

# Spartanburg

DAY SCHOOL

## **Lower School Student/Parent Handbook**

**2021-2022**

# SDS Lower School Handbook 2020-2021

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# Lower School Overview

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Spartanburg Day School is to provide a superior educational experience, in a community of trust, that prepares students for a life well lived.

## We Value:

Excellence  
Individuality  
Leadership  
Curiosity  
Passion

## Honor Code

*We will respect others, tell the truth, and will not cheat.*

## Welcome to the Lower School

The Lower School is a happy place in which a sense of joy and a love of learning are evident. There is mutual respect between teachers and students. Curiosity is celebrated, and hands-on opportunities are abundant. Students gain a strong academic foundation while also discovering the importance of being kind, telling the truth, and being a good friend.

We are so glad that you have chosen the Day School for your family. We take seriously the education of the students entrusted into our care. We believe in developing the whole child which includes all aspects of child development including social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

We aim to develop a partnership with families in order to best teach each unique child. Our caring and professional teachers are highly qualified and knowledgeable and deliver a superior educational experience. We look forward to a great school year! Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. We are here for you.

## Whom to Call?

Head of Lower School	Sunny Huckaby	Curriculum, Academic/Developmental Concerns, Discipline, LS Activities	864.582.7539 <a href="mailto:sunny.huckaby@sdsgriffin.org">sunny.huckaby@sdsgriffin.org</a>
Lower School Assistant	Wickie Willard	Attendance, Pickup and Drop Off, Messages, General Information	864.582.7539 <a href="mailto:wickie.willard@sdsgriffin.org">wickie.willard@sdsgriffin.org</a>
Preschool Coordinator	Page Birney	Preschool Activities, Preschool Policies	864.582.7539 <a href="mailto:page.birney@sdsgriffin.org">page.birney@sdsgriffin.org</a>
Extended Day Director	Beth Ryan	Extended Day, After School Activities	864.582.7539 <a href="mailto:beth.ryan@sdsgriffin.org">beth.ryan@sdsgriffin.org</a>
Technology Support	Celia Cooksey Chris Link	Contact for SDS's Website Parent Portal Log-In Information	864.582.7539 <a href="mailto:celia.cooksey@sdsgriffin.org">celia.cooksey@sdsgriffin.org</a> <a href="mailto:chris.link@sdsgriffin.org">chris.link@sdsgriffin.org</a>

## Hours

<b>School Hours</b>	
Early Drop Off in LS Lobby	7:30-7:45 a.m.
Morning Carpool	7:45-7:55 a.m.
2K-4K	8:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. or 8:00a.m. -2:30 p.m.
K-4th	8:00 a.m. -2:30 p.m.
Extended Day	2:30-6:00 p.m.

## Attendance Procedures

In order for our students to achieve the highest level of academic excellence and maximize their educational experience at Spartanburg Day School, they must be punctual and in attendance regularly. Absenteeism and tardiness generally result in lower subject grades and markings because of the missed interaction and sharing of information.

We do understand that some mornings do not go as planned, that children have necessary appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of a school day, and that families will have trips that cannot be delayed. However, parents are requested to do their best to schedule all vacations, trips, doctor's appointments and other planned absences around the published school calendar in order to avoid placing a hardship on themselves, their children and the faculty.

All absences must be documented. If you know your child is going to be absent from school, please call the Lower School office (582.7539 ext. 2112) or email the Lower School Assistant to let the school know about an illness, injury or family emergency. When your child returns to school, please provide a written excuse. A written note or email from a parent is sufficient. A doctor's note is not required for an absence unless a medical condition warrants more coordination for a return to school. If there are extenuating medical circumstances, please convey that information so that our school nurse could be aware.

In the event of an illness or other unplanned absence, a classmate, sibling or parent can pick up assignments and books at the end of the school day.

In the event of a planned absence, a written request for assignments should be submitted to the classroom teacher at least two weeks in advance of the planned absence. This will allow the teacher to prepare adequately for the absence so that there will be as little disruption to the learning process as possible. Recognizing that these assignments may not be exactly what the class will actually be doing, the student and parents need to be responsible for conferencing with the teacher to make up any work missed upon return.

## Tardies

It is important for students to begin the day in an organized fashion. Teachers begin class at 8:00 a.m. Therefore, it is extremely important for students to be on time. When students are late they often find themselves sacrificing valuable time "catching up" and feeling rushed. For security reasons, all doors will be locked by 8:00 a.m. If a student is tardy, parents must sign them in at the Lower School office before going to class. Students who accrue excessive tardies will be contacted by the Head of Lower School. Faculty/staff nor parents are permitted to open locked doors for late arrivals.

## Signing Out

Before leaving school due to an appointment, illness, etc. a student's parent must sign out their child in the LS office. This may be done by having the student present a note to the Lower School Assistant or by speaking with the Lower School Assistant in person or by phone. Please try to inform the classroom teacher that a student is leaving (in advance if possible) and have your child get his or her assignments. Faculty/staff, students, nor parents are permitted to open locked doors for parents to go directly to their child's classroom for an early pick-up. **For security reasons, all early dismissals must go through the Lower School office.**

## Visitors

All visitors and parents must sign in at the Lower School Lobby upon arrival to the Lower School.

