



Dear Parents, Old Boys and Friends of Michaelhouse

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## Rector's Message

Adults often wonder how they may best **help and guide their sons** and daughters through the teenage years which, for many, present a real challenge. A popular “self-help guide” appeared some two decades ago in Steven Covey's *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People*. This was so acclaimed that it became the most important source of inspiration for many in their daily lives and it remains a valuable resource. A parent in a previous school, Patsy Crisp, used the messages in it to construct an abbreviated version for her own children in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens* and her message in a simplified and direct form developed considerable traction with teenagers.

I will articulate some of these habits periodically in my eNews in the hope that they may be appropriate starting points for discussions on long car journeys when you are contemplating the road in front of you with your son. I do not intend to go into great detail in discussing each habit, but it may be useful to remind you of some of the essential ingredients of those habits.

You may recall that the first habit is to *be proactive*. This is the foundation for all the other habits. We are told that, although your parents' genes, background and environment do influence your actions and behaviour in certain ways, they do not need to determine what you will make of your life. The message is that no matter how bad your predicament or situation may seem, you can change, break or stop a cycle if you realise that you can choose how you will act, respond or behave. The key message is that each individual is responsible for his own life and happiness and that **he can make things happen**. When confronted by setbacks, unfavourable circumstances or challenging relationships, each individual can control how he responds and what to do about it. It is very easy to respond instinctively or unthinkingly, losing one's cool, blaming others and feeling a victim of circumstances. The result is that other people become responsible for changing your approach to life or moods and you become reactive. The more difficult and challenging choice is to be proactive – in other words to take responsibility and adopt a can-do attitude.



In reality, most people tend to be both proactive and reactive and the key is to try to get into the habit of being more proactive – that is not necessarily being “pushy or obnoxious”, but courageous, smart, creative and resourceful. A typical example may be that, when an individual is dropped from a team, it would be better to make a time with the coach/teacher to discuss this disappointment and see where one can improve than to feel aggrieved or “give up”. It is suggested that one way in which one can gain control over one’s emotions, attitudes and approach is to employ four “human tools”: **self-awareness** – this allows one to stand apart from oneself and to observe one’s thoughts and actions and to evaluate the situation; **conscience** – listening to one’s inner voice to know what is right; **imagination** – considering new possibilities and escaping present circumstances; and **will power** – having the capacity to choose, control emotions and overcome negative instincts.

Saying “I will do my best”, looking for opportunities, seeking to turn setbacks into triumphs and not allowing others to decide how one will feel allows a teenager to feel responsible for his own life and happiness and enhances the notion that **he can make things happen**.

On a different topic, yesterday we had a further visit from our consultant on Transformation and Diversity, **Karabo Che Makoape**. He continues to engage with staff, and with various groups within the school, such as the School Prefects and each Block separately, and with our Transformation and Diversity Advisory Committee. Yesterday, he spoke to the whole school as well on our sensitivity in the use of certain words in South Africa in 2021. His consultancy with us will come to an end in June just as we had planned; the idea has been to ensure that we are able to continue productively and constructively without him, but he has agreed to return to Michaelhouse on an *ad hoc* basis over the next twelve months to assess our progress.

## Sports & Cultural News

### Rugby

Michaelhouse played some friendly “practices” against Clifton in Durban. All our teams fared well and even though there were no scores recorded, we won our matches and there were some solid performances. Our teams should be proud of themselves.



Rugby action at Clifton Durban (Photos by - [howard cleland pix](#))



## *Hockey*

Matches were played against Clifton in Durban, the highlight being our U16C Team, who were 1-0 down with 2 minutes left on the clock and managed to win 2 – 1. Well done to all the teams which participated.

Other scores were: U14C lost 0-2, U14B lost 1-4, U14A lost 0-7; U16D lost 0-4, U16B lost 0-1, U16A won 1-0; 4<sup>th</sup> XI lost 1-3, 3<sup>rd</sup> XI lost 0-2, 2<sup>nd</sup> XI drew 1-1 and 1<sup>st</sup> XI lost 0-3.

## *Canoeing*

In the Winter Surfski Series Race #02 held at the Durban Marine over the past weekend these results were recorded:

U18 S1– 1<sup>st</sup> **Matthew Millward** and 3<sup>rd</sup> **Jack Shooter** and in the U18 S2 – 1<sup>st</sup> **Murray Behn** and partner, and U16 S2 – 1<sup>st</sup> **Dominic Furby** and **Robert Butcher**. Well done to **Chase Leisegang** who came in 5<sup>th</sup> in the U23 S1 race.

