

Press release: New Charity

Investigation: Fazal Ellahi Charitable Trust

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into Fazal Ellahi Charitable Trust. The inquiry was opened on 16 April 2018.

The charity's objects include the education of all people, particularly children and young persons in the Muslim religion and the Urdu language, as well as the advancement of the Muslim religion through the provision of collective prayer meetings and otherwise.

The Commission removed the charity from the register in 2009, in accordance with its legal obligations under Section 34 of the Charities Act 2011. The trustees had failed to submit its annual financial accounts or respond to repeated correspondence from the Commission and therefore the Commission considered that it had ceased to operate. Despite its removal from the register, the charity continued to operate including running a mosque and religious classes for children.

Despite not being registered with the Commission, the charity remains under the Commission's regulatory remit. The Commission engaged with the charity in 2017 after being made aware of offences committed by the Imam at the mosque operated by the charity. The offences resulted in a conviction of six counts of encouragement of terrorism and two counts of encouraging support for a proscribed organisation in relation to a series of sermons and classes for children he gave at the mosque.

The inquiry will examine the following regulatory concerns:

- the management and oversight of staff, use of the charity's premises and safeguarding procedures by the trustees
- whether the trustees have properly exercised their legal duties and responsibilities under charity law in the administration of the charity
- the financial management of the charity, particularly in regards to maintaining and preserving accounting records
- whether there has been misconduct and/or mismanagement by the trustees, including failure to comply with the charity's own governing document

The Commission has exercised its regulatory powers under section 76(3)(d) of the Charities Act 2011 to 'freeze' the charity's bank account and under section 84A of the Act to direct the trustees not to take specified actions relating to activities at the charity which would constitute regulated activity.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were

undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](#).

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work see the [about us](#) page on GOV.UK
2. Search for charities on our [check charity](#) tool
3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers
4. Regulated activity is work which involves close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups including children. The full legal definition of regulated activity is set out in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012