




## Campsbourne School Fasting Policy

Policy Originator	Jonathan Smith
Committee Responsible	Curriculum and Standards Committee
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Signed by Chair of Governors	

## **Policy for Fasting**

### **Aim:**

To ensure that:

- All members of the school community give due respect and consideration to the importance of fasting for some faith communities
- The continuing education for all children, whether fasting or not, is not compromised.

### **Lent (Christianity)**

Lent is an important time in the Christian calendar. It lasts for 40 days starting on Ash Wednesday and finishing on Easter Sunday. Christian fasting is intentionally withholding something we'd normally partake in (normally food) for the purpose of creating space in their lives to focus on the presence of Jesus 'directly' Whilst some Christians fast by withholding particular foods e.g. chocolate during Lent some Christians may fast by withholding comforts which they normally enjoy e.g. internet access.

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

Ramadan is an important time for 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 all 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. It is customary for all males and females to fast once they reach the age of puberty. Younger children may fast for all or part of the month, but this is optional.

### **Yom Kippur (Judaism)**

Yom Kippur is the most famous fast day in Judaism and starts at sunset in the evening and continues through to sunset the next day.

### **Changes at Home:**

Family life and circumstances may change for children during periods of fasting. It is necessary to ensure that all school staff have an understanding of the religious requirements of children who choose to fast. It is also necessary for parents to understand the school's requirements that will enable the education of all children to continue to comply with education law in this country, and at the same time to keep their own faith.

### **The Effects on Children:**

At Campsbourne, we need to be aware of important considerations in relation to children's health and well-being during periods of fasting. Children fasting may be required to get up before dawn to have their breakfast with their families which can interrupt their sleep pattern. When Ramadan falls during the summer months, children may need to stay up later than usual. Depending on the time of year, some of the older children will go for long periods without eating. This can affect their levels of concentration, well-being and behaviour and may make them feel unwell during the day e.g. dizziness.

**Due to the effects of fasting on children, Campsbourne governors respectfully ask that parents don't ask their children to fast unless they are in years 5 or Year 6 and that they are not encouraged to fast for extended periods during the school week in the interests of their physical health and wellbeing.**

**Campsbourne School will seek to support children who choose to fast by:**

- Recognising and celebrating the spirit and values of their faith through whole school, class and year group assemblies.
- Making prayer space available at lunch times.
- Avoiding the testing of children who are fasting (except in the case of KS2 statutory tests).
- Avoiding holding parent meetings which could clash with 'Iftar' (*breaking the fast*)

- Authorising one day's absence to celebrate Eid Al Fitr and Eid Al Adha (*Muslim holiday*).
- Requiring parents, who wish their child to fast, to inform the school. (***The school will not support a child fasting if parental permission has not been given in advance.***)
- Children may be offered food and drink should they feel unwell.
- Allowing children to fast, but only on the days when they do not have P.E.
- Encouraging children who fast to spend their playtimes sitting quietly, in the shade, reading or chatting to their friends and discouraging them from playing physically demanding games.
- Offering parents, the choice of taking their children home to rest at lunchtime.

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