



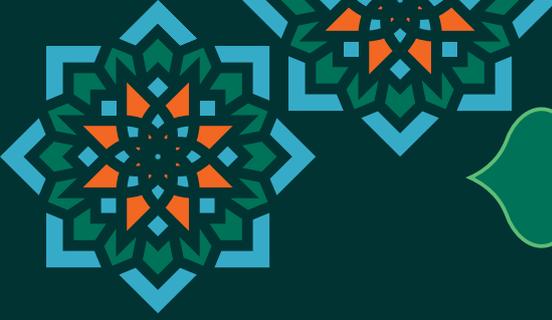
Lewisham
ISLAMIC•CENTRE

RAMADAN GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

2026/1447

In partnership with Lewisham Standing Advisory
Council on Religious Education - Lewisham SACRE





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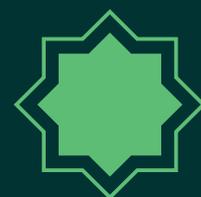
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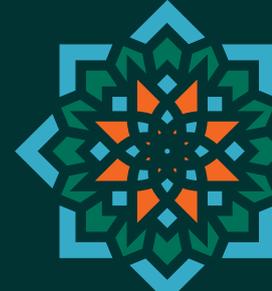
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INTRODUCTION & THE MONTH OF RAMADAN

“

Oh, you who believe! Fasting was prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become righteous.

Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow) – Holy Qur'an 2:183

”

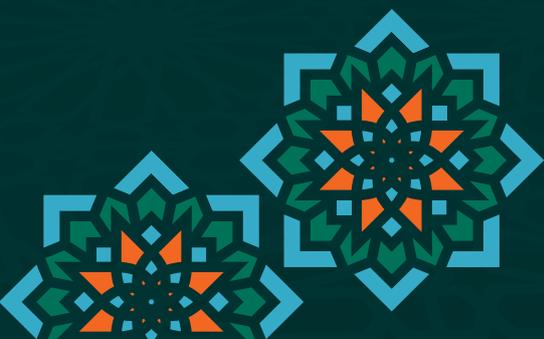
Fasting in the month of Ramadan, the month of revelation of the Holy Qur'an, is an obligation for all Muslims past the age of puberty. There are exemptions from these requirements for some people, such as the sick, those engaging in a long journey, menstruating women, or those who are frail in old age. Exemptions have to be made up later or compensated for, e.g. by fasting on another day or by feeding the poor. Fasting at other times is also encouraged but is non-obligatory.

Fasting is undertaken by Muslims for the sake of Allah, the Creator, the Merciful, the Loving (to mention just three of His names or attributes) and is one of the main requirements of the Islamic faith. Muslims believe this cultivates virtues such as piety, love of God, unity, vigilance, devotion, patience, unselfishness, moderation, thriftiness, satisfaction with what one has, discipline, social belonging, self-control, and empathy and compassion for fellow human beings who might suffer hunger and deprivation unwillingly.

Fasting during Ramadan is one of the main requirements of the Islamic faith. Muslims are required to abstain from all food, drink (and sexual activity where appropriate), from dawn to nightfall through the 30 or 29 days between one new moon and the next. The daily fast begins at the time of the Fajr (dawn) prayer and finishes at the time of Maghrib (sunset) prayer.