## **Late Pick-ups**

Please make every effort to arrive on time at your child's dismissal. When not picked up in a timely manner, students can become sad and worried. We want students to end their days in a positive manner. We know that emergencies happen, as well. Please call the school and let us know if you are running late. Students will be taken to class/Extended Day and billed appropriately. If your child is enrolled for either 12:00, 2:30 or 6:00 p.m. pick-up and you are late, you will be billed a fee of \$25 for each 15 minutes late.

\*Late is considered to be 12:15 p.m., 2:50 p.m., or after 6 p.m.

## **Academic Overview**

### **Admissions Requirement/ Toileting 3K**

All entering 3K students must be fully potty trained in order to start school. This means that they are no longer in diapers or pull-ups during the day, and they are able to take care of their own needs in the bathroom. We understand that young children will have accidents, and parents are asked to send an entire set of clothing labeled with the child's name in a large ziploc bag. Students are encouraged to change independently to gain self help skills when accidents occur. Of course, assistance and guidance will be provided, as needed, by teachers as children become more independent.

### **Placement Policy**

At Spartanburg Day School we pride ourselves on maintaining and attracting high quality teachers. Our teachers strive to ensure a dynamic and well thought out educational experience for each child. In addition, our grade level teams collaboratively create similar experiences and opportunities throughout the grade.

Our practice at SDS is to thoroughly assess each child and to make the decision of class placement based on many factors. In creating a class, we look at boy/girl ratio, academic achievement, learning styles, behavior and social interactions, as well as information and input from the current teacher. While we ask that parents trust us for class placement decisions, we welcome pertinent input regarding your child's personality, his/her learning style, the environment that he/she thrives in and any particular strengths and needs. Please contact the Head of Lower School for more information on class placement.

### **Homework**

Homework is an important element of the academic program at the Lower School. This preparation, when thoughtfully assigned and completed, reinforces learning and understanding, enriches and sustains reading and critical thinking skills, and fosters responsibility and organizational skills.

There is a progression of homework guidelines that begins with minimal tasks at the primary level that progress to a more demanding schedule at the intermediate level, ranging from short family activities in kindergarten to perhaps 60 minutes of work in the fourth grade, which includes daily reading assignments. At each grade level, teachers carefully monitor the amount of work required of students in daily assignments, tests preparation, and long-term projects. If a student is regularly spending more than an hour a night on homework, the parents should investigate the work habits of the student both at home and at school and schedule a conference with the teacher. Homework is expected to be completed and turned in by the student on the assigned due date.

The issue of parent support with homework is one of degree and intent. Teachers use the thoughtfulness and completeness of a child's homework as a learning gauge for his or her understanding of and proficiency with the material. Parental intervention that invalidates that process is detrimental to the education of the child. The school discourages anything more than minimal parental intervention in work that a child brings home.

Homework is assigned on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday in Lower School. We encourage families to take advantage of no homework on Wednesday nights to take time to play board games and spend quality time together without the worry of an assignment.



## Grades and Grading

Preschool assessments are based on a continuum of learning acknowledging that children progress at different rates. Preschool students are assessed based on teacher observations, feedback from parents, and developmental milestones. These assessments are documented through developmental checklists and teacher narratives every fall and spring.

Preschool and kindergarten markings on skills are as follows:

C- Consistently

O- Often

S- Sometimes

N- Not observed at this time

Report cards for kindergarten through 4th grade students are sent out four times a year at the end of each quarter - October, December, March and May. Access to report cards is online through Renweb each quarter, and a final report card will be mailed home each May.

First through fourth grade markings on skills are as follows:

4-Meets Expectation/Mastering

3-Approaching

2-Progressing

1-Developing

The following academic grading scale will be used in third and fourth grade:

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
F = 60 and below

## Standardized Testing

Standardized testing is conducted in third and fourth grades in the spring of every year. The Education Records Bureau's (ERB) Comprehensive Testing Program IV is administered.

The purpose of administering this test is to offer another barometer for measuring the individual aptitude and achievement of Lower School students. Through an understanding of what this test is attempting to measure and what an individual score reflects, parents and school personnel can better support a student's efforts to learn.

The results of the testing become part of each student's record, and a copy of the scores is mailed to the parents.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is also administered twice per year (fall and spring) to all 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade students. MAP is used as one of many tools to assess student growth and progress.

## **Promotion and Retention**

In grades Preschool through grade 4, promotion to the next grade is based on a combination of academic performance, developmental readiness, and teacher recommendation. A student is promoted upon demonstrating sufficient academic and social growth to capably meet the demands of the next grade. Although the school takes great care in preparing students for promotion and one of the benefits of an SDS education is individualized attention, a student is at risk for promotion and/or continuation at the school if he or she fails to meet the above criteria and if he or she requires an extraordinary and excessive amount of individual time and attention from the teachers.

During the school year, the teachers will communicate with parents in a timely fashion about any academic concern.

## **Tutoring**

In general, the employment of tutors should be unnecessary during the school year except in unusual and temporary circumstances. The Lower School program is designed so that any student who listens attentively and does his or her work responsibly on a daily basis will benefit from the program. If additional explanation is necessary, the student or his/her parent should contact the classroom teacher to arrange an extra help session provided by the teacher free of charge.

The school acknowledges the spectrum of maturity levels potentially represented in any given class and/or any given grade level. That spectrum of developmental readiness in learning is primarily handled within the confines of the classroom through the use of various teaching techniques and formats, assistant teachers, technology, volunteer parents, and older students. On occasion, though, students may be recommended by the school for our VISTAS program or to work with a tutor outside of the regular school day to support and reinforce the academic progress.

