

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

ETIS Islamic Sunday School: The Key to Our Children's Future

Children are our most important asset. The Future of Islam in this country tomorrow is directly dependent on how much effort we expend today on their Islamic and intellectual growth. The East Texas Islamic Society is dedicated to the development of our next generation, they are our future, and will fill the masjid when we are gone.

ETIS recognizes the importance of this project, and has three phases of education available to them. Firstly, there is the Islamic Sunday School. The goal of the Sunday school is to give the basic foundations of Islamic education to our children, and guide them to learn more by themselves. The Islamic Faith Academy is the next level of education. Finally ETIS offers the Islamic Evening Qur'an and Tajwid program twice a week for our children.

The goal of the East Texas Islamic Society is to reach each Muslim child through one of these channels. The Sunday school currently reaches about 50 children each week. Along with the Islamic Faith Academy, which enrolls about 50 children, we are currently reaching about 100 children in the community. This leaves a large number of our children going to public schools, and getting minimal exposure to Islamic education.

The Islamic Sunday School is focused on providing the basic Islamic education and basic Islamic Tarbiyah to our children. Since the school meets only once a week, it is not possible to focus on a lot of areas, additionally, the children are only available for less than 3 hours. So the curriculum is focused on three areas,

1. Islamic Aqeedah, Muslim Identity, and Character,
2. Qur'an and Tafsir,
3. Arabic and Tajwid.

We are currently reorganizing the program, to better track student performance, and to provide a higher level of academic quality. InshaAllah you will see the results of these efforts very soon.

Statement of Objective

- 1) We want the children to be believers and practice Islam.
- 2) We want them to believe in Allah in their hearts and recognize that He is their Lord.
- 3) We want the children to be aware of their duty to Allah and to be motivated to do 'Ibadah.
- 4) We want the children to have knowledge of the teaching and practices of Islam.
- 5) The children must know why Islam is a better way of life than everything they see around them.
- 6) We want the children to develop character, better manners and a respectful demeanor.
- 7) We want the children to be able to relate Islamic beliefs and teachings to non-Muslims in a coherent and compelling way.

The Weekend School Program

Introductory Note:

This information has been prepared for students and parents to help better understand the program of studies. The information presented should also serve to define requirements and expectations from student and their families.

The school's program reflects a commitment of teachers, staff, and administrators to address the needs of each and every student. We welcome parents' ideas and support in our efforts to serve the young and growing Muslims of tomorrow. As parents bring their children to school, we want to work with them in the spirit of a true partnership in making this investment of time, effort, and resources fruitful for children, satisfying for parents, and rewarding for all those at the school

School Calendar

1. School starts on Sunday.
2. Timing 10:45 am – 2:00 pm.
3. During the two Eids and Ramadan Sunday school will be closed.
4. Last day of classes will be in May 27th.

School Regulations/Attendance

The school will be conducted every Sunday. It is essential that the students maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and Islamic behavior. Any act of misconduct or disrespect may be a cause for student warning or dismissal from the school. Parents are urged to emphasize the importance of education, respect for teachers, and the need for spiritual and physical cleanliness, decency in dress, and Islamic behavior. For example, chewing gum or listening to headphones during classes will not be allowed. Food items, toys, radios, or non-related books are not allowed in the classrooms.

Children should abide by the school dress code that is outlined below:

1. All girls are required to wear their Hijab at all times.
2. Shorts and slippers are not allowed.
3. Caps (sport) are not allowed. Islamic dress is encouraged.
4. Any clothing materials displaying inappropriate images are not allowed.

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is very essential in order for progress to be achieved. Considering that the classes are held only once a week, time is of essence. Three or more consecutive absences require a meeting of the teacher and parent to discuss the situation.

School Hours/Class Structure

Assembly: 10:45 AM - 11:00 AM (Imam Faisal Ahmad)

Session 1: 11:00 AM - 11:45 PM

Session 2: 11:45 AM - 12:30 PM

Session 3: 12:30 AM - 1:15 PM

Activity/Lunch: 1:15 AM - 1:45 PM

Dhuhr Prayers: 1:45 PM

The Syllabus

There are three main elements to this syllabus. They are: 1) Building a Muslim identity and Character.
2) Gaining knowledge of Islamic beliefs and practices. And
3) Becoming fluent in Qur'anic knowledge, Arabic language and Tajwid.

The first element involves trying to combat the influence of non-Muslim culture in the minds of our youth. Let's face it: the only books our children read are written by non-Muslims, the only TV shows they watch are produced by non-Muslims, all their best friends are non-Muslims, the only heroes they have are non-Muslims, they go to school 40 hours a week with non-Muslims and the only places they like to go to for recreation such as Malls, amusement parks and restaurants are all operated by non-Muslims. Is it any wonder your child doesn't "feel" very Muslim! The second element is fairly self-explanatory. The approach must be systematic. We can't teach the same thing to every grade as if there is nothing else in Islam. There should be a variety of knowledge from class to class. Therefore, the textbooks chosen must be varied also to suit the various requirements of each class level. The third element is a combination of Arabic class, Hifz class and Ta'leem class. Arabic classes taught as separate from the Qur'an will have little meaning. All three must be combined. It may seem a daunting task but this is how it used to be done in the old days. We are trying to renew our methods to make all three trends relevant to each other.

The Structure

Usually a Weekend Islamic School has a structure for the classes it holds as "age-group" based. A better scheme might be to divide the children up into knowledge ability levels, which we will label "Mastery Levels".

Here is how our procedure will work:

Give an entrance exam to the students when their parents bring them to register for the Weekend School. This test will determine how much they know about Islam. Then, place them in Mastery Level 0,1, 2 up to 6. "0" being the basic level class and "6" being geared towards advanced studies. The exact knowledge and subject matter for each class will vary according to their level. One of our goals should be to give the students something to look forward to. They should expect that something different would come as they advance through the grades. This is only possible if the students have a similar level of knowledge. Then the teacher can build the instruction from there.

Our Mission

Our mission is to breath new life into the spirit of Islamic learning, to lift it back into its proper perspective so that men, women, boys and girls everywhere will be happy when they consider Islam. To change a person's attitude towards something is to gain their allegiance. Remember that. A child won't love to make Salah simply because you order them to. When you convert their heart and mind then you will never need to tell them to obey their Lord. They'll do it on their own.

To Register your children for Sunday school or Evening Classes today, please contact Br. Ansar or Sr. Brenda.

May Allah Most High accept from our efforts and keep our children on the Straight Path.