

# **Student-Parent Handbook**

**2018-2019**

(Revised July 2018)



## **Mark Day School**

**39 Trellis Drive San Rafael, California 94903**

**415-472-8000**

**[www.markdayschool.org](http://www.markdayschool.org)**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

A SHORT HISTORY OF MARK DAY SCHOOL	3
MISSION STATEMENT	3
I. BEHAVIORAL PHILOSOPHY AND EXPECTATIONS	4
II. ACADEMIC INFORMATION	11
III. ATTENDANCE	18
IV. TRANSPORTATION	20
V. COMMUNICATIONS	22
VI. HEALTH AND SAFETY	24
VII. ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS	30
VIII. GENERAL	34
IX. PARENT AND GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES	36
X. TEACHER – PARENT/GUARDIAN RELATIONS	37
XI. HOW TO HANDLE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS	40
XII. PARENTS' ASSOCIATION	41
XIII. BOARD OF TRUSTEES	41
APPENDIX A - Harassment Policy	43
APPENDIX B - Acceptable Use Policy	45
APPENDIX C - Homework Strategies and Support in the Upper School	48

## **A SHORT HISTORY OF MARK DAY SCHOOL**

Mark Day School is a non-profit corporation governed by a Board of Trustees. The school was opened for classes in September 1980 by founding Board president William F. “Buzz” Nern and by Headmaster Raymond F. Bizjack. Their guiding philosophy was to provide high quality education in an atmosphere of love and care in which each member of the community was responsible for the well-being of the others. Mark Day School was accredited in 1984 by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and was given full membership in the National Association of Independent Schools and the California Association of Independent Schools under its second Headmaster, John A. Pistel. Damon Kerby became Headmaster in 1987. In 1999, Mark Day School entered into a 30-year lease for its current site with the Dixie School District. In 2011, Joseph M. Harvey became Head of School. In 2012, Mark Day School signed a lease extension on the 39 Trellis Drive site through 2045. In July 2014, the school officially changed its name from **Saint Mark’s School** to **Mark Day School**.

### **Mission**

Mark Day School discovers and nurtures what is finest in each child in a vibrant, inclusive learning community. Innovative and full of heart, Mark Day School strives to develop well-rounded critical thinkers in a challenging program that fosters academic excellence and responsible world citizenship.

### **Philosophy Statement**

At Mark Day School, we:

- offer a strong, dynamic academic curriculum, enriched by programs in the arts, physical education, service learning, and outdoor education, with an emphasis on social-emotional development.
- honor and are guided by the Seven Pillars of Character: Caring, Courage, Citizenship, Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, and Fairness.
- embrace diversity in preparing students for a global future.
- combine thoughtful innovation with enduring best practices.
- provide a hands-on program that encourages curiosity, develops independence, and addresses different learning styles.
- strive to teach, learn, and live in a sustainable way.
- integrate technology for learning at age-appropriate levels.
- foster a partnership between our school and parents, which is vital to the success of each child.
- understand that each member of our community blossoms in an atmosphere of safety, encouragement, support, and collaboration.
- believe that school should be challenging, fun, engaging, and joyful.

*Approved by Board of Trustees, May 2014*

## **I. BEHAVIORAL PHILOSOPHY AND EXPECTATIONS (*Updated June 2012*)**

At Mark Day School, we believe that each child is intrinsically good. Demonstrating good character, kindness, and inclusivity is fundamental to bringing our school's mission and philosophy statement to life. These traits are modeled by adults, taught to students, and expected from everyone in our community. We believe that through teaching and modeling self-awareness, social awareness, emotional intelligence, and respect for and valuing the differences in others, the school promotes inclusivity, ethical behavior, empathy, and good character in practical, day-to-day ways.

Mark Day School believes that all students have the ability to learn kindness, empathy, self-advocacy and the courage to translate this learning into action. We believe that we learn what we practice.

Our community strives to support students through social justice and equity. When a student exhibits inappropriate behavior, the school responds with appropriate consequences that often include a learning experience designed to help the student progress toward character development and inclusive behavior. Repeated, intentional, negative action on the part of one person or a group (e.g., bullying) undermines the community's values of good character, kindness and inclusivity. As with all aspects of ongoing social and emotional development, it will be addressed with appropriate remediation until the issue can be resolved in a manner that preserves the integrity of both the community and every individual involved.

### **A. General Guidelines Regarding Behavioral Issues:**

1. The school strives to design consequences and learning opportunities that fit both the student(s) involved and the seriousness of the issue.
2. The school strives to communicate promptly and proactively with parents regarding issues that arise. We also encourage parents to communicate promptly with the classroom teacher and/or mentor should behavioral issues arise so that the school may respond appropriately.

3. Administrators, faculty, and staff hold information in confidence and involve relevant members of the school (e.g., the school counselor) or outside professionals only as we deem appropriate.
4. Students will be guided to take constructive action to participate in working on the problem.
5. The Administration and Faculty will respond to issues of negative behavior and poor conduct when occurring under the aegis of the school (such as field trips, outdoor education, travel on the school bus) and will determine, alone or together, necessary action. On occasion, should a child's behavior be disruptive or hurtful, parents may be asked to pick up his or her child at short notice. Possible consequences could span a spectrum that may include detention, letters of apology, service learning projects, suspension or expulsion.
6. While Mark Day School will consistently honor each student's unique social and emotional journey, specific behaviors are always deemed unacceptable at Mark Day School and will be addressed with appropriate remediation. If necessary, a serious disciplinary response will be taken, until the issue can be resolved in a manner that preserves the integrity of both the community and every individual involved.
7. Ultimately, if student or family behaviors undermine the community's values or pose a threat to its safety, the school will take appropriate action. If a behavior threatens the safety of the community (e.g. bringing a weapon to school), a student may face expulsion after only one infraction. Less harmful behaviors, repeated frequently despite interventions, undermine the values of the community and, therefore, may also result in expulsion or suspension. To support community understanding of Mark Day School behavioral expectations, the appendix below is intended to provide further clarification. The final responsibility for decisions at this level rests with the Administration.

## **B. Unacceptable Student Behavior**

The following behaviors are unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

1. Academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism or cheating).

2. Language (including online) that is threatening, obscene, racist, contemptuous, abusive or prejudicial.
3. Sexual harassment. (Mark Day School has clear policies regarding sexual harassment. Please see Appendix A.)
4. Threatening or engaging in physical violence.
5. Taking of property, littering, or defacing school or personal property of others.
6. The use, possession, or sale of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, electronic cigarettes, or other mind-altering drugs, or the misuse of over-the-counter or prescription drugs on campus or at any school-supervised event.
7. The use or possession of dangerous items such as knives, cigarette lighters, firecrackers, other weapons (or toys resembling weapons) on campus or at any school-supervised event.
8. Violations of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy. (Please see Mark Day School Acceptable Use Policy.)

### **C. Items Regulated or Not Permitted**

1. Cell phones and cell phone-enabled communications devices (such as smart watches) may not be used on campus for any reason between 8:20-3:10. These devices must remain turned off and in backpacks or lockers (i.e. not in pockets).
  - Middle Division students wishing to use a cell phone after school, including during carpool, must ask permission.
  - Upper Division students wishing to use a cell phone after school, including during carpool, do not need to ask permission.
  - Students remaining on campus for after school club, homework cafe or other events must ask permission.
  - Use of cell phones and cell phone-enabled devices during school field trips and school sponsored events (i.e. dances) is at the discretion of the trip/event leaders.
2. Family-owned laptops, tablets, media players, electronic games and related multi-use devices may not be used by students on campus during the school day.

3. Use of family-owned e-readers is permitted on campus at the discretion of the supervising teacher. Mark Day School does not assume liability for devices that are damaged, lost or stolen.
4. Students may not use a camera, video or audio recording devices to record faculty or students, except with the permission of a faculty or staff member. Photographs or recordings made on campus may not be posted online without the permission of a faculty or staff member.
5. Unless specifically approved by the supervising faculty or staff member, chewing gum is not allowed on the school campus.
6. The use of bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, wheelies, and scooters is not permitted on campus at any time.
7. The same principles of behavior that prevail on the school campus extend to buses used by the school, field trips, athletic trips, and any other school-sponsored activity. Exceptions may be made to the use of digital devices when students travel to outdoor education destinations, if approved by the supervising faculty or staff members.

#### **D. DRESS GUIDELINES**

The school dress guidelines seek to strike an appropriate balance between individual self-expression and appropriateness for school. The overall aim is to help students learn to dress appropriately for different situations. The communication of the guidelines, and the approach for responding to infractions, will be carried out with the goal of supporting student learning. The general dress code is below. Expectations for planned special events, such as PE, field trips or special assemblies, are included below. Expectations for other school events, such as outdoor education or school dances, will be communicated as needed.

