



10th April 2018

Staying in Touch

St Michael's Primary School, Blacktown South
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Dear Parents and Friends,

Ubuntu: "I am what I am because of all who we are."

'Ubuntu,' is a South African word, and while I was thinking of Miss Cox's kind words given at a staff gathering, I thought *Ubuntu* sums up my feelings about the last 14 years. In describing *Ubuntu* the South African athlete Caster Semenya called it, "*her humanity.*" Caster went on to say, "*My country has given me love, courage, respect, recognition and appreciated me for who I am. That's for free, we call it humanity (Ubuntu).*"

So, you see Miss Cox's words painted our story, our humanity and I believe our culture. I have been asked, "How are you feeling about retiring?" I know that for me this is the 'right time.' I also know for our community this decision is a good one. Last Tuesday when I introduced Mrs. O'Rourke (Acting Principal) at briefing, I sat back and noticed two important things; Firstly, I noticed the way my colleagues welcomed and engaged with Sarah. These qualities are deeply embedded in our culture they are our *Ubuntu*. These qualities highlight both our teachers open mind-sets and professional competence. Secondly, I was taken by Sarah's presence, and confidence.

We are in a strong position, mainly because we all serve in this community, after all we are '*Presentation People.*' We are blessed with strong leaders who know the importance of relationships and trust. We have a shared and owned action plan, with high level of resourcing in supporting ongoing professional learning. I believe our PBS4L team will continue to work with you and provide opportunity to hear our student and parent voices in creating a '*whole village,*' view in meeting our children's needs.

Finally, (phew!) I feel this incredible sense of gratitude for you and all those that I have served with over these years. I hold you in great esteem, our work is so important in providing a *Sanctuary* for children. I'm constantly amazed by our teachers ability to 'do the work,' collaborate, analyse, plan and above all to be there for the child. I also want to acknowledge our office team and Mr. Lewis, who continue to do an extraordinary job in supporting our work and serving our community.

I pray that you will always recognise and connect with God who is within you, and that you will be generous in inviting all those you meet to dance the 'sacred dance.'

Love One Another

John Laffan

PRINCIPAL





Friday, 13th April	Mr Laffan's Farewell Assembly - 11.00am-12.30pm Guard of Honour 2.00pm Term 1 concludes
Monday, 30th April	Term 2 commences
Tuesday, 1st May	Diocesan Cross Country - Eastern Creek
Wednesday, 2nd May	ANZAC Liturgy - 9.30am
Tuesday, 8th May	ICAS Digital Technologies Competition
Tuesday, 8th May	Panther Trophy Rugby League Competition

ENROLMENTS OPEN

We are now accepting enrolments for 2019.

Please collect an Enrolment Application Form from the office or download from our Website - when completed please bring to the school office with all relevant documents listed. To accept your Enrolment Application Form we require a \$100 non-refundable Enrolment Application Fee (\$50 application fee and \$50 enrolment fee). At the time of payment an interview will be made with the Principal.



PLEASE NOTE: Uniform Shop

Due to building work at Nagle our grounds are out of bounds during the school holidays and therefore no teachers or parents are permitted on school grounds.

Trading will re-commence trading on:

Monday, 30th April - 8.00am-12noon

Wednesday, 2nd May - 8.00am-12noon



P&F



Parents & Friends Association

Facebook: St Michael's Blacktown South P&F **Email:** stmichaelspandf@gmail.com
Kristen Mobile: 0409 952 852 **Leanne Mobile:** 0413 546 062

Calendar of Events

2018

May

9th – Mother's Day Stall

19th – Bunnings BBQ & Cake Stall

August

19th – Shopping Bus Trip

September

22nd – Bunnings BBQ & Cake Stall

STAYING IN TOUCH

Easter:

Once again our children thoroughly enjoyed the Easter Raffle with plenty of ice blocks for everyone to enjoy. Thank you to those who helped make it another fun event for all and thanks to all of you for your support.

We also saw some amazing Easter cards come through from the children, well done for taking the time to make something for our friends over at St Hedwig's Village. Big thanks also to those who hand delivered the cards to the residents.

Mothers Day:

With the school holidays coming up I just wanted to let you all know that we will be holding our Mother's day Stall on Wednesday 9th May 2018, which is Week 2 of Term 2.

We will be once again looking for volunteers to assist on the day so please reach out to Kris on her above mobile number if you're able to help. Whether you can give an hour or more it doesn't matter, all assistance is appreciated.

Second Hand Uniform Shop:

Karen Estrada will have the Second Hand Uniform shop open on Wednesday from 8:30am to 9:30am which is located in the demountable next to the School Uniform Shop. Donations of clothing welcome, we are especially in need of girl's uniforms and sports uniforms.

