

# **SPARK Schools Scholar and Family Handbook**

**2020 Instructional Year  
High School**

[www.sparkschools.co.za](http://www.sparkschools.co.za)  
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## Welcome

Welcome to SPARK Schools for the 2020 instructional year! Whether you are a returning family or beginning with us for the first time, we look forward to working alongside you during the year ahead.

This Scholar and Family Handbook serves as a guide to our policies and procedures. All family members, scholars, and staff are asked to abide by the expectations set out in this handbook to ensure that our schools are safe and positive learning environments. We are committed to partnering with you and ask that you assist us by upholding and supporting the school's mission, policies, and expectations with your scholar, as well.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask any school staff for clarification.

Thank you for embarking upon this journey with us!

To University and Beyond,

The SPARK Schools Team

## Our Core Values

At SPARK Schools, we live by our core values. They are essential to nurturing SPARK scholars who will shape society for the better in the future. These are the five core values that make up the acronym SPARK:

- **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 mindset.
- **Persistence:** SPARK scholars never give up. They relentlessly pursue their academic and personal goals, tackling problems with an optimistic attitude and determination.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Kindness:** SPARK scholars treat themselves and others with respect and dignity. They are generous and value their relationships with peers and Educators alike.

Every SPARK School also has a sixth core value, which is unique to that school and acts as a theme for school and community initiatives throughout the school year. SPARK Randburg's 6th core value is Respect.

SPARK scholars promise to abide by our core values when they recite the Daily Creed at Sparks Fly each day. Practice the daily creed with your scholar:

*Who are we? We are SPARK!  
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 respectful scholar. I consider the rights and feelings of others.  
I am a SPARK scholar, and I'm going to university!*

## Communication

We believe that consistent, clear, and relevant communication builds a strong relationship between our families and our schools. Therefore, we promise to:

- Resolve queries with urgency, including scheduling in-person meetings as needed and acknowledging written or email communication within two working days;
- Send weekly newsletters containing information about upcoming school events and initiatives;

- Host multiple opportunities each term for scholars and families to engage with Educators and members of the Leadership Team in an informal setting; and
- Celebrate families when they make positive contributions to our school community.

In return, we request the following of the family members of our scholars when communicating with the school:

- Seek to resolve issues with their scholar's educator first, before escalating concerns to a member of the school leadership, or airing grievances on social media. If your concern is unresolved, please refer to our [Policy for the Resolution of Grievances](#).
- Schedule appointments with members of staff, understanding that they are unavailable for meetings from 7:30am to 4:00pm, which are our instructional hours.
- Interact respectfully in-person and by e-mail with staff, who are also committed to professional and calm communication.
- Contribute to the school community each term through family volunteer hours.

Should your query or concern not be resolved by the educators or school leaders, please elevate it further by emailing [complaints@sparkschools.co.za](mailto:complaints@sparkschools.co.za).

Please note that our Enrolment and Accounts teams are stationed at SPARK Support, our central office. **School leaders and staff are unable to assist with enrolment and accounts queries.** Should you wish to contact our enrolment and accounts teams, please use the following contact details:

- Enrolment- [registrar@sparkschools.co.za](mailto:registrar@sparkschools.co.za)
- Accounts- [accounts@sparkschools.co.za](mailto:accounts@sparkschools.co.za)

Keep up-to-date with SPARK news and spread the SPARK love to family and friends by liking us on [Facebook](#) and following us on Twitter ([@SPARKSchools](#)).

## Family Engagement

We believe that parents and other family members are our most important partners in fulfilling our vision for South Africa to lead global education. The purpose of family engagement at SPARK Schools is to invest and involve families in this vision by providing opportunities for family contribution, leadership, and recognition in our schools.

We ask all families to complete 30 volunteer hours annually. There are many ways to positively contribute to your child's school:

- Participate in school events, fundraisers, and extracurricular activities;
- Complete classroom tasks, as requested by an educator; and
- Make a donation of art supplies or other specific item required by the school for a project or initiative.

