RECTOR'S eNEWS

NEWSLETTER 34/2026: Wednesday 28 October

MICHAELHOUSE

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Rector's Message

As October draws to a close, the end of the year is firmly in sight. The matrics are well into their exams, and the rest of the school will soon follow. At congregational singing practice, the boys were practising Christmas carols – an outrage in October, but a sure sign of what lies ahead.

As exams replace normal teaching routines, staff use the time to plan for next year and beyond. With several decisions under consideration, I wanted to share how we approach them.

My principle, wherever possible, is to communicate our thinking early and make the final decision late. I adopted this approach during Covid, when circumstances and information changed constantly. It has stayed with me: sharing our thinking helps you understand the options, the factors we are weighing and the values guiding us. Taking time before deciding allows us to examine the implications and consider new information. The intention is that, when a decision is announced, you understand how we reached it. I want our decisions to be predictable because the principles behind them are clear.

Two current examples are our review of the Devices (Cell Phone and Laptop) Policy and our planning of term dates for 2028.

Ms Karin Moffat, our Deputy Rector: Pupils, is leading the Devices Policy review. She writes:

I am writing to let you know that the Pastoral Office is revising Michaelhouse's Device Policy, and to explain the thinking behind it.

Restricting phone use in schools has, over the last few years, moved from a school-by-school choice to national law in many countries — more than 100 countries and 29 U.S. states now restrict phones in classrooms in some form, and countries such as France, China and Australia have gone further still. Michaelhouse's own policy has, in most respects, been ahead of this trend rather than behind it: our age-graduated approach, our removal of phones overnight, and our ban on SIM-enabled smart watches and other devices all mirror or exceed what leading schools and legislators elsewhere are only now putting in place.

We do want to be candid with you about the evidence. The most rigorous independent research on school phone bans — a study of over 1,200 pupils across 30 English schools, published in The Lancet

Regional Health – Europe — found that banning phones only during the school day does not measurably improve pupils' wellbeing or results, because pupils simply make up the screen time before and after school. This finding is genuinely important, but it describes day schools, which cannot govern a pupil's evenings. As a boarding school, Michaelhouse already governs significantly more of a boy's day — including the evening and overnight hours where a day school has no reach at all — which is precisely why our approach is different, and why we believe it remains the right one.

With that in mind, the revised policy keeps everything that already works well and adjusts certain levels of access to remain in line with our philosophy and trends that we have noted here at school.

The full policy will be sent out in due course.

For the 2028 calendar, we are reviewing the structure of Half Terms. The decision to remove the Quarter 4 Half Term was made some time ago, and I support it: in a short term dominated by exams, a break would be unnecessarily disruptive. In longer terms, however, Half Terms offer an important chance to rest and recuperate. The traditional Wednesday evening to Monday evening break can be compromised by travel, sports tours and events. For families living further away, it can also be difficult and expensive.

I have asked our team to explore whether a different arrangement in Quarter 2 – often felt to be particularly intense – would make the break more worthwhile. We are considering starting Half Term after Saturday fixtures and returning the following Sunday night. This would provide a full week's break, with two teaching days to be made up elsewhere in the calendar.

In principle, I like the idea. It offers a proper rest and makes the journey more worthwhile for families living far away. We are still working through the implications, particularly for parents with children at other schools that retain the current Half Term arrangements.

Under this proposal, Quarters 1 and 3 would remain unchanged, and Quarter 4 would continue without a Half Term. We hope to confirm the 2028 arrangements in the next week or two.

A Season to Remember – Mrs Fran Fleming Bolttler, Head of Development





It started on Friday afternoon, 19 June 2026, with the first whistle and the first hockey fixtures. Hard-fought, spirited, and the perfect way to set the tone.

Then came Saturday. A beautiful day, a ground full of colour, and boys giving everything they had. Rugby and hockey, A teams through to F teams, played with *courage, composure and the*

sportsmanship this school is proud of. The results were remarkable, but it's the *feeling* that stayed with us: the sidelines roaring, staff, parents and Old Boys shoulder to shoulder, boys cheering on their friends long after their own final whistle.

These are days and memories to celebrate and hold onto.

That's why we're opening **A Season To Remember**: A Silent Auction for moments worth holding onto.

The jerseys from this unforgettable weekend of sport have been framed and are now yours to bid on. Hang one on your wall and keep the memory alive for years to come.

