

14A Tynystanova,  
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan 720055  
TEL: +996 312 56 31 39  
Email: [bishkek@qsi.org](mailto:bishkek@qsi.org)

# QSI Bishkek Teacher Handbook 2021-2022

*Director: Jason Montgomery*

*Office Manager: Anna Grigorova*

*Financial Manager: Svetlana Buhantseva*

Dear QSI Bishkek Faculty Member:

Welcome to QSI Bishkek! This handbook is designed to provide convenient access to the policies and procedures of QSIB, thus facilitating your success throughout the school year. When you have questions regarding what you should do in a given situation, please refer *first* to the handbook, for its use will minimize miscommunication regarding the various situations with which you must deal daily, and will enable the smooth operation of our school. Additionally, it is imperative that you familiarize yourself with this Teacher handbook, but the Parent/Student Handbook.

In order that you have timely information, we will update this handbook at least annually, and more frequently as necessary.

Remember that a Positive Attitude is the key to success. We are going to have a great year!

Mr. Jason Montgomery, Director

## **Daily procedures at QSIB**

Below is a list of the most basic information you will need for the first few weeks of school.

### **After School Activities & Clubs**

Each teacher and paraprofessional are required to lead, sponsor, or supervise ASA activity or club every quintile. Staff members are responsible for planning and conducting their activity as well as coordinating with the ASA coordinator.

### **Attendance**

Please update your attendance on a daily basis using the electronic program explained to you by the Director. This will then show up on the Student Status Report.

### **Classroom Supervision**

- Teachers and paraprofessionals are required to supervise their students during class AT ALL TIMES, regardless of the age of the students. Leaving students unattended in a classroom is unacceptable and constitutes grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from duty and termination.
- **MORNING ARRIVAL:** Teachers are expected to be at school no later than **8:00 a.m.** each morning. Please be in classrooms by 8:05 a.m. to greet students
- **IN BETWEEN CLASSES:** Secondary teachers greet students (12 year olds up to Secondary IV) at the door every day before class and supervise the hallways between classes. Please stand near your doorway and welcome kids to class, keeping an eye on the hall activity.
- **AFTERNOON DISMISSAL:** Wait until the bell rings to dismiss students. Students should not leave class before the dismissal bell. If you happen to finish your lesson early, have students sit quietly and/or prepare for dismissal. Elementary teachers or para professionals will accompany students to the Main Gate in the front of the school building by the offices to

meet drivers or parents. **At the end of the day, wait with students to make sure that they are picked up by drivers or parents. *We are responsible for the safety of our students and supervision is important to ensure that students are safe.*** If a student is left waiting for long, please bring them to the reception area where they will get help calling a parent or driver. The stranded students will wait in the front foyer.

### **Conferences (Parent/Teacher)**

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled two times a year, in October and February. The February conferences should be student led. Additional parent conferences, scheduled by appointment only, can be held as needed throughout the school year. In June, teachers may independently schedule meetings prior to issuing the final status reports.

### **Dress Code**

Staff members are to dress in an appropriate, modest, and professional manner.

“Jeans” are not allowed unless it is for a field trip or a preannounced, “Casual Day”.

Fridays are tentatively scheduled as Casual Days, but this may be changed or eliminated at any time at the discretion of the Director.

“Flip-flops”, house shoes, shorts, tank tops and shirts with no collars are not allowed on any school day. (This includes on Casual Days.)

### **Internet -Microsoft Office-Email**

You may access the Internet from your rooms, the library, and the computer lab. If you have a laptop, you may access the internet and server wirelessly. Contact the system administrator, Igor, for information about connecting. Using school computers or personal laptops to access the internet must be done in a professional manner. Any staff member who uses the internet inappropriately will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, by the Director.

We use the Microsoft Office platform for all school related functions with the exception of the Learning Management Systems.

### **Field trips**

If you wish to take a field trip with your class, you will need to schedule the event with the Administrative Assistant in the main office. **Requests must be made at least one week in advance of the planned trip.** Buses, fees, etc. need to be planned in advance. First aid kits, found in the nurse’s room, should be taken along in case of minor emergencies.