## **VISTAS**

Our goal at the Spartanburg Day School is for every student to develop the tools he or she needs to succeed in the classroom, in college and beyond. Teachers focus on our students as individuals. If a student needs assistance beyond the classroom, there are a number of options available to provide him or her with the necessary support through our VISTAS program.

Students participating in the VISTAS program experience:

- enhanced self-esteem
- improved academic skills
- individualized and customized instruction
- specific skill instruction in basic reading, mathematics, and writing skills
- instruction in global skills such as study skills, test-taking skills and organization
- general curriculum support
- full integration into grade level activities
- instruction in a one-to-one or small group setting

Designed for student success, VISTAS classrooms use proven techniques and integrated technology to best serve students.

The Lower School VISTAS program, established in 1998, offers individualized instruction for SDS students in 4K through fourth grade. Improved academic skills and enhanced self-esteem are the hallmarks of this program. Students attend the VISTAS program during the school day for instruction in reading, mathematics, writing skills and general curriculum support, as needed. They are fully integrated into the activities of their classrooms. Our certified teaching professionals customize instruction to meet the learning style of each student. Lower school teachers and the VISTAS staff work closely together to assure that each student is successful in the classroom.

Accommodations for students with documented learning disorders will be made at the discretion of the Head of the VISTAS Program in consultation with the Head of the Lower School, teachers, educational specialists, and psychologists. Classroom accommodations are provided to make learning more accessible to the student with identified disabilities. Accommodations do not change the expected academic standards that the student is working toward.

In order to develop an Accommodations Plan, there must be a full psycho-educational evaluation on file at Spartanburg Day School, and it must be current within three years of the evaluation date. The information provided in the psycho-educational evaluation is used as the basis for determining the accommodations for which the student is eligible. There must be a documented diagnosis of learning disorders. The Head of the VISTAS Program will formulate an accommodation plan that will be submitted to the Head of the Lower School for agreement. The plan will be discussed with the student and parents and teachers will receive a copy of the plan after final approval.

## Carpool Procedures

### For safety, please adhere to these guidelines:

- Cell phone usage is not permitted in carpool.
- Always load and unload students at the right-hand curb. Never allow a student to exit a car from the center to cross a lane of traffic. No student is to be dropped off in the parking lot. Please be sure to cross at the crosswalks at all times.
- Observe the speed limit of 10 miles per hour.
- Use your signal lights to indicate when you are ready to merge to the left or the right.
- Pay close attention to school personnel directing traffic and follow their directions.
- Pull all the way forward so that several cars can unload (in the morning) or load (in the afternoon) simultaneously.
- Do not leave an unattended car in the carpool lane.

### Arrival

**The safety of our students is always our first priority.** Arrival time for students begins at 7:45 a.m. At this time, staff members meet arriving students, open car doors, and generally “attend” as necessary. Class begins at 8:00 a.m. and all exterior doors are locked at this time. **Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. need to check in with the Lower School office to sign-in before entering class. Faculty/staff nor parents are permitted to open locked doors for late arrivals.**

### Early Arrival

Supervision for students is available from 7:30 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. Students may not walk into the building unsupervised if they arrive at 7:30 a.m. Parents must walk their children to the Lower School lobby, and teachers will walk students to the designated location for early care. Students report to their homerooms at 7:45 a.m., and teachers will be ready to welcome students into class.

### 2K/3K/4K Morning Carpool

- There are two options for morning carpool.
- *Option 1:* The circle in front of the 100 wing is a **drop off area only. There will be no parking in this circle.** Please pull up to the porch in front of the 100 wing and your child will exit from the car and will be escorted to the classroom by a teacher. Please arrange vehicles so children may exit from the passenger side **ONLY**.
- *Option 2:* If you want to walk in with your child, park in the parking lot and walk along the sidewalk along the grass or cross on the painted crosswalk only. For safety reasons, our goal is to keep families from walking in the parking lot.

### Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> Grade Morning Carpool

All students in Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> grade will be dropped off at the Lower School Lobby Carpool Circle. Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> grade students may not enter through the 100 wing unless they have a 2K/3K/4K sibling.

### Morning Walk-In

If parents want to walk their child in, please park, walk on the sidewalk, and cross at the crosswalk at all times to the building. For safety purposes, no families/children may walk in the parking lot unless crossing the cross-walk beside the 100 wing.

## **Departures**

### **12:00 p.m. Pick-Up for 2K /3K/4K**

2K/3K/4K students will be dismissed from the 100 wing carpool area. Teachers will individually load children into their cars; however, per DSS it is the parent's responsibility to pull forward and secure the child in his/her car seat.

### **2:30 p.m. Pick-Up for 2K/3K/4K**

2K/3K/4K students will be dismissed from the 100 wing carpool area. Procedures are the same as the noon pick-up. If an older sibling is riding in the same car, that child will be escorted to the preschool carpool area.

### **2:30 p.m. Pick-Up for Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Students in Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> will be picked up in the Lower School Lobby Carpool Circle. If any of these students will be riding with a 2K/3K/4K student, they will be escorted to the 2K/3K/4K carpool area.

