



**FSU**  
FREE SPEECH UNION

THE FREE SPEECH UNION  
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Kim Leadbeater MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

5<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear Ms Leadbeater,

I am writing to you in my capacity as General Secretary of the Free Speech Union, a non-partisan, mass membership public interest body that stands up for the speech rights of its members and campaigns for free speech more widely.

This letter concerns a teacher in your constituency of Batley and Spenn. You will doubtless be familiar with his predicament.

The teacher, whom I will not name, was suspended from Batley Grammar School after he showed students in his religious studies class cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad. The suspension was lifted after the school found, following investigation, that he had not intended to cause offence.

Despite the lifting of the suspension, the teacher has not returned to his home or his job. Such is the abiding anger of some parents and activists, his life remains in danger.

I hope you will agree that this state of affairs is intolerable. The teacher – your constituent, I believe – was not merely doing his job, he was upholding the school's legal obligation to actively promote the fundamental British values of mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Your own, albeit tangential involvement in the teacher's plight recently came under scrutiny. It was revealed in June of this year that the Jo Cox Foundation, of which you were at the time an ambassador, had made a donation of £1,000 to Purpose of Life, a charity which publicly named the teacher and, we believe, recklessly endangered his life by accusing him of 'insulting Islam', of 'hatred', 'sadistic behaviour' and 'terrorism'.

I understand that the donation was made before Purpose of Life identified the teacher. I am confident that, as the teacher's MP, you share our grave concern at any act which could result in a teacher fearing for his life simply for doing his job. Could I therefore ask for your reassurance that you have taken active steps to ensure the wellbeing of the teacher?

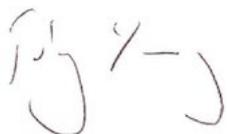
It would be helpful to know, for instance, whether you have liaised with West Yorkshire Police to ensure that the teacher has been offered adequate protection against the threat to his safety. Have you made any efforts to secure a guarantee from the parents and activists who protested about the teacher that neither he

nor his family would be in any danger if he returned to his job at Batley Grammar School? Have you tried to make contact with the teacher to assure him that his MP is looking out for his interests?

I believe that this is a good opportunity, following your by-election success, to demonstrate your commitment to the liberal values of tolerance and open-mindedness.

Your [comments](#) in May 2021 that it was “completely unacceptable that a teacher was forced into hiding and his family were put at risk” were most welcome. I look forward to hearing from you regarding further steps you have taken.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Toby Young'.

Toby Young  
General Secretary  
The Free Speech Union  
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