

# Guidance on Islam

This guidance is based on the published guidance from the Kent Agreed Syllabus REACT! 2006 (KAS) and the guidance published with the 2000 syllabus.

## **Islam KS2** (school yrs 3-6)

Time allocation- – 5 terms minimum across the key stage

This Key Stage maybe the only time some students study Islam. Islam is not one of the major faiths of Kent, and this is a local syllabus, but it is the second largest faith in the UK. It is therefore important for pupils to learn the facts about this vibrant and growing faith. The images the media creates of Islam are overwhelmingly negative and it is important that we embrace this opportunity to challenge some of these images and stereotypes.

Below I have highlighted the content as it appears in the KAS but please remember that the course is now skills focused and that you need to refer to the whole KAS syllabus before writing or amending your own syllabus.

### **Key Stage 2**

Compulsory content (i.e. what the pupils must be taught.)	Options within the content. (i.e. those areas you can leave out or adapt to suit your interests, work, constraints or syllabus.)
<b>BELIEFS &amp; QUESTIONS</b> Belief in One God (Allah) as Creator, Guide & Provider Belief in human nature & angels	
<b>TEACHINGS &amp; AUTHORITY</b> Life of Muhammad – revelation (Jibril) Traditions about Muhammad Guidance from the Qur'an Qur'an as the word of God, its study and treatment Links with Torah & Bible	There is over lap here with inspirational people.
<b>WORSHIP, SACRED PLACES &amp; PILGRIMAGE</b> Hajj (links with Abraham) Worship in the mosque (importance of Friday) 5 Pillars of Islam Festivals, e.g. Id-ul-Fitr & Id-ul-Adha Status of Ka'bah	You can choose which area to study or do them all. Id-ul-Fitr & Id-ul-Adha, status of Ka'bah  There are links to the section on religion and the individual.
<b>JOURNEY OF LIFE &amp; DEATH</b> Ceremonies to mark stages in a person's life Birth and death ceremonies	
<b>SYMBOLS &amp; RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION</b> Symbols – star & crescent	
<b>RELIGION &amp; THE INDIVIDUAL</b> Terms: Islam & Muslim Role & function of mosque Role of imam	There are links here to worship, sacred places and pilgrimage.

<b>RELIGION FAMILY &amp; COMMUNITY</b> Home, family & extended family life, e.g. responsibilities & duties of parent & child e.g. respect for elders, teachers & the wise Local mosques as centres for worship and teaching Marriage Importance of honesty, greeting, visiting, respect to guests, hospitality, code of hygiene.	Again you can focus on one area or cover them all. The focus is however, the family.  Responsibilities & duties of parent & child e.g. respect for elders, teachers & the wise
<b>BELIEFS IN ACTION THE WORLD</b> Importance of community to a Muslim Local Muslims who make a difference in their communities	
<b>INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE</b> Muhammad	Links to teachings and authority.

\*If content spans two themes you only need to teach it once.

### **Some recommended 'Do's and Don'ts' when teaching about Islam**

<b>Do</b>	<b>Do not</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoid stereotypes which regularly link Islam with terrorism, harsh punishments and extreme strictness</li> <li>• avoid interpreting 'jihad' simply as a 'holy war' as it also means a spiritual struggle</li> <li>• if possible, use a Qur'an stand to hold the book</li> <li>• be careful about art work any Muslim pupils are asked to undertake, e.g. avoid asking them to depict or draw Muhammad and the other prophets of Islam</li> <li>• seek to show the way that culture and religion are often blended in Islam and indicate that some customs and practices may be more to do with culture than religion</li> <li>• be aware that Muslims do interpret parts of the Bible in ways that are not accepted by Jews and Christians</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe Islam as 'Muhammadism' for it can imply the worship of Muhammad</li> <li>• describe Muhammad as the founder of Islam. He is believed by Muslims to be the last prophet. The first prophet in Islam was Adam and the founder is believed to be Abraham</li> <li>• ask someone to role play or act as Muhammad in a drama</li> <li>• compare wudu (washing before prayers), to Christian baptism as they do not have the same meaning</li> <li>• imply that the killing of an animal at Id-ul-Adha is a sacrifice to a bloodthirsty God. It is not. It is a reminder of the story of Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael)</li> <li>• call Muslim prayer beads (subhah), a 'Muslim rosary'</li> </ul>

