

# ISLAMOPHOBIA: SCHOOLS

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AWARENESS MONTH

Recent data shows that Islamophobia in schools continues to be an issue across the UK.

A report conducted by The Better Community Business Network (BCBN) and the University of East London, School of Psychology, looks at the obstacles faced by young Muslims in their battle to maintain their mental health. The report, which was based on the responses of 729 young Muslims, reveals that:

- **Over 70%** of those who say they experience mental health struggles also say that they have been victims of Islamophobia.
- **64% of young Muslims** said they experienced suicidal thoughts.
- **4 in 5 young Muslims** say they suffered mental health struggles.
- **60%** said they would not tell their parents if they had a mental health struggle.
- **90% of service users** said it was important for mental health support services to be faith and culturally sensitive.
- **More than 2/3 of participants** experienced bullying (mainly in a public setting). Over 70% say bullying occurred in schools.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Case Study from the IRU

Sana\*, a school teacher, was shocked when one of her pupils called her a “bomber”. When Sana reported the incident to the school leadership team (SLT), she was disappointed to find the SLT lacked the urgency and concern to deal with the incident promptly and effectively. Sana’s disappointment quickly turned into distress when she discovered that the school had no effective procedure in place to deal with incidents of bullying by students. She contemplated a situation where she would have to face Islamophobic bullying from pupils on a daily basis without any formal routes to resolve the matter.<sup>[2]</sup>

\* Sana is a pseudonym

1. Hidden Survivors: Uncovering the Mental Health Struggles of Young British Muslims, Better Community Business Network, 2021  
2. IRU Case Study, <https://www.theiru.org.uk/project/student-teacher-bullying-in-the-classroom-sanas-story/>