



Alma Park Primary School
Celebrating Difference, Achieving Together

Religious Observance Policy 2024-27

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Written by: Manchester City Council
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UNICEF Article 14:

Freedom of thought and religion

Children can choose their own thoughts, opinions and religion, but this should not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents can guide children so that as they grow up, they learn to properly use this right.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children and staff at Alma Park Primary School are able to observe their religious practices, in a respectful and supportive environment. This policy outlines the procedures for accommodating these observances while maintaining the school's educational mission and commitments.

Ramadan Observance

- **Arrangements:** Children in Y5 and Y6 are permitted to Fast on Fridays only during Ramadan
 - If families would like their children to fast on Fridays, they will need to complete a permission slip and give this to the child's class teacher or school office
 - Children who are fasting on Friday will have quiet time in a room with a member of staff when the other children are eating their dinners
 - If a child who is fasting becomes unwell, they will be offered a drink of water and a snack. Parents will be informed of this at the end of the day.
- **Breaks and Activities:** Children who are fasting should be allowed to leave class for toilet breaks as needed. The school will work to ensure that school events do not unduly interfere with fasting practices, where possible.
- **Support for children:** Teachers and staff will be informed about the observance of Ramadan and will be trained to understand the needs of fasting children. We encourage open communication between parents and teachers to discuss any specific accommodations required.

Eid Celebrations

- **School Celebrations:** The school recognises Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha as important religious holidays. The school will have year group assemblies to celebrate these dates inviting in parents of those year groups. The school will also organise a community meal where all parents and carers are invited to share a meal with their children in school.
- **Celebration Participation:** Children and staff who wish to celebrate Eid may request leave for the day(s) surrounding these holidays. Requests should be submitted to the school administration at least two weeks in advance to allow for appropriate planning. The school will normally only authorise leave for one day for each celebration
- **Cultural Awareness:** The school will facilitate awareness activities about Eid for children and staff who may not be familiar with the significance of these celebrations. This will foster a greater understanding and respect for diverse cultural practices.



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Procedures for Requests

- **For children:** Parents or guardians should notify the school in advance of any specific religious observance needs. This can be done through a written request to the school office.
- **For Staff:** A maximum of three days' paid leave will normally be granted to observe the days of obligation for the main religious festivals e.g. Eid, Diwali and Passover where these fall in term times.
 - Employees must submit their request through the office and give as much notice as possible. The Headteacher will be sympathetic and give serious consideration to requests. However, where reasonable notice is not given or if the request makes the service delivery impossible, the Headteacher has the right to refuse the time off.
 - At times, extended leave of absence for religious observance may be requested, for example, individuals may request a period of time off for Haji. Individuals should submit their request through the office with plenty of advance notice with the reason, duration and return to work date to the Headteacher, who will give serious consideration to their request. Such extended leave will be without pay.

Prayer

In recognition of the diverse beliefs within our school community, we ask children to participate in prayer outside of school hours and for staff to participate in prayer in their own time (e.g. breaks, before or after school). This initiative aims to foster a spirit of respect and inclusion, allowing individuals to express their faith while ensuring that our educational environment remains focused on learning and community engagement.

Responsibilities

- **Teachers and Staff:** All teachers and staff are responsible for supporting children's religious observances and making reasonable adjustments to accommodate these practices.
- **School Support Team:** The School Support Team will oversee the implementation of this policy, address any concerns related to religious observances, and ensure that accommodations are provided as needed.

Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in practices and feedback from the school community.