# North Westminster Federation

***Working Together to Grow Our Future***

# Ramadan Policy

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At the North Westminster Federation (NWF) we acknowledge that fasting is an important aspect of some religions/faiths. Fasting may occur at prescribed times determined by the religion.

**Aim**

To ensure that:

- all members of the federation community give due respect and consideration to this important religious event;
- all children's (fasting and non-fasting) education continues smoothly.

**The 'Fasting Month' (Islam)**

Ramadan is an important time for many Muslims. Fasting during the month of Ramadan is the third 'Pillar' of Islam and is an act of worship of great spiritual, moral and social significance for many Muslims. The physical dimension of fasting involves completely abstaining from all forms

of nourishment - food, liquids (including water) from dawn to sunset for the whole lunar month. Many Muslims fast once they reach the age of puberty. Younger children may fast for all or part of the month but this is optional.

**Changes at Home**

Family life and circumstances may change during this time. It is necessary to ensure that all school staff understand the religious requirements of some Muslim families who are fasting. It is also necessary for all parents to understand the federation's requirement to ensure continued education for all pupils.

**The Effects on Children**

At the federation, we need to be aware of important considerations in relation to children's health and well-being. Children fasting will get up before dawn to have their breakfast with their families. This changes their sleep pattern. When Ramadan falls during the summer months, children will need to stay up later than usual. Depending on the time of year, some of the older children will go a considerable amount of time without eating. This can affect their levels of concentration and behaviour; therefore, teachers need to remind children that part of fasting is behaving well and support them to be their best at school. If a child feels unwell whilst fasting they are allowed to break the fast. It is important to note that if fasting impacts the health, safety or well-being of a child, the school has a duty to stop the child from continuing to fast. In the first instance, we would discuss this with the parents and agree appropriate next steps.

**The NWF will seek to support children who fast by:**

- recognising and celebrating the spirit and values of their religion through collective worship, class and year group assemblies;
- making prayer space available;
- avoiding the testing of children who are fasting (except in the case of Key Stage 1 and 2 statutory tests);
- avoiding holding parent meetings which could clash with 'Iftar';
- ensuring written parental permission for fasting, before fasting starts;
- agreeing with parents, in advance, that their child may be given food and drink should they feel unwell;
- encouraging children not to fast on the day that they have PE;
- encouraging children who fast to spend their playtimes sitting quietly, reading or chatting to their friends and discouraging them from playing physically demanding games;
- allowing parents the opportunity to take their children home to rest at lunchtime for the duration of Ramadan;
- understanding that younger children may want to fast. However, it is advisable that they should not fast for the whole day, but for example may miss breakfast and bring a fruit snack to eat at playtime.

**The federation will always endeavour to address the wishes and concerns of individual families to agree arrangements which satisfy both educational and religious requirements.**