SPARKJAR

Dunottar School
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

Case study: Dunottar School

Dunottar School is an independent secondary school with over 400 students aged 11-18. Their 1:1 iPad scheme was introduced over the course of 2018-9 and the school now has 53 teachers using Sparkjar to manage communication, workflow and feedback with their classes.

What were your initial impressions of the app?

When I started looking into it I saw the interface and I was blown away, I loved it. I liked the fact that you had listened to teachers, you know? And the chat was fabulous because the children use it very constructively and support one another through it.
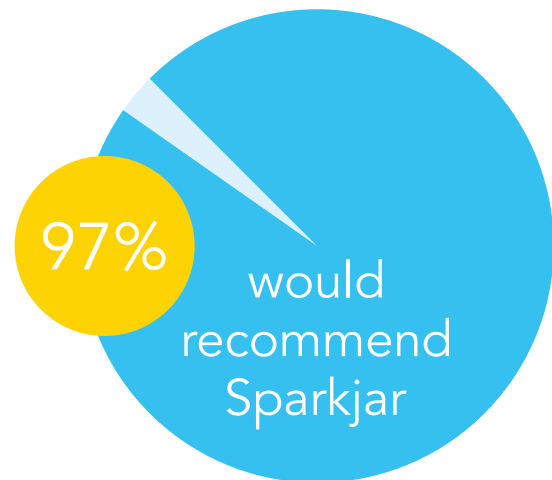
"I was blown away, I loved it"

It's all that, it's the whole package.

What's been the most useful thing about Sparkjar for you as a teacher?

There's two things: with my form I use the chat only – I have a group of very young children and they forget everything; today I sent a message reminding them about their PE kit and things like that, so that's useful.

The main use in my teaching is setting homework. I'm able to see very quickly who hasn't done it and then I can have a 1:1 conversation with them, through the chat or in class. I'm able to see what they've done and I'm able to plan my lesson accordingly.

97% would recommend Sparkjar

"Would you recommend Sparkjar to a friend or colleague?" – Sparkjar teacher survey, July 2019

"I use it to inform my teaching"

If the homework is for students to submit a recording of themselves speaking, for example, I will listen to a few of the submissions but I won't necessarily mark them every time. I use it to inform my teaching. So it's that flexibility that both enables me to pinpoint what they need for the next lesson and to monitor my students much better.

How would you describe Sparkjar to another teacher?

It's a time-saving app that makes your feedback more efficient. Everything is in one place.

Do your students like Sparkjar?

They love it. I've had all sorts of comments like: "It's the best app we've used"; "I know I'm tracking my HW now"; "I know where I am"; and "if I don't understand something there's always someone that can help".

"It's the best app we've used"

They like the fact that they can share their progress in the chat and see each others' good practice – they're so supportive of one another.

"If I don't understand something there's always someone that can help"
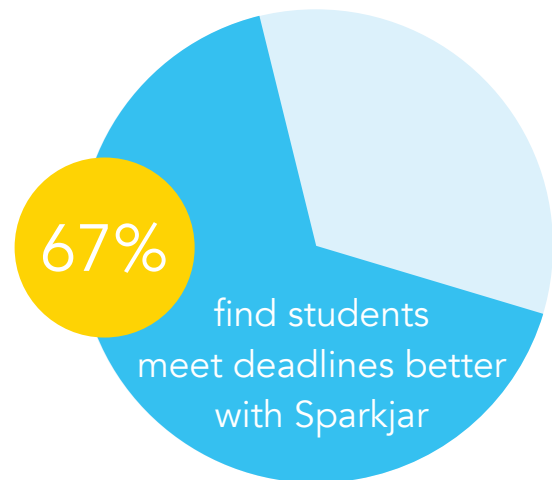
The older students really like being able to go back to it and look at the comments that are made, so that's nice. They can also go back and re-listen to things when I give oral feedback and that's been effective for their learning.

Any other comments?

Personally, I love it. I think the app has been beautifully created. It's so simple and looks gorgeous. That's a big thing for me, and for the children – it needs to appeal to them.

"At Parents' Evening the marksheet is great"

It's easy and it's straightforward. It's very quick to review what you've set and to avoid conflicts with students. If assignments are not returned, then straight away you can look at it and say 'right you haven't done your work, what's the problem?' You can talk to them, they can submit it on paper – whatever works for them – but straight away you're on their case. And at Parents' Evening the marksheet is great for sharing that tracking.
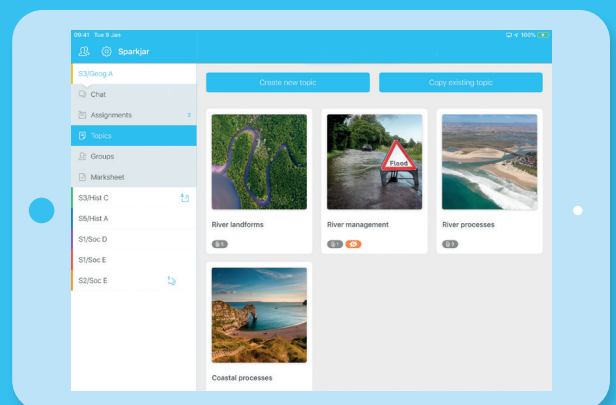
67% find students meet deadlines better with Sparkjar

Sparkjar teacher survey, July 2019

Sylvie Bartlett-Rawlings spoke with Catherine Jessey, Sparkjar Teacher Champion

100% of teachers prefer Sparkjar*

*Compared to Google Classroom, Showbie and Microsoft Teams – Sparkjar teacher survey, July 2019

For a demo or more information call 01273 921 233 or visit sparkjarapp.com