## Class Parents

While all families contribute to our schools through volunteerism, every year, we select several “lead” parent per grade level to provide a critical link between SPARK families and the school leadership and staff.

The primary responsibilities of the Class Parent are to:

- Attend monthly meetings with the Principal and fellow Class Parents to plan events and discuss school-wide initiatives;
- Connect with new-to-SPARK families during their initial onboarding, to assist them in understanding the SPARK Schools culture and procedures;
- Participate in Open Days, media opportunities, and other events;
- Encourage volunteerism amongst all families; and
- Collect donations for special projects or celebrations.

*Class Parents do not assume a governing role and are not involved in the resolution of grievances.*

If you are interested in becoming a Class Parent, please contact the Principal of SPARK Randburg in January 2020 with your name, your scholar’s name, and their grade level. Class Parents will be selected by the Principal to begin their duties in February 2020 after a mandatory training.

## Tuition and Fees

At SPARK Schools, we provide high quality education at an affordable cost. Beyond monthly tuition, we aim to limit the amount of extra costs to SPARK scholars and their families. Monthly tuition is the total cost for your child to attend SPARK Schools during our extended instructional day.

### Stationery

SPARK Schools provides all classroom resources, workbooks and files for scholars upon receipt of an annual stationery fee. Families are not responsible for purchasing textbooks or replenishing classroom resources. **We ask that families ensure that scholars have access to consumable stationery such as pens, pencils, rulers and highlighters to use at school and at home.**

Tuition and fees for high school for 2020 are as follows:

Annual Tuition	Monthly Tuition	Application Fee	Stationery Fee
<b>R33 000</b> per year for 2020	<b>R3 300</b> per month for 2020	<b>R500</b> for 2020	<b>R700</b> for 2020
<b>R31 000</b> Discounted Fee	Paid over 10 months.	Non-refundable application fee, must accompany first month's tuition fee for enrolment.	Annual fee for all SPARK scholars.
Tuition paid by 31 December 2019 to qualify for discount.	Total cost of R33 000	Does not guarantee your child's enrolment at SPARK.	This fee includes all classroom resources, workbooks and files. Please ensure that students have access to consumable stationery such as pens, pencils and highlighters for use at both school and home.

Study Hall is available until 5:30pm daily. A contract must be signed prior to a scholar's enrolment. All fees are paid in advance. A term's notice (three months) must be given in writing to cancel Study Hall for your scholar.

- Study Hall until **5:30pm five days a week during the school terms** will cost R7800 per year, which is payable over 12 months at R650 per month.
- Study Hall until **5:30pm on Mondays ONLY during the school terms** will cost R3600, which is payable over 12 months at R300 per month.
- **Late Pick-Up Fee:** Late pick-ups are billed at R90 per half hour, or part thereof. There is a 15 minute grace period for collection, but late billing begins from dismissal time. For example, if dismissal is at 4pm, collection may take place until 4:15pm. However, if the child is collected at 4:45pm, the parent will be billed for two half hour periods, at a total cost of R180. Please note that if a child is not picked up by 6pm, an additional charge of R250 will apply in addition to late pick-up charges.
- Scholars enrolled in Study Hall who are picked up after 5:30pm are liable for late pick-up fees at a rate of R90 per half hour, and scholars who are picked up after 6:00pm are liable for an additional financial penalty, as well as removal from the Study Hall program if picked up after 6:00pm multiple times. Please refer to the Study Hall agreement and contract for more information on late pick-up fees.