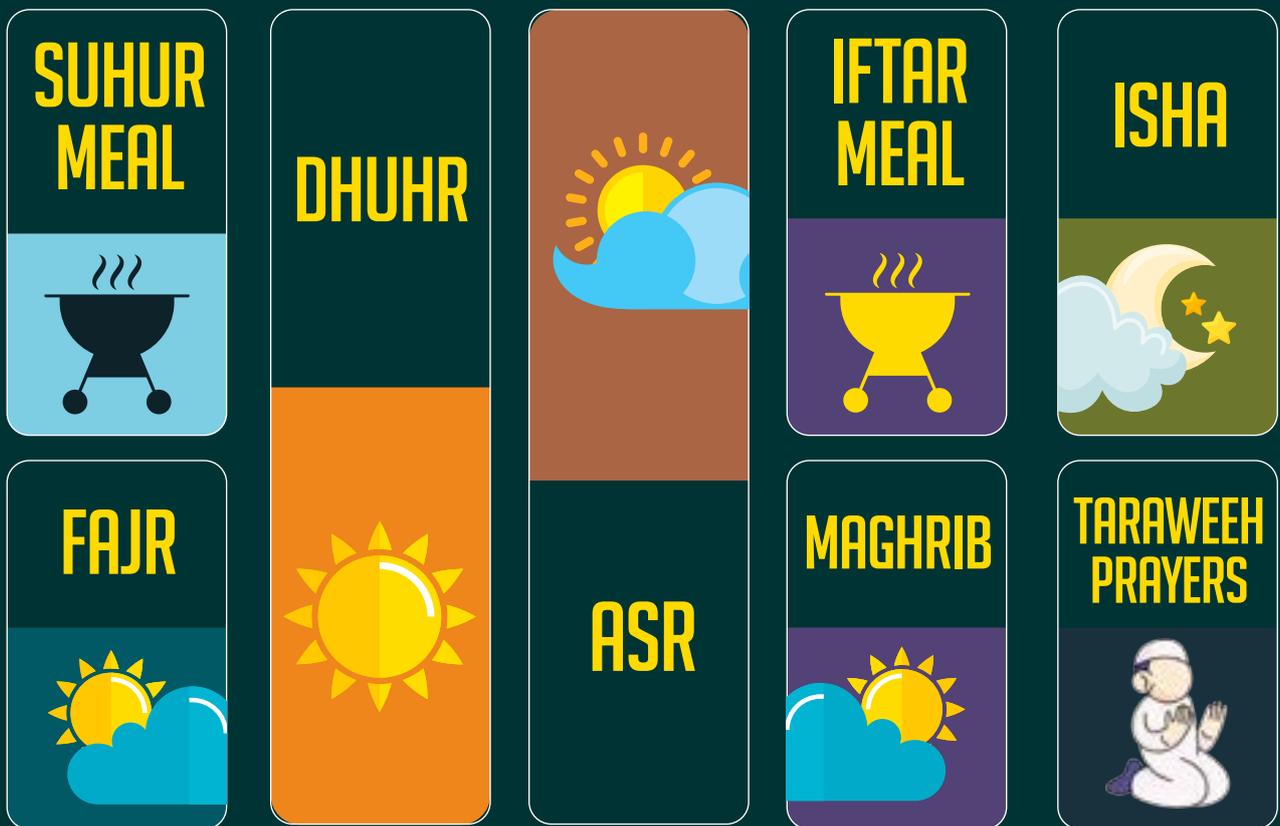
Fasting in Islam is not only about denial of food and drink. Muslims believe they should also try to restrain their other senses, such as the eyes, ears, and particularly the tongue, avoiding backbiting, foul language, obscenity, confrontation and other such matters.

The routine of Muslim families are entirely different during Ramadan; depending on the time of year the whole household will be awake much earlier in the morning and will stay up later at night. Young children may well become more tired or excitable during school time even if they are not fasting themselves. Those students who are fasting may become very tired and thirsty during the school day.



Suhoor is the pre-fasting meal you eat right before sunrise and is a vital part of a fasting Muslim's day and can be difficult for pupils waking up for school especially in the summer time. It is important to equip the body with the right nutrients and healthy food that will keep it energised for a full day of fasting.

Iftar is the meal eaten after sunset to break your fast at Maghrib time. In the summer season this can be very late in the evening around 9pm but during the winter season this can be around 4pm. The fast is usually broken with dates, water, fruits or something small to re-energise the body.



PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

It is very important for many Muslim families that their children should begin participating in the practice of fasting at an early age. Most children of secondary school age, as they are considered adult members of their communities, will be expected to fast. Many primary school children will be fasting as well with younger pupils fasting possibly for part of Ramadan, or only on certain days of each week.

Schools should not encourage these children to break their fast early unless it is for health and safety reasons. Breaking the fast before the correct time may be regarded as being worse than not fasting at all by some young pupils and their parents. The overriding consideration should be that the children do not feel disadvantaged in school activities because of their religious observance

On the other hand, if a fasting child exhibits health concerns, the school has an overriding safeguarding duty of taking action to enable the child to have the best outcome, as governed by DfES's statutory guidance. Schools are encouraged to have a closer and more direct link with parents so that they can express their concerns as they arise and share this responsibility. New and supply staff may need to be made aware of the importance of Ramadan and the school's responsibilities.



SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS

Fasting is obligatory for Muslim pupils in secondary school and the only dispensations are for those who are ill or girls who may be menstruating. Families will normally make their own decision on such issues affecting their children. Schools would normally acknowledge the moral and spiritual values associated with fasting and the positive benefits that this has on their students.

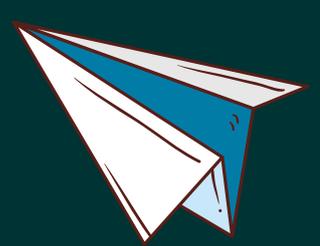
A sensitive approach may be required while asking Secondary school pupils whether they are fasting or not as it may be embarrassing especially for female pupils on their periods. Schools may however need to know which pupils are fasting or not through liaising with parents and carers in order to offer guidance on the best way to avoid dehydration, eating nutritious food, getting appropriate rest periods and organising revision sessions etc.

Since fasting pupils have plenty of spare time during lunch break, schools can support Muslim students by providing a quiet space during break times where they can pray, rest or revise. In addition, fasting pupils can also utilise the long gap between when school terminates and Iftar (breaking of the fast), by having a good rest and balancing it with revision periods.





GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES



Schools are asked to consider the following points in determining their approach to the needs of the Muslim school children and staff for whom they are responsible during Ramadan.

KEY ASPECTS SHOULD BE:

- Please inform and reassure parents /carers in advance how the school will support pupils, including any special provisions that will be made for those pupils who are fasting, during Ramadan.
- In Primary schools it is helpful to establish a register of those pupils who will be fasting, what their fast will involve (e.g. are they abstaining from drink as well as food?) and on which days, based on parental permissions, given either verbally or in writing. Pupils of secondary age will be expected to fast and it may not therefore be a practical or reliable course of action to attempt to establish a register for them.
- Make special provision at lunchtimes for pupils who are fasting but cannot go home. They may want to rest and be quiet or they may enjoy taking part in special activities that can be arranged for them while other pupils are having their lunch. They may also wish to perform prayers at this time, or to share reading the Qur'an with other Muslim pupils or staff.
- It is helpful to ensure that no pupil who is fasting is expected to do anything that would make her/him break the fast or become dehydrated or weak.
- Anticipate that fasting may make some pupils weak or tired, and where possible adapt the curriculum as appropriate
- Where possible, use the fact that pupils are fasting to inform and enrich the curriculum experience both for themselves and others. The fast could provide a starting point for discussions in a number of subjects, such as religious education, history, P.E., health education, performing arts, geography, and science.

