

ASW to all my students, staff and especially the Year 11s,

I know these last few weeks haven't been easy. There are so many expectations and so much excitement over the end of the school year. I know I have been a little more easily frustrated this time of year and I can seem more difficult to please. I know you are feeling a bit more excited as you become filled with anticipation over the fast-approaching summer, but I want you to know something.

I want you to know that as we embrace the end of your school life, I'm feeling a bit nostalgic and a little bittersweet.

I look at you and realize you aren't the same kids that I welcomed into my classroom two years ago. You're all a couple inches taller. Your style has changed a little as you've grown into yourself a bit more.

I think of how you've learned. You're reading at a higher level and you can speak with a confidence you didn't possess when you started. You're not that same student I met; you're different, and that, at the same time, breaks my heart and comforts me.

You see, I'm looking forward to this summer as much as any of you. I've dreamed about my alone time. We're all proud of the job we've done when we look at the ladies you've become, but I can't help but wonder if I did enough. Could I have done more? Did I prepare you for the road ahead? Did I give it my all?

And mostly, I did. I had cloudy moments where my vision was blurred by stress from too many papers to mark and too many meetings to conduct, but I always cared. Always. And I hope you always felt that.

I hope you always knew that I cared; more than you learned how to write a coherent essay. Of course, I hope that I prepared you for what's ahead and made your transition into college life easier. It's more important to me that you become respectful muslimahs who can

go out into this big wide world and be anything you want to be with confidence. Your results, which you'll get on the 22nd August, (not that I'm counting days or anything!!) are not the be-all and end-all. What's more important is the person you are! And I am very honoured and proud to call you all ambassadors of Al Islah.

I hope, more than anything, that I have prepared you. I hope you remember me as the teacher who was firm but kind. I hope I was the role model you needed. I hope my discipline made you stronger. I hope my kindness made you feel safe.

Now, I can speak for all the teachers here... today, it's hard for all of us to say goodbye. It's an adjustment to go from welcoming your face at the classroom door each morning to wondering how you're doing years later.

I know I am 'just' your teacher / headteacher, but we've spent days and days together and change is never easy.

I hope you'll remember me and come back to see us.

I hope that you'll all remember Al Islah as a place that you learned many things and made many friends.

I hope it was a place you genuinely liked to be.

While I'm sad to see you all go instead of continuing to know you more, I'll think of you succeeding where you're at.

I'll think of how you've grown and how you'll continue to do so. And I'll not only think of how much you've learned, but also how much you've taught me as we've grown together.

Finally, I wish you all the best in your upcoming exam results and all the best in whatever you decide to do.

Remember Al Islah Girls High School in your duas!

Apa Nikhat