw Muslim education as the framework in which every subject, if not every lesson, should be delivered.

The interviewees were conscious of the fact that they were in a pioneering position as far as the establishment of Muslim minority communities in the United Kingdom were concerned. In countries where Muslims constitute the majority of the population, children learnt about their faith in their day schools, in the mosques, from the print and broadcast media and their families: what Neilsen called "socialisation":

> In the Muslim world traditionally, Islam was passed on from one generation to the next through the whole process of socialisation, within the family and outside (1987: 391).

The Muslims of Scotland were reconciled to the fact that as a small minority community, some of the elements of this "socialisation" were not available to them. They had to establish institutions like Mosque-schools to initiate their children into their faith and their traditional cultures. These Mosque-schools were originally set up to teach the children the reading of the Quran. Some of them had broadened their remit to inculcate Islamic morals, manners and human conduct in their pupils

(Siddiqui, 1997). These lessons were grouped together as Islamic Studies, though they were not very effective in this undertaking. Most of the staff in these schools were not qualified to teach anything other than Quran reading. The language skills and teaching abilities of the staff were at best very basic. The parents were aware of the limitations of the Mosque-schools but they did not criticise them too severely as there were no real alternatives. They nevertheless voiced their concern that their children were being alienated from the teachings and values of Islam, in spite of their regular attendance at the Mosque-schools. They regarded the Mosque-schools to be doing a reasonable job, within the constraints of their limited resources, but 88.17 % of the survey respondents did not think that the Mosque-schools fulfilled the needs of Muslim children. Only 50.69% of the community considered the Mosque-schools to be effective in the undertaking of "educating Muslim children to be productive citizens of this country". Thus a large proportion of the community was looking for alternatives to the Mosque-schools (see chart 4).

These Mosque-schools had been modelled on the religious institutions of Muslim countries, but had to be adapted to meet the needs of the second and third generations of Muslims in Scotland. The Mosque-schools started meeting varied demands of the community, thus evolving into institutions that had uniquely Scottish characteristics such as English being the medium of instruction and constant reduction of emphasis on mother-tongue teaching. Although they had evolved into religious schools, the Muslim parents did not favour continuation of the process and adaptation of these part-time Mosque-schools into the full-time Madrassas, resembling those that flourish in Muslim countries, commonly called *Darul-Uloom*. The survey data in this study confirmed that more Muslims opposed (42.55%) than were in favour (24.92%) of such a transformation (see chart 6). Such institutions are designed to produce Islamic scholars, where subjects related to the study of Qur'an and Hadith (Prophetic traditions) form the basis of all learning whereas subjects like English and Mathematics are assigned to the margins of the curriculum. This result shows an important trait of the Scottish Muslims: they wanted Muslim education for their children but they did not wish to follow the educational models of Muslim countries. Rather, they were looking for solutions that were uniquely Scottish and more suited to the Scottish environment.

Whereas the first generation of Muslims in Scotland saw Islamic education as associated with the Mosque-schools, the younger Muslims, who happened to be second or third generation of Muslims in Scotland, had a much broader concept of Muslim education. They envisaged the day schools playing a much greater part in the Islamic education of their children. They questioned the dichotomy that has existed between Mosque-schools and normal day schools. They may not yet have a cohesive strategy to chart a clear way forward, but the desire to see their children educated within the traditions of Islam was undiminished. The lack of an Islamic dimension to the education of their children was given the highest priority by the respondents in the survey.

One possible strategy for the delivery of this Islamic dimension was the recurring theme of "Islamic studies" as a school subject for Muslim children, 94.21% of the respondents in the survey wanted Islamic studies to be taught in schools with a high proportion of Muslim children (see chart 7). They wanted knowledge about Islam and Islamic culture to be awarded a higher status: to be taught alongside other school subjects by qualified teachers, using modern resources. There was some common understanding in the community about what could be grouped under the heading of Islamic Studies, notably Qur'anic studies, Arabic language, Islamic history and Muslim culture. The overwhelming majority of the respondents (93.16%) wanted Arabic to be offered as an alternative modern language in Scottish state schools (see chart 8) along with and not instead of their mother tongues (see chart 10). Although the demand for Urdu and other community languages (80.82%) was lower than that for Arabic (93.16%), it was by no means low enough to be ignored. It was apparent from the interviews that there were some differences of emphases, some regarding the teaching of the Quran as the main component of Islamic studies, while others were inclined towards the teaching of Muslim culture, to locate their identity as Muslims in this country. The majority of the Muslims in the survey (54%) believed that the introduction of Arabic and Islamic studies in the curriculum would reduce the demand for Muslim schools (see chart 9) though they did not wish it to displace any of the traditional school subjects. Audrey had also found this in her study in Glasgow: over

75% of her sample who regarded the teaching of Islamic Studies either as "very important " or "quite important":

> But when asked to choose two most important subjects, the majority of respondents prioritised other subjects, particularly English and mathematics. (Audrey, 2000: 135)

On their part, the Muslim community have to engage with the majority community to put forward the case for Islamic studies in a coherent manner, within the terms and terminology of the Scottish education documents. Some parents did not see Islamic studies as their final goal, but regarded it as an intermediate step in the development of Muslim education in Scotland. It may remain the only viable solution for Muslims dispersed in the suburbs of the cities, where the numbers may not enable them to establish Muslim schools for the foreseeable future. The Muslim community have to prioritise their own ambitions and draw up plans that may be acceptable to local and national governments. There is room within the Scottish education system, in the spirit of "social inclusion", to be inclusive of the Muslim community as well. The Muslims of Scotland may start feeling some ownership of the education system once they see Islamic studies on the curriculum in some state schools.

The education authorities ought to be exploring and devising agreed curricular guidelines for the subject. This can only be done by engaging more fully with the Muslim community, to promote what Callan called "substantive commonality". He had suggested that within common schools the needs of linguistic minorities and even specialised religious instructions could be met "while retaining an overarching commitment to common education". It is a model that deserves further attention, especially by the advocates of common education in Scotland:

> Common schools might even become a vehicle of separate education while retaining an overarching commitment to common education. The provision of optional language programmes for linguistic minorities, or even specialised religious instructions, are ways in which common schools may attempt to create an educational environment that instantiates substantive and not merely de jure commonality (1997: 165).

Identity issues

The preservation and maintenance of the Muslim identity of their children is of fundamental importance to the parents. This study has shown that the Muslims of Scotland were concerned about the education of their children on two accounts. First, it was the traditional concern that Muslim children should learn about their faith and culture in the Scottish environment, and second, they wanted education to play an important role in shaping the present and future identity of Muslims in Scotland. They recognised that education plays a crucial role in shaping the identity of any individual, and that the minorities have to struggle that much harder to maintain the boundaries of their culture (Bhatti, 1999). They had set up their own institutions to provide for the specialist needs of the Muslim children but they wanted a much bigger say in the day school education of their children. These parents wanted the education authorities to recognise Muslim demands and make changes to the formal and informal curriculum of the schools with Muslim pupils so that the day schools would be seen as supportive of the efforts of the parents to impart Muslim culture and values to their children. The support for Arabic, Urdu and Islamic studies were all indicative of the fact that they wanted their children to be knowledgeable about what Zine calls "an Islamic subculture":

> An Islamic subculture cannot evolve without making certain structural and pedagogical changes to the system to accommodate and accurately represent the interests of Muslims. (Zine, 2000: 298)

To "accurately represent the interests of the Muslims", the authorities have to understand the role Islam plays in the lives of the Muslims. Bhatti (1999) had argued that Islam for Muslims was not just a religion but it was the basis of group cohesiveness, it sustained and advanced identity and it established social networks and communication. Saeed *et al.*, in a study of Glasgow Pakistani teenagers, had found that "Muslim identity was listed by 80 per cent of the South Asian Muslims as an important identity item" (Saeed *et al,* 1999: 826).

The interviews highlighted the fact that a number of younger Muslim children did not want to draw attention to the fact that they were Muslims to the extent of not even making demands for halal meals or prayer room, which were generally granted very

readily. The Muslim children did not wish to be ridiculed by their peers or "questioned" by their teachers, therefore they chose the path of least resistance; adopting situational identity, acting as nominal Muslim children who were not bothered about their religion in their day schools and adopting a different role at home and in the Mosque-schools. Consequently those children who did not attend the Mosque-schools for any reason, did not get an opportunity to develop their Islamic identity. A number of people, especially those brought up in the suburbs of Glasgow, commented on the fact that they were not aware of their Islamic identity when they were at school in Scotland; they discovered their roots in their late teens or early adulthood. As a consequence these young people sometimes demonstrate the fervour of new converts to any religion, being very single-minded and idealistic in their outlook. They sometimes pose problems for the British society by their uncompromising attitudes (Christie, 1991; Neilsen, 1991). A gentle initiation of these youngsters to Islam in their day schools would not only develop their confidence in their faith, but would also strengthen their identity as Muslims. The element of self discovery – which often means these youngsters seeking simplistic solutions to complex problems – would also be reduced: that would be beneficial for the Scottish society in the long run.

Islamophobia and MCARE

As most of the Muslims of Scotland were also members of various visible minority ethnic groups, multicultural and anti-racist issues played fairly prominent roles in their everyday lives. Most parents praised their primary schools for making significant efforts in trying to meet the cultural and religious needs of their children. Some schools provided prayer rooms others offered halal food etc. Some schools with a high concentration of Muslim children even offered Urdu and other community languages on their curriculum. It was very noticeable that most of the parents who withdrew their children from the state schools, to enrol them in the Muslim independent school, nevertheless heaped praise on the schools they were withdrawing their children from. These parents talked of their dilemmas and the difficult decisions they had to take; on the whole they subscribed to the notion of Muslim children being educated in an Islamic environment, which helped them resolve their dilemmas, being prepared to

make short-term sacrifices for long-term gains. Undoubtedly, provision through multicultural education met some of the needs of the Muslim children, but from a Muslim perspective it did not address the issues closer to their hearts. They saw MCARE meeting the peripheral needs of Muslim children, without making inroads on issues like provision of Islamic education to Muslim children. Moreover they saw MCARE policies only being implemented in areas of high concentration of minority ethnic populations, white schools still having the attitude of "no problem here" (Donald, Gosling and Hamilton, 1995). Muslim parents were very concerned about the racial problems faced by their children. The male population placed the issue second in a list of five priorities, which is a sad reflection on the effectiveness of multicultural and anti-racist education in Scotland. Hurst captured Muslim sentiments when he wrote:

> Muslim communities have a widespread perception of themselves as unwelcome in Britain. They have been attacked by right-wingers on crudely racist lines. They have also been attacked by left-wing liberals on the grounds of their religious and cultural traditions, in particular their attitude to women (Hurst, 2000: 93).

Ashrif updated this perception from a Muslim perspective when he wrote:

> The distorting mirror of racism still caricatures Islam in terms of polygamy, purdah, religious zealotory - and more recently, a militant fundamentalism that threatens the economic and political domination of the West (2001: 24).

The interviewees in this study were very conscious of the Islamophobic climate in the country: they modified some of their responses to take account of the prevalent atmosphere. Bhatti (1999) maintained that Islamophobia and racial problems experienced in the street and at school were a hindrance to the education of the Muslim children in Bradford. It is incumbent on local and national education authorities to explore solutions to the problems of Muslim children, which may be hindering their progress; not allowing them to develop to their full potential. All possibilities, ranging from the reinforcement of multicultural and antiracist education for all children in Scotland, introduction of Islamic studies for Muslim children and the establishment of Muslim schools in the state sector, ought be explored in order not to disadvantage this community any further. Some parents also suggested that

fundamentals of Islam and Muslim culture might be incorporated into multicultural and anti-racist education to inform the majority community about the faith and practice of the Muslims. The authorities must engage with the Muslim community to fulfil the Muslim community's overwhelming desire for Muslim education for their children (see chart 1 and chart 3), by putting forward alternative models to meet the requirements of the community. The schools with a predominantly Muslim clientele perhaps present a window of opportunity for the education authorities to pilot models that may be more inclusive of the Muslim community.

Muslim schools

The first generation of Muslims was more concerned about the education of their girls in co-educational schools of Britain. That provided the historic pretext for setting up Muslim schools to cater for the needs of the Muslim girls. Muslim males, in this study, still regarded educating their girls in single-sex schools as an important issue. They ranked it second in a list of five priorities. The female opinion, on the other hand seems to have shifted very radically: they put it at the bottom of their list of five priorities. Thus the people on whose behalf the elders of the community had been setting up girls' Muslim schools, like the one in Glasgow in the seventies, were sending a clear message to their own community: they did not regard the establishment of Muslim girls' schools as a solution to the educational problems of the community. They were of the opinion that all Muslim children, irrespective of gender, suffered equally from lack of moral and religious teachings in the day schools run by the state. They were concerned about the lack of religious teachings in the state schools and highlighted the widening gap between what the children were taught at home and what they were exposed to in the day schools.

In the survey, 83.24% of the Muslim respondents supported the idea of Muslims setting up their own schools in Scotland (see chart 1). Some of the interviewees (especially the activists) revealed that they were in favour of establishing independent Muslim schools in order to have the freedom to devise their own curriculum that would be totally in keeping with Islamic ethos. In their opinion it was only possible to establish the correct environment if the Muslims took all the strategic decisions without being accountable to non-Muslim education authorities.

On the other hand a majority of parents indicated their desire to see Muslim schools, reflecting Islamic values, within the state sector. They wanted their needs to be recognised by the national and local governments and wanted adequate provisions to be made for their children.

Some of the activists were also of the opinion that they should have been operating within the state system, but were forced to set up their independent Muslim school, as the authorities would not entertain Muslim demands. They were hoping that they would be able to set up a successful school and seek to opt-into the state system at a later date. The independent Muslim school in Glasgow also operated within the framework of "community based schools" (Hewer, 2000), since it did not charge an economic fees and relied very heavily on the goodwill of its teachers and administrators. Nevertheless, a very large proportion of the survey respondents (72.61%), while favouring the establishment of Muslim schools, nevertheless considered the fees charged by independent schools to be an impediment to their success (see chart 2). Only about 13% of the respondents did not consider the fees to be a drawback. This may reflect the percentage of people in the community who could perhaps afford to pay the fees of an independent school. Ashraf had pointed out the limitations of this approach when he had argued:

> The last solution is to have independent schools...financial limitations make it almost impossible for the Muslim community to have such schools. Only a few may be set up for the elitist group. That does not solve the problem of the majority (Ashraf, 1986: 7).

Indeed the majority of the Muslim community was seeking other solutions. A very large proportion (69.18%) of the respondents wanted the Muslims to campaign to set up Muslim schools within the state sector in Scotland (see chart 3). They have yet to persuade the Scottish education authorities to listen to their case sympathetically. They lack an Islamic Education body that would make the case and eventually provide the logistic support for the Muslim schools. The principles on which these schools should be established have yet to be fully debated and adopted by the Muslim community of Scotland. Major questions of staffing and curriculum have to be resolved, which can only be done by tapping into the educational expertise present in

the Muslim community. Education is one of the activities of the charitable bodies that run the Mosques and other welfare functions in the Muslim community. Philanthropic individuals, not necessarily from educational backgrounds have tried to fill the void; with varying degrees of success. The Willowbank affair had highlighted the need for an Islamic Education body that could speak authoritatively on behalf of the Muslim community. That need has not diminished, if anything it has grown as more Muslim schools have started to emerge in Scotland.

If the Muslim community was to publish outline plans for Muslim schools, detailing the curriculum content, staffing policies and their place within the overall Scottish education system, it would enhance the debate on the subject. Halstead (1986) had made a case for "voluntary-aided schools" in England in which Ashraf's foreword encapsulated the Muslim desire to set up their own schools within the state system. The Muslims of Scotland would do well to take a lead from that and produce a complementary document from the Scottish perspective:

> The establishment of voluntary-aided schools is a necessity now because only then will the Muslim community have some examples in front of them where education can be arranged in a way that would allow the Islamic concept of education to be reflected in the curricula and lessons and also the methods of teaching (Ashraf, 1986: 9).

It would be erroneous to assume that Muslim parents did not have any reservations about making a commitment to Muslim schools. They feared the isolation of their children in Muslim schools, where they would lack a worthwhile contact with the non-Muslim majority community. They also pointed out that "contact" with non-Muslims had to be a two way process. They did not feel that the children of the majority community were any better informed about the Muslims amongst them than the children of all white schools. They also feared their children may not receive an education of a high quality, which forced some parents who had high hopes for the independent Muslim school to remove their children from the school after only a few months. This demonstrated the fact that the parents did not have a blind faith in the Muslim school: they expected a high standard of education for their children and would not settle for second best. They were prepared to give the managers a chance to demonstrate their skills and abilities but they would not gamble with the lives of their

children. They wanted a high quality provision that would incorporate their need for an Islamic education for their children but were prepared to vote with their feet if they did not get the quality. Three of the parents in this sample, who had expressed high hopes for the independent Muslim school, withdrew their children after the first session. They had lost confidence in the management of the school, who were thanked on the one hand for giving their children an opportunity to experience a Muslim school environment and on the other they were not considered to be running the school in the best interest of the children. Therein lie the lessons for the Muslim community. To have any chance of success in establishing Muslim schools in Scotland they will have to galvanise Muslim educationists in order to develop credible plans- showing a deep understanding of the Scottish education system. They will have to devise comprehensive strategies- taking into account areas of high and low Muslim population areas. They will have to put forward alternative models that may be sustained in different environments and ensure that they have the backing of at least the majority of the community.

References

Ahmed, A. S. (1988). *Discovering Islam: Making sense of Muslim history and society.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

Ahmed, A. S. (1993). *Living Islam: From Samarkand to Stornway.* London: Penguin books.

Akhtar, S. (1993). *The Muslim parents handbook: What every Muslim parent should know*. London: Ta Ha Publishers.

Al-Attas, S. N. (Ed). (1979). *Aims and objectives of Islamic Education.* Jeddah: Hodder and Stoughton.

Al-Ghamdi, A.M. (1991). *Meeting the needs of Muslim pupils.* London: Iqra Trust.

Altbach, P.G. and Kelly, G.P. (Eds.). (1984). *Education and the colonial experience.* New Branswick: Transaction books.

Anwar, M. (1979). *The myth of return: Pakistanis in Britain.* London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

Anwar, M. (1982). *Young Muslims in a multi-cultural society: Their educational needs and policy implications.* Leicester, Islamic Foundation.

Anwar, M. (1996). *British Pakistanis: Demographic, Social and Economic Position.* Coventry: University of Warwick.

Armstrong, B. (Ed.). (1989). *A people without prejudice?: The experience of racism in Scotland.* London: Runnymede Trust.

Armstrong, K. (2000). *Islam: A short history.* London: Westfield and Nicolson.

Arshad, R., and Diniz, F.A. (1999). Race Equality in Scottish Education. In Bryce, T.G.K., and Humes, W.M., (Eds), *Scottish Education,* (pp. 880-892). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University.

Ashraf, S.A. (1985). *New Horizons in Muslim Education.* Cambridge: Hodder and Stoughton.

Ashraf, S.A. (1986). Forward. In Halstead, J. M. *The case for Muslim Voluntary-aided schools* (pp. v-ix). Cambridge: Islamic Academy.

Ashrif, S. (2001). Beyond Islamophobia. *Multicultural teaching. 19(2), 22-32.*

Audrey, S. (2000). *Multiculturalism in practice: Irish, Jewish, Italian and Pakistani migration to Scotland.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Badawi, Z. (1989). A Muslim perspective. In Wood, A. (Ed), *Religions and Education: Shap working Party 1969-89*. Isleworth: The BFSS National RE Centre.

Banks, J.A. & Banks, C.A.M. (Eds.). (1989). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bariatser, P. (1999). Family planning and sexual health- understanding the needs of South Asian women in Glasgow. *Journal of ethnic and migration studies,* 25(1), 133-149.

Beishon, S., Modood, T., & Virdee, S. (1998). *Ethnic minority families.* London: Policy Studies Institute, University of Westminster.

Bell, A. (1991). *Aspects of racism in Scotland: Information and sources.* Edinburgh: Moray House College of Education.

Bell, J. (1987). *Doing your research project: A guide for first-time researchers in education and social sciences.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Bhatti, G. (1999). *Asian Children at home and at school: An ethnographic study.* London: Routledge.