### **Illness**

All teachers and paraprofessionals must inform the Director, of any absence due to illness. He may be notified by a phone call, a text message, or an email, but all must be sent before 7:15am. Please remember that he will be out front with students by 7:45am and he will need to make arrangements for classes to be covered before then. So please notify him before 7:15am.

All other employees must inform the Administrative Assistant, Anna Grigorova, of an absence due to illness. She may be notified only by a text message or email, and she must be notified by 7:30am.

## **Inventory**

QSIB uses Asset Manager Software to record all school equipment and textbooks. Teachers are to hold students responsible for any textbooks they check out to them. All textbooks should be checked out with the Librarian.

## **Learning Management System (LMS)**

All teachers are required to maintain a digital learning management system.

Secondary-10-YO classes will use Schoology.

5-YO through 9 YO classes can choose to use Schoology or See Saw

## **Lesson Plans and Emergency Lesson Plans**

Teachers should maintain weekly lesson plans that are readily available to the Director. Weekly plans should **be placed on the teacher's desk so that they are readily available to the administration.**

**All teachers are required to create Emergency Lesson Plans. These Emergency Lesson Plans should be kept in a folder on the teacher's desk so that they are readily available to a substitute and/or the administration.**

## **Lunch Supervision**

- Assist students with lunch trays, if necessary
- Assist students with the microwave and hot water.
- If you are not on duty, but choose to have lunch in the cafeteria, it is expected that you will address any student misconduct you see it and report it to the person on duty.

## **Local Bank Accounts**

Each staff member is required to have a local bank account for salary deposits.

## **Email Communication**

Each staff member will be given an email account that should be used for school business only. Official school communications should be done through the school email account. Use appropriate and professional email etiquette when communicating with parents, staff, and students. Memos and other critical documents will be dispersed using email, so staff members are responsible for checking their email at least once daily.

## **Newsletters**

QSIB sends home a weekly newsletter. Teachers are responsible for contributing articles in the Newsletters and a schedule of the assigned weeks will be provided at the beginning of the school year. All newsletter contributions will need to be submitted to the director by the Tuesday at 4:00 pm of your assigned week.

## **Personal Opinions/Religious Views (QSI is a secular organization)**

- A teacher is a facilitator of discussions, not someone who emphasizes one point of view. As professionals, teachers should keep personal religious beliefs outside of the classroom and school setting.
- However, we do not discourage others' beliefs. Discussion of beliefs, if done appropriately, can be held as long as respect for others beliefs is maintained.

### **Phone Calls Home**

You are advised to use your personal cell phone and Skype account to communicate with friends and family outside of Kyrgyzstan.

### **Photocopies**

We have two photocopiers located upstairs and downstairs. Please treat them kindly and report any problems to the Administrative Assistant in the Main Office.

### **Professional Development**

- Teachers are expected to participate in professional development opportunities presented at the school.
- Professional Performance for Growth---The Director will implement the QSI model of Evaluation that includes Goal Setting, announced and unannounced observations, documentation folders, student surveys and summative reports.
- The Director will meet with each teacher regarding each of the above elements of the Professional Performance for Growth throughout the school year.

### **Recess Supervision**

- During recess, pay particular attention to student behavior. Be alert, and when rules are broken, please intervene. Watch for behaviors that may result in injury to students and stop them before they escalate. Adult intervention is required if there is a potential for injury and when students cannot solve a problem by themselves.
- Active supervision is required. Teachers should be walking around and monitoring behavior.
- Students should speak English during recess.

### **Record Keeping**

Teachers are required to keep *assessment binders* and or digital assessment records for each student for mathematics, reading, language arts, science and cultural studies (Subjects can be combined). These binders should contain assessments for each unit of study. Assessments and tests are *not* to be sent home. (Teachers may make copies to send home.) Parents are welcome to make an appointment to come into school to see the tests. Tests and assessments should be clearly marked and the difference from an A or a B should be understood clearly by the student and parent. These documents should be available upon request during parent/teacher conferences.

### **Social Media**

We are active in sharing information about our school on our social media accounts. Each staff member is encouraged to take pictures of all of the great learning taking place in their classroom

and sharing them with our social media coordinator. Pictures of students and other school related activities are not to be shared on teacher's personal social media accounts.

