



Dear Parents, Old Boys and Friends of Michaelhouse

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Rector's Message

I wish to begin today by thanking so many of you for your understanding over the past week as we have navigated our way through issues related to the health of the boys, examinations and broader educational matters. It has been heartening to have messages of support as we followed our medical advice and, with the exams completed for D and E Blocks, our younger boys have returned home to work online with our teachers for the last section of the term.

It has, quite naturally, been really disappointing for the boys that the “third wave” appeared when it did and, effectively, put an end to their winter sports season which had started so wonderfully. However, in life, we need to make the best of every situation and this one is no different.

Currently, the D and E Blocks are in the midst of assignments online after their examinations and there have been some encouraging reports about their activities. The A, B and C Blocks are completing their exam session during this week and should capitalise on the learning experience available to them in the week ahead when their papers are returned.

The term will end on Friday 18 June and the Johannesburg and Durban busses will leave at 8.30am on that morning though parents may fetch their sons on the afternoon of Thursday 17 June should they wish to.

Looking ahead towards the end of the month and the boys' holidays, could you please consider how best we may, as a Michaelhouse community, prevent the spread of this virus further: each of us has a role to play and, especially towards the end of the holidays in the week before 13 July, it is imperative that boys are not going to super-spreader events which leave others vulnerable on their return to school. Indeed, we will be attempting to recreate the “Michaelhouse bubble” on the return of boys to school; please will you also plan to have your son tested for Covid 24-48 hours prior to his return to Michaelhouse next term. The PCR test remains the gold standard, but this is not easily attainable in all areas and, for those who cannot have the PCR test, a Rapid Antigen test is appropriate. Furthermore, any parent who has a suspicion that he/she has Covid should please ensure that he/she is tested prior to boys coming back to school as this would be another way in which the virus might impact on us.

Because we will be trying to recreate the “Michaelhouse bubble” at the start of the Third Quarter, at this stage we do not foresee there being leave outs for the period until half-term, though we may relax this depending upon the incidence of the pandemic at that stage. I am sure that you will appreciate that the difficulty which faces us over leave outs is that some boys do not fully consider the problems they can create for others by their actions when they are away from school. As I have indicated, whilst we foresee



the need to try to create a Covid-free environment in which all can flourish and enjoy their Michaelhouse school experience, we will keep a close eye on developments and respond accordingly.

We bid farewell at the end of this term to **Mr Bernie Whitaker** who has given much to Michaelhouse over the past 19 years, recently as Assistant Housemaster of East, Geography teacher (and latterly as HoD Geography) and waterpolo coach. Bernie is to return to the Eastern Cape whence he came and will take up a position as HoD Geography at Kingswood College.

Mr Nathan Holm, an intern who has served Michaelhouse loyally teaching Mathematics and Science and coaching sport, notably waterpolo, has been appointed to his first teaching role at SACS in Cape Town. We wish Nathan well and thank him for his significant contribution to Michaelhouse and, indeed, we have suggested that he might return to us when he has learnt more about the craft of teaching in Cape Town. Another intern, **Mr Thami Zakwe**, a recent Old Boy, is also leaving after a brief spell with us.

We usually give a brief overview of teachers joining us on their arrival as this is more meaningful to parents and boys, but I did want to break with this norm on this occasion by mentioning in passing that **Mr Justin McDougall** will be arriving in January 2021 as a Geography teacher. He is currently Master-in-Charge of Waterpolo at St Stithian's and he will be taking over the leadership of our waterpolo. There are also two excellent young men with a strong waterpolo background who will be joining us as interns. We will introduce them next year. We have been very conscious of building strength in this sport and we are, as you will see, doing that.

Mr Jonathan and **Mrs Candice Smith**, as well as **Mr Bailey** and **Mrs Avis Coxon**, will leave us at half-term during the new term and we will celebrate their various contributions to Michaelhouse at that stage. Jonathan and Candice are to move to Malvern College in Qingdao as part of their desire to travel extensively in Asia over the next few years, whilst Bailey is due to take up a position at St Lawrence's College, Ramsgate, UK. I am sure that they will find a position for Avis in the San there before too long! In their stead, **Mr Ian Crawford** has been appointed to the Housemastership of West and **Mr Ed Jeffrey** to the equivalent position in Mackenzie. Ian is an Old Boy and was in Mackenzie House during his time at Michaelhouse; he teaches CAT across the range of pupils up to the A Block and co-coaches the 1st Cricket XI, being mainly responsible for the organisation of the team, whilst Darren Mortimer, our professional coach, does the majority of the coaching. Ian coaches the U16A Hockey Team, demonstrating his significant involvement in the sporting programme of the school. He has been an Assistant Housemaster in Farfield and acted very successfully as Housemaster of Farfield for a term during 2019. Ian has a keen interest in photography and, when he has an opportunity, enjoys watching game.

Ed Jeffrey, the Housemaster-elect of Mackenzie, teaches Physical Science and has been particularly involved with the Outdoor Education Programme of the school, such as in the C Block Journey, canoeing and mountain biking, apart from coaching hockey. He has been the Assistant Housemaster in Pascoe but, over the past terms whilst boys in Mackenzie have occupied accommodation in the Indoor Centre, Ed has also been supportive in mentoring these boys who have been some distance away from their House. Ed is married to Charlene and they have two sons, Joshua (9) and Nathan (5).

Both Ian and Ed will be working with the boys in their respective Houses from the start of next term and getting to know them well so that the take over at half-term is seamless. We wish them success and fulfilment in their new roles.



Ian Crawford (West)



Ed Jeffrey (Mackenzie)

Pavers in the Main Quad

An interesting discovery was recently made during the relaying of pavers in the iconic Main Quad, substantiating the belief that history is quite literally alive in every brick at Michaelhouse.

The story goes back to February 1904 when the two important projects of laying antheap cricket pitches and levelling the main courtyard were infused with life after wide ranging restrictions as a result of the war had put development on hold after the facade of the school was completed in 1900. Work would continue - we are told by the Chronicle - until the finishing touches were added to the Main Quad in May 1928.

Pavers lifted last week revealed newspapers dated 26 September 1927, a fascinating snapshot of the school's past.



1927 Newspaper clipping under the old paving in the Main Quad



Updating the Main Quad with new pavers



Michaelhouse Online

Please find attached, a reminder of the Michaelhouse online platforms and steps to follow should your son need assistance when working online prepared by Mrs Julie Flanagan (JulFla@michaelhouse.org).

A Block Open Day

Just a reminder to A Block parents that the A Block Open Day will now be held online. Your son's teachers will be in touch with you to set up online meetings. These will not be restricted to only Friday 11 June 2021. If you have any queries please contact Mrs Wendy Kelly on wenkel@michaelhouse.org or on 033 234 1122.

Bus Bookings / School Transport

A reminder that school closes for the end of Second Quarter on Friday 18 June and school transport will depart from school at 08h30. Please ensure that all bus bookings for Johannesburg, Pavilion and King Shaka are made **before midday on Monday 14 June.**

For any queries please contact **Mrs Nirvana Naicker**, School Transport Co-ordinator:

Cell: 060 562 3954

Office: (033) 234 1170

E-mail: opsadmin@michaelhouse.org

With my best wishes

ANTONY CLARK
RECTOR