

Hamish Featherston: Co-Vice Captain of School

Keynote Speech 2025

At the 1992 Summer Olympics, 26-year-old, British 400m runner Derek Redmond had made his return to the track after 4 years of multiple setbacks including eight surgeries. Redmond was injury free and determined to earn a place on the podium.

Like a fairytale, he made the final. After a strong start, and a good placement on the back straight, tragedy struck. Redmond's hamstring completely ruptured making it impossible for him to continue running. He fell to the ground with the pain.

Then slowly, he got up and started hobbling to the finish line. You could see his devastation. And then, suddenly a man ran onto the track from the crowd. The officials tried to stop him, but he pushed them all away. Then, Redmond's father put his arms around his son and helped him to the finish line.

[Here is Redmond's story](#)

Good morning, Mr Angus, Dr Swann. Mr Tellefson, Ms White, staff, Mum, Dad, Pippa, Lucy and boys.

To me, this story embodies the power of love, and the ways in which family can enrich our lives. With that, today I want to talk about loving your family. We often take them for granted because they are just there – but they are actually the cornerstone of who we are.

My family consists of two sisters, an older brother, two dogs and of course my two parents. To say I love them is an understatement. Yes, at times, I'll bicker with Mum when she thinks I'm driving too fast or find myself in an argument with my sister about stealing my clothes, however that is beside the point.

When I am around my family, I feel a bond that runs through all of us. I feel like myself. Like I don't need to be anything other than who I am. I feel a sense of comfort when we are all together. A feeling I don't feel anywhere else. It feels like home. I only fully understood what it meant to be together as a family when my brother moved up to Queensland for university.

Up until this point, we shared every night at the dinner table, we battled each other for the living room, and every Sunday morning we woke up to Dad's egg and bacon rolls. When Will left, he left a hole.

With Lucy just recently joining Will up north, our day-to-day family has temporarily shrunk down to four. The makeup of my family has shifted and that is all part of growing up. When we do get the chance to be together, the comfort is still there. And when it's time to say goodbye, even though it is temporary it still hurts.

That's the price of love. Not being able to see a family member every day is challenging. It may be as fleeting as your mum or dad going overseas for work, or your older brother or sister, travelling the world. Seeing them leave yanks on your heartstrings. The reason? Love.

It is the love that we share for our family that makes it so tough to see them go. It is love that holds us together in times of despair and discomfort.

And now I would like to share something closer to home and the power of love within my family.

Earlier this year during cricket season, I went through a tough period. I could not perform on the field. And as much as I hate to say it, I could not find joy in a game that I have loved for over a decade. At training I wasn't myself, and on game days I felt out of place. But my family was always there.

One day, after a game against St. Kevins, sitting in the car I could not hold back the tears, I felt a hand go onto my shoulder and to no surprise it was Dad. It was such a small and simple gesture. But immediately, I felt cared for, I felt supported. And above all, I felt loved.

People often ask me, what is it like to be the Headmaster's son?

My honest response: I feel a tremendous amount of pride to call the Headmaster of this great school my dad. Whilst I am sure Dad, you won't like me saying this, the amount of work and positive change you have given to this school is something that only few can do. I look up to you day in, day out.

You embody what it means to be an authentic, humble and dedicated man. You inspire not only me, but I am sure many people in this room to be a better version of themselves.

With that, I encourage everyone here today to cherish their family and show them how much you love them. Don't take them for granted. Eventually we will all forge our own paths, where we will leave our families and stand on our own two feet. But our families will always be there – cheering us on, loving us and supporting us when we fall.

So, don't be afraid to let your family know how much you love them, that doesn't just apply to you boys, it also applies to the staff here today; let your children know, your mum, your dad, your brother, your sister.

I'll start:

I love you Mum, I love you Dad, I love you Pippa, I love you Lucy, I love you Will.

Thank you.