### **Staff and Committee Meetings**

All teachers, including part-time instructors, and paras, are required to attend weekly PLC, staff and committee meetings. Staff, committee, and PLC meetings are scheduled every month from 3:35-4:35 p.m. (These meeting times and days may be changed at any time at the discretion of the Director.)

### **Supplies**

Supplies are available in the front office cupboards and the supply room on the second floor. If additional supplies are needed, please talk to the receptionist or Main Office.

### **Working Hours**

Regular working hours are 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday ( 4:35 on Wednesday) and 8:00 a.m. until 2:45 p.m. on Friday. (The early release on Fridays may be changed at any time at the discretion of the Director.)

## **Curriculum**

### **A SUMMARY OF THE EDUCATIONAL MODEL IMPLEMENTED BY QSI**

The schools of Quality Schools International (QSI) use a model of education based upon student performance.

This success oriented way of operating a school leads to optimum learning and to happy and motivated students. Using knowledge of educational research, these schools are student performance-based rather than 'time-based' or 'calendar-based'. Teachers and students in QSI schools use time as a resource to reach mastery of clearly-defined objectives (unit outcomes) rather than using time as a boundary condition to determine when learning begins and ends. Our teachers are expected to employ instructional practices of excellence; however, the measure of success is not how well the teacher teaches, but how well the students learn.

#### ***The implications of QSI's three foundational beliefs:***

##### **1) All students can experience success in their learning.**

QSI defines academic success as performing at a minimal level that would traditionally earn a "B" grade. The system for evaluation is mastery at an "A" or "B" level, or a "P" which means the student is still in progress toward mastery in a particular unit.

There is a relationship for any student between the time spent on learning and practicing, and that student's level of performance. Rather than employing an extensive grading system, such as A, B, C, D, E, or 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, to record varying performance levels, QSI believes that the amount of time each student spends on a unit of study can vary considerably as each works toward achieving an "A" or "B" mastery.

The QSI curriculum identifies core units that make up courses. There are ten units in most year-long courses. Teachers should expect that most students will achieve mastery in these core units within the school year. Higher performing students may master not only the core units, but selective units as well as shown on the status reports. Some students will need to take advantage of the opportunities provided for them to utilize extra time to master the units.

Some examples of ways for a student to find extra time to work on a unit include:

- a) Using time from another course in which that student is performing well and therefore does not need the full class time to master units. (i.e. a student who is doing well in a reading unit may take some of that time to work on challenges they have encountered in a mathematics unit, or vice versa.)
- b) Using some time at recess or lunch to spend with a teacher or to do some practice in an area that they find challenging.
- c) Formal "safety netting" sessions after school where teachers stay after the normal school day to work with students who need extra assistance.
- d) The administration may schedule additional time for a student to work on a specific area.
- e) Younger students may seek the help of older students on a formal or informal basis.
- f.) A student may spend more time at home in the evenings or on weekends working on areas that they find challenging. On occasion, students set themselves up with study groups or peer tutors. Some may hire tutors to help them. There will be occasions when a student will be engaged in a course for more than one academic year.

## **2) Success breeds success.**

QSI believes that there is a definite connection between how a student perceives their performance in a subject and how they actually perform in that subject. Students who consistently experience failure are unlikely to see themselves as successful. It is very important to break cycles of failure. One of the best ways to do this is to place students in situations where they will begin to experience success.

Following admission to the school, students are given an assessment to determine their level of performance in mathematics, reading, and writing. These assessment results are used to help determine the level of instruction that would be best for the students in the core courses. Based on these assessments, students are placed at the appropriate levels for achievement in each of the core courses. Students remain with their chronological age group for homeroom. They attend all courses not in the core group with their homeroom.

The progress of students who are placed in instructional groups below their age level is monitored. Once mastery is achieved, they are moved to their appropriate level. Students whose lack of English skills would prevent them from finding success in the main classroom are assigned to the Intensive English department. Here, very small teacher-student ratios exist.

**3) It is the responsibility of the school to provide the conditions for success.**

QSI believes that more learning will occur if students have a desire to learn, have positive feelings concerning the school environment, and have success in their work. A comfortable atmosphere of caring and acceptance is considered important. Students are encouraged to strive for excellence and creativity. An aesthetically pleasing environment enhances this. A student's possibility of success increases when he/she work at the appropriate level of difficulty and sense positive expectations from well-qualified, experienced, and caring educators.