Billig, M. (1996). *Arguing and Thinking: A rhetorical approach to social psychology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blair, M. (1998). The myth of neutrality in education research. in Connolly, P. and Troyna, B. (Eds.), *Researching racism in education: Politics, theory and practice* (pp 12-20). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. & Tight, M. (1996). *How to research*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K. (1992) *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods.* Boston. Allyn and Bacon.

Bradney, A.G.D. (1987). Separate schools: ethnic minorities and the law. *New Community*, 13(3), 412-420.

Braham, P. and Kiloch, M. (1996*). Study Guide 3. Racism and antiracism: Inequalities, opportunities and Policies*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Braham, P., Rattansi, A., & Skellington, R. (1992). *Racism and Antiracism*, London: Sage Publications.

Brown, A. & Dowling, P. (1998). *Doing research/reading research: a mode of interrogation for education.* London: Falmer Press.

Callan, E. (1997). *Creating citizens: political education and liberal democracy.* Oxford: Clarendon press.

Cashmore, E.E. & Troyna, B. (1986) Race, power, prejudice. In Cohen, L. & Cohen A. (Eds.), *Multicultural Education: A sourcebook for teachers* (pp. 90-110). London: Harper & Row Ltd.

Christie, C. J. (1991). The rope of God: Muslim minorities in the West and Britain. *New Community,* 17(3), 457-466.

Cohen, L. & Cohen, A. (Eds.). (1986). *Multicultural Education: a sourcebook for teachers, London*: Harper & Row Ltd.

Cohen, L. & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education* (4th ed.). London: Routledge.

Connolly, P. & Troyna, B. (Eds.). (1998). *Researching racism in education: Politics, theory and practice.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Conroy, J.C. (2001). A very Scottish affair: Catholic education and the State. *Oxford Review of Education,* 27 (4), 543-558.

Conway, G. (1997). *Islamophobia: A challenge for us all.* London: Runnymede Trust.

Cottle, S. (2000). (Ed.). *Ethnic minorities and the media: Changing cultural boundaries.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Cumper, P. (1980). Muslim schools: the implications of the Education Reform Act 1988. *New Community*, 16 (3), 279- 389.

Cumper, P. (1994). Racism, Parental choice and the law, in Halstead (Ed.), *Parental choice and education: Principles, policy and practice* (pp164-179). London: Kogan Press.

Delamont, S. (1992). *Fieldwork in educational settings: Methods, pitfalls & Perspectives.* London: Falmer Press.

Devine, T. M. (Ed.). (2000) *Scotland's Shame?: Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland.* Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing.

Donald, P. *et al.* (1994) *'No problem here'*, Stirling: University of Stirling with Central Regional Council Education Services.

Donald, P., Gosling, S. & Hamilton, J. (1995) 'No problem here?' Children's attitudes to racism in a mainly white area. Edinburgh: SCRE. Spotlights, 53.

Donaldson, D. M. (1963). *Studies in Muslim ethics*. New York: S.P.C.K.

Drever, E. (1995). *Using semi-structured interviews in small scale research: A teacher's guide.* Edinburgh: SCRE Publications.

Droubie, R. (1978) Religious education: a Muslim insight. In Cole, W. O.(Ed.), *World faiths in education* (pp. 161-166). London: George Allen & Unwin.

Dunnet, S. (1988). *A case for Christian education.* Bradford: Harvestime Services Ltd.

El'Ibrashi, M.A. (1965). *Studies in Islam: Education in Islam*. Cairo: The Supreme Council for Islamic affairs.

Falaturi, A. (1990). *Islam in religious education textbooks in Europe*. Koln: Islamische Wissenchaftliche Akademic.

Finn, G.P.T (2000-a) A culture of prejudice: Promoting pluralism in education for a change, in Devine, T.M., *Scotland's Shame?: Bigotry and sectarianism in modern Scotland* (pp. 869-879). Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing.

Finn, G.P.T. (1987). "Multicultural Antiracism and Scottish Education", *Scottish Educational Review*. 19, 39-49.

Finn, G.P.T. (1999). "Sectarianism" and Scottish Education, in Bryce, T.G.K. & Humes, W.M., (Eds.) *Scottish Education,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University.

Finn, G.P.T. (2000-b). Thinking uncomfortable thoughts about prejudice: Is educational intervention prejudiced by prejudice against prejudice? *The Psychology of Education Review*. 24, 3-16.

Flew, A (1986). Clarifying the concepts. In Palmer, F. (Ed.), *Anti-racism: An assault on education and value* (pp. 15-31). London: Sherwood Press.

Foster, M. (2000). A black perspective. In Myers, K. (Ed.), *Whatever happened to equal opportunities in schools?: Gender equality initiatives in education* (pp. 189-200). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Francis, L. J., Kay, W. K. & Campbell, W. S. (Eds.). (1996). *Research in religious education*. Leominister: Gracewing.

Fyfe, E. & Figueroa, P. (Eds.). (1993). *Education for cultural diversity: The challenge for a new Era*. London: Routledge.

Ghuman, P.A.S. (1999). *Asian adolescents in the West.* Leicester: BPS Books.

Gillborn, D., & Mirza, H.S. (2000). *Educational inequality: Mapping race, class and gender - a synthesis of research evidence.* London: Ofsted.

Gillham, B. (2000). *Case study research methods.* London: Continuum.

Gillham, B. (2000). *The research interview*. London: Continuum.

Gordon, P. & Rosenberg, D. (1989). *Daily Racism: The press and black people in Britain*. London: Runneymede Trust.

Gordon, P. (Ed). (1996). *A guide to educational research.* London. Woburn Press.

Grant, C.A. (Ed). (1992). *Research & Multicultural education: From margins to the mainstream.* London. Falmer Press.

Grant, N. (1998). Multicultural education in Scotland: Ourselves and others. *Scottish Education Review*. 29, (2), 134 –144.

Green, P. (1999). *Raise the Standard: A practical guide to raising ethnic minority and bilingual pupils' achievement.* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Gulick, R. L. (1969). *Muhammad The Educator*. Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture.

Halstead, J. M. (1986) *The case for Muslim voluntary-aided schools: Some philosophical reflections.* Cambridge: The Islamic Academy.

Halstead, J. M. (Ed.). (1994) *Parental choice and education: Principles, policy and practice.* London: Kogan Page.

Halstead, J. M.(1997). Muslims and Sex Education. *Journal of Moral education, Vol. 26, No. 3.* (317-330).

Hammersley, M. (1998). (2nd ed.). *Reading ethnographic research: A critical guide.* Harlow: Longman Ltd.

Hammersley, M. (1998). The profession of a 'methodological purist'? In Walford, G. (Ed.). *Doing research about education* (pp. 139-153). London: Falmer Press.

Hashim, R. (1996). *Educational dualism in Malaysia: Implications for theory and practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Haw, K. (1998). *Educating Muslim girls: Shifting discourses.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Haydon, G. (Ed.). (1987). *Education for a pluralist society: Philosophical perspectives on Swann report.* London: London University.

Haywood, C. & Mac an Ghaill, M. (1998). The making of men: Theorising methodology in 'uncertain times'. In Walford, G. (Ed.). *Doing research about education* (pp. 125-138). London: Falmer Press.

Henderson, D. (1999, March 25). Kirk no to Christian RE. *Times Education Supplement Scotland.* London: Times Supplements Ltd.

Hewer, C. (2001). Schools for Muslims. *Oxford Review of Education,* 27 (4), 515-527.

Hirst, K. (1998). Pre-school literacy experiences of children in Punjabi, Urdu and Gujerati speaking families in England. *British Educational Research Journal.* 24, (4), 415 - 430.

Hitchcock, G., & Hughes, D. (1995). *Research and the teacher: A qualitative introduction to school-based research.* New York: Routledge.

HMSO. (1997). *Aspects of Britain: Ethnic minorities*. London: HMSO.

Honeyford, R. (1986). Anti-racist rhetoric. In Palmer, F. (Ed), *Anti-racism: an assault on education and value.* London: Sherwood Press.

Hurst, J.(2000). Religious requirement: the case for Roman Catholic schools in the 1940s and Muslim schools in the 1990s. *Journal of beliefs & Values.* 21, (1), 87 - 97.

Husain. S. S. & Ashraf, S. A. (1979). *Crisis in Muslim education.* Jeddah: Hodder and Stoughton.

Husband, C. (1994). The political context of Muslim communities' participation in British society. In Lewis, B. & Dominique, S. (Eds.), *Muslims in Europe* (pp. 79-97). London: Pinter Publishers.

Jeffcoate, R. (1984). *Ethnic minorities and education*. London: Harper and Row Ltd.

Jeffcoate, R. (1986). Combating racism. In Cohen, L and Cohen A. (Eds): *Multicultural Education: a sourcebook for teachers* (pp. 43-67). *London*: Harper & Row Ltd.

Jones, R. (1999). *Teaching Racism or tackling it: Multicultural stories from white beginning teachers.* Stoke on Trent.: Trentham Books Ltd.

Judge, H. (2001). Faith-based schools and state funding: a partial argument. *Oxford Review of Education,* 27 (4), 463-474.

Kazepides, T. (1991) Religious indoctrination and freedom. In Spiecker, B. & Straughan, R (Ed.), *Freedom and indoctrination in education: international perspectives* (pp. 5-15). London: Cassell Educational Limited.

Kelly, E. (2000). Scottish racism. *Multicultural Teaching,* 19,(1),14-21.

Kepel, G. (1997). *Allah in the West: Islamic Movements in America and Europe.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Khan, M. W. (Ed.). (1981). *Education and society in the Muslim world.* Jeddah: Hodder and Stoughton.

Khan, S. (1999). *A glimpse through purdah: Asian women- the myth and the reality.* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books Ltd.

Kirk, J. & Miller, M. L. (1987). *Reliability and validity in qualitative research.* Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, Inc.

Knott, K (1986). *Religion and identity, and the study of ethnic minority religions in Britain.* Leeds: University of Leeds community religions research papers.

Knott, K. & Khoker, S. (1993). Religious and ethnic identity among young Muslim women in Bradford. *New Community.* 19(4), 593-610.

Lewis, B. and Dominique, S. (Eds.). (1994). *Muslims in Europe*. London: Pinter Publishers.

Lewis, R. (1988). *Anti-racism: a mania exposed.* London: Quartet Books.

Loughran, J. (Ed). (1999). *Researching teaching: Methodologies and practices for understanding pedagogy*. London. Falmer Press.

Maan, B. (1992*). New Scots: History of Asians in Scotland.* Edinburgh: Donald Publishers.

Massey, I. (1991). *More than skin deep: developing anti-racist multicultural education in schools*. London: Hodder & Staughton.

May, S. (Ed.). (1999). *Critical Multiculturalism: Rethinking multicultural and anti-racist education.* London: Falmer press.

Miller, M. (2001). Meeting the challenge: the Jewish schooling phenomenon in the UK. *Oxford Review of Education,* 27 (4), 501-513.

Modood, T (1993). Muslims in Britain, in UKACIA . *Muslims and the law in multi-faith Britain: Need for reform.* London: The UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs.

Modood, T., Berthoud, R. *et al.* (1997). *Ethnic minorities in Britain: diversity and disadvantage.* London: Policy Studies Institute.

Mullard, C. (1980) *Racism in society and schools: history. policy and practice.* London: University of London Institute of Education.

Mullard, C. (1984). *Anti-racist education: The three O's*. London: National Association for Multi-Racial Education.

Munn, P. & Drever, E. (1995). *Using questionnaires in small scale research: A teacher's guide.* Edinburgh: SCRE Publications.

Murad, K. (1986). *Muslim youth in the West: Towards a new education strategy.* Leicester: Islamic Foundation.

Murphy, E. & Dingwall, R. (2001). The ethics of ethnography. In *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 339-350). London: Sage publications.

Naylor, F. (1989). *Dewsbury: The school above the pub*. London: The Claridge Press.

Neilsen, J. (1987). Muslims in Britain: Searching for an identity. *New Community,* London: 13(3), 384-393.

Neilsen, J. (1991). A Muslim Agenda for Britain: Some reflections. *New Community.* London: *17(3), 467-474.*

Okamura, J.Y. (1981) Situational ethnicity, *Ethnic and racial studies*. 4, 452-464.

Palmer, F. (Ed.). (1986). *Anti-racism: An assault on education and value.* London: Sherwood Press.

Parker-Jenkins, M (1991). Muslim matters: The educational needs of the Muslim child, *New Community.* London: 17(4), 569-582.

Parker-Jenkins, M (1995). *Children of Islam: A teachers guide to meeting the needs of Muslim pupils.* Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham books.

Patton, M.Q. (1991). *How to use quantative methods in evaluation.* Newbury Park. Sage Publications Ltd.

Pettigrew, T. F. (1996). *How to think like a social scientist.* New York: Harper Collins Publishers Inc.

Pimple, K. D. (1995). General issues in teaching research ethics. In Penslar, R. L.(Ed.) *Research ethics: Cases and materials* (pp. 3-13). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Powney, J., McPake, J., Hall, S. & Lyall, L. (1998) *Education of minority ethnic groups in Scotland: A review of research.* Research Report 88. Edinburgh: SCRE.

Pumfrey, P. D. & Verma, G. K. (Eds.). (1993). *Cultural diversity and the curriculum: The foundation subjects and religious education in primary schools.* Volume 3. London: The Falmer Press.

Pumfrey, P. D. & Verma, G. K. (Eds.). (1993). *Cultural diversity and the curriculum: The foundation subjects and religious education in secondary schools.* Volume 1. London: The Falmer Press.

Report (1984). *Meeting the educational needs of multicultural society: A report into current and future provision in Glasgow.* Strathclyde Regional Council – Department of Education, Glasgow Division.

Saeed, A., Blain, N. & Forbes, D. (1999). New ethnic and national questions in Scotland: Post -British identities among Glasgow Pakistani teenagers, *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 22(5), 821-840.

Saiyidain, K. G. (1971). *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy.* Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf.

Sarwar, G. (1994). *British Muslims and schools.* London: Muslim Education Trust.

Sharif, M. M. (1964). *Islamic and Educational Studies.* Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture.

Sharples, M. (1999). *How to write: Writing as creative design.* London: Routledge.

Short, G. & Carrington, B. (1996) Antiracist education, multiculturalism and new racism. *Education Review*, London, 48(1), 65-71.

Siddiqqui, A. (1997). Ethics in Islam: Key concepts and contemporary challenges. *Journal of Moral education. 26,(3)* 423-431.

Smith, R. & Standish, P. (Eds.). (1997). *Teaching right and wrong: Moral education in the balance.* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books Ltd.

Snook, I.A (1972) *Indoctrination and education.* London.: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Snook, I.A (Ed). (1972). *Concepts of indoctrination: Philosophical essays.* London.: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Spiecker, B. & Straughan, R (Ed.). (1991) *Freedom and indoctrination in education: International perspectives.* London: Cassell Educational Limited.

Stein, S.D. (1999). *Learning, teaching and research on the Internet: A practical guide for social scientists.* Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman Ltd.

Swetnam, D. (1997). *Writing your dissertation.* Oxford: How to Books Ltd.

Tajfel, H. (1978). *The psychology of minorities.* London: Minority rights group

Tajfel, H. (1981) *Human groups and social categories: Studies in social psychology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, M. J. & Hagarty, S. (1985). *The best of both worlds...?: A review of research into the education of pupils of south Asian origin.* Windsor: NFER- Nelson.

Thompson, N. H. (Ed.). (1988). *Religious pluralism and religious education.* Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press.

Tomlinson, S. & Craft, M. (Eds.). (1995). *Ethnic relations and schooling: Policy and practice in the 1990's.* London: The Athlone Press.

Troyna, B. & Williams, J. (1986). *Racism, education and the State.* Beckenham: Croom Helm Ltd.

Troyna, B. (1987). *Racial inequality in education.* London: Tavistock Publications.

UKACIA (1993). *Muslims and the law in multi-faith Britain: Need for reform.* London: The UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs.

Verma, G. K. & Mallick, K. (1999). *Researching education: perspectives and techniques.* London: Falmer Press.

Vertovec, S. & Rogers, A. (Eds.). (1998). *Muslim European Youth: Reproducing ethnicity, religion, culture.* Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

Wagner, D.A., and Lotfi, M. (1980) Traditional Islamic education in Morocco: Sochiohistoric and psychological perspectives, *Comparative Education Review*, London. 24, (2), 248-251.

Wahab, I. (1989). *Muslims in Britain: Profile of a community.* London: Runnymede Trust.

Walford, G. (1995). *Educational politics: Pressure groups and faith-based schools.* Aldershot: Avebury.

Walford, G. (Ed.) (1998). *Doing research about education.* London: Falmer Press.

Walker, R. (1985). *Doing research: A handbook for teachers.* London: Routledge.

Werbner, P. (1991) Shattered bridges: The dialectics of progress and alienation among British Muslims, *New Community,* London. 17,(3), 231-246.

Werbner, P. (1994) Islamic radicalism and the Gulf war, lay preachers and political dissent among British Pakistanis. In Lewis, B. and Dominique, S. (Eds.), *Muslims in Europe* (pp. 98-115). London: Pinter Publishers.

Williams, K. (1998). Education and human diversity: The ethics of separate schooling revisited. *British Journal of Educational Studies*. 46, (1), 26 – 39.

Wolffe, J. (1993) Fragmented universality: Islam and Muslims, in Parsons (Ed.), *The growth of religious diversity: Britain from 1945* (133-172). London: Routledge.

Wright, A. (1998). *Spiritual pedagogy: A server, critique and reconstruction of contemporary spiritual education in England and Wales.* Oxon: Culham College Institute.

Yaseen, M. (1983). *Muslims in Britain.* Unpublished M.A theses, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University.

Zine, J. (2000) Redefining resistance: towards an Islamic subculture in schools. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 3, 3 (293-316)

List of Appendices

1. Iqra Academy leaflet
2. Muslim school in Dundee
3. Interview schedule
4. Survey questionnaire
5. Pilot of ten priorities
6. Comments of respondents
7. Interviewees with codes
8. Summaries of interviews
9. Revisit interview schedule
10. Glasgow Herald "Willowbank" leader
11. Willowbank press statement
12. Press statement of Jamiat-Ittihadal-Muslemin
13. Islamic Academy Committee
14. Availability of Bellahouston annex
15. Iqra- public meeting March 2001
16. Muslim needs
17. Iqra academy fees structure
18. Priority tables
19. Nomenclature
20. Miscellaneous Iqra Academy papers

Appendix 1

Iqra Academy leaflet

" The finest education in an Islamic environment"

IQRA ACADEMY GLASGOW

Faith Knowledge Practice

IQRA ACADEMY

First Independent Muslim School in Glasgow

A modern establishment providing an Islamic education alongside the Scottish National Curriculum.

Nursery and Primary places starting 18th August 1999

Come and visit the school on our OPEN DAYS:

Saturday Morning 31st July: 10-12 Noon
Wednesday Evening 4th Aug: 7-9pm
Sunday Afternoon 8th Aug: 2-4pm

Light refreshments will be served
Bouncy castle and games for children

For more information and an application form contact:

IQRA Academy 423 Paisley Road West, Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

Photograph courtesy of Manchester Muslim Prep School

Curriculum

The following subjects will be taught by registered and qualified staff.

Nursery

1. Emotional, Personal and social development
2. Communication and language
3. Knowledge and understanding of the world
4. Expressive and aesthetic development
5. Physical development and movement
6. Islamic Morals and Manners

Primary

1. English language
2. Mathematics
3. Religious and Moral Education
4. Personal and Social Developments
5. Environmental Studies
6. Expressive Arts
7. Islamic Morals and Manners
8. Urdu and Arabic

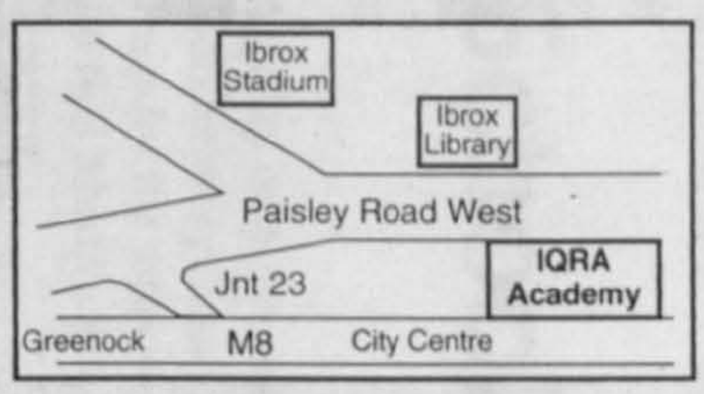
Photograph courtesy of Manchester Muslim Prep School

School Policy

Iqra Academy is an independent Muslim` School.
Knowledge will be delivered under an Islamic Ethos in order to develop good manners and personalities in its pupils and to offer them an Islamic identity.