## *World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championships*

The championship officially began during the holidays when recorded versions of prepared speeches and readings were sent in for adjudication.

The synchronistic events (debating and impromptu) occurred on Friday 23 and Saturday 24 April. Each competitor had to participate in two rounds of each category.

Congratulations to **Kwande Dhlomo**, **Ross Keep** and **Jadin Jordaan** who succeeded in moving through to the final round. **Kwande** was the only South African to be placed in all four events, whilst **Jadin** made it through two rounds and **Ross** got through to the debating final. We are still waiting for the final results to be announced. We will update you all as soon as we can.



From L-R: Kwande Dhlomo, Jadin Jordaan and Ross Keep



## *Cultural*

The **Competition Marimba Band** was invited to perform at the Harvest Moon Festival at the Nottingham Road Farmers' Hall on Friday evening, 30 April. Despite a cold and wet evening, the band performed a number of songs to an unexpectedly large audience of community members, Michaelhouse staff, family and friends. The atmosphere created by the super energetic boys was infectious and it was further enhanced by the warmth of numerous bonfires, and food and beverage stalls. Performances like these really give the boys an opportunity to serve the community of which Michaelhouse forms such an important part. The band is currently under the leadership of Sello Stone-Mboweni, with Jacques du Preez being vice-captain.

## **The Michaelhouse Community Partnerships**

As of 1 May 2021, the Community Partnership have ten Eduhelpers enrolled in four partnership schools. Our first Eduhelpers' information day this year took place recently with four valuable presentations. Michaelhouse Old Boy, Jon Bates, spoke briefly about the history of the Eduhelper project followed by the Michaelhouse HR Manager, Lynne Moore, who summarised the dos and don'ts of CV writing. We were later joined by Joni Warburton (Financial Director, Michaelhouse) and Bronwyn Cramer (Assistant Bursar, Michaelhouse) who presented a few tips on successfully managing personal finances and Karen Mckenzie (Life Coach & PfP Facilitator) closed off with some great insight on personal leadership.





## D Block Open Day

The D Block Academic Open Day is on Wednesday 19 May 2021. A reminder to please RSVP by Tuesday 11 May 2021. If you have not received your invitation please contact Wendy Kelly on 033 234 1122 or email [wenkel@michaelhouse.org](mailto:wenkel@michaelhouse.org). We would like as many parents as possible to attend but if you do not wish to or are unable to be there, please liaise with your son's teachers to set up online meetings. If you need help with this, please contact Wendy Kelly.

The presentations on Subject Choices for C Block and the D Block Hike will commence at 9am and the Parent – Teacher meetings at 10:20am. The presentations will be recorded and the link will be sent to all D Block parents. Boys not playing sports matches on Wednesday afternoon may go home with their parents after the Open Day has ended.

## Half-Term Arrangements

The half-term break for this term is from Thursday 20 May until Monday 24 May. There is a winter sports fixture against Glenwood High School, with both hockey and rugby matches scheduled for the afternoon for Wednesday 19 May. Boys will be able to depart for their half-term break with their parents from 14h00 on Wednesday 19 May although those boys involved in the hockey and rugby matches will only be able to leave after the completion of their matches. School transport to various destinations and airports will depart, as usual, on Thursday morning 20 May at 08h30. All boys are due back at school on Monday evening by 21h00.

Please be aware of the fact that there will be no dinner leave for boys on Friday 11 June, the evening before our fixtures against Hilton.

A reminder to parents to please ensure you place your bus bookings for the Durban and Johannesburg buses timeously via the portal and inform **Nirvana Naicker**, the School's Transport Co-ordinator, of any flight details and airport drop-offs/collections.

Nirvana can be reached for any queries at:

Email: [opsadmin@michaelhouse.org](mailto:opsadmin@michaelhouse.org)

Tel: 033 234 1170/060 562 3954

## Sibongakonke Buthelezi - Update

The most recent update on Sibongakonke is that he has been on several occasions off his ventilator and sitting up out of bed. So, a great improvement!



## Durban Parents' Evening

Please find attached an invitation to the **Durban Parents Evening** to be held at the Mount Edgecombe Country Club on 17 May at 18h00. We look forward to an extremely pleasant and informal occasion which will be attended by some staff and boys. For any enquiries, please contact Angela Jonsson on [angjon@michaelhouse.org](mailto:angjon@michaelhouse.org).

The purpose of the evening is for current parents to get to know other parents in their son's year and /or House and it also gives an opportunity for some interaction with the Rector, some members of staff and some senior boys.

With my best wishes

**ANTONY CLARK**  
RECTOR