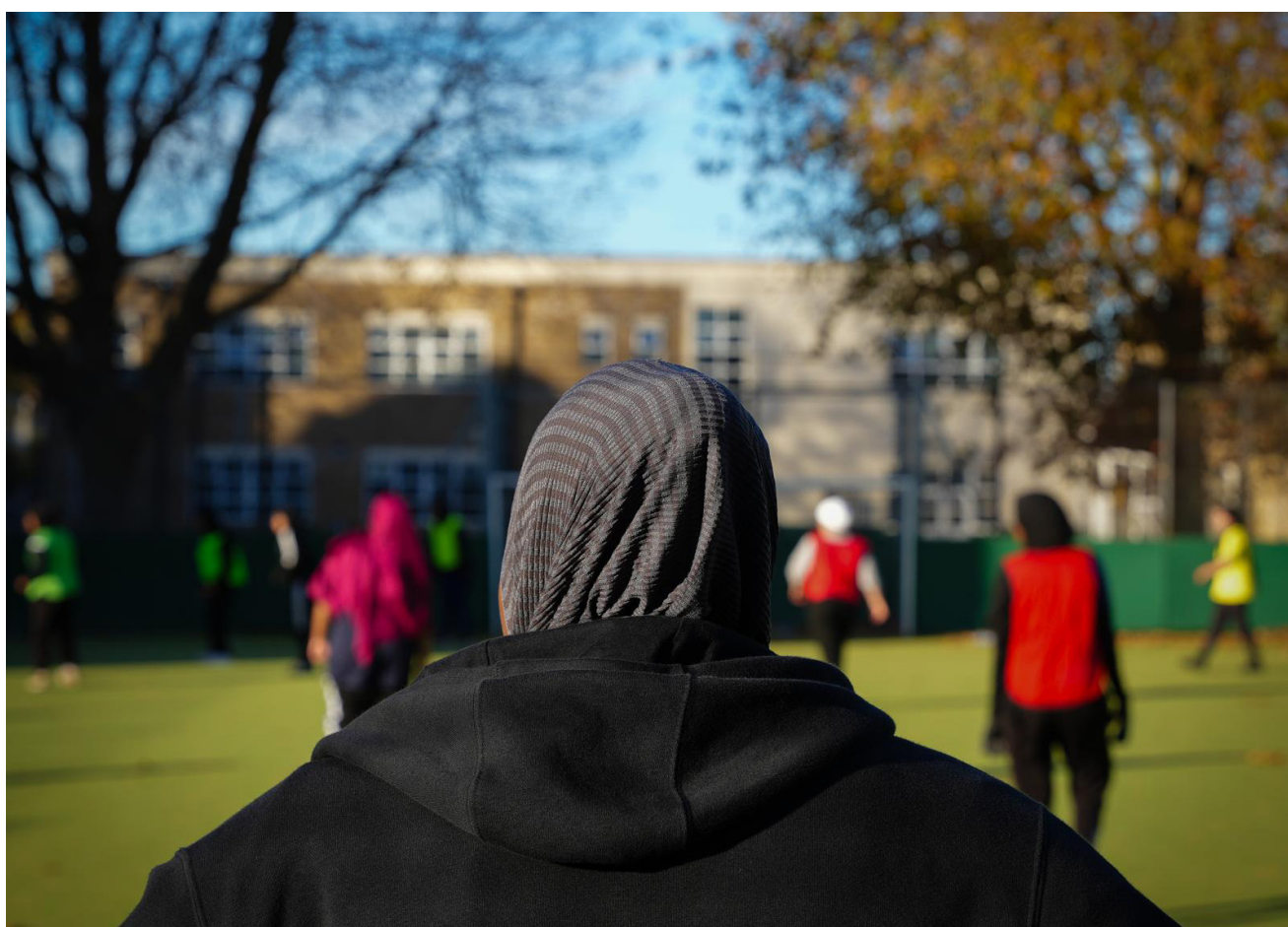


## 5 TIPS FOR COACHES TO ENCOURAGE ETHNICALLY DIVERSE GIRLS' JOURNEYS IN SPORT



### 1. NEVER ASSUME.

Not every Muslim girl, or girl from an ethnically diverse background, has the same experience. Never assume it's the same, and instead take time to speak with parents and the child to understand what some of the barriers they're facing could be, and work together to reduce it.

## 2. CREATE A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT.

Try to get all your players to get to know each other. It's important to create a supportive and friendly environment between players, and as a coach it's crucial that you support your player to feel comfortable with their teammates and with you as a coach. Try your best to make sure they feel safe around yourself and others.

“In my experience as someone from an ethnic background, you already have that lack of confidence going into a new environment. You're unsure going into something because you have a lot more experience of being judged and left out, so the coach should definitely create a welcoming space.”

## 3. DO YOUR RESEARCH!

Research (online and by asking questions in person) and try to think ahead on what adjustments girls may need, and be flexible with this.

Some of these adjustments can include:

- Flexibility with kit and clothing preferences.
- Awareness of religious events like Ramadan.
- Understanding cultural differences.
- Ensuring players feel safe bringing their full selves to your sessions.
- Providing a small space for prayer if needed.
- Having a protocol in place to protect your players from discrimination.

## 4. CREATE OPEN AND CLEAR COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Create clear and open communication channels so that children and parents know they can come to you with any concerns, challenges, or ideas. Show that as a coach, you'll listen and be open to what they have to say.



## 5. MORE FLEXIBILITY WITH CLOTHING

Issues around clothing are probably the biggest barriers Muslim girls face when participating in football. Allowing for more flexibility and options for what a child can wear, and not having a strict uniform, can allow for a young person and their family to feel like their differences are respected.

When asked how she would have felt if a coach had said to her, “you can wear whatever you feel comfortable playing in”, one girl responded: “Oh my God I think I would have loved that so much!”