



Supporting Pupils During Ramadan - Fasting Policy

UNICEF Articles relevant to this policy

- Article 14: Every child has the right to believe in and practice their own religion, as long as they are not stopping others from enjoying their rights.
- Article 30: Every child has the right to learn and use the customs and religion of their family.

Policy adopted	November 2024
Policy due for review	November 2027

Statement of Intent:

The school uses the current advice and guidelines published by the Muslim Council of Britain. For primary pupils it is:

Although fasting for the entire month does not become obligatory until the age of puberty, it is common practice for Muslim children to begin to fast before this age, in order to become progressively accustomed to the obligation. Most children aged 10 and 11 (Years 5 & 6) are likely to fast all 30 days. Children are enthusiastic and get a great sense of achievement joining their families in taking part in the spirit of Ramadan and often begin at a younger age. The younger the child, the more difficult it tends to be for children to fast without their physical stamina and concentration levels being affected. This can be problematic for very young children and we would advise that schools liaise with parents to encourage very young children to fast half days or to avoid fasting during school days as this can have a significant effect on their concentration levels and degree of alertness while at school. It is important to be aware that young children are more likely to fast when Ramadan falls in the winter months, when the days are shorter and the climate is cooler. Whether a pupil decides to fast or not is a matter to be decided between the parent and child. Breaking the fast before the correct time may be regarded as being worse than not fasting at all by some pupils and parents. Schools should not encourage children to break their fast early unless it is for health and safety reasons. The overriding consideration should be that the children do not feel disadvantaged in school activities because of their religious observance.

(Meeting the needs of Muslim Pupils in State Schools: Information & Guidance for Schools: MCB 2016)

Aims and Objectives:

- To further develop understanding of the different faiths represented in the school population.
- To facilitate religious practices for pupils in **years 4, 5 & 6** who wish to fast during, part of, or for all of, the month of Ramadan.
- To ensure the proper care of pupils is maintained and keep parents/carers informed if their child is unwell.

Health and Safety:

- Parents/carers will inform the school via an online form if their child is going to participate in fasting.
- Pupils who are fasting at Colindale Primary School will spend lunchtimes away from the dinner hall.
- Colindale Primary School will inform parents/carers immediately if their child, who is fasting, becomes unwell.
- Any pupils who fast will be expected to participate in regular school activities.
- A person who is fasting can take no oral medication: however, in an emergency the school will administer any medicine that is deemed necessary.
- If there are concerns about any pupils who are fasting, the school has an overriding safeguarding duty and will apply judgement and common sense on a case-by-case basis.
- If any members of staff notice signs of dehydration or exhaustion in any pupils who are fasting, then a teacher will advise the pupil, to terminate the fast immediately by drinking

some water. They will be reassured that in this situation, Islamic rulings allow them to break their fast and make it up later.

- Children are made aware through assembly and reinforced by staff that there is no obligation for young children to have to fast before puberty stage. In addition, it will be shared that it is up to individuals and their families to consider whether they want to fast at this stage of their lives.

Physical Education including swimming

- Pupils who are fasting are able to partake in physical activities, as long as they are not putting themselves at risk or danger.
- Pupils will not do strenuous exercise, as they will be at high risk of headaches, tiredness, thirst, and drowsiness, due to dehydration.
- Staff will consider planning reduced-endurance activities during the month of Ramadan for those pupils observing it.
- Staff will make adaptations to lessons to accommodate those pupils fasting during Ramadan.
- Pupils are able to swim during Ramadan as long as they do not submerge their face in the water. The swimming teacher will adapt lessons in accordance to this (e.g. teaching back stroke, leg specific taught activities)

Implementation

- During Ramadan, the school will dedicate some assemblies to the Muslim faith and the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr, in order to create a more thorough understanding of the religion and fasting throughout the school.
- Children in EYFS, Year 1, 2 and 3 will not be allowed to fast during school hours.
- If a parent wishes their Year 4, 5 or 6 child to fast, the school will send out an online form before the month of Ramadan, for them to complete.
- Pupils without a completed form will not be allowed to fast for health and safety reasons.

Implementation during SATs

- If Key Stage 2 SATs examinations fall during Ramadan pupils in Year 6 will not fast during school hours. Islam gives allowances for these pupils to break the fast and make it up later if fasting will in any way jeopardise their performance in examinations.

This policy was written following advice from The Muslim Council of Britain* .

Advice regarding physical activity during Ramadan was obtained from: [Ramadan Guidance for Schools and Educational Settings: Physical Education and Physical Activity - Association for Physical Education \(afpe.org.uk\)](https://www.afpe.org.uk/)

*NB: The Muslim Council of Britain is a democratic body that represents a broad spectrum of Muslim communities in the UK

Appendix 1

R

Review - Have you reviewed your curriculum plan?
Consider when Ramadan falls in the academic year.

A

Accommodate - How have you accommodated your fasting students?

M

Modify your activities to make everyone feel included and comfortable.

A

Aware - Are you aware of who is fasting?
Are you aware of their daily routines?

D

Develop your practice. Have you updated your teaching practice
to accommodate student's needs?

A

Ask - Check in with your fasting students. How are they feeling today?

N

Network - inter-school collaboration. Share what Ramadan is, and
how it should be considered a reason to adapt the PE curriculum plan.

Appendix 2 – Ramadan Fasting Letter

Dear Parents / Carers,

RE: Ramadan

Many of our Muslim community will soon be observing the very special time of Ramadan.

In the past, a few of our older children have chosen to fast for some, or all, of the time. Throughout Ramadan all children will be expected to take part in all subjects as per usual, so they will continue to do PE, swimming and other energetic activities. When your child is talking to you about whether to fast or not, this needs to be considered.

At Colindale School, as per our policy, we only permit children in Years 4, 5 or 6 to fast.

If your child has decided to fast and has your permission, please complete the online form here to let us know. This is so we know which children will not be eating lunch. If your child changes their mind and wishes to eat lunch, please call or email the school office before 9.30 am on the day.

If you do not complete this form, we will assume that your child will not be fasting.

For more information about how will we support pupils during the holy month of Ramadan please refer to our 'supporting pupils during Ramadan policy' available on our website

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Jane Palmer
Headteacher