## **Extended Day - Options After 2:30 p.m.**

Extended Day students can be picked up anytime between 2:30-6:00. Parents should park and walk to the LS Lobby for entry into the school for student pick-up. Pick-ups may also occur at the LS playground. The Extended Day Director will communicate any updates or changes to pick up through email, as needed.

Please see Extended Day Program guide for a complete list of programs.

## **Sibling Care**

For students that have siblings in Middle School or Upper School, we are providing sibling care from 2:30-3:15 p.m. in Lower School with prior approval. Please email [sunny.huckaby@sdsgriffin.org](mailto:sunny.huckaby@sdsgriffin.org) and confirm that you would like for your child to report to sibling care daily. Lower School students will be walked to the appropriate MS/US carpool location to meet siblings at 3:10.

## **Late Departures**

Please make every effort to arrive on time at your child's dismissal. When not picked up in a timely manner, students can become sad and worried. We want students to end their days in a positive manner. We know that emergencies happen, as well. Please call the school and let us know if you are running late. Students will be taken to the appropriate class/Extended Day. If your child is enrolled for either 12:00, 2:30 or 6:00 p.m. pick-up and you are late, you will be billed a fee of \$25 for each 15 minutes late.

\*Late is considered to be 12:15 p.m., 2:50 p.m., or after 6 p.m.

Lower School students are never allowed to remain on any part of the Spartanburg Day School campus without supervision after the end of the school day.

## **Notice of New Pick Up Person**

Parents must notify the school if someone who does not regularly pick up will be picking up their child from school. Parents must provide the school with accurate contact information for this person if the parents will be unreachable. The names of all adults authorized to pick up a child must be on file with the school along with a copy of the individual's photo ID. When an adult who does not routinely pick up a child comes to the school, a photo ID must be presented to the administrator or front office personnel before the person enters the child's classroom or before the child enters the car.

## **Communications**

### **Newsletters/Teacher Communications**

Teachers in grades 2K-2nd grade will utilize the Seesaw app and email for communicating with families. Grades 3 and 4 will use Google Classroom and email to communicate with families. Weekly newsletters are sent each week to update families on class events, units of study, homework, upcoming tests, and other pertinent information.

### **Home/School Communication Folder**

Every child will also have a navy blue home/school communication folder. Important flyers, invitations, etc. will go home every *Thursday* via the home/school communication folder.

### **Weekly Email Communication from School**

A weekly email from our Communications Division will be emailed on Friday afternoons at 5:00 PM. Please click on the Lower School tab for weekly updates from the Division Head.

## Discipline

The Lower School is a place where good order prevails in a friendly, supportive atmosphere in which all people feel valued, accepted, and have a sense of belonging. A positive and constructive working relationship between the school and families is essential to individual student growth and fulfillment of the school's mission.

Each classroom is governed by the teacher and class generated codes of conduct, as learning communities are formed. Classroom management is handled in a positive way where students learn from their mistakes. While the 'rules' have minor variations from room to room and grade level to grade level, all emphasize respectful treatment of others and their belongings.

Discipline is seen as a form of guidance rather than punishment. Teachers use logical consequences whenever possible to help modify undesirable behavior. Younger children are encouraged to "use their words" to solve problems and much time is spent in discussion and role-playing to help them learn how to interact with peers and adults in an appropriate manner. Teachers guide appropriate behavior in students and reinforce positive behavior. Children who are disruptive or distracting to the learning process will have their behavior appropriately modified by their classroom teacher. Corporal punishment is not allowed at Spartanburg Day School. Serious, continuous or inappropriate behavior or conduct will be addressed by the Head of Lower School. Good citizenship is encouraged using International Baccalaureate Student Profiles and the Spartanburg Day School honor code.

## Promoting Social Kindness

Woven into all activities at SDS is the promotion of socially kind behavior. "Kind" behavior can be described in many ways but it comes down to one relevant word: Respect. We expect students to respect themselves, respect others, and respect their school.

Our approach begins with an assumption that all students at SDS are good students who mean well, but we also understand that a natural part of the maturation process is navigating the sometimes complicated, difficult, and frustrating waters of social relationships and students will necessarily make mistakes.

Learning from these mistakes provides the building blocks of developing mature social skills in our students. In the classroom, at lunch tables, during recess and other special activities, our teachers help students learn from their social mistakes in much the same manner that they help them learn from academic mistakes. How this is accomplished will vary depending on the circumstances and age of the students but we will be guided by the following beliefs:

- 1) Students can, and often do, engage in socially unkind behavior. Most often, this does not mean that they are bullies.
- 2) All students can learn from their mistakes.
- 3) Learning from one's mistakes begins with taking responsibility for those mistakes. This will sometimes include suffering consequences for these mistakes.
- 4) Classmate observers are in the best position to know when inappropriate social behavior occurs and, depending on the age and circumstances, it is generally not acceptable for them to passively allow it to go on.
- 5) **When adult action is warranted**, teachers are **often** in the best position to intervene in school-based social problems.
- 6) When necessary the Division Head and/or the Guidance Counselor will be asked to be involved.
- 7) Whenever appropriate, parents will be asked to partner with the school to help resolve the issue.

While social unkindness is normal and typical in students, bullying is not. Bullying is an extreme type of social unkindness that we define by three characteristics 1) There is a power imbalance in the social dynamic (the bully is older or stronger or socially more powerful), 2) the unkindness is intentional, and 3) the unkindness is chronic and systematic (occurring on an almost daily basis for many weeks). Whenever bullying is suspected the Division Head will be immediately informed, an investigation undertaken, and a plan formulated.

