



Queen of the Universe N.S.

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Queen of the Universe N.S. - Code of Behaviour Policy

Introductory Statement

Following consultation with the Board of Management, the teaching staff, parents and pupils of Queen of the Universe this Code of Behaviour was drafted in the school year beginning 2018.

Rationale:

- In accordance with good practice and to ensure compliance with the publication of Developing a Code of Behaviour. Guidelines for School, N.E.W.B. 2008 it is felt that our existing policy needs to be revisited
- This review of our Code of behaviour will ensure the continuance of the existing orderly climate for learning in Q.O.U. N.S.
- Having a Code of Behaviour is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000 Section 23 (1).

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of our school

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore any rules will be age appropriate, with clear agreed consequences.

Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

A code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

Aims

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community

- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

Expectations of Staff

School rules are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. It is imperative that adults 'practise what they preach' in their interaction with children every day.

Staff are expected to:

- support and implement the school's code of behaviour;
- be cognisant of their duty of care;
- to be familiar with and follow the school's Child Protection Policy and Safe Guarding statement and to follow the relevant procedures in relation to child protection;
- create a safe, welcoming environment for each pupil;
- praise desirable behaviour;
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential;
- recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
- be courteous, consistent and fair;
- keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum;
- deal appropriately with misbehaviour;
- keep a record of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour;
- listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour;
- provide support for colleagues;
- be familiar with the Teaching Council "Professional Conduct Code";
- communicate with parents and staff when necessary, always with courtesy and respect;
- provide reports on matters of concern.
- to be familiar with and follow the school's policies on Grievance and Harassment if he/she has any complaint against staff, parents or outside personnel.
- Comply with guidelines, policies and procedures of the school in relation to

Expectations of Parents

Parents are expected:

- to nurture in their children a positive attitude towards school
- to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually in full school uniform with appropriate clothing for the weather so that their child will be warm and dry playing outside during breaks;
- to send a written note to the class teacher (in advance if possible) explaining their child's absence from school;
- to ensure the school has up-to-date phone numbers of family/friends to be contacted in case of an emergency.
- to arrange and ensure that a family member/friend is contactable and available to attend the school in the event of an emergency.
- to ensure their child attends school clean and with a good level of hygiene; to check their child's head regularly for head lice and treat as necessary;
- to ensure their child has a healthy lunch in school every day in line with the school policy on Health Eating.
- to arrange meetings with the class teacher and/or principal when they are concerned about any issue relating to their child;
- communicate with staff when necessary, always with courtesy and respect and to model good behaviour in their relationship with teachers;
- to encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others, for their own property and that of others;
- to be interested in, support and encourage their child's school work;
- to ensure that their child has the correct books and other materials;
- to be familiar with the code of behaviour and other school policies and to support the implementation of these policies;
- to co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others;
- to communicate to the school problems which may affect a child's behaviour and/or learning.
- to follow the school's "Complaints Procedure" if they have a complaint about a staff member.
- To co-operate with the schools Acceptable Use Policy regarding I.C.T.
- To respect the privacy of other children especially around the use of photography/videos/social media.

Expectations of Pupils

Pupils are expected:

- to listen to the class teacher, work hard, do their best and make best use of their time in school;
- to enter and leave the school building at all times in an orderly fashion; for more information please refer to the school's Exit and Entry routines. When the bell rings after play-time the children stop playing and walk to their class lines. Children do not enter the school building without getting permission from teachers.
- to walk within the school building and **quietness** is expected while children are getting ready to enter/exit class i.e. while queuing, while putting on coats in cloakrooms etc. ;
- to treat all staff members, themselves and each other with due respect and courtesy;
- to stand back for an adult, to welcome visitors and to show respect to their elders;
- to never bully any person; any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to be safe is unacceptable. Fighting, rough play or any physical force is never allowed or tolerated.
- to never use bad language; inappropriate language if used towards a teacher or anywhere within the school or while on a school activity is considered a breach of the code.
- to wear their full school uniform;
- not to bring chewing gum, glass bottles, sharp objects, correction fluids, other solvents, matches, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs to school either on the premises or to a school related activity;
- to bring no jewellery to school except one small stud earring in the bottom of each ear and a watch;
- not to wear make-up or false nails;
- not to cycle in school grounds unless taking part in safety training organised by the school;
- to hand up their mobile phone, switched off, to the class teacher or principal as soon as school starts and to remember to get their mobile phone from the teacher/principal before school finishes. If a child is found with a mobile phone it will be confiscated. All pupil phones must be switched off while on school grounds.
- to keep their hair neat and in its natural colour; for hygiene purposes hair must be tied back.
- to respect the school building and property; if any deliberate damage is caused, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost of repair/replacement.
- to value our school environment; the playground is a litter-free zone. Fruit peels, pencil parings etc. are collected for composting. Waste paper and cardboard are collected for recycling. All other empty carton drink containers and wrapping papers are considered household waste and are taken home.
- not to climb on the school railings.