To achieve these conditions, QSI takes on the responsibility:

- a) to recruit educators who have a love for children, who have positive expectations of children, and who are willing to give the time and energy necessary to meet the needs of individual students.
- b) to employ educators who have acceptable values and who believe that their life style should be a positive influence on their students.
- c) to employ educators directly from outside of the country, if necessary, to provide experienced and successful educators for specific positions.
- d) to employ enough educators to maintain reasonably small class sizes.
- e) to provide facilities that support academic and activity programs.
- f) to assess each student in reading, mathematics, and writing upon initial enrollment to assure a proper entry level in these courses.
- g) to encourage parental support of the school with a view toward enhanced learning and the development of positive student attitudes.

To provide these conditions, the staff at QSI schools takes on the responsibility:

- a) to continually assess the students in all areas of learning to assure mastery.
- b) to ensure students know what learning tasks are expected.
- c) to provide appropriate learning experiences and allow students sufficient time on tasks to be able to experience success.
- d) to provide reteaching experiences if mastery is not achieved.
- e) to reward students equally for mastery.
- f) to evaluate students in a way that encourages self-growth rather than competition against other students' achievements.
- g) to inspire students toward actualization of accomplishments in excellence and creativity.



- h) to provide a positive school atmosphere by working with a cooperative spirit supporting one another and encouraging a high morale and efficiency within the staff.
- i) to incorporate differentiated teaching methods and styles within the classroom.

The curriculum is based upon the objectives derived from the school's Exit Outcomes.

**Outcomes** - There are four levels of outcomes as follows:

1. Exit Outcomes - In the beginning of the restructuring process these were developed for Sanaa International School and subsequently for QSI's other schools. These outcomes were formulated in weekly meetings for an entire school year by a voluntary 'core group'. The starting point was to imagine our definition of a model graduate and then write what that graduate would know, would be able to do, and would be like. This led to dividing the Exit Outcomes into three parts: Knowledge, Competencies, and Success Orientations. From this the school's overall curriculum is developed.

QSI particularly stresses success orientations which include trustworthiness, responsibility, concern for others, kindness/politeness, group interaction, aesthetic appreciation, and independent endeavor.

2. Program Outcomes are derived from the Exit Outcomes and outline the school's curriculum in each of the seven departments (English, Mathematics, Cultural Studies, Science, Languages other than English, Creative and Applied Arts, and Personal Health). Each course (8 year old reading, biology, algebra, etc.) is identified in the Program Outcomes

3. Course Outcomes are derived from the Program Outcomes and give a more detailed description of each course and include information on materials available for the course.

4. Unit Outcomes Each course is divided into essential unit outcomes which are designed to require from 12 to 18 class periods for the student to attain mastery. These consist of a general statement and a series of measurable objectives (segment outcomes) which are used by the teacher and student to identify what the student must demonstrate in order to receive credit for the unit. Each unit has an evaluation instrument (usually two equivalent versions) used to determine student mastery and level of success. This may be a paper/pencil test, project, performance, or other means of determining student success.

**Alignment** - The teacher teaches, the materials support, and the mastery demonstrations test the objectives of the unit outcome. In other words teachers teach what they test and test what they teach. To do otherwise is not ethical. We want Mastery Learning, not Mystery learning.

**Expanded Opportunities** - Students differ in time needed to attain mastery on a unit outcome. A variety of ways are employed to allow a student the time necessary, while those who need less time are able to engage in selective outcomes and receive additional credits.

**Credentialing** - Aligned with this structure is the reporting system. Mastery of each unit is evaluated at the time of completion with an 'A' or 'B' (mastery grades). Mediocre or poor work is

not accepted. Completed work is assigned either 'A', or 'B', or 'P' - "You're not done yet!". If a student has mastered a unit with an evaluation of 'B', he or she may wish to demonstrate a higher level of mastery at a later time in the same school year in order to change the evaluation to an 'A'. This encourages continued learning. Data is entered in a computer on a daily basis and 'Status Reports' can be produced at any time. A time period (quarter, term, semester) is not evaluated; student performance in each unit outcome in which a student is engaged is evaluated.