*Whether or not adult intervention is necessary and what form that intervention takes, will vary depending on the grade level. In general, when adult intervention is warranted, SDS will employ the Four-A-Response to any instance of social unkindness: Affirm feelings, Ask questions, Assess safety, Act (coaching, imposing consequences, and/or informing). In situations where two or more students experience social difficulties, we work hard to help them learn to resolve differences in a bullying situation; however, there will be a quick, strong, and appropriate disciplinary response.*

### **Biting Policy in Preschool**

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between 1 and 3 years old. Even though most children stop biting on their own, and it is a normal process of growth, biting is something we discourage. The safety and emotional wellbeing of the children at the school is our primary concern.

Toddlers bite other toddlers for many different reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. He or she might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or his peers. Toddlers are gaining language skills and sometimes lack the ability to communicate their thoughts and/or feelings effectively. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. The school will encourage the children to “use their words” if they become angry or frustrated. The faculty and staff will maintain a close and constant supervision of the children at all times.

The child that participated in biting will be removed from the situation so that the focus will be on the injured child. The injured student will be comforted and cared for by the teacher. Wounds will be assessed and cleansed appropriately. The teacher will effectively communicate with the child that bit so that the child can gain understanding on using their words, how biting hurts, and how their friend feels. Steps will be made to gain empathy and understanding. Parents of both parties will be notified while maintaining confidentiality of student names.

If a child continues to bite, additional steps will be taken on a case by case basis. Additional steps could include meetings with the teacher and Head of Lower School, a language screening, documentation of incidents, parents/guardians being called to pick up the child, and/or a temporary break from school while the concern is being addressed. The child’s development and progress will remain at the forefront of the conversation while also ensuring a safe environment for all children in the class.



## Dress Code

The goal of the Spartanburg Day School dress code is to help create an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Clothing should not distract or detract from the learning environment and should be neat, clean and appropriate. Parents should ensure that their child's clothing is suitable for prevailing weather conditions and that all outerwear is labeled with their child's name.

Parents are asked to take responsibility in ensuring their children adhere to the dress code guidelines. The following guidelines are provided but should not be viewed as an exhaustive list. The determination of appropriateness and neatness rests with the homeroom teacher and ultimately, the Division Head.

Our goal is to keep parents informed as dress code guidelines are learned the first couple of weeks of school. During this time period, a note will be sent home from the classroom teacher with a reminder of dress code parameters to help students and parents understand the expectations. After this time period, students will be asked to resolve dress code violations before attending class by calling home and having clothes that meet dress code standards delivered to school.

### General Clothing

- Clothing should be clean, in a good state of repair, and fit properly - no frayed ends, no holes in clothes, etc.
- Clothing should fit and not be excessively baggy or excessively tight.
- Undergarments should not be visible at any time.
- T-shirts are not permitted outside of designated spirit days. Shirts should not display any writing or graphics except for small logos. Shirts with appliques (sewn on design) are permitted.
- Pull-overs and sweatshirts are permitted.
- Jeans are permitted, but athletic attire (shorts, sweatpants, or jerseys) and fatigues/camouflage are not.
- Shoes should provide an appropriate level of comfort, support, and protection for the varied activities of the school day. Flip-flops and rubber/plastic casual shoes are not permitted.
- Hats should be removed inside the building except on special occasions approved by the Division Head. Scarves and head adornments should not cover the head, but exceptions are made for religious purposes.
- Hair should be neat and clean and styled so that eyes are visible.
- Shorts, skirts, dresses should be mid-thigh or longer. Leggings and jeggings may only be worn under skirts or dresses that fall at the length of one's fingertips when arms are stretched downward.
- Costumes or costume-like clothing is not considered acceptable for school.
- Collared shirts with sleeves, blouses, and turtlenecks are allowed. All blouses and shirts must cover the shoulders and back. Tops may not reveal midriff, be low cut, have spaghetti straps, or be transparent.
- Shirts without a collar may be worn under a sweater or a sweatshirt. Shirts should not display any writing other than small logos.

### *Preschool Considerations*

Children in preschool should wear comfortable clothes. They will get dirty. Clothes which children can manage independently are ideal. (Examples are pants with elastic waists and Velcro shoes.) Rubber soled shoes are preferred. Please send an extra complete set of seasonal clothing (including socks and underwear) to be left at school that is labeled in a ziplock bag.

## **Events**

### **Back-to-School Picnic**

The Annual Back-to-School Picnic is held on the day before classes begin in August. This is a great way for families to connect and it also provides faculty and staff with the opportunity to mingle with our families, all while enjoying great food, games, dance, and laughter! The Parents' Community and school administration work together to make this a momentous and fun-filled event each year.

### **Back-to-School Night**

Back-to-School Night is held shortly after the beginning of the year and is designed to give parents an opportunity to meet their child's teachers and receive information about the class and what their child can expect. Issues such as developmental expectations of the grade level, curriculum, textbooks, grading procedures, and ways of communication are discussed.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Lower School teachers hold two conferences with parents each year. The conferences occur in November and March. Teachers are responsible for scheduling appointments on those days. At these times parents will have the opportunity to discuss your child's development and progress at school.