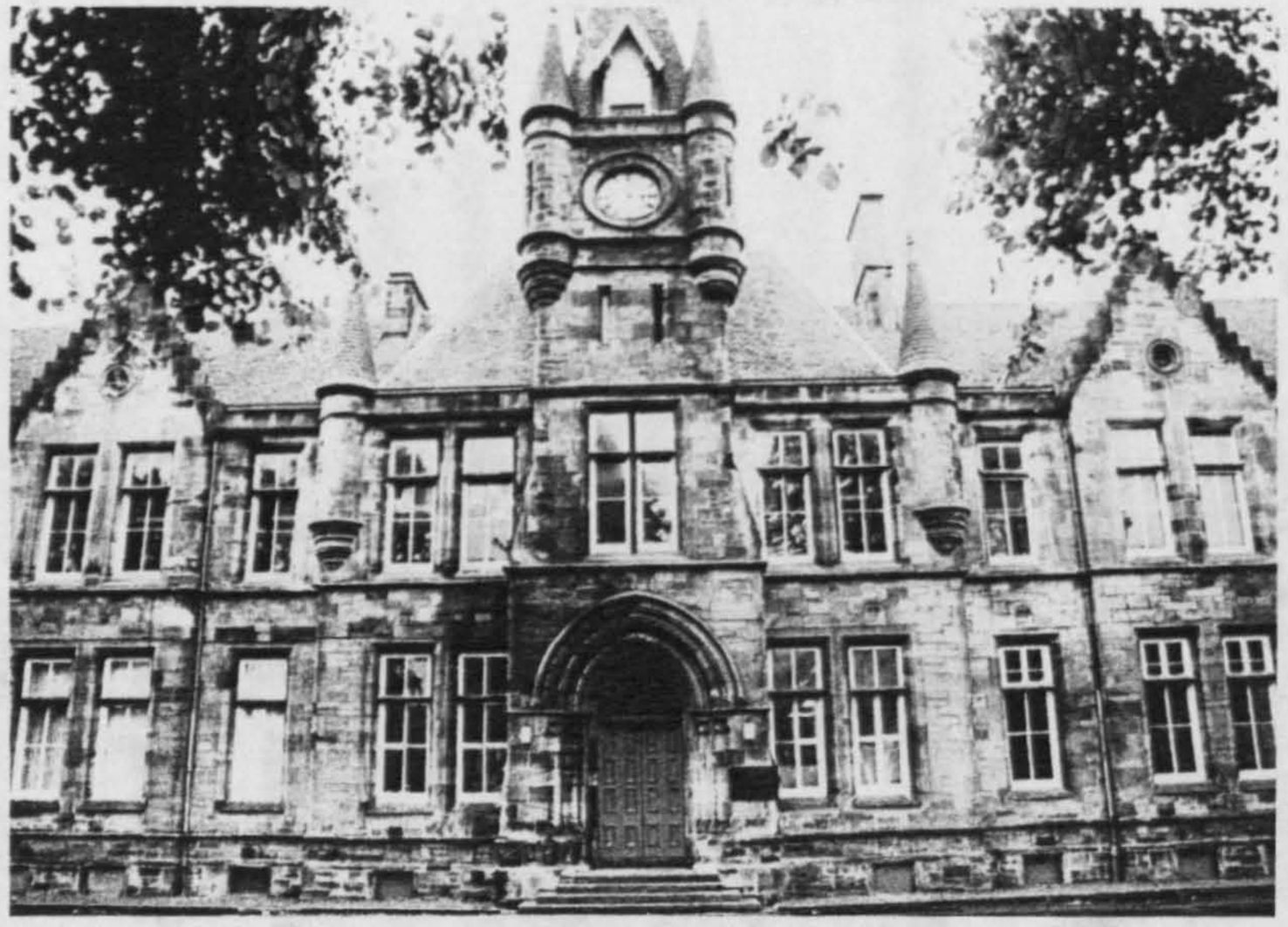
In our present society tolerance and understanding of different religions, races and cultures are important aspects; these form the core of our policies.

IQRA ACADEMY



IQRA Academy, 423 Paisley Road West, Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979
email: 1qra_academy@hotmail.com **Website:** http://iqra-academy.faithweb.com
The school is a registered charity (SCO 27748)

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful



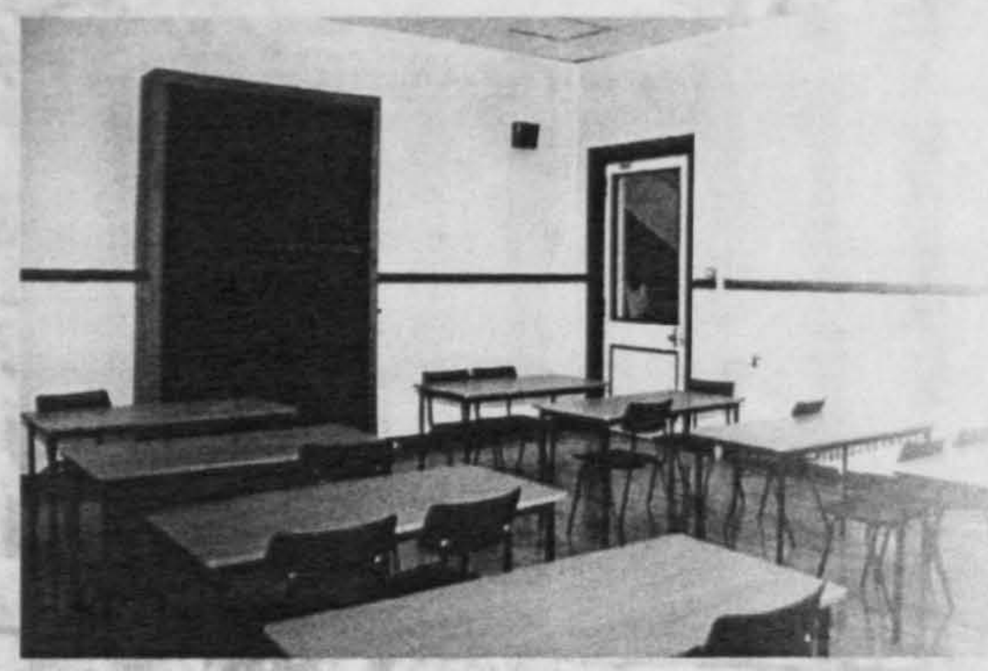
Islam encourages Muslims to seek Knowledge through the teaching of the Qur'an, the Sunnah and education. At Iqra Academy, we strive to provide such knowledge as a comprehensive education.

- ☆ We offer an education that is focused on Islam.
- ☆ We provide a curriculum that couples traditional school subjects with an Islamic education and perspective.
- ☆ We aim for high standards in performance, appearance and character.
- ☆ We encourage self-discipline, integrity, tolerance and respect to others.
- ☆ We accommodate learning into an Islamic environment where the spiritual, educational and physical development of the pupils can prosper.
- ☆ We respect and value parental interest, their co-operation and support.

School Background

Swimming Pool completion by the year 2000

A group of dedicated Muslims set up a charitable organisation called Iqra Trust for the purpose of establishing the first Muslim School in the city of Glasgow.



This is a purpose built school which has undergone major refurbishment works. The school is located on the south side of Glasgow.

The building contains 23 classrooms, 2 gymnasiums, and a large swimming pool.

It is vitally important for all Muslims to recognise the need for a proper Islamic environment to be present for the upbringing of their children.

We hope to develop a relaxing and stress free atmosphere in which to educate future generations.

There is a need to provide the Muslim community with an alternative to the standard schools.

This is what IQRA aims to do.

Iqra Academy

Admission policy 1999/2000

The Iqra Academy is open to anyone that shares the aims and objectives of the school and believes that their child can benefit from the provision on offer at the school. As places are limited and the school is funded by fees and donations, the following criteria are applied to all applications for admission:

1. Applicants will have to provide assurances that they will be able to meet all tuition fees.
2. Preference will be given to children who have elder brothers or sisters attending the Iqra Academy.

Admission to the primary school is selective. Applicants will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

1. An interview with the parents or guardians and the child.
2. In the case of Primary 3 upwards, an interview with the parents and child and a written test in language and mathematics.

All applications to the Iqra Academy made after December 1, 1999 will have to follow the procedures described below:

1. An application form must be completed and submitted to the office.
2. An appointment will be made, usually on the first available Thursday or Friday, for a visit to the school and an interview with the Head Teacher.
3. Children entering Primary Three or above will be expected to complete a written test, which should last no more than 40 minutes on the day of the interview.
4. A written offer will be made to the parents.

5. Once the offer has been accepted by return of the letter with signed undertaking to abide by the school rules and fee schedule and the first instalment of fees has been received, the child will be officially admitted to the school. At this point you will be required to provide proof of the date of birth. Failure to do so may lead to a withdrawal of the offer.

Admission is not dependent on ethnic origin, creed or gender.
Although the Primary School is selective, the Nursery does not discriminate in its admissions on the basis of ability.
There are limited facilities for children with severe special needs. The Iqra Academy reserves the right not to offer a place to any child whose meets can not be met.

Wa billahi al-tawfiq

Iqra Academy February 2000

Appendix 2

Muslim school in Dundee

Brief Introduction To

MADRASATUL IMAM MOHAMMAD ZAKARIYA

Institute for the Advancement in Religious & Secular Education for Girls & Ladies

Scotland is a proud country with a great diversity of ethnic minorities. Among these minorities, there exist families from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian, Arab & other Asian communities who share the same faith (Islam).

Islam plays a great role in their cultures. It brings them together in many ways and on many occasions such as during weddings, both Eids, bereavement, during prayers, in the blessed month of Ramadhan, etc. Due to Islam, these ethnic communities share the same moral codes & values & stress on the importance of Education for their children.

For a long time, even well before embarking on economic contribution for Scotland, these communities felt the need for an Institute of Education. This would not cater only for their Religious & Moral upbringing, but would also impart Secular Education of the highest grade.

Unfortunately, it took a long time to fulfil this need, but fortunately, it occurred during our lifetime.

As a result, the former Whitethorns Nursing Home, in Dundee was bought to serve as a Religious, moral, cultural & Secular

Education Institute (or a Madrasa, as we call it).

The Scholars gave the women the advantage to run it and now they run the school or Madrasa solely for the Girls & Ladies.

The building is 80% refurbished & is in full use by them. Presently, there are 60 local students.

Girls are attending Tajweed & Alimah classes. Whereas, the ladies are learning Tajweed & day-to-day issues.

There also exists Maktab for the small children.

The Institute is ready to take residential students from all over Scotland.

Subjects at present

Among the subjects taught are Islamic morals, Arabic, Urdu, at-Tajweed(the correct recitation of the Holy Quran), al-Ahaadith(the sayings of the Holy Prophet (*sallallaahu alayhi wassallam*), Seerah, Sunnats, Islamic Jurisprudence etc.

Future

We soon hope to introduce Secular Education such as standard grade, highers, etc.

We are also ready to intake students from all over Scotland.

We regret that this Institute has not been publicised as other people wished.

Anyone who wishes to apply or visit it, please contact Maulana Zuber L. Karim on 01382 776921/ 730522/322248.

The Institute is located at 42 Strathern Road, West Ferry, Dundee, DD5 1PN

.

(For More information, please see overleaf)

Teachers
Presently, This Institute has 3 qualified teachers. It also has 3 more qualified Alimahs in reserve. 2 are from Glasgow & one from Edinburgh.

Location
It is situated at the affluent area of West Ferry which is joined to the posh area of Broughty Ferry. Therefore, it is known as one of the most safest, tranquil & secure places in Scotland.

View
The madrasa enjoys a good view of the River Tay & the Tay Bridge towards the south.
It has two verandas facing towards its spacious garden.

Building
It has 31 rooms of various sizes. They have been refurbished with modern wallpapers. 12 of which have W.C facilities. 10 rooms have Wilton carpets laid on. 80% of the rooms are overlooking the beautiful River.
It has 3 spacious, plush halls which are being used as class rooms at present.

APPLICATION FORM

Applicant's name……

Age……

Parent's name……

Address……
……
……
……
Post Code……

Telephone number……
Name of School……
……

Please return this Application form by post to:

MADRASATUL IMAM MOHAMMAD ZAKARIYA
42 Strathern Road
West Ferry,
DUNDEE
DD5 1PN

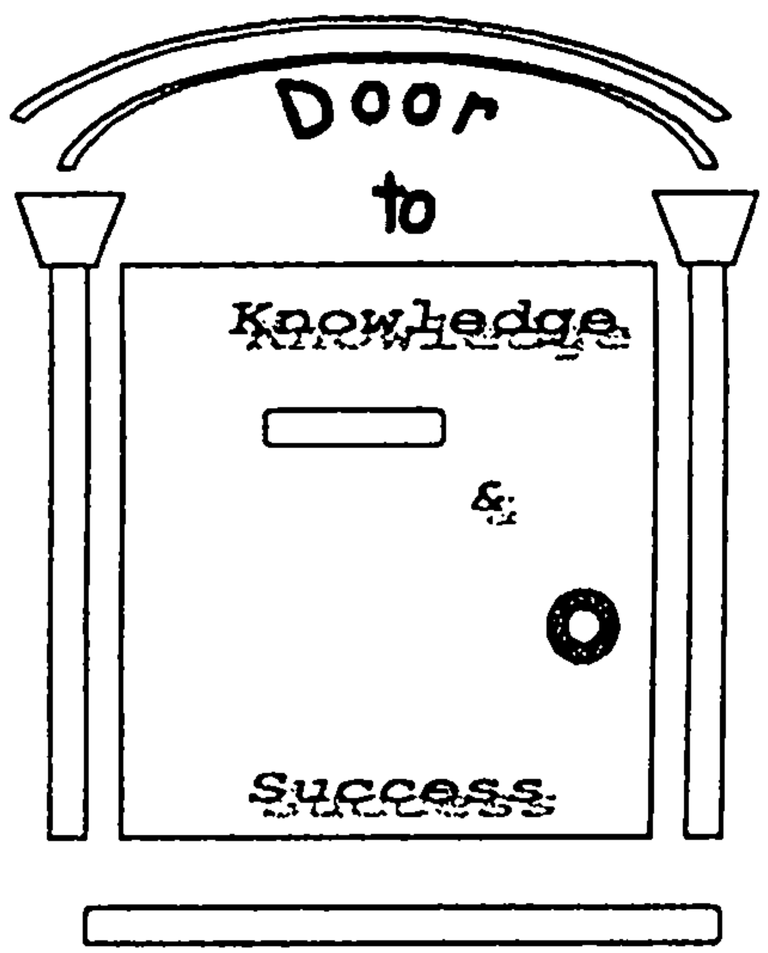
In the name of the Almighty

Have You Ever Heard Of

MADRASATUL IMAM MOHAMMAD ZAKARIYA

(MAY ALLAH ENLIGHTEN HIS GRAVE)

Institute For T he Advancement In Religious & Secular Education For Ladies & Girls



Appendix 3

Interview schedule

Research Questions.
The understanding of each interviewee about Muslim Education?
What do they mean when they are talking about Muslim Education?

How well are the needs of Muslim children met by state provision?
What needs are not met by the system?

How are separate Muslim schools viewed by each interviewee?
How do they see future developments?

1. A lot of people are talking about Muslim Education and Islamic Education. They don't all mean the same thing.
    - Let us say, I have never heard of Muslim/Islamic Education, how would you explain to me, what **you** mean when **you** talk about Muslim Education.
2. State schools are there for everyone; they provide education for everyone, including Muslim children.
    - Do they provide the kind of education, you as a Muslim parent would like?
    - In your opinion, what are the special needs of Muslim children?
    - Do the schools meet the needs of Muslim children?
    - What particular needs of Muslim children are not met by our schools?
3. These days there is talk about Separate Muslim Schools.
    - What is your opinion on the subject?
    - What advantages and disadvantages can you see in such schools?
4. A Muslim School has been established in Glasgow.
    - Are you sending your children to the school? Why?
    - Is it likely to attract the support of the bulk of the Muslim community? Why?
    - What factors will determine the success or otherwise of the Muslim school?
    - The establishment of the first Muslim School in Glasgow is likely to effect the Muslims of the city and the Education Authorities. How do you see the future?

Appendix 4

Survey questionnaire

MUSLIM EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND

For Muslims in this country, education of their children is a major issue. This questionnaire is an academic survey of the views of Muslims on this very important subject. There are various options, ranging from maintaining status quo, to establishing Independent Muslim schools.

Can you please tell us a few things about yourself, to allow us to categorise this research:

1. What age group are you in (please circle one) **under 20,** 20-29, **30-39,** 40-49, **50-59,** 60+
2. Do you have chilren of you own? (please circle one) **Yes / No**
3. If Yes, what are the ages (in years only) of your children?..... .
4. Please indicate your gender (please circle one) **Male / Female**

Please indicate your opinions on the subject of Muslim education in Scotland by placing a tick(✔) in one box, against every statement shown below.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Muslims should establish their own separate Muslim schools in Scotland.					
2	The fees charged by Independent Muslim schools will be a major drawback of these schools.					
3	Muslims should campaign to transform State schools with majority Muslim population, into Muslim State Schools.					
4	There is no need for separate Muslim schools, because Mosque schools fulfil the needs of the Muslim children.					
5	Instead of separate Muslim schools, Muslims should be establishing Dar-ul-Uloom (Muslim Madrassahs).					
6	Islamic Studies should be taught in schools with a high proportion of Muslim children.					
7	Arabic should be offered as an alternative modern language in Scottish State schools.					
8	Arabic and Islamic Studies on the curriculum in state schools would reduce the demand for separate Muslim schools.					
9	Urdu and other community languages should be offered as alternative modern languages in Scottish State schools.					
10	Mosque-schools are educating Muslim children to be productive citizens of this country.					

Please turn over the sheet and complete the other side too. Thank you.

Issúes relating to education of Muslim children.

Muslim children face numerous problems in their schools. We have selected five of the oft repeated ones. They are not printed in any particular order.

Please select the issue that, in your opinion, is the most important and label it as No. 1, then select the issue that is the second most important and label it as No. 2, continue to label the rest of the issues as No. 3, 4, and 5.

Number in Importance	ISSUE
	Racial Problems : Muslim children are part of ethnic minority groups. They constantly face problems, ranging from name calling to physical abuse, in the school, which have an adverse effect on their education.
	Sex education in schools: Muslims are not against sex-education as such, but they do feel that it is not done properly in schools. Sex-education without any moral foundations leads to pre-marital relationships, and sexual promiscuity.
	Availability of prayer rooms: A number of schools are making arrangements for their Muslim pupils to say their prayers during school hours, while others are still steadfastly refusing to accommodate Muslim demands.
	Lack of Islamic education: There is generally very little religious/moral education of any kind in schools these days. Lack of Islamic Studies means that Muslim children are growing up without a sound knowledge of their faith, culture or history.
	Single-sex schooling: Children learn better if they are safe from distractions of any kind. Muslims feel their daughters in particular, are in a much safer and more secure environment when they attend all-girl schools.

If you wish to make any further comment on the subject of Muslim education or this questionnaire, you can write (in any language) in the space below.

Thank you very much for your time and attention. Your answers will be of great value to the researchers. All responses will be treated with greatest confidentiality, to be used for a doctorate study into Muslim Education in Scotland, which is currently being carried out at University of Strathclyde, by your brother Akhtar-Saeed Bhutta.

Appendix 5

Pilot of ten priorities

Issues relating to education of Muslim children.

Muslim children face numerous problems in their schools. I have selected ten common problems. They are not printed in any particular order.
Please select the issue that, in your opinion, is the most important and label it as No. 1, then select the issue that is the second most important and label it as No. 2, etc.

Number in Importance	ISSUE
	Racial Problems :
	Provision of halal meals in schools:
	Sex education in schools:
	Problems with School uniforms:
	Problems with physical education/changing/showering/swimming
	Availability of prayer rooms:
	Lack of Islamic education:
	Single-sex schooling:
	Teaching of Urdu:

Appendix 6

Comments of respondents

Other Views on Muslim Education.

