

Trustees Report 2008/09 (extract)

This year saw another very successful year at St Benedict's School. The pupil role was at an all-time high and the move to full co-education was seamless, as if the girls had always been at the school. The whole school Community was committed to the school's mission of "Teaching a Way of Living" and appreciated the importance of prayer in helping to achieve this. The Sixth Form achieved the best A level results in the school's history, achieving 74% A/B grades, with the girls outperforming the boys with a stunning 84% A/B grades. These results guaranteed places at the first choice of university for the majority of pupils, including ten Oxbridge places. At GCSE level the school increased its percentage of A/A* grades to a new high of 46%. The co-curricular life of the school continued to thrive, with increased participation in many activities, especially drama, the CCF and Duke of Edinburgh awards. In the Junior School additional activities included Book Week, Maths Week and Science Week. On the sporting side there were many successes for boys and girls. The senior girls went on an inaugural netball tour to Sri Lanka, the first XV went on a highly successful rugby tour to New Zealand and the U12's to Dubai. The school continued to ensure that pupils of all abilities and all ages, from nursery to sixth form, took part in the many and varied sports on offer. Music and Drama productions continued to thrill audiences. Over £10,000 was raised for several worthy charities on St Benedict's Day and pupils participated in many other charitable and fund-raising activities including volunteering for soup kitchens, working with Mencap, raising money for Georgia and running an old people's Christmas party.

The level of bursaries granted to pupils whose parents and guardians cannot afford the fees was increased for at least the sixth year running. The scholarships and bursaries policy was published on the school website and adverts for the school included reference to the availability of fee discounts. The school provided a number of specialist days at which pupils from local primary schools came to benefit from the school's wonderful facilities and the school's premises were used extensively by external local organisations e.g. over 500 pupils attend Polish School at St Benedict's on a Saturday and Ealing Cricket Club use the playing fields for many matches throughout the year.

The year also saw the opening of the £6.2 million Cloisters development in October 2008. The new building includes a central multi-purpose hall, music and modern language facilities, a chapel, art gallery and fourteen new classrooms as well as reception and medical facilities. Other development projects included a dance studio and fencing suite, a well equipped gym, new toilets in the Junior School, a quiet area in the playground and a small wildlife area to aid the teaching of biology and geography.