

RECTOR'S eNEWS



NEWSLETTER 04/2026: Wednesday 4 February

MICHAELHOUSE

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Rector's Message

Today I thought I would write briefly about the fact that we are, by choice, a **full boarding school**. Full time boarding is an increasingly rare construct globally and nationally with just two such schools in South Africa. However, it is one which we deeply believe in and one to which we are fully committed. Full time boarding offers many advantages over day-schooling or weekly-boarding but today we will dwell on just three of them.

In the first instance, full time boarding **develops independence in young men** and sets them up for a life beyond school. Secondly, full time boarding **creates additional time** in each boy's day with no time being wasted waiting for transport to and from school or sitting in traffic each day. We put this time to excellent use in our pursuit of a holistic education and we are very proud of the breadth of opportunities we are able to create for our boys. Thirdly, when boys live together full time for extended periods they **learn to live in a community** and they form friendships which last a lifetime.

Of course, we do not need to sell **full time boarding** to you as **you have already chosen this option** for your son. However, we do want to take this opportunity to do two things:

Firstly, while we have been offering full boarding since inception, we are continually refining our model in order that it remains both optimal and relevant for the present day. We are proud of the fact that, as a school, we are a thought leader in this space with many of our staff making valuable contributions at national and international conferences around boarding. Please refer to the article further down in my message about the research being done and shared by Herman Visagie, Founders Housemaster.

Secondly, this is a good time to reflect briefly on what it means for each of you to be a parent of a boarder. By sending your son to Michaelhouse you are making great sacrifices (emotional and financial to mention just two). While you are no longer responsible for ensuring his bed is made or his homework is done, you are by no means abdicating your responsibilities as a parent. **Your role-modelling and your support for your son remain all important.** As a school we know that we are most effective when we work in partnership with you, the parent. We count on your support but we also appreciate the trust you place in our staff and our processes. Your confidence in us will inspire confidence in your son and make him more receptive.



MICHAELHOUSE

For your son to develop the independence mentioned above you will, at times, need to give him the space and time to try and solve his own problems with the support of his Housemaster, tutor, teachers and friends amongst others. This can take some getting used to and may require you to manage your natural instinct to dive in. We are certainly not arguing for a hands-off approach but rather a considered one. It goes without saying that you should always communicate any concerns you may have. We are proud of the relationships between Michaelhouse and the parent community and we want to take this opportunity to thank you for your support for our staff, our systems and, most importantly, your sons.

Mr Herman Visagie, who completed his Master's degree in Residential Education through the University of Buckingham in 2024, has been awarded the UK-based Boarding Schools' Association (BSA) Research Fellowship for 2025/2026, as well as the ISASA Staff Development Fund Award for 2026. These awards enabled him to present his ongoing research at the annual BSA Conference in Nottingham, England, held on 27 and 28 January.

Herman's current research builds on his Master's work, which explored boarding culture, with a particular focus on the situational influences that drive conformity and their impact on adolescent wellbeing. His work also examines the development of situational awareness training for boarding staff as a proactive approach to strengthening boarding environments.

He has presented on adolescent wellbeing and boarding practice at schools and conferences across South Africa, and the BSA Conference provided a valuable opportunity to share this work on an international stage.

As a school, we are proud of Herman's contribution to residential education research. Herman's work speaks directly to the heart of our boarding tradition: the intentional care of boys within a strong, values-based residential community. His research enriches our understanding of boarding culture and supports the ongoing development of staff who seek to create Houses in which boys can flourish, feel secure, and grow in character.



Mr Herman Visagie presenting at the BSA Conference in the UK

Distance Parenting Online Course – Save the Date

Michaelhouse is delighted to offer this ONLINE course designed for parents of boys who are new to the senior school boarding environment. Kicking off on Monday 9 March, the programme has been curated specifically for Michaelhouse and is presented by well-known psychologist, Megan de Beyer, and Mr Tim Jarvis, Michaelhouse School Counsellor. The programme consists of four lunchtime (12h00-13h00), sessions over Zoom. This year we have added an extra session on masculinity and what that looks like in a boys' boarding school.