**The SPARK Schools bank account is under the following company name:  
eAdvance (Pty) Ltd.** Our bank details are as follows:

Bank: First National Bank (FNB)  
Account Name: eAdvance/SPARK Schools  
Account Number: 62363790108  
Branch Code: 250655

If you have any questions regarding tuition, fees, or billing, please e-mail [accounts@sparkschools.co.za](mailto:accounts@sparkschools.co.za) or call 010-125-0600. **School leadership and staff cannot assist with accounts queries at the school and have no information regarding accounts, payment plans, or outstanding balances.**



# Instructional Hours and Calendar

Instructional hours for 2020 are as follows:

## School Hours

Regular Days: 7:30am-4:00pm

Minimum Days (Mondays) 7:30am-1:30pm

Mid-Year Examination Days (Minimum Days) 7:30am-1:30pm

End-Year Examination Days (Minimum Days) 7:30am-1:30pm

Monday	
7:30 - 7:40	Sparks Fly
07:40 - 07:50	Reflections
07:50 - 08:40	Lesson 1
08:40 - 08:45	Transition
08:45 - 09:35	Lesson 2
09:35 - 09:40	Transition
09:40 - 10:30	Lesson 3
10:30 - 10:50	Lunch
10:50 - 11:40	Lesson 4
11:40 - 11:45	Transition
11:45 - 12:35	Lesson 5
12:35 - 12:40	Transition
12:40 - 13:30	Lesson 6

Tuesday - Friday	
07:30 - 07:40	Sparks Fly
07:40 - 07:50	Reflections
07:50 - 08:40	Lesson 1
08:40 - 08:45	Transition
08:45 - 09:35	Lesson 2
09:35 - 09:40	Transition
09:40 - 10:30	Lesson 3
10:30 - 10:35	Transition
10:35 - 11:25	Lesson 4
11:25 - 11:30	Transition
11:30 - 12:20	Lesson 5/Lunch
12:20 - 12:25	Transition
12:25 - 13:15	Lesson 5/Lunch
13:15 - 13:20	Transition
13:20 - 14:10	Lesson 6
14:10 - 14:15	Transition
14:15 - 15:05	Lesson 7
15:05 - 15:10	Transition
15:10 - 16:00	Clubs/Lesson 8

Please refer to the 2020 Instructional Calendar for a full calendar of instructional days.  
Make special note of the following:

**Term Dates**

- 15 January- 18 March, 2020 (46 Days)
- 31 March- 10 June, 2020 (48 Days)
- 7 July- 16 September, 2020 (51 Days)
- 29 September- 1 December, 2020 (36 Days)

**Examination Days (Minimum Days)**

- 8 June - 9 June
- 17 November - 30 November

**Public Holidays (School Closed)**

- 1 January- New Year's Day
- 21 March- Human Rights Day
- 10 April- Good Friday
- 13 April- Family Day
- 27 April- Freedom Day
- 1 May- Workers' Day
- 16 June- Youth Day
- 9 August- National Women's Day
- 10 August- Public Holiday
- 24 September- Heritage Day
- 16 December- Day of Reconciliation
- 25 December- Christmas Day
- 26 December- Day of Goodwill

# Uniform

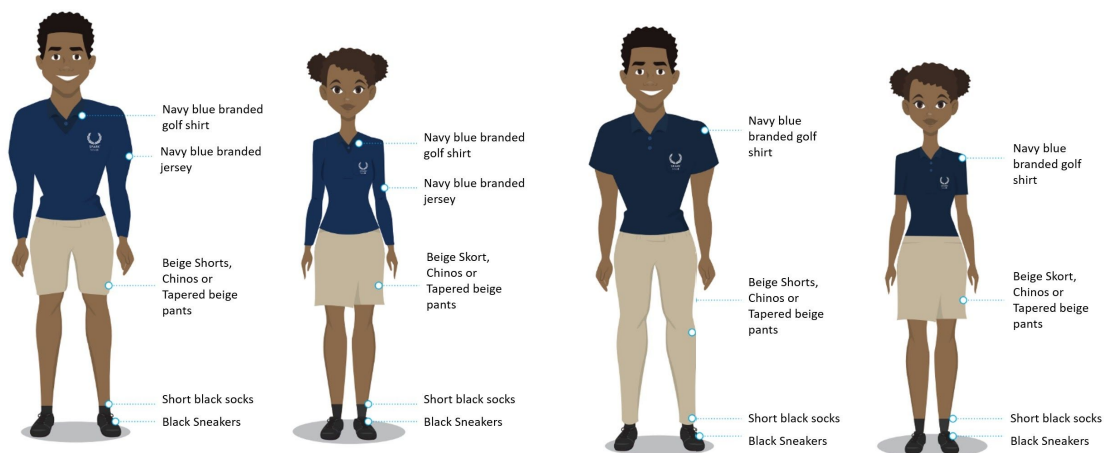
Your scholar's appearance and uniform reflect your scholar and your family's commitment to the SPARK Schools culture. Encourage your scholar to "dress for success" by grooming him/herself neatly and taking care of her appearance at all times. Scholars must wear the full school uniform during school hours on school grounds. Every item of the uniform should be marked inside with the child's full name, and no items other than the official uniform may be worn.