### **Student-Led Conferences (Celebration of Learning)**

Students are the center of their learning experience; therefore, it makes sense for the student to take part in the sharing of that learning. Student-led conferences offer a unique, structured setting in which children can discuss school work with parents. Student-led conferences offer students the ability to use their own words to showcase work at varied stages of development. Individual strengths, weaknesses, and interests will be highlighted, as well.

Each student has a portfolio that is a collection of their work in all areas of the curriculum and incorporates many skills. The portfolio is composed of pieces chosen by your child and by their teacher. The work in your child's portfolio has been chosen for a reason that is documented in an accompanying reflection. The chosen piece may or may not be their best work, but shows progress or success in a specific area. Conferences can take up to 25 minutes and will be located in areas other than your child's classroom. Classroom teachers will not be present during student-led conferences. IB World Schools are required to provide a cumulative record of student work that shows growth over time. Student-led conferences are in alignment with the assessment philosophy of International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme.

### **Field Trips**

As an extension of the classroom curriculum, field trips are planned to occur over the course of the school year. Parental permission is requested during enrollment for field trips. Parents may also be asked to drive if a bus is not available. A parent's role is much like that of a teacher in supplying assistance as needed and outlined by the faculty member(s) in charge. Please refrain from bringing your child's younger siblings on such trips. Your active attention is needed in helping to supervise the students for whom the field trip was planned and therefore cell phone use is limited to emergencies.

### **Grandparents' and Special Friends Day**

This special day in the spring is a much-anticipated opportunity for grandparents and special friends to visit their grandchildren/students in their classrooms and enjoy a taste of the SDS experience. SDS students perform a musical program for school family and friends.

### **Field Day**

Field Day is a fun day for all! Lower School classes compete in athletic events. Parents and friends are invited and encouraged to attend.

### **Friday-in-the-Dent**

One Friday morning per month, K-4<sup>th</sup> grade students, and occasionally 3K/4K students, gather in the Dent for a gathering. It is our opportunity to recognize achievements, birthdays, and unique events. Friday morning community meetings embody the Lower School philosophy of educating the whole child by providing a time for reflection, role-playing and character building with the purpose of creating positive interactions and a broader acceptance of others as well as building confidence in oneself.

## **Parent Participation in the Life of the Lower School**

The role that parents play in the life of an independent school is an important and multifaceted one. The SDS Lower School sees the parent body as a tremendous collection of interested and talented people whose appropriate and constructive participation in the life of the school significantly enriches the school-related experience for the students, the faculty, and the parents themselves.

The school believes that it is in the community's best interest to have parents actively participate in the life of the school. The children benefit from sharing their school world with the parents. The school benefits from parents volunteering talents, interests, and energy on behalf of school programs. The parents benefit from experiencing, firsthand, the environment in which their children are educated.

### **Parents' Community**

For nearly fifty years the Parents' Community has focused on providing volunteer support for every aspect of school life. The Community enthusiastically supports academics, recruitment and retention, athletics, and communications. Additionally, the Community focuses on fundraising to supplement the school's budget and provide for unexpected expenses. Each school division has a parent representative that functions as a liaison to the larger Community from their respective division. This highly valued organization sponsors important events that add immeasurably to the vitality of the school. At the beginning of each school year, the Parents' Community publishes its list of meetings, activities, and projects. All SDS parents are by definition members of this Community.

### **Lower School Parent Coordinator**

The Lower School Parent Coordinator serves as the coordinator for all Lower school volunteer activities. The Lower School Parent Coordinator provides support and assistance to the Lower School Head for activities, special events, and program ideas/design as requested by the Head. The Coordinator reports Lower School updates at the Parents' Community meetings.

### **Homeroom Parents**

Each class has a parent representative who works with teachers to plan activities (field trips, etc.) and class parties throughout the year. These volunteers act as coordinators for spirit-building events in their respective classrooms.

# Health and Safety

## Immunizations

All students at Spartanburg Day School must have a South Carolina Certificate of Immunization.

## Illness or Injury

In the case of illness, all students have to be fever free and/or vomit free without the benefit of fever reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Children will routinely be sent home with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, flu symptoms, suspicious injury (needing a doctor's attention), etc. **We require your child to be free of these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school.** Please inform the school if your child contracts a communicable disease such as chicken pox.

Most times we try to encourage children to return to class if possible (a little TLC can go a long way with the aid of an ice pack or band aid).

In the event that a student is sent home, they can be picked up in the Nurse's Room located off the Main Lobby in Room 10.

On occasion, students have been taken by or accompanied by the nurse to the emergency room or doctor's office to meet a parent. This is by necessity only, when time or location is a factor. Otherwise, students are taken from school to the appropriate medical facility by their parents. Emergency vehicles are only called when medically necessary.

## Head Lice

Participants with crawling lice or with nits (eggs) ¼-inch or closer to the scalp will be sent home. Participants may return with a parent note after his/her first treatment with a lice removal product IF there are no active lice crawling on the child's head. The school nurse will check your child for 7 days after treatment for any newly hatched crawling lice. If any are present, your child will have to be re-treated for lice in order to return to school.

## Medications

It is school policy that students are prohibited from carrying their own medications on campus. There are very few exceptions – such as inhalers for asthmatics. The nurse or appointed designee will be responsible for the correct administration of the medication at the appropriate time, allowing accurate records to be kept and to have the information readily available in case of an emergency.