This results in enhanced student learning and high student motivation as students are rewarded for their successes.

## **Student Evaluation**

Evaluations and rewards for student progress should take place as soon as possible after mastery is demonstrated for each unit outcome.

THE THREE BASIC PREMISES OF PERFORMANCE-BASED EDUCATION ARE:

- A. All Students can learn at a high level of achievement.
- B. Success breeds success.
- C. It is the school's responsibility to provide the conditions for the student's success.

With this in mind, Quality Schools International does not accept mediocre (grade of "C") or poor (grade of "D" or "F") work. Traditionally, the grades of "A" and "B" are considered to be mastery grades. "Mastery" may have variations of interpretation from one course to another, but generally 90% mastery is a guideline for verifying student achievement. However, teachers are encouraged to use professional judgment as well in evaluating mastery or non-mastery.

In view of the above comments, the evaluations issued in the written status reports are defined as follows:

- A = All essential parts of the outcome were mastered at an appropriately high level. The student consistently demonstrated noteworthy achievement of a high quality, particularly in the higher order thinking or performance skills.
- B = All essential parts of the outcome were mastered at an appropriately high level in which the student successfully engaged in higher order thinking or performance skills.
- P = The student is "In progress" in the outcome (normal status).
- H = This outcome is "on hold" for a legitimate reason. (The student has begun the outcome but is not currently pursuing it.)
- D = The student has not made a reasonable effort and is therefore "deficient" in attaining mastery of the outcome.

E = "Exposure". The student made a reasonable effort in the outcome and attained a level of mastery consistent with his/her capabilities. (Elementary classes only, but not in mathematics, reading, or language arts.)

W = The student has withdrawn from this outcome.

In Secondary School, students are granted one credit for mastery of each unit outcome which is credentialed "A" or "B". Thus, ten credits correspond to one "Carnegie Unit" used by many American secondary schools. In a given course, some students may not attain mastery in all ten essential unit outcomes, earning credits only for those outcomes mastered. This deficit will be reflected on their status reports. On the other hand some students may have demonstrated mastery of some selective unit outcomes for a course and may have more than the ten essential unit credits. If students receive an evaluation of "B" on a unit outcome, they may continue to work independently in that outcome and request another opportunity to demonstrate a higher level of mastery. Providing this opportunity encourages students to pursue continued learning, and the evaluation may be changed from a "B" to an "A".

Evaluations, called status reports, are issued to all students five times each year (at the end of each "quintile"). If there is a need or reasonable request, a status report can be issued for a particular student at any time.

**Emergency Procedures** (fire, earthquake, etc.) - see Emergency Handbook

## **English**

English is the language of instruction must be spoken in the classroom at all times. Exceptions to this rule include Kyrgyz, Russian, and French language classes. If students are overheard not speaking English in the hallways, teachers are advised to kindly ask students to use English. For those who desire to do so, students can speak in their native language during lunch and recess.

## **Student Placement and Reevaluation**

New students are given a mathematics, reading and language placement tests.

- New students
  - Meet briefly with Director, if available
  - Meet with Academic Coordinator.
  - Are placed by birth date (Oct 31 is cut-off)  
Ex: A student who is 8 years old on May 8 enters the 8 year old class. However, if a student turns 8 in December, he goes into the 7 year old class
  - The Intensive English Coordinator tests reading, writing, and mathematics. Placement decisions are determined by test results in these areas.
    - The decisions made for placement are communicated by speaking and/or in written form with parent.
    - If an Intensive English placement is required, a specific Intensive English file is created and documents are placed there.

- If parents disagree with placement determined by the Intensive English Coordinator, a meeting with the Academic Coordinator concerning the suggested placement will be scheduled. .
  - If a placement exception is being considered that diverts from QSI policy, a meeting with Academic Coordinator or Director is advised. A typed document stating the reason for the decision made by the school is signed by the parent(s). Each party then keeps a copy.
  - An Exception would be if a student is coming from an advanced grade in a US school, the student is placed in the next grade.
- Current student--if teacher/parent makes a request to move a student to a different level, we will evaluate student using:
    - Current sample of reading, writing, math (depending on subject requested)
    - Other information indicating student performance such as developmental continuums
    - Teacher, parent, Counselor and/or Intensive English Coordinator meet to decide final result
    - Team above meets with parents

## **Intensive English**

The Intensive English department provides a *service* to the school. Our main purpose is to give students the skills necessary to be successful in reading and writing in their mainstream class as quickly as possible. HOWEVER, due to the school's population, ALL teachers in our school teach Intensive English to some extent.

