

THE COLUMNS



By Pupils; For Pupils | HSD's Newsletter: Issue 152

Photo - Ruby McNair

The HSD Columns Production Team presents:

LEAVERS' EDITION 2026!

Just when you thought you'd seen the last of us...it's the 25/26 editors send off special! We're back! For exactly one week and then we're gone! Yay! You've got a new batch of editors to 'ahem' brighten up your Friday mornings with this publication,

As it is the last edition, not just for myself and the other editors, but for the whole year group, the 'class of '26' if you will, we have appealed to the entire form 6 for contributions and received some submissions, so read on. We also have a wide selection of photos from over the past year, so enjoy!



Lucy Smith

Tempo Rubato



There is a technique in music called 'tempo rubato', it refers to the speeding up or slowing down of the traditional tempo of a song to invoke a new emotion. It represents the absolute freedom of a musician as they break free from the ticks of the metronome, stretching the melody out to create real human feeling. Rubato is the moment a conductor slows a key moment in a symphony, the push and pull within a duet, and the wavering breath at the end of a love ballad. Coming from Italian, it literally means 'stolen time', time is stolen from one bar, and given to another.

Looking back at our years at this school, I realise that our time here was never dictated by ringing bells or timetables. It was a song played with a heavy rubato.

There were times where the tempo slowed to a painful crawl, the clock on the wall seemed frozen, relentless orchestra rehearsals, the three hour periods back in lockdown, assemblies that seemed neverending. The days when growing up felt like an impossibly slow process. In those moments we wished for the metronome to tick faster. We wanted to rush ahead to the future, desperate to see what the next chapter of life would look like.

Almost overnight, the rhythm shifted. The tempo accelerated. Without realising it, the years collapsed into months, months into weeks, and now these past few weeks into a blur of final concerts, events, and parties. The music rushes past us so quickly it leaves us breathless. We find ourselves yearning for the past, wanting to reach out and pull back on the reins of time, begging the song to slow down just a little bit longer.

We cannot stop the clock. The final chord of this movement will inevitably play. But as this time comes to a close, the beauty of the music isn't how fast it went, but the echoes it leaves behind. Long after the last bell rings, and the corridors fall silent, the moments that we slowed down to share will remain.

HSD Cadets 2026

RSM Lyndsey McDowall

As the school year comes to a close, I am reminded of the bittersweet reality that my term as RSM of the HSD CCF is coming to an end. The experience has been an amazing one, full of challenges, but also has truly enhanced my final year, and indeed my whole school career, in a way that I never expected. So, as I head into my final summer camp, I thought it necessary to reflect on the year we've had in the contingent.

In a way, the CCF calendar starts and ends in late June and early July, at our annual summer camp. For many cadets, the summer camp is a highlight of the year, and I am no exception. A week full of challenging training and unforgettable memories, summer camp 2025 definitely achieved its goal in encouraging cadets to step out of their comfort zone, and push themselves to develop their confidence, leadership and resilience in ways that simply cannot be replicated in a classroom.

As the year progressed, one of our most important events was the Armistice Parade. Taking part in the parade was an immense privilege, and seeing cadets of all ages come together to represent the school with such professionalism made me incredibly proud of the contingent.

Another standout event was definitely March Camp, which tested both the determination and teamwork of our cadets. The conditions were challenging at times, but brought out the best in all of us. The fun found in the birthday celebrations and the necessary treasure hunt also demonstrated the friendships that underpin the cadet force at HSD.

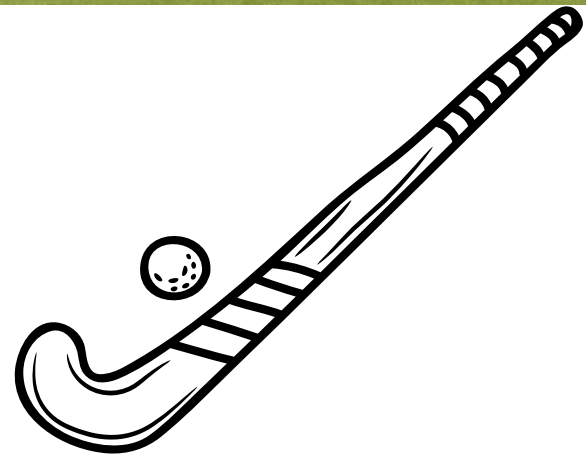
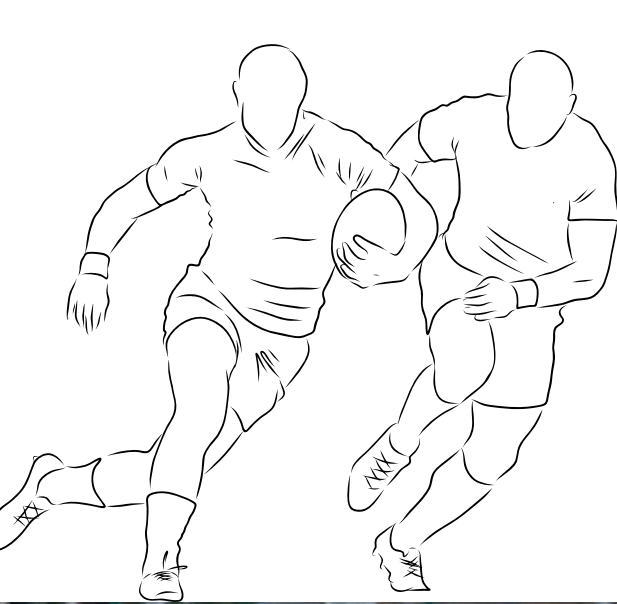


