



Portrait of a Graduate

Spartanburg Day School graduates are...

Purposeful

- in developing their intellect
- in building meaningful relationships
- in exploring their inner lives and the world beyond them

Confident

- in leading others
- in communicating clearly and effectively
- in cultivating agency related to their learning

Discerning

- in seizing opportunities
- in taking risks and navigating challenges
- in investing in causes that matter to them

Spartanburg Day School Mission

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.*



Expectations

Expectations for an Upper School Student

- Act with integrity
- Embrace inclusivity
- Pursue excellence
- Be leaders

In a nutshell

Students are expected to do their own work to the best of their ability, participate in school life, and treat themselves and others with kindness.

Expectations for Upper School Teachers and The Administration

- Treat students kindly and strive to know them as an individual
- Be prepared for every class and program
- Provide feedback to students as they grow as learners and young adults
- Be available
- Apply the school rules equally and hold students accountable for their actions
- Welcome feedback on teaching and upper school programs and policies
- Protect the learning environment
- Remember students have many commitments and that balance matters

In a nutshell

Administrators and teachers will know students as individuals and create a learning environment that is supportive, challenging, and safe.

Expectations for Upper School Parents

- Give your child space to communicate and advocate for themselves, and solve their own problems
- Recognize that growing as a learner and as a person sometimes involves obstacles and discomfort
- Communicate with us if there is a problem your child cannot fix
- Trust that our teachers and administration will always strive to do what is best for your child, but also for the school community

In a nutshell

The school values parents as essential partners. In working with and supporting the school, parents will best support their child's achievement inside the classroom and will help ensure their child is ready for success beyond the Day School.



Upper School Information

Attendance

Daily attendance is absolutely essential to the academic progress of a student. It promotes dependability and respect for education, as well as good habits for the future. It also is the safety and legal responsibility of the school to know the whereabouts of students. If you will be absent from school, please have a parent/guardian call/email Mrs. Aiken. She can be reached at 864-582-7539 ext. 2917 or by email - attendance@sdsgriffin.org, preferably before 8:00 a.m.

Students are allowed a maximum of twelve (12) absences per class during the academic calendar for a full-year course, or six (6) for a semester class. Notice there is ***no distinction between excused and unexcused absences***. Even if a student is absent through no fault of their own, missing 12 class periods in a year is equal to missing more than 15% of total instructional time. The only exceptions are limited to *school-related* absences, such as school-sponsored trips, competitions, games, or similar events.

A student who reaches 12 absences in a year (or 6 in a semester) may be required to complete make-up work/class time during the summer in order to be granted academic credit in that class or risk losing credit or Honors/AP distinctions. *This is regardless of the grade they have in the class.* The specifics of the summer make-up work will be finalized by the subject teacher and Head of Upper School and may be administered through South Carolina Virtual School.

In extreme cases, chronic absences may lead to a student being placed on probation or asked to withdraw from school.

College Counseling

The College Counseling Office has programming for all upper school students, as well as many opportunities for parents. These are specific to grades. Any student can make an appointment with a College Counsellor, or just pop by the office if they have a quick question. Parents can also contact the office if they have questions.

- Jennifer Spearman, Director of College Counseling - jennifer.spearman@sdsgriffin.org
- Ann Marie Wesneski, Assistant Director of College Counselling - annmarie.wesneski@sdsgriffin.org

Graduation Requirements

Subject Area	Credits Required	Required Courses
English	4	English 9, 10, 11, and 12.
Maths	3	Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry
Science	3	Physics, Biology, Chemistry
Social Studies	3	United States History
Languages	2	2 years of the same language (taken in Upper School)
Arts	1	
Electives	4	
Athletics	Students must earn 1 credit per year by participating on an SDS athletics team or by providing evidence that they participate in an out-of-school athletic team not offered by SDS.	

The above is the minimum. We recommend 4 credits in the core subjects and three years of progression for the same language (which many colleges now require).



MAC Periods and Study Halls

Meetings Activities and Clubs period [MAC] are times when students can meet with clubs and complete missed work. Most importantly, MAC periods are a time for students to receive extra help from their teachers. There is a MAC period every morning before school and every day after school, until 4 pm. On Monday and Wednesday, there are also MAC periods during the middle of the day.