Faculty and administrators will respond individually and privately to students not in compliance with the dress code to ensure they understand the guidelines and to facilitate student learning. Students may be asked to change into PE clothing or other alternative clothing if needed. If a student is repeatedly breaking the dress code, the school may engage the family as needed.

<b>Clothing Allowed</b>	<b>Clothing Not Allowed</b>
Hats worn outdoors or during outdoor school assemblies.	Hats worn inside.
Underwear and undergarments being <b>under</b> clothing and <b>not visible</b> .	Visible underwear or undergarments.
Clothing that covers the midriff area completely.	Clothing that exposes the midriff area.
Opaque clothing or see through shirts that are worn over appropriate clothing.	See through shirts that allow visibility of inappropriate clothing.
Clothing that promotes school-appropriate messages, ideas, or humor.	Clothing that promotes messages inappropriate for school, especially around offensive language, sex, drugs, alcohol, or violence.
Shorts and skirts should be of appropriate length for school activities, or approximately mid-thigh or longer.	Shorts and skirts that are shorter than mid-thigh.
Shoes must be worn at all times. In the upper school, sandals or flip-flops are allowed.	Bare feet. In the lower school, flip-flops are not allowed.

<b>Dress for Special Events</b> - This list highlights a few school-wide events that require clothing suited to the activity. Expectations for other special events (i.e. outdoor ed or school dances) will be communicated as needed during the year.	
<b>Physical Education</b>	Students in the upper school are expected to dress appropriately for daily physical activity. Running shoes, a Mark Day School PE shirt and appropriate shorts are expected. In the lower school students are expected to dress for daily physical activity and should wear (or bring) athletic shoes to school every day.
<b>Field Trips</b>	Students are often asked, depending on the situation, to wear Mark Day School shirts for field trips. They may also

	be asked, in grades seven and eight, to wear community engagement shirts for service activities. Some field trips, including outdoor education trips, will have unique dress requirements depending on the activity.
<b>Special Assemblies</b>	Opening Day, Closing Day,, and Grandparents' and Special Friends' Day are examples of special occasions when students (K-8) are asked to wear their Mark Day School shirt.

**E. At recess, lunch and all other times:**

1. Everyone must be safe. Fighting and rough physical contact or intimidating behavior or language is unacceptable.
2. Sportsmanlike behavior and a spirit of inclusion and friendliness in all games is expected.
3. Students must stay within the specific school boundaries and remain within the view of supervisors at all times.
4. Students should run and play in designated school areas. Off-limits for running are the deck in front of the portable buildings and all breezeways.
5. Students may not climb trees, poles, tables or sheds, nor should they sit or stand on the hand rails on the stairs to the athletic field, the handrails on the steps to the gym, or the handrails on the stairs of the Learning Commons and Creativity Lab.
6. Students may not enter any classroom or the gym unless a member of the faculty or staff member is present. Upper Division students (grades 7 & 8) may use the upper division hallway to access lockers or enter classrooms, but may not linger there. The middle division hallway should not be used by students at all during recess or lunch.
7. Students who have written permission to be excused from physical education should not participate in physical activities at recess and lunch recess.

**F. Dismissal Procedures**

1. Go promptly to the carpool area.
2. Be attentive in watching for their carpool. Eating or drinking is not permitted during carpool.
3. Cross the parking lot only with proper supervision.
4. Refrain from games, ball playing, and other distractions.
5. Leave campus in their previously determined carpools unless their homeroom teacher has been informed of an after school change of plan (see below about communicating changes).
6. All students who are not picked up during carpool are escorted to Afterschool Club at approximately 3:30 (2:45 on Fridays). Students in grades 6-8 can wait at the front office until 3:45 (3:00 on Fridays) for pickup, after which they must go to the Afterschool Club. From the ASC, students in grades 4-8 may go to homework cafe, which is open until 5:30 pm, Monday through Thursday.
7. Mark Day School maintains a closed campus. Students must be signed out when leaving campus and signed back in if they return the same day. K-6 students' parents must come to office and sign out children. Students in grades 7 & 8 can sign themselves out if parent is waiting.
8. **When picking up your child during the school day:**
  - **Please communicate proactively.** Contact your child's teacher (K-6) or mentor (7-8) and the front office at [attendance@markdayschool.org](mailto:attendance@markdayschool.org).
  - **Arrive about 10 minutes early at the front office.** The front office staff will then begin the process of getting your child from class. *Please do not go to your child's classroom. Note that it usually takes 5-10 minutes for your child to be ready.*
  - **Sign Out.**
9. **When changing departure plans**
  - **Bus Changes.** Contact Sue Crowther and your child's teacher at least 24 hours in advance if your child's bus departure plans change. She will update her list.

- **Running Late?** Your child will automatically go to the After School Club and be cared for there until you arrive. There is no need to call.
- **Carpool Change?** Please communicate with the other parents you are working with; the school does not need to be updated.
- Please be aware that teachers do not regularly check email during the school day, and the front office staff is not always able to deliver messages to kids.

**10. Front of School Pickup:** Email a request to Sue Crowther **and** to your relevant division head. Examples of needs include distant after school activities that start just after the end of the school day or other special appointments. Please be explicit in your note, and please understand that convenience alone is not a sufficient rationale. **Students may not walk out to meet you on a neighborhood street for pickup. Please do not ask your child to do so.**

**11. Leaving Campus Unaccompanied - Grades 7 & 8 Only:** To indicate permission for your 7th or 8th grader to depart campus unaccompanied by an adult, please email a specific permission note 24 hours in advance to Sue Crowther, Dave Hickman and Gaelle Gordon. Please be explicit about the day, times and rationale. For example, *“My child (name) has permission to leave campus without an adult to walk to Northgate Mall on Friday, October 10th, 2018.”*

## II. ACADEMIC INFORMATION

### A. Admission and Non-Discriminatory Policy

The School seeks to admit mission-fit students who demonstrate developmental and academic readiness and who have strong personal and school recommendations.

Mark Day School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender identification, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national and/or ethnic origin in the admission process, its educational policies and programs, athletic programs or indexed tuition. Applicants with

special needs are strongly encouraged to identify themselves so that accommodations in the admission process can be arranged.

The School actively seeks ethnic, racial, religious, geographic, and socio-economic diversity, and gender balance. Siblings and children of faculty and staff who meet all the admission qualifications are given priority consideration.

All applications are reviewed by the Head of School, the appropriate Division Head, the Director of Cross-Cultural Partnerships and Community Engagement, the Director of Admission, and, for applicants to the Upper School, the Upper School Director of Student Life.

Applications to pay below the top of the index have no bearing on the evaluation of a candidate's admission application. The Indexed Tuition Committee is comprised of the Head of School, a Division Head, the Director of Finance and Operations, the Director of Cross-Cultural Partnerships and Community Engagement, the Director of Admission, and the Indexed Tuition Coordinator. The Admission and Indexed Tuition Committees, respectively, have final authority for admission and Indexed Tuition decisions.

## **B. Re-Enrollment**

Contracts for the next academic year are made available in the password protected Parent Portal in January. The school reserves the right to re-evaluate the re-enrollment of all students at the end of the academic year. Should the school have concerns about the progress of a child or student or family behavior, the school's practice is to raise those issues in a parent-teacher conference or parent meetings with faculty and administration.

## **C. Reporting Student Progress**

Information about student progress is communicated formally through parent-teacher conferences, interim reports in the fall and spring, full report cards in January and June, and in the upper division, through periodic progress updates from your child's mentor. Full report cards are posted in the password protected Parent Portal at the end of each semester.

<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b>Conferences</b>	<b>Reports</b>
<b>K-3</b>	Required parent/guardian and teacher conference in late October to early November. Optional parent/guardian and teacher conference in March.	Full report cards written and posted twice a year, in January and June.
<b>4-6</b>	Required parent/guardian and teacher conference in late October to early November. Students may attend in some classes. Optional parent/guardian and teacher conference in March to be requested by the teacher or family.	Interim reports are posted in October and March just prior to conferences. Full report cards are posted in late January and June after school ends.
<b>7-8</b>	Two required conferences per year in November and March. Conferences are student-led and involve the student, family and faculty mentor.	Interim reports are posted in October and March just prior to conferences. Mentor Progress updates are emailed by the mentor to the family and student periodically during the year. Full report cards are posted in late January and June after school ends.

**Report Cards:**

Report cards in grades K-8 include narrative comments and supporting checklists. Narrative comments address a child’s strengths and growth areas as well as their overall experience at school. Checklists address students’ metacognitive skills and academic skills. Metacognitive skills refer to actions and habits students learn to use in support of their overall learning. These include such skills as curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, self-understanding and self-direction, growth mindset, community mindset, and collaboration. Academic skills address foundational literacies in reading, writing, math, world language, science, history, PE and the arts.