The survey questionnaire had some space at the end where the respondents could make any comment they wished to regarding Muslim education or this study. 17 respondents made some comments which have been recorded below. It is worth noting down these comments as the respondents had taken the trouble to append these comments to their questionnaires when they did not have to. They must have attached some importance to them. They cover a wide range of subjects and show a rich variety of Muslim opinion on the topic of Muslim education.

1. There are catholic run state schools therefore, why should there not be any state run Islamic schools. Although it is not always the best solution to separate because it is good to mix because we can all learn from each other.
   As to Islamic studies although they should be available to study, it is up to the parents to provide religious education. This may help to provide all children with an academic education and not bring religion into the classroom and that way the teachers can not wrongly influence our children. (Young female with no children of her own)

2. The problem with teaching Islamic studies in schools is that material is from non-Muslim sources & is very inaccurate & even more so if a non-Muslim is teaching. Logically you can't teach a subject you are not qualified to teach. There is also a very obvious fact there is a lack of Muslims to teach. If non-Muslims teach Islam it is always misrepresented. (Mother, 30+)

3. I feel that if we can not change our schools into Muslim schools that all state schools in Scotland should have a choice of Halal food and Islamic/Arabic classes. (20+ Mother with 2 children, 7 and 3)

4. It is better to make reforms from within society-Muslims are a valuable part of British society and should continue and persist in their efforts.
   (40+ mother with 3 teenage children)

5. Islamic education should begin in the home. Therefore parents need to be educated as well. Boys need single-sex schooling as much as girls- they are much more easily distracted than girls.
   Racism works both ways- some 'Muslims' are worse than non-Muslims.
   Availability of prayer rooms etc- all it would take is a group of parents and children to raise their voices but many don't really care unfortunately. (40+ mother with 4 children)

6. The proper thinking and implementing of sincerely activities all that are necessary for the Muslim community, especially from the rich community. (40+ Mother with 2 young children)

7. There is no need for separate Muslim schools as being in a mixed racial environment will help the child to grow up and geyt used to other races. We can't separate the Muslims in today's workplaces, so why should the children, as it will just cause more problem in their future life in the workplace. (Young female with no children).

8. Islamic studies should be taught in every school, no mater what the majority of Muslims are. We may not notice but many non-Muslim at a young age are interested in other people's religion !

9. In my opinion parents have responsibility to educate their children in part of religious activity. However, any country you should see different view of Islam. There is no too much matter where your child grow up, but.....(30+ mother with 3 teenage children)

10 Muslim education is really important for Muslim peoples, at least to pray. They are supposed to know about their way.(20+ male without any children)

11. All above (Priority issues) are important. Can't really distinguish (between) them or say one is much more important than others, except a few. (20+ male without any children)

Appendix 7

Interviewees with codes

Table of interviewees

	Code	Information
	1a	Young Pakistani mother from Motherwell
	2a	White Scottish lady, married to an Arab.
	3a	An Iraqi FE lecturer, formerly a charity worker.
	4a	White Scottish lady , married to a Pakistani
	5a	Young Pakistani father, working for Inland revenue.
	1b	A Pakistani Jeweller
	2b	Assistant Imam of a Glasgow mosque
	3b	IT engineer, working for the BBC
	4b	Pakistan lab-technician, married to a white Scottish woman.
	1c	Young Pakistani civil engineer, one of the founder members of Iqra Academy.
	2c	Young University student, responsible for IT of Iqra Academy.
	3c	The first head teacher of Iqra Academy
	4c	Newly qualified teacher, helping with the curriculum in Iqra Academy.

Appendix 8

Summaries of interviews

Q1. A lot of people are talking about Muslim Education and Islamic Education. They don't all mean the same thing.
Let us say, I have never heard of Muslim/Islamic Education, how would you explain t. me, what <u>you</u> mean when <u>you</u> talk about Muslim Education.

1a Muslim education is, I want my children to be brought up with the awareness of *deen* which is Islam. Islam is a way of life and I want them to live a life in a way that was taught to us by our Prophet Mohammed. In a way that God wants us to live our life. I don't want them to be narrow minded either. I want them to have a wider vision of things.

Our school was wonderful. I can honestly say I have nothing against it, but there is such a big gap. The things that were missing from their education. There were so many things they were taught that were conflicting, like Jesus being Son of God, God being one then they are taught that God is one but there are three, the trinity. Where as at home we teach them that God is one and there is no such thing as trinity in Islam. Jesus was a Prophet of God, was of miraculous birth.

2a For me it is more than just teaching them prayer, teaching them the fact that they are Muslim. It is the whole environment, it is a family environment. Muslim teachers, who are not just Muslims, but they are knowledgeable about their religion, because there is a difference you know, who genuinely love the children, who are interested in the children's well being.

I feel it also gives the children a pride in themselves to be a Muslim.
It is more than just the curriculum, the whole atmosphere of the school.

3a In my opinion <u>Muslim education</u> means the whole thing, encompassed by Muslim laws, Muslim Shariah and so on.

<u>Islamic education</u> could be like an hour you put aside and you talk about Islamic aspects of Islamic culture etc.
<u>Muslim education</u> is designed, implemented by Muslim people rather than people of other religions that come in to talk about Islam.

I found it quite difficult for him (son, Hassan) to comprehend the Islamic aspects of our lives. He was getting definition of God from various points of view from various religions.

4a Islamic education would be teaching of whole of Islam included in life, because Islam is not just a religion. The thing about Islamic education is that it should be taught in every subject. Muslim and Islamic education is totally different from teaching Islam within a state school. It is only teaching religious side of things.

5a Most important quality one should have is honesty. For me that is the differentiating part between Islamic education and any other education, it teaches morals and values of life,..... aspects of prayer, honesty, kindness to parents, respect for parents, respect for society, the aspect of caring more for the society than your individual needs.

1b In my opinion as long as our children are brought up in an Islamic environment, in the house, as long as they get to read the Quran We have been giving Muslim children Islamic education for twenty five/thirty years..... going to the Mosque, we had our education from there, basic Quran reading, basic history, basic sunnah, that is the type of education we have had.

They have learned the Quran, they have learned the *sunnah*, people have become 'Maulanas', Hafiz, some have become very educated in Islam as well as being educated in mainstream schools.

2b In the first instance we have to understand 'what is education' then we can enquire into what is Islamic education. Education is that activity by which people acquire knowledge, skills, habits, attitudes and a ways of life, making a person a useful member of the society is the aim of education. To inculcate in the person a respect for the culture and make him fit to lead a full and fulfilling life.

When we talk of Islamic education, all these things are included in it along with an understanding that Islamic education establishes a relationship between man and his Creator, and prepares him for realising the objectives of the religion: protecting his beliefs, protecting his life, protecting his property, protecting his intellect, protecting his progeny- that would be true Islamic education. That a man would lead a life according to his Lords commands in this world and have a vibrant concept of the hereafter; that man is not eternal on this planet but shall die and be accountable for his deeds before his Lord. This is what I believe to be the concept of Islamic education.

3b We classify Islamic education in two broad areas. One is the education with regard to Islamic way of life...You should know how to fulfil your duties as Muslims, the morality the religion teaches you, the behaviour towards other people, family, elders, youngsters etc. This is the education about the way of life about the *deen* of Islam.
The second is with regard to the culture of Islam and moral education... There is a kind of atmosphere that needs to be, along the education subjects which guides one to a proper overall understanding of what life is about.

4b Muslim education is education which is on top of what is taught in normally in comprehensive schools in this country i.e. the Islamic values, that means the basic tenants of Islam and also the manners and behaviours Quran and Islam teaches.

1c Moral and ethical values of Islam are taken account of in the education prospects. How it is taught to the children. I could put it in another way and say "education will be delivered on Islamic ethos".

I would say Muslim education is the way things are given to the children, taught to the children in the manner that allows them to feel respected, privileged, it is not degrading any part of the system…..For a start we will not teach sexual education in an Islamic environment. The other subjects are exactly the same, the English is the same , the only difference there is an Islamic base to it.

One of the things we try to teach is that a particular formula has been given in books, go the roots of the formula, if it has Islamic roots let the children know that this work was done by Islamic scholars

The environment that we teach it in, that is a huge difference.
Within classrooms the girls are separated from the boys. The girls will wear a *hijab* to cover their hair…… male and female we wish to differentiate, let the children know that you are different, certain things the boys will learn, certain things the girls will learn.

2c If you say Islamic education I think of a wider picture, that would pertain to anything that is taught to a child, whether it be standard curriculum or whether it is specific Quran studies or whether it is about Islamic history or geography or anything , I would term it as Islamic education. Islam would encompass any kind of education and promotes any kind of education as long as it is within the framework of Islam - which is quite comprehensive and covers most things. ….Islam is the core element - the teachings and the principles that Muslims should follow and abide by. The people are tying to aspire to live up to those guidelines are Muslims…..It would lead to education of children in an Islamic environment, which has never been done before in Glasgow. There was definitely a need and a necessity for this kind of education system in Glasgow.

3c Muslim education is the education of the Muslims, whether it is in secular subjects, or religious subjects. Whether it is carried out in a Muslim school or a non-Muslim school.
Islamic education is connected to the concept of Islam. Therefore it is education which is built on the principles of the religion of Islam which are: to understand and know God, and to come close to Him, and have those beliefs permeate through one's actions.

4c It is also the environment. Not every school has the Islamic environment. There are a lot of social and moral etiquettes, Muslims would follow. Islamic education could also be education about the religion of Islam. Muslim education would be etiquette and moral teachings of how a Muslim would behave, the relationships between pupil and teacher, relationship between pupil and pupil.

2. State schools are there for everyone; they provide education for everyone, including Muslim children.

- **Do they provide the kind of education, you as a Muslim parent want?**
- **In your opinion, what are the special needs of Muslim children?**
- **Do the schools meet the needs of Muslim children?**
- **What particular needs of Muslim children are not met by our schools?**

1a There isn't as much taught about respect, about religion, how life should be lived. I know a great part is taught by parents but these (values) have to be superimposed by the schools. They do touch on Islam but it is nothing to what they really need to know…They need a special class in Islamic education, quite honestly, not just for Muslim children but for all the children. If there were classes for everybody, they would understand why we don't go out at night, why we don't do this and that.

2a For me they did not meet his needs. May be because I live in an area outside Glasgow, without a huge Muslim community, where they don't feel the need to learn about other communities.

To be recognised, to be respected, to know something about them…..I could be more practical and say well, the food, prayer rooms and things. These are minor things. These are bonuses if you like.

3a In state schools they are trying to encompass everything, they are trying to teach children basically everything, whether it is to with religious education, physical education or sexual education. When it comes to religious education, he was getting some aspects of the faith, but he was getting what is fasting, what is Eid so on. That, as far as I am concerned is not enough, when it is combined with other faiths
The special needs of Muslim children, they need to have Muslim teachers, to teach only Islamic studies, ….. It has to be part of the curriculum…. As a Muslim parent I want to bring up my child to be well acquainted with Islam, before I introduce him to any other faith. Basically, I would have loved to have seen Muslim teachers, taking them a couple of hours per week or more, going over with them the basics of prayers in terms of *wodhu*, and that would be part of the curriculum.

4a Islam is a way of life, not just teaching the religious aspects of it. This is all that is taught in the schools, the five pillars perhaps, that's about it. They don't know about the cultural background of Islam . It is not possible for non-Muslim teachers to teach that kind of thing.

Taking her out of a very good state school, I must say, it was an extremely good school she was in, it was very difficult decision to take. In the end I thought this is what we really want. This is what we have been asking for such a long time…….Literally, the Islamic atmosphere. It was almost, going from one culture to another, putting her into an ordinary state school.

The children are being taught about thing (sex education) at school we do not know about. We are not even being told what the children are being taught about along these lines.. ..Sometimes children are too embarrassed to tell you.

5a They certainly don't meet the needs.I know, I have been through this school system myself.

The special needs, that differentiate us from the rest are prayers for a start. We need a place within the school, a facility to have that done. Then there are the aspects of the Quran,...the characteristics they require, to grow up as a Muslims, to be aware of their religion, they have to go to activities after school. Imagine the pressure that is put on a child at that age!

1b Now, people - particularly teachers have become accustomed to our Muslim needs and our cultural needs... There are meals available, which are Halal, for our needs. They are more versed with our Eid festivals, they gladly give one day on occasions two days off for celebrations.....I wouldn't stop my children from taking part in any event like that (assemblies, celebration of other festivals), as long as it is educational, may be it teaches them something.

2b That is indeed the case. As the education system in this country is secular in nature, there is no provision for religion in the system. The state schools impose their own values and culture instead of understanding values and culture of Islam....The biggest problem is that it is a secular system, there is no room for establishing the relationship between man and his Creator and inculcating a sense of accountability before the Creator. Not only that, basic moral values which were common to all faiths are not being passed on in the schools these days..... respect for teacher, respect for parents, respect for humanity (I have already mentioned about protection of life, intellect, progeny and property) are completely alien to state schools.

3b Islamic education is not taught at all.....Secondly the teachers themselves, if nothing else, are nominal Christians where Christian ethos is created in the school in the various classes. This is missing for our children.

In every subject the ethos of Islam is missing. Take the example of Science, it is taught in such a way, it actually collides with the belief in God.
Thirdly, our children don't get, the moral background to be a good citizen. Religion itself is taught as a subject. What is taught basically are the rituals of various religions, but the ethos, morality of religions in not even taught.

4b There is a question mark here, whether they cater for ordinary children first of all, never mind Muslim children.....I think, Muslims needs are very similar to the indigenous population in this country.....They are thinking more or less the same way as non-Muslims do. Some Muslims who have Islamic know-how etc. they cater for their children at home and also try to seek a redress through the state school system. Every now and then they make a protestation or approach to local authorities where things are actually being done. I believe there a further need for need for improvement.....I do know that certain schools provide Halal meat during

lunch times, on occasions they provide prayer rooms and ablution places. I also would like to stress that Muslims do not always respond positively to these facilities.

1c The only aspect of education, I can say is sexual education. There are other issues, there are moral issues, particularly with regard to integration of children. They respect their elders, they respect the community they live in, they respect the teachers who have been teaching them and they respect their parents.
The special needs of the children? We would like to see them separated, girls and boys. Integration under Islamic terms is extremely difficult simply because of the nature of females and males.....The only difference is that it is in an environment that you have created, is it right for the child.....and the people who are teaching can also speak the language the parents speak, it makes a huge difference to them

2c (The system) doesn't really take into account the minority needs and their perspectives and their opinions....They are providing education for the majority, excluding the minority.....if you are a practising Muslim, and you want to pray or show that you are a practising Muslim, it is made very difficult for you in the education system. Facilities are not provided, the set-up isn't there, teachers are not sensitive to it, and obviously children aren't going to be.

When I was at school, I wasn't a practising Muslim, you didn't go about saying to your friends "I am a Muslim", doing your payers, or stand up for Islamic beliefs. ....The basic need is that people should feel free to be themselves, identify themselves as to who they are, and not to be made to feel that they have to fit in, try to be the same as everybody else...

3c Muslim schools haven't been established because the state schools have failed to serve our needs. Muslim schools have been established in addition to state school provision. It is not instead of state schools, it is in addition to state school.....In some areas the state schools have lost sight of the religious roots or their moral roots. Many of the schools were originally established to provide a moral education.....we believe that a Muslim school can return/add that back to the schools....We believe schools have also lost touch with a large section of the community.....Muslim schools are not necessarily for Muslims only. It is providing an education.

4c It is very difficult for the pupils and teachers as well, to pray *Dohar* and *Asr* (afternoon prayers). There is also this mixing situation, PE, at times is difficult . Even though a lot of multicultural schools will do everything they can to help pupils ....they allow sisters to wear *hijab*, they allow (may be) people in a room to pray. They do allow this, but it does affect the pupils, in the sense that it makes them feel different from everybody else. They are very affected by this "look out for No. 1" kind of society. A lot of disrespect for the teachers etc.
You can't always keep an eye on the kids. Once they are in the school they are a different person.....because of the peer pressure, which is not always

Islamic even if it is from Muslims, it is not necessarily Islamic peer pressure.
It is also teachers, because there is no God-consciousness, there isn't hat feeling of being responsible of somebody's education, day of judgement even, I don't feel they put in as much as they can or should.... if teachers have this God-consciousness they will know that they are responsible for that person's education, it will affect the rest of their life.

3. These days there is talk about Separate Muslim Schools.

- **What is your opinion on the subject?**
- **What advantages and disadvantages can you see in such schools.**

1a If there was enough taught in other schools, there wouldn't be any need for separate schools. Because there is a general ignorance, we had no choice.

There are very big advantages. For a start , there is no one questioning why someone is fasting....There is no one questioning why girls are wearing *hijab.* Why the children pray? Where as here (in the Muslim School) there is no such questioning. The children accept it as well.

The only disadvantage I can see is that we might become a target of people who are extremists, racists, people who are very narrow minded.. It might be a focus for someone who wishes to do something bad.

2a In an ideal world, there wouldn't be a need to be a separate Muslim school. We are not living in an ideal world. Other schools aren't meeting our needs. We have to do it this way.

I can say that now I am completely happy about my children coming here. I have no worries at all. I drop them a the door and they are happy to come to school....They know that they fit in, they are not embarrassed, everyone has similar names. It could be something as simple as that, similar names, they do similar things, they celebrate things at the same time, they can feel like a family, it is like an extended family.

The only disadvantage I can think of at the top of my head would be the fact that maybe non-Muslims might take an aggressive stand point, personally I don't see any need to, when there are already Jewish schools and Catholic schools.....This is a primary school, half a mile along the road is a secondary school. Their break times are similar. When the kids have their break here, the kids are outside playing, they get racial abuse. I am quite sure they wouldn't get abuse if it wasn't a Muslim school, they might get taunts., they wouldn't get racial taunts. The girls are running about with scarves and things. They know it is a Muslim school, we are talking about teenagers.

3a It is like a breath of fresh air, to be honest with you. Not just for me, but us as a family...He (Hassan) is getting well balanced education in terms of

Scottish curriculum combined with Islamic education.....although there are difficulties in terms of taking and dropping him at the school, far away from the house plus the financial aspects of it, but still we were prepared to sacrifice a lot of things, to send him to that school. He is happy there. A number of times we have discussed with him whether he wants to go back to his old school, he doesn't want to do that at all.....we weighed all the aspects. It is a new school, there is always the possibility that it is not going to succeed, all the staff there is new staff, they don't have the experience. But we felt he is at a very early stage in his education, we are even prepared to sacrifice a year, to suss out the situation, to see how he progresses. By the grace of God , he is progressing. O.K they don't have the facilities of a state school, there are limited facilities available to them whether it is internal or external

3a The advantage is. finding your identity as a Muslim. Basically the children discover their identity, they become very acquainted with Islamic faith as a part of the educational circle. The other advantage is that it is a private school, they care more for the child than I felt especially in the second year of the state school. Less and less care was given to my child. Disadvantage is that they feel a bit segregated from the entire environment surrounding them. But if you were to ask me if this is a price worth paying. I would say without any hesitation, yes! I would rather my child went to this school and got this kind of education, and got this kind of care and attention, rather than the way he was feeling or even behaving in the state school.

4a I don't think it will be case of schools will be totally segregated, they will never meet. Once the school establishes itself properly, perhaps in a couple of years, there can be links established with other schools. they are right next door to another state-run primary school. There is no reason why there shouldn't be links between the two, teachers swapping places in order to give different aspects to the pupils. They are not going to be so segregated, at the end of the day, for the foreseeable future at least, we know if our children are going to go to further education, they are going to end up in mixed, non-segregated further education. At least they will be ready by then, and they will know where they stand. They will feel strong, they will have that behind them. If questions come up, and they are bound to, they will have the answers, which they wouldn't get if they were in state run schools.

You will always get an element of that (racism), no matter how hard you try, you will get a minority that will target Muslim schools. Even today you get people targeting, Catholics for one reason or another

There are some parents who perhaps don't want to send their children, they don't have so much commitment towards Islam. You do get a full spectrum of Muslims. Why they don't send their child, even a private school, either they have financial problems or they don't agree with it. A major reason is funding. A lot of Muslim families have a number of children, they don't want to send one child and not be able to send another child. That has a lot to do with it as well. They can afford to send one, not necessarily afford to send three or four children.

