On Wednesday, our computer teacher told me something very serious – that one of the speakers was missing. It was a very stupid theft because one speaker is no good to anyone – you need two amplifiers. Also not every speaker works on every machine. But why are these computers here? Who are they for? YOU! You are stealing from each other! The amount of money this school spends on equipment and books is very great and they are all for YOU! So it is very important that you are honest in your use of our books and equipment.

I thought that, maybe, in ordinary Bangladeshi schools, there were students who could not be trusted but I had hoped that TBS was different. I want to ask you to help us to catch any thieves that are among us. Maybe the thief thought it was a bit of a joke – but no one is laughing. It is not funny to steal. Sometimes when people are young and silly, they go through a phase of stealing things in order to feel clever but, with help, they realize it is not clever at all. Let us help them by finding out who they are and helping them to see that what they have done is wrong and ask them to return the amplifier, to say sorry and then we can forgive them – and give them a new start.

Please remember that trust between people is very important. Maybe some of you have discovered already how very sad it is when trust is broken and how it can destroy a relationship. Maybe you had a friend and found that you could not trust him or her and so the friendship came to an end. It is terrible when trust is lost in a marriage. A Bangladeshi man and his wife came to me recently to see if I could help them. Trust had been destroyed and, for the woman, the marriage is dead. The man is very sorry but it is too late. Many people are praying that there will be a resurrection of this marriage but maybe it is not possible. Trust has gone. Please learn, while you are young, to get into the habit of always being trustworthy and to help your friends to see the importance of behaving in this way. It is a very important part of your character. Without it, you will never have good friends or family life. Let us



have a good school, of good people who can be trusted so that we can be proud of our school. People who are part of our school and steal things damage our confidence in our school and their own characters.

God bless you.

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## HIGH THINKING AND SIMPLE LIVING

***Assembly 11- January 20th 2003***

One of the ways in which you show you are part of the The British School is that you wear a uniform. We have tried to make it as comfortable and acceptable as possible and the Senior Girls now have the choice of wearing a shalwar kameez.

But it is very interesting how, in every country, girls and boys try to be different from one another. In the very cold weather, some of you have been wearing some of your warm clothes and not the uniform and I sympathise, especially as the cold weather is not for a long time here, but, in the matter of clothes that are on the border-line between uniform and non-uniform, I am giving the form teachers the authority to tell you what non-uniform clothes are acceptable in special conditions and what are not.

What is not acceptable is what some of our teachers have noticed and we are all uncomfortable about – which is that some of you have been wearing designer clothes and trainers and bringing expensive things to school to make the others look at you with jealousy – *hingsha* – yes? I want to say, this morning, "Stop it! Listen to what happens if this is allowed to develop!"

What has happened in some schools in the UK – and in many schools round the world - has been very bad. So many of the pupils have designer clothes that the pupils who do NOT have designer clothes are mocked by the others. Some parents have schoolchildren

who come home in floods of tears saying, "Everyone, EVERYONE, in the class has Nike trainers and they are all laughing at me in these old shoes ! You MUST buy me Nike trainers!" Parents, even poor parents are put under terrible pressure to buy clothes that are not suitable for school and far too expensive.

Worst of all, the fashion changes – so, one month, this thing is in fashion and everyone MUST have it and the next month, it is something different that everyone MUST have. It is becoming so stupid and brings so much unhappiness that I refuse to let it happen here.

I had an expensive education because my parents wanted the best for me, as your parents want the best for you. But, in my home, we did not have enough money for a fancy life-style, fashionable clothes, going to restaurants, new cars and expensive holidays. My family lived very simply so that my brothers and I could have a good education. I think some of you have families like that and I want you to know that I am on your side. We do not want to play the games that some people want to play with fashions for this and fashions for that in this school.

A boy in Year 4 yesterday brought his Gameboy computer game into school and his teacher was very worried and brought it to me and I took it in my hand until he was in the school bus going home. Do not bring expensive things to school with you. It is not necessary. It is not kind to the other students to show off the expensive things that *you* can afford. Moreover, the school cannot take responsibility for such things if they are stolen.

Many people in the world today are going crazy for consumer goods. They *must* have this or that! Some of them do not want to think seriously about anything. They want high living and low thinking. I think that it is far better, in a good school, to model simple living and high thinking. I think the world needs people like that and I hope you are going to be like that when you are adults.

God bless you.



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## GROUP CELEBRATIONS MEAN HARD WORK

***Assembly 12 – January 20th 2003***

In our school prayer, we pray that we are saved from sin and selfishness and, in the next 3 days, we shall need a lot of unselfishness if we are going to have a good time together at the Foundation Day Ceremony. When we are part of a larger group, one of the things that a large group of people can do very well, is to put on very good parties – but it needs everyone to want everyone else to have a good time as well as themselves.

When I was about 10 years old, my school had a special function. Lots of parents came and we had lots of stalls and raised money for the school and, for some reason or other, I stayed behind and found I was helping to clear up when everyone had gone home. I never forgot that experience because I learnt how much work has to go on, before an event and after an event, as well as during the event, to make it possible for people to have a really good time. If any of you have parents that put on really good parties or have big families that have big family occasions, then maybe you too have learnt, how much hard work there is, making sure that everyone has a good time.

The day after tomorrow, Thursday, is our Foundation Day Ceremony – our 4th birthday. It will also be a celebration of the fact that, yesterday, we enrolled our 300th pupil. So now our school has over 300 pupils. On Thursday, I hope your parents and you and the teachers and all our visitors are going to have a very good time but it will demand very hard work from all of us. It will also need a lot of unselfishness because, if your wish to have a good time for yourself, is greater than your wish to give others a good time, then things can start going downhill.