# Former Harris Academy Tottenham teacher banned for orchestrating petition linked to threats against staff



A former physical education teacher at Harris Academy Tottenham has been permanently banned from teaching after orchestrating a controversial online campaign that resulted in serious allegations of institutional racism against the school. Joshua Adusei, 31, initiated a petition in April 2021 demanding the resignation of the school's executive principal, which quickly garnered over 6,000 signatures. In response to claims that the school's disciplinary policies disproportionately impacted Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) students, tensions escalated and threats against staff were reported.

The Teaching Regulation Agency's panel revealed that Adusei's actions not only included soliciting student support for the petition but also encompassed “repeated safeguarding failures.” He was caught redirecting pupils to sign the petition directly, which culminated in a formal suspension after school administrators observed him with students during a lunch period when he was off duty. A student reportedly informed a school witness that a staff member, specifically Adusei, encouraged them to participate in the petition.

During the proceedings, the headteacher recounted a chilling encounter with Adusei, wherein he was reportedly told, “If you don’t resign I am going to start a petition to get you out.” This comment created a palpable atmosphere of threat within the school, prompting the headteacher to perceive the situation as severe enough to warrant police involvement. The Metropolitan Police later investigated death threats made against staff as a direct consequence of the petition, highlighting a growing concern about the safety of educators in volatile school environments.

Despite the gravity of these allegations, the Harris Federation, which oversees the academy, took a firm stance against Adusei's claims. They categorically rejected allegations of racism, branding the petition as “misleading,” and emphasised that disciplinary decisions were made collectively among management, not unilaterally by the headteacher. They defended their zero-tolerance behaviour policy, arguing that it reflects a commitment to maintaining high standards of conduct and does not disproportionately affect BAME students, a position they reinforced amidst a backdrop of heightened scrutiny.

Following the unfurling of these events, a separate crowdfunding initiative emerged, aimed at supporting Adusei, who labelled his termination a “brutal exclusion” and an assault on his reputation. This initiative received a modest £320 from supporters, indicating a fractured community landscape—where, on one hand, there were calls for accountability, and on the other, allegations of vindictive suppression of essential discourse around racism in schools.

The panel's findings were unequivocal, stating that Adusei's actions constituted serious misconduct. They noted a “lack of evidence of either insight or remorse” on his part. In a decisive ruling, decision-maker Sarah Buxcey outlined that the seriousness of the safeguarding failures and the lack of accountability warranted an indefinite ban, with a five-year review period to reassess his eligibility for teaching.

This incident raises pertinent questions about institutional practices within educational frameworks and the handling of complaints regarding discrimination. While Adusei’s campaign has spurred debate over the alleged systemic issues within Harris Academy, the resistance from school leadership underscores a profound challenge in navigating conversations about race, accountability, and the complexities of trust within educational institutions. The fallout from this controversy will likely resonate within the community, further igniting discussions around inclusivity and equity in the school system.

## 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/teacher-joshua-adusei-petition-school-tottenham-harris-academy-b2759248.html), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/apr/30/police-examine-threats-against-staff-at-london-school-accused-of-racism), [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/04/30/headteacher-receives-death-threats-amid-school-racism-row/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/teacher-joshua-adusei-petition-school-tottenham-harris-academy-b2759248.html), [[5]](https://www.change.org/p/harris-academy-resignation-of-dr/u/28962724), [[7]](https://theeyeofmedia.com/school-staff-harris-academy-zero-tolerance-policy-is-appropriate-and-does-not-disproportionately-affect-bame-pupils/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[6]](https://www.change.org/p/harris-academy-resignation-of-dr/u/28915276), [[4]](https://www.change.org/p/harris-academy-resignation-of-dr/u/30754384)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/teacher-joshua-adusei-petition-school-tottenham-harris-academy-b2759248.html), [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/04/30/headteacher-receives-death-threats-amid-school-racism-row/), [[7]](https://theeyeofmedia.com/school-staff-harris-academy-zero-tolerance-policy-is-appropriate-and-does-not-disproportionately-affect-bame-pupils/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/apr/30/police-examine-threats-against-staff-at-london-school-accused-of-racism), [[6]](https://www.change.org/p/harris-academy-resignation-of-dr/u/28915276), [[4]](https://www.change.org/p/harris-academy-resignation-of-dr/u/30754384)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/teacher-joshua-adusei-petition-school-tottenham-harris-academy-b2759248.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/apr/30/police-examine-threats-against-staff-at-london-school-accused-of-racism> - In April 2021, Harris Academy Tottenham in London faced a police investigation after its executive principal received alleged death threats. The threats followed a petition initiated by former PE teacher Joshua Adusei, accusing the school of institutional racism and discriminatory practices against Black students. The petition garnered nearly 6,000 signatures, leading to heightened tensions and safety concerns within the school community. The Harris Federation, which oversees the academy, categorically denied the allegations, describing the campaign as misleading and vindictive. The Metropolitan Police conducted inquiries into the malicious communications aimed at staff members.
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/04/30/headteacher-receives-death-threats-amid-school-racism-row/> - In April 2021, Harris Academy Tottenham's executive principal received multiple death threats amid allegations of institutional racism. The controversy stemmed from a petition by former PE teacher Joshua Adusei, accusing the school of discriminatory practices against Black students and staff. The petition, which collected over 5,000 signatures, claimed the school's zero-tolerance behaviour policy disproportionately affected pupils from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds. The Harris Federation rejected the allegations, describing the campaign as misleading and vindictive. The Metropolitan Police investigated the threats, highlighting concerns over online campaigns targeting school leaders.
4. <https://www.change.org/p/harris-academy-resignation-of-dr/u/30754384> - In July 2022, Joshua Adusei, former PE teacher at Harris Academy Tottenham, announced the conclusion of his petition calling for the resignation of the school's executive principal. Adusei expressed gratitude for the support received over the past year and emphasised the importance of advocating for change within the educational system. He encouraged continued support for initiatives that aim to support all students across communities, reflecting on the collective efforts to address issues of institutional racism and promote inclusivity in schools.
5. <https://www.change.org/p/harris-academy-resignation-of-dr/u/28962724> - In April 2021, Joshua Adusei, former PE teacher at Harris Academy Tottenham, updated his petition calling for the resignation of the school's executive principal. Adusei highlighted his dismissal from the school following the publication of the petition and urged continued support from students, staff, and parents. He emphasised the importance of freedom of speech and the need to address institutional racism within the educational system, calling for collective action to ensure that all voices are heard and respected.
6. <https://www.change.org/p/harris-academy-resignation-of-dr/u/28915276> - In April 2021, Joshua Adusei, former PE teacher at Harris Academy Tottenham, provided an update on his petition calling for the resignation of the school's executive principal. Adusei reported that the petition had surpassed 123 signatures and encouraged supporters to share it further to amplify its impact. He stressed the importance of collective action in addressing issues of institutional racism and ensuring that the voices of students, staff, and parents are heard and respected within the educational system.
7. <https://theeyeofmedia.com/school-staff-harris-academy-zero-tolerance-policy-is-appropriate-and-does-not-disproportionately-affect-bame-pupils/> - In response to allegations of institutional racism and disproportionate impact on Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils, Harris Academy Tottenham defended its zero-tolerance behaviour policy. The school stated that the policy is appropriate and reflects its intolerance to bad behaviour. A Harris Federation spokesperson described the petition initiated by former PE teacher Joshua Adusei as a 'misleading, vindictive and vexatious campaign' and categorically denied all allegations of racism. The school emphasised its commitment to maintaining high standards of behaviour and inclusivity for all students.