*Therefore, the policy follows:*

- ❑ Medication should come to the nurse in pharmacy bottles, labeled with the name of the child, name of the drug, drug strength, prescribing physician, and times and dosages for administering the drug. Instructions should be included, as well. Most pharmacies will give you an extra bottle for this purpose.
- ❑ It is the school nurse's responsibility to keep up with the number of tablets, etc. and inform parents by email when a refill is needed. If possible, the nurse will return your empty prescription bottle to you for your convenience.

- ❑ When first initiating the administration of medications at school, it helps for the nurse to meet directly with the parent. This will give the nurse and parent the opportunity to check to see if all the necessary paperwork is properly filled out. Subsequent refills can be arranged more casually.
- ❑ The nursing office depends on the information and permission given on the Student Health Form. Please take care to fill it out in full and with full consideration of its importance. If medical issues change during the school year, make sure the nurse is informed of those changes.

It is mandatory that all parents comply with the Medication Policy so that we can ensure the safety and quality of care we all wish for our children.

## **Food Allergy**

The Day School strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for all our students. Ensuring the safety of our students will take the collective efforts of all constituencies: students, parents, food service, and school. We follow these guidelines in an attempt to create a secure atmosphere, recognizing that we cannot guarantee that our school is completely free of food or other allergens that might cause a reaction.

**Children’s allergies must be documented with the school nurse on health forms provided at school opening and throughout the school year. This documentation should include allergen and symptoms of reaction, along with directions for administering medication in the case of a reaction.**

### The School

- The school nurse makes every staff member aware of the use and availability of the Epipen.
- The school nurse will make school personnel familiar with the allergies significant to his/her classroom or other points of contact with students.
- Teachers will encourage frequent hand washing, particularly before and after meals.
- Teachers will discourage sharing of food from lunch boxes or snacks.

### Parents

- Parents will be informed if your child is a member of such a class that you refrain from packing peanuts or specific nuts in your child’s lunch or snack. Furthermore, we suggest that you be mindful of this designation when you plan classroom activities and celebrations.
- Parents should be mindful of other foods to which individuals may have serious allergies: dairy, egg, glutes, berries, and corn. Each of these allergens can be found hidden in foods, and can therefore become a danger to our children with these allergies. On occasion we will update these lists and offer some considerations for planning party foods for these classes, such as: cross-contamination can be a problem when preparing foods for both non-allergic and allergic children. A spoon used to serve an allergen food item should not be used to serve a safe food, as it can pass particles from one to the other. *If you are informed that a child of yours is in a class with a student who has a serious food allergy, we will encourage you to refer to these lists before you send snacks for the class or plan party foods for that class. On a daily basis we will be asking that you pack lunches and snacks for your child only, thereby limiting the likelihood of causing harm to another child accidentally.*
- Parents are asked to speak with your child about being a good school citizen- being aware of the needs of their friends, remembering not to share their food with classmates that have allergies, making small sacrifices for the wellbeing of their friends. Help them to understand the importance of this issue by educating them in the way you think best.

### Food Service

- Our food service makes every effort to avoid serving foods that contain peanuts, or tree-nuts or contain traces of such foods. Other foods such as shellfish, eggs, or milk may be served, and noted on the signs in the service line.
- The food service will work to ensure tables are cleaned and other cafeteria work surfaces between meals and after food service each day.

We must recognize that while we are making every effort to keep the environment of a nut-sensitive student nut-free, we cannot monitor food that is prepared in a home or restaurant that is not a nut-free environment, and will do everything we can to be prepared for the incidental allergic reaction.

### **Fire and Tornado Drills**

In accordance with state law, emergency drills are held on a consistent basis. SDS has procedures in place for emergency situations such as fire, security threat, and tornado warnings. The faculty has been trained in those procedures and the entire school practices them multiple times each year. A school wide warning system that can be heard inside and outside the buildings indicates the nature of the emergency and initiates the appropriate procedures.

### **Inclement Weather Procedures and Early Dismissal**

In the event of inclement weather or an early dismissal, SDS will close at its own discretion. SDS will send a text and email to your preferred email address as indicated in Renweb through our emergency alert system. SDS reports our status to TV Channels 7 and 4. SDS will also post our status on our school website and other school social media.

No announcements are made when weather and/or road conditions are not hazardous. Reopening SDS after an emergency will be at the school's discretion. The announcement of reopening will be sent through text and parent email through our emergency alert system, posted on our website and school social media, and made on TV Channels 7 and 4.

### **Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

Spartanburg Day School administration follows news updates and warnings on local Spartanburg TV stations' and city websites.

Spartanburg Day School has taken the following steps to ensure that our school and staff are prepared in the event of a medical emergency or natural disaster.

- All staff are trained in emergency management.
- School-wide fire and natural disaster drills are scheduled during the year.
- An emergency medical bag is prepared for staff and children containing necessary medical and emergency supplies.

*In-Place Evacuation* (for instance, in case of a tornado): If conditions are such that immediate action is warranted, Spartanburg Day School will be prepared to do the following:

- Escort children to nearest room without windows. Children will gather in the hallway, teacher workroom, or bathrooms.
- Disconnect all electrical plugs and extension cords.
- Shut off lights in the building.

Each teacher will have a class list/ emergency phone numbers.

*On-Site Evacuation:* Depending on the emergency, the Head will determine evacuation sites. For fire emergencies, students will evacuate to the nearest outdoor location according to the classroom evacuation plans.