Topics covered include:

- Understanding what your teen is going through and the impact of boarding school life.
- Male adolescence.
- Discovering best parenting practices.
- Communication skills and how to offer your son emotional support.
- Learning effective problem solving and boundaries to encourage your son's autonomy and independence.
- Q & A- ask Megan & Tim anything! A time to get personal yet remain anonymous if you prefer.

We hope that you will be able to join Tim and Megan online for this invaluable course on the below dates:

Session 1 – Monday 9 March 2026

Session 2 – Thursday 12 March 2026 (Masculinity)

Session 3 – Monday 16 March 2026

Session 4 – Thursday 19 March 2026 (Q & A)

More information and booking links will follow shortly.

Co-Curricular and Individual Achievements

Swimming Report

On Wednesday, 28 January, Michaelhouse attended the annual Dimont Gala. This traditional fun gala sees boys' schools paired with girls' schools, with captains drawing the names of their partner schools at random. Michaelhouse was teamed with Epworth, St Charles with The Wykeham Collegiate (TWC), and Hilton with St Anne's. A late withdrawal from Maritzburg College resulted in St John's DSG and Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School being paired together.

The afternoon was filled with enthusiasm, school spirit, and several closely contested races. The U14 Michaelhouse/Epworth team dominated the competition, winning all but one race, while the U15s delivered consistently strong performances, finishing second in each of their events.

Overall, Michaelhouse and Epworth finished third with 52 points, Hilton and St Anne's placed second with 60 points, and St Charles and TWC secured first place with 66 points.

Golf

Our golfers played against College on Friday at Maritzburg Golf Club (MGC). The 1st team won 6.5 - 1.5 and the 2nd team won 7 - 1.

Well done to **Ben Heuer** (A Block Baines) who shot 1 under par which included a hole-in-one on the 8th hole at MGC.



The 1st and 2nd golf teams at the MCG

Squash

The Squash club played Maritzburg College last week Monday, where we played 16 games, won 9 and lost 7, with the first team winning 4-2.

The KZN Open was played this weekend. This was a provincial ranking tournament and a significant step for players working toward obtain provincial colours. Well done to the following boys:

U19 – 5th **Connor Hatfield** and 9th **Harry Porter**

U17 – 4th **Graeme Higginson**, 6th **Kai de Klerk**, 7th **James Moodley** and 9th **Cameron Hatfield**

U15 – 11th **Ross Warburton** and 12th **Liam Muller**



Some of our squash players in action (from left to right): **Cameron Hatfield**, **James Moodley**, **Harry Porter** and **Graeme Higginson**

Tennis

Michaelhouse started their tennis season with a series of excellent junior performances against Maritzburg College and St Charles over the past few weeks.

To kick-start the season, 16 Michaelhouse juniors competed in doubles fixtures against Maritzburg College at Kershaw Park. After a highly competitive afternoon of tennis, Michaelhouse emerged with a convincing 14-2 overall victory, with all the doubles matches closely contested.

In the second league fixture, 8 Michaelhouse boys took on St Charles and produced a fantastic performance, winning all their matches.

Well done to the boys on their first few tennis fixtures of the year and for getting off to such a positive start.



Jeremy Wattam and Harry Makepeace



Ashton Arbuckle and Kiran Hattingh

Basketball

Our A-teams faced a high-stakes double-header in Johannesburg. Congratulations to the 1st Team and the U14As for their clinical victories over St David's, and to the U14As and U15As for securing strong wins against ESCA. The U16As and 1st team faced an exceptionally tough ESCA outfit; while they fell short, the experience gained against top-tier Gauteng opposition is invaluable. Below are the results from all the games played this weekend:

vs St David's:

1st team won 36-32, U15A lost 22-35, U14A won 36-12

vs ESCA:

1st team lost 33-36, U16A lost 46-56, U15A won 44-39, U14A won 42-24

vs Treverton

2nd team won 32-21, 5th team vs Treverton U16A won 39-29, U15D won 13-12 and U14C won 30-2

vs Thomas More:

3rd team lost 24-26, U16B won 25-18, U15B won 49-5, U14B won 30-15

vs Etham College

4th team lost 29-32

vs Maritzburg College
8th team lost 32-34, U16E lost 15-12

Internal Michaelhouse games:
U16C vs U15C won 48-11, U15E vs MHS U14D won 15-7



The U14A team after their 42 - 24 win
against ESCA



Phiwa Sithole in action taking a layup
against St Davids



Pano Gargassoulas taking a free throw
against St Davids

Water Polo

Our 1st team travelled to Johannesburg and played three games losing two and winning one:
vs St Stithians lost 10-11, vs St Albans won 12-6 and vs St Davids lost 17-7

Our 2nd water polo team participated in the Pearson Tournament, which was a gruelling eight-match marathon in Port Elizabeth which included four wins and four loses: vs Bishops lost 1-9, vs Rondebosch lost 6-7, vs St Stithians lost 5-6 and vs St Davids lost 2-7, vs Wynberg won 4-2, vs Oakhill won 9-1, vs Paul Roos won 10-2, and a thrilling penalty shootout victory over St David's (5-3).

The other open teams, as well as some B teams played Maritzburg College, winning all their matches:
5th team won 13-5, 6th won 11-4, 7th won 8-6, U15B won 15-3, U14B drew 4-4 and U14C won 7-3

The U15As were unbeaten with four wins – vs St Davids won 14-4, vs Affies won 5-4, vs Pretoria Boys' won 8-3 and vs St Albans won 12-3

The U14A team also travelled to Pretoria and played a game against Pretoria Boys, winning 17-2

Cricket

This past weekend saw Michaelhouse cricket teams in action with internal fixtures between different age groups, plus matches against College and Treverton.

The 5th XI secured a solid 3-wicket victory over Treverton 1sts. Treverton posted 118-10 after 20 overs, with MHS reaching 119-7 to secure victory. **Max Oliva** top-scored with 36* runs off 26 balls, while **Bernard Rossouw** took 3-21 with the ball.

The U16C team produced the performance of the weekend, defeating Treverton 2nds by 161 runs. Michaelhouse posted an imposing 222-6 after 20 overs, with **James Meyer** scoring 58 runs off 24 balls and **Connor Jordan** smashing 55* runs off 30 balls. Michaelhouse then bowling Treverton out for just 61 after 9.2 overs, with **Benji Goble** taking 3-15 and **Connor Jordan** taking 3-10 with the ball.

The U15C suffered an 86-run loss to College U15D. College posted 127-7 after 20 overs, with Michaelhouse managing only 41-6 after 10.2 overs. **Cole Hooker** took 3-28 with the ball, while **James Goble** scored 40 runs off 30 balls for the U15C.

The U14D team won by 6 wickets against College U4E. College posted 116-4 after 20 overs, with Michaelhouse successfully chasing it down at 117-4 after 14.3 overs. **Kiran Hattingh** produced an outstanding all-round performance, scoring 35 runs off 26 balls and taking 2-21 with the ball.

The U14E dominated College U14H with a comprehensive 9-wicket victory. **James Denny** produced superb figures of 4-10, bowling College out for just 85-10 after 19 overs. **Juan Delport** then anchored the chase with 44* runs off 36 balls as Michaelhouse cruised to 89-1 after 9.4 overs.

The 2nd XI defeated the U16A by 3 wickets. The u16A posted 120-8 in 30 overs, with **Cameron McCleary** scoring 48* runs and **Nathan Simons** taking 3-24 with the ball. The 2nds successfully chased down the target, reaching 122-7 after 25.0 overs, with **Ben Hughes** top-scoring with 43 runs off 47 balls.

The 3rd XI lost to the 4th XI by 13 runs. The 4ths posted 144-7 after 20 overs before restricting the 3rds to 131-6 after 20 overs. **Matthew Cassidy** scored 41 runs off 36 balls for the 3rds in the loss.

The U16B beat the 5th XI by 95 runs. The U16B posted a commanding 213-10 after 26.5 overs, with **Jayden Barry** scoring 68 runs off 61 balls and **Connor McMurray** taking 3-33 with the ball. The 5ths were bowled out for 118 after 14.3 overs. **Benjamin Trotter** took 3-12 and **Riley van Schoor** took 3-25 with the ball for the 5ths, but they couldn't prevent the defeat.

The U15A defeated the U14A by 7 wickets. The U14A posted 136-6 after 30 overs before the U15A chased it down at 137-3 after 26.3 overs. **Edward Carmichael** making 37* runs off 29 balls for the U14A.