Beginning in grade five, in addition to narrative comments and checklists, students also receive percentages for overall subject areas on their report cards, and in grades six through eight, students also receive letter grades.

## D. Homework

### Core Beliefs

Homework supports the school's mission and the success of young learners. The following core beliefs guide homework:

- Teachers strive to make homework developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and engaging.
- Over time, homework provides opportunities for students to practice and reinforce academic knowledge and concepts, prepare for learning the next day, and develop metacognitive skills including growth mindset, organization, self-advocacy and time management.
- Aside from some assignments in the lower school where parents have a specific role, homework is intended to be completed independently. Students are taught a variety of methods at each grade level about what to do when "stuck" and to learn how to seek help from teachers, peers, tutors and parents.
- Nightly, independent reading, beyond regular homework, is regularly assigned, and is always encouraged, throughout all grades.
- The average nightly homework load should support a well-rounded, balanced experience alongside outside activities and family time.

### What To Expect K-3 (Lower School)

***In the Lower School, it is recommended that parents and guardians encourage their children to read independently, that parents read to their children, and that parents "model" reading for their children.***

**Kindergarten:** Assignments will be given occasionally. Incomplete daily assignments may be sent home for completion.

**First Grade** (20 minutes average/night, including reading): Incomplete daily classroom work may be sent home when necessary. Assignments are usually given 2-4 times a week.

**Second Grade** (20-30 minutes average/night, plus daily reading): Incomplete daily classroom work may be sent home when necessary. Assignments are usually given 2-4 times a week.

**Third Grade** (20-30 minutes average/night, plus daily reading):  
Incomplete daily classroom work may be sent home when necessary.  
Assignments are usually given 2-4 times a week.

### **What To Expect 4-8 (Upper School)**

*(Also see “Appendix C” at the end of this handbook)*

Homework in the Upper School is designed for practice, preparation, and project work. Students will practice skills to reinforce class learning, and as they get older, spend an increasing proportion of homework time preparing for class activities and working on elements of longer-term projects and assignments. The amount of time students spend on homework varies greatly from person to person and is influenced by many factors. If a child is routinely spending an excessive amount of time on homework, or experiences frequent challenges with concentration or organization, an opportunity exists to explore and support the child’s learning style, work habits and overall approach. Close partnership between the school and family will be essential in these situations, and families are encouraged to share their observations with the teachers. At a minimum, students and families should set aside daily, focused blocks of time for homework according to this guide:

- 4th grade - about 45 minutes
- 5th grade - about 60 minutes
- 6th grade - about 70 minutes
- 7th grade - about 90-120 minutes
- 8th grade - about 90-120 minutes, not including high school application work

7th and 8th graders will experience “peaks and valleys” over the course of the year due to the nature of the upper division program. Eighth graders applying to independent schools in the fall must also balance applications and high school shadow visits with homework.

### **What Should Parents And Guardians Do To Support Homework?**

*(Also see “Appendix C - Strategies to Support Independence” at the end of this handbook)*

- Provide routine time, space and supplies for completing homework. As much as possible, create media-free zones and times in the common space of your home to model reading and quiet focus.
- Show interest in the content of what your student is learning and model reading and learning for pleasure.
- Help your children experience mistakes as learning opportunities. When parents deliver forgotten work or step in to rescue a child at the last minute, they may be denying the child the opportunity to develop autonomy, perseverance and problem-solving skills.
- Be supporters rather than micro-managers or tutors. In general, parents should not teach or reteach skills or concepts. This may confuse a student through teaching things differently than the teacher. It may also give the teacher a false sense of the child's understanding. In short, don't help them do their homework, help them figure out what strategies to use when they're stuck with their homework.
- Encourage and assist your students with learning to ask their teachers questions. This strategy helps students develop a growth mindset and see their teachers as allies in the learning process.
- Support and partner with your child's teacher(s). Teachers at each grade level identify and teach their own procedures and strategies for homework and homework support. Get to know how this works each fall.
- Keep after school activities in balance with homework time, play time and family time. Work with your child to design a healthy schedule of activities.
- Help your children develop their own methods and strategies for homework. Some need breaks, some work steadily, some need silence and others need company. Work with your children to reflect on choices and environments that lead to good results.
- Communicate with your child's teachers when persistent patterns or issues with homework reveal themselves.

### **How is Feedback and Grading Used with Homework?**

Since homework is often practice, students who regularly complete it in a thoughtful manner and use effective strategies when stuck are better able to effectively use a skill, demonstrate knowledge and understanding, and

be prepared for class. Teachers at different grade levels use a range of assessment methods that will be explained at Back To School Night or during the course of the year as needed.

#### **E. Standardized Testing**

Mark Day School students in grades three through seven are given the CTP5 version of the Educational Records Bureau (ERB) test each year. It includes sections that measure aptitude and achievement in verbal and quantitative skills and reading comprehension. The scores are normed for independent and suburban schools, and for a nationwide elementary school population. The tests are administered in parts over several days in May of each year, and the scores are reported to the school. To obtain your child's results, parents may contact Sandy Bohm in the office starting in late August following the year of testing. Parents may also learn more about ERB testing by attending an information session offered each fall or contact the relevant division head.

Students in grade eight typically take the Secondary School admission Test (the SSAT), which most independent high schools require for admission.

#### **F. Class Placement**

- Parent requests for a specific teacher cannot be taken. The school makes every effort to make the appropriate match between the student and teacher and his or her peers.
- Information that is helpful for class placement can be shared with the Heads of Upper and Lower Schools.
- Factors influencing placement include gender, chronological age, personality, academic ability, and learning style. The school strives to create heterogeneous classes, and it attempts to reconfigure the classes each year so children get to know all students in their grade level.

#### **G. Graduation Requirements**

In order to graduate from Mark Day School, a student must comply with the Standards of Conduct set forth in the *Student-Parent Handbook* and must satisfy the following **academic** requirements:

- At the end of the eighth grade academic year, a student may have no more than one “D” average in a **core** subject for the year **based upon all semester grades**.
- A student must maintain an overall average for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade year **for all core subjects** of no less than a “C”. (A student with an overall average of “C-“ has not met Mark Day School graduation requirements.)
- If a student receives an “F” in **any** subject during the second semester of his eighth grade year, the student will not have met the requirements for graduation from Mark Day School.

The **core subjects** are Math, Science, English, History, World Language/Classroom Support and Physical Education.

### III. ATTENDANCE

#### A. Regular Attendance

1. Regular attendance and promptness are essential to satisfactory completion of the year's work. **Parents are urged not to ask their children to be excused from school except in the case of illness or family emergency.** *Any student who is absent 21 days or more may jeopardize his or her promotion or graduation.*
2. Vacations and long weekends are listed on the school calendar. **Parents are urged not to take vacations at other times or extend vacations past these times.** Earlier dismissal or later return places a burden on both students and teachers. Students miss assignments, activities, explanations and essential discussions that grow out of vital learning experiences. These lost opportunities cannot be duplicated. Teachers are not expected to provide assignments for the learning that will have been missed. The responsibility for making up these lost learning opportunities becomes the obligation of the parents and students. **If such an absence is absolutely necessary, the appropriate Division Head should be notified at least two weeks prior to the trip.**

#### B. Daily Schedule

1. Monday through Thursday:  
     Kindergarten 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM  
     Grade One through Eight 8:30 AM - 3:15 PM
2. Friday:  
     Kindergarten 8:30 AM - 1:15 PM  
     Grade One through Eight 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Afterschool Club will be provided free of charge between Kindergarten dismissal and the dismissal of students in grades 1-8.

Exceptions to these schedules (e.g. Kindergarten and grade one graduated start to the year) are listed on the school calendar. Parents will be reminded about such exceptions in the *Hip Pocket News*.

**C. Absence Procedures**

1. If a child is ill, parents and guardians must notify the school office ([attendance@markdayschool.org](mailto:attendance@markdayschool.org)) **and** the homeroom teacher (K-6) or mentor (7-8).
2. Any request that a child be excused from school for an appointment during the day should be made in writing by email or note, to the school office ([attendance@markdayschool.org](mailto:attendance@markdayschool.org)) and the homeroom teacher (K-6) or mentor (7-8). Insofar as it is possible, medical and dental appointments should be scheduled during vacation or on Friday afternoons to take advantage of the early dismissal time.

**D. Tardiness**

Students must be in homeroom by the 8:30 bell. Any student who is not present at 8:30 will be considered tardy. **He or she must report to the Office to sign-in before going to class.** Chronic tardiness will be dealt with by the Division Heads.