### Some Muslim sensitivities -

When it comes to the use and storage of the Qur'an, schools need to decide whether to implement the following recommendations often given about the use of the Qur'an. It is often recommended that it is necessary to:

- store the book carefully wrapped up and place it on a high shelf
- wash hands before handling the book
- place the book on a clean surface
- do not leave it open when not being read.

The teacher should also consider:

- concerns about pupils 'acting' out the prayer positions on a prayer mat
- respect shown by Muslims for the prophet Muhammad by the use the term 'peace be upon him', (pbuh), after the prophet's name and that of other prophets.

### Some Key information about: Muhammad

- Muhammad was born in Makkah (Mecca), in 570 C.E. His father died before Muhammad was born and his mother died when he was young. He was brought up by his uncle Abu Talib.
- At 25 he married Khadijah a wealthy widow. They had six children.
- Muhammad disliked the religious life of Makkah with its worship of idols and different gods and its materialism.
- He spent much time alone in a cave on Mount Hira, near Makkah. At the age of forty, he received a vision from the Angel Jibril (Gabriel). Although he could not read or write he was told to recite what he had received. Muhammad continued to receive further revelations with the message for the world to worship the one God, Allah (the Arabic for God). The message was later written down by his followers.
- In 610 Muhammad began preaching in Makkah but encountered opposition. His message of the one God who requires compassion and brotherhood was accepted by some travellers from Madinah (Medina)
- In 622 he made a journey to Madinah which is called the Hijra (departure or migration). This was a very significant event and marks the beginning of Muslim era/calendar. So 622 become year 1 AH for Muslims (AH stands for after Hijra). BH stands for the time before Hijra.
- In 630 Muhammad returned to Makkah and was accepted as a prophet by the people. Later the Ka'bah was purged of idols.
- Muhammad went on a pilgrimage to Makkah where he died in 632. He was later buried in Madinah.
- Muslims do not consider Muhammad as the founder of Islam. He is believed to have preached the same message as previous prophets going back to Adam. He is believed to be the last prophet, who delivered God's revelation in its clearest and purest form which was then enshrined in the Qu'ran.
- Muhammad is seen as fully human and not divine. Respect for him is shown by use of phrase 'peace be upon him' (pbuh) after his name.
- Biographical information is found in the **Sirah** and his teaching in the **Hadith**.

## Some Key information about: The five pillars of Islam

The five Pillars of Islam are duties which support the whole Muslim way of life and help Muslims to become the sort of people they believe that God wants them to become. The five pillars are:

### 1. **The Shahadah**

This is the Muslim profession of faith. It is the first duty of a Muslim to recite this declaration:

*I bear witness that there is not God except Allah  
and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.*

2. **Salah:** prayer. Prayer is to be undertaken five times a day at set times. It involves an elaborate ritual and prayers facing Makkah. The Muslim must prepare for prayer with ablutions called Wudu. For Wudu different parts of the body are washed in a set way and prayers are recited during the process:

- Wash hands three times
- Rinse mouth out three times
- Clean nostrils three times
- Wash face three times
- Wash both arms three times
- Pass palms over head and neck
- Rinse both ears
- Wash both feet.

The set prayers themselves involve a fixed set of actions called rak'ah which signify a submission to Allah.

After this first rak'ah a Muslim sits back and then performs another series of prayerful actions. A different number of actions are required at different times of the day.

3. **Zakah:** compulsory payment of money

This is the giving of money or possessions to help the poor and needy. Zakah comes from a word for purity and it is a way of 'purifying wealth' i.e. checking greed and selfishness. It acknowledges that all good things come from Allah, and that the Muslim has responsibilities to support the Muslim community. The contribution is usually 2.5% of any surplus income after basic needs have been met and it is to support members of the Muslim community.

