

'Devoted' mother beat son to death for failing to learn Koran A mother who beat her son to death because he failed to learn the Koran properly was described by a judge as an otherwise "devoted and caring mum".



Sara Ege beat her son Yaseen to death Photo: PA/WALES NEWS SERVICE

By Richard Alleyne

Sara Ege, 33, was said to have treated her seven-year-old son "like a dog" and repeatedly beaten him with a stick, rolling pin and slipper for failing to memorise the religious text quickly enough.

But as he sentenced her to life for the "dreadful crime", Mr Justice Wyn Williams said that in many respects she was a "very good mother".

Ege collapsed as the sentence was delivered at Cardiff Crown Court and had to be helped, trembling and sobbing, from the dock.

The trial heard that for at least three months before his death in July 2010, Ege had beaten Yaseen on a number of occasions, sometimes so badly he was unable to write and sit down.

The beatings, often with a wooden pestle, became so bad that on the day he died he was suffering from "serious abdominal injuries" and "multiple fractures".

In a confession that she later retracted, Ege said that as he lay dying he continued to recite tracts from the Islamic Holy book.

Ege then burnt the body in an attempt to cover up the crime and claim that he died in a house fire. Judge Williams, who said she must serve at least 17 years in jail, said "the cause of the beating was your unreasonable view that he wasn't learning passages quickly enough".

"The violence Yaseen suffered was not confined to the day of his death," he said. "For three months you beat him often with a wooden pestle and I'm confident these beatings left him in a significant amount of pain.

"This prolonged cruelty culminated on the day of his death in what was a savage attack. "You then set fire to his body in an attempt to evade responsibility for what you had done. "I accept you were a devoted and caring mum.

"Except for the obsession with Yaseen learning you did many fine things to bring him up as a young boy. "In killing your son you abused a precious relationship of trust which does and should exist between a parent and a child."

Ege, a university graduate who suffered prolonged bouts of depression, sobbed throughout the one-hour hearing. She had originally admitted killing him after getting "frustrated" with him because he failed to three chapters of the Koran in three months.

The court was told how Ege would hit Yaseen with a stick, a hammer, a rolling pin and a slipper as well as repeatedly punching him.

Ege finally retracted all her previous confessions and told police they had all been lies.

She said her husband and his family had threatened to kill her and her family if she didn't take the blame for her son's death.

Her husband Yousef denied causing or allowing the death of a child by not stopping his wife's beatings of Yaseen. After the sentencing Mr Ege, a taxi driver, said: "He was loved by all who had known him due to his beautiful nature and his high academic level.

"I would like to thank all my family, friends for the endless support through these difficult times and I would like to thank all the people who sent messages of condolences."

Ann James, head teacher at Radnor Primary School in Cardiff where Yaseen was a pupil, "He was a delightful little boy and beautifully behaved who always had a smile on his face," she said. "It was a pleasure having him in school with us."

Ege was found guilty of murder and perverting the course of justice by burning little Yaseen's body.