The U14B defeated the U15B by 5 wickets. The U15B posted 106-10 after 29.1 overs, with **Michael Erasmus** taking 4-9 with the ball. The U14B successfully chased down the target at 107-5 after 22.1 overs.

Well done to all players and coaches on a competitive weekend of cricket.

Team of the Week: Mr Ryan Ravenscroft: Head of Sport

The Team of the Week accolade goes to the U15A water polo team for their flawless performance on the Johannesburg tour. Facing a gauntlet of top-tier Gauteng schools, the boys went entirely unbeaten, racking up four straight victories. Their clinical 14-4 win over St David's and a hard-fought 5-4 edge over Affies showcased a perfect balance of dominant attack and disciplined defence.

Clubs and Societies

The annual Clubs & Societies Fair took place on Monday, 2 February. The teachers, as well as senior boys, in charge of over 30 Clubs and Societies had the opportunity to invite boys to showcase and join their societies. Alongside the Cultural Programme, Clubs and Societies provide boys with a wide range of enriching experiences throughout their Michaelhouse career. The Cultural Programme also used this opportunity to showcase some of the various activities available to boys with the Music Department delivering some excellent performances.

We expect boys to join at least one society. This is not intended to increase their workload, but rather to serve as an avenue for enrichment, fun, and fostering interests while at Michaelhouse.

Club / Society Name	Teacher in Charge
Active Wilderness Society (Hiking, Trail Running and Camping)	Dale Lynch
Agricultural Society	Graeme Lucas-Bull
Backyard Adventures (Outdoor Education)	Nicholas Bérichon
Barista Society (Coffee)	Xavier Saunderson
Birding Club	Ed Jeffrey
Conservation Society	Righardt Kotze
Culinary Society	Mike Sevenoaks
First Aid Society	TBA
Fishing Club (Fly, Trout, Deep Sea)	Righardt Kotze
Investors' Society	Lwando Saunders
Law Society	William Koopman
Matric Dance Society	Marcel Cornelius
Media Production Club	Jed Coventry
M.E.N (Leadership Club)	Michael Sevenokes
Philosophy and Politics Society	Asha Royappen
Photographic Society	Grant von Mayer
President's Award	Leigh Kotze
Readers and Wordsmiths' Society	Jed Coventry
Reptile Society	Garth Quaite
Rock Climbing	TBA
Rugby Ref Society	Garth Quaite
Scuba Diving Club	Matthew Higginson
Snell Society	Win de Wet - Rector
Social Padel	Bruere Venter
Surfing Society	TBA
Tech and Robotics Society	Jed Coventry
Theatre Appreciation	Asha Royappen
Toastmasters (Seniors only)	Dominic Gruijters

Cultural Programme:

The Cultural Programme operates similarly to the sports programme, with boys expected to attend weekly rehearsals, meetings, or practices and, where possible, to compete or perform for the school or as an individual. Formal school awards (Half-Colours, Colours and Honours) are granted to those who demonstrate excellence and commitment and meet the required criteria. The Head of the Cultural Programme is Dr Carika de Swardt (cardes@michaelhouse.org).

Cultural Programme	Teacher in Charge
Art Development Programme (Individual)	Jenni Clinton-Parker
Chess Programme	Jed Coventry
Debating and Public Speaking (Junior and Senior Teams)	Sally Cahill
Choral Programme Chapel Choir Concert Choir Chamber Choir	Gareth Dry
Orchestral Programme Orchestra Jazz Band	Eldene Bruiners
Marimba Programme Competition Marimba Band Marimba Second Team Junior Marimba Band	Carika de Swardt
Theatre, Technology and Movement Programme Theatre Technology and Productions Movement Programme	William le Cordeur



The various Clubs and Societies on display at the Societies Fair

Michaelhouse Culinary Society

The Michaelhouse Culinary Society launched its 2026 programme in fine style with a shisinyama braai demonstration by the legendary Thobs Dumakude, held as part of the Clubs and Societies Fair held last week Monday. Thobs demonstrated how to prepare a selection of steaks and traditional shisinyama dishes, sharing both practical technique and insight into this proudly South African food culture.