5a There is a danger of isolation. There is that possibility but if we look at Catholic schools, Jewish schools, Gaelic schools, their children still come out and integrate with society. If our system is set up properly, it caters not only for Islamic character but also society at large, then I don't see any problem in it. Any system that is set up, will tackle the issues at large as well, so that a child is prepared to come out not only as an ideal Muslim character, but integrate with society as well. The danger is if the schools don't cater for that, the child is going to have a lot of difficulty integrating with society , to go on to work, and develop a family unit later on. That is one of the main disadvantages.

Advantage ….as I mentioned if it is set up properly, then for the child there is the advantage, he doesn't have to go to another 'school system' after school, another three or four hours at the weekend. There is no pressure on the parents either, because the child is being catered for, within school hours. The family unit will be stronger, as they will have more time to spend with each other at the end of the day, by the grace of God, also develop an Islamic character, which is much needed in the society at the moment.

1b Two or three people I know, sent their daughters to a school in Lancashire, Two of the girls came back in a matter of weeks, complaining of the harsh conditions they were facing, and about the very strict regimes….it was like these girls were sentenced to some concentration camp and not an Islamic environment

The biggest advantage you will have is that the kids will be totally Islamicised, on the other hand those children who are going to come out of those schools, are going to be faced with the reality and problems of multicultural society. You will come out of those primary and secondary education and still go to university, where you still have the multi-cultural level. How far would you go with these Islamic schools. You can only go so far, you have to mix some where.

In the past I have had negative feedback from various schools, that have opened in England. Two or three people I know, sent their daughters to a school in Lancashire, Two of the girls came back in a matter of weeks, complaining of the harsh conditions they were facing, and about the very strict regimes….it was like these girls were sentenced to some concentration camp and not an Islamic environment
The other (reason) is that all these schools, wherever they are, they are only experimental. We are at the beginning, it is a very difficult decision, not only for the children who are three/ four primaries ahead, to take them out of their schools, re-plant them as you like, at the beginning of another school., with new friends, new atmosphere, totally different environment. If they were going into, lets say P1, and I knew that the school was well established, I might take a chance.
Two or three people I know, sent their daughters to a school in Lancashire, Two of the girls came back in a matter of weeks, complaining of the harsh conditions they were facing, and about the very strict regimes….it was like

these girls were sentenced to some concentration camp and not an Islamic environment

2b As I have mentioned previously, if state schools do not make provision for Muslims, we have no choice but to establish our own schools. For this Muslims need to do some long term planning. It is not a case of an individual may get up and start a school and gamble with the lives of children. It is essential that who ever is planning in this field should involve educationists, and at least maintain a standard of education equivalent to public schools. No doubt it requires financial and personnel resources, but Muslims have to do that.

The biggest factor in education is the environment. If you can not provide an Islamic environment to a child, no matter how many things are taught to him , he will not acquire Islamic values. Unless you demonstrate sacrifice and selflessness in practice how can he learn about sacrifice and selflessness. Thus the dominant factor in an Islamic school shall be its environment. Each child shall deal with the other child, with sympathy, sacrifice, love and affection, from the teachers and pupils. It would be reminiscent of a small Islamic state, where a child will be able to see the blessings and advantages of Islam. Then Islam is passed on by practice more than by teaching.

The disadvantage that has been expressed is that Muslim will be isolated, bringing up a generation in two different ways. You will not be able to develop multiculturalism in them. They will have difficulty in understanding each other's values and culture. It may become difficult to live in peace and harmony with each other. But we can plan to overcome these disadvantages.

3b I would say that, the ideal situation would be that people of different religions should be able to get education about their religion in the state schools, to me that would be the ideal. That's what I would wish to implement, if I had the capability and the resources to do so. When anybody tries to have any Islamic education in normal state schools, as it happened some time ago in one of our primary schools here, the whole of the secular world is together, and rams down the throat of Muslims "no, no, you can not do this". Muslims are forced into a position, where they have to make their own arrangements, which are far from the ideal. It is not something I would prefer....If I could ensure that my children received good basic education and moral guidance about their religion, I would be happy for them to have that in the normal schools rather than any specialised schools.

4b There are two views: One is that this school will be catering more from Muslim point of view, in comparison with state schools. It also segregates a child from very early age, therefore their development later on may reflect on this segregation, which is probably negative. The positive side is that at least from a Muslim point of view, they cater for all the Islamic sciences, may be *tajweed of Quran*, Quran reading, proper prayer times and supervising the prayers etc. etc.

I rather prefer to say this that I see this as putting pressure on state schools, or local authorities, to provide more facilities for Muslim children... Lets say, if state schools are not catering for Muslim needs therefore as a reaction, they have separate schools and separate schools has a kind of pressure. If there is a positive outcome, I believe it will reflect into state schools. They will provide more facilities and move towards Muslim needs.
I think the best thing is that for children is that the atmosphere which is at home , Islamic atmosphere ...It is primarily the environment which the parents provide at home, that is the most important.

1c We want to keep the moral values, the ethical values, get the stress out of the child itself and let them get on with the actual education. The child comes out of the system, respecting values, not only those of his parents but his community, and he is a better citizen. I personally don't think that is happening within the state schools at the moment.

The disadvantage is ....segregation from the host community. This concept of multicultural society, it is a great concept, if we can avoid this kind of thing it should be avoided. The problem is respect for other cultures. State schools don't have that.
That is a serious problem for the parents. We need to respect all cultures, be it Muslim, be it Jewish, what ever. What is happening in Scotland at the moment is: religion for the host community is disappearing.

2c It is to do with the whole environment. Going back to the issue of identity. That they will feel comfortable and feel confident to be Muslims, to declare that they are Muslims. If you are brought up in that environment you will be able to do that because everybody else around you is the same . Your beliefs are equally valid as anybody else's... the parents feel their children should be brought up this way, it is their culture, heritage, tradition, then they should be fully entitled to put their children through that kind of education system. It will obviously mould the child, at an early age affect their views and way of thinking. It is not a bad thing. The whole concept of Islam is to be morally Just, truthful and it is not anything negative. To treat others equally as you treat another Muslim, to look upon everybody as equals, not as Muslims as some kind of supreme race or belief or anything.
The only real disadvantage I can see, it has been argued that the children will be isolated from the rest of the community, they will not be able to interact with others etc. I personally don't feel that is valid.

3c I don't like the word separate schools. The idea being separate denotes that it is not connected to society. This is what a lot of the media in early eighties, liked to use this word "separate" specifically to Muslims. You have a "separate Muslim school" but you don't have a "separate Christian school". A Muslim school, is a school that has a particular ethos. It has developed particular principles. It is not set up in competition with anybody. It is not "religious apartheid"; to keep Muslims away from non-Muslims.
The advantage is that on the whole the schools are community schools. They reflect the community and have the community involved. This is an

aspiration most schools have. This community has developed a school,.... I am just reflecting what the community wants. Schools need communities. Communities need schools.
The disadvantages: obviously it is costly. It is putting a burden onto the community, we all have to make sacrifices. I much prefer not to have to pay fees, but I do. I pay taxes, very high taxes. Since coming to Scotland I am surprised how much of my taxes go towards supporting the education system which I don't take any advantage from because I do not send my child to a state school.
The other disadvantage is that there is a lot of prejudice about. When you face a lot of ignorance, from people " you are a headteacher? Are you qualified? Can you speak English?" People have so many prejudiced views. You are always working against a political system, political climate or media induced climate, which detracts you from the teaching of children.

4c If we take out young Muslims from state schools and separate them from all these non-Muslims, then how do these non-Muslims learn about Muslims and Muslims learn about non-Muslims. ...At he moment there are perhaps no non-Muslims going into Iqra Academy, but God-willing if it has good academic results people will be putting their non-Muslim children in there.

When it comes to teachers as well, if all Muslim teachers end up in Iqra, teaching there, how will the non-Muslim children who are in state schools know about teachers who are Muslims, sometimes that is the only Muslim some young people know, their Muslim teacher.

Being able to relate to non-Muslims, as kids grow up, especially at home they are with Muslims, at Mosque they are with Muslims, in primary school they are with Muslims, in secondary school they are with Muslims, then out they go into the world of university or further education, and now they mix with non-Muslims. Not everyone will know how to relate to non-Muslims.

I think a lot of parents want their children to go to Iqra, but they can't afford it, can't afford to pay for the child to go to the school, as it is a Private school. On the other hand some parents are a bit weary, it is a new school, it does affect children's education, they are not sure whether it is the right thing to do.

Interviews Summary Sheets

Q1 Summary of the responses of parents who do not have children at the Muslim school.

1.1a Awareness of religion - way of life.

1.2a Muslim environment is family environment.
Knowledgeable Muslim teachers.
Giving children pride in themselves.

1.3a Muslim education - the whole thing, laws, Shariah etc.
Islamic education - aspects of Islamic culture.
Designed and implemented by Muslims.

1.4a Teaching the whole Islam - way of life.
Islamic education in every subject.

1.5a Honesty in education
It teaches morals and values of life.
Teaching to care more for society than for the self.

1.1b Islamic environment at home.
Ability to read Quran (in Arabic)
Teaching of Quran, history, sunnah, etc.

1.2b To establish a relationship between man and God.
Prepare children to realise the objectives of the religion.
Protecting beliefs, life, property, intellect, progeny - Islamic values

1.3b Teaching Islamic way of life, the morality, behaviour etc.
Culture of Islam and moral education.
Creating an atmosphere to guide people.

1.4b Teaching Islamic values, manners, behaviour etc.
Teaching basic tenants of Islam.

1.1c Taking account of moral /ethical values of Islam.
Delivering Islamic ethos.
Children to feel respected, privileged not degraded.
No sexual education.
Pride in previous Islamic scholars and their contributions.
The environment - segregation of sexes.

1.2c Wider curriculum with Islam as a core element.
Teaching the principles that Muslims abide by.
Teaching children in an Islamic environment.

1.3c It is connected to the concept of Islam.
Built on the principles of Islam
Have beliefs permeate through one's actions.

1.4c It is the environment - social and moral etiquettes.
Education about religion of Islam.
How a Muslim should behave towards teachers and pupils.

Q1 Summary of the responses of the activists

1.1c Taking account of moral /ethical values of Islam.
Delivering Islamic ethos.
Children to feel respected, privileged not degraded.
No sexual education.
Pride in previous Islamic scholars and their contributions.
The environment - segregation of sexes.

1.2c Wider curriculum with Islam as a core element.
Teaching the principles that Muslims abide by.
Teaching children in an Islamic environment

1.3c It is connected to the concept of Islam.
Built on the principles of Islam
Have beliefs permeate through one's actions.

1.4c It is the environment - social and moral etiquettes.
Education about religion of Islam.
How a Muslim should behave towards teachers and pupils.

.....

2.1a Gaps in education of Muslim children.
Conflict between what is taught at home and school.
Not enough taught about respect, religion, life skills.
Parental values not reinforced by school.
Need for Islamic education for *all* children.

2.2a Schools with very small ethnic minority numbers make no effort to learn about other communities.
Muslim children need to be recognised, to be respected and know something about Islam.
Food, prayer-rooms etc. are minor 'bonuses'.

2.3a State schools trying to teach everything, RE, PE, sexual education.
Only very basics(rituals) of Islam taught.
Muslim children need Muslim teachers - Islamic studies.
Children confused by definition of God from non-Muslim perspectives.

2.4a State schools only teach religious aspect of Islam - five pillars etc.
Cultural side of Islam not taught.
Children taught about things (sex ed.) without consent of parents.

2.5a State schools do not cater for Muslims.

Need for a place to pray in the school.
Need to acquire aspects of Quran, be aware of their religion.
After school activities for Muslims.

2.1b Halal meals now available in schools.
Days of for Eid festivals.
Multi-cultural activities in schools.

2.2b Secular system - no provision for religion in the system.
Imposition of values alien to Islam.
Sense of accountability to God not created.
Basic moral values not being passed on.
Respect for teacher, parents, humanity have become alien values

2.3b Lack of Islamic studies.
Christian ethos in State schools.
Islamic input missing from every subject.
Muslim children don't get the moral background to be good citizens.
Rituals of religion are taught at the expense of ethos, morality etc.

2.4b Muslim needs are very similar to indigenous population.
Some schools provide halal food, prayer rooms etc.

Q2 Summary of responses of the activists.

2.1c Sexual education in state schools
Moral issues - integration of children (co-education).
Respect for elders, community, teachers and parents is eroding.
Creation of Islamic atmosphere for learning and teaching.

2.2c System does not cater for Muslim needs like prayer, fasting etc.
Facilities aren't provided, insensitive teachers and pupils.
Muslims suppress their identity, not free to express who they are and what they stand for.

2.3c State schools have lost sight of religious/moral roots.
Schools have lost touch with a large section of the community.

2.4c Difficulty in offering afternoon prayers.
Male/female mixing in PE etc.
Allow girls to wear hijab and provide prayer-rooms
Muslim pupils sensitive to doing anything different from their peers.
Disrespect for teachers.
Teachers are not God-conscious...

3. These days there is talk about Separate Muslim Schools.

- What is your opinion on the subject?
- What advantages and disadvantages can you see in such schools

KEY, = neutral statement
+ stating an advantage
- stating a disadvantage

3.1a = If enough taught in other schools, no need for Muslim schools.
+ No one questioning children about fasting, prayers, hijab etc.
- Targets for extremists and racists.

3.2a = No need for separate schools in an ideal world.
+ Completely happy about children being here - no worries.
+ Children know they fit in - similar names, like a family.
- Non-Muslims may take an aggressive stand point.
- Children already getting racial abuse from youngsters in the street

3.3a + Child getting well balanced education combined with Islamic ed.
+ Child is happy at the school.
+ Children discover their identity.
+ Children become well acquainted with Islamic faith.
+ Private school, care more for the children.
- Difficulty in taking child to and from the school.
- Financial difficulties.
- It is a new school, new staff - it may fold (experimental).
- The school does not have state school facilities.
- Children may feel a bit segregated.

3.4a = Parents who don't send their children to the school don't have so much commitment towards Islam.
+ Children well prepared to face questions in later life.
- Financial problems - some parents can afford to send one child.

3.5a = If system set up properly - to cater for non-Muslims as well.
+ Children to come out with ideal Muslim character and integrate with society as well.
+ Child does not have to attend evening/weekend school.
+ Pressure on parents is reduced, family unit is stronger.
- Danger if system is not set up properly, children will have difficulty integrating with society.
- Danger of isolation.

3.1b + Children will be totally Islamicised.
- Strict regimes in Muslim schools; harsh conditions.
- Children opting out of multicultural society, postponing mixing.
- School are experimental - totally different environment.

3.2b + The biggest factor is the environment - for Islamic values.
+ Islam is passed on by practice rather than teaching.
- Muslims will be isolated.
- You will not be able to develop multiculturalism in them.
- They will have difficulty in understanding each other's cultures.

3.3b + Good basic education and moral guidance about their religion.

3.4b + School will cater more from Muslim point of view.
+ School will cater for Islamic sciences like *tajweed* etc.
+ Pressure on local authorities to provide more facilities for Muslims
- Segregating children at a very early age.
- Negative influence on later development of children.

3.1c + Keep moral and ethical values.
+ Get the stress out of children - get on with education.
+ Children come out respecting values of parents and community.
- Segregation from the host community.
- 'Multicultural society' a great concept in theory.
- Religion for the host community is disappearing.

3.2c + It is to with the whole environment - everything else is the same.
+ Children are comfortable and confident to declare that they are Muslims - issue of identity.
+ Your beliefs are equally important.
- Criticism that children will be isolated, not valid assumption.

3.3c + A school with particular ethos.
+ It has developed particular principles.
+ School reflects the community.
- The school is costly - burden onto the community.
- A lot of prejudice and ignorance about.
- Working against political and media induced climate - distracts from teaching the children.

3.4c - Muslims and non-Muslims will not learn about each other.
- Muslim children will not be able to relate to non-Muslims.
- Loss of Muslim teachers from state schools.
- Expense, a lot of parents can't afford the fees.

Appendix 9

Revisit interview schedule

Post-experience questions:

1. I talked to you last year about Muslim education and your children. Has your child been attending the Independent Muslim school since last year?
   How happy were/are you with his/her progress?
   Did the school fulfil your aspirations? What was particularly good, what was lacking?

2. When there was some turmoil in the school last summer, how did you feel about your choice of Iqra Academy for the education of your child.?
   What persuaded you to keep your child at the Academy/remove your child from the Academy?

3. It looks like Iqra Academy is here to stay. How can it be improved for the future.
   What needs to be done that is not being done?
   What policies/practices should change to make the school better.
   What are its shortcomings.

4. Is there anything else you wish to add in this respect?

Appendix 10

Glasgow Herald "Willowbank" leader

THE GLASGOW
HERALD

SCOTLAND'S NEWSPAPER

Established 1783

20/6/91

Isolation through education

CHANGING patterns of demography and the ethnic composition of some school catchment areas are providing new problems for education authorities when allied to the new element of parental choice afforded by Government legislation. Glasgow has two current examples involving schools in Cranhill and Woodside. In Cranhill declining rolls encouraged the idea that two smallish separate schools might be fused into a single more viable unit, but this was frustrated by the fact that one is a Roman Catholic school. By an arrangement stretching back to 1918, Catholic education is provided in separate schools. The original dispensation came about at a time when West of Scotland Catholics were a self-conscious minority anxious to preserve their religious identity in a society which was overwhelmingly Protestant, especially in education where the Kirk had been a dominant force long before the advent of State schools in 1872. The concession made to Catholics in 1918 was designed to allow them to control their own education, and to enhance its provision through public finance to augment the scarce resources available to a Church whose membership was mainly very poor.

Much of that has changed. Anti-Catholic sentiment is fast disappearing in the West of Scotland. Our society is ever more plural and a growing number of Catholic parents, particularly the more affluent and self-confident, exercise their choice in sending their offspring to non-denominational schools whose Protestant flavour has diminished considerably. The social environment is increasingly secular and the free play of parental choice is likely steadily to reduce the numbers opting for a formal, religiously based education. It is, however, one thing to identify a trend; quite another to say that it should be endorsed or anticipated by State intervention. Whatever some may say about the general drawbacks of separate religious provisions for public education, no case has been established to confirm them specifically. The complaint that they divide society rests uneasily with the view that a good society is pluralistic rather than monolithic. When Catholics want their own schools, no-one should doubt their right to have them. Current legislation supports this right which would probably be endorsed by the European Convention on Human Rights.

By such tests, if the parents of children at Willowbank school want to opt out of local authority control, then they will have their way. Last night's confused meeting of the school board, where the chairman went to great lengths to prevent discussion of the subtext, helped nobody. The formal aim is opting out; but what they will appear to want, if they vote for opting-out, is a State-funded Moslem school. And though it will not — no more than Catholic schools, as Moslems well know from their use of these — be closed to others, it will inevitably have the character of a denominational school. Any drawbacks identified at this stage seem to be social rather than educational. Such a school would emphasise the withdrawal of the Moslem minority from the rest of the community. It would certainly enhance the Moslem ethos conveyed to pupils, but reduce their exposure to the rest of the society in which they are going to have to live and make their way. It would make integration and acceptance that much harder just at the very time when Scots have been made aware that these developments are much less advanced than we would all like.

Arguably, some of this applied 70 years ago to Catholic schools too, but their self-elected purdah is breaking down and was anyhow less important because of the nearness of the two varieties of Christian experience (though bigots long refused to see this). Moslems should think twice before they opt for more social isolation in the name of education. Above all, it will not confer more of a sense of security than that which presently obtains.

Appendix 11

Willowbank press statement

The executive committees of the U.K. Islamic Mission (Glasgow) and Muslim House would like to make clear the following points regarding the controversial issue over the proposed opting out of Willowbank primary School

1) We are in favour of the principle of opting out.

2) We will support the wishes of the school board if the opting out is backed by the parents in the ballot.

3) We however, advice them, should they obtain the consent of the parents to opt out, to do so on educational grounds rather than religious or racial grounds.

For Further information please contact Mr. A S Bhutta

Tel:- (041) 762 4109

21/6/91.

Appendix 12

Press statement of Jamiat-Ittihadal-Muslemin

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICIENT, THE

THE ISLAMIC CENTRE

Raees-al-Fakhri
H.E. Dr. Abdullah Omar Naseef

Jamiat Ittihad-ul-Muslim
THE GLASGOW CENTRAL MOSQU
off Ballater Stre
Glasgow G5 9
Tel: 041-429 3132 or 429 71

14 June 1991

VIEWS OF THE ISLAMIC CENTRE GLASGOW, ON THE ISSUE OF SEPARATE SCHOOLS

Majority of the Muslim Community are not in favour of separate schools. There is though a strong desire for the establishment of Muslim denominational schools within the state education system on the lines of Catholic and Jewish denominational schools.