Please note that MAC periods before and after school are not mandatory. Students should make an appointment with a teacher should they want some help.

Every student has a Study Hall, and many have two. This is when students can work in a quiet space during the day and have quick access to teachers should they have questions. Students in 10-12 grades who carry a grade of a certain level are allowed to check out of Study Hall and work in the library, outside, or in other designated spaces. All ninth graders must stay in the Study Hall room.

Honor Code and Honor Council

The Upper School places the Honor Code at the center of our community. It reads:

“As a member of the Spartanburg Day School community, I agree that I must demonstrate respect for myself and for every other member of the community. An important aspect of demonstrating respect is that I will not lie, cheat, or steal. I commit myself to promoting behaviors that are valued within our community, and I will encourage others to do so.”

The Honor Council is the body charged with educating the community about the Honor Code, as well as weighing appropriate consequences in instances where the Honor Code has been violated. The Honor Council consists of both students and faculty. The Honor Council will hear all cases dealing with the values set forth in the Honor Code. The Honor Council will then make a recommendation to the Head of Upper School. All final decisions will be made by the Head of Upper School and, where appropriate, the Head of School.

Artificial Intelligence and School Work

In many ways, any questions about the use of Artificial Intelligence [AI] systems are dealt with by the Honor Code. That said, given the rapidly changing landscape in this regard, SDS has created the following policy:

“Spartanburg Day School (Upper School) recognizes that AI is a swiftly evolving resource that has a place in the education of our students. However, this powerful tool must be used with the guidance of a teacher so that it is employed ethically, effectively, and responsibly. Intellectual honesty is vital to our learning community. Unless explicitly authorized by the teacher, the use of AI is not permitted in the creation or submission of papers, homework, or other assessments. The unauthorized use of AI will be viewed as cheating and/or plagiarism, as it represents the submission of words and ideas that are not original to the student. When AI is permitted, it must be cited just like any other source.”



Problems - Who to contact if...

- My child will be late for school, will need to leave early, or has an appointment - Mrs. Aiken (or email attendance@sdsgriffin.org)
- My child is having a problem in a specific class - we strongly encourage you to begin by having your child speak with the teacher. After that, you can contact the teacher.
- My child seems to be underperforming generally in their classes - again if your child can speak with their teachers that is great. But if there is a wider issue than one class you can also reach out to their advisor.
- My child is having social or emotional problems at school - Ms. Gladson, Ms. Phillips, Dr. Fisher
- My child is having issues with their sports coach or other aspects of their sport at school - start with the coach then if needed contact our Athletic Director, Mike Cerino.

Parent Partners

- Encourage your child to be the one who emails or meets with teachers if they are having an issue in a class.
- Encourage your child to take appropriate responsibility for the business of being at school (arriving on time, dressing correctly for school, and following rules about phones and boundaries).
- Encourage your child to hold firm to their commitments to sports teams, clubs, and other things they volunteer to do.
- Encourage your child to step outside of their comfort zone.
- Encourage your child to seek a healthy life balance and to surround themselves with supportive friends.

Of course, all that said, you the parent should know that you can pick up the phone or send us an email if you have any questions or concerns.

Advisory

Upper School students are placed in an advisory group of between 8-10 students. They stay with the same group and with the same teacher for all four years of high school. Advisory time (Tuesday during midday MAC and Wednesday mornings) is used by advisors to check in with students, for fun competitions and community programs, and for our social/emotional program, The Social Institute.

Grade Deans

Grade Deans are primarily responsible for communicating with students, and then if necessary parents, when there is an issue with the dress code or tardiness or any other low-level discipline matter. Grade Deans will assign detentions and communicate with parents when warranted.

Special Studies

Special Studies for 2024 is the week of February 26th to March 1st. The faculty is currently creating opportunities for travel, immersive programming, and course and non-course-based opportunities. These will be finalized and published in early Fall. Our goal is to offer a variety of opportunities that match student interests. The cost of Special Studies varies widely. If a student wishes to participate in an offering that is cost-prohibitive, they are encouraged to speak to the school.