



## **SPARK Schools Code of Conduct**

### **1. Preamble**

- 1.1. This Code of Conduct has been developed in accordance with the South African Schools Act and is aimed at establishing a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective education and learning at SPARK Schools.
- 1.2. The principles enshrined in this Code of Conduct are based on the Rights contained in the Bill of Rights, as set out in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, (“the Constitution”) including but not limited to:
  - 1.2.1. the right to Democracy;
  - 1.2.2. the right to non-discrimination and equality;
  - 1.2.3. the right to privacy, respect and human dignity;
  - 1.2.4. the right to non-violence and the freedom and security of a person;
  - 1.2.5. the right to freedom of expression;
  - 1.2.6. the right to a safe school environment; and
  - 1.2.7. the right to education.
- 1.3. The Parents and Scholars accept that whilst these rights are paramount, they are not absolute and can be limited in accordance with the Constitution.

### **2. Core Values and Creed**

- 2.1. The aim of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that SPARK Schools core values are upheld. Our core values are:



- 2.1.1. Service: SPARK Scholars are active citizens in their classrooms, communities, and country. They dedicate time and effort to serving those in need and approach challenges with a team mind set;
  - 2.1.2. Persistence: SPARK Scholars never give up. They relentlessly pursue their academic and personal goals, tackling problems with an optimistic attitude and determination;
  - 2.1.3. Achievement: SPARK Scholars accomplish their academic goals, putting them on a trajectory toward university and successful careers. They are intellectually curious and have a genuine love of learning;
  - 2.1.4. Responsibility: SPARK Scholars demonstrate self-control and are accountable for their actions. They pay attention, follow directions, complete assignments, and seek to understand how their actions impact others;
  - 2.1.5. Kindness: SPARK Scholars treat themselves and others with respect and dignity. They are generous and value their relationships with peers and educators alike.
- 2.2. Each SPARK school has their own 6th Core Value, chosen by the founding Principal.
- 2.3. Every day, our scholars recite the SPARK Schools Creed, a promise to conduct themselves by these core values: *"I am a SPARK Scholar at all times. I serve my classmates, community, and country. I am persistent. I never give up. I achieve my best in all that I do. I am responsible for my actions. I treat everyone around me with kindness. I am a SPARK Scholar, and I am going to university!"*

### **3. DISTRIBUTION PROCEDURES**

- 3.1. The Code of Conduct is displayed on our school website.
- 3.2. Each Scholar will be given a copy of this Code of Conduct via the Scholar and Family Handbook, distributed annually. Parents are required to read through the Handbook with their Scholar and sign the Handbook Agreement and return it to the Scholar's educator for filing.
- 3.3. By signing this Handbook Agreement, parents and Scholars acknowledge they are informed of what they may not do or should do and what action will be taken against them if they contravene this Code of Conduct.



#### **4. JURISDICTION AND SCOPE**

- 4.1. The Code of Conduct is in force:
  - 4.1.1. on the Schools premises, prior to, during, and following, regular School hours;
  - 4.1.2. at all official School events, both within and outside the regular School hours and whether on or off the School's Premises;
  - 4.1.3. at all times when the Scholar is dressed in the school uniform or is reasonably identifiable as a SPARK Scholar, both on the School Premises, or outside of same, even if he/she is online at the time.

#### **5. SCHOOL RULES**

- 5.1. Intention
  - 5.1.1. The School Rules are intended to establish a disciplined and purposeful environment to facilitate effective teaching and learning at the School. Nothing shall exempt a Scholar from complying with the School Rules. Ignorance of the School Rules is, therefore, not an acceptable excuse. To this end, the School rules are available to every Scholar and are emailed to each Parent upon enrolling at the School.
- 5.2. General Principles
  - 5.2.1. Scholars are expected at all times to behave in a courteous and considerate manner towards each other, all members of staff and visitors to the School;
  - 5.2.2. Scholars are expected to abide by the School Rules with regard to appearance and behaviour when representing the School both during school hours and after school hours, at School and away from School;
  - 5.2.3. Scholars may not say or do anything that will discredit themselves or the School;
  - 5.2.4. no Scholar has the right at any time to behave in a manner that will disrupt the learning activity of other Scholars, or will cause another Scholar physical or emotional harm.



### 5.3. Dress Code

#### 5.3.1. General

- 5.3.1.1. Scholars must be groomed neatly and take care of their appearance at all times;
- 5.3.1.2. every item of the Scholar's uniform should be marked inside with the Scholar's full name, and no items other than official uniform may be worn.

#### 5.3.2. Uniform

##### 5.3.2.1. The summer uniform includes:

- 5.3.2.1.1. a navy blue golf shirt with a school badge;
- 5.3.2.1.2. khaki shorts or a khaki skort;
- 5.3.2.1.3. a navy blue peak cap or floppy hat with school badge;
- 5.3.2.1.4. white socks; and
- 5.3.2.1.5. white takkies.