The rationale behind this desire is that while in the state schools the Muslim children are subjected to Christian ethos and teachings, there is no provision for their instruction in Muslim religion. The Muslim parents, therefore, in accordance with their religious requirements are obliged to arrange for the religious education of their children on the weekends and late evenings. The children are thus forced to go to schools for seven days a week and for long hours. Further not all of the Muslim children cam attend the weekend schools to learn their culture and religion and those who do not attend are growing up without a faith, confused and bitter.

The answer to the problem is the provision of religious instructions and education in state schools. If this was done the desire and the demand for denominational schools will disappear from the Muslim community.

The provision of single sex school, however, is very dear to the heart of the majority of the Muslim people. According to the Muslim religious law boys and girls after the age of about twelve should not mix freely. Therefore, devout Muslims prefer to send their children to single sex secondary schools. Also there are many Scottish parents who who do send their children to single sex schools. Thus, the provision of single sex schools has a wider constituency and a wider demand. This provision therefore, ought to be enhanced and strengthened as it would help to stem the need and the demand for separate schools. However, if there was no provision of religious education in the state schools and no single sex schools then the agitation and action for denominational as well as separate school would increase.

M. NAZIR AWAN
General Secretary

Appendix 13

Islamic Academy Committee leaflet

Glasgow Islamic Academy Committee

459 Paisley Road,
Glasgow,
G5 8RJ.
Tel: 0141-429-1050/3146
Fax:0141-429-3129

Ref No:
Date: 5th Sept 1997

Dear Brother/Sister,

Aslam-o-Alikum

Muslim Education Strategy - Glasgow

I trust this letter finds you in the best of Iman & Health.

For some time, the muslim community has expressed a desire to create professional muslim educational services and resources in Glasgow. Whilst some work has been done by the community there is still a requirement for a more co-ordinated effort.

We have been speaking to muslim politicians, businessmen and community leaders over the possibility of starting a Glasgow Islamic Academy, this has led to the need of establishing a working group to look at general muslim educational needs, including a muslim primary school.

You are invited to attend this Working Group Meeting on ***Monday 15th September at 7.00pm*** *at YCSA offices in Forth Street, Pollokshields.*

I enclose proposals to establish a new Community run school with a brief outline on proposal so far and an initial agenda for our initial meeting.

Please remember me in your prayers.

Your Brother In Islam,

Zulfiqar Hussain.

Appendix 14

Availability of Bellahouston annex

Glasgow City Council

Chief Executive

Ian Drummond
Head of Committee Services and Administration
Glasgow City Council
City Chambers
George Square
Glasgow G2 1DU

Telephone: 0141 287 4521
Fax No: 0141 287 3627

Your Ref:
Our Ref: *IAD/LM/propserv97/hussain2*

5 September 1997

Mr Zulfiqar Hussain
459 Paisley Road
GLASGOW
G5 8RJ

Dear Mr Hussain

BELLAHOUSTON ACADEMY ANNEXE
PROPOSAL FOR SELF FUNDED SCHOOL

I refer to your letter of 15 August 1997 in connection with the above matter.

I can advise you that Bellahouston Academy Annexe has formally been declared surplus to requirements by the Council and that the maintenance and security of this empty property are being supervised through the Property Services Department. That Department is at present preparing a marketing brochure with the intention that the property be advertised for sale. This is a substantial building on an extensive site with a prominent main road frontage and within close proximity to the city centre, and despite being a listed building the property is regarded as being marketable and potentially capable of generating a substantial capital receipt for the Council. As you may be aware, the Council has a difficult financial position and it is the policy of the Council to maximise capital receipts where possible.

It is open to you and your colleagues to submit a commercial bid during the process of the marketing exercise which would then be considered by the Council. The question of establishing an independent Muslim school in Glasgow would be a matter in due course for the Secretary of State for Scotland and not the Council's Education Committee. As we discussed on the telephone, you may wish to contact the Director of Property Services and to enquire whether there are any other suitable properties within the Council's portfolio for disposal.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the writer.

Yours sincerely

I.A. Drummond

IAN DRUMMOND
HEAD OF COMMITTEE SERVICES & ADMINISTRATION

Appendix 15

Iqra- public meeting March 2001

issue no. 428 * volume 10 * 28th Dhu al Hajjah 1421 * Friday 23rd March 2001

FRIDAY PEOPLE

FREE

⇧ Muslim Education Inspector Sheikh Akram Khan Cheema

⇧ Iqra Academy's primary children and a special wecome programme to their guests.

FROM THE CRADLE TO THE GRAVE Education as (PBUH) said: "At the age of '3' I took the hand of my child and told the school "do what you want (to do) with my child" - but why *Muslim Schools*? when we can have free education? - was the £1,500 question which Sheikh Akram Khan Cheema asked at the special evening last Saturday at Scotland's first Muslim school. Besides, money is not a question for an increasing number of Muslim parents who happily pay much more for their children's private education and even for other denomination schools. "Is it then a matter of priorities? when this must be the Qurán and Sunnat?" asked the chief guest, who had hand in assisting the 50 or so Muslim schools - only a couple state maintained! The difference is in 'Iymam' (faith) and 'Bara Kat' - the blessing of Allah, above all lies our "duty to do the bidding for Allah", he emphasised, continuing: "When Muhammad (PBUH) had the 'Revelations' this was intended to 'non-Muslims', people will knock on your (school) door and say: please accept out children! with morality, manners and good citizenship inculcated in them, the stakes will be high, they will start to view you not as 'Paki' any more"! Promoting Iqra Academy as part of world-wide network in education that prioritise knowledge as enjoined by Islam, the future is promising; for the first time in the UK we can get funds to train our teachers in maths and sciences, 'the virtues of two worlds' reiterating on the need for unity despite different opinions as Allah will help us if we start to (walk) and keep on the (talk).. for Glasgow Iqra Academy is one idea whose time has come, with Allah's blessing and the future of our children - tomorrow's generation - at your hand, and besides 'Duá', enrolling and material and moral support run a long way!

Appendix 16

Muslim needs

Muslim Needs

Muslim educational needs have been analysed by Parker-Jenkins (1995). She has provided an extremely useful "framework of needs analysis" that can be used as a template to provide for the needs of almost any minority ethnic group. She categorises Muslim educational needs as:

i. Religious/Cultural
ii. Curriculum
iii. Linguistic
iv. General
v. Individual.

i) Religious /cultural needs.

This category of need requires consideration of:

- school dress code
- school policy on hair for male and female pupils
- physical education dress
- school diet
- collective acts of worship
- prayer room provision
- fasting period
- school activities during fasting
- alternative rooming during lunchtime fasting
- religious holidays
- Friday prayers.

ii) Curriculum needs

In negotiating the National Curriculum on behalf of the school, areas of need include:

- balance
- global perspective
- a multicultural permeation model reflected in all subject areas

- recognition of cultural and linguistic accomplishments of ethnic minorities
- an appropriate Islamic perspective
- promotion of positive images
- avoidance of tokenism
- avoidance of bolt-on dimension of minority achievement
- access to resources of minority groups
- using the community as a resource
- multiculturalism/anti-racism embedded in the 'hidden curriculum'

iii) Linguistic needs

This category of need requires consideration of:

- The level of English language competence
- support for English language acquisition
- mother tongue competence
- community language accomplishments
- support for mother tongue and community languages
- languages offered at certificate levels
- a school language policy.

iv) General needs

This category of needs requires consideration of:

- a genuine commitment to a whole multicultural/anti-racist policy
- care over pronunciation of children's names
- adoption of anti-harassment policy to cover racist and religious abuse
- pastoral support for victims of abuse
- safety base in the school grounds for bullied children to go
- single sex groupings within a co-educational context
- effective home-school links
- parent-teacher associations
- translations of school communications
- home-school visits
- termly class meetings

- cultural awareness about all groups
- in-service teacher training
- school contracts incorporating parental accountability
- written reports and consultations
- a parents' room in the school
- structures for pupil representation
- homework policy sensitive to 'supplementary schools'
- a representative governing body.

v) Individual needs

Beyond these religious/cultural, curricular, language and general needs affecting all children there may be further special needs pertaining to an individual child.

Having provided a useful tool, a *framework of need analysis*, Parker-Jenkins warns against a slavish adherence to the framework, for:

> There is no such thing for example, as *the* Muslim child - as if he or she typifies all the needs and desires of all Muslim children. Nor should individual children within a group, which has a collective identity, be given a label which is generally applied. (1995: 120)

Appendix 17

Iqra academy fees structure

School Fees

For 1999/2000

Nursery

	per Term (x3)	per Month (x10)
Morning (Half day 9 - 12 Noon)	£500	£150
Afternoon (Half Day 1 - 3:30pm)	£400	£120
Afternoon (including late waiting)	£500	£150
All Day (inclusive of late waiting)	£900	£270

Late Waiting (to 4:30pm)	£1.50 per day
Late Waiting (to 5:30pm)	£3.00 per day

Nursery open from 8:30am - 5:30 pm

Primary

	per Term (x3)	per Month (x10)
Primary One	£400	£120
Primary Two	£425	£128
Primary Three	£450	£135
Primary Four	£500	£150

Lunch is optional at £1.20 per day payable by term or by Month

Payment

School fees are payable by the first day of each term or by direct debit over 10 months from 1st September to 1st June.

Withdrawal
A terms notice of intention to withdraw must be given in writing. Failing to do so will incur the full fee for the following term.

Reminders
Reminders for late payment will incur an admin charge of £10

Admission procedure

Primary One : by Interview Primary Two - Four : by Interview and Test
Admissions are subject to availability . Please send in a completed Application Form at the earliest to avoid disappointment.

IQRA ACADEMY
423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

School Fees 2000/2001

Nursery

	Per Year	*Per Year (Inc. Grant)**
Morning (Half day 9am – 12 noon)	1550.00	*600.00*
Afternoon (Half day 1pm – 3:30pm)	1250.00	*300.00*
Full Day (8.30am – 3.30pm)	2750.00	*1800.00*

**Grants available subject to eligibility.*

Above fees include snacks in the morning and afternoon.

Primary

	Per Annum
Primary One	1250.00
Primary Two	1325.00
Primary Three	1400.00
Primary Four	1475.00
Primary Five	1550.00
Primary Six	1625.00
Primary Seven	1700.00

We hope to start Secondary School next year Insh'Allah

Payment
Fees are payable in three equal instalments at the beginning of each term, or as a concession, they may be paid monthly in ten equal instalments from 27th August to 27th May 2001.

Withdrawal
A terms notice of intention to withdraw must be given in writing. Failing to do so will incur the full fee for the following term.

Reminders
Reminders for late payment will incur an administration charge of £10
Admission subject to availability.

10/08/00

Fees2001

Email: enquiries@iqraacademy.org.uk Website: www.iqraacademy.org.uk

The school is a Registered Charity (No. SCO 27748)

Appendix 18

Priority tables

Males, n=51	PRIORITY(accumulated percentages).					PRIORITY (raw percentages)							Raw data				
ISSUE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	**%**	n	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Racial Problems :	17.65	43.14	62.75	72.55	100	17.65	25.49	19.61	9.80	27.45	**100**	51	9	13	10	5	14
Sex education in schools:	5.88	15.69	56.86	80.39	100	5.88	9.80	41.18	23.53	19.61	**100**	51	3	5	21	12	10
Availability of prayer rooms:	13.73	33.33	52.94	74.51	100	13.73	19.61	19.61	21.57	25.49	**100**	51	7	10	10	11	13
Lack of Islamic education:	54.90	66.67	82.35	98.04	100	54.90	11.76	15.69	15.69	1.96	**100**	51	28	6	8	8	1
Single-sex schooling:	17.65	50.98	54.90	78.43	100	17.65	33.33	3.92	23.53	21.57	**100**	51	9	17	2	12	11

Females, n=69	PRIORITY (accumulated percentages)					PRIORITY (raw percentages)							Raw data				
ISSUE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	%	n	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Racial Problems :	23.19	44.93	59.42	78.26	100	23.19	21.74	14.49	18.84	21.74	100	69	16	15	10	13	15
Sex education in schools:	23.19	33.33	56.52	82.61	100	23.19	10.14	23.19	26.09	17.39	100	69	16	7	16	18	12
Availability of prayer rooms:	7.25	30.43	63.77	85.51	100	7.25	23.19	33.33	21.74	14.49	100	69	5	16	23	15	10
Lack of Islamic education:	30.43	56.52	73.91	92.75	100	30.43	26.09	17.39	18.84	7.25	100	69	21	18	12	13	5
Single-sex schooling:	7.25	26.09	40.58	56.52	100	7.25	18.84	14.49	15.94	43.48	100	69	5	13	10	11	30

TOTAL (males + females) n=120	PRIORITY (accumulated percentages)					PRIORITY (Total percentages)					Male Priorities (percentages)					Female Priorities (percentages)				
ISSUE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Racial Problems :	20.42	44.04	61.09	75.41	100	20.4	23.6	17.1	14.3	24.6	17.7	25.5	19.6	9.8	27.5	23.2	21.7	14.5	18.8	21.7
Sex education in schools:	14.54	24.51	56.69	81.5	100	14.5	9.97	32.2	24.8	18.5	5.88	9.8	41.2	23.5	19.6	23.2	10.1	23.2	26.1	17.4
Availability of prayer rooms:	10.49	31.89	58.36	80.02	100	10.5	21.4	26.5	21.7	20	13.7	19.6	19.6	21.6	25.5	7.25	23.2	33.3	21.7	14.5
Lack of Islamic education:	42.67	61.59	78.13	95.4	100	42.7	18.9	16.5	17.3	4.61	54.9	11.8	15.7	15.7	1.96	30.4	26.1	17.4	18.8	7.25
Single-sex schooling:	12.45	38.54	47.74	67.48	100	12.5	26.1	9.21	19.7	32.5	17.7	33.3	3.92	23.5	21.6	7.25	18.8	14.5	15.9	43.5

Appendix 19

Nomenclature

Nomenclature

Use of appropriate language presents considerable difficulties while tacking subjects like Muslim education, multicultural and anti-racist education. Some words (like *fatwa and jihad*) are in common usage, but not how Muslims use them, others (like *Madrassa, Darul-uloom)* are specialist terms in the field of Muslim education. The following list will inform the reader how these terms have been used in this study.

Bangladeshis: British citizens who have roots in Bangladesh, though they may be born and brought up in this country.

Blacks: An all-encompassing term that includes anybody and everybody who suffer disadvantage due to their colour, race or origin. Muslims on the whole are unhappy to be classified as Blacks.

Darul-Uloom: Literally- house of learning. It is a specialist school (often full time) that concentrates on teaching Islamic sciences. It specialises in producing Islamic scholars and Imams for the Mosques.

Ethnic Minorities: A term applied mainly (but wrongly) to people of Asian or Afro-Caribbean origin living in Britain. Strictly speaking all communities have ethnicity, and all minority communities like the Jews or the Irish should also be considered ethnic minorities.

Fatwa : A legal opinion given by a learned scholar of Islam. It is not binding on anybody except the one who issues it.

Fundamentalist: A term previously applied to strict adherents of Christianity, but now used in a derogatory manner to describe strict adherents of Islam, who are observant of their faith.

Hadith : To do with Prophet Mohammad's teachings, his sayings and biography, as distinct from the Quran which is regarded as word of God.

Hijab: A head scarf worn by Muslim ladies to cover their heads and hair.

Hijra: Term used to describe Prophet Mohammad's flight from Mecca to Medina. Often used to describe flight from one system to another.

Halal: Usually refers to meat slaughtered according to Muslim custom, synonymous with Jewish Kosher food.

Indians: British citizens who have roots in India, though they may be born and brought up in this country.

Islamophobia: a useful shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam - and, therefore, fear or dislike of all or most Muslims (Runymead Trust)

Jihad: A struggle to achieve a worthwhile objective. Muslims struggling to educate their children in this country see their efforts as their *jihad.* Informed Muslims do not use this term as synonymous with "holy war"

Madrassa : A part-time school often attached to a Mosque, where teachings of Quran and basics of Islam take place. Most Muslim children attend a Madrassa after their day school.

Mujahedeen: Those who are engaged in Jihad- struggle of any kind. A term frequently used for fighters in the field.

Multicultural education : In its truest sense it is valuing all cultures equally and imparting an education that would emphasise that all communities have a contribution to make to the development of a tolerant society in this country. In essence it is a term applied to teach about minority cultures and religions where it is necessary to teach about these things.

Muslims: Those who submit their will to God, by declaring that there is no god but God and Muhammad is the Prophet of God. Not all Muslims are strict followers of Islam.

Pakistanis : People who have roots in Pakistan. Some children whose parents were born and brought up in this country are still considered to be Pakistani though they may have only a tentative link with Pakistan. The Pakistani identity is also emphasised by those who are excluded from the mainstream identities.

Racial minorities: A group of people that have common ties of language, culture or place of origin. A term generally applied to Asians or Afro-Caribbeans, though it should also include the white racial minorities like the Polish or Italians.

Racism: To discriminate against somebody on the basis that he/she belongs to a different racial group. Muslims, though not strictly a racial group, suffer from racism nevertheless as they on the whole belong to different racial groups than the majority community.

Sadaqa: An act of charity in the widest sense.

Sadaqa Jaria: An act of continuous (ever lasting) charity. According to the Prophet Mohammad – teaching and learning is an act of *continuous charity*, as is bringing up children in the tradition of Islam.

Ummah: A term used to signify unity of Muslims across the globe.

Appendix 20

Miscellaneous Iqra Academy papers

IQRA ACADEMY

423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

Akhtar Saeed Bhutta

Bishopbriggs
G64 2DP

12th March 2001

Assalam alaukum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuhu

I hope this letter reaches you in the best of health and emaan.

UPDATE ON IQRA ACADEMY

Please find enclosed January and February's edition of Iqra Academy Newsletter.

I would like to inform you that the School is making good progress , with your Dua's it will continue to grow.

Iqra Academy started of with 34 students and now Alhamdulillah has 85 full-time students and insha 'Allah we are hoping to have 120 by August.

I am pleased to inform you that the new head teacher Sister Beverley is settling into her role. Sister Beverley was installed as head teacher in August 2000 and Mash 'Allah she has become a valuable asset to the school.

Insha 'Allah from now on we will be keeping you regularly updated with our newsletters and you are welcome to come and have a look around the School.

It would be appreciated if any relevant information regarding the School could be passed on to any prospective parents.

Wassalam

Asim Khan
Chairman
Board of Governors

E-mail: enquiries@Iqraacademy.org.uk Website: http://www.iqraacademy.org.uk

The school is a Registered Charity (No. SCO 27748)

IQRA ACADEMY
GLASGOW
Faith Knowledge Practice

PARENTS' INFORMATION PACK

Iqra Academy
423 Paisley Road West
Glasgow G51 1PZ

Tel. 0141 427 7999
Fax.0141 427 7979

Parental Information Pack

Contents

Mission Statement

The Iqra Academy is a co-educational private Muslim School. In addition to the Scottish Curriculum, it offers classes in Islamic Studies and Arabic, and throughout it reflects Islamic principles.

- It maintains the highest standards possible through the provision of a secure, healthy and stimulating environment
- It empowers pupils to acquire a critical mentality in evaluating prevailing value systems
- It inculcates attributes of tolerance, respect and understanding
- It applies a balanced curriculum which restores the link between knowledge and values
- It encourages an atmosphere and spirit of teamwork between the administration, the staff and parents.

It pledges itself to a periodical self-evaluation and critical examination of its standards in order to ensure that the excellence it seeks to deliver is continuously maintained for the benefit of the pupils and the community.

School Aims & Objectives

"A father can confer on his children nothing more valuable than the gift of education; it is better that a man should secure a good education for his children than he should leave a treasure of gold and silver for them."

(Hadith)

Iqra Trust, a charitable organization, was founded by a group of dedicated Muslims for the purpose of establishing the first Muslim school in the city of Glasgow. That School is Iqra Academy.

The School endeavors to provide an Islamic education, which is based upon spiritual, moral, social and cultural values. By maintaining a secure healthy and stimulating environment, we aim to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning enables our pupils to maximise their skills and attain their full potential.

