

Co-Located Islamic Schools

ISLA & Joffe Academy

Unique Context

Muslim Prayers

- Five Daily Prayers:
 - Dawn
 - Early Afternoon
 - Late Afternoon
 - After Sunset
 - Twilight
- Friday sermon + prayer

Mosque: “Open Doors”

- Shared premises: Co-located with school, community center, prayer hall
- Campus gate unlocked
- Code widely known
- Security Guards familiar with what “typical congregants” look like
- Mosque + School = Shared doors

Events & Visitors: “Open Doors”

- Community Events held on school / mosque facilities
- Private events held at facility
- Parent and community events held during school hours
- Community visitors, guests, contractors, volunteers during school hours

Typical security procedures may be waived or not provided

Facility staff assigned to events and/or visitors may not be aware

School : “Open Doors”

- Entry wide open at drop-off / pick-up
- Access in to classrooms unfettered to allow parents to assist students to classrooms
- Multiple buildings on campus
- No centralized, monitored point of entry/exit for all parents/students
- Security system / guards do not restrict parent access
- Classroom, hallway doors propped open
 - Ventilation, easy access to shared teaching staff, easy observation by school leaders
- Stairwell doors propped open / unlocked
 - Ease of access to students at recess and break times
 - Classes with one teacher cannot guide students + equipment while opening/closing doors
- Mosque + School = Shared doors

Parent & Community Member “Lack of Buy-in”

- Nothing bad will happen in a religious space
- Bad things do not happen to observant Muslims
- I am special, just let me ...
- My kid is special, just let him/her ...
- Muslims don't do bad things

Diverse Community

- Diverse community congregants
 - Variety of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds
- Large immigrant population
 - Different cultural norms and expectations
 - No history of safety precautions or following rules
- Imams, School Leaders, Staff
 - Lack of training in safety procedures
 - Lack of awareness in need for safety procedures
 - Emergency guidelines and exit routes not shared with visiting speakers

Emergency Procedures - Issues

- Not Posted for public to see
- Not discussed with community leaders and/or congregants
- Emergency Response Team (if existing) limited to school leaders
 - Need to representatives from ALL stakeholders
- Not reviewed / updated on a regular basis
- Need to involve leaders from entire community
- Knowledgeable facility rep to be on-campus at all times
 - Contact procedures for off-campus emergency response team to be communicated
 - Digital and analog communications developed
 - Emergency guidelines available to off-site designated team members

Emergency Procedures - Solutions

- Post Procedures in Common Areas
- Post Exit Routes in Common Areas
- Provide Emergency guidelines to visiting speakers
- Emergency Response Team
 - Consists of Reps from All Stakeholders
- Facility Rep On-campus at all times
 - Basic security guidelines communicated
- Review and update procedures regularly
- Provide training and communication to all congregants and key stakeholders

Governance

- Governance of school + mosque intertwined, not differentiated, or dysfunctional
- Partial buy-in
- Mosque leadership uncooperative

Islamophobia

- Fear, distrust and hatred of Muslims common
- Heightened during times of political turmoil
- Threats against congregants, mosque leader
- Xenophobia and racism added layers

Crisis Scenarios

Actual Crisis Scenarios

Mosque:

- Guest imam does not know or follow emergency protocol:
 - Fire alarm goes off during last portion of the sermon; imam tells everyone to stay put
 - Exit doors closed / covered
 - No safe gathering space for congregants outside the building
 - Parking Spots Blocked- Emergency vehicle entry blocked
- Gate to mosque open during Friday prayers so guests can arrive, delays caused by gate closures/opening minimized

School:

- Belligerent spouse/ex-spouse of a staff (parent of a student) comes on campus
- Understaffed schools

Actual Crisis Scenarios

Mosque:

- Fire Alarm during Religious Service:
 - Fire alarm goes off - Imam tells everyone to stay put
 - Exit doors closed / covered preventing exit
- Earthquake during Religious Service
 - Imam continues prayer
 - Unattached objects fall all on congregants
 - No furniture available to shield congregation from broken glass, falling light fixtures
 - Shoes removed to pray in carpeted hall - feet cut from items on ground
 - Mosque personnel may not be present to turn off gas, check building for structural damage
 - No registry of emergency contacts + medical alerts for attendees and family members at prayer