Josh Misner, a father of four from the US and author of the blog Mindful Dad, has written about his regretful experience at an airport where he vented his frustrations at Delta Airlines ticket agent ‘Ron’. This deeply apologetic letter serves as a reminder to us all about the importance of kindness and setting a good example for our youth.

Josh was travelling with his children and when the plane was delayed in Chicago, he realised it would be tight with his next connection in Salt Lake City. Despite running with his children, the youngest being six, they missed the connection and a busy ticket agent did not appear to be able to help. He lost his temper and clearly expressed his thoughts to the agent. In his words:

“That's when I looked down and to the right. There was my six year-old, looking up at me. He wasn’t looking for answers to our problem. He wasn’t looking at me because I was being loud, self-righteous and indignant. He was looking at me because he had never encountered a situation like this before in his young life, and he needed to find a way to deal with it, should it ever happen again. The problem was, I was giving him a precedent. My childish tirade presented him with a solution to his future conflicts when dealing with difficult situations and even more, difficult people.”

After re-arranging their flights with a four hour delay, Josh struggled with how to undo what he had inadvertently taught his son. I spotted the original ticket agent, who was working the desk at our gate again, grabbed my son’s hand and said, “Come with me”. When it was our turn, the agent looked up at me and asked, “Can I help you?”

“Sir, I don’t know if you recognise me, but about three hours ago I did something inappropriate. I cursed at you because you didn’t help us find a new flight after we missed our connection, and that wasn’t right. I took my frustration out on you and set a poor example for my children. I want to apologise to you and ask your forgiveness.”

He looked stunned. He was speechless for what felt like forever, and just when I was ready to turn and walk away, he spoke: “I don’t know what to say. I didn’t hear you use any foul language, but I do remember you. At the time I was trying to locate a medical kit for a woman boarding her plane over at the gate next door and I was in a rush. I wanted to stop to help you, but I was in a hurry to assist the passenger over there. I’m sorry I didn’t stop to help.”

I became even more ashamed of my actions. I responded, “You have nothing to apologise for, sir. I was in the wrong, and I need to ask forgiveness for right this wrong, but also to show my son that the way I behaved was not right.”

Again, in disbelief, he looked stunned. “It’s okay. I forgive you, and I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your apology. You didn’t need to do this. Quite frankly, nobody ever has, and trust me, we get yelled at a lot in this job. You just made my day and I thank you for that.”

He then extended his hand for a handshake, as he said, “My name is Ron”. Grabbing his hand, I replied, “Thanks, Ron. I’m Josh. Nice to meet you and I hope you have a wonderful rest of your day”.

Turning to walk away after giving Ron a smile, I looked down at my son who was still gripping my hand tightly. He was staring up at me again, but this time, doe-eyed, with the beginnings of a smile. I smiled back at him, tears brimming on my eyelids, and said, “That, my son, is doing the right thing. Always do the right thing, no matter what”.

Five minutes later, Ron called me back to the desk on the PA. After I sat back down, he had looked at the flight manifest and noticed that the three of us were in separate rows, spread out all over the plane. He took the initiative to not only rearrange people to allow us to sit together as a family, but also moved us to seats with additional leg room.

Forgiveness is a gift of love, an act of beauty that benefits not only the person being asked by way of reconciliation, but for the person requesting it, by way of redemption. Thanks to snow, a delayed flight, and the selfishness of others, I had the chance to make things right, to set in motion a lifetime of redemption for my children.

To Ron, the ticket agent at the Delta counter, thank you for giving me another chance.

David McClintock
Principal
Harmony Day Performance
One of our Year 3 students, Hannah L, participated in a Harmony Day program at Charlestown along with many different groups on Tuesday with her mum. Well done, Hannah!

Anti-Bullying Day Chapel
Last Friday in Chapel, Pr James shared the story of how Esther took a stand against a bully to save her people. Our students were challenged to stand up for their friends. When we see bullying we have a great opportunity to say something, to be kind and to tell an adult. Perhaps, like Esther we were born for ‘such a time as this’.

Chess Competition
The School Chess Competition was held last week with 70 competitors from Kindy to Year 6. The Junior Division (K-4) and Senior Division (Years 5 & 6) results will be used to select the students who will make up the four school teams who will play in the 2017 NSW Hunter Junior Chess League. Trophies will be presented at the assembly on Monday, April 3.

