



Heathfield Primary School

RAMADAN POLICY

***Our Mission Statement:
Learning together, Learning for Life***

Chair of Governors	Zulfi Jiva
Headteacher	Mark Thornley
Policy written by	Heathfield staff and governors
Date approved by governors	May 2022
Date of next review	September 2023
Committee Responsible	Learning Challenge

INTRODUCTION

The Governors, Head Teacher and staff have adopted the following policy.

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is the fourth 'Pillar' of Islam, an act of worship of great spiritual, moral and social significance for Muslims. In this respect, it is obligatory for all males and females to fast once they reach the age of puberty. The physical dimension of fasting involves completely abstaining from all forms of nourishment food, liquids (including water) and smoking from dawn to sunset for the whole month. Some younger children may fast for all or part of the month but this is entirely optional. The spiritual and moral dimension of fasting is considered to be of far greater importance than the physical one. We aim to support our school community during their observance of Ramadan but respect that this is a personal choice and may differ from family to family.

AIMS

In respect of the Muslim children and staff at Heathfield, we believe it is essential that we follow these guiding principles:

WE AIM TO ENSURE:

- We recognise the values of Ramadan in the lead up to and during the month of fasting.
- We recognise, respect and build upon the essence and spirit of Ramadan ~ whilst the discipline and the challenge of fasting is to continue with the tasks of everyday life, staff are aware of the need to exercise a significant degree of understanding in this regard.
- All new staff develop a good awareness of the factors that may affect the children in their care during Ramadan.
- The children and staff who are fasting, partially or fully, are supported in preparation for and during the month of fasting.
- Most children fast at the age of puberty; however, it is recognised that some families may wish their child to begin to fast before this age to become progressively accustomed by the age of puberty. **Therefore, some children in Year 6 could be expected to fast, partially or fully**
- The younger the age of the child, the more difficult it is to fast without their physical stamina and concentration levels being affected and so is not encouraged
- Whether a child decides to fast or not is a matter to be decided between the parents and carers and the child. We are aware that breaking the fast before the correct time may be regarded as being worse than not fasting at all and are sensitive to this.
- Communicating with parents and carers will also include seeking to confirm how many children are fasting or not (although it is appreciated that this will be changeable for some children), so that the school kitchen can be fully prepared, provide the correct number of lunches on a daily basis and be aware of the reduction in the number of lunches needed. A letter will be sent out in advance. (Appendix 1)
- Suitable arrangements are in place to supervise fasting children.
- Raised awareness and understanding of the expectations and traditions of Ramadan for those who are not Muslim.
- We are considerate of the staff and children who are fasting.
- We provide the option for those Muslim children who are entitled to free school meals to take packed lunches home, should they wish to do so at the end of the school day.
- Staff are considerate and mindful that fasting children do not take part in over demanding exercise, as this may result in dehydration, for example if a PE lesson is taking place outside and the weather is warm
- We enter into the charitable spirit of Ramadan by raising funds for the poor and the needy in the world and acknowledge this with the whole school learner community.

Background Information

- Muslims are encouraged not to use Ramadan as an opportunity to avoid aspects of normal life but rather to cope with normal life under a different set of guidelines. Children who are fasting will get up before dawn to have their breakfast. This interrupts their sleep pattern. By the same token when Ramadan falls during the summer months they will need to stay up later than usual, as the fast is broken at dusk.
- During Ramadan, Muslims focus on improving themselves in all aspects of their lives and dealings with others including: their character, respect for others, kindness, forgiveness, avoidance of bad language and poor behaviour. In addition, having empathy with the poor and donating generously for charitable causes, sharing of food and inviting others to their home for breaking the fast are important features of Ramadan. Muslims also focus on reading more of the Qur'an and performing additional prayers in the mosque every evening.
- During Ramadan, many children may observe special additional prayers called Taraweeh which take place at the mosque every evening and last approximately an hour. These are normally performed in congregation at the mosque but can also be observed individually or as a family at home.
- The Islamic calendar is based on the lunar months and therefore the month of Ramadan begins 10 or 11 days earlier each year on the Gregorian calendar; hence it takes Ramadan about 30 years to move through the seasons from January to December.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

FASTING EXEMPTION

There are certain circumstances and conditions in which Muslims are exempt from fasting. These include: menstruation, those for whom fasting is likely to have a detrimental effect on health and physical wellbeing and those who cannot survive without taking medication or nourishment e.g. diabetics. Those travelling on long and difficult journeys may not fast if it is likely to cause undue hardship. If fasting days are not completed, then they would have to be made up at a later date or in some circumstances compensated for as prescribed by Islam e.g. providing food for the poor.

MEDICATION

No oral medication can be taken by a person who is fasting, but anyone needing regular medication during fasting hours is normally exempt from fasting in any case. Medication can be taken once the fast has been broken. Medical injections can be continued by a person who is fasting, although not those injections that influence body nutrition ~ guidance should be sought on specific issues if necessary. During emergencies, where a life is at risk or severe illness is diagnosed, then medicine should be administered. Routine vaccinations should be scheduled for other times of the year. Parents and carers must contact school if their child is fasting and needs to take regular medication to discuss this further.

NATIONAL TESTING

Where Eid falls during the KS2 SATs testing week the school may use timetable variations to reschedule any test for the children who may be absent. If large numbers of children are absent, the school may decide it is appropriate to delay the test for the whole cohort. School will discuss the arrangements for the tests with parents and carers before the test period.

CONCLUSION

If any parent, governor, member of staff or child requires any further information or advice regarding any aspect of this document please seek out a member of the Senior Leadership Team or contact the school

office. This guidance has been compiled in consultation with key staff and the Learning Challenge Governor Committee.



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Headteacher: Mr. M. D Thornley BSC (Hons)

Dear Year 6 Parent and Carer,

We would like to clarify our arrangements for Ramadan, the month of fasting. If you feel that your child is able to fast and you would like them to do so, please complete the slip below and return it to the school office or send the response to parents@heathfield.bolton.sch.uk as soon as possible. A daily register is taken of children who are fasting as we appreciate that this may change throughout Ramadan but the information is needed for the kitchen and class-based staff. We require written consent from a parent or carer so that we can put the necessary provision in place for your child.

As a school, we hope to support your child in their observance of Ramadan whilst at the same time ensuring the continuation of their education. All our staff have received our Ramadan policy and have been informed of the factors they will need to take into consideration with due regard for the children in their care. Please also see the Ramadan policy on the school website for further information.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact school or email parents@heathfield.bolton.sch.uk

Yours sincerely

Mr. M D Thornley
Headteacher

My child will be fasting during the school day.

Name of child: _____

Class:

Signed: _____

Date:

My child is entitled to free school dinners and will require a free packed lunch Yes