**E. Absence and Extra-Curricular Activities**

Any student participating in extracurricular activities will be expected to attend school for a minimum of four hours on the same day as the extra-curricular event. This includes but is not limited to sporting events, sports and play practices, Adventures After School, school

dances, etc. Any exception to this policy would be at the discretion of the Head and/or Division Head.

#### **F. Homework Assignments for Absent Students**

Grades 1-6: Families may request homework assignments for excused students by emailing or calling the appropriate teacher before noon. Homework may be picked up in the Front Office.

Grades seven and eight: In the Upper Division, students who are absent may contact a fellow student about the homework missed, or find it online in Jupiter Grades and/or Google Classroom. If neither of these methods is feasible, the mentor or faculty member may be contacted.

#### **G. Parent/Guardian Absence**

If parents or guardians are going to be away from home for an extended length of time, they are asked to leave a forwarding address and telephone number where they can be reached by the school. It is helpful to the homeroom teacher or mentor to receive a note about such absences, including the name, address, and phone number of the adult(s) who will be responsible for the child.

### **IV. TRANSPORTATION**

***As a school community, we are concerned about insuring the safety of our children, fostering earth-sustainable practices and minimizing our traffic impact on our neighbors. In order to be mindful of our immediate and surrounding communities and to comply with our Use Permit we ask that parents form carpools, as well as remember the following guidelines.***

#### **Morning Drop-off**

The school doors are opened at 8:20 AM. Students who are on campus before 8:20 should either be supervised by an adult (parent, guardian, or teacher) or checked into the Afterschool Club room.

1. Approach the school by the following route: West on Freitas Parkway, left on Las Pavadas, left on Arias, right on Trellis. Please do not use Nova Albion to reach Mark Day School. (This route is mandated by our Use Permit; please follow it on any trip to school.)

2. Enter the parking lot, turn right immediately before the transformer enclosure, follow the ring road south to the garden, turn left and drive in front of the gym, dropping off students in front of the main entrance to the school. Please pull as far forward as possible before dropping off your student. Follow the directions of the volunteer parents who are assisting.
3. Morning drivers who wish to park and walk students to class may park only in the Parent and Visitor lot or at the back of the school. Cars parked in the back must be removed by 8:45 or immediately after Assembly.
4. **Please do not park on Trellis Drive or in the Faculty/Staff parking lot.**

### **Afternoon Pick-up**

1. Approach the school by the following route: West on Freitas Parkway, left on Las Pavadas, left on Arias, right on Trellis.
2. Enter the parking lot, double-queue and follow the ring road to pick students up on the rear basketball court. You may be directed to form a second queue past the transformer enclosure, turning right to drive through the parking lot along the front of the gym and then to take turns merging onto the ring road. Please drive slowly at all times.
3. Drivers who wish to park to pick up children should park in the Parent/Visitor lot or on Arias or Montecillo, then walk to the rear of the school to meet their children in the carpool pick-up area. Students are not permitted to meet their drivers in the front of the school unless there are extenuating circumstances, in which case a note should be placed on file in the front office.
4. Use the same route after leaving the campus. Make a right on Trellis, a left on Arias and a right onto Las Pavadas. Please do not make a right onto Arias.

### **General Reminders**

1. Please be considerate of our neighbors. Do not speed, turn around in driveways, block driveways or crosswalks, or park on the street. Drive as if you live in this neighborhood.
2. **Please do not park on Trellis Drive under any circumstances. If parking on the street is necessary, park on Montecillo or Arias.**

3. Do not ask your children to meet you off the school campus. Mark Day School will not and cannot be responsible for their safety if they meet you somewhere other than the campus.
4. Do not leave your car while in the carpool line, and, to avoid the deleterious effects of auto emissions on children and the environment, please do not idle while waiting.
5. **In compliance with California law, cell phones in the carpool line may only be used with a hands-free device.**
6. After school, encourage your child (as we do) to come immediately out to the carpool line in the rear of the school.
7. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to educate other carpool drivers (grandparents, babysitters, etc.) as to proper drop-off and pick-up procedures.
8. Please do not park in the reserved handicapped parking spaces without approved handicapped tags.
9. Families wishing to use a ride-sharing service such as Uber or Lyft must consult with the relevant division head for permission and to make arrangements to ensure student safety, including having required student release consent forms on file. Ride-sharing services have their own policies that must be followed.

## **V. COMMUNICATIONS**

### **A. Hip Pocket News**

The *Hip Pocket News* is the weekly electronic newsletter to families, emailed each Wednesday. If you wish to include an announcement in the Hip Pocket News, please submit it to the Director of Communications by Monday at 4:00 p.m.

### **B. Broadcast Email**

A broadcast email system is maintained by the Director of Communications. Broadcast email can be sent by room parents, faculty and administration. Each class has its own email list. If you need to send communication to the class, please do so through the room parent.

### **C. Conferences**

Conferences are required at the end of the first quarter and optional at the conclusion of the third quarter. These should take place during the designated conference times noted on the school calendar. Additional conferences should be by appointment; teachers can be contacted at school to arrange for appointments. The school encourages parents to communicate with classroom teachers about concerns. Should you need a translator for a parent conference, please see the appropriate Division Head.

### **D. *The Marker***

*The Marker* is a magazine published by the Development Office, which is mailed to the entire school community (families, alumni and friends) each year in the spring.

### **E. Publication Policy**

Publications representing the school or any aspect of the school should be approved by a school administrator before mailing or distribution.

### **F. School Website**

The school website is at [www.markdayschool.org](http://www.markdayschool.org). On the website is information regarding all aspects of the school, some of which may be password protected.

### **G. Class Visits**

Parents are welcome to visit the classroom. To keep classroom disruption to a minimum, however, appointments must be made in advance with the classroom teacher.

### **H. Directory**

The School Directory is for the private use of Mark Day School families only. A printed version is distributed in the fall; the online version is always the most up to date.

### **I. Other Publications**

Other communication informing families about the life of the school include email messages from Upper and Lower School Heads, faculty and administrative blogs, school/division Facebook pages, regular letters and emails from the Head of School and President of the Board of Trustees, and various classroom newsletters.

#### **J. Phone Calls**

Please do not call the School Office to contact your child unless it is an emergency. In the same vein, please support the school in its efforts to discourage children from making social arrangements over the school phone during the school day. Such arrangements should be settled before the school day begins. Student calls from school phones are limited to urgent matters.

#### **K. Returning Phone Calls and responding to email**

**Teachers will make every effort to respond to a parent's phone call or email within 24 hours.** Unless requested to do so, parents and students should refrain from calling teachers at home. If you have emailed or called a teacher and have not heard back, please call or re-send your email in case the message or email has not been received (our filters sometimes fliter out known addresses).

#### **L. Mailings**

School publications, both general and child-specific (report cards, etc.), are sent to or made available in the Parent Portal to the custodial parents or guardians only, unless others are listed on the on the student's Emergency Card. Upon request, we will add an additional parent or guardian to mailings during the course of the year. Mailings will be denied only on the receipt of legal notification so ordering.

#### **M. Teacher Absence**

In the event of extended teacher absence, the School will:

1. attempt to keep as much continuity as possible with one substitute teacher.
2. attempt to keep sufficient coverage in the classroom by hiring an extra support teacher if necessary.

3. make every attempt to keep parents informed by updating them on the teacher's condition, or when a change of events indicates.
4. make every effort, when it knows of an absence in advance (e.g. teacher pregnancy), to effect a seamless transition by having the substitute work in the classroom before the regular teacher leaves.

## VI. HEALTH & SAFETY

### A. Health Guidelines

Mark Day School is very concerned about good health practices. It is inevitable that children are going to get sick. Unfortunately, we cannot give sick children the individual attention they need. Sick children require recuperative rest at home. Abiding by these health guidelines will greatly contribute to the health and safety of all the Mark Day School community.

Making a decision that a child is too sick to be at school is often difficult. We encourage you to make alternative arrangements regarding childcare in advance for the time when your child is feeling ill. **Parents must keep children at home under the following conditions:**

**FEVER:** Fever is an indication that something is wrong. Do not give your child fever medication and bring him/her to school. Masking a fever does not help your child as it may cover up symptoms as well as expose other people to a possible contagious disease. **A child should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

**RUNNY NOSES:** A runny nose showing yellow or green mucus indicates infection rather than "allergies" and should be checked by a physician.

**COUGH:** Coughs spread germs. A child with a wet or wheezy cough may be spreading bacterial or viral infection in the droplets and should not be at school.

#### **GASTROINTESTINAL DISTURBANCES:**

**DIARRHEA:** This is a symptom of intestinal problems that can be highly contagious.

**VOMITING:** **Do not bring a child to school who has vomited in the last 24 hours.** Be sure that a child who has vomited during the night is really well enough to come to school.