The food was shared with the boys as they signed up for the opportunity to join the society, creating a relaxed, engaging, and memorable introduction to what the Culinary Society offers.

The Culinary Society provides Michaelhouse boys with a unique opportunity to develop practical cooking skills and a deeper appreciation for food through hands-on experiences, in-house demonstrations, and external partnerships. This includes ongoing involvement with Jackie Cameron throughout the year, as well as a number of new initiatives planned in collaboration with local eateries and chefs, promising an exciting and enriching programme for 2026.



Busy scenes from the Society Fair's Culinary Society Table

Service

Thank you to boys from Mackenzie House who helped at Khazimula with moving bookcases, sorting and packing books as well as prepping the steps for a repaint.



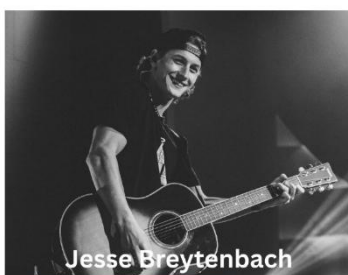
Mackenzie boys helping at Khazimula Childrens' Home

We have been able to purchase a number of indigenous trees and vegetable seedlings from the funds raised from Arbour Day initiatives and will be planting trees as well as helping with the vegetable gardens at various partner schools at their request. Well done to the Baines boys who worked hard in the heat with the children from Jabula Combined School to plant beautiful trees in the playground and vegetables in the vegetable garden. Thank you to Mrs Leigh Kotze for sourcing the trees, seedlings and additional compost.



Baines boys help plant the indigenous trees at Jabula Combined School

Old Boys' Club News



Jesse Breytenbach



Gqamile Mbuyazi



Ian Graham & Samir Dookie

Michaelhouse is proud to celebrate the achievements of several Old Boys who continue to distinguish themselves in the world of music, both locally and internationally. Four of our boys who studied music as a matric subject in recent years have gone on to make their mark in academia and performance globally. Ian Graham (Baines, 2025) has been awarded a prestigious scholarship to pursue his music studies at the Berklee College of Music's Valencia campus in Spain, beginning in September 2026. A gifted pianist, Ian has long been recognised as an outstanding performer within, and outside the school.

Jesse Breytenbach (Pascoe, 2021) continues to make waves as the singer and guitarist in the father-son rock duo *Cantrel*. The group has performed across Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and South Africa, drawing a growing international audience. Their track *Walls* has gained significant traction online, surpassing one million views on social media - an exciting milestone for this young musician.

Samir Dookie (Tatham, 2023), another talented pianist, has also been awarded a music scholarship and is currently studying towards a classical B.Mus degree in piano performance at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in Cardiff, Wales. His classmate, Gqamile Mbuyazi (Founders, 2023), is pursuing contemporary music studies at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, USA. Both young men continue to perform regularly and generously share their musical gifts with the Michaelhouse community whenever they are home.

These remarkable achievements highlight the strength of the Music Department and the passion, discipline, and commitment of our musicians. We wish these young men every success as they continue to carry the Michaelhouse name with pride across the globe.

Join the Midlands Branch of the Michaelhouse Old Boys' Club on 12 February at Fordoun for an inspiring fireside conversation as we explore the remarkable paths taken by several Old Boys whose lives and careers have been shaped by the great outdoors. In addition to Old Boys and their families, this relaxed (child friendly) Midlands gathering is open to all school staff, parents (current and past!), and friends and family of the Michaelhouse community.



The Michaelhouse Old Boys' Club
Midlands Branch invite you to for a day of

JOURNEYS SHARED

FROM MICHAELHOUSE TO THE WILD

5pm for 5.30pm
on **12 February 2026**
at **Fordoun**

Ticket prices: **R110** per person
Snacks included | Cash bar available



CLICK TO RSVP

Speakers are: *Chris Pearson | Al Yeowart | Steve Fly*

With my best wishes

WIN DE WET
ACTING RECTOR

WATER POLO vs ST CHARLES COLLEGE

Saturday 07 February 2026 (Home)



