



Guidelines for Visiting Al-Medinah Mosque Brighton

We at Al-Medinah Mosque would be delighted to show you around our place of worship. It is the sharing of what we hold very dear to our heart. It is hoped, however, that the visitors - our guests - observe certain basic rules of conduct.

Before visiting our Mosque, it is important that you give some thought to how you feel. We would not want visitors to feel unease. Likewise, we would not want to be made ill at ease ourselves by criticisms of our way of worship or of our religion. Questions are always welcomed but negative comparisons with your own customs are unlikely to create a friendly atmosphere.

Whether you are visiting alone, or as part of a group, it is important to follow certain guidelines for clothing and behaviour so as not to cause offence. For groups, it is important not to talk loudly, keeping in mind the sanctity of the Mosque. If any group members have special needs, let us at the Mosque know in advance so that we can be prepared to assist. For example, although the custom of the Mosque is to sit on the floor, chairs can often be provided for elderly, infirm or disabled visitors.

Clothing in a Mosque

Clothing should be modest for both men and women. For women this means ankle length skirt or trousers, which should not be tight or transparent, together with a long sleeved and high-necked top or shirt. A headscarf is usually essential for women. For young girls an ankle or knee length skirt with tights or trousers is necessary. Shoes are removed before going into the prayer hall and are placed on the racks provided. Clean and presentable socks, stockings, or tights are therefore a good idea.

Reminder note: A head scarf or head covering will not be necessary for the young girls. What would be required for the girls is that they wear trousers or if they are wearing a short skirt then to wear tights or the like to cover their legs.

Entering a Mosque

Where women attend the Mosque, men and women usually enter the prayer hall by separate entrances. Visitors are not always required to do so. You may on entering be greeted by the Muslim Arabic greeting "Assalamo Allaikum" which means "peace be with you." The answer, if you would like to use it, is "Wa 'alaikum-as-salam", which means "peace be upon you too". Do not offer, or expect, to shake hands with people of the opposite sex. Before entering the prayer hall or prayer room, Muslim men and women perform wudhu or ablutions if they have not already done so earlier or from home. This is not necessary for the non-Muslim visitor who will not be asked to join in the prayer.

Entering a Mosque Prayer Hall

Go quietly into the hall, and sit where requested on the carpet. If visiting as a group during a time when prayers are taking place, sit together towards the rear of the hall.

Worship in a Mosque

When salat (Arabic), one of the five daily prayers are in progress, non-Muslim visitors are welcomed but simply to observe rather than to join in. If arriving at such a time, find a place near the rear wall and sit quietly observing the prayer. No sacred or blessed food will be offered, nor will visitors be expected to make any physical gesture of respect to holy objects (except removing their shoes and acting respectfully in the prayer hall).

We hope this article is helpful in making your visit both enjoyable and beneficial. Happy visiting!!