PRAYER FACILITIES IN SCHOOLS

Many Muslim staff and older Muslim pupils who are fasting may like to have the opportunity to pray at lunchtime and/or other times during the school day. If schools are to meet this need physically they will have to:

- consider and be aware of the daily prayer times / time periods for when pupils wish to perform these prayers. More attention and care should be provided for secondary school pupils more so primary pupils because of their age. This shouldn't affect the pupil's education during school hours and should only last approximately 10-15 mins. As the month of Ramadan in 2026 coincides with the winter period, the prayer timings are a lot closer together with the sun setting a lot earlier. This means there could be a maximum of 3 prayers that could occur during the school day, depending on the time of the year.
- provide supervised, sanitised, ventilated and appropriate rooms that are sensitive to the needs of the participants, (where possible one for girls and one for boys), if these are not already made available for this purpose throughout the year.
- make available washing facilities and a vessel for washing. Those praying need to wash their arms and feet and with most toilet facilities they are not built for this purpose which may lead to a few puddles on the floor which will need to be cleaned for health and safety reasons. The pupils should ensure the area is clean and any water spillage should be minimised as much as possible
- those wishing to pray can bring their own prayer mats during this time, and if they wish to, slippers to wear after ablution. Sensitive, sanitised storage for these items should be agreed with those concerned.

PRAYERS IN RAMADAN

Ramadan is a time when Muslims try to spend more time in prayer and religious contemplation. Muslims offer extra prayers every night called Taraweeh. Many Muslims, including children, will stay up very late saying prayers and reading the Qur'an; schools should liaise with parents to reduce the impact on their children's academic performance in the day would be encouraged.

Schools are requested where possible to set aside a place acceptable for prayer, for mid-afternoon "Dhuhr" prayers (during lunch break). This prayer changes its time to reflect different seasons. In winter time this is likely to be between 12.00pm - 1.00pm, whilst in summer it is likely to be between 1.00 pm - 2.00 pm. Where possible, washing facilities should be available for pupils getting ready for their prayers. Preparation for prayer - ablution - includes washing the visible parts of the body like the face, hands and feet.

Schools should be sympathetic to pupils' desire to offer prayers at prescribed times. This opportunity for offering prayers during school time should be available throughout the year. As it is also customary for more pupils to offer their prayers in school during Ramadan, Schools might also consider the provision of a larger room for prayers or contacting their local Mosque to arrange for an Imam to lead Friday prayers.

ESSENTIAL TIMES OF PRAYER

- 
- 1 FAJR** After first light and before sunrise.
 - 2 DHUHR** Between the sun reaching its zenith and mid-afternoon
 - 3 ASR** Between mid-afternoon and sunset
 - 4 MAGHRIB** After the full setting of the sun
 - 5 ISHA** In the dark of the night