## Summer Uniform:

- navy blue golf shirt with school badge
- khaki chinos or skort
- black belt
- short black socks
- black takkies
- black wristwatch

## Winter Uniform:

- navy blue long sleeved golf shirt with school badge
- khaki chinos or skort
- navy blue SPARK branded outerwear (fleece, jersey, jacket, anorak)
- black gloves
- black belt
- short black socks
- black takkies
- black wristwatch



**Winter Uniform**

**Summer Uniform**

**The uniform may only be purchased from School and Leisure, our approved uniform suppliers.** No uniform items may be homemade, and the SPARK Schools logo and badge may not be copied or used for the purpose of creating homemade uniform items.

Scholars should carry a backpack that does not have wheels, but has sufficient space for a workbook per subject, personal learning journal, stationery, homework folder, portfolio, water bottle and a lunch container.

Scholars may not wear jewellery except a small, black wristwatch or Medic Alert bracelet and plain gold or silver stud earrings. Earrings may not contain cut or coloured glass. Only one wearing per earlobe may be worn.

Hairstyles must be neat and may not fall over the face or eyes. No distracting designs may be cut or shaved into hair or eyebrows. There may be no artificial hair colouring, tints, or streaks. Hair clips must be black or silver. Hair bands or beads must be blue, green, white, or black. No multicoloured or decorative hair bands are allowed.

### **Personal Devices**

Scholars are permitted to bring cellular phones and other handheld devices. However, all cell phones must be completely silent and out of sight during instructional time. Personal devices that are misused, seen or heard during instructional time will be confiscated. If a personal device is confiscated, a parent or legal guardian must come to the school to retrieve the device. The school is not liable for stolen or damaged devices.

## **Arrivals and Dismissals**

Strict adherence to arrival and dismissal procedures is required to ensure the safety of scholars and staff, but is also practiced in order to respect neighbours and the community.

### **Arrival Procedures**

Parents receive a placard with the name and grade of their scholar. The placard must be displayed in order to gain access to the school grounds. Without a placard, a parent will be in the same position as a visitor and must therefore sign-in and provide proof of identification.

**Scholars may arrive on school grounds from 6:45-7:30am. Please take note of the following guidelines, intended to ease congestion and maintain the flow of traffic:**

- Scholars should be ready to exit the car with belongings, avoiding the need to remove belongings from the boot.
- Parents or drivers should not exit the car.

### **Dismissal Procedures**

During dismissal, scholars will be present in the dismissal area and will be encouraged to walk swiftly to the appropriate car in order to encourage a steady flow of traffic. School staff will be present to facilitate the process.

Everyday, during dismissal, there will be educators available for office hours. If you would like to speak to an educator who is available for office hours, you will be asked to park to maintain the flow of traffic.

## Transport

Parents or guardians are responsible for the transport of scholars. SPARK Schools does not provide, promote, or endorse transport services. Should a parent contract independently with a transport supplier, they do so at their own risk. The family's duty is to ensure that the transport supplier they use complies with the norms and standards of scholar transport and the country's laws in respect thereof.

Transport drivers who independent contract with parents must provide a child's placard in respect of the scholars that are being transported in order to enter the school grounds. Parents are specifically alerted to the fact that a breach of school rules or policies, including late pick-up, by the transport driver responsible for their child, amounts to a breach of the relevant rule or policy by the parent or legal guardian concerned and could therefore invite consequences for the parents or legal guardians as detailed in the enrolment contract.

