

207 English schools

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ences and necessary training.
A good number of teachers of
these schools teach in more than one
school as the authorities do not pay
them adequately. As such, most of
the teachers do not have any formal
appointment letters. In some schools
fresh pass-outs or mere 'O'/A' level
students are found working as
teachers.

Many English medium schools
affiliated with the British Council do
not have books on various subjects.
The school management committees
put this burden on the guardians who
move heaven and earth to get the
books. The schools use the Bengali
medium books and the guardians
engage tutors on every subject to get
the Bengali books translated into
English.

The authorities frequently search
for smart and good looking young
girls and boys as teachers, who can
well please the anxious parents and
guardians. They also go for appointing
the relatives of the powerful
bureaucrats and influential people of
the society so that their institutions
can run without any trouble", said a
source.

Authorities of a number of these
schools also mislead the simple
minded parents and guardians by
using vague affiliation. A good number
of these English medium schools
are housed in the rented buildings in
the city's posh areas including Dhan-
mondi, Gulshan, Banani and
Baridhara. Most of these school
buildings lack playground and labora-
tories. As these buildings are built
for residential purpose the rooms are
not suitable for class-rooms. Over 40
kids of a section attend in a room
that can hardly accommodate 20
students.

Moreover, once a student is admit-
ted into an English medium school,
he or she becomes isolated from the
society and local culture. "Students
are given books imported specially
from India. The syllabus of these
schools seldom cover any chapter
which truly depicts our society and
culture. This is really ironical that
from vulnerable young ages, our
children are learning about a differ-
ent society and culture", the sources
added.

It is also very difficult to find out
the exact number of the English
medium schools and kindergartens in
the capital as there is no particular
department of the government to
look after or control it.

The schools affiliated with the
British Council are Willes Little
Flower School, Bangladesh Interna-
tional Tutorial, Scholastica School,
Dhanmondi Tutorial, Maple Leaf
International School, Onnesha Interna-
tional School, The Aga Khan
School, Saint Jude's Tutorial, Man-
arat International College, Oxford
International School, Loreto School,
Sun Beams, Dhaka Grammar
School, SFX Green Herald Interna-
tional School, Lyceum International
School, Holy Child International
School, South Breeze Siddiq's Tuto-
rial, Blooming Buds School, Green
Gems International School, Master-
mind School, Dawn Grammar
School and Omni International
School.

English schools mushrooming with inadequate facilities

Tareq Al Naser

The so-called English medium and
kindergarten schools with in adequate
qualified teaching staff, libraries
and laboratories are mushrooming in
the city and getting increased num-
ber of children admitted to their
institutions. In fact, they are doing
brisk business instead of serving the
cause of education.

There are over 200 English
medium schools in the city, of them
only 23 are affiliated with the British
Council as candidates from these
schools appear to 'O', 'A' levels and
Senior Cambridge examinations each
year. The exact figure was not avail-
able at the Ministry of Education.

Admission to these schools re-
mains open almost throughout the
year provided full payment of the
prescribed annual charges, tuition
fees and other charges are paid.

At present annual charges and
tuition fees of these schools have
increased abnormally. Annual
charges of each student from Play

group to Class X now range between
Taka 5,000 and Taka 10,000 which
was Taka 3,000 last year. While, the
monthly tuition fees for each student
from Play group to Class VII vary
from Taka 600 to Taka 1,500 com-
pared to Taka 500 last year.

Tuition fees for each student from
Class VIII to Class X with computer
facility are between Taka 2,000 and
Taka 5,000 up from Taka 1,500 on an
average last year. Besides it is man-
datory for the students to buy books,
study materials, dresses etc. from
their respective schools or from
shops referred by the institutions at a
cost usually two or three times higher
than the actual market price.

Another interesting feature is that
annual promotion of a student in
these schools is seldom denied for
pleasing the parents and guardians.
Although some students cut a very
sorry figure at their examinations
scoring less than the usual pass mark,
the school authorities have innovated

an "eye wash" provision for these
types of students. After almost a
month of the annual examinations,
the authorities make special arrange-
ments to hold trial examