



# BARCLAY PRIMARY

## SCHOOL

10<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Dear Parents / Carers,

We are aware that the month of Ramadan is due to begin next week and that Muslim families, in both our school and the wider community, are busy preparing for the month ahead. We fully appreciate that this is a very significant and special time of the year for our Muslim community and that from a very early age Muslim children learn to understand and practice adherence to the Five Pillars of Islam, of which the annual observance of Ramadan is one.

Next week we will be celebrating in an assembly, led by Mrs Member, about what Ramadan means to Muslims, and how our Muslim families will be observing the month of Ramadan and preparing to celebrate Eid. We are extremely proud of how articulate the children are in explaining their customs and beliefs. During the weeks ahead, children across the school will be leading class activities and sharing their customs and beliefs with their peers.

This year, the month of Ramadan falls even earlier than in previous years and will continue throughout the summer term. In addition to it being the hottest time of the year, this is also a very busy time of the school year with additional sports activities, sports days and annual year group visits etc. Whilst we're aware that this is a special time, it is very much a time to spend with family and friends; many of our children wake up with their families as they open their fasts and stay up late to close the fast. Last year on occasion the period between opening and closing fasting was in excess of 18 hours. For a child this is a significant amount of time without sustenance and water.

We have sought guidance and are reliably informed that in Islamic Law, children are not required to fast during Ramadan, only being required to do so when they become adults. Although we accept the age of adulthood is disputed, (with some traditional views regarding puberty to be the beginning of adulthood) in Islamic law the health of an individual is the first priority. Previously, we have had a number of children who became ill and children who have fainted or been unable to fully access the school curriculum in their attempts to fast.

Therefore, since the school policy and Islamic law have the same purpose i.e. to safeguard the health and education of the child, the policy of both Barclay Primary School and all schools within the Lion Academy Trust does not allow any children attending the schools to fast.

**We do understand that some of our older children might want to take part in the fasting. We suggest that children do this at weekends. Fasting has a significant impact on younger children hence why it is only for adults. As a school we have a duty of care to safeguard children's welfare under the Education Act 2010.**







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However, if you are considering your child fasting during the school week, you will need to meet with me individually to discuss how we ensure the safety and well being of your child whilst still ensuring that they are part of the Ramadan celebration. No child will be considered to be able to fast in school unless you have met with myself.

We do not wish to cause offence, but only to ensure the health and well-being of all children in our care and would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued understanding and support at this special time.

We wish all our Muslim families a very special Ramadan Mubarak.

Kind Regards,

Mr Wright  
Acting Head of School