## Self-Transport

"Self-transport scholars," who are scholars walking or driving themselves to school, must arrive between 6:45-7:30am. Arriving late to school or leaving the school grounds during class or before the end of the school day amounts to unexcused absence or tardiness ("bunking") and requires disciplinary action.

The above notwithstanding, the parents or legal guardian of a "self-transport scholar" acknowledge and accept that a scholar is old and/or independent enough to walk to and from school, or to drive to and from school, and are in a position to leave the school grounds independently, and SPARK Schools does not accept responsibility for the safety of scholars once they have exited the school grounds (with or without permission).

**Parents must provide written permission to allow their scholar to leave the school premises via self transport.**

## Learning Model

The SPARK high school model is a rotational blended learning model designed to cultivate global citizens through the delivery of integrated inquiry projects. The scholar-centered model is comprised of the following parts:

- **Skills** - Face-to-Face Instructions
- **Online** - Virtual Learning

- **Inquiry** - Project Completion
- **Study** - Practice and

Learning is inquiry-based and driven by BIG HOOK problem questions anchored to integrated CAPS Plus South African National Curriculum subjects. Inquiry projects, or *XC Projects*, drive learning and are given termly through two broad disciplines: humanities and sciences.

*Clubs* are designated and run by school-based staff, offering scholars opportunities for sports, fitness, cultural development and community engagement.

*Daily Reflection* sessions with an educator offer scholars a meaningful relationship with adults carefully trained to increase individual character. The purpose of the reflection is to develop self-awareness with regards to emotional intelligence and self-regulation with regards to academic performance.

## Curriculum

SPARK Schools is aligned to South African national standards and seeks to extend scholar learning to meet international grade level standards. Therefore, each curriculum used encompasses the requirements of the CAPS curriculum and deepens scholar knowledge to make SPARK scholars globally competitive.

Curriculum resources such as art supplies, scientific equipment and textbook guides are procured and managed by the school.

Subject Area	Description	Publisher
<b>Mathematics</b>	Classroom Mathematics (Grade 8 & 9) Inzalo Mathematics <a href="https://www.ukuqonda.org.za/learning-materials/mathematics-grade-7-9">https://www.ukuqonda.org.za/learning-materials/mathematics-grade-7-9</a>	Heinemann Sasol & Siyavula
<b>English</b>	A Christmas Carol, by Charles Dickens (Grade 8)  The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, by John Boyne (Grade 9)	Scholars will be loaned a copy for Term 1
<b>isiZulu</b>	Khalipha Mfunda for First Additional Language (Grade 7 – 9)  isiZulu Sethu (Ibanga 8 & 9)	Funda Njalo
<b>Natural Sciences</b>	Natural Sciences: Solutions for All (Grade 8)  Platinum: Natural Sciences (Grade 9)	Macmillan  Pearson

	Free downloadable Scholar Natural Science Workbooks: <a href="http://www.mstworkbooks.co.za/index.html">http://www.mstworkbooks.co.za/index.html</a>	
<b>Technology</b>	Inzalo Technology (Grade 8 & 9) <a href="http://www.mstworkbooks.co.za/index.html">http://www.mstworkbooks.co.za/index.html</a>	Sasol & Siyavula
<b>Social Sciences</b>	Social Sciences: Solutions for All (Grade 8) Platinum: Social Sciences (Grade 9)	Macmillan Pearson
<b>Economic and Management Sciences</b>	EMS Today (Grade 8 & 9)	Askew Miller Longman
<b>Creative Arts</b>	Creative Arts: Solutions for All (Grade 8 & 9)	Macmillan

SPARK high schools offer subjects in line with the Department of Basic Education National CAPS curriculum, although implementation of curriculum content is via the high school integrated inquiry model. Subjects are therefore combined and aligned specifically for the SPARK Schools learning model.