**BOWEL OR BLADDER:** Constipation makes a child very uncomfortable. Do not give your child bowel medication and then send him/her to school. Urinary infections are quite painful and may be contagious. Children with bladder symptoms must be seen by a physician.

**RASHES:** All rashes, except obvious heat rash, need to be seen by a doctor to be confirmed that they are not contagious.

**EYES:** Other than allergy-related symptoms, excessive tears, redness, swelling, pus, inflammation, “pink eye”, itching, etc. indicate a highly contagious infection. A child must be on medication for 24 hours and have clear eyes before returning to school.

**PAIN:** A child in pain should be taken to the doctor. Tenderness in the neck, ears, throat, abdomen or back can be serious.

**BEHAVIOR:** A child who appears weak, lethargic, or listless should be seen by a doctor.

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES:** (These diseases include chickenpox, measles, strep throat, and mumps.) **At the first indication of a communicable disease, you should keep your child at home and away from other children and notify your physician and the school. Your child must not return to school until the contagious stage has passed or as directed by your physician.**

**LICE:** Head lice, tiny, wingless parasitic insects that live in human hair, are a common annoyance during childhood. Schools, having large numbers of children in close proximity, periodically have outbreaks of head lice. Mark Day School is committed to minimizing these outbreaks and the inconvenience that they cause.

### **The School’s Responsibility:**

Mark Day School holds periodic lice checks. They are conducted by trained volunteer parents, with a nurse present at all checks.

A school-wide lice check is implemented the first few days of the school year. A lice check is also implemented one to two weeks following an identified infestation. The timing of subsequent checks is scheduled in relation to outdoor education trips & vacation weeks.

If students are found to have a positive case of lice, they are taken to the front office and parents or guardians are called to pick them up, if possible.

As a precaution, classroom rugs and sofas are vacuumed and potential problem areas are cleaned.

Notification is sent home to all families in the infected child's classroom. Note that the notices only communicate an anonymous infestation; student names are not used.

### **The Family's Responsibility:**

Parents or guardians of infested student need to take proper steps to rid the student's head of the lice and remove all nits (eggs) from the hair shafts. Depending on the severity of the case, this might be a quick process or it may take longer.

Additional care should be taken to launder all bedding and towels and to vacuum and ensure that further exposure is avoided. It is also recommended to check all other family members for lice and nits.

After successful treatment, parents should notify the office the afternoon prior that their child is clear of lice and/or nits and ready to return.

As a precaution, parents of other students should check their children periodically for the next one to two weeks. Frequently, a second treatment is necessary.

**Parents should report any instances of infestation to the school immediately. Please call the front office and your child's teacher. Communication is a key component to preventing lice from spreading. Students with an active case of head lice are asked not to return to school until treated.**

### **B. Allergies**

Please inform your child's classroom teacher in writing about any allergies he or she may have.

**Mark Day School is a nut-free school.** The nut-free school policy applies year round to all areas of campus, both for students and adults.

**Please do not send students to school with food that contains peanuts, tree nuts (almonds, brazil nuts, cashews, chestnuts, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, walnuts), or sesame seeds. Foods containing peanuts, tree nuts or sesame seeds as ingredients (e.g., baked goods, hummus, tahini, crackers, nut-based milk, pesto, sauces and dressings) are also forbidden.**

If food is to be shared, (e.g. birthdays, other celebrations), please do not send student to school with **food processed in facilities that process peanuts, tree nuts or sesame seeds**. Food found to be processed in such a facility will be sent home.

Peanuts, tree nuts and sesame seeds account for the most severe anaphylactic reactions; highly allergic individuals can experience anaphylaxis if they touch, inhale or ingest even the slightest trace or residue of the allergen. Trace amounts of nut products may be passed from hands to a ball, chess piece, or other objects, and thus come into contact with allergic individuals.

Therefore, to address reactions based on food residue, we encourage students who eat foods with nuts or sesame for breakfast to wash their hands and faces before entering school.

## **C. Disaster Preparedness**

### **1. Emergency Communications**

In the event of a disaster or school closure, you will receive an automated emergency call from a school representative alerting you to the current situation, possible school closure or need for immediate dismissal.

### **2. Fire Drills**

Mark Day School conducts regular fire drills. When the fire buzzer sounds children are expected to line up quickly and quietly and follow their teachers to designated areas on the playing field where the roll will be taken. Upon the all-clear buzzer, students will follow their teacher's' instructions to return to the classroom.

### **3. Earthquake Preparedness**

Mark Day School has developed a comprehensive Earthquake Plan. It includes expectations for students, description of drills, general policy and responsibilities for employees, specific assignments for each employee, and parent responsibilities. In

addition, each classroom contains emergency food and supplies to last for 48 hours. Copies of the full plan are available in the Front Office.

#### **4. Earthquake Drills**

When the earthquake bell (one long ring) goes off, students should get beneath their desks or under a table with arms holding the furniture legs with their backs toward the windows. When their teacher instructs them to do so, they should follow the teacher silently out of the building to the designated areas.

#### **5. Lockdowns**

The school has coordinated with members of law enforcement agencies to create plans to deal with intruders on campus, or any other emergency requiring sheltering in place or potentially evacuating the campus. This is practiced as part of our normal emergency preparedness cycle. We attempt to make this as non-threatening for children as possible.

#### **Parent and guardian responsibilities in the event of a major disaster include:**

- a. Having named all individuals authorized to pick up your child on the Authorization to Release Form, including relatives and friends in your carpool. Children will not be released following a major disaster to anyone not appearing on that card. It is, therefore, imperative that parents notify the office of any changes during the year.
- b. Having a family emergency plan that covers various contingencies and discussing with your children what that plan is.
- c. Listening to radio station KCBS (740 AM) for announcements.
- d. Looking for school personnel in the parking lot to direct you to the Checkout Station upon your arrival at school. In case of lockdown, parents will be advised by automated parent phone tree about where to gather while waiting for student release.

- e. Assisting in communication with a phone tree, if needed, which will begin with school administration and go through room parents.

#### **D. Medical Reports**

Student information, including allergies and medical concerns, will be collected electronically at the beginning of each school year. Should there be any changes to this information throughout the year, it is the responsibility of the parent(s) to notify the front office.

State law requires that every student must have on file with the school:

1. The required State of California immunization record (blue card).
2. An emergency release form.
3. For students entering seventh grade, proof of TDAP and two doses of MMR vaccines.
4. The Marin County Department of Health and Human Services could bar students from school should there be an outbreak of something for which a child could have been immunized but was not.

**STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO SCHOOL WITHOUT THESE FORMS.**

#### **E. Child Abuse Reporting**

Under the State of California Penal Code Section 11166, “certain professionals and laypersons, who have a special working relationship or contact with children, are required to report suspected child abuse to the proper authorities.” The faculty and staff at Mark Day School who fall into one of the defined categories are under legal obligation to conform to the law. Anyone interested may request a copy of the pamphlet, “Child Abuse, the Educator’s Responsibility,” published by the California Office of Attorney General through the Mark Day School office.

### **VII. ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS**

#### **A. Assemblies**

Assemblies are held Tuesday and Friday mornings from 8:35 - 8:50 AM. Division assemblies generally take place the first Friday of every month. These are important parts of the school day, and all students are required to be present. Parents are warmly invited to attend.

**B. Roots and Wings**

Our Roots and Wings program provides an opportunity for students in K-6<sup>th</sup> grade to hear from speakers and performers who bring presentations connected to our Seven Pillars of Character. These presentations are scheduled several times throughout the school year and vary in frequency and topic from year to year.

**C. Excursions and Field Trips**

A permission slip to cover all field trips will be sent electronically prior to school opening. Insurance restrictions dictate that verbal permission will not suffice.

If parents choose to drive on a field trip they must have a copy of their insurance on file in the Office for the current school year. Coverage amount has to be \$300,000 per accident and \$100,000 per person to be eligible to drive.

**Students in grades five and below on any Mark Day School field trip may not ride in the front passenger seat in any car equipped with passenger-side airbags.** In the event of transporting shorter students in the older grades, we would ask for field trip drivers to be judicious by assigning those students to the rear seat as well.

**In 2012, California's Car Seat Law changed. The new Booster Seat Law requires that children use a child safety restraint system until they are 8 years old or weigh 80 pounds.** If your child is going on an excursion and is being driven by another parent, please ensure that parent has a booster seat if your child needs to use one. If you need to bring your booster seat to school, please leave it against the wall outside your child's classroom.

Please refer to Division-specific guides for field trip driving.

**D. Extended Day Services**

A program of supervision is available for your child both before and after school.