I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Major Rodger who, after this year's camp, is stepping down as head of cadets. His commitment has helped shape the experience of generations of cadets, and his influence can be seen in the strength of the contingent today. As someone who has had the privilege of being a cadet under his leadership, I am deeply grateful for the support, trust, and encouragement he has shown me throughout my time in the CCF. On behalf of us all, thank you for everything you have done

As I prepare to leave the CCF, I have found that what I will miss the most is not any single camp, parade or exercise but the people who have made these experiences so enjoyable. The cadets and staff create a community that is so unlike any other I have found at school, as it is built on shared experience and support as well as friendship. The CCF has helped shape me as a cadet and a person, and I am incredibly grateful to have been a part of it. While my time as RSM may be ending, I know that the memories, lessons and friendships that I have gained will stay with me for many years to come.



Sports



Sport is a huge part of HSD and our year group has contributed to this field like no other





Pippin: HSD senior years musical 2026



Rehearsing for Pippin has been very tiring however also very valuable. Pippin has been an extremely fun experience, from learning circus skills such as juggling and plate spinning to forming new friendships and overcoming challenges such as backstage flooding on opening night and changes in the casting. Pippin truly has been exhilarating. Overall, it has been extremely rewarding and incredible to see it all come together - we all as a cast have grown in our abilities and learnt so much.

~ Matthew Jamieson ~





Cluedo was the Form 6 play we put on this year, following in the footsteps of the Form 6 pupils from two years ago. From the start, I knew I wanted to produce a murder mystery with a farcical twist, and luckily Cluedo was the perfect choice. It was a play that really suited our year group.



Directing the play helped me discover skills I did not know I had and definitely supported aspects of my Advanced Higher Drama. After negotiating with a New York licensing company and signing my first contract, we secured the rights to perform the amateur stage production.

The play is loosely based on the board game, where six guests: Colonel Mustard, Mr Green, Professor Plum, Mrs White, Miss Scarlet and Mrs Peacock are summoned to the grand Boddy Manor. As secrets are revealed and the host, Mr Boddy, is mysteriously murdered (twice?), the manor is plunged into chaos while the audience tries to solve the case.

In the run-up to the play, I was fairly insistent that the cast learnt their lines, although even during the week of the performance we still had a way to go. This made for some funny moments on stage and, in a way, gave the performance a more authentic feel. Some of my favourite moments were Colonel Mustard's powerful speech and Professor Plum laughing at the line, "Maybe we'll be excited by something in the bedroom."

It has to be said that this play wouldn't have been possible without all the help I received from the drama department, my friends, and everyone who offered help for the final performance. To them, I'd like to say thank you.

We worked hard to put on a great performance on 26 February and, although there were challenges along the way, the experience was a lot of fun. I would certainly recommend it as a project for future Form 6 pupils.

~ Director George Duffus ~







Seven questions for...who?

Lucy Smith

Well I never thought I'd be doing this again, but here we are back with a new seven questions, though this time I thought I'd bring them to one of the deputy-heads of our yeargroup...Nina van der Kuyl!

1: Favourite moment of F6? – I genuinely have no idea, there are so many good moments, you can't ask me choose.

2: Favourite teacher? – Dr Morris (zero hesitation here)

3: The thing you're proudest of this year? – Getting my Grade 8 classical singing

4: The thing you'll miss the most about school? – Scheduled time to see your friends every day

5: The thing you won't miss? – Having a timetable that tells you where you have to be at all times of the day

6: Favourite school event? – The Christmas carol service

7: What you're looking forward to the most? – Travelling. I'm going interrailing around Europe this summer, starting in Poland.

And that's a wrap! I wish the best of luck to all the year, I've a feeling we're going to do great things.

Editors' Note

What are you still doing here?

It's over

Go home

Live your life!

Your Editors - Charlie, Emma, Shan, and Lucy