### Report Cards

Report cards are distributed during the first week of each term with scholar marks and progress from the previous term's formal assignments and assessments. (In Term 4, these reports are sent home via email after all examinations have been completed and marks inputted.) Our report cards show the scholar's progress according to our globally competitive assessments, as well as a mark indicating the child's progress against a traditional South African grading scale.

Families are asked to attend a short conference with one of the scholar's educators to receive the report card, understand their Scholar's progress, and receive resources to support their scholar going forward.

If your scholar is struggling to make adequate progress or meet grade level standards, your scholar's educators will work with you to create a plan to ensure your scholar's success. Our aim is to prevent the need to retain scholars in grade level at the conclusion of the school year through our Fail No One (FNO) program. For more information on this retention prevention program, please contact one of your scholar's educators or school leaders.

Please note that informal assessments will be given in each subject throughout the term, in order to determine your scholar's progress prior to formal assessments at the conclusion of each term. The results of these assessments are not reflected on your scholar's report card, but are an important tool your scholar's educator uses to support your scholar's success.

Ensure that you familiarise yourself with the termly “Scholar Assessment Overview” which will be sent to via email and available in your scholar’s academic diary.

### **Workbooks and Portfolio Files**

Scholar Workbooks and Portfolio Files are vital pieces of evidence regarding scholars’ academic progress. They are also used to demonstrate compliance to national education regulations.

Workbooks are used for class activities, study notes and homework. At the start of each term scholars are given a “Scholar Book Overview” which notes all tasks and content to be covered in the term.

Portfolio Files are used by scholars to develop metacognition and self-regulation, and to showcase their projects and assessments. Files are categorised by CAPS subjects and are used as an evidence base for assessment compliance. Given the importance of keeping these pieces of evidence uniform, scholars will not be allowed to take Portfolio Files home. Families will be given an opportunity to view Portfolio Files at report card conferences, and results of tests and projects will be noted in the front of the Portfolio Files on the “Progress Tracking Page” for feedback to families.

Should a parent wish to see their scholar’s portfolio files at a point other than at report card conferences, the educators and/or school leadership team will happily welcome a meeting and set up a review of test scores and results.

### **Assessment**

At SPARK Schools, we recognise that all assessment is used for improving personalised learning and scholar engagement with personal learning goals. Assessment is therefore both for learning and of learning. Assessment results are not viewed as a complete judgement of a scholar’s ability, rather as a developmental point on a personal learning journey. It is to this end that high school assessment is continuously framed in a cycle of self-regulation and development of metacognition.

Assessment combines traditional tests, homework, examinations and XC Projects. Reporting of achievement is given in each delineated CAPS subject.

In senior phase, ALL assessments combine into the final year mark with 40% for Term 1 - 3 and 60% for the final examinations.

### **Absence from Tests / Examinations and Assignment Submission Dates**

In the case of illness or any other circumstance beyond the scholar’s control preventing a scholar from attending school on the day of a test or examination:



- A medical certificate or an affidavit must be provided by the scholar on the day of return after an absence.
- The scholar must complete the test / examination on the day of return.
- This process also applies to project and assignment deadlines. Should a scholar be absent on the day of a given deadline:
  - The project or assignment must be handed in on the first day of return to school after an absence.
  - A medical certificate or an affidavit must be provided to explain absence.
- Should a scholar be absent for an extended period beyond the examination or test season, production of the child's academic report will be postponed until all required assessments have been completed.

## **Behavioural Expectations**

### **Code of Conduct**

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

Our core values form the basis of our behavioural expectations at SPARK Schools. We practice positive behaviour management to support scholars with character development and decision making while at school and in their communities.

### **Bullying and Intimidation**

SPARK Schools aims to provide a safe and secure environment where:

- Individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted;
- Individuals empathise with one another, and offer one another support; and
- Bullying is reported and the necessary steps are taken to eliminate such behaviour.

SPARK Schools does not tolerate bullying in any form, and all members of the school staff are committed to promoting a safe and caring environment for the scholars. Staff, scholars and families will work together to address issues of bullying when these arise.

Bullying is aggressive behaviour or harassment by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can be physical or non-physical in nature. Bullying can be online through social media, email, messaging and phone calls.