On wet days children are expected:

- to do activities in class based on the class teacher's instructions or supervising teacher's instructions; A minimum of 3 teachers are on supervision duty at morning and lunch time-breaks – at least one for the senior section of the school and two for the junior section of the school with the assistance of the team of Special Needs assistants.
- to stay in their classrooms and not run around the room;
- to never use sharp implements;

When swimming children are expected:

- to wear a coat when walking to the swimming pool except on dry, sunny days during May and June;
- to walk in line behind the teacher to the swimming pool. No running allowed;
- to never shout or run in the dressing rooms or pool area;
- to listen and obey the instructor and life guard;
- to wear a swimming cap. Arm bands are needed for beginners and shower socks may be worn;
- to never leave the pool from the side - unless under the instructor's directions;
- to never push or play roughly in the pool, pool area or dressing rooms;
- to dress quickly after each session;
- not to bring shampoo, hairsprays, gels, spray deodorants to the pool;
- not to buy drinks/sweets at the pool.

When on school trips/tours, children are expected:

- to enter/leave the bus in an orderly manner;
- to arrive 15 minutes before departure time; Parents are expected to contact the school 15 minutes before departure time if a child is sick or unable to attend.
- to keep the school rules as listed above;
- not to bring mobile phones or electronic devices on school tours; Teachers will have mobile phones on tour if parents/children need to get in contact with one another.
- to sit in their seats and avoid loudness that would distract the driver;
- to take drinks and sweets at the appointed lunch breaks;
- to stay in their appointed groups at all times;
- to wear uniform on school tours;
- to return the parental/guardian permission slips allowing the child to go on tour;

Methods of Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. If special arrangements are required in order to communicate, parents will be facilitated in so far as practicable.

The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

- Meeting with parents/guardians at enrolment
- Induction meeting for new pupils
- Informal parent/teacher meetings and formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework
- Telephone contact
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School newsletters
- Through Parents' Council meetings.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

School Rules

- Pupils are required to attend school regularly and to be punctual. Pupils should line up in silence when the bell rings.
- School uniform is to worn during school hours except when otherwise instructed.
- School track suit should be worn for P.E. In the interest of safety pupils are asked not to wear facial jewellery and only wear studded earrings. The wearing of makeup is not allowed.
- Pupils are encouraged to be considerate towards their fellow pupils at all times. Name calling, bullying, bad language and fighting are to be avoided. School Policy on bullying is available from the school.
- Pupils must show respect for themselves, their fellow pupils and their teachers and to visitors who come to the school.
- Pupils should walk quietly and orderly along the corridors and should not play in the toilet areas.
- In order to encourage a healthy diet and healthy teeth, sweets, tayto, and chocolate bars etc., are discouraged.
- Pupils should not use the car park entrance when entering and leaving the school.
- Notes signed by parents or guardians are required for absences from school.
- Pupils going home must have a note signed by parents/guardians.
- Homework notebook is to be signed if requested.
- All pupils must play in their own playground. Rough and dangerous play is not allowed.
- Pupils are expected to be neat and tidy in their persons and in their work.
- Climbing on walls, school buildings, furniture etc., is not allowed.
- All pupils are asked to be litter conscious and to have respect for all property.
- While in school each pupil is subject to the authority of each member of the staff.
- Pupils should not use mobile phones or other hand held electronic devices in the school unless given permission by the class teacher.
- Parents will be involved at an early stage rather than as a last resort. It is agreed that a high standard of behavior requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation between

staff, pupils and parents.

These can be summed up as 6 main rules;

- Respect yourself and others
- Do your best
- Listen
- Be Safe
- Be honest
- Be tidy

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children. Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should where possible emphasise positive behavior (e.g. ‘Walk’ not ‘don’t run’.) Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Playground(s)

Positive behaviour is expected at all times in the playground. We support and encourage such behaviour by

- Marking school yards
- Supply of balls, skipping ropes, hula hoops etc.,
- Separate playground for infants and all remaining classes.
- Careful supervision at each break time ensuring that all children are visible and actively involved (see supervision rota).
- An incident book is carefully maintained where necessary.
- The children’s movement to and from the yard is orderly and supervised.
- On wet days, board games, jigsaws, cards, D.V.D’s etc., are used in the classrooms.

Other areas in the school

There is an expectation that the school rules will be implemented in all areas of the school such as corridors, halls, cloakrooms, toilet etc., and all children are reminded of them regularly.

Covid 19

Pupils are expected to follow the rules and procedures in our Covid 19 response plan. Any pupil breaking rules/procedures put in place in our Response plan, will be dealt with according to our Code of Behavior.

Anyone deliberately spitting/coughing in another persons face will face more serious sanctions e.g.suspension.

School related activities

Standards and rules contained in the code of behaviour would usually apply in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school e.g. school trips etc.

Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/resource teacher, and or Principal will work closely

with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments may be helpful.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Incentives

Part of the vision of Queen of the Universe N.S. is to help children achieve their personal best – academically, intellectually and socially. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Reward systems which are based on academic merit or particular extrinsic goals continuously apply to only a limited number of children and undermine the individuality of children.

