

# Fasting Policy

Linden Primary School



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## 1. Purpose and Introduction

Fasting is a part of many religious observances and practised by most of the major world faiths. This policy has been written to meet the religious needs of any child wishing to fast during the school day, and in particular to ensure that the needs of the Muslim children are met during Ramadan as this is a significant period of time during which the children have limited intake of water and food. The policy must also consider the health & safety aspects of fasting alongside supervision levels within school. Parents, carers and pupils are expected to adhere to the Fasting Procedure.

## 2. Aims

- To provide a safe environment or procedure for children who wish to fast at any time, whether it be for a single day, selected days or a longer period of time such as the month of Ramadan.
- To ensure the religious needs of each child are not compromised, whilst still ensuring they are in the best possible physical and mental state in order to successfully participate in all curriculum activities.

## 3. Scope

This procedure applies to all pupils at Linden Primary School.

## 4. The Requirement for Primary Age Children to Fast

- As fasting for Muslims is not obligatory for children until they reach the age of puberty, along with the other acts of worship, at Linden Primary School we do not consider it an obligation to allow children below this point to fast at school.
- The policy at Linden Primary School supports the opinion of Islamic scholars who have said that the age 10 and above is most appropriate because the Prophet (P.b.u.h) stated that children should pray at this age (prayer and fasting are both compulsory pillars in Islam, however, fasting is more challenging so due care is given when the child is of fasting age).
- At Linden Primary School we recognise that Muslim children who are below the age of 10 and have not yet reached puberty often choose to fast for part of the day/on certain days of

the week as training to help them when they reach the age when it becomes compulsory. We support this, in line with the School Aims, as part of their preparation for adult life.

- At Linden Primary School we recognise that fasting is not compulsory for children of primary school age in any major world faith.

## **5. Fasting during Ramadan**

Ramadan is the main period of the year when Muslim children may choose to fast. Depending on when Ramadan falls, the length of the fast will vary and may be particularly long. This raises some concerns as to how pupils will cope during the school day. Therefore, we would ask that parents consider this when agreeing with their child how many days they fast for. There are different arrangements in school for each key stage and the school will write to parents prior to the start of Ramadan to gather information about which children will be fasting:

### **UKS2 Children**

For those UKS2 children who wish to fast, the school asks parents to consider allowing them to fast at weekends and during school holidays. For UKS2 children who do choose to fast at lunchtime during Ramadan, the following arrangements will be put in place in school:

- Weather permitting, the children will be outside in the playground for their normal outdoor time at lunchtime. If your child is unwell you will be contacted and asked to collect him/her.

### **LKS2 Children**

Due to the age of the children in LKS2, the school would ask parents to carefully consider the appropriateness of allowing these children to fast. For those LKS2 children who wish to fast, the school asks parents to consider allowing them to fast at weekends and during school holidays.

### **KS1 & FS Children**

Due to the age of the children in KS1 & FS, the school cannot allow the children to fast during the school day.

## **6. Fasting at Other Times of the Year**

It is recognised that there are other holy days throughout the year when children of different faiths may choose to fast. However, the school is unable to adjust the curriculum to accommodate these individual days and so the children will be expected to participate in all lessons, including PE sessions but staff will be mindful of the energy levels of those children who are fasting. All parents must complete a fasting notification form or an email must be sent to [office@linden.leicester.sch.uk](mailto:office@linden.leicester.sch.uk) to notify school prior to the period of fasting.

## **7. Health and Safety**

- All parents/carers of children wishing to fast, must inform the school, by sending an email to [office@linden.leicester.sch.uk](mailto:office@linden.leicester.sch.uk) and include the child's name/year group and class/class teacher's name, if they wish their child to fast. This can be done on a daily, weekly or monthly basis to allow the children to make decisions on their ability to maintain the fast as time passes
- Parents should be contactable, as at all times (being particularly conscientious of this when their children are fasting), and available to collect their child if necessary.

- If a child says that they are fasting but the school has not received a fasting notification form from their parent/carer, a phone call will be made and the parent/carer will be asked if they give their permission for the child to fast. If we are unable to contact of the parent/ carer, or the parent/carer is not in agreement with the child fasting, the child will be treated in a respectful manner but will be informed that they are not allowed to miss lunch.
- The school recognises that children may perform below their usual level in PE and other physical activities when they are fasting.
- Fasting should not be a burden. However, if a child becomes distressed, depending on the circumstances, the school will either provide the child with something to eat and drink and contact the parents/carers.
- RE lessons and assemblies will be used to help all children develop an understanding of the different faiths who use the practice of fasting as part of their religious traditions and particular festivals associated with times of fasting.
- Any exceptional circumstances (e.g. early puberty) can be discussed with the Headteacher, class teacher or Attendance & Welfare Officer.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head Teacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Business Management Committee.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our:

- Health and Safety policy
- Curriculum policy