When an incident of bullying or suspected bullying is reported, the school will

respond in a manner that is appropriate to the incident. For full information on definitions of bullying, preventative measures, and reporting procedures, please review our [Anti-Bullying Policy](#).

Families are advised to:

- Be alert to signs of unhappiness in their child's life. Any change in attitude, drop in school marks, avoiding school or social activities and other unusual behaviours may indicate bullying;
- Be aware, in a respectful manner, of the content of social behaviours and content posted on electronic sites, via SMS or MMS;
- Be supportive when an incident of bullying in any form and, in particular, of cyber-bullying, is reported as this can be extremely damaging and have lasting effects. Encourage their scholar to retain any possible evidence;
- Inform their scholar's educator if there is any suspicion that their scholar is being bullied;
- Not take matters into their own hands in confronting the perpetrator or his/her family;
- Refrain from telling their child to retaliate; and
- Clearly address the situation if their child is found to have abused another scholar.

## Media

SPARK Schools implements a new and innovative model in South Africa and will thus be subject to increased media attention. SPARK scholars may be photographed or filmed for social networking and promotional purposes. **If you would prefer for your child not to be photographed or filmed, you should complete an "opt out" form to state that permission has not been granted for media release.**

### Social Media

SPARK Schools recognises the evolution of social media as a mechanism of communication and its importance in being used responsibly and appropriately in relation to the school's business and the larger school community. On social media platforms, scholars and families are expected to behave in a manner which is representative of the school's policies and core values.

Scholars and their parents or legal guardians should regularly review the content of the scholar's social media postings and remove any information that could reflect negatively on SPARK Schools, its staff, other scholars, SPARK families or other stakeholders.

Scholars should ensure that the content of social media or other online postings is accurate, ethical and legal. The attention of scholars and their parents is drawn to the personal liability a scholar or parent may incur for defamation (a false statement damaging to the subject of the statement) or breach of privacy legislation.

Scholars and families may not engage in activities online or through social media which could bring SPARK Schools into disrepute - in particular, through offensive conduct which impacts on the SPARK Schools community. Conduct which is threatening, abusive, harmful, hateful, malicious, discriminatory, demeaning, derogatory will always contravene SPARK Schools' policies and ethos.

In line with SPARK Schools' social media policy, scholars and/or their parents or legal guardians may not post or engage in:

- defamatory conduct
- bullying conduct
- impersonation
- the sharing of inappropriate, obscene or pornographic material
- the sharing of personal information of any sort, pertaining to an individual, where such disclosure may cause harm or amount to an intrusion or invasion of the individual's privacy
- the use of the SPARK logo or other SPARK trademarks or intellectual property without written permission.

SPARK Schools reserves the right to investigate any allegations which contravene the School's policies and/or involve scholar safety.

**SPARK scholars should uphold the ethos of their school at all times. Therefore, conduct which offends the precepts contained above, whether within the boundaries of the school or outside of those boundaries, will be subject to the oversight of the school and its leadership - which includes the right to take disciplinary action against scholars and parents found to have acted in a way which contravenes the school's policies and by its nature offends public policy. Such disciplinary action may include suspension, expulsion and/or termination of the parent Enrolment Contract.**

## Health and Safety

### Child Protection

SPARK Schools is steadfast in its devotion to protecting children at risk and ensuring that they can experience quality care and nurturing relationships. SPARK Schools has put in place guidelines for protecting children in all aspects related to the Children's Act that impact the nature of work of SPARK Schools to ensure the wellbeing of children impacted by their work.

All SPARK Schools staff and leaders are bound by law to report suspected abuse or neglect according to our Child Protection Policy and Duty to Report. If you have questions about the grounds upon which reporting may take place, please contact your child's school leader or educator. **Please note that this includes breaches to the October 2017 ruling on reasonable chastisement by the South Gauteng High Court, which held that families may not commit violence against their children as**

**a form of discipline, including hitting, slapping, pushing, beating, or otherwise.**

Evidence of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse at home is cause for reporting according to the SPARK Schools Child Protection Policy.

