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Dear Old Sulian,

Christmas now seems some time in the past, despite the residual decorations hiding in the corners of offices and cards awaiting recycling. The new term is in 'full swing' but it is worth reflecting on the achievements of the last few weeks.

Many of you will have been at the Carol Service in Bath Abbey – those who were will, I am sure, agree that this occasion was magnificent. Mr Calvert and Mrs Nourse had marshalled their 'forces' brilliantly and the result was quite exceptional. The event came at the end of a day which had seen a staff 'Barbarians' XV take on the 1st XV in open combat (tag rugby) on the field of play. This year the combined talents of staff (plus some notable premiership rugby players, Jason Gardner etc) succeeded in overcoming the boys. I am sure revenge will come next year! The event raised a significant sum for a cancer charity and also brought the whole school together for a celebration of sport, following an exceptional lunch provided by our own master chef, Tim Fletcher.

In more general sporting circles we have seen further progress made by our boys. Mr Markall's tennis teams have now taken on and despatched the might of Colston's, Bristol Grammar and Clifton, while the only opponent awaiting the challenge of our boys is Millfield – this to come in the near future. On the rugby pitch our Under 14, 15 and 16 teams have performed strongly, the Under 15 about to move into the final phase of the Somerset Competition. The quarter finals of the National Cup have been targeted by our 1st XI on the football pitch, a success not seen for some time. The opposition on this occasion will be provided by Exeter School, a team better known for rugby success in years gone by. We wish our boys every success as they attempt to move on to the final stages.

The cricket season has already 'begun', training being undertaken in the Sports Barn for our young hopefuls – complemented by significant basketball activity; thanks mainly to the fact that we have a basketball coach on site, undertaking work for 'Bath Titans', a team which, at schoolboy level, now has significant representation from Beechen Cliff School.

Cultural achievements have been significant; debating and public speaking competing with the first significant dramatic production "Children of the Empire". This is due to take place in the next half term and has been organised by the Head of English, Ms Baker, in conjunction with our new Head of Sixth, Mr Brian McGee.

Our younger boys have been making a name for themselves by running racing car projects, robotic programmes and bio fuel production activities. In the last few weeks teams of boys have excelled at regional level in their areas, now moving on to national competitions in the Jaguar F1 car design competitions.

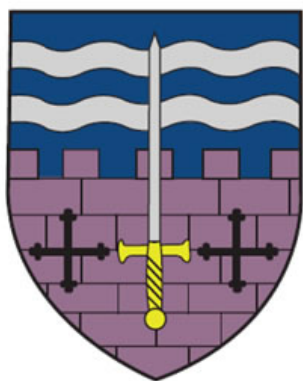
The school continues to be as popular as ever. This year we have had 306 applications for only 162 places – quite remarkable when you consider this is from only one sex and predominantly within the confines of the city. At Sixth Form level growth is unprecedented; in 2004 there were 212 Sixth Form students and in 2009 we anticipate around 340. The popular perception that schools with Sixth Forms cannot meet the needs of Post 16 pupil appears to have been missed by young people in Bath

From January 1st 2009 the school came under the governance of a Trust. This new body includes representatives from Beechen Cliff, Hayesfield, Rotork Engineering, City of Bath College and the University of Bath. The new Trust comes with a 'logo' – one which you will, in the main, be familiar. I attach a copy for your perusal!

We now 'gear up' for the terms ahead and look forward to achieving as much as possible for our boys, regardless of their interests, aptitudes and social background. In aspiring to this, the 'school on the hill' will always continue in its efforts.

Yours sincerely,

A Davies
Headmaster



Bath Education Trust