

P 13  
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2017  
LEADER

NOBLE PARK

P 13 18<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2017 LEADER HARRISFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

INDIA (MAD)

# Teens charged over school theft

## Quartet to appear in court for stealing iPads and laptops

**Jack Paynter**

FOUR children have been arrested after \$10,000 worth of iPads and laptops were stolen from a Noble Park primary school.

Police raided four properties at 7.30am yesterday, arresting three boys and a girl, aged between 13 and 15, from Noble Park.

They have been charged with burglary and bailed to appear in the Children's Court.

Two men, aged 42 and 47, were also arrested and have been charged with possession of stolen property and obtaining property by deception.

They have been bailed to face the Dandenong Magistrates' Court in February.

It's alleged the men bought

some of the electronics stolen from the school.

Police said a group of boys broke into Harrisfield Primary School, in Princes Highway, about 10.30pm on November 20.

They wedged open a classroom door and took 14 Apple iPad minis and 12 Lenovo laptops valued at \$10,000.

Exactly a week later, on November 27, the school was again a target when a group damaged a door and window trying to get in, but fled before police arrived about 12.20am.

Principal Meredith Iaconese said the burglary came at a busy time of year and Grade 6 students were using the iPads to film their final days at the school and write graduation speeches.

The burglary was a signifi-

cant hit for the school's resources, with about 20 per cent of the school's iPads and 25 per cent of its computers stolen.

Dandenong crime investigation unit detective Leading Senior Constable Rob Colcott said police found five iPads and three Lenovo laptops in the raids and hoped to recover more.

"It's a pleasing result for us," Sen-Constable Colcott said. "It's important to get a result from these ones where students' learning is affected."

Ms Iaconese said she was grateful for the proactive approach by police.

"We thank them enormously," Ms Iaconese said.

"It means the school's students and teachers can get back on task."



Harrisfield Primary School leaders Harrison and Fareeha with the boxes where their iPads were kept.

\$10,000 WORTH OF IPADS AND LAPTOPS STOLEN

SCHOOLS — HARRISFIELD PRIMARY

# School finds individual approach is for the best

By CASEY NEILL

NOBLE Park students are keeping ahead of the pack thanks to novel teaching techniques.

Harrisfield Primary School principal Meredith Iaconese was thrilled with the school's performance in the recently-released National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results.

She said it was proof the school's unique teaching model was working.

"From what I'm just seeing here there are no surprises," she said.

"We continue to be doing really well in spelling in grammar.

"We're significantly above the state."

Ms Iaconese said children in Grades 4 to 6 were grouped into the Senior Learning House.

They are then split up according to ability rather than age.

"They move according to the skills that are being taught at the time," she said.

"We don't teach classes we teach children.

"That is something that we've really focused on."

She said the school had full-time art, physical education and information and communication technology (ICT) specialists.

"Because they don't have a full-time load in that specialist subject, they also take a group when it's reading time," she said.



Principal Meredith Iaconese with Grade 5 students David, Brooke, Maria and Ethan. 143207  
Picture: STEWART CHAMBERS

So instead of having about 25 kids in four groups for reading, Ms Iaconese said students were split into eight smaller groups.

"The focus is much tighter, based on the student needs," she said.

There are six maths groups in the Senior House.

"I think that's really helped. It's narrowed down for teachers,"

Ms Iaconese said.

"You can really target your small group work so much tighter."

She said explicit teaching was also making a difference to outcomes.

"It's that whole thing of leaving nothing to chance," she said.

"There's a learning intention for each lesson.

have a deficit in particular skills," Ms Iaconese said.

"Teachers work with just two children on that skill. All the other students are working on no new learning.

"Kids come in and out of this intervention program. They might have three sessions.

"The aim is to progress them as much as we can in each year.

"It's really hard if kids are six months behind at the starting point, or a year behind.

"We have a lot of children coming in with limited English."

The teaching program has been in place for about four years, since the Federal Government funded flexible learning spaces.