The School aspires to lay down the firm foundations that will enable each child to develop into a well-adjusted, upright human being, with a strong faith, proud to be a Muslim, with sound knowledge of his/her heritage and values as well as the world around us, with the skills to make wise judgements, and the confidence and ability to contribute to the betterment of both the local and national communities.

On the academic level, the highest possible standard of behaviour, effort and achievement is expected of each boy and girl.

The Nursery

The nursery is a self-contained unit within the School. The main entrance is through the back playground area. Children may attend morning or afternoon sessions or may stay the whole day from 9.00 – 3.30.

The Nursery is not a playgroup . It emphasises early literacy, numeracy and the development of personal and professional skills. It provides structured learning sessions involving many activities. As children learn through play, there are also many play opportunities using good and varied equipment.

Fees also contribute towards fruit, juice and biscuits that are given to the children mid-session. This charge also covers the cost for cooking ingredients. Milk is provided free for every child every day.

Parents are asked to provide spare clothing to be kept in the Nursery in case of accidents.

The Curriculum

"Seeking after knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim man and woman."
(Hadith)

Emphasis is placed on the teaching of the Qur'an, Hadith, Islamic Studies and Arabic as a modern language as well as the language of the Qur'an. The school also delivers the Scottish Curriculum, which includes the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science as well as History, Geography, Technology, Art and Physical Education. Cross-curricular teaching will reinforce the Islamic ethos of the School, for example by highlighting Islam's role in world history, the Muslim contribution to science, medicine, Mathematics and so on.

Reading Schemes

The School employs various up - to date reading schemes, to promote, encourage and improve every child's reading. Most children are heard read individually at least twice a week.

'The best person among you is the one who learns the Qur'an an teaches it to others." {Hadith}

Children will be taught to memorise the Qur'an, beginning with the shorter Surahs, coupled with a simple explanation of their meanings. As we see the Qur'an as an effective avenue through which Arabic reading skills can be consolidated, it is the policy of the school not to encourage pupils to rely on translation.

Homework policy

The school will seek reassurance from all parents that they will support their children in their homework and reading assignments, to complement and reinforce e the work of the school. Children will be set an appropriate level of homework, and it is hoped that parents will provide the support and framework at home under which their children can complete their assignments.

Parents and Children and Teachers

Parents are encouraged to support their children's reading development by hearing their children read books they have brought home from school at least two or three times a week, and ideally every day. Parents should record any specific comments they have about their child's reading in his or her reading record book, and in particular making a note of any words the child had difficulty in reading or understanding, or any other problems.

Parents who wish their children to become good readers are advised to follow these guidelines:

- Spend a little time together reading to your child ands be sure to let him/her read to you.
- Listen to your child and ask about stories he/she has read. It is important that children have a chance to tell you about what they have read and learned. This ads meaning to the exercise and informs you as to your child's level of comprehension. It provides the opportunity for vocabulary extension and beneficial interaction between you and your child.
- Make home a house of books. If your child sees you reading, you have set a good example that will be followed for life.
- Give books as gifts. Ask your child's teacher or librarian for ideas.
- Visit the library and help your child select books. Borrow some yourself.
- Provide a place for your child to keep books.
- Subscribe to a children's magazine.
- Select books based on your child's interests: hobbies, sports and crafts are some ideas that might be exciting.
- Monitor and cut down on the time your child spends watching TV.
- Give praise - lots of it - to encourage your child to read more.

Your child is in our trust, but both parents and teachers must share the responsibilities as trustees.

"All of you are guardians and are responsible for your words and whatever comes under your care."

(Hadith)

Library Facilities

In addition to the stock of books in each classroom, the School is currently developing its own well-stocked library, which the children will visit insha'Allah with their teachers on a regular basis to borrow books and to be taught how to make the best use of its facilities.

We also encourage parents to enrol their children as members of their local libraries, so that they may have access to additional reference books. The School will also organise such visits for juniors.

Computer Suite

The School has a computer suite that can accommodate a large number of children. Each class is timetabled to use the facilities.

School Hours

The School operates from Mondays to Fridays during term time, with the exception of bank holidays, when the School is closed. The School day runs from 8:50am to 3:30pm. There, may, on occasion, be after school activities, of which parents will be notified. Parents must insure that their children attend School regularly and on time, and they should note that the School gates will be closed at 9:10am onwards.

Staff are not obliged to arrive at School before 8:15am. Between their tie (time) of arrival and the start of the school day, they are usually engaged in preparing for classroom activities. As the children must be under adult supervision at all times whilst on the School premises, it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children are looked after until the start of the School day, when the teachers will receive and take charge of them. The School cannot be held responsible for the safety of children on its premises outside the hours of 8:45am and 3:30pm (except when a supervised after School activity is taking place).

Parents must collect their children promptly and the school must be contacted immediately, if due to exceptional circumstances, a child will be collected late. Persistent lateness will be dealt with severely since it has a noticeable effect upon the child's attainment and the smooth running of the school.

Calendar, School Terms and Holidays

Broadly speaking the academic calendar follows the traditional pattern of local schools, except that holidays are adjusted to accommodate the two main Islamic festivals of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid –ul-Adha.

A school calendar is usually produced at the beginning of August to cover the whole academic year. Special arrangements will be made during the month of Ramadan insha'Allah , of which parents will be duly notified in advance.

School Routine

The School day is broken up into blocks of teaching periods beginning at 9.00 with a break at 10.45 and a lunch break between 12.30-1.30. Salat and registration follow directly after lunch break. The nursery operates different times to the rest of the School.

Assembly

The whole school (with the exception of the nursery) assembles twice a week.

Prayers

" *Teach your child to perform salat from the age of seven*"

Salat, which falls within school hours, will be performed on the premises and all junior pupils are expected to attend. The prayer time provides a unique opportunity for the prayer leader to impart further moral guidance and Islamic ethics to the children as well as help them to develop a stronger sense of identity. On Fridays the elder boys travel to the local mosque to hear the Khutbah.

Lunch

No meals are served by the school and parents must therefore provide their child/ren with a nutritious packed lunch and also ensure that they have a proper breakfast before they come to school. Packed lunch containers should be clearly labelled with the child's name and class.
Sweets, chewing gum and fizzy drinks are not allowed on the school premises. Drinks in glass bottles are also not allowed: please use flasks or cartons. Please give your child only as much as he/she can reasonably eat so that food is not wasted.

Nutrition and Welfare

It is vital for a child's physical and mental development that he/she be given a well- balanced diet. Parents should refrain from feeding their children excessive amounts of "junk" food and drink, which is mainly devoid of nutritional value. These foods and drinks contain additives, some of which are known to cause hyperactivity and other effects in some children.
It is also vital for children to have enough sleep. A child who goes to sleep late at night will not be able to concentrate well at school the next day. It is therefore important to follow a regular bedtime routine at a sensible hour.

Medicines

Parents are expected to take primary responsibility for the health and welfare of their children and should liaise with their local GP, health centre, dentist or optician concerning any immunisations, health check-ups, dental examinations and eye tests their children should require.
The School has a qualified first aider who can treat minor ailments that may arise during the school day. The school must be kept up-to-date on any developments in the child's health. Only medicines for chronic/long term conditions are accepted in the school, e.g. asthma, hayfever, eczema etc. These should be clearly labelled with the child's name and form and handed into the Head teacher.
Parents must not send their children to school if unwell. Any children receiving antibiotics or penicillin must complete the course before returning to school. A clearance letter from the pupil's GP must be provided after a serious infectious illness or one requiring hospital treatment. The school must be notified immediately if a child is diagnosed as having a notifiable illness e.g. meningitis, so that the school can take the necessary precautions.
The School must be notified of the time and name of the person who is to collect and take a child to any medical appointments during school hours. Should any child become ill during school hours the School will inform the parents, who must make the necessary arrangements to take the child home or to the doctor. Only if the illness is assessed to be of a serious nature will the School contact the emergency services.

Student Records

We cannot emphasise sufficiently the need to update the school of any change of home address or telephone numbers whether home or work numbers, where parents or legal guardians can be contacted during the day. Parents are required to submit in writing the names of all persons who are authorised to collect their children on their behalf. Any changes to the usual collection arrangements at the end of the school day must be notified immediately, as staff are under instruction not to allow unauthorised persons to collect the children.

Absence from School

Absence for any reason must be first notified by telephone in the morning before school starts and then in writing to the class teacher. Frequent unauthorised absence will result in the child concerned being excluded from the school.

Manners

"I have been sent to perfect good morals and manners"

As good manners are essential to our beliefs (din) children are expected to show respect for other pupils and adults in the School. Politeness and pleasantness towards others is viewed as a high priority and anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated.

Disciplinary Code

It is the objective of the School to provide a safe, happy and secure Islamic environment, in which each child will learn to acquire self-discipline through developing an awareness of his/her accountability to Allah and an awareness of the rights of other children to learn and play happily and safely without bullying, aggression, victimisation or intimidation.

It is clear from Islamic teachings that a healthy child/adult relationship should be based on trust, total honesty and mutual respect. The most productive child management techniques include rewarding good behaviour and progress through praise, attention and special treats: teaching desired behaviour by talking together in a constructive manner: teaching by example and maintaining a consistent system of rewards and sanctions.

The partnership between parents and the School is essential to uphold and help maintain the high standards of behaviour that the School is endeavouring to foster. If the Head teacher considers it necessary, the parents of an offending child will be asked to come into school to discuss their child's behaviour and to explore ways in which it could be corrected.

In the first instance, any unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher or the staff on duty at the time. There is a sanctions book into which children's names are entered for unacceptable behaviour. The Head teacher will be informed if the child/ren's behaviour is considered serious enough and appropriate action will be taken.

The Head teacher may require pupils to be withdrawn from the School at any time, if it is deemed that the child is unwilling or unable to profit from the educational opportunities provided by the School, or that the child's presence at the School is detrimental to the well being of the school or its other pupils. No refund of school fees will be made for any child who is temporarily or permanently excluded.

Damage to School Property

Pupils are expected to behave in an acceptable manner and respect all persons and property. If any child is found responsible for deliberately damaging school property his/her parents will be required to cover the cost of repairs or replacement incurred by the School. Frequent damage to school property may result in expulsion.

Textbooks and reading books will be lent to pupils during the course of the academic year. There will be a charge for any book, which is lost or damaged.

Uniform

"Cleanliness is half of one's faith"

School uniform is compulsory and no variations will be permitted. Children should learn to take pride in their appearance and understand the need for cleanliness in both person and clothing. It is not acceptable for clothes to be worn for several days in a row without being washed. Shoes should also be kept clean and polished. All items of clothing and personal belongings must be clearly marked with the child's name.

The girls' uniform comprises white blouse, checked blue pinafore, royal blue school blazer, navy tights and white hijab. The boys' uniform comprises black trousers, white shirt, school tie and blazer. For PE boys may wear T.shirt and shorts while girls will wear a tracksuit. Nursery students are asked to wear a royal blue tracksuit. The majority of these items can be ordered through the School.

Hairstyles and Jewellery

Boys are required to maintain a conservative haircut. Where girls have collar length hair or longer they are required to keep it tied back or plaited. Pupils are not permitted to wear jewellery or make-up to school

Personal possessions and Valuables

Pupils must not bring items of value to school such as expensive watches, jewellery and money. The School cannot accept liability for loss of personal items.

Parents are required to ensure that children do not bring anything into school which is likely to distract their own or other children's' attention away from learning, such as computer games or noisy toys.

Lost Property

Lost property is kept in the School Secretary's office from where it can be collected. Items unclaimed at the end of each month will be disposed of.

Parent Visits and Evenings

Parents are welcome to visit the School to discuss any matters concerning their children, in the first instance with their class teacher and further, if necessary, with the Head teacher. However, in order to ensure that adequate attention is given

to all such interviews, it is important that a prior appointment is made with the member of staff concerned, as no parents are allowed to enter the classrooms during school hours. Parents Evenings are held at least twice a year for parents to have the opportunity to discuss the progress of their children and view their work.

Parents visiting the School are requested, for security reasons, to sign the visitors' book in the front reception.

Parental Assistance

Iqra Academy considers parents to be very valuable partners in the education process. We recognise that parents have great expertise in certain fields and we welcome their involvement in the school in areas such as hearing children read and giving support to class teachers, particularly if such help can be offered on a regular basis.

However we ask volunteers to bear in mind the following points:

- Parent helpers must respect the confidentiality of the school
- No younger pre-school children can be allowed into the classrooms
- Helpers will act under the instructions of the class teacher
- Helpers are requested to sign the visitors' book in the front reception
- It may not be advisable for parents to be in the same classes as their children

Anyone wishing to volunteer their services should contact the Head teacher.

Communication between School and Home

From time to time the School will be sending newsletters, memoranda, details of the school calendar or other information home with the children at the end of the school day. It would therefore be advisable for parents to check their children's school bags on a regular basis for such communications as children may have the tendency to forget about them.

Extra-Curricular Activities and Clubs

Children need a well-rounded education, not all of which can be achieved in the classroom in the rigid framework of a normal school day. It is important that they should develop hobbies and interests, which will stimulate their minds and extend their range of abilities to encompass new fields. Such an objective can be achieved through the provision of clubs, which will respond to the child's needs and interests. Because Iqra Academy does not just serve the local community but also families living a long distance away, the staff have decided to extend the school day on Wednesdays so as to offer a variety of clubs to all children.

School Trips and Educational Excursions

Educational visits have a valuable role to play in helping children to relate their class work to the real world. The School will therefore be organising insha'Allah a number of appropriate excursions during the academic year not only to reinforce what they are learning in the classroom but also to extend their horizons.

Parents will be requested to sign an authorisation slip prior to any such excursion. If the School has not received written consent from the parents by the date of the trip the child will not be permitted to accompany his or her class.

School Photographs

Following school tradition, the School will insha'Allah invite the services of a professional photographer to record class and individual photographs.

Admissions Policy

Children will be invited along with their parents to attend an interview and a test with the Head teacher and parents will be informed of the outcome in writing.

School Fees

School fees are currently set at a fixed amount for each year group, which includes the cost of stationery and books including exercise books.

Parents are permitted to pay the fees in not more than three termly instalments or by 10 monthly Direct Debit instalments through the bank only. Requests for such financial arrangements should be discussed on an individual basis by appointment.

All parents are requested to give at least one terms notice of their intention to withdraw their child from the School. If such notice is not given parents will be liable for the fees for the whole of the current and following term.

Full details of the current fee structure may be obtained from the School Secretary.

IQRA ACADEMY
CODE OF CONDUCT

We must

- **Show Taqwa (awareness of Allah) in everything we do.**
- **Obey and respect all teachers, staff members, *pupils* and elders.**
- **Be kind and show good manners to others.**
- **Remember that a Muslim does not hurt others with his/her hands or tongue.**
- **Say salam to everyone we see.**
- **Respect the School building and help keep it neat and tidy.**
- **Say the prayers sincerely.**
- **Obey all the rules inside and outside the building.**
- **Strive hard to be a model muslim student seeking knowledge in the name of Allah.**
- **Remember that we are Muslims at all times wherever we may be. Our goal is to live as a Muslim and die as a Muslim**

Say "O my Lord, increase me in knowledge"

Iqra Academy
School Calendar 1999/2000

Autumn Term	
First Day of Autumn Term	Wednesday, 18th August, 1999
Parent's Evening	Thursday, 9th September, 1999
September Weekend Holiday	Friday, 24th September, 1999 and Monday, 27th September, 1999
Half Term Holiday	Monday, 11th October, 1999 until Friday, 15th October, 1999
Ramadan Programme	Wednesday, 22nd December, 1999
Last Day of Autumn Term	Thursday, 23rd December, 1999
Spring Term	
First Day of Spring Term	Tuesday, 11th January, 2000
Eid party (normal school hours)	Friday, 14th January, 2000
Parent's Evening	Thursday, 27 January, 2000
Spelling Bee Competition	Thursday 17th February, 2000
Half Term Holiday	Friday, 18th February, 2000 and Monday, 21st February, 2000
Yaum al-Arafa – no school	Thursday, 16th March, 2000
Eid Day – no school	Friday, 17th March, 2000
Eid Holiday	Monday, 20th March, 2000
Eid Party (normal school hours)	Tuesday, 21st March, 2000
Last Day of Spring Term	Friday, 7th April, 2000
Summer Term	
First Day of Summer Term	Tuesday, 25th April, 2000
May Day Bank Holiday	Monday, 1st May, 2000
Half Term Holiday	Friday, 26th May, 2000 and Monday, 29th May 2000
Parent's Evening	Thursday 15th June, 2000
End of Year Function (open to public)	Friday, 23rd June, 2000
Last Day of Term	Friday, 30th June, 2000

There are 190 days in the academic year.

School begins at 8.50 a.m. and finishes at 3.30 p.m. Pupils must not arrive before 8.30 a.m. and must be collected promptly.
Lunch is from 12:30pm to 1:30pm including Zohar Salat.

IQRA ACADEMY

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2001/2002

TERM 1

Students return to School	Monday 20th August 2001
September Weekend Students return to School	Friday 21st September- Monday 24th September 2001 Tuesday 25th September 2001
Half term Students Return to School	Wednesday 17th October- Friday 19th October 2001 Monday 22nd October 2001
Eid Holiday Students return to School	Friday 14th December- Monday 17th December Tuesday 18th December 2001
End of Term Holidays	Monday 24th December 2001- January 4th 2002

TERM 2

Students return to School	Monday 7th January 2002
Half term & Eid holidays	Monday 18th February- Monday 25th February 2002
Students return to School	Tuesday 26th February 2002
End of term Holidays	Wed 27th March- Friday 5th April 2002

TERM 3

Students return to School	Monday 8th April 2002
Bank Holiday	Monday 6th May 2002
Half Term Students return	Friday 24th May –Monday 27th May 2002 Tuesday 28th May
Last Day	Thursday 27th June

IQRA ACADEMY

Staff 1999/2000

Abdul Aziz Ahmed: Headteacher

Brother Abdul Aziz Ahmed was: born in Nottingham, England; Educated at Mundella Grammar School, Trent University and Leicester University. He has been a qualified teacher since 1984 and has been involved in the management of Muslim Schools (including the Islamia School, London) since 1990. He has experience teaching in England, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the USA. He has carried out post-graduate studies and research at the Open University, SOAS, University of London and the Institute of Education. He has a number of publications and translations.

Gadija Esau: Primary Teacher

Sister Gadija Esau was born and educated in South Africa. She continued her post-graduate studies in London where she qualified as a Primary School teacher from North London University. She has several years of teaching experience in London, South Africa, Saudi Arabia and The United States of America.

Asma Ahmad: Primary Teacher

Sister Asma Ahmad graduated with a B.Ed Honours Degree in Primary Teaching from Glasgow University, Jordanhill Campus. She has three years Primary teaching experience, focusing one year on Bilingual Teaching which holds a special interest for her.

Shabana Khaliq: Primary Teacher

Sister Shabana Khaliq graduated with a degree in Medicinal Chemistry from Glasgow University after which she decided to study to become a Primary School teacher. She gained her qualified teacher status from Strathclyde University with excellent grades and distinction in teaching.

PTO

Rosina Ahmed: Nursery Assistant
Sister Rosina Ahmed studied at Glasgow College of Nautical Studies where she gained her NNEB certificate in Nursery Nursing. She has since worked in several Nurseries and crèches.

Shaeen Ahmad: Nursery Nurse
Sister Shaeen Ahmad has 8 years experience teaching in a wide range of state nurseries. She achieved her NNEB Certificate in Nursery Nursing from Langside College.

Sami Mohammad Al-Halawani: Arabic Language Teacher
Br Sami Al-Halawani has achieved a B.Ed in English/Arabic Education, a B.A in English/Arabic Literature, a M.Sc. in Linguistics and is currently doing his Ph.D. in Arabic/English translation/interpretation at Heriot Watt University. He has been teaching Arabic since1981 at all levels.

Asma Sheikh: Islamic Studies/Quran Teacher
Asma Shaikh gained her secular education in Glasgow culminating a BSc in Pharmacy from Strathclyde University. She is well known in the community for her teaching in mosques and homes. She gained a Diploma in Islamic Studies from al-Huda Institute in Islamabad. She has been teaching Islamic Studies for many years.