Before-school care runs from 7:30 AM to 8:20 AM. All students arriving before 8:20 AM are expected to report to before-school care unless

otherwise supervised by an adult. Students arriving after 8:10 AM will not be charged. Other areas on campus are not supervised before that time.

Afterschool Club for Kindergarten students is available free of charge from the end of their school day until regular (grades one through eight) dismissal time.

From regular dismissal time until 6:00 PM, Afterschool Club activities include arts and crafts, sports, cooking, etc., and a snack is provided. All students in grades K through eight must attend Afterschool Club immediately following carpool.

The **Homework Cafe** is available for upper school students 3:30-5:30, Monday-Thursday. Students drop in and the family will be billed through the Afterschool Club at the same rate. A snack is provided, and students can work on homework and get basic support from the Homework Cafe staff. Please note that Homework Cafe staff are not formal tutors.

Fee schedules for before-school and Afterschool Club are posted online. Requests for Afterschool Club on a regular basis should be addressed to the Director of the Afterschool Club. If there is an occasion when your child must go to Afterschool Club for one afternoon, please notify your child's teacher in the morning. The Business Office will bill all charges. Penalty fees are charged for pick-up after 6:00 pm.

#### **E. Learning Commons**

1. Books may be borrowed and renewed for specific durations with due dates indicated at the time of borrowing.
2. Appropriate behavior is expected while in the Learning Commons.

#### **F. Drama**

Students in grades four through eight are eligible to participate in the fall drama production, and in the spring musical. Rehearsals last for six-eight weeks and culminate in the production of a play or musical in the fall and spring.

#### **G. Sports**

In addition to daily physical education, students may participate in intramural sports at lunchtime and inter-school sports after school.

Mark Day School, over the past several years, has fielded teams for students in cross-country, basketball, golf, volleyball, and track and field.

## **H. Student Support Services**

As a community, we value diverse learning styles and strive to differentiate instruction throughout our program. We provide specific, targeted student support services when needed. Our school learning specialists and counselors aim to provide proactive and responsive support to ensure every child is making progress and experiencing success. Our goal is always to work in partnership with the family to ensure each child has the best possible experience.

### **Services Provided by Learning Specialists**

- May conduct an initial screening (in house) or refer to an outside professional to determine if a child has a specific learning need. Initial screenings may also point to the need for a larger, more comprehensive evaluation, conducted by outside professionals (referrals provided).
- Support students with specific learning disabilities up to twice a week with skill development or classroom assignments.
- Create, update and share a Student Support Plan for each student receiving learning support services to ensure information, including goals and current interventions, is up to date and shared among teachers and parents.
- Consult with teachers to apply interventions as needed.
- Attend significant meetings with families regarding student progress.

### **Services Provided by School Counselors**

- Meets with students individually and/or in groups as needed for brief counseling interventions.
- Provides crisis intervention.
- Consults and collaborates with teachers to support students' social and emotional needs.
- Conducts conflict resolution, small group problem-solving, and other interventions.
- Provides parent consultation by appointment.
- Provides referrals to outside therapeutic resources as needed.
- Attends meetings regarding the progress of children with significant social or emotional needs and provides insight or counsel as needed.

- Provides classroom-based programs, in collaboration with faculty, and facilitates group meetings throughout the year at all grade levels covering a broad range of topics related to social-emotional health and well-being.

#### **I. Adventures After School**

For an additional fee, Mark Day School offers a series of after school enrichment classes called Adventures After School. Classes, offered Monday through Friday, have included art, hip hop, kung fu, carpentry, knitting, music, cooking, crafts, golf, and more. Sign ups take place twice a year: in July and in December.

#### **J. Network Acceptable Use Policy**

Mark Day School has an Acceptable Use Policy (see Appendix B) for all students who have access to the school network. Parents and students are expected to understand and comply with the Acceptable Use Policy while using the school network.

### **VIII. GENERAL**

#### **A. Lost Articles**

"Lost and Found" is located in the shed by the rear Lower School entrance and on a rack in the LS hallway. Nametags on apparel and other personal items will help the return of lost articles. Lost and found articles are placed on tables or hung around the quad periodically.

#### **B. Invitations to parties and other group activities**

Invitations to parties and other group activities should not be distributed to students at school. Parents and students are asked not to discuss parties at school. In addition, the school requests that students who are attending a party not be picked up on campus at the close of the school day.

When extending invitations to a party, parents should be sensitive to the feelings of those students who are not on the invitation list. An acceptable rule of thumb is to invite either all of the children in your child's class, or, if you prefer a smaller party, to limit your invitation list to no more than half of the group.

### **C. Food served at school and school events**

1. Mark Day School strives to minimize waste in the lunch program. Parents are asked to provide reusable containers for their students to bring lunch to school.
2. Please do not send glass containers.
3. Be aware that the school does not have the facilities to provide hot water for noodles or soup.
4. Please send utensils if they are needed to eat the food you have provided.
5. Mark Day School encourages families and teachers providing food and snacks to model and teach moderation and offer healthy choices for our students.
6. For the school's nut-free policy, please see VI. Health and Safety, section B.

### **D. Textbooks**

Textbooks are distributed by the classroom teacher and are included in the student's Activity Fee. The teacher will announce at the beginning of the year whether books are to be kept by the student or returned at the end of the year. Parents are responsible for the replacement of lost or damaged books.

### **E. Internet Access**

Mark Day School encourages all families to have Internet access at home to facilitate school-home communication. Use of a computer and access to the Internet for homework become academic imperatives for students beginning in grade four. Families needing financial support for technology or Internet access should contact Wendy Broderick ([wbroderick@markdayschool.org](mailto:wbroderick@markdayschool.org)).

### **F. Tuition**

Tuition may be paid according to a number of different plans in the enrollment agreement. Prompt payment is expected. In the event payments are not made when due or if there is an unpaid balance owing the School, the School shall have the right to deny admission of

the student and to fill the student's place with another qualified candidate.

A tuition refund plan is available and is recommended.

## **G. Images**

Mark Day School occasionally uses images of students in school presentations, publications (print and online) and in releases to media. Parents are asked for authorization for such use in the summer prior to enrollment.

## **H. Guests on Campus**

Permission to have a guest on campus must be obtained prior to the day of the visit from the appropriate Division Head. The parent whose child is hosting a guest should register the guest in the front office.

## **I. Group and Individual Gifts to Faculty and Staff**

Gifts of any kind to faculty and staff from students and parents are neither encouraged nor expected. Historically, however, parents and children have shown appreciation for teachers in a number of different ways; among them are notes, homemade gifts, gift certificates, or donations to the Learning Commons, the Indexed Tuition fund, or a favorite charity in the teacher's name. In the past, the practice of small groups of parents organizing a group gift to a teacher has been discouraged because of the exclusionary feeling such a practice can create within a class. However, a group gift that allows all families within a class to participate, without regard to the dollar amount given, de-emphasizes the financial wherewithal of the individual gift giver while allowing parents the option of a monetary gift.

If families wish to participate in a group gift of a monetary nature, all families must be offered the chance to participate. Parent participation is completely optional.

# **IX. PARENT AND GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **A. Parent and Guardian Support of Policies**

We ask that parents and guardians be familiar with and support school policies and procedures.

## **B. Information**

It is most important for those who work with your children to be informed about each child's specific circumstances. Should you have medical information (e.g. allergies, medication), personal information (e.g. family re-configuration, family emergencies, death, absent parent), educational information (learning assessments, etc.) or religious or cultural factors which might influence the way we work with your child, please let your child's homeroom teacher know.

**Information shared with faculty and staff may be shared with other faculty and staff who work with a child, unless a parent specifically requests that this not happen.**

## **C. Parents on Campus**

We value parent participation, but we ask that parents make appointments to see teachers or administrators for anything longer than a brief chat.

In order to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, we ask that parents not congregate in school hallways during school hours.

Please remember that the Faculty Workroom is the only facility available for many school meetings and professional phone calls. It is reserved for faculty and staff.

Parents may reserve meeting space (e.g., the Afterschool Club, Flex Room, Small or Large Conference Room) with the Director of Plant Operations.

## **D. Pets**

For the safety and health of our students, and because some children are frightened of or allergic to dogs, we discourage their presence on campus. When they are on campus, all dogs must be held on a leash. Please do not bring pets into the classroom or school buildings, except by special permission.

## **X. TEACHER – PARENT/GUARDIAN RELATIONS**

### **Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers and Parents/Guardians**

The relationship between teachers and parents/guardians is a critical element in the education and development of Mark Day School students. Each brings important skills and knowledge to the task, and, as in all relationships, each has rights and responsibilities that need to be recognized and understood. The Seven Pillars of Character should characterize the relationship between parents/guardians and teachers; in addition, civility, candor, kindness and mutual trust are essential. Clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, and open communication are absolutely necessary for success.