Bidding will run from: 13 - 20 November 2026
Top Bidder will be announced on the 20th November 2026 after 15:00

Awards

The following boys were congratulated in our Assembly yesterday on their significant achievements in this realm:

Service Awards:
Honours
Matthew Rees and **Joel Reinhardt**

Colours
Massimo Calcaterra and **Mikahael Geemooi**

Half-Colours
Chad Abrahams, Jayden Barry, Oliver Beukes, Griffon Erasmus, Sam Hoy, Ben Hughes, Zhengfei Li, Noa Nel, Solethu Ngxola, Nkosinathi Radebe, Cameron Schwegmann, Neo Selibe and **Nicholas Wulfsohn**

Cultural Awards
Honours
Music – **Mikahael Geemooi, Thembekile Ntuli** and **Nkosinathi Radebe**

Colours
Music – **Kwanda Dumasi, Simphiwe Kona, Zhengfei Li, Biko Makaula, Jordan Matthee, Luthando Mxhego, Keamogetse Noge, Darren Phala, Harry Steyn, Mpho Thipa** and **Sheldon Topham**
Debating and Public Speaking – **Tanaka Chinyoka**
Performing Arts – **Max Oliva**

Half-Colours
Music – **Lwandle Dube, Powers Motsileng** and **Khumo Ntumba**
Debating and Public Speaking – **Kai de Klerk, Moletsane Likate, Keamogetse Noge, Charlie Parham, Daniel Pieterse, Mutale Sunkutu** and **Otto von Claer**
Visual Arts – **Owen Pelser**

Sports Awards
Honours:
Cricket – **Benjamin Heuer, Graydon Leslie, Liam O'Dwyer, Cody Sander** and **Thandanani Zuma**

Rugby Sevens – **Ben Hughes**
Soccer – **Nkateko Mathebula**
Water Polo – **Tane Greene**
Equestrian Polo – **Jim Brooke-Leggatt**
Golf – **Gareth D'Oyley**

Colours:
Cricket – **Preston Greene, Riley Muir, Rendani Nonge, Victor North** and **Rex Wardlaw**
Rugby Sevens – **Fabiano Fierro** and **Jed Reilly**

Half-Colours:
Cricket – **Adam Cooke, Jack Campbell, Nishay Sudhoowa, Wonga Mlonzi** and **Matthew Southwood**
Rugby Sevens – **Jared Cole, Richard Knott, Iminathi Mntu, Banathi Sabelo, Thomas Smith, Jose Sserwanga, Calum van Zyl** and **Daniel Uys**
Soccer – **Marc Brufau Galvin, Martinho de Abreu, Kumkani Dwenga, Khazimula Hadebe, Tyron Kaufmann, Ayonga Kubukeli, Tshegofatso Mashile, Willie Matshela, Lerako Mogalakwe, Thibedi Mogoba, Kganya Mondlane, Nkanyeziyokusa Ndlovu, iLan Nel, Rendani Nonge, Sphesihle Nxumalo, Liam O'Dwyer, Leo Oliva, William van Niekerk** and **Max Vries**
Water Polo – **Cameron Bowen, Jack Ries, Mitchel Rodgers** and **Matt Shannon**
Canoeing – **Sam Hoy**







Co-Curricular and Individual Achievements

Swimming

Bandile Mahaye and **Samuel Gilson** competed at the MAC Long Course Gala, held at Rachel Finlayson Swimming Pool in Durban from Friday 23 to Sunday 25 October. The gala provides an early-season opportunity for swimmers to establish personal bests (PBs), develop focus and determination, and pursue regional and national qualification times.

Competing in the 15-and-over category, both swimmers produced strong performances against older opposition.

Bandile finished second in his age group in both the 50m butterfly and 50m freestyle, and third in the 200m individual medley (IM), recording personal bests in the 100m backstroke and 200m IM.

Samuel delivered an impressive series of results, finishing first among 15-year-olds in the 50m breaststroke and third in both the 100m and 200m breaststroke. He also recorded personal bests in the 50m and 100m butterfly, finishing fifth in his age group in both events.

These performances provide a positive start to the season as both swimmers continue to build towards their goals in the pool.





Canoeing

The final Interschools Canoeing League race took place on the Lions and Umgeni Rivers on Saturday. Michaelhouse finished the season strongly, placing second overall behind Kearsney and ahead of Hilton.

In the individual standings, the Michaelhouse paddlers dominated the top five U18 positions. **Ethan Perry** finished in 4th place, **Sam Hoy** claimed the bronze medal in 3rd and **Duncan Roberts** took gold with a 1st place finish.



Water Polo
Out 1st team competed in the 2026 Saints Invitational Water Polo Tournament at St Stithians College in Johannesburg, testing themselves against some of the country's leading school sides. The team showed their attacking potential with convincing wins over Pretoria Boys High and St Benedict's College, scoring 23 goals across the two matches. Finishing 12th overall.
Vs Bishops lost 6-11, vs Reddam Constantia lost 7-13, vs PBHS won 15-6 and vs St Benedict's won 8-4, vs Grey High lost 8-12 and vs Kearsney lost 9-12

Back home, our other teams played against Northwood School winning eight of our games:
2nd team lost 6-11, 3rd team won 7-5 and 4th team won 6-5
U15A lost 6-9, U15B won 14-1 and U15C won 6-3
U14A won 8-4, U14B won 8-4 and U14C lost 2-6

Congratulations to Jed Reilly who is the Water Polo caption for 2027.









