



Friday 24th April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: Ramadan and Eid 2020 during COVID-19

This Ramadan and Eid will be very different in Birmingham during the Coronavirus outbreak.

During this difficult time, it is important to remember that we still have to remain within our homes, the houses that we live in, and only go out for essential food or brief periods of exercises, maintaining 2 metres distances while outside of the home, and washing our hands regularly.

This Ramadan, along with our Islamic faith leaders, the Government ask that everyone:

- observe Ramadan at home, in the house that you live in, do not go to family or friends houses or meet them outside of the home.
- pray at home, in the house that you live in with the people you share the house with, and do not attend any Mosque or other family or friends houses to pray.
- do not leave the house to distribute food but donate online or via food banks instead.

On the 23 March 2020, the UK Government officially announced that all places of worship should close, and both the Muslim Council of Britain and British Board of Scholars and Imams advised Muslim communities that they must pray from home and not congregate together for worship. This currently continues for the duration of Ramadan.

Birmingham City Council has been working closely with Islamic leaders of the city to support the continuation of spiritual support of Muslim citizens, the advice that we are sharing has been developed in partnership with these leaders and reflects their positive approach to this unique challenge.

It remains essential that all Mosques and Madrassas continue with the suspension of all gatherings and remain closed to prayer, to ensure that we protect each other and save lives. There are early signs that this may be having the benefits hoped for and so it is essential to continue to maintain social distancing and lockdown procedures.

Muslim communities have been extremely active in supporting social distancing and we would like to thank you for this. Unfortunately, the pandemic is likely to continue through April and May and into the Summer months, and with Ramadan due to fall across April and May, we recognise how immensely challenging this will be. In order to protect the health and safety of all our citizens, we all need to work and prepare together to maintain as



effectively as possible the social distancing guidance by the government and national bodies such as the Muslim Council of Britain.

The holy month of Ramadan is a time for reflection and renewal and we fully understand the significance for our Muslim communities and understand that during this time families and communities traditionally come together to take part in the breaking of the fast (Iftar), to offer prayers in the evening at the Mosque (Tarawih) and the desire for individuals to spend the last 10 days in the Mosque for worship of God in isolation (Itikaf). However, this year faith leaders across the world have agreed that we must remain at home, within the houses we live in, to observe these rituals at home.

We can not stress enough the need for families and communities not to come together at each other's homes or any other places for Iftar, Tarawih or Itikaf – and to can continue to observe these rituals from their own homes.

Similarly, we also understand that Eid-ul-Fitr (marking the end of Ramadan) is a festival where families and communities come together to celebrate in Mosques and visit each other at their homes. **In these circumstances, it is really important that public health is put first and,** in keeping with the current UK Government's guidance, Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated in your own homes with the people you live with and avoid gathering at the Mosque or any open space to offer Eid prayers.

Thank you in advance to those families who will be observing Ramadan and celebrating Eid following the advice provided by the Government, the Muslim Council of Britain and British Board of Scholars.

Kind regards,

Rob Meadows
Headteacher of Sladefield

Cathy Grace
Deputy Headteacher of Thornton