*Off-Site Evacuation / Major Disasters / Emergencies:* In the event an emergency requires students to move to a location off campus which has been designated as The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (1801 Skylyn Drive), the Head will work with local authorities / Red Cross to determine the appropriate location. Parents will be informed immediately by cell phone of the exact location and how to reach their children. Class lists, emergency student information, authorized pick-up forms, and emergency medicine or materials will be taken with the students. A teacher or staff member will remain with the students at all times.

In the event of any type of evacuation, the following steps are required by Spartanburg Day School personnel:

- The Head of School will be informed immediately of the emergency.
- Children will be accounted for and matched to the day's attendance record.
- Emergency cards and the attendance list will accompany the students to a safe location.
- First Aid kits, children's medication, and emergency supplies will be taken when relocating to a safe area.
- A cell phone will be available at all times to contact emergency agencies, parents, and Child Care Licensing.

### **Security Cameras**

Security Cameras are in place on campus in the common areas.



## **Extended Day Information**

The Extended Day Program at SDS is the way in which we provide care of our SDS students after school hours and on some school holidays. This program has been designed to be an extension of the school day. The Extended Day teachers and staff actively promote the social, emotional, and physical development of each child. During the afternoon children will have the opportunity to engage in centers, take part in story time, play outside, and participate in many other diverse activities.

Enrichment offerings provide an opportunity for our students to develop skills and interests in a variety of areas. Enrollment in after school enrichment classes is offered to all SDS students in grades 3K-4<sup>th</sup> grade. In the past we have had offerings such as golf, soccer, tennis, dance, theatre, voice, , piano, and many more. Please refer to the descriptions, fees and registration process via our website for more details and information on each class.

Extended Day provides care for students from 2:30-6:00 p.m. Full care will be available on predetermined school holidays as determined by demand for an additional fee. It is necessary to pre-register for these Special Days. Special Day registration notices will be emailed to Extended Day families each semester. An Extended Day calendar will be provided annually.

Extended Day information can be found on the school's website.

## Friendly Griffin Suggestions

### Extra Clothing

All Preschool students are required to bring an entire set of clothing in a zip lock bag marked with the child's name in case of an accident.

### Cell Phones

It is our strong desire that student cell phones be left at home. Cell phones may be brought to school but cannot be used during the school day. If a student chooses to bring a phone to school, it should be powered off and stored in the student's backpack. Failure to abide by these guidelines will result in the loss of the privilege of having the device at school (for a period of time determined by the Division Head).

### Snack

Students in all grades are encouraged to bring a healthy snack for each afternoon. **Students are not to bring sweets or sugary snacks and sodas are not permitted at any time.** Please ensure your child brings non-sugary snacks, as this is more conducive to learning. These snacks should be sent from home. Parents are advised to check with homeroom teachers to determine if any food allergies need to be considered when bringing a treat for the class.

### Party Policies

Class parties for each class and grade level are planned by the parent room representative(s) in conjunction with the classroom teachers. A schedule of parties will be announced at the Back-to-School Night. Classrooms are allowed two parties to include Winter Holidays and End-of-Year. Parents are encouraged to celebrate Halloween with us at our school-wide costume parade. Valentine's Day is celebrated in individual classrooms by passing out Valentine's cards. Individual grade levels may have other celebrations including but not limited to: Thanksgiving Feasts, Mother's Day Tea Parties, Egg Hunts, Donuts for Dad, Muffins with Mom, Grandparents' Day, IB Unit Celebrations, and Writing Celebrations.

Lower School class parties will be coordinated by the parent room representative for each grade, in conjunction with the teachers' wishes. Our policy is to keep parties simple, and therefore ask that parents not send elaborate gifts and treats for students. Our policy for party foods is as follows: only one sweet (ex. cupcake, cake, donuts etc.) with healthy choices (ex. vegetable or fruit tray, etc). Goodie bags filled with candy are not permitted. Due to food allergies, if possible, please send ingredient labels or list of ingredients for party treats. Please check with the teacher and room coordinator about food allergies in order to provide a safe and healthy snack for all students.

The school recognizes and celebrates the birthdays of all students and will do so monthly during our school wide morning announcements at Friday-in-the-Dent.

To diminish hurt feelings, invitations can only be handed out at school if **the entire class is invited or all the boys or all the girls.** Parents and other family members may want to recognize their child's birthday at school by donating a "Birthday Book" to the library in honor of their child. These Birthday Book Club honorees are recognized during our Dent gatherings. Find out more about the Birthday Book Club by contacting our school librarian, Will Strait, at [will.strait@sdsgriffin.org](mailto:will.strait@sdsgriffin.org).

## **Classroom Visits**

In order to maximize instructional time, it is most helpful to teachers for parents to refrain from interrupting your child's classroom during the school day. Pre-planned parent involvement in classroom activities is welcomed. Spontaneous visits or "brief" conversations with the teacher, regardless of how well intended, interfere with the instructional flow of the classroom. If you have a need to send a message to your child, please do so by leaving the message with the Lower School Assistant, who will convey the information to your child or to his/her teacher as quickly as possible without interrupting classroom activity.

## **Lost and Found**

We often find things such as jackets, book bags and lunch boxes, which students have misplaced. These items are placed in the "Lost and Found," located on the 100 wing. Please put your child's name on coats, jackets, sweaters, hats, lunch boxes, and book bags so that lost belongings can be returned.