

How to establish a Maktab?

The maktab system has proved to be among the most vital tools in implementing basic Deeni ta'leem to the ummat at large. If makaatib are established in the correct manner, there is great hope that the jahaalat (ignorance) will be dispelled and people will learn Deen and put it into practice and thereby earn the success of both dunya and aakhirat.

The following two questions then arises

1. How does one establish a maktab?
2. How does one go about running a maktab in the correct manner?

After many years of working in the makaatib and after much thought, contemplation and consultation, our senior Ulama have concluded that in order to run a maktab efficiently, four things are necessary.

- 1. A proper administration of the maktab.**
- 2. A proper curriculum and syllabi.**
- 3. Qualified and experienced teachers.**
- 4. Supervision.**

If in every area makaatib are established in this manner, there is hope that the winds of hidaayat (guidance) will blow in every corner of the world and the seeds of Imaan will be sowed deep into the hearts of the children of the ummat.

Firstly, we must understand that to run and establish a maktab is very easy. Anyone has the potential of running a maktab. However, it must be done with *ikhlaas* (sincerity) and by following the proper principles of ta'leem (education). Every person should make an intention to establish and run a maktab in his area. Every masjid should have a maktab. There is great hope that the Deen of Allah Ta'ala will *insha Allah* spread throughout the entire universe.

1. The Maktab Administration

1. Find a suitable venue to establish a maktab.
2. There are many masaajid all over the world. The *sehn* (courtyards) of the masaajid could be used for the makaatib. If there are no masaajid in the area, any other public or private room could be rented or even the public school classrooms could be used in the afternoons for this purpose.
3. Before commencing a maktab, the senior people in the community must be met and *mashwarah* should be made with them. This should also be discussed in the *Jumuah* talks, so that the people are well informed of the commencement of the maktab. Pamphlets could also be made out and distributed in the schools and other strategic places.
4. Arrangements should be made for the maktab books, desks, blackboards and other necessary items for the madrasah to make learning and teaching easier. All necessities for the maktab must be arranged by the trustees, e.g. desks, black boards, chalk, charts, kitaabs, toilet and wudhu facilities, etc.
5. Separate facilities for the boys and girls must be arranged (at the least from grade 4 upwards).
6. If there are more than three ustaads at the Madrasah, one ustaad should be appointed as the principal to oversee the day to day needs of the maktab. This will help in the smooth administration of the madrasah affairs.
7. The times of the madrasah should be fixed. At least 2½ hours of maktab ta'leem should be allocated daily.

8. A nominal fee should be charged to the children. If any child cannot afford the fees, then no compulsion should be made for him.
9. Constant meetings with parents must be held to discuss issues regarding the madrasah and their children.
10. Some arrangements should be made for high school, college students and adults. After Fajar is a good time to teach these pupils. In the same way some kind of arrangements should be made for the bigger girls and the women in the community.
11. Those children who do not understand English should be taught in their own language. The syllabus should then be translated for this purpose.

2. A proper curriculum and syllabi

1. Have a proper syllabus in place. This must be done with the mashwarah of the senior Ulama-e-Kiraam in the area. One must also remember that the syllabus is not something that is cast in stone. This can change according to the need.

3. Qualified and experienced teachers

1. It is extremely important to employ pious and righteous teachers whose Qur-aan reading is excellent. For this it is necessary for the local people to contact the senior Ulama and make some arrangements to train the ustaads in this field.
2. Teachers should be made to attend ta'leemi workshops in order to improve their levels as well as their teaching methodologies.
3. One should not look at saving finances and hire unqualified teachers at the makaatib. Having incompetent teachers in our makaatib will throw water over all our efforts. Ensure that we have good competent teachers to impart quality ta'leem to the children of the ummah.

4. Supervision

1. The local trustees must help to oversee the needs of the maktab in as far as cleanliness and other basic needs are concerned.
2. The principal of the Madrasah must from time to time go to each class and ensure that the level of ta'leem improves. Special attention must be focused on the recitation of the Qur-aan Shareef.
3. Special focus must be made on the tarbiyat of the children. Absenteeism, bad behaviour and other aspects must be rectified.
4. The maktab should be affiliated to some Ulama body which will send a supervisor/inspector regularly to check on the progress of the maktab. Thereafter in the light of his assessments he will make suggestions on how to improve the level of ta'leem at the maktab.
5. Half yearly and final exams should be conducted by external examiners who will award marks to the children. Examiners should be asked to produce a written report with constructive suggestions on how to improve the level of ta'leem.