Important things to remember for students new to English:

- There is usually a “quiet period” when the new- to- English student won’t participate much. This will change as the student becomes familiar with routines.
- By the end of the year, these new English speakers will amaze you with the amount they have learned!
- Always pair them with a buddy to help them figure out what is happening. Make sure the buddy stays with the student for several days.
- Finally, when new students come in January or even May and they are new to English, remember what your students were like at the beginning of the year.

### **Intensive English Support**

When your mainstream students go to foreign language, the Intensive English students go to Intensive English Support. This is for increased exposure and instruction in English. This time can be used to review concepts students struggle with in mathematics, science or cultural studies.

### **Grading**

- We can assign an “E” grade to Intensive English students for ONLY science and cultural studies. The “E” indicates exposure but not mastery in the subject. Please remember that

the Intensive English students are just as eager to learn. Be patient with them. No “E” is given in secondary.

- Intensive English students are responsible for all math outcomes. Use your cooperating teacher to help. We cannot give the “E” grade in mathematics.

### **Transitioning Out**

During the year many students in Intensive English are ready to join their mainstream class. The Intensive English teacher will contact the mainstream class teacher. Then a meeting will be set up and the classroom teacher, Intensive English teacher, and Intensive English Coordinator will all meet to discuss possible transitioning out of Intensive English. Once an agreement is reached, a date is given for transitioning and a letter is sent to the parents. If an agreement is not reached, we discuss the alternatives.

In most cases, the student who transitions out of Intensive English will remain (for part of the year) in Intensive English support.

## **Committees**

All teachers, para professionals, specialists, and language teachers are expected to serve on various school committees.

## **Classroom Management**

Key to reducing unproductive behaviors:

- Continual engagement of students in learning activities, switching activities frequently
- Make your lessons stimulating and creative and use humor and be dynamic
- Make your lessons relevant—find out about your students— this can help you connect lessons with their interests and experiences.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Teaching will continue until the last day of school. Even when all units have been completed, teachers are expected to continue meeting their students in class as scheduled and plan meaningful learning activities related to their curricular area. Selective Units provide good opportunities for this.

- Effective Instruction
  - Time spent teaching correlates positively with achievement. This does not mean more lecture, but more time on task
  - Teacher emphasis on content correlates positively with achievement—place more emphasis on content areas students are having difficulty with
  - Teach in small groups as often as possible
  - Program as many question-response opportunities into your lesson as you can.
- The more student responses that are task related, the more *learning takes place*—

- Ignore off-task comments  
The more student responses are task related, the more *learning takes place*
- Clear and concise behavior expectations in classroom
  - Clear and concise consequences of not fulfilling expectations
  - The consequences are followed through by the teacher consistently
- Classroom management styles that correlate significantly with students' behavior in learning
  - "With-it-ness"—demonstrating you know what is going on
    - Communicated through the teacher's behavior
    - Being able to see something starting and stopping it before it gets bigger
  - Overlapping—dealing with two or more matters successfully at the same time. For example, continuing to teach while disciplining a student
  - Smoothness and momentum—ease and quickness of the teacher's management of the topic movement during recitations and transitions. The smoother and more anticipated the transitions the more on-task students will stay.
  - Ways that disrupt the "flow":
    - Stopping an activity in the middle and moving to another one
    - After moving to another activity, coming back to the first one
    - Teacher who goes on and on about a topic or a student's behavior
    - Student Participation - Good way is to say that you will be picking people at random during certain situations—keeps everyone engaged and on their toes
  - Accountability—The degree to which a teacher holds students accountable and responsible for their task performances
  - Seatwork variety and challenging
- Some behaviors require consequences be given. Teachers may assign detention for disciplinary reasons including tardiness to class. Detention, when assigned by the teacher, should be served in the teacher's classroom, not in the office. Parents must be kept informed of situations where a student's behavior is unacceptable or disruptive.