## **Teachers' Responsibilities and Rights**

Teachers have a responsibility:

- to have an appropriate understanding of the strengths and areas where growth is needed in each student;
- to promote candid, open and thoughtful dialogue about each student with his or her parents;
- to artfully give and receive information about a student in a variety of formats (informal chats, formal conferences, report cards, telephone, e-mail, note) and to document those events;
- to provide leadership for the room parents in working constructively in the ongoing life of the class;
- to communicate regularly about what is happening in class;
- to greet parents on campus in a courteous and friendly manner;
- to maintain confidentiality;
- to return phone calls and emails within 24 hours.

Teachers have a right:

- to work in an atmosphere in which all parties involved work toward the common goal of the welfare of the child;
- to be respected as professionals;
- to work with an administration that sets clearly defined roles and responsibilities for both teachers and parents;
- to assume parents have read and support school policies;
- to supervise students and attend to duties (e.g. carpool, recess), especially those that involve the safety of students, without interruption;
- to expect parents to approach them directly with any concerns about their child or the class, then, if necessary, follow recommended channels (Division Head, then Head);

- to expect parents to make an appointment for anything other than a brief chat;
- to expect parents to return calls and emails within 24 hours;
- to have personal time in the evening and on weekends that is free from unwarranted interruptions;
- to assume that parents are speaking well of the school with students at home.

## **Parents' Responsibilities and Rights**

Parents have a responsibility:

- to be familiar with and supportive of school policies and procedures (e.g. dress code, attendance, tardiness, health and safety issues, homework);
- to educate all caregivers about school procedures and policies;
- to treat teachers as professionals, respecting their expertise as educators;
- to respect teachers' personal lives by scheduling conferences, phone calls and other communications within school hours, unless the teacher has expressly indicated a willingness to do otherwise;
- to approach teachers first with any concerns about their child or the classroom and to direct these concerns through appropriate channels when necessary;
- to make every effort to avoid scheduling children's appointments (medical, dental etc.) and vacations during school hours;
- to provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes and habits;
- to attend parent education events and involve themselves in the life of the school;
- to read all communications sent home through *Hip Pocket*, email or mail;
- to seek and value the school's perspective on the student;
- to supervise their children when attending extracurricular events, maintaining a standard of conduct supported by the school community;
- to respect and maintain the confidentiality of the school's dealings with other families.

Parents have a right:

- to be acknowledged as the foremost caregiver and decision-maker in the child's life;
- to have teachers seek and value the parents' perspective on the student;
- to receive thorough information about educational goals and curriculum content at each grade level;
- to receive honest, accurate and complete evaluations of their child's strengths and weaknesses, progress or lack thereof in both formal evaluations and informal feedback;
- to receive timely, candid and confidential communication-including plans of action-when academic, behavioral, or developmental concerns arise;
- to have confidence that all communication regarding their child will be held in strict confidence between only involved parties;
- to observe the classroom in an unobtrusive manner through mutual arrangement with the teacher;
- to have all school policies enforced consistently;
- to have parent volunteer hours valued and appreciated by administration and staff and faculty;
- to expect that the safety and security of the students is a priority to the school;
- to have advance, complete, written information regarding activities, field trips and outdoor education, class donations or any other program which may require parent involvement.

## **XI. HOW TO HANDLE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS**

In the normal course of events, **if you have a question or concern regarding your child, go first to the teacher or mentor involved.**

The next person to contact should be the Head of Upper School (grades 4-8) or Head of Lower School (K-3).

### **Academic or Behavior Concern:**

1. Teacher (or Mentor in Upper Division)
2. Division Head and/or Director of Student Life (grades 4-8)
3. Head

**Adventures After School** – Kim Danforth, Director of Extended Day programs

**Afterschool Club** - Kim Danforth, Director of Extended Day programs

**Bus Transportation** – Steve Voss, Transportation Director

**Calendar** - Sue Crowther, Office Manager

**Counseling** – Theresa Hall, School Counselor

**Directory/address/email changes** – Olivia Jimenez, Registrar

**Electives** - Brian Wilkerson, Music Teacher

**Enrollment, re-enrollment** – Mandy Tachiki, Director of Admission

**Field Trip Transportation (Insurance)** – Olivia Jimenez, Registrar

**Financial issues** - Bella Chang, Director of Finance and Operations or Wendy Broderick, Director of Indexed Tuition

**Fundraising** - Wendy Levine, Development Director

**High School Placement** - Dave Hickman, Head of Upper School

**Hip Pocket, broadcast emails, website** - Sophie Shulman, Director of Communications

**Maintenance** - Alfredo Jimenez, Maintenance Director

**Sports** - Ray Orwig, P.E. Teacher

**Standardized Testing Results** - Dave Hickman, Head of Upper School  
Thaddeus Reichley, Head of Lower School (fourth grade results)

**Technology, Parent Portal** – Bonnie Nishihara, Assistant Head for Educational Design and Innovation

**Traffic Management** - Kevin Bower, Director, Plant Operations

**All other inquiries** – Sue Crowther, Office Manager

## **XII. PARENTS' ASSOCIATION**

The Mark Day School Parents' Association (PA) handles a wide variety of events, fundraisers, and programs on behalf of the school each year. They include the Fun Run, Spring Fundraiser, eScrip, AmazonSmile; Art Show, Book Exchange, Passport Day, welcome events, Family Sunshine, Hot Lunch, Lost and Found, Organic Garden, room parent coordination, and

more. Through this service to the school, parents and guardians help to create and participate in a warm and inclusive community. All families are members of the PA; no dues are collected.

### **XIII. BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Mark Day School, like most independent schools, is governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board consists of at least 22 members, both parents and non-parents, who hold the school in trust. The Board is charged with three main tasks: establishing long-range policy for the school, assuring the fiscal stability of the school through oversight of the budget process and through fundraising, and hiring and evaluating the Head. The Head is the Board's sole employee, and is charged by the Board with the day-to-day running of the institution.

The Board is a self-perpetuating group, and does its work primarily in committees. These include Advisory, Finance & Development, Governance, and Site. In addition, the Board may establish one or more *ad hoc* committees or task forces each year for specific purposes. Members may serve for two or three-year terms. Board members are elected to serve based on their commitment to the school and the expertise they bring to the Board.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **HARASSMENT POLICY**

Mark Day School is committed to maintaining a learning environment free from harassment, intimidation, or insult on the basis of an individual's sex. Sexual harassment by any student, parent or teacher is forbidden and will result in disciplinary action. Any student who believes he or she has been subject to harassment should report it to a teacher or Division Head. The Division Head will investigate the complaint immediately and appropriate actions will be taken.

Also, Mark Day School will not allow any personally insulting or demeaning remarks or act based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, medical condition, sexual preference or physical disability. This includes racial slurs, ethnic jokes, posting of offensive statements, posters, cartoons, or other similar conduct. Just like examples under sexual harassment, these acts can create a hostile learning environment which will not be tolerated.

Harassment includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile learning environment. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It includes, but is not limited to circumstances in which:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a part of the academic environment;
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for grading, evaluation, or supervision decisions affecting a student; or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interference with a student's academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment.

### **Forms of Sexual Harassment**

Forms of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. unwelcome leering, sexual flirtations or propositions.
2. unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments, or sexually degrading descriptions.

3. graphic verbal or written comments about an individual's body or actions.
4. making sexual jokes, remarks, stories, or gestures; teasing.
5. spreading sexual rumors.
6. cornering or blocking a person's normal movements.
7. displaying sexually suggestive objects, photographs, graffiti.
8. touching another person's body or clothes in a sexual way.

**No individual will suffer any reprisals for reporting any incidents of harassment, making any legitimate complaint or participating in the investigation of a harassment complaint.**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

#### **Mark Day School Computer Network**

Mark Day School's network resources and technology infrastructure exist to further the school's mission and to enrich, support and extend learning. Digital technology provides unprecedented access to information and to tools that facilitate communication, analysis, and multiples modes of expression. Despite the manifold benefits that digital tools bring, certain legal and ethical restrictions apply to their use. A limited supply of hardware, software, and network bandwidth requires Mark Day School to set priorities for use. Academic class work always takes priority over any other use of network and computer resources. The following is a list of rules and guidelines that govern the use of Mark Day School network and computer resources.

In this document "network resources" refers to all aspects of Mark Day School owned or leased equipment, including computers, printers, scanners and other peripherals, as well as email, internet services, servers, network files and folders, and all other technology-related equipment and services. These rules apply to any use of Mark Day School network resources regardless of whether access occurs on or off campus.