HRIS Swimming Ribbons
The HRIS Swimming ribbons will be presented at assembly on Monday, April 3.

HRIS Netball
Congratulations to Abigail C who has been selected from the HRIS Netball team to play at CIS.

Run Around Australia
Monday, March 20 – Friday March 31
The Primary students have made a great start to the Run Around Australia program. Many students have already achieved their 10km certificate and some have run over 40km this week. We have one week to go with still more rain forecast. Students can run from 8.00 - 8.45 am and at lunchtime. The Primary Cross Country events will be held on Monday, April 3, weather permitting.

Cross Country Training – Sport Uniform Permitted
Our students are very enthusiastic about training for the Cross Country event and are running laps of the muddy track each day. To facilitate our training, we want to offer you the option to send your child in sports uniform every day until our Cross Country event on Monday, April 3. Full school uniform or sports uniform are both acceptable during this training time. We still encourage students to wear old shoes on the track and then change into dry shoes and socks for class time. It’s great to see our students working hard on their fitness and endurance.

Primary Cross Country
Monday, April 3
The Primary Cross Country will be held at school on Monday, April 3, weather permitting. Please note students will run in the event based on their age as at December 31, 2017.

9.20 - 9.55 am       9 year-olds  - 2km
10.00 -10.30 am    10 year-olds - 2km
10.30 - 10.50 am   RECESS
10.50 - 11.40 am  11 year-olds - 3km
11.40 am -12.20 pm 12 year-olds - 3km
12.20 -1.10 pm  LUNCH
1.10 -1.45 pm    5 & 6 year-olds - 1km
1.45 - 2.30 pm  7 year-olds - 1km
2.30 - 3.10 pm  8 year-olds - 2km
Secondary Cross Country
A slightly overcast and humid morning met lots of eager runners on Wednesday morning for the Cross Country. But at least it wasn’t raining! We had over 370 students and 2 staff complete the course. It was great to see the parents come along and cheer. Thanks to all the staff, parents and competitors for a great morning. The team for the HRIS event has been posted in the MPC window. Age Champions and the winning House will be announced on Monday in Chapel. A full report will be in next week’s Newsletter. Students are encouraged to put in some serious training runs over the next few weeks and into the holidays as we race on the second Thursday back next term May 4. The HRIS Cross Country will be held on Avondale College grounds again from the oval, following the track along the creek to the swing bridge and back to the tennis courts.

Duke of Edinburgh Tasmania Trip
Our Duke of Edinburgh students had an amazing time in Tasmania this last week! They had lots of sunshine! The students climbed Cradle Mountain on Saturday. Some celebrated in style as it was their second summit in less than two years. They walked 7 hours to the summit and back on very challenging terrain. Great memories that will last a lifetime!

HRIS Swimming
Last Wednesday 43 eager swimmers headed to Lambton Pool to compete at the HRIS Swimming Carnival. Some students swim in nine races and it was the consistency and dedication that led to Avondale School winning the Carnival (Division 2). The students should be proud of their achievements and the way they worked together to ensure that our School had a swimmer in every race. Special thanks to the cheersquad (parents and grandparents) who came to support on the day. We could hear you on our side of the pool! It was AWESOME! Avondale School were the overall winners on the day being only 80 points ahead of the next school. This means next year we will move up to Division 1. We won six age pennants on the day:
- 13 years Boys and Girls
- 15 years Boys
- 17 years Boys
- 18 years Boys and Girls
A huge congratulations to our four Age Champions - Rhiannon D, Byron R, Isabelle F and Paige F. Rhiannon has qualified to go to AICES in the 50m and 100m freestyle events. She is wished every success with these races.

Year 7-11 Parent Teacher Interviews
Interim Reports were emailed to you this week. Please remember this is a snapshot of progress six weeks into the term and a more detailed academic report will be issued at the end of Term 2.
We are keen to have you come in and talk with the teachers to gain further information and clarify anything in this basic report. This is an anticipated part of Term 1 and we would be delighted if you could make the time to come in and connect with staff in regard to your child’s general progress. In this way, we can strengthen and continue our partnership as teachers and parents. You are welcome to make 10-minute appointments for our Parent Teacher Interview evenings next week on 27 March and 28 March. Interviews will take place each evening between 4.00 and 8.00 pm in the CLC. Bookings are essential and can be made online now at www.schoolinterviews.com.au using the Event Code umm9b. We look forward to sharing with you the progress of your child.