Ms Iaconese said teachers operated as a tight team.

"They are never apart," she said.

"Their tables are together, they sit talking at lunch time, before school, after school - it's all discussion about student learning.

"They are discussing kids constantly.

"If I was teaching a child a particular skill and I simply couldn't get them to achieve the outcome, I'm not afraid to go to another teacher and say 'maybe your way is better than my way'.

"It's hard work.

"We know it's for the best for the kids and we know that it's working."

Journal  
24th Aug  
2015  
Page 12

SCHOOLS - HARRISFIELD PRIMARY  
NEW TEACHING MODEL EXPLAINED

SCHOOLS - HARRISFIELD PRIMARY

FUNDRAISER. FARMER DRESS-UP DAY.

\$1600. TO HELP OUR FARMERS PROVIDING  
OUR MAIN FOOD SOURCE

# Reaping for our growers at dress-up day

Students have raised amazing feats to bail out drought-stricken farmers.

At Harrisfield Primary School, student councillors recently dedicated their term fundraiser to helping out the nation's food providers.

They organised a farmer dress-up day, raising upwards of \$1600.

"It's important that we all realise our main food source is provided by Australian farmers," staff member Cathy O'Brien said.

At St Anthony's Primary School, teacher Deana Portia said students were moved by the stories of farmers struggling to feed their livestock - and even their families.

Students, teachers, support staff and parents cooked up hot dogs and African cuisine for lunch, as well as cupcakes, friendship bracelets and bookmarks.

Over two weeks, they have raised nearly \$3000 for the fundraiser Buy a Bale.



Harrisfield Primary students Jess and Lucas with a hat full of cash. 184063



Charley, of Harrisfield Primary, joins in the fundraising effort. 184001



St Anthony's students Nicholas and Neha sell cupcakes for drought relief. 184001

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SCHOOLS — HARRISFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

THIEVES TOOK iPADS AND COMPUTERS  
USED BY GRADE 6 STUDENTS. ON 20<sup>th</sup> Nov 2017  
STUDENTS. GRADUATION SPEECHES AND VIDEOS  
LOST VALUE AT \$10,000.

Harrisfield Primary School leaders Harrison and Fareeha with the empty boxes where their iPads were kept. Picture: PENNY STEPHENS

## NOBLE PARK

# School targeted by thieves

### Students left reeling and without graduation speeches after group steals iPad minis and laptops

**Jack Paynter**

HEARTLESS thieves have stolen iPads and computers from a primary school in Noble Park, leaving Grade 6 students without their graduation speeches and videos.

A group of men broke into Harrisfield Primary School in the Princes Highway about 10.30pm on Monday, November 20.

The crooks wedged open a classroom door and took 14

Apple iPad minis and 12 Lenovo laptops valued at \$10,000.

Principal Meredith Iaconese said it was a pretty low act to steal from a school and the students felt violated.

“Not only are they disappointed, but they feel violated,” Ms Iaconese said.

“They can’t believe people have come into their space and taken their things.”

She said the students were using the iPads to film their final days at the school and

### AT A GLANCE

- 14 Apple iPad minis stolen
- 12 Lenovo laptops stolen
- Five thieves who may be caught on CCTV
- Year 6 students have lost their graduation speeches

write graduation speeches – but now “all their writing was gone”.

The burglary was also a significant hit for resources,

with about 20 per cent of the school’s iPads and 25 per cent of its computers taken.

A week later, on November 27, the school was again a target when a group of men tried to break in, but they fled when police arrived.

Ms Iaconese said they damaged a door and window.

Dandenong crime investigation unit detective Leading Senior Constable Rob Colcott said they believed the two incidents were related.

“We consider these events more serious than typical burglaries because of the broader impact it has on students’ learning,” Sen-Constable Colcott said.

He said there were five offenders and police were examining CCTV footage.

The offenders left their bikes at the scene during the second incident.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.