All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given;

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- A system of merit marks or stickers
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- Medal and trophies for sustained achievement in a subject area.
- Mention at whole school assembly.
- Publication of work on school website/ social media.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised; Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property (intentional)
- Theft

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property (intentional)

Rewards

The school places great importance on praising and rewarding good behaviour. Teachers grant age appropriate rewards and incentives.

Sanctions

In Queen of the Universe N.S. if a pupil fails to observe the standards of behaviour outlined in the school's code, certain measures and sanctions may be imposed.

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features:

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
- The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
- Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

Some or all of the following steps will be taken when the children behave inappropriately.

- Reasoning with pupil
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
- Prescribing extra work
- Loss of privileges
- Detention during break
- Communication with parents
- Referral to Principal
- Principal communicating with parents
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour

Should a pupils' behaviour constitute a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, the school will take several steps. These include –

- Isolation of pupil/removal of the pupil to a safe place with a trusted member of staff
- Alternatively the other pupils in the classroom will be removed to a safe place.
- Every effort will be made to calm the child
- Immediate communication with parents
- Immediate visit from parent if deemed necessary
- In extreme cases, child may need to be referred to external agency for psychological testing. This would only be done in consultation with the parents.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with the pupil, teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools, the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the NEWB guidelines 2008. Suspension must also be notified to parents in writing. Where the parents decline the offer of meeting the school authorities, the written notification is to be regarded as the notification of suspension.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Queen of the Universe N.S. will follow fair procedures in the event that it is proposing to suspend or expel a student. These procedures have two essential components

- The right to be heard
- The right to impartiality

These fair procedures apply to

- The **investigation** of alleged misbehaviour
- The process of **decision making**

In exceptional circumstances, the principal and chairperson of the BOM may extend a 3 day suspension to a 5 day period without full BOM sanction (e.g. if the BOM is unable to convene at short notice).

The BOM will normally place a ceiling of **10 days** on a single suspension. Any extension of this will be considered as another suspension and due procedures should be followed. Where a period of suspension exceeds 20 days, the parents of the child have the right to appeal this under section 29 of the Education Act. A section 29 appeal can be made by contacting the Secretary General of DES. An application form for this procedure can be downloaded from the DES website.

Removal of Suspension

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff.

The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class. The school will make every effort to help the student reintegrate into school life – academically and socially.

The student will be given every opportunity and support for a fresh start.

Records and report to be kept in respect of suspension will include –

| | |
|--|---|
| Records of investigation and decision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The investigation (incl. all interview notes) • The decision making process • The decision and rationale for same • The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension |
| Report to the BOM | The principal will report all suspensions to the BOM with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension |
| Report to NEWB | The principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Ed. Welfare Act 2000, section 21 (4) (a)) |

Use of suspension will be reviewed at regular intervals.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools the National Education Welfare Act 2000 and the NEWB Guidelines 2008. The grounds for expulsion will be similar to the grounds for suspension. However, it will only be considered when all other interventions have been exhausted.

Grounds for Expulsion may include:

- The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The pupil is responsible for serious intentional damage to property.

Before expulsion is considered Queen of the Universe N.S. will have tried other interventions and will have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour.

Procedures in respect of expulsion

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal (similar to one carried out in the case of suspension)
- A recommendation to the BOM by the principal
- Consideration of the BOM of the principal's recommendation, and the holding of a hearing
- BOM deliberation and action following the hearing
- Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer (this should occur within the 20 day period between the Board's decision and the start of expulsion date.

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

Records and reports to be kept in respect of expulsion will include -

| | |
|---|---|
| Records of investigation and decision making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The investigation (incl. All interview notes) • The decision making process • The decision and rationale for same |
| Report to the BOM | The principal will report to the BOM with the and records of all relevant communication will be maintained. |
| Report to NEWB | The BOM is required to report expulsions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines and the Welfare Officer is required to liaise with the all relevant parties within that period. (Ed. Welfare Act 2000, section 21(4) (a). |

Keeping records

All serious incidents on the playground are recorded factually in the School Incident Book. Teachers include a record of individual children's behaviour on the annual school report.

Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

The school informs the parents regularly that The Education Welfare Act, 2000, stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence. This notification is required to be written. Accounts of all absences with the reasons (written) are retained in an absence file in each classroom. This information is reported to the NEWB on the standard forms/on line.

Reference to other Policies

Queen of the Universe N.S. has an extensive range of policies which support and consolidate the school's Code of Behaviour.

These include:

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Sexual harassment
- Enrolment
- Health & Safety
- Equality
- Special Educational Needs

Success Criteria

Our school Code of Behaviour will be considered successful if the following criteria are satisfied:

- *Observation of positive behaviour in class room, playground and school environment*
- *Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers*
- *Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils*

Roles and Responsibility

- **All members of the school community have responsibility**
- **The BOM has a vital role to play in supporting the school Code of Behaviour, especially in extreme situations such as suspension and expulsion.**

Implementation Date

This policy will come into effect on 8 March 2018

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals. A formal review will be timetabled 4 years from now.

Ratification & Communication

This policy has been ratified by the BOM of Queen of the Universe N.S. on _____

Signature: _____
 Mary Murphy
 (Chairperson)