



# PENINSULA

— G R A M M A R —

20 December 2017

Dear Parents,

I write to update you on the legal action undertaken by our Principal, Mr. Stuart Johnston with the endorsement of the School's Board of Directors, to address defamatory comments made about him in 2015.

On 29 March 2016, the Herald Sun ran a story entitled *The Peninsula School Principal launches defamation against Twitter critic Mr. T.* [This article](#) provides some background to the case.

The Board supported our Principal in launching defamation proceedings in the Supreme Court. We did this as part of our governance responsibility to protect him, our School and its reputation. We do not, and will not, allow our people to be harassed or our School's reputation to be undermined in any form, including social media. Our School has effective bullying policies and procedures in place for every community member to address their concerns if, and when, required.

The Twitter account was part of a broader campaign during 2015 which besmirched Mr. Johnston and Senior Staff. It involved a small number of people at a time when our School was undergoing necessary improvements and transformation. The legal action addressed the Twitter account that ridiculed Mr. Johnston and was part of a much broader campaign denigrating both him as our Principal and our Senior Management.

I am pleased to advise you that the matter has been settled out of court. The two former employees, Mrs. Nicola Holland and Mr. Wayne Murray, have provided unreserved apologies to Mr. Johnston for their roles in the campaign to defame his character and standing within our community. Their apologies can be read [here](#).

Mrs. Holland and Mr. Murray have paid undisclosed financial sums as part of the settlement in resolving this case, which has unfortunately been quite distressing for many valued members of our School community.

This is a very pleasing outcome for our School, our Principal and our people. Our actions in pursuing this matter have been vindicated by this outcome. It is testament to the courage, dignity and determination of our Principal, who resolutely followed this course of action, despite the enormous personal cost to him and his family. The outcome, and our unwavering pursuit of it, sends a clear message to our community that we are a school that will not tolerate this type of behaviour or any form of conduct that unfairly diminishes our reputation.

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For our students, it is a lesson in the importance of taking a stand against those who have wronged us, an opportunity to learn that good process can support and protect good people.

We are pleased that this chapter of our School's journey has ended and we look forward, with renewed excitement, to the continued success of our School in 2018 and beyond.

Regards,

Ron Zammit  
Chairman