

School Kids Labeled 'Racist' If They Miss Islam Workshop

Parents in Staffordshire, England, were told their children would be punished for racism—using a “Racial Discrimination” note attached permanently to the child’s school record—if they missed a trip to a workshop on Islam.

Head teacher Lynn Small made the trip—involving grades 4,5 and 6—mandatory in a letter last week, emphasizing all absences will be “investigated for their credibility and will only be sanctioned with a GP sick note.”

The letter said, “Children will be looking at religious artifacts similar to those that would be on display in a museum. They will not be partaking in any religious practices.

“Refusal to allow your child to attend this trip will result in a Racial Discrimination note being attached to your child’s education record, which will remain on this file throughout their school career.”

Small has now apologized for “inaccuracies” in the letter and told parents to “disregard” a section of it.

Parents of children at Littleton Green Community School were outraged by the threat.

One father, David Rhys, said that if parents do not allow their children on a trip, “That doesn’t mean the parents are racist, and it certainly is not fair to label the children as racist for the rest of their school life.

“These children are very young, but something like that could affect the rest of their lives.”

Another parent, Tracy Ward, said she was “shocked” by the letter.

She said, "To be told my kids have got to attend this workshop is disgusting."

Mother Gillian Claridge said, "It was a draconian move, and it's left a lot of parents fuming."

And Gavin Williamson, MP for South Staffordshire, said the school's approach had been "unfair," "heavy-handed and slightly bonkers."

Staffordshire County Council said that although this was an issue for the school, it had "strongly advised" the head teacher to reassure parents about their right to withdraw children from religious activities.