must be to fall down?" It would be very strange. Such a person must be very disturbed! Of course, it is natural for a baby to fall down when it is learning to walk! Scientists tell us that learning to walk needs many different muscles to work in many different ways. Walking is a very complicated thing for the body to learn so it is natural for the baby to fall down when it is learning to coordinate all these different muscles! It is as difficult for the baby to learn how to walk as for you to pass your examinations…

And you and I, when we are learning something, we usually do it badly, to begin with. When you learn to ride your bicycle, you fall off. When you learn to cook, you burn the food. When we learn to care for people, sometimes we get it wrong. One day, maybe, you must learn how to be married. This is very hard work and you will make many mistakes. There is no shame – no *lodja* – in making mistakes – it is normal. We should not say, when we are learning how to write, or do Mathematics or learning to play cricket, "How terrible! I have made a mistake! I must stop trying because I must be very stupid!" No, we try – maybe again and again and we learn to do a very important thing – WE LEARN HOW TO LEARN FROM OUR MISTAKES.

This is a big problem teaching in Bangladesh. In your culture, you tend to feel shame very quickly. In Haluaghat, where I was teaching before, I used to mark a piece of work for a form and give it back and say, "Now we shall look at your mistakes!" and look up and all the papers had disappeared! The red pen had made marks on the papers so the students felt they had been very bad. And I would say, "Get out the papers! Look at your mistakes! There is no shame in making mistakes. You should only be ashamed if you make the SAME mistake again and again. So that you do not do that, you must look at your mistakes and understand your mistakes and do your corrections." We all have to LEARN FROM OUR MISTAKES and we should all help each other to learn from our mistakes.

So please remember, you must never be rude and teasing to someone who makes mistakes. Let us help one another so that we understand our mistakes and can always learn from them so that we make progress and do more and more things well.

God bless you.

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LEARNING TO DO WITHOUT TEACHERS!

Assembly 5 January 9th 2003

(Show L-plates)

There is just one more thing that I want to say about LEARNING. We all learn in different ways and at different speeds. Our brains are like computers but each one is wired differently. Some people can learn very easily through spoken words. Some need pictures and drama, some need music and some need practical examples. Just because someone learns in a different way from you, does not mean that he or she is stupid. So you must respect each other's methods of learning. In teacher training today, teachers are encouraged to use different methods to explain different things so that all the different sorts of brains inside the heads of the different pupils in the class can make the right connections.

In some Bangladeshi schools, pupils do not feel free to inform the teachers that they have not understood something. This is very strange for we should all try and help one another in the learning game. Teachers can learn from one another and pupils can learn from one another. Sometimes, a teacher has to accept that a pupil who is having difficulties may find another pupil who understands the subject more helpful than the teacher! So we are all both teachers and learners. As soon as we know something, we can teach someone else. I am sure that some of you are teaching your

little brothers and sisters at home and some of you may be teaching your parents how to use the computer or the video!

But there is something very strange about teaching. Imagine that you get a puncture in your bicycle and you do not know how to mend it. Some person comes along and teaches you how to mend a puncture. Fine! Now you can do it yourself – and you do not need the person who taught you! When you have taught someone something, then they do not need you any more. So the aim of teachers is to make themselves unnecessary. Teachers exist so that you do can learn to do things yourself, become independent and accept responsibility for your own life. When a teacher has taught for many years, we have seen pupils grow from weakness to strength, from dependency to independency. It is a very exciting job to see someone you remember as a little pupil, able to cope with life and do something useful and have their own life. When you walk out of the school gate and say, "'Bye, 'bye," for the last time, then that is the completion of our work, because you are able to live without The British School. This school exists so that, one day, you can leave it, because you do not need it any more. Right now, you need our help to learn many different skills – and, above all, learn what it means to be YOU – and the very special person you are.

God bless you.

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LEARNING TO BE PART OF OUR SCHOOL – TIME-TABLES

Assembly 6 - Sunday January 12th 2003

(Take piece of jigsaw puzzle and a time-table)

(Hold up the piece of jigsaw puzzle) Do any of you know what this is? … I wonder if any of you can guess what the theme of this week's assemblies is going to be? Learning to be just one piece in

a big jigsaw puzzle called The British School! Learning to be part of our school. When you are at home, some of you are part of a much smaller group. Here you have to learn to be part of a much bigger group. If over 300 pupils all behaved at school as they do at home – there could be chaos!

To start with, we need to have a daily routine – and part of this routine is called a TIME-TABLE. Many Bangladeshis call this a 'routine' but that is not the correct English word – that is 'Banglish'. I believe a school with the name of The British School, should teach you very good English and not Banglish. *This* is called a time-table. Can you say that? (Spell it…) What do our time-tables tell us? Now, the word 'routine' is a very good word. It does not mean 'time-table' – it means a system – a way of doing something regularly – and we need routines here as well as time-tables. We need to have ways of doing things that help us to be 300 people working well together in one building.

May I ask you to think very carefully today about the routine BETWEEN lessons. When one teacher leaves you, that is not the time to fight, or play or stare out of the window or go to sleep. That is the time when you go to the toilet – I do not want to see pupils going to and from their classrooms in lesson-time unless they are very young indeed or unless there is an emergency of some kind. Between lessons is also the time when you take a drink, if you want one, either from the drinking fountain or from your water-bottle. Try not to do that in the middle of a lesson. Most of all it is the time when you put into your bag the books you used in the last lesson and get out of your bag the books you need in the next lesson so that you are ready when the next teacher comes in. Your next teacher has prepared the lesson and is ready for you – you must be ready for him or her. You should stand by your desks to greet the next teacher with all your books ready and your pencils sharpened or pens at hand.

Between lessons is also the time for what my Principal called 'a wriggle' – do you know what a wriggle is? When I was at