

Fasting Procedure 2017-18

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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 take into account the health & safety aspects of fasting alongside supervision levels within school.

Parents, carers and pupils are expected to adhere to the Fasting Procedure.

The policy wording and its procedures have been discussed at both committee and Full Governing Body meetings before being approved.

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 Evington Valley 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 Evington Valley Primary School we do not consider it an obligation to allow children below this point to fast at school.
- The policy at Evington Valley 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 Evington Valley 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 Evington Valley 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.

The school will always look at the curriculum for the weeks during Ramadan and ensure that there will be no music or singing, and that PE sessions will be less energetic.

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 on alternate days.

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.
- The children will spend 20 minutes inside, supervised by a Lunchtime Supervisor, completing calm, quiet activities e.g. reading, drawing, quiet talking with friends or quiet reflective time. (Please note, if your child's behaviour does not meet with the schools expectations during this time, you will be asked to make alternative arrangements and take your child home. If your child is unwell you will be contacted and asked to collect him/her.)

Alternatively, children can choose to go home at lunchtime, however, they will need to be a home dinner for the whole period of Ramadan. If a child chooses to go home each lunchtime, they will need to be collected from the main reception promptly at 12pm by an adult and they should not return to school until 12.55pm when teachers will be on duty to supervise them in the playground.

Any children who are fasting will be given a sticker by their class teacher to wear during the day. This must be visible to ensure school staff can monitor their well-being.

LKS2 & KS1 Children

Due to the age of the children in KS1 & LKS2, the school would ask parents to carefully consider the appropriateness of allowing these children to fast. For those KS1 & LKS2 children who wish to fast, the school asks parents to consider allowing just one or two days per week.

For those KS1 & LKS2 children who will be fasting, the school is unable to accommodate them in school across lunchtime. As such, they will need to go home for the lunch hour during Ramadan. They will need to be collected from the main reception promptly at 12pm by an adult and they should not return to school until 12.55pm when teachers are on duty to supervise them in the playground.

Any children who are fasting will be given a sticker by their class teacher to wear during the day. This must be visible to ensure school staff can monitor their well-being.

FS Children

Due to the age of the children in 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.

For any children who will be fasting at times other than Ramadan, a fasting notification form (see Appendix A) or a letter should be sent to the class teacher prior to the day of fasting. The school will not be able to accommodate the children in school across lunchtime, and they will therefore need to go home for the lunch hour. They will need to be collected from the main reception promptly at 12pm by an adult and they should not return to school until 12.55pm when teachers are on duty to supervise them in the playground.

Any children who are fasting will be given a sticker by their class teacher to wear during the day. This must be visible to ensure school staff can monitor their well-being.

7. Health and Safety

- All parents/carers of children wishing to fast, must inform the school, **in writing**, 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
- If a child says that he or she is fasting but the school has not received a fasting notification form from his or her parent/carer, they will be treated in a respectful manner; however, the child will not be allowed to miss lunch.
- 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.
- 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, or contact the parents/carers and ask them to collect their child and take them home.
- 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.

APPENDIX A

Evington Valley Primary School

Fasting Notification Form

My child in Class will be fasting
on.....

I understand that my child will need to be collected from the main reception promptly at 12pm by an adult and that they should not return to school until 12.55pm.

Signed

Relationship to child

Date