RAMADAN TIMETABLE 2026/1447

DATE		FAJR		SUNRISE	DHUHR		ASR		MAGRIB		ISHA	
Day	Date	Start (Suhur Ends)	Jamat		Start	Jamat	Start	Jamat	Start (Iftar Begins)	Jamat	Start	Jamat
Wed	18 Feb	5:29	6:00	7:06	12:20	12:45	2:50	3:30	5:24	5:39	6:53	7:30
Thu	19 Feb	5:27	6:00	7:04	12:19	12:45	2:51	3:30	5:26	5:41	6:55	7:30
Fri	20 Feb	5:25	6:00	7:02	12:19	12:45	2:52	3:30	5:28	5:43	6:58	7:30
Sat	21 Feb	5:23	6:00	7:00	12:19	12:45	2:53	3:30	5:30	5:45	6:58	7:30
Sun	22 Feb	5:21	5:45	6:58	12:19	12:45	2:55	3:30	5:31	5:46	7:00	7:30
Mon	23 Feb	5:19	5:45	6:56	12:19	12:45	2:57	3:30	5:34	5:49	7:03	7:30
Tue	24 Feb	5:17	5:45	6:54	12:19	12:45	2:58	3:30	5:35	5:50	7:03	7:30
Wed	25 Feb	5:14	5:45	6:51	12:19	12:45	2:59	3:30	5:37	5:52	7:04	7:30
Thu	26 Feb	5:12	5:45	6:49	12:19	12:45	3:01	3:30	5:39	5:54	7:06	7:30
Fri	27 Feb	5:10	5:45	6:47	12:18	12:45	3:02	3:30	5:40	5:55	7:07	7:30
Sat	28 Feb	5:08	5:45	6:45	12:18	12:45	3:03	3:30	5:42	5:57	7:09	7:30
Sun	1 Mar	5:06	5:30	6:43	12:18	12:45	3:04	3:45	5:44	5:59	7:10	7:45
Mon	2 Mar	5:04	5:30	6:41	12:18	12:45	3:06	3:45	5:46	6:01	7:12	7:45
Tue	3 Mar	5:02	5:30	6:39	12:18	12:45	3:07	3:45	5:45	6:02	7:12	7:45
Wed	4 Mar	4:59	5:30	6:36	12:17	12:45	3:08	3:45	5:51	6:06	7:14	7:45
Thu	5 Mar	4:57	5:30	6:34	12:17	12:45	3:09	3:45	5:51	6:06	7:15	7:45
Fri	6 Mar	4:55	5:30	6:32	12:17	12:45	3:11	3:45	5:53	6:08	7:17	7:45
Sat	7 Mar	4:53	5:30	6:30	12:17	12:45	3:12	3:45	5:54	6:09	7:17	7:45
Sun	8 Mar	4:51	5:15	6:28	12:16	12:45	3:13	3:45	5:55	5:56	7:19	7:45
Mon	9 Mar	4:48	5:15	6:25	12:16	12:45	3:14	3:45	5:58	6:02	7:21	7:45
Tue	10 Mar	4:46	5:15	6:23	12:16	12:45	3:15	3:45	6:00	6:03	7:22	7:45
Wed	11 Mar	4:44	5:15	6:21	12:16	12:45	3:16	3:45	6:01	6:16	7:23	7:45
Thu	12 Mar	4:42	5:15	6:19	12:15	12:45	3:18	3:45	6:03	6:18	7:25	7:45
Fri	13 Mar	4:39	5:15	6:16	12:15	12:45	3:19	3:45	6:05	6:20	7:26	7:45
Sat	14 Mar	4:37	5:00	6:12	12:15	12:45	3:20	3:45	6:06	6:21	7:27	7:45
Sun	15 Mar	4:35	5:00	6:12	12:15	12:45	3:21	3:45	6:08	6:23	7:29	8:00
Mon	16 Mar	4:33	5:00	6:10	12:14	12:45	3:22	4:00	6:10	6:25	7:31	8:00
Tue	17 Mar	4:31	5:00	6:08	12:14	12:45	3:23	4:00	6:12	6:27	7:32	8:00
Wed	18 Mar	4:28	5:00	6:05	12:14	12:45	3:24	4:00	6:13	6:28	7:33	8:00
Thu	19 Mar	4:26	5:00	6:03	12:13	12:45	3:25	4:00	6:15	6:30	7:35	8:00
Fri	20 Mar	4:25	5:00	6:01	12:13	12:45	3:26	4:00	6:17	6:22	7:37	8:00



CELEBRATING RAMADAN IN SCHOOLS

Ramadan for this year will start approximately Tuesday 17th February and the fasting day will be roughly be from 5:29am to 5:24pm on the 1st Day of Ramadan. Muslims approach Ramadan with enthusiasm and it is customary for Muslims to congratulate one another on its arrival. Schools can value and build on this spirit by having themes based on Ramadan at assemblies, and by organising communal 'Iftar' when pupils, parents, community members and teachers – both Muslims and Non-Muslims taking part in ending of the fast and eating together. A communal iftar may be possible in the winter with the short hours of fasting, schools may also enter the charitable spirit of Ramadan by raising funds for the poor and the needy

Because fasting is an Islamic obligation, teachers can take this opportunity to be more inclusive by teaching the pupils about Ramadan and inviting guest speakers from the Muslim community to explain the subject – Lewisham Islamic Centre would be happy to be a liaison. This will help in promoting diversity as well as enabling Muslim pupils to feel more comfortable within the school environment. Schools may consider incorporating Ramadan into the Religious Education Programme, encouraging teachers to utilise opportunities across the curriculum to develop knowledge and understanding of the basic tenets of Islam.