#### **General Policy**

It is a general policy that Mark Day School network resources be used in accordance with the Seven Pillars of Character and the ethos of Mark Day School in a manner that is responsible, considerate, efficient, ethical, and legal. As a condition of using network resources, users must acknowledge their understanding of this policy and the responsibilities and guidelines herein set forth. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in suspension or revocation of the offender's privilege of access, and, possibly, to disciplinary or legal action, up to and including expulsion of students or separation from faculty or staff employment.

#### **Privileges, Risks and Responsibilities of Internet Access**

Access to the Internet is a privilege granted by Mark Day School. In return for this privilege, every person using the Internet has the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every user in the community and on the Internet. In short, users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. It is essential for each user of the Internet to recognize his/her responsibility in having

access to vast services, sites, systems and people. The user is ultimately responsible for his/her actions when using network resources. Online conduct that reflects negatively on the School is prohibited.

Sites and services accessible via the Internet may contain material that is illegal, defamatory, threatening, profane, inaccurate, offensive or otherwise inconsistent with the mission of Mark Day School. Although Mark Day School utilizes a content filtering device, the School makes no guarantee that such a device is effective or operable. Even with the use of such a device, users may encounter inappropriate material when using network resources. The School cannot be held responsible for such incidents. The user is responsible for NOT pursuing inappropriate material.

It is every user's responsibility to inform an appropriate supervising adult when others break the rules.

### **Legal Issues and Jurisdiction**

Mark Day School owns and operates the hardware and software that comprise the School's network resources. Consequently, the School is obligated to take steps to ensure that all equipment is used legally. Any illegal use of network resources is strictly prohibited. All content created, posted, sent, accessed, downloaded, uploaded or stored using any part of Mark Day School network resources is subject to the rules stated in this policy. School staff and administration monitor network resources and may find it necessary to investigate electronic incidents that utilize Mark Day School network resources, including those that happen after school and off campus. The School reserves the right to remotely access, open and/or examine files that may violate the School's Acceptable Use Policy and to delete files that are found to violate the policy or that interfere with the healthy operation of network resources.

It is the responsibility of users to abide by the laws governing software licensing and copyright.

In addition, Mark Day School account holders take full responsibility for their access to the School's network resources. Mark Day School makes no warranties with respect to network resources nor does it take responsibility for:

- the content of any advice or information received by users;
- the costs, liability or damages incurred as a result of access to network resources or the Internet; any consequences of service interruptions.

### **File Sharing and File Sharing Programs**

The installation and/or use of any Internet-based file-sharing tools, including but not limited to BitTorrent, Limewire, and Gnutella, is explicitly prohibited.

**Unacceptable Use:**

1. Accessing, creating, posting, sending, downloading, uploading or storing files or messages that contain:
  - a. sexually explicit material;
  - b. slurs related to ethnicity, race, religion or sexual orientation;
  - c. profanity, libel, pornography, or obscenity;
  - d. material undermining the School's basic educational mission;
  - e. material intended to cause deliberate harm or offense to another user; or
  - f. material that is abusive, hateful, harassing, intimidating, or disparaging to others.
2. Using the Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright, software licensing or other contracts;
3. Invading the privacy of individuals, including but not limited to accessing or using files or accounts belonging to others;
4. Giving out any student's home address or phone number online, including one's own home address or phone number;
5. Altering computer settings and configurations, files, applications, programs, or documents that do not belong to the user;
6. Deliberately attempting to degrade or disrupt local or remote system performance or security;
7. Using pseudonyms; impersonating another person or posting anonymous messages (unless explicitly directed to do so as part of a class assignment);
8. Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities;
9. Using the network for financial gain or for any commercial activity;
10. Send or forward email commonly known as "SPAM", Unsolicited Commercial Email (UCE), "junk email" or chain letters;

11. Attempting to determine or secure any unauthorized password or giving one's own passwords out to anyone other than one's parents or School personnel;
12. Posting or re-distributing personal communications online in a public context without the author's prior consent;
13. Using video or audio recording devices to record faculty or students without the permission of a faculty or staff member; posting audio or video recordings made on campus online without the permission of a faculty or staff member.

### **Criminal Behavior**

Though very unlikely to occur when students follow School Network Guidelines, the following acts may constitute a crime under California Law:

1. Copying files or passwords belonging to others;
2. Adding, altering, deleting, or destroying data or software programs on the Network that do not belong to the user;
3. Introducing contaminants into the Network system.

*Portions of this policy were adapted with permission from The Urban School of San Francisco's Computer Use Policy*

## **APPENDIX C: Homework Strategies and Support in the Upper School**

### **What Are Some Examples of Homework Assignments?**

- **Grade 4:** Students practice current math, reading and writing skills, practice fluency with math facts, and study for a weekly geography quiz. Students also read independently chosen books on a nightly basis. Large projects and significant writing assignments are done entirely at school.
- **Grade 5:** Students practice current math, reading or writing skills, and study for vocabulary or grammar quizzes. Students continue to read

independently chosen books on a nightly basis. Large projects and significant writing assignments are done entirely at school.

- **Grade 6:** Students practice current skills and concepts in math, writing, grammar and vocabulary while monitoring their level of understanding in order to be ready for the next day. Students sometimes brainstorm ideas for upcoming discussions in humanities, and may be asked to read from class novels and reflect on specific texts or videos related to current topics. Students continue to read independently chosen books on a nightly basis. Large projects and significant writing assignments are done entirely at school
- **Spanish (4-8):** Students read stories, answer comprehension questions and sometimes write comprehension questions. They practice grammar, vocabulary and story-telling narration skills using audio and video recording.
- **Mandarin (4-8):** Students practice writing characters, reading aloud, creating sentences and using correct grammar. They answer and write comprehension questions, write in journals, record audio and video and work on research projects.
- **Grades 7 & 8 Math, History, Science, English**
  - **Algebra 1:** Students work on problem sets from the textbook, worksheets for skill and concept practice, and view videos that reinforce mathematical skills or approaches.
  - **Algebra 1 Enriched:** Students work on problem sets to practice skills and concepts as well as apply them to real-world problem solving situations; open-ended, multi-layered “Problems of the Week;” and short- and long-term mathematical/analytic thinking projects.
  - **History:** Students read and annotate documents, complete writing assignments, conduct interviews, watch video clips and listen to podcasts. They also complete worksheets and maps, complete work started in class and engage in long-term projects that often involve independent research.
  - **Science:** Students read documents in preparation for class, complete lab write-ups from hands-on experiments in class, work on long-term projects, and study current events.
  - **English:** Students read independent books, class novels, short stories and non-fiction texts. Students annotate readings and

complete reflection assignments to practice analytical skills and prepare for class discussions. Students work on writing assignments, and also prepare for quizzes and tests.

### **What Should Kids Do When Stuck?**

Needing help with homework is an experience all students will face at some point. Building resilience over time depends on students building a “toolkit” of strategies they can use to problem-solve in different situations. These strategies are taught and explained explicitly by teachers at each grade. They include:

- **Strive for “personal best”** - Students should aim for their personal best resulting from strong effort, problem-solving and concentration. Students should challenge themselves to use multiple strategies from the list below.
- **Take a break** - eating a short snack, doing some physical activity or changing one’s location can help students concentrate and move through a “block.”
- **Remove distractions** - these can include music with a heavy beat or lyrics, pets, siblings, television, cell phones, chats (on phones or laptops), youtube and video games, to name a few. Some students do well in less monitored circumstances, and some may do better at the kitchen table near adults.
- **Re-read directions** - methodically checking directions from beginning to end can help. Students can try crossing off directions as they are completed or highlighting directions before working.
- **Explain the assignment to someone** - describe the steps of an assignment or the overall purpose often results in an “A-Ha!” moment.
- **Use resources** - students usually have class notes, class handouts, returned assignments, textbook examples or language dictionaries.
- **Consult a “study buddy”** - ask for support, not for answers, from trusted friends.
- **Write a question** - crafting a specific question on the assignment to ask the next day can start a great conversation with a teacher.
- **Ask teachers questions** - There are numerous opportunities for students to ask their teachers questions the next day, and teachers make themselves available at times that fit their individual schedules. Depending on the teacher’s specific approach, times may include before school, at recess or lunch, during class or after school. In grades 7 and 8, students are encouraged to ask questions during study halls, and depending on the

specific protocols from each teacher, may be able to ask questions by email. Even when planning to consult a teacher the next day, students should attempt a variety of additional strategies and aim to fully complete an assignment with a “personal best” effort.

- **Plan ahead** - in the upper grades, students will have multi-day assignments and projects to manage. Starting early and spreading the work out in steps is an excellent life skill. Using a whiteboard, calendar, to-do list or productivity app can be helpful.
- **Chunk your learning** - research proves that rehearsing new learning in small bits over several days is significantly more effective than “cramming” for long periods of time in a single session.