



## **U19A National Schools Lacrosse 2024**

**By Mrs Mason-McLeod (Director of Sport)**

The U19A team arrived at their National Schools Lacrosse Tournament carrying their Division 2 Trophy from last year's event. Division 2 champions was a fantastic achievement but the team had set their sights higher and the aim this year was to progress into Division 1.

In their section was Moreton Hall (eventual U19A overall National Champions), St Mary's Calne, Benenden, St Bartholomew's and Canford. There are no easy games in tournament play but the team were confident that their athleticism and speed would be a super strength of theirs across the weekend. BGS had three tough matches against Moreton Hall (1-4 loss), St Mary's Calne (1-4 loss) and Benenden (1-5 loss). However the team knew that wins against St Barts and Canford would secure their 4<sup>th</sup> place group position and would qualify them into the Division 1 competition that they had set their sights on. Bedford showed their class in these games and the teamwork, determination and focus in both these matches was sensational. BGS came out with wins in both games beating St Barts 5-3 and Canford 7-1. Division 1 secured for Sunday's competition and they could head back to the hotel for some much needed rest and team meal at the local Premier Inn.

Sunday morning arrived and the team were to face Bolton School, Haileybury and Monmouth School for Girls in a round robin style format. These games were much tighter due to the teams we were playing also finishing in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> position in the Saturday group matches. Every game played was incredibly close and the team finished 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in their group with a loss v. Bolton 3-6, a very narrow loss v. Haileybury 3-4 and a win against

Monmouth 1-0. Finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> in the group meant they then were drawn against a second place team from another section. This was St Helen's and St Katherine's and the game was now down to a knockout format. Unfortunately the opponents were just slightly more polished with their performance and secured nearly all centre draw possession making it difficult for BGS to gain any momentum. The final score was 3-1 to St Helen's and St Katherine's which sadly meant the tournament had come to an end for the U19A's. However, operation Division 1 was achieved and the students should feel very proud of how they played across the whole weekend. Given the team had only managed to come together a handful of times all season for training, due to their outstanding success on the hockey pitch, it was quite incredible to see how competitive they were against some of the top schools in the country. Next step is securing a place in the Championship top 16 schools!

**U19A Team** - Lucy Nissen, Freya Arnold, Caitlyn Peppiatt, Kate Woodward, Lara Wildon, Esme Challacombe, Meg Howlett, Avneet Dhaliwal (C), Molly Lincoln, Mya Lakhan, Gabby W-G, Alice Challacombe, Jessica Parrish, Charlotte Brakenbury, Izzy Jackson and Amelia B Jones.