

Ms Nithia  
(third from right)  
with some of the  
centre's teachers



# A Sparkling idea

## Ms Nithia Krishnan, Principal of Kinderland Preschool (Marine Parade), shares how she got her centre certified under the Singapore Pre-School Accreditation Framework (SPARK).

### What made you decide to get the centre certified under SPARK?

When my team and I first heard about SPARK, we were not too sure what to expect. We attended a SPARK briefing conducted by the Early Childhood Development Agency. That gave us a better idea of the benefits of embarking on the journey of quality improvement and it inspired us to go for SPARK!

We knew that to achieve the SPARK certification, we needed to take a good look at our centre's strengths and weaknesses. We knew we would have to challenge ourselves to take the quality in teaching and learning practices to the next level.

We decided in September 2012 to apply for a SPARK assessment with the strong support of our management at Kinderland. In October 2013, our centre achieved the SPARK certification.

### How did you lead and motivate your team to achieve SPARK?

As the centre leader, it was important for me to role-model with commitment towards getting my centre to be a SPARK-certified centre. It also helped me to have a clear vision and mission in mind for the centre. In turn, these have enabled me to steer my team to work towards our shared goals.

It was important to get my staff on board with me. The staff needed to understand for themselves how the SPARK certification would benefit the centre. It was also important for me to emphasise that everyone had a part to play — not just the teaching staff, but also our support and customer service staff.

The teachers reviewed and thought about how to enhance their teaching processes

such as improving the learning experience for children. Along the way, teachers were at times unsure and some questioned if the SPARK certification was achievable. To overcome this, I ensured that there was a positive work environment to sustain the teachers' commitment and motivation. I talked to them regularly and paid close attention to their well-being. I also encouraged them to help one another in the areas that each most needed help in. Verbal recognition of the teachers' efforts and pep talks helped to keep the momentum going.

Over time, the teachers were better equipped with the requirements of SPARK. It became a norm for them to plan lessons, for example, with certain quality standards in mind.

### How has your journey in SPARK benefited the centre?

SPARK has given us the chance to review, as a team, our goals for the centre. We have learnt to establish our strengths and work towards improving our weaknesses. Certain processes that we put in place to achieve the SPARK certification are still being observed and these help us to maintain our standards.

The ties among our staff members have become stronger than before. Teachers are more open to discussion. They share their concerns and give feedback on how to make the centre a more conducive learning environment and workplace. ♥

“  
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Ms Nithia Krishnan  
Kinderland Preschool @  
(Marine Parade)



## ABOUT SPARK

The Singapore Pre-School Accreditation Framework (SPARK) is a quality assurance framework introduced in 2011 to raise the quality of pre-schools in Singapore. SPARK aims to provide recognition and support to pre-schools in their efforts to improve quality in teaching, learning,

administration and management processes in the centre. It serves as a benchmark for pre-schools in their journey towards raising the quality of early childhood education programmes as well as to help parents make informed choices in their selection of pre-schools for their children.

To find a list of SPARK-certified pre-schools, please visit <https://preschool.edu.sg/SPARK>