

Dear Parents/Carers of pupils in Years 7-13,

For Muslim families in our community, Ramadan represents an important time of the year. As a school we want to honour and celebrate our pupils' identity and religious events are an important part of this. Ramadan is expected to commence on or around 2nd April 2022 so the first two weeks will fall in the school holidays. We are writing to you now to prepare for the first two weeks of term (8 days) when we come back.

Observing Ramadan

Each year we think carefully about how to support our pupils (and families) during Ramadan. Whilst continuing to teach the full curriculum, we think carefully about this time, considering pupil activities and parent events with Ramadan in mind.

In terms of supporting our pupils, we consider the guidance given by the Association of School and College Leaders, issued via the Muslim Council of Britain:

Observing Ramadan may bring many benefits to individuals and communities but also has the potential to cause the individual temporary hardship through hunger and lack of liquids during fasting hours which may impact on physical wellbeing and cognitive performance.

- *Young Muslims and families, particularly those sitting exams this summer, will need to balance their obligations as Muslims with their studies and the importance of examinations for their future, noting that the pursuit of education is also a religious and moral duty for Muslims of both genders. This is also alongside any other relevant factors when deciding how to observe Ramadan this year.*
- *No child under the age of puberty is obliged or expected to fast. Younger children may do a partial fast but this should be in consultation with and under the supervision of parents, carers and schools.*
- *Fasting is only obligatory under Islamic tradition when a child becomes an adult. However, jurists differ over when this is. It is recommended for children to practise shorter and partial fasts in order to train them for the full fasting when they become adults.*
- *Parents and carers should be made aware of the following points of view to facilitate their decision-making:*
 - a) *The 'biological maturity' view: children become adults when they reach physical or biological maturity, that is, puberty. According to this view, children are expected to fast at the age of 15, possibly earlier.*
 - b) *The 'intellectual maturity' view: children become adults upon attaining intellectual maturity in addition to biological maturity. According to this view, the expectation to fast will occur at some point between the ages of 16-19.*

Observing fasting during Ramadan in school term

We recognise that many families will choose for their children to fast during the holidays and then resume normal eating patterns for the first two weeks of term.

If your child is going to be fasting, it is very important that the school knows exactly which pupils will be fasting so that we can support them and so that our kitchen staff can prepare the correct number of meals during the period of Ramadan. Please complete the [FORM HERE](#) stating whether or not your child will be fasting. Please complete one form per pupil in years 7-13. Please complete the form by Wednesday 30th March at 5pm.

If you do not indicate that your child is fasting we will assume that your child will be eating school meals as normal. You will be charged the usual rate unless your child is entitled to Free School Meals.

If, for any reason, the information needs to change for a short period parents must inform the school by emailing parents@kingsolomonacademy.org on the morning of the change, by 9am, or earlier if possible.

If your child is fasting in Ramadan and your child is eligible for free school meals, parents can sign up on the form to a weekly food parcel.

Supporting pupils through Ramadan and celebrating this important time

The school is keen to manage the running of the school so as to be inclusive as possible to our Muslim pupils, through how we support them through fasting but also how we celebrate Ramadan. The following plans / adaptations are planned.

- Ramadan focused assemblies to help all pupils to understand the holy month of Ramadan and how it will be celebrated in KSA
- At lunch, pupils who are fasting will be allowed to be in a different space to those eating
- The planning of events, trips, extended learning and parent events has been done to ensure that our Muslim pupils do not miss out on experiences.

Managing concerns about fasting

I appreciate that fasting is a challenge for many pupils, especially younger children. Where pupils appear to not be able to learn due to fasting it is likely that your child's Head of Year will invite their parent to meet with them to discuss if continuing to fast during Ramadan is appropriate for that child.

If it is felt that a child's health is severely at risk due to their decision to fast, the school has a duty to care for the child by offering them some food or water. If it is felt that a decision for a child to fast, or to continue fasting, is dangerous, this could be treated as a safeguarding matter.

Thank you for your continued support of your child's education. Please complete the form by Wednesday 30th March.

Yours faithfully,

Max Haimendorf
Principal