Basketball
It was a busy week for the basketball club, which hosted midweek fixtures against St Nicholas Diocesan School. The U14A, U15A and 2nd teams all played, with the following results:
2nd team lost 23–31, U15A won 68–7 and U14A won 55–28

On Saturday, the club faced a formidable Northwood basketball programme. The boys showed grit and determination, and most of the games were closely contested. The opens won their division, which showed the depth and talent on the day. Highlights included the U14Es playing their first ever fixture, and a convincing 58–16 win for the U14As, with **Mangaliso Sibiya** scoring 16 points. The 2nd team also picked up their first win of the season, with **Powers Motsileng** top scoring on 15 points.

The results are as follows:
2nd team won 41–10, 3rd team won 18–13, 4th team won 19–18 and 5th team won 36–32
U16A lost 28–32, U16B lost 22–16, U16C won 29–25, U16D lost 14–18 and U16E lost 29–13
U15A lost 58–37, U15B lost 25–23, U15C lost 44–24, U15D lost 12–18 and U15E lost 22–4
U14A won 58–16, U14B lost 23–15, U14C won 24–13, U14D lost 23–9 and U14E lost 32–2

Meanwhile, the 1st team travelled to Gauteng to take part in the prestigious Inanda Hoops Challenge Classic hosted by St David's, which brings together some of the best schools in the country. The boys started the tournament well with a win over Pretoria Boys High, before losing to St John's to end Day 1. On Day 2, they beat the Inanda Invitational side to secure a place in the knockout phase. Unfortunately, they went down to a dominant St Stithians side, then lost narrowly to KZN rivals Kearsney. In their final game of the tournament, the team won convincingly against Parktown Boys.

1st team results:
Pretoria Boys won 47–34, St John's lost 22–38, Inanda Invitational won 54–26, St Stithians lost 31–61, Kearsney lost 42–44 and Parktown Boys won 41–28









Cricket
On Wednesday 21 October, Michaelhouse hosted Whitgift School, who are on tour from the UK, in three 40-over matches. The U17A team won by 6 wickets with **Matthew Southwood** (63 off 96 balls) and **Mark Benfield** (55 off 67) building the innings, and **Nishay Sudhoowa** taking 3/14. The U17B team lost by 42 runs, with **Callum Fly** taking 3/52. The U15A team won by 4 wickets, with **William Rattray** taking 3/16.

On Thursday 22 October, the Stayers team beat Maritzburg College by 8 wickets in a CSA20 T20 match. Maritzburg posted 166 for 4. **Wonga Mlonzi** and **Daniel Rees** gave the chase a solid start with an opening stand of 51, but at 86 for 2 after 10 overs the game was still in the balance. **Rex Wardlaw** (66*) and **Cody Sander** (43*) then put on an unbeaten 83 in just 32 balls, finishing the game with 28 balls to spare.

On the weekend, our teams played at home against Northwood, playing 11 games, winning 8 and losing 3: 1st XI won by 8 wickets, 2nd XI lost by 3 wickets, 3rd XI won by 5 wickets, 4th XI won by 8 wickets, 5th XI won by 9 wickets and 6th XI lost by 166 runs

Notable achievements
1st XI - **Joshua Nicholson** 3/23, **Preston Greene** 3/31, **Graydon Leslie** 103* (82), 2nd XI – **Adam Cooke** 2/21 and **Mark Benfield** 2/14, 3rd XI – **Hayden Ravenscroft** 4/33, **Daniel Pieterse** 3/20 and 69*, 4th XI – **William Aylward** 35*. 5th XI – **Adam Roberts** 4/27, **Eberhardt Basson** 4/8 and **Cullen Duffield** 43* and **Connor Jordaan** 33* and 6th XI - **James Ralfe** 3/19

U15A won by 9 wickets with **Daniel Rees** 75 and **James Buys** producing with ball and bat with 5/30 and 62* and U15B lost by 33 runs with **Cole Hooker** 3/59 and **James Witherspoon** making 71 and **Teddy Harvey** 38

U14A won by 174 runs with **Robert Walker** making 93, **Edward Carmichael** 42 and **Mzila Mzila** 49 and **Joseph Bates** taking 4/25, U14B won by 6 wickets with **Timmy Yorke-Smith** taking 3/5, **Fynn McKenna** 38* and **Harry Finnemore** 33* and U14C won by 4 wickets with **Wandile Zulu** 3/18 and **Cameron Kent** 5/22 and 35 runs.

