playing? You see young lions and tigers pouncing on Mummy's tail but, when they are playing, they are developing their muscles for the day when they will be pouncing on deer or zebra when they are hungry and need to eat. Play is practice for life. It is true of us too. When we are playing, we are practicing our life-skills. Never let anyone say to you, "It is ONLY playing! It is not important!" or "You must not play. You must work!" To be really healthy in body and mind, we need BOTH work and play. There is an English saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy!"

God bless you.

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YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY PEBBLE ON THE BEACH!

Assembly 43 – March 17th 2003

Those of you who remember the first few days of this term, will remember that some of the children from Nursery School, having been brought here on the first day of school, decided, quite quickly, that they did not like school and, please, could they go home to Mummy *now*? When a little child goes to school for the first time, many find it very hard. At home, some of these little 3 year olds have been treated as little kings and queens and, suddenly, they are in a classroom with 15 or 20 other little kings and queens! They are now one of a group and many of them do not know how to behave as one of a group.. Some of them, who have a large family at home where they have begun to learn how to fit in, find it easier. But for others it can be very difficult.

But it is not only in the Nursery School that these lessons have to be learned. All the way up the school, some of you behave as though, when you forget something or do something wrong, it

will not be treated as important. The teacher asks the whole class to do something – but *you* find it a little inconvenient and so *you* do not! You say, "I have left my work at home," or "I have forgotten a pen today," and you think the teacher will say, "Oh, never mind, dear. That does not matter!"

Education is a preparation for life. As you grow up and as you get jobs and join families – and as you create families of your own, you have to learn to fit in with what is convenient for other people. You *are* an individual but you are *also* part of a group. This school is going to be much tougher with those of you who are forgetting to bring your work to school. It has become an epidemic! Every teacher knows how maddening it is, not to have a complete set of work to mark – to have work coming in late. So I am warning you what will happen. When you do not give work in on time, the Subject teacher will write a little note and give it to your Form teacher. Your form teacher will collect these little notes and, when there are three of them, your Form Teacher will talk with the Coordinator and a letter will go to your parents or guardians and you will be 'in detention'!.

I hope all of you who *do* hand in your work on time will welcome this development. You must get very annoyed because your teachers waste so much time on those pupils who cannot organize their work properly. Please help yourself by using your diaries to help you to remember when your work needs to be handed in. Write it in your diary for the evening before. For the rest of your life, you are going to have to learn to keep a diary so start now! This is a good preparation for life.

But, more importantly, you have to be helped to *care* about being one of a group and not just a little king or queen who always wants your own way. It is right that, in a school, we treat you, as much as we can, as individuals. We have small classes which helps a lot. But learning to behave as one of a larger group of people is also a life-skill that you must learn. There is an English expression, "You are not the only pebble on the beach!"

A pebble is a little round stone that is found on many beaches. It means, 'You are not the only person in the world!" "You are not the only person in your class!" You have to learn, as everyone must, how to be *both* an individual *and* one of a group. It is not easy but some of you are not learning fast enough. So we are going to be more strict with you to help you to wake up to your responsibilities. I am sure most parents will be very glad that we are doing this and helping those of them who are also trying to help you to develop this life-skill. I expect some of your parents say to you at times, "You are not the only person in this family!"

God bless you.

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STORING PROVISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Assembly 44 – March 17th 2003

Take Cyril the Squirrel – stuffed toy/puppet

The winter in the UK is very cold – snow on the ground and ice. Most of the plants have lost all their leaves and nothing is growing. The only green things are the special evergreen trees whose leaves are strong and leathery so they can stand the cold. Humans need fires and central heating to keep them warm – and animals that have no protection die. In most places, the farm animals have to come indoors. But some of the wild animals are very sensible. They go to sleep for the winter. It is called 'hibernation' – from the Latin ' hiber' meaning winter. This is a very clever way of managing weather that you do not like. You just go to sleep. But hibernation is a special sleep – the animal's temperature drops, its heart rate slows down. Anyone finding such an animal would think it was dead. If there is a warm day, the animal may wake up and move around a little bit, eat food that it has stored, and then fall asleep again. One of these animals is called the SQUIRREL.

Let me introduce you to a friend of mine. *(Take Cyril out of bag.)* He is a squirrel and his name is Cyril. Cyril the Squirrel. Can you say SQUIRREL? .....You are much cleverer than I was when I was little, I couldn't say 'squirrel' – I said 'squiggle'. The native squirrel in the UK is the beautiful RED squirrel but the grey squirrels arrived and they were bigger and more aggressive and now the red squirrel is very rare and is a protected species. (What's that, Cyril? I am making him feel embarrassed? I know, you are a grey squirrel – not so exclusive but you are very nice. You need not feel upset!)

Squirrels live in trees. I have a wonderful big cedar tree next to my house in the UK and there are squirrels in it. They are very good climbers and jump from branch to branch. All squirrels hibernate in winter and, to prepare for this, they store nuts all through the autumn. You know what nuts are? Squirrels collect nuts in their mouths but (what are you saying, Cyril?) Yes, I was going to say that – you hold the nuts in your mouth but you do not eat them. *(Blow out cheeks.)* One sees squirrels going round looking like this.....and then they hide them somewhere carefully. The problem is that squirrels often forget where they have hidden their nuts. This is very good because sometimes they have put them in a hole in the ground and, if they are not disturbed and eaten, then those nuts grow into trees later. The squirrels hide the nuts so that they know that, if they wake up in the winter on a warm day, they can have a meal. Then, when they wake up in the spring, when there are no nuts, they can eat them then also. (Yes, Cyril, the nuts are very good in Bangladesh too..)

Several animals store food for the winter. In fact, people have to do that in all countries where the winter is very cold. There is nothing growing in the ground through the winter so that, in the days before refrigerators, all people had to live on was what they