MUSLIM SPORTS FOUNDATION

ACTIVE SUNNAH

Understanding Islam: Faith, Values and Active Living

www.muslimsports.org.uk



Presentation Objectives

- Introduce the core beliefs and practices of Islam.
- Explain how these beliefs influence daily life, health and activity.
- Highlight practical ways to create inclusive spaces in sport and physical activity.



Islam

Islam is one of the world’s major religions, followed by nearly two billion people around the globe.

Understanding the basic beliefs and values of Islam can help create a more inclusive and supportive environment.



Core Beliefs

Muslims believe in one God, known in Arabic as Allah.

Islam teaches that Allah is merciful and compassionate.

Muslims also recognise a line of Prophets including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and finally Muhammad (peace be upon him) (pbuh), who Muslims believe was the final messenger.



The 5 Pillars



Shahadah – Faith
To believe and declare that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad (pbuh) is His messenger.



Salah – Prayer
Muslims pray five times a day.



Zakah – Charity
Giving to the poor and those in need.



Sawm – Fasting
During the month of Ramadan.



Hajj – Pilgrimage
To the holy city of Mecca (once in a lifetime if able).

Character in Islam

Character is at the heart of Islam: built on honesty, kindness, self-control, humility and patience.

These values shape how Muslims act, interact and compete with integrity, respect and balance.



From a young age, Muslim children are encouraged to:

Be respectful to teachers, parents and elders.

Show kindness and mercy to others.

Refrain from inappropriate speech or gossip.

Be fair and just, even when under pressure.

Show gratitude and avoid arrogance.



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Key Holidays/Celebrations



Eid al-Fitr

Celebrated at the end of Ramadan. A time for communal prayers, feasting and charity.



Eid al-Adha

Commemorates the willingness of Prophet Abraham to sacrifice his son in obedience to God. Coincides with the Hajj pilgrimage.

Key Terms



Sunni and Shia - Islam has two main sects Sunni and Shia - which differ mainly on leadership after Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Faith practices may vary slightly, and that’s perfectly normal.



Halal- Arabic word meaning “permissible” . Often used to refer to food which is prepared and consumed according to Islamic dietary rules, behaviour, clothing, finance or activities that align with Islamic principles.

Key Terms



Madrassah - a type of educational institution associated with a mosque, often school age children attend lessons after mainstream school.



Mosque (Masjid) - Place of worship for Muslims.

Islamic Values that can be applied in Sport/PA

Respect– respecting others, teammates, coaches and opponents, this ties into Islamic values of good manners.

Fair play– giving everyone a fair chance, especially in a competitive activity and including other members of the team in team games.

Discipline– Islam emphasises self-control and discipline, an important part of sport.

Co-operation– Islam encourages working together and helping others, in team sports working collaboratively to achieve a common goal.

Active Sunnah

Active Sunnah means incorporating physical activity into daily life, following the example of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Physical health and movement are seen as both beneficial and spiritually encouraged.



Active Sunnah

Spiritual Mandate: Caring for the body is a religious duty our bodies are a trust from Allah. Preserving life and intellect are central Islamic teachings.

Prophetic Example: The Prophet (pbuh) himself was physically active despite his many responsibilities. His involvement in physical activities was divinely inspired and practical.

Health as Worship: Maintaining good health is linked to better worship and fulfilling life's obligations. Neglecting health is seen as neglecting a blessing from Allah.

Examples of Active Sunnah



Archery



Swimming



Horse Riding



Wrestling



Walking/Running/Hiking

Modern equivalents (e.g. cycling, fitness training) are equally valid alongside traditional examples

The importance of living actively in Islam

- **Mental and physical well-being:** Linked to the preservation of intellect and emotional health and wellbeing.

- **Prevention of disease:** Active lifestyles can help reduce issues like heart disease and diabetes, which are prevalent in some Muslim populations.

- **Spiritual accountability:** Muslims are accountable for how they care for their bodies and time as this is seen as a form of Amanah. Amanah refers to trust, responsibility and honesty in all aspects of life.

- **Strength to serve others:** A strong believer can contribute more to family, community and justice.

Inclusive Practices



Offer women-only sessions where requested, ensuring privacy, modesty and a non-judgemental environment.



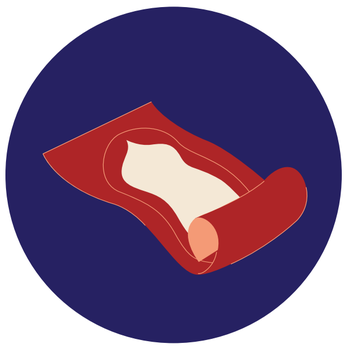
Adapt activities, intensity and goals to suit needs (e.g., during Ramadan).



Permit modest clothing and head coverings without restriction.



Offer private, respectful changing facilities.



A space for those who need to pray (this does not have to be a designated prayer space).



Build trust, promote inclusion and create positive, lasting attitudes .

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Inclusive Practices



If catering, consider halal options (e.g. halal meat, no pork, no alcohol).



Take account of Madrassah timings when organising sessions for children and young people.



Involve parents, faith leaders and community groups .



Use Muslim female role models in marketing and outreach work that target females.



Offer choice between cooperative and competitive play.



Be flexible with attendance policies during religious observances.

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Respecting Boundaries

Some Muslims may avoid physical contact with the opposite gender as an expression of modesty and respect.

Honouring this choice shows respect for all and helps create an inclusive, welcoming environment.



Inclusion begins with understanding.

Every act of awareness helps open doors for participation.

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By understanding faith and values, we can build inclusive, active communities where everyone feels welcome.

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