4. **Sawm:** fasting

Fasting takes place from dawn to dusk during the month of Ramadan. It is obligatory for all adult Muslims, with certain exceptions, (e.g. pregnant women and children under twelve). Those fasting must not eat, drink, smoke, or have sex between dawn and sunset. The fast is broken each day at sunset with water and dates and there will be a festive meal later. Ramadan ends with the festival of Id-ul-Fitr. A number of reasons can be given for fasting:

- It helps Muslims identify with and feel of those with little food and drink
- It helps them to learn to control physical desires
- It reminds them of God who is without physical appetites

5. **Hajj:** pilgrimage

- Hajj is the pilgrimage to Makkah which a Muslim is obliged to make, once in their lifetime, if they are able to do so.

- Muslims consider it to be a great privilege to undertake Hajj. It can strengthen a Muslim's faith
- It lasts five or six days and takes place during Dhul-Hajjah, the twelfth month of the Muslim calendar
- There are various ceremonies that take place:

◊ Wearing ihram, i.e. men wear two white pieces of cloth to signify equality and purity

◊ There are no prescribed clothes for a woman to wear but they should cover all parts of their body except hands and face. Some wear a long white dress and head scarf.

◊ Performing tawaf, i.e. circling the Ka'bah seven times and kissing (or saluting), the black stone symbolises the unity of Muslims and importance of the Ka'bah.

◊ Running between As-Safa and Al-Marwah recalls the story of Hagar and her baby son Ishmail, searching for water and then it appeared. The place this happened is believed to be the well of Zamzam where today the pilgrims bathe or drink.

◊ Visiting Mount Arafat, to stand before Allah and ask for forgiveness. (The plain of Arafat is 24km east of Makkah). Stones are collected for the rituals of the next day.

◊ Stoning the devil at Mina. Pilgrims throw stones at three stone pillars which represent Shaytan (or Iblis meaning the devil). This is to recall the story in the Qu'ran of Abraham (Ibrahim) and the sacrifice of a sheep instead of his son Ishmael, (the figure of Isaac in the Jewish and Christian scriptures). The devil is said to have tempted Ibrahim to resist God's demand three times. The actions are about the pilgrims resolving not to give into temptation and evil in their own lives.

◊ Many Muslims men will cut their hair at the end of the Hajj. This can be to indicate that the special period (ihram) is ended and to show that outward appearances matter little.

◊ Many pilgrims will sacrifice an animal, usually a sheep or goat, at Mina on the tenth day of the month. The meat is then distributed to the Muslim community and eaten. This act recalls Ibrahim's sacrifice of a ram instead of his son. (Muslims elsewhere celebrate the festival of Id-ul-Adha at this time).

### Some Key information about: The Mosque

- The term mosque is from the Arabic word masjid meaning to prostrate oneself. It means a place where Muslims bow before God.
- A mosque is usually rectangular in shape with a place for ritual washing, (wudu).
- Mosques have a plain interior with no pictures or status. It may be decorated with geometric patterns and Islamic calligraphy.
- Inside the mosque there will be a raised platform or pulpit (a minbar), for the Friday sermon. One wall, (the quibla wall), will have an indentation or niche (a mihrab) which indicates the direction of Makkah, the city which Muslims face to say their prayers.
- Outside these will often be a high tower called a minaret which is used, in Muslim countries, for a person named a muadhin or muezzin to call worshippers to prayer five times a day. The building may also have a dome.
- Often mosques in Britain will not be purpose built but conversions.

### Some Key information about: **The Muslim Community**

- It is estimated that about a sixth of world's population is Muslim.
- There have been Muslims in Britain since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it was not until the 1960's that the community grew much larger. Many British Muslims have their family origins in India and Pakistan, but not all.
- There are approx. 1.5 -2 million Muslims in Britain. Islam is the second largest religion in Britain but accounts for only around 3% of the population. There are over 300 mosques in Birmingham alone.