John's Farewell:

Hope to see you all on Friday for John's farewell. Karen Estrada has kindly been working on a gift for John (thanks heaps Karen) and I know I'm excited to see it. Whilst it will be sad for the school to say goodbye it will be great to celebrate all the wonderful things he has done for our children, community and The P&F over the years.



Using screen time to foster kids' wellbeing and family fun

by Dr Jodi Richardson

Children of my generation (born in the 1980s) used to spend a great deal of time outside. Childhood is different now. Technology has changed everything. Our 'digitally native' children don't know of a life when watches were used to tell the time and if you wanted to make a phone call anywhere other than at home you needed 30 cents and a phone booth. As kids we built forts, practiced goal shooting in our backyard ring, rode our bikes all around and spent hours outside. We loved it.

Nowadays, left to their own devices, literally and figuratively, our kids are relying on technology for their entertainment. Some young Australians are now spending a third of their waking hours glued to screens, and this is affecting their physical, psychological and behavioural health.

For optimal health and wellbeing, our young people need more quality family time, movement, green time (over screen time) and a chance to put a stop to the perpetually rewarding dopamine drip from constant tapping, scrolling, searching, swiping and Angry Bird launching.

Well, what if I was to tell you that you can combine the wonders of technology with an endless number of outdoor adventures that are infinitely more fun than selfies, snapchat and episodes of *Little Lunch*? Would you want to give it a go?

All you need to do is to download a free app called 'Geocaching'. It's a high-tech GPS-based treasure hunting app and it's one of the best-kept family fun secrets.

Hailed as the world's biggest treasure hunt, the premise of geocaching is to get us all playing outside. And that it does. Here's how it works:

You start by downloading the app and creating an account, giving you the perfect opportunity to chat to your kids about remaining anonymous online. Once you're all signed up, you can load up a map of your current location (or anywhere in the world) and watch for all of the hidden 'geocaches' – otherwise known as 'caches' – to appear showing their precise coordinates. Each cache is a hidden, small waterproof container containing a logbook and, if large enough, a pen and a whole range of trinkets or swaps from previous finders.

When you find a cache, being careful not to be seen by outsiders affectionately known as 'muggles', you can sign and date the log, swap your trinket or toy with something inside the container, close it all up and return to exactly where you found it.

parenting*ideas

There are millions of these geocaches hidden all over the world. There's probably one near you right now!

The app provides information about the difficulty of finding the cache, the local terrain, the size of the cache, a description of what you're looking for and even hints if you're having a bit of trouble. We always like to check the 'activity' of a cache too, to make sure it's been found recently so that we can be confident it's where it's meant to be.

It's so exciting when you all find one! Some are really quick finds while others can take quite a bit of hunting. We practice perseverance each time and agree not to give up until we achieve success.

My family have had the most amazing fun on our geocache adventures. Some days we plan an afternoon of treasure hunting, other times we set off after school to hunt for one closer to home. Some families even plan holidays around their geocaching adventures!



Aside from the obvious advantages of getting outside into the fresh air, moving and having fun, geocaching ticks all the boxes for the elements that contribute to happiness and flourishing.

The PERMA model of flourishing tells us there are five key contributors:

Positive emotions. These are aplenty when geocaching, starting with a sense of adventure and excitement, followed closely by wonder, curiosity, joy and elation.

E is for **E**ngagement, which is all about devoting time to those things that capture your attention and enable you to dive in head first to an activity, experiencing a feeling of flow by being fully immersed in what you're doing. A big tick for geocaching on this one!

R is for **R**elationships which are essential for our kids' mental, social and emotional health. Geocaching will bring you together as a family as you work towards a unified outcome, take turns to locate the cache, chat, problem solve, search, laugh and encourage each other along the way.

M represents **M**eaning, something we experience when we feel a part of something bigger than ourselves. Being a valued part of their family fosters meaning for our young people, and so does being a part of the geocache community as a whole.

A is for **A**chievement, which is absolutely essential for our kids to flourish, not to mention us as parents too. The sense of achievement experienced by 'geokids' is evident by the smiles on their faces with every successful treasure hunt. It never gets old.

Wishing you and your families hours of good old-fashioned (if high-tech) outdoor fun.

Learn more about geocaching at geocaching.com. And connect with me on Facebook/[drjodirichardson](https://www.facebook.com/drjodirichardson) to let me know how you go!!



Dr Jodi Richardson

Jodi is a happiness and wellbeing speaker and writer, and is mum to two primary school aged kids who light her up. For more great ideas on flourishing mental health for the whole family, subscribe to her newsletter at drjodirichardson.com.au and say hello on [facebook.com/DrJodiRichardson](https://www.facebook.com/DrJodiRichardson) Enquiries to jodi@drjodirichardson.com.au