Avondale School Musical Fundraiser Movie
The Lego Batman Movie
Sunday, 9 April, 2.00pm
Event Cinemas, Glendale
$12 per ticket
Booking available soon at www.avondaleschool.nsw.edu.au

HRIS Swimming
3.30 - 4.30 PM THURSDAYS
ALL THIS TERM IN THE ICENTRE
A CHANCE TO:
- DO INDEPENDENT STUDY
- COMPLETE YOUR HOMEWORK
- GET SOME HELP WITH WRITING (JUST SORTING THAT ESSAY OUT!)
- GET SOME HELP WITH MATHS (EVEN THAT TRICKY HOMEWORK QUESTION!)
- GET SOME GUIDANCE ON THAT ASSESSMENT TASK YOU NEED TO START
K-6 Library Prizes
Hundreds of exciting picture books, intriguing fiction and informative non-fiction books have been read by many students during Term 1. It’s now time to return your library books so please remember your library bags and books next week. Congratulations to the 292 students who have borrowed books EVERY week this term! What an excellent and enjoyable job! You will choose your prizes in library classes next week.

Years 7-12 Makerspace
If you’re wondering what happened to the Makerspace upstairs in the library, it’s now made the short move to the Media Room. This space will be available during recess and lunchtimes for you to embrace your creativity and see what you can make! Watch this space for more exciting Makerspace information.

Primary Calendar - Term 1
Run Around Australia .................................................. March 20 - 31
SWOMP (Super Week of Mega Praise) .................................. March 27 - 31
Daylight Saving Ends .................................................. April 2
Primary Cross Country .................................................. April 3
Year 2 Wetlands Excursion ............................................. April 4
Year 1 Lakes Excursion .................................................. April 5
Year 3 Overnight Camp .................................................. April 5
P&F Meeting 7.00pm Admin Building ................................. April 5
Year 5 Camp ............................................................... April 5 - 7

Secondary Calendar - Term 1
Years 7-11 Parent Teacher Interviews 4.00 - 8.00pm CLC ...... March 27 & 28
Chess Competition ...................................................... March 28
Year 9 History Excursion ................................................ March 29
Year 12 English (Advanced) Excursion .......................... March 30
Daylight Saving Ends .................................................. April 2
Year 12 Mid Year Exams ................................................ April 3 - 7
Year 12 Broken Bay Camp ............................................. April 3 - 5
Year 10 Anna Bay Camp ............................................... April 4 - 7
Year 11 Urban Challenge .............................................. April 5 - 7

K-6 Library Prizes
Hundreds of exciting picture books, intriguing fiction and informative non-fiction books have been read by many students during Term 1. It’s now time to return your library books so please remember your library bags and books next week. Congratulations to the 292 students who have borrowed books EVERY week this term! What an excellent and enjoyable job! You will choose your prizes in library classes next week.

Years 7-12 Makerspace
If you’re wondering what happened to the Makerspace upstairs in the library, it’s now made the short move to the Media Room. This space will be available during recess and lunchtimes for you to embrace your creativity and see what you can make! Watch this space for more exciting Makerspace information.

Primary Calendar - Term 1
Run Around Australia .................................................. March 20 - 31
SWOMP (Super Week of Mega Praise) .................................. March 27 - 31
Daylight Saving Ends .................................................. April 2
Primary Cross Country .................................................. April 3
Year 2 Wetlands Excursion ............................................. April 4
Year 1 Lakes Excursion .................................................. April 5
Year 3 Overnight Camp .................................................. April 5
P&F Meeting 7.00pm Admin Building ................................. April 5
Year 5 Camp ............................................................... April 5 - 7

Secondary Calendar - Term 1
Years 7-11 Parent Teacher Interviews 4.00 - 8.00pm CLC ...... March 27 & 28
Chess Competition ...................................................... March 28
Year 9 History Excursion ................................................ March 29
Year 12 English (Advanced) Excursion .......................... March 30
Daylight Saving Ends .................................................. April 2
Year 12 Mid Year Exams ................................................ April 3 - 7
Year 12 Broken Bay Camp ............................................. April 3 - 5
Year 10 Anna Bay Camp ............................................... April 4 - 7
Year 11 Urban Challenge .............................................. April 5 - 7

We Value Patience.

Avondale School
P. (02) 4977 0200
E. admin@avondaleschool.nsw.edu.au
W. www.avondaleschool.com.au