### **Illness and First Aid**

Do not send a sick scholar to school. If your scholar is experiencing a fever, rash, pain, nausea, or other symptoms of contagious illness, please inform the school that the scholar will not be attending. Please provide a doctor's note if the scholar is booked off for two or more days.

If a scholar becomes ill at school, school staff will follow these procedures according to our First Aid Policy:

- If a scholar becomes ill during the school day, their parents must be contacted and asked to pick their scholar up as soon as possible. During this time the scholar will be cared for in a quiet and calm area.
- A minimum of five (5) telephone attempts followed with a maximum of three (3) emails is considered a reasonable attempt to contact each parent and/or guardian at the contact number provided to the enrolment team. **If your contact details change, it is imperative that you update them with the office manager immediately.**

If a contagious infection is identified in the school, parents must be informed to enable them to spot the early signs of this illness.

If a scholar becomes severely ill or injured, our policy is to call for an ambulance immediately. No member of the school staff may transport an ill or injured child. Should this take place, the school will contact the parent directly, accompany the child to the hospital, and remain with the scholar until the parent arrives.

### **Medication**

Per the requirements of the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa, of which SPARK Schools is a member, school staff are not in a position to prescribe or dispense medication for any child. Only a licensed health professional (e.g. doctor, nurse, physiotherapist, etc.) may prescribe and/ or dispense medicine. Even in the case of slight headaches or ailments, our school staff members may not administer medication to any child. **The only exception to this rule is if a licensed medical professional has provided instructions in writing to the school directly regarding a prescribed medication. These instructions have to be resubmitted and updated in accordance with the medication's expiration date.**

**If your scholar suffers from a severe allergy, please inform school leaders and staff immediately.** Should your scholar require an epipen to treat severe allergic reactions, this should be carried in the child's backpack in a sealed box or bag, with a note on its purpose and administration. We also welcome parents who would like to

train staff members of their child's allergy to contact our school leaders to schedule this training.

## Crisis Management

According to our Crisis Management Strategy, each school has appointed a Crisis Management Team comprised of a group of staff of the school who are equipped to make the necessary decisions quickly and efficiently when a crisis occurs. Please ask your school leaders for more information on your school's Crisis Management Team and how to obtain information from the school during a crisis. If you can be of assistance during a crisis as trained emergency personnel, please inform a member of school staff. **Please note that, should a crisis occur, parents must present identification when picking up scholar from an alternate location due to an emergency.**

## Attendance

Section 3 of the Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996) makes school attendance compulsory for everyone under the age of 16. As stated in our Scholar Attendance Policy, we abide by the Policy on Learner Attendance with regards to scholar absenteeism.

- If a learner is absent for three consecutive school days without a valid **written** reason, the matter should be reported to **the Principal**, who must **intervene**. This intervention must include contacting the parent regarding their responsibility and requesting the parent cooperation; approaching the district office for support if necessary, and requesting government or non-government social development agencies to intervene, when necessary.
- **If the absence reaches 10 consecutive school days**, the learner's record in the class register **must be cancelled on the grounds of continuous absence**. The cancellation should take place only after the Principal has again made a **reasonable** attempt to contact the parent. Any of the following three circumstances may apply, their record in the class register must be cancelled:
  - The learner has been withdrawn from that school.
  - No valid reason was offered for the absence.
  - The parent could not be reached (DBE, RSA, 2010, para. 56).

As is evident from the phrases "must be charged" and "must be cancelled", the Principal is not allowed any discretion in this matter. Furthermore, the policy provides that principals, Educators and district officials are obliged to show zero tolerance for unexcused absences (DBE, RSA, 2010, para. 14(a)).

**The cancellation of a scholar's record in the class register entails the Principal informing the class Educator, the parent and the district office of the cancellation, the date of the cancellation and the reason therefore.**

## **Additional Policies**

SPARK Schools may add and amend policies throughout the instructional year, which will be published on our website for parents and scholars to review.