Congratulations to the following U15 boys, who represented the province at Regional Week:
James Buys, Luke Mallet and **Daniel Rees**

Click on the relevant links below to access the sports fixtures for this weekend:
Basketball
Cricket
Water Polo

Storage of Boys' School Trunks during the holidays

Should you wish to have your son's clothes washed and his trunk stored in Nottingham Road during the holidays rather than take it home, please contact Georgie Carter or Thuli Khanyile. Georgie and Thuli offer the service of collecting, washing, ironing and returning the trunk to your son's House at school at the beginning of the school year. Mending of clothes such as loose buttons and hems can also be arranged as well as storing of other items such as sporting equipment and washing of additional clothes or bedding.

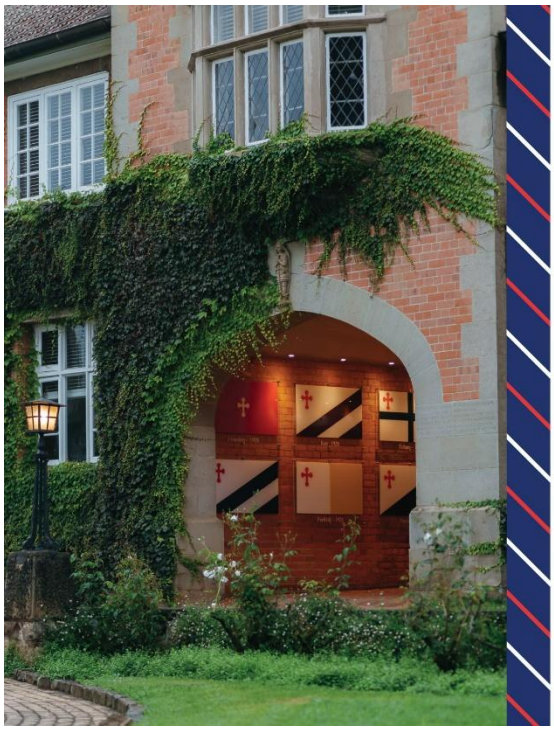
All dealings in this regard must please be done with Georgie or Thuli directly as this will be a private arrangement between parents and GezaGeza Cleaning Services. For all arrangements please contact them directly on gezageza566@gmail.com or via whatsapp on 082 882 7202 or 073 143 2259.

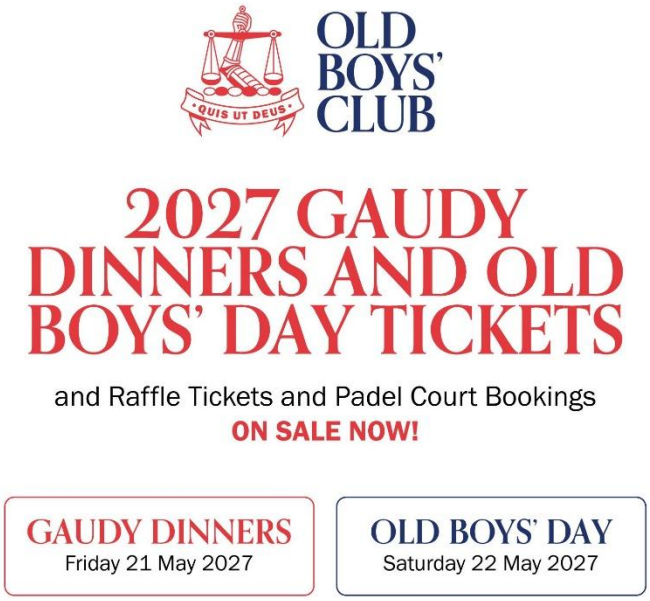
Please note the following important points:

1. Boys' trunks will be collected from the school laundry on either Thursday 26 November (between 10-2pm) and on break-up day, Friday 27 November (between 8.30-10am)
2. Trunks that are not left at the school laundry will not be taken by GezaGeza
3. Trunks of prefects returning earlier for the Prefects' Camp will be delivered to their House dayroom on Friday 8 January 2026
4. Trunks for all other boys will be delivered to their House dayroom on Monday 11 January 2027

Old Boys' Club

Gaudy Dinners and Old Boys' Day 2027 – Tickets Now on Sale





In 2027, we will celebrate the reunion years of 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2017.

Book your tickets here: https://michaelhouse.howler.co.za/Gaudy2027

For any queries, please contact the OBC Office at oldboys@michaelhouse.org.

With my best wishes

MR BART WIELENGA
RECTOR