DATE	TEAM	OPPONENT	VENUE	TIME
04 February	1st	St Benedicts College	New Pool - Floating	17:00
04 February	3rd	St Benedicts College	New Pool - Floating	16:30
06 February	2nd	Jeppe High School for Boys	New Pool - Floating	17:00
06 February	U14A	Jeppe High School for Boys	New Pool - Floating	16:30
07 February	1st	St Charles College 1st	New Pool - Floating	10:55
07 February	2nd	St Charles College	New Pool - Floating	10:15
07 February	2nd	St Charles College 1st	New Pool - Railway	09:30
07 February	3rd	St Charles College	New Pool - Railway	09:00
07 February	3rd	St Charles College 2nd	New Pool - Railway	08:30
07 February	4th	St Charles College 3rd	New Pool - Railway	08:00
07 February	5th	Cake League	Old Pool	08:00
07 February	6th	Cake League	Old Pool	08:25
07 February	7th	Cake League	Old Pool	08:50
07 February	8th	Cake League	Old Pool	09:15
07 February	U15A	Training Camp	Old Pool	09:30
07 February	U15B	St Charles College U15A	New Pool - OBC	09:30
07 February	U15C	St Charles College U15A	New Pool - OBC	08:30
07 February	U14A	Training Camp	Old Pool	09:30
07 February	U14B	St Charles College U14A	New Pool - OBC	09:00
07 February	U14C	St Charles College U14A	New Pool - OBC	08:00

SUPPORT OUR BOYS.



CRICKET vs ST CHARLES COLLEGE

Saturday 07 February 2026 (Home/Away)



DATE	TEAM	OPPONENT	VENUE	TIME	FORMAT
05 February	1st	Inland Academy	Roy Gathorne Oval	14:30	T20
05 February	U15B	Howick 15A	Howick 1*	14:30	T20
06 February	5th	St Charles College	Colts*	14:30	T20
06 February	U14C	St Charles College	Crooks*	14:30	T20
07 February	1st	St Charles College	Roy Gathorne Oval	09:00	50 Overs
07 February	2nd	St Charles College	St Charles Oval*	09:00	50 Overs
07 February	3rd	St Charles College	Willows	09:00	30 Overs
07 February	4th	St Charles College	Michael Patricks Oval*	09:00	T20
07 February	U16A	St Charles College	Hannahs	09:00	50 Overs
07 February	U16B	St Charles College	Harwin*	09:00	40 Overs
07 February	U16C	St Charles College	Crookes*	13:00	T20
07 February	U15A	St Charles College	Tarpeys	09:00	50 Overs
07 February	U15B	St Charles College	Conway*	09:00	40 Overs
07 February	U15C	St Charles College	Crookes*	09:00	T20
07 February	U14A	St Charles College	Holleys	09:00	50 Overs
07 February	U14B	St Charles College	Colts*	09:00	40 Overs
07 February	U14D	St Charles College	Clifton Nottles*	13:00	T20

*Denotes away games

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BASKETBALL vs ST CHARLES COLLEGE
Saturday 07 February 2026 (Home)



TEAM	OPPONENT	VENUE	TIME
1st	St Charles College	Main Court	12:30
2nd	St Charles College	Indoor Court 1	11:30
3rd	St Charles College	Indoor Court 2	11:30
4th	St Charles College	Indoor Court 3	11:30
5th	St Charles College	Outdoor Court 1	11:30
6th	St Charles College	Outdoor Court 1	10:30
7th	St Charles College	Outdoor Court 2	11:30
U16A	St Charles College	Indoor Court 1	10:30
U16B	St Charles College	Indoor Court 2	10:30
U16C	St Charles College	Indoor Court 3	10:30
U16D	St Charles College	Outdoor Court 1	09:30
U16E	St Charles College	Outdoor Court 2	10:30
U15A	St Charles College	Indoor Court 1	09:30
U15B	St Charles College	Indoor Court 2	09:30
U15C	St Charles College	Indoor Court 3	09:30
U15D	St Charles College	Outdoor Court 2	09:30
U15E	St Charles College	Outdoor Court 1	08:30
U14A	St Charles College	Indoor Court 1	08:30
U14B	St Charles College	Indoor Court 2	08:30
U14C	St Charles College	Indoor Court 3	08:30
U14D	St Charles College	Outdoor Court 2	08:30

SUPPORT OUR BOYS.