At Lewisham Islamic Centre we host our regular Open Iftar event every Ramadan inviting local community members, faith leaders, councillors. Please view our website or social media platforms to stay updated with this event date .

It would be a good initiative to potentially schedule in a day of fasting for all the pupils to embrace this blessed month together. Fasting is a great way of building discipline and focus against distractions in class and boosts productivity.



CELEBRATING EID IN SCHOOL

The month of Ramadan culminates with the festival of Eid ul-Fitr, which takes place either 19 or 20 March. Muslims cannot be specific with the date beforehand as it is dependent on a visual moon sighting. Lewisham Islamic Centre customarily provides an update on www.lewishamislamiccentre.com as soon as confirmation has been received. It is advised that schools follow their own policies on holidays for religious and cultural needs, and at the same time consider those parents/carers who request further days.

Eid-ul-Fitr at the end of Ramadan is a great day of celebration for Muslim families and it is appropriate that schools should mark this time in a special way. Some schools may want to encourage pupils to find creative ways to do this for example by engaging in charitable activities.



RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE AND HOLIDAYS

The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). As a general rule, 'on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body, to which they belong to, to be absent from their employment in order to record the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm the day of religious observance

If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day using this code; the rest of the time would need a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as.

For more information please refer to the Education Act 1996, Section 389



Scan QR code to access the Education Act 1996

Therefore, in striking a balance between authorised absence for religious observance and excessive loss of school time, schools may consider the following to be reasonable:



PUPILS (Please bear in mind that many Muslim families mark the occasion of Eid for up to three days.)

Agreeing a one day authorised absence for religious observance at Eid-ul-Fitr (a 10-day holiday in some Muslim countries) and another day for Eid-ul-Adha, the festival at the time of the annual Hajj Pilgrimage. If parents/carers request further days, then consideration should be given to this. Each case should be considered on an individual basis, looking at patterns of absence and the impact on the overall attendance level.

Please note that the Islamic calendar is subject to the sighting of the new moon, or the news of this from recognised Islamic authorities. Therefore, there is some uncertainty in establishing the date until the last moment. It should also be understood that different Muslims in Britain might follow different days depending on their country of origin or the school of thought they follow.

STAFF

Requests for leave from individual members of staff should be treated sympathetically by the Headteacher and governing body.



COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/CARERS

It is helpful that the school's policy regarding holidays for religious observance is communicated to parents/carers and included in the school prospectus and online. Ideally, in advance of Ramadan, all parents/carers of Muslim pupils should receive information about the school's arrangements; either through a letter in English or translation where necessary, or at a meeting, virtually or in school.





COMMUNICATING WITH THE HOME CAN ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING:

- acknowledge the importance of Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr in Islam and show concern for the welfare and education of the child;
- clarify the legal position with regards to authorised absences for religious observance and stress the need for parents/carers to ensure that their children are not absent for more than what is authorised
- outline any special provisions that will be made for pupils who are fasting during Ramadan;
- request confirmation from parents/carers of primary age pupils about whether their child will be fasting during Ramadan, and if so, on which days and whether this includes having no drinks as well as food. Or give parents/carers an opportunity to discuss with school how best to decide on which days to allocate fasting and which to avoid;
- give details of any plans for the marking of Eid in schools;
- seek advance notice of when the pupil is likely to be away from school (see section above 'Absence for religious observance') whilst recognising that Muslims cannot be specific in advance of the information being given by the appropriate Islamic authorities.



PARENTS' EVENING

In general, 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 and conditions. However, during Ramadan, the evenings can be a very busy period for Muslim families, particularly if Iftar occurs in the early hours of the evening.

All schools should work to ensure effective communication with parents to understand and respect the needs of the communities they serve. Furthermore, some parents may spend their time observing the special evening prayers called Taraweeh at the mosque or at home. This may make it difficult for them to attend meetings or other functions in the evening during the month of Ramadan.

