

NEWSLETTER - PILOT UPDATE - APRIL 2023

Asalaamu Alaikum wr wb

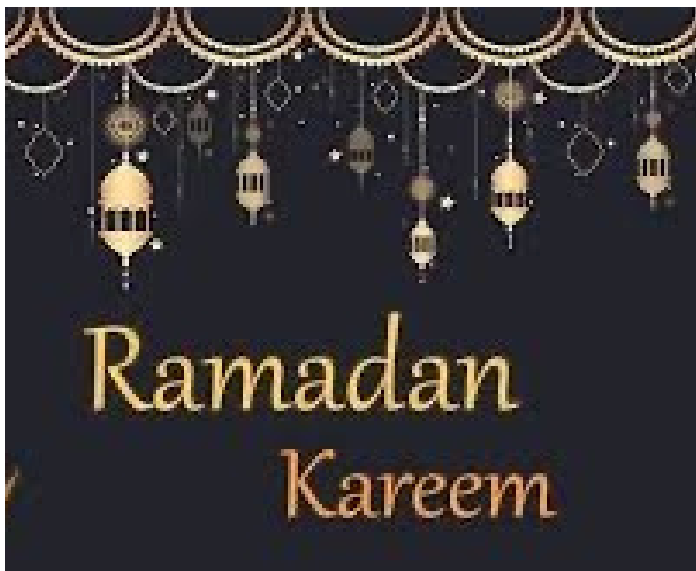
The ACT Public School Pilot Project Team wishes you Ramadan Mubarak and In Sha Allah we look forward to a blessed Eid Ul Fitr.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging.

We continue to acknowledge the Islamic Council of NSW (ICNSW) and the Australian Islamic Education Services (AIES) who have had many years experience in teaching Islamic scripture in NSW public schools. The Pilot delivery model and Syllabus is based on the Special Islamic Religious Education (ISRE) program which is used across 300 schools by over 700 volunteer teachers in NSW.

We thank parents who have enrolled their child/ren in the Islamic scripture classes held in the three pilot schools. Our aim In Sha Allah is ultimately to expand this program across all ACT Public schools. In so doing we pray that our next generations of Muslims have a proud Muslim identity, a strong thirst for Islamic knowledge and observance of Islamic traditions...Aameen

This newsletter is an update on the progress of the Pilot. In Sha Allah we aim to provide an update at the end of each school term and more regularly if required.



Allhumdulillah achievements so far:

- The three pilot schools are up and running in Term 1 - Bonner Primary (k-6), Amaroo School (Primary K-6/ Secondary 7-10) and Gungahlin College (11-12).
- We have established strong and positive relationships with the principals of the schools.
- 200 students are registered in the program and over 40 volunteer teachers have undertaken training so far.
- We have a registered business name - ACT Islamic Education Services (ACTIES) under the umbrella of not-for-profit organisation Canberra Islamic Centre Incorporated Association.



Islamic Education Syllabus and teaching methodology

Given the limited teaching time for the lesson, the Syllabus is designed to cover the basic foundations of Islamic belief and practise. It is based on the categorisation as per the Australian Curriculum. Students are grouped by Stage i.e. Early stage 1 – Kindergarten; Stage 1 – Years 1 and 2; Stage 2 – Years 3 and 4; Stage 3 – Years 5 and 6, etc

The syllabus, worksheets, supplementary activities and audio-visual materials are provided to teachers of the junior years.

Teachers in the secondary years are given syllabus guidelines and a breakdown of topics to cover – and a greater level of freedom to teach based on the cohort they teach. This is the approach taken by the ISRE program in NSW and ACTIES will review this approach over the pilot year to gauge it's effective delivery by our volunteer teachers.

With the "motto" of the ISRE program **“Love, Learn, Live”** we hope to instill the **love** for our Deen in the hearts of our children such that they are self-motivated to **learn** more about Islam and deepen their understanding and connection to Allah such that they want to **live** Islam! In Sha Allah.

Other important news

Parents - we welcome your feedback and appreciate it if you check in with the child/ren on what they have covered in the weekly class to reinforce the knowledge learnt.

Term 2 dates when Islamic education classes will start:

Bonner Primary Week 1 - Thursday 27 April

Amaroo School Week 2 – Monday 1 May

Gungahlin College Week 1 – Wednesday 26 April

The experience of some of our Volunteer Teachers

Maha Osman – Volunteer Teacher

The Kindy group at Bonner has been an enthusiastic and switched on bunch to say the least! My initial hesitation of them having this lesson during their break time was proven wrong when I saw them running to class with big smiles and enthusiastic 'Assalam Alaikums' week after week.

What I found after the first few classes was, they engaged more quickly with fun activities and they learnt faster. For example, for the five pillars of Islam we quickly as a group came up with some hand gestures to signal Shahadah, Salah and Zakat and then the class played dumb charades to guess what the pillar could be. This has helped them learn the first three pillars very easily.

Mohammad Firoj – Volunteer Teacher

Contributing to the pilot program, I believe, is a learning opportunity for the volunteer teachers as well as for the program organisers who are working unwaveringly coordinating between schools, parents, and enabling the volunteer teachers to make it a success. My experience of volunteering as an Islamic scripture teacher imparting the tenets of Islam to year 5 and year 6 kids at one of the ACT schools [Neville Bonner Primary School] is joyful and memorable.

I have 19 students registered all of whom regularly attend the weekly sessions. So I am connected to 19 multi-national/multi-cultural Muslim families in the learning and teaching experience. Occasionally we have non-Muslim students spending their school breaks with us to listen and understand Islam, alhamdulillah!!!





New enrolments

Parents who have not yet registered their child/ren in the program are requested to register with ACTIES using the below link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScWeoC2KhTZ038klfMA2Jluqb6bRPdl-faBNOK3d2N_iHobkw/viewform?usp=sf_link

Next steps of the Pilot

Allhumdulliah the ACTIES team have built a sound understanding of the various aspects of running the Islamic education program within the ACT Government schools' system ... from volunteer teacher training/support to managing the day-to-day coordination of classes, students, and volunteer teachers all within school safety, security and compliance requirements.

An evaluation of the pilot will inform the successful expansion of the program. One of the key aspects we are very cognisant of is the need for volunteers as expansion will require a large volunteer workforce who are capable, agile and committed. Attracting these volunteers, together with recruitment, training and related support logistics will be a major challenge. To do this effectively and to sustain this over the long run will require sound administrators and capable team leaders.

In Sha Allah we seek guidance from the Lord Almighty Allah SWT to help us plan and focus on what will be required for a phased expansion of the program across ACT public schools from 2024.

We look forward to further engagement with our community members and request that you keep praying for the success of this program.

Wasalaam

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