Mrs Javed: Urdu Language Teacher

In the name of Allah Most gracious, Most merciful

IQRA ACADEMY

423 Paisley Road West, Glasgow, G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 or 0141 427 7979

Newsletter

April 99

Assalam Aleikum

Welcome to the first edition of the "*Iqra Academy Newsletter*". It is our intention to produce, if possible, one newsletter every two months Insha Allah. The idea is to keep parents, teachers, and the community at large in touch and informed.

Children are a trust in the hands of their parents. Doing well, by training them and teaching them good habits, makes them grow up well, and the parents are rewarded for fulfilling their duties.

The chapter of Al Alaq (96) is the first revelation of the Holy Qur'an on Muhammad, peace be upon him, in Makkah. It begins with "*Read*". This first revelation honours Reading, Teaching and the Pen and will be the ethos of the school.

Allah, the Almighty, coupled faith with knowledge to tell us that the knowledgeable persons, being believers, are the highest in rank and honour in this life and the hereafter.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "*Seeking knowledge is the obligation of every Muslim.*" *(Al Baihaqi)*. Thus, the Prophet, peace be upon him, considered it a duty of all Muslims.

The Messenger of Allah also said: "*He who pursues a way for seeking knowledge, Allah will make it easy for him to find the way to paradise.*"(Muslim)

Following the recommendations of the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet peace be upon him, Iqra Academy will adopt the above principles as well as the Scottish National Curriculum.

Islam encourages Muslims to acquire knowledge and to keep on increasing it. Knowledge according to Islam is any kind of useful information whether religious or secular.

In teaching children we hope to use the best methods and the most interesting techniques so that we can inculcate from the very beginning love and curiosity for acquiring knowledge.

- Iqra Academy will accommodate Nursery, Primary, and Secondary Classes once it is fully operational, however Nursery and Primary will be opened first Insha Allah.

- This project is the first of it's kind in Scotland and we are doing our best to succeed. However, all positive suggestions and comments are welcome and we humbly request your assistance in making this project possible.

- Anyone, who is interested in sport activities, our Gym Hall is available for use. Please phone to find out more.

- In the following weeks, Iqra Academy will be offering evening and weekend classes for Arabic , Urdu, and Islamic studies. If you are interested, please call.

- Iqra Academy has no government funds, hence in order to help us bring this project to reality, we request everyone to have an Iqra Charity box in their premises in order to help funding the school.

- Anyone interested in visiting the school is most welcome to do so by appointment. For *further information contact Dr. Hamoud or Mrs* Nizami during weekdays between 10–12am.
  Tel: 0141 427 7979

- Parents, who would like to be on our mailing list for future newsletters, should forward their address as soon as possible to the school.

- We hope the above is informative and we will keep you advised of our progress in the future.

NB: Registration forms for enrolment will follow in due course Insha Allah.

Wassalam

MAY ALLAH BE PLEASED WITH YOU FOR PASSING THIS NEWSLETTER TO OTHERS. JAZAK ALLAH KHAIR

NUMBER OF NEWSLETTERS POSTED: 247

ISSUE NO: 1

IQRA ACADEMY
423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

Date: 04 December 2000

Dear Parents/Guardians

Assalaam alaykum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh

I hope this letter finds you in the best of health and emaan.

NEWSLETTER

NURSERY
Alhamdulilah, Iqra Nursery is progressing very well. The pupils in the Nursery, as well as the staff and some parents, thoroughly enjoyed the trip to the Museum of Transport.

WORK PLACEMENT
Brother Janghir Khan is a Physical Education teacher, and is currently on a work placement at Iqra Academy. He is now taking the P.E classes of pupils. We have purchased some new sports equipment for the pupils to use, and Insha'Allah more will be purchased in the future as required.

VOLUNTEERS
Alhamdulilah, there are many volunteers who are helping class teachers in the school. We would like to thank Abda Malik, Nasreen Aslam, Mrs Khan, Nazia Ali (an 'Alima who has recently graduated from Jamea tul Imam in Bradford) and Tanzeela Majeed.

HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTION
Iqra Academy received a visit by three inspectors. This was the first stage of school registration. The scheduled visit was originally planned for two days, but Alhamdulilah the inspectors were pleased with the progress of the school and the visit lasted only one day. The inspectors toured the school, talked to class teachers, sat in class lessons and checked sample works of pupils. Overall the inspection went well. Insha'Allah, we will inform you of more details when a written report is received.

RAMADHAN
Insha'Allah, we will arrange Iftari programmes for parents. More details will be given when dates are confirmed.

Finally, I am pleased to inform you that Sister Beverley will, Insha'Allah, be starting back at Iqra Academy on the 18th of December.

Jazak'Allah Khairan

Sami Al-Halawani

IQRA ACADEMY

423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

Head Teacher's Newsletter

Newsletter No. 10

Friday 19th November

Dear Parents

Asalamu alaykum

Ramadan hours

Ramadan is approaching. There is a tradition in most English Muslim schools to close a little earlier during Ramadan. As the time of *Iftar* is considerably earlier in Glasgow and parents' circumstances are different, we thought we would consult parents before deciding on Ramadan hours. Please indicate on the slip below whether you would prefer to close the school at 3.00 p.m. during Ramadan or keep the hours the same as at normal.

The last day of school will be Thursday 23rd December. School will reopen after Eid.

Uniforms

Uniforms will, *inshallah,* be ready before Ramadan. Please complete the attached order form.

Lunch

I would like to thank Mrs Hussain for last week's lunch, which raised £45 for the school and for baking the cakes on Thursday. Thanks are also due to Mrs Kurshid Bibi who made the lamb burgers. Thursday's meal raised £55. Sister Kurshid will be making lunch once a week for the next few weeks. Sami' al-Halawani's wife, sister Mona will be making an Egyptian delicacy for us on Thursday and we will be having lamb and rice on Tuesday. The cost of each meal will be £1.50.

Nursery fees

Alhamdullilah, we expect the money from the Nursery partnership scheme to come to the school within the next few days. This will greatly reduce the fees for nursery pupils. We expect that many of the parents will now opt to make their children full-time.

Teacher's Assistant

Sister Taj Ahmed will join us next week as a teacher's assistant. She will work in Class One on a part-time basis.

Library Books

I would like to thank Mr and Mrs Hussain for donating the library books and computer programs to the school. We welcome donations of new or nearly new books and computer programs that are suitable for our school library.

Wa Salam

Abdul Aziz Ahmed
Head Teacher

I would like the school to close at 3.00 p.m. in Ramadan ☐
I would like the school to close at the normal time during Ramadan ☐
(please tick one)

Signed .....
Name of child/ children:

email: Iqra_academy@hotmail.com **Website:** http://iqra-academy.faithweb.com

The school is a Registered Charity (No. SCO 27748)

IQRA ACADEMY

423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

Head Teacher's Newsletter

Newsletter No. 13

Friday 22nd of January, 2000

Dear Parents

Asalamu alaykum

Parents' evening

We are now half way through the year. The parents' evening and mid-year reports will give us a chance to reflect on the progress of individual children and hear comments about the progress of the school. As mentioned in the school calendar given to all parents at the beginning of the year, the parents' evening will be Thursday 27th January. It will begin at 6.00 and end at 8.30. Parents are asked to make 10 minute appointments. If we all try and keep to the appointment schedule, the all parents will be able to meet the teachers. Anyone that needs to discuss matters further are asked to make an appointment on a different date. The appointment sheets will be posted on the doors of the respective classes. Teacher Sami's and Teacher Asma's appointment sheets will be on Class Three and Class Two doors.

The nursery will have an open day on 2nd of February. If any parent would like to see the Head Teacher, I will be available for appointments on Friday 4th February. Please contact the office to make an appointment.

Volunteers

As the school has been growing over the last few weeks, we are particularly grateful to Mrs Zarruq and Mrs Jalib for volunteering to help in the Nursery and Class One. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the office.

Spelling Bee

We have decided to postpone the Spelling Bee competition until Thursday 2nd of March and Friday 3rd of March. The words will be given to the children approximately one month in advance and there will be 'rehearsals' so that the children are fully aware of the format. The spelling bee is an American knock-out competition that encourages the memorisation of the spelling of set words. The Spelling Bee will be during normal school hours.

Hajj Course

An organisation called Andalus are holding a Hajj course at the school on 5th of February. I have personally been involved in several such courses and found them to be excellent preparation for those planning to perform Hajj and useful information for those seeking general knowledge about Islam and Islamic law.

Literature, fiction and fantasy

There may be questions from parents about our policy on children's literature and fiction. Children are exposed to a variety of literature. To develop language skills, it is best to read the best literature available in that language. The reading scheme has been chosen because it offers a variety of good reading material. We usually plan our literature units around award

IQRA ACADEMY

423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

Head Teacher's Newsletter

Newsletter No. 14

Friday 11th of February, 2000

Dear Parents

Asalamu alaykum

Nursery Uniforms

The Nursery uniforms are ready. There are unfortunately only a limited number due to the unexpected increase in children attending the Nursery. There will be more stock coming in a few weeks. The royal blue sweatshirts with the school logo and black jogging pants with a combined cost of £25 and the optional white polo shirt costing £5 are available from the office.

Lunch

We would like to thank the Hussain family (the mother and father of Amara in P1) for donating the pizza last week. It raised £55 towards gym equipment.
Next week Mrs Hussain (the mother of Ayisha, Adam and Idris) will be making a pasta meal on Thursday. We will have curry and pitta bread on Tuesday.

Noise after school

Children are not allowed to run around the hall after school. Please ensure that they are supervised once you have collected them from the class.

Games for wet playtimes

We would welcome donations from anyone who has any spare board games in good condition that can be used by our children during wet playtimes.

Tuck Shop

We are considering whether we could run a small tuck shop at the school. We welcome any parents who would be interested in helping us. Please contact the office if you have some time to donate as a volunteer.

Spelling Bee

The Spelling Bee will take place on Thursday 2nd March and Friday 3rd March. The words have been distributed to most children. Please remind your children that it is just a little competitive fun. The challenge is to try and learn all the words and not to knock out your opponents. Parents are welcome to attend.

Visit of Muhammad Sarwar MP

Muhammad Sarwar MP visited our school today. He was particularly impressed with the quality of questions asked by Class Three and as a result invited them all to visit him at the House of Commons in London. I am already looking into the feasibility of such a trip later in the year.

Hajj Course

The school helped Andalus, a new Islamic organisation, organise a Hajj course last Saturday at the Iqra Academy.

Wasalam
Abdul Aziz

email: Iqra_academy@hotmail.com **Website:** http://iqra-academy.faithweb.com

The school is a Registered Charity (No. SCO 27748)

IQRA ACADEMY

423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

Head Teacher's Newsletter

Newsletter No. 15

Friday 25th of February, 2000

Dear Parents

Asalamu alaykum

Nursery Uniforms
The cost of the Nursery uniforms has been reduced to £20. The optional polo shirt remains £5.

Tax rebates for Nursery parents
There is up to £50 for working parents whose children attend nursery at Iqra. Applications need to be made to the Inland Revenue on form WFTC502. Further details are available via the helpline on 0845 609 5000.

Fundraising and family-oriented internet services through the school
If you change internet provider to the Hope internet service and choose Iqra Academy as your sponsored school, we will receive money towards books and supplies. This does not cost you or the school anything. I have looked at the service and it contains a lot of good material for school children and parents. A separate letter explains the details.

Lunch
We would like to thank the Bashir family (the mother and father of Amara in P1) for donating the pizza and the Hussain family (the mother of Ayisha, Adam and Idris) for donating the pasta at the beginning of the month. We would also like to thank the Hussain family (the mother of Shamsa) for donating the kebabs yesterday. A lunch menu for the next few meals is attached.

Games for wet playtimes
I would like to thank Mrs Azam for donating some games to the school.

Spelling Bee
The Spelling Bee will take place on Thursday 2nd March and Friday 3rd March. The words have been distributed to most children. Please remind your children that it is just a little competitive fun. The challenge is to try and learn all the words and not to knock out your opponents. Parents are welcome to attend.

Hajj
I intend to perform Hajj this year. I will be away from school from Friday 10th March until Thursday 23rd March. Asma Ahmad will cover for most of the time but there will be a substitute for two days.
The school will be closed on Thursday 16th, Friday 17th and Monday 20th March.

Secondary School at Iqra
We are making progress with our plans for the secondary school. *Inshallah* we will open the S1 Girls class in August. Plans for the Boys school are already underway.

Wasalam
Abdul Aziz

email: Iqra_academy@hotmail.com **Website:** http://iqra-academy.faithweb.com

The school is a Registered Charity (No. SCO 27748)

IQRA ACADEMY

423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

Head Teacher's Newsletter

Newsletter No. 16

Wednesday 8th March

Dear Parents

Asalamu alaykum

Spelling Bee
Overall, I was pleased with the hard work that was put into our Spelling Bee competition. However, I feel that the P6 children did not do as well as I expected and I suspect that several of them did not work hard enough. For this reason, they will be given another opportunity to learn all the words and compete one more time. The result of the first competition will stand. The date of the Primary Six Spelling Bee will be the 27th of March. The winners of the competition were:

Primary One:	**Idris Hussain**
Primary Two:	**Anum Malik**
Primary Three:	**Hira Ahmed**
Primary Four:	**Shamsa Hussain**
Primary Five:	**Nur Fatima Ahmed**
Primary Six:	**Akhlac Ghos**

They will be given their prizes at the Eid party.

Fundraising
A few parents have taken up the idea of switching to hope and nominating our school. They have found the family-orientated homepage beneficial. There are still some disks available from the office.
We are still collecting Maths for Schools tokens found on crisp packets. A chart showing our progress and the types of products that have the tokens is on the wall outside Class One.

Lunch
The money raised by the two Mrs Hussains (the mother of Reha and Adil and the mother of Shamsa) was used to purchase books for the Nursery. Money raised by previous lunch donations has been earmarked for PE equipment, which is expected very soon. A menu for the next two weeks is attached.

Karate
There will be self defence classes for boys and men at Iqra Academy on Wednesdays at 7.00 p.m. and Saturdays at 3.00 p.m.. The classes will be taught by Brother Ameed. He is an experienced instructor. The cost of each session will be £1.50. The classes will last for one hour and will take place in the gym. If you are interested, please just come along to the gym next Wednesday.

Shabbir Ali
Shabbir Ali, a specialist in comparative religion, will be visiting Glasgow for a series of debates with prominent Christians. He will give a lecture on *The Importance of Dawa to non-Muslims* at

IQRA ACADEMY

423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

Iqra Academy on Wednesday 22nd March. The programme will begin at 7.00 p.m. but as places are limited we would like people to arrive early.

Hajj
While I am away performing Hajj, Sister Asma Ahmad will cover on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and Sister Shaheen Haq will cover on Monday and Tuesday. Sister Shaheen is an experienced, qualified teacher registered with the General Teaching Council of Scotland.

Please make *dua* for me while I am away. You will of course all be in my *duas* while I am away.

Eid Party
The staff have decided that they would like to have the Eid party on Friday 24th March, 2000 and not on the 21st as originally planned and mentioned in calendar.

Thank you for your continued support.

Wasalam

Abdul Aziz Ahmed

email: Iqra_academy@hotmail.com **Website:** http://iqra-academy.faithweb.com

The school is a Registered Charity (No. SCO 27748)

Staff Meeting Minutes
Meeting Number 7

3/3/00

Present: Abdul Aziz Ahmed, Shaeen Ahmad, Gadija Esau, Shabana Khaliq, Khatoon Shafi,

Apologies: none

The meeting began at 3.45 p.m.

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and agreed.
2. Outstanding actions include the purchase of sports equipment by Sister Taj and Gadija. The opening of a tuck shop will be delayed until it is feasible.

   Action: Sister Taj and Sister Gadija
3. Abdul Aziz gave an overview of the contents of the Standards in Education Bill and the most important changes for independent schools. In particular, he highlighted the fact that registration is to be made more difficult, that there is a move towards only GTC registered teachers being allowed to work in independent schools and that corporal punishment would be outlawed in independent schools as a result of the bill becoming law.
4. There was a brief overview of the proposed bullying policy. This is to be discussed again once the teachers have had an opportunity to review the book *Action Against Bullying by Andrew Mellor.*

   Action: Abdul Aziz
5. The issues related to the Child Protection Policy were discussed. It was decided to address this policy over a series of meetings beginning once Abdul Aziz returns from Hajj.
6. Abdul Aziz presented the school development plan and asked the staff to look over it for any glaring omissions. They were asked to report their suggestions to him shortly after his return.
7. There was considerable discussion about the use of Arabic and Urdu labels in the Nursery Class. It was decided that only Arabic and English labels were to be used as specific 'reading material' although the use of other scripts and languages would be encouraged within the overall objective of developing awareness of other scripts. There was an urgent need for new and clear labels in the Nursery.

   Action: Nursery staff
8. There was discussion about the aims, objectives and early years strategies for encouraging reading. This discussion will be reflected in the ongoing curriculum development on Language.

   Action Abdul Aziz

The meeting ended at 4.20 p.m.

In the name of Allah the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful

Iqra Academy

Iqra Academy is Scotland's first Muslim school. It offers a curriculum within Scotland's 5-14 guidelines while maintaining an Islamic ethos. It currently caters for the whole primary range and intends to open its doors to Senior One girls next year.

In addition to the Scottish National Curriculum, the school offer instruction in Quran, Arabic, Urdu and Islamic Studies. It has two large gymnasiums, a prayer area and a computer lab. All its staff were trained in Britain and are qualified to teach in Scotland.

The school is known for its happy atmosphere and for its aspirations to 'faith, knowledge and practice.'

Applications for 2000/2001

There are a few vacancies for the Primary and Nursery Classes.

The school is now processing applications for **Senior One Girls**. To apply please contact the office for an application form and prospectus. Offers will be made after interviews and entrance tests. There will be two dates for interviews and tests. They will be:

Friday 31st March
Thursday 6th April

The trust is currently examining the feasibility of opening a **Senior One Boys** class. If you are interested and would like more information please contact the office.

Iqra Academy
423 Paisley Road West
Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999

IQRA ACADEMY

423 Paisley Road West Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999 Fax: 0141 427 7979

May 2001 Safar 1421

IQRA ACADEMY NEWSLETTER UPDATE

Anas bin Malik narrated that the Prophet (saw) said '*When carried to his grave, a deceased person is followed by three, two of which return (after the burial) and one remains with him. His relatives, his wealth and his deeds follow him, his relatives and his property go back, while his deeds remain with him'.* (Bukhari)

Assalam alaykum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuhu

Staffing Changes

The beginning of this third term has seen some new faces. Br Innes Shaheen has initially taken over from Sr Shazia Akhtar who, for personal reasons, could not be with us this term. At the same time Br Uthman has come in as a classroom assistant and is working with Primary 1 five mornings a week.

Sr Aisha Saddiq however has started her maternity leave earlier than expected. We wish her and her family the very best. Primary 4/5 is currently being taught by myself but something more permanent is currently being looked at insha 'Allah.

Topics this Term

Included at the back of this newsletter is a list of the topics that each class will be studying this year. We hope that this be of use to you but if you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact myself or the class teacher.

Attendance

Unfortunately there are a small number of children whose attendance is still relatively poor. We ask that parents try to ensure that students attend on a regular basis and only miss school due to illness. We also ask that if possible medical appointments are made either first thing in morning or at the end of School.

Lateness

At the same time lateness both in the mornings and afternoons is still a problem. A number of Parents are still regularly dropping off their children between 9.00 and 9.30. This is greatly disrupting lessons and is not fair on all students. Registration takes place at 8.50 and it is essential that pupils are there for this time.

At the same time a number of parents are consistently picking up their children late. Nursery ends at 3.15 and the School at 3.30. Only children who are attending after school classes should be in school

SCHOOL UNIFORM PRICE LIST & ORDER FORM

SCHOOL UNIFORM

BLAZER	£45.00
PINAFORE	£25.00
TIE	£2.50
HIJAB	£4.00
SHIRTS (with school logo)	£6.00

NURSERY

JOGGING SUITS (Royal Blue with School logo)	£20.00
WHITE POLO SHIRTS (with school logo)	£6.00

ITEM OF CLOTHING	SIZE	PRICE PER ITEM	QUANTITY	TOTAL

TOTAL

In the name of Allah, Most Beneficent, Most Merciful

IQRA ACADEMY
is to open a

Secondary School for Girls

Following the successful opening of Scotland's first Muslim School, Iqra Academy are now inviting applications for Senior One.

Iqra Academy
423 Paisley Road West
Glasgow G51 1PZ
Tel: 0141 427 7999