Schools can enhance their understanding of Ramadan by engaging in active dialogue with the local Muslim community and Mosques, by sharing information and seeking to ensure that school practices are consistent with parental wishes and religious beliefs. If they organise parents' meetings to talk through the issues and share ideas, schools will be more likely to have the support of all parents for their particular policies in this area. The scheduling of parent evenings before or after the month of Ramadan would be appreciated by parents and is likely to ensure better attendance.



EXAMS IN RAMADAN

It is inevitable that certain statutory and internal examinations may occur during Ramadan. Considering that Ramadan is set by Lunar calendar, its date changes by 11 days every year over the solar Gregorian calendar. This year, Ramadan will occur somewhere roughly between the 17 February and 18 March. It is suggested that schools take into account these future dates of Ramadan when preparing their annual Diary of Events.

Schools should give appropriate consideration when scheduling internal exams because the combination of preparing exams and fasting may prove challenging for some pupils. Good examination room management during hot weather will enable the exam invigilators to be vigilant of all students and not only those who are fasting.

In the event that the school notices any indications of dehydration or fatigue in a child during statutory exams, the child should be asked if they are fasting and advised to drink water immediately. The child should be reassured that in their current situation, they are allowed to break their fast and make it up later. Schools may need to notify the pupils of this allowance during exams briefing or incorporate it into their exams instructions.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Because breaking the fast before the correct time may be regarded as being worse than not fasting at all by some young pupils and their parents. Schools should not encourage these 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.

On the other hand, if a fasting child exhibits health concerns, the school has an overriding safeguarding duty of taking action to enable the child to have the best outcome, as governed by DfES's statutory guidance. Schools are encouraged to have a closer and more direct link with parents so that they can express their concerns as they arise and share responsibility. New and supply staff may need to be made aware of the importance of Ramadan and the school's responsibilities.

Schools with a significant number of Muslim pupils should try to avoid scheduling swimming lessons during Ramadan to remove unnecessary barriers to full participation. Pupils who are fasting are usually physically able to take part in most activities during Ramadan without putting themselves at risk. Although participation in swimming is an acceptable activity whilst fasting, the potential for swallowing water may be an issue. Some pupils or parents consider the risk too great and may wish to avoid swimming whilst fasting. Schools should not ask fasting pupils to do anything which might be construed by them or their parents as breaking the fast.



MEDICATION

No oral medication can be taken by a person who is fasting. Anyone needing regular medication (e.g. insulin) during fasting hours is normally exempt from fasting, in any case. Medication can be taken once the fast has ended. Medical injections can be taken by a person who is fasting and their fast will still be valid. However, injections that influence the body's nutrition will nullify a person's fasting. Guidance should be sought from local Muslim organisations on specific issues if necessary.

During emergencies, where a child's wellbeing is at risk, medicine should be administered. Routine vaccinations should be scheduled, if possible, for other times of the year.



DETENTIONS AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

With Ramadan now occurring during the winter months, after-school detention or activities for a pupil who is fasting will mean that the pupil is not able to reach home in time to break their fast. Whilst accepting full responsibility for breaching school rules, schools should be aware that pupils should be able to carry out their religious duty of breaking the fast on time.

Although a drink or anything to eat provided by the school is sufficient, some parents may request that their children break the fast at home with their family. The need for pupils to be at home before sunset might also have implications for the school's behaviour management practice, e.g. afterschool detentions. Schools may wish to consider alternative sanctions during this period, including the use of lunchtime detentions.

Schools need to know Muslim pupils may be unable to participate in extra-curricular activities during Ramadan because parents will want them home in time to break their Fast. Thus, it may be possible, for example, for sports practice sessions to be held before school starts or at lunchtimes.





Lewisham
ISLAMIC CENTRE

RAMADAN GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

2026/1447

In partnership with Lewisham standing advisory
council on religious Education-Lewisham SACRE



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