Please be sensible about your bodies at examination time. You do not sit in one chair and your body in another! You are together and, if your body is tired and hungry and sluggish, you will not do well in your examinations. Please get into a good routine this week. Go to bed in enough time to give yourselves 8 or 9 hours' good sleep before getting up early. Do not revise late at night and so have only a short sleep. If you have not revised before 8 o'clock on the evening before an exam, it is too late. Stop work about 8 o-clock and do something relaxing before you go to bed – play with the dog or the baby brother or sister or watch a little television or read a nice book or play chess or practice your guitar. (Incidentally - no one turned up for guitar lessons on Thursday – why not?).

Then there is breakfast. You cannot do a good morning's work, least of all in examination time, on little or no food. You need something with a bit of fat in it, to slow down your rate of digestion so that the food lasts longer in your stomach. You need some protein to be brain-food but, if you are feeling a little nervous, you do not want anything too difficult to digest. An egg is ideal. Tell your parents from me, "Mrs Robinson says it would be very good if I had an egg for breakfast." Not hard-boiled as that takes most of the nourishment out of it. Try and get a little exercise before you enter the school gates to get your blood circulating to your brain. Walk a little or skip or run round the garden – or roof.

When you are faced with your examination paper, you will probably look at the first questions and panic. "I cannot do this." Calm down. Do not start writing immediately. Read the question paper carefully. If it says, "Do three of the following questions," do not do all 5 questions or the examiner will put his or her pen through the last 2 which may be your best ones. Make sure you understand what you have to do. Think before you write and then write carefully. Take your time. If some idiot decides to race through the paper and then march out of the room long before



anyone else, do not let that person make you feel inferior. What he or she does is their business. You take as long as you need. Most people who leave examination rooms before the end of the time are very foolish. Most of them have not re-read their paper and checked it for mistakes. If you mis-timed your paper and finish early and if you see that your paper looks very messy and you have half an hour or more to spare, think of re-writing some of the questions – and crossing out the old ones. That could give you several more marks. God bless you.

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## THE MILLENIUM RESOLUTION – LET THERE BE - 6

***Assembly 62 – Tuesday April 15th 2003***

This is the last Assembly of this term. Our next Assembly will be on the first day of the Summer Term on Sunday May 4th. Next week, I shall be going away for a week to Nepal, while you are doing your exams and having your holidays. I have only had 3 days' off since November 1st and I hate to admit it but I am not as young as I was so I need a holiday. I wish you all the best in your examinations and hope you have a nice few days' holiday before the new term begins. We are giving ourselves very short holidays this year, as you know, because we are changing from a January to December school year to an August to July one so our timings are very odd and it is hard for you and also hard for your teachers. We have to begin the new School Year in September this year. But one of the lovely things about the new sort of school year will be the way it will take the pressure off the winter months when the weather is at its best.

Let us remind ourselves of the Millenium Resolution – Let there be ------- and the last phrase is 'Let there be, from now on, a

new start.' Yesterday was the Bengali New Year and, at every New Year celebration, we think of throwing away the old year with all that has been bad about it – and making a new start - a new beginning. It is a time of hope – as long as you have faced up to those things that have made the old year bad. We must not play games and pretend the bad things have never happened. In fact, you cannot throw rubbish away, unless you get hold of it. If you are standing there, with the bucket of rubbish beside you, you can say how terrible it is, how much you want to get rid of it and how *important* it is to get rid of it but if you do not bend down, pick up the bucket and throw the contents away, then you just look stupid. You have got to admit it is there! This is the whole point about forgiveness. You cannot forgive someone who keeps saying, "I did not do it! That is nothing to do with me!" We have to face up to what is wrong in us and say, "I do not want that rubbish in my life! I do not like that part of me and I shall throw it away and choose not to be like that." There is a saying in English, "Turning over a new leaf." It is an invitation to start again.

There are times in our lives when it is right for us to offer people a new start. Sometimes in a school, a pupil has done something very bad and foolish but is very sorry and says they will not do it again. After a lot of discussion, everyone decides that he or she needs a new start. Thank God, time after time, pupils take the opportunity and do make a new start. Sometimes, two people are very close friends and then one of the friends does something stupid. If one of them does something really awful, the friendship may be dead, but often, if is not too bad, the friends decide that they will make a new start. It also happens in other relationships.

If we do not offer people new starts then the rubbish never gets thrown away and bad feelings go on. Old enmities are like a fire – and, if a fire is fed, it will never go out. It is very sad. But sometimes, the miracle happens and people say,



especially as they get older, "This is stupid. We should be friends again. We are all older and wiser. Our children can be friends also. Let us let the past go away and face a better future." When this happens, there are a lot of happy tears, as people forgive one another and start again with a happier relationship. It is very sad when people die *before* they can make friends again. The new start never happened! Because we never know when we are going to die, it is very important to forgive people and make friends with them again quickly. Do not let the fires of hatred go on burning.

We are all human. We all make mistakes. How important it is for us to forgive one another and offer one another a new start. A Happy New Year to you – and God bless you.

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## STILL LEARNING FROM OUR MISTAKES

***Assembly 64 - May 5th 2003***

Tonight, our minibuses are taking our team of dancers to the International School for a dance exhibition by some of the bigger English-medium schools. I am very proud and pleased that our school will be represented.

Very early last term I spoke to you on the subject of learning from your mistakes but I need to say something again because you will be getting your examination papers given back to you this week and your teachers will be going over the questions with you and you may be tempted to think this is just a boring exercise and an excuse for a little sleep. There are some VERY good reasons why you should NOT go to sleep when your teacher is going over your exam papers!

Firstly, it is quite hard for people of your culture to face up to their mistakes so, although it is very important to do so, it is not