##### 5.3.2.2. The winter uniform includes:

- 5.3.2.2.1. a navy blue golf shirt with a school badge;
- 5.3.2.2.2. a navy blue long sleeved golf shirt with a school badge;
- 5.3.2.2.3. long khaki pants or a choice of navy blue track suit pants for Grade R Scholars;
- 5.3.2.2.4. a navy blue jersey with the school badge;
- 5.3.2.2.5. a navy blue beanie hat;
- 5.3.2.2.6. white socks; and



5.3.2.2.7. white takkies

5.3.3. Jewellery:

- 5.3.3.1. Scholars may not wear jewellery except a small, solid-coloured wristwatch or Medic Alert bracelet; and
- 5.3.3.2. Scholars may only wear plain gold or silver stud earrings. Earrings may not contain cut or coloured glass. Only one earring per earlobe is permitted.

5.3.4. Bag:

- 5.3.4.1. Scholars should carry a backpack that does not have wheels, but has sufficient space inside for a homework folder, water bottle and lunch box.

5.3.5. Hairstyle:

- 5.3.5.1. Hairstyles must be neat. No designs may be cut or shaved into hair or eyebrows. Gel or mousse may only be used in moderation. Hair may not fall over the face or eyes. Braids, extensions or dreadlocks must be neat and tied back if over the collar. There can be no artificial hair colouring, tints, or streaks. Hair clips must be black or silver. Hair bands must be blue, green, white or black. No multicoloured or decorative hair bands are allowed.

5.3.6. Deviations:

- 5.3.6.1. Should a Scholar require a deviation from the Dress Code for any reason, whether it be religious, medical or other, a written request must be submitted to the School and a meeting must be arranged with the Principal to make alternate arrangements which must be confirmed in writing and kept on the Scholar's file.

5.4. School Policies

- 5.4.1. Each Scholar agrees to adhere to the School Policies, as amended from time to time, including but not limited to:



- 5.4.1.1. the Anti-Bullying Policy;
- 5.4.1.2. the Internet Usage Agreement;
- 5.4.1.3. the Diversity Policy;
- 5.4.1.4. the Substance Abuse Policy; and
- 5.4.1.5. the Sickness and Illness Policy

## 6. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

### 6.1. The Behaviour Chart and Daily Learning Journal:

- 6.1.1. At SPARK Schools, we believe that high academic achievement is impossible without excellent behaviour. Our core values provide the positive basis for Scholar behaviour at SPARK Schools;
- 6.1.2. our Behaviour Chart, helps Scholars in the foundation phase (Grades R-3) track their behaviour throughout a given class period. The Behaviour Chart is as follows:

PURPLE	Exemplary Display of all Core Values
BLUE	Exceeding Classroom Expectations
GREEN	Ready to Learn
YELLOW	Warning
ORANGE	Scholar Loses Privilege
RED	Phone Call Home/ Written Reflection/ Scholar Loses Second Privilege

- 6.1.3. each Scholar begins with his/her magnet on the green panel, indicating that she is “ready to learn”;
- 6.1.4. if a Scholar **exceeds classroom expectations** by displaying Core Values in an exemplary way or setting an example of good behaviour for others, he/she may move his magnet **UP** to the blue or purple panels; and



- 6.1.5. if a Scholar **struggles with behaviour, violates a classroom rule, or breaches the Code of Conduct**, he will move his magnet **DOWN** to yellow, orange, or red, based on the severity of the infraction.
  - 6.1.6. Scholars whose magnets are on red must complete a written reflection, will call their parents, and will lose privileges.
  - 6.1.7. When Scholars rotate to a new subject, for example, from literacy to maths classrooms, they begin again on green. This gives Scholars a fresh start with a new teacher and encourages them to continue behaving well or to improve their behaviour if they were previously below green on the Behaviour Chart.
  - 6.1.8. Parents can expect to receive a daily report, included in each Scholar's homework folder, which shows the scholar's behaviour colour in each class and may include educator comments. The Behaviour report includes space for Parents to write notes or ask questions and includes an indication of the Scholar's homework quality, if homework is assigned.
  - 6.1.9. Parents should expect to be supplied with an explanation from the teacher for students on orange or red, but should not expect further written explanation if their Scholar was on yellow and received a warning for their behaviour.
  - 6.1.10. In cases of severe behaviour issues, the student's parents will be contacted to attend a meeting with the student's teachers to create a plan to ensure the Scholar's success. Incidents of bullying and intimidation will be taken very seriously.
  - 6.1.11. In Grades 4-7, our students record their behaviour in a Daily Learning Journal, where they self-reflect on demonstration of each of the core values daily. Educators in the intermediate phase leverage the privilege of personal responsibility by removing that privilege as a consequence for a Scholar's poor behaviour and completing the journal for the Scholar when they struggle to behave.
- 6.2. Serious Offences that Could Lead to Suspension and/or Expulsion
- 6.2.1. The Scholar accepts, and the Parent authorises the Principal to institute suspension, as a precautionary measure, with regard to a Scholar who is



charged with serious misconduct, as contemplated in the South African Schools Act. These offences include but are not limited to:

- 6.2.1.1. conduct which endangers the safety and violates the rights of others;
- 6.2.1.2. possession or threat of use of a dangerous weapon;
- 6.2.1.3. possession, use, transmission or visible evidence of narcotic or unauthorized drugs, alcohol or intoxicants of any kind;
- 6.2.1.4. fighting, assault or battery;
- 6.2.1.5. immoral behavior or profanity;
- 6.2.1.6. falsely identifying oneself;
- 6.2.1.7. harmful graffiti, hate speech, sexism or racism;
- 6.2.1.8. theft or possession of stolen property including test or examination papers prior to the writing of tests or examinations;
- 6.2.1.9. unlawful action, vandalism, or destroying or defacing of School property;
- 6.2.1.10. disrespect, objectionable behavior and verbal abuse directed at educators, other School employees or Scholars;
- 6.2.1.11. repeated violations of School Rules, the Code of Conduct or School Policies;
- 6.2.1.12. criminal or oppressive behavior such as rape or gender based harassment;
- 6.2.1.13. victimization, bullying and intimidation of other Scholars;
- 6.2.1.14. infringement of examination rules; and





6.2.1.15. knowingly and willfully supplying false information or

6.2.1.16. falsifying documentation to gain an unfair advantage at School.

("Serious Misconduct")

6.2.2. Before a Scholar is suspended, the Scholar and his/her Parents must be given an opportunity to meet with the Principal, so as to indicate why the suspension should not be considered as detailed in clause 7 below.

6.2.3. This meeting with the Scholar and his/her Parent must precede any suspension and should, in so far as possible, take place on the day of or day after the offense. During this period, depending on the severity of the offense, the Scholar may be separated from his/her peers to serve an in-house detention. It is the Parent's obligation to attend this meeting and they will make all reasonable attempts to do so. If they do not, the School will have no choice but to make its decision without the input of the Parents.

6.2.4. If suspension is decided upon, it may be for a maximum period of 1 (One) week or any other such reasonable period not exceeding 1 (One) week, pending a decision by the Principal, as recommended by the tribunal set out in clause 7 below, as to whether or not the Scholar is to be expelled from the School.

6.3. Expulsion

6.3.1. Serious Misconduct or repeat offences could lead to the expulsion of the Scholar.

6.3.2. The process to be followed in this regard is set out hereunder.

6.4. Criminal Proceedings

6.4.1. Serious Misconduct which may include offences according to the law must be investigated by the police and referred to a Court, if necessary.

## **7. DUE PROCESS**

7.1. The Right to a Fair Hearing:



- 7.1.1. Every Scholar accused of Serious Misconduct which could lead to a disciplinary consequence or expulsion is entitled to a fair hearing before such action is taken.
- 7.1.2. Any Scholar accused of Serious Misconduct must first be brought to the Principal to explain same (“the Initial Meeting”). At this Initial Meeting the Principal must hear any evidence he/she deems necessary BEFORE deciding on the action to be taken.
- 7.1.3. Once reaching a decision which entails either the disciplinary consequence or expulsion of the Scholar, the Principal must inform the Parents in writing of the proposed action and must convene a disciplinary tribunal, to hold a hearing (“the Hearing”). In the case of very young Scholars, special arrangements must be made for the Hearing and the Parents of the Scholar could represent him/her if necessary.
- 7.1.4. For the Hearing the Scholar must:
  - 7.1.4.1. receive notification of the charges against him/her, which notification explains the offence and sets out the details of the Hearing to be held, at least 5 (Five) days prior to the Hearing;
  - 7.1.4.2. understand the charges against him/her;
  - 7.1.4.3. get the opportunity to be heard and tell his/her side of the story and to represent the relevant facts;
  - 7.1.4.4. not be prohibited from being represented by legal counsel, or their Parents, in which case, written explanation of the charges must be given;
  - 7.1.4.5. be heard by an impartial person;
  - 7.1.4.6. be treated with dignity during the process;
  - 7.1.4.7. be informed in writing of the decision of the tribunal on whether or not he/she has been found guilty of Serious Misconduct and the penalty to be imposed in respect of same; and



7.1.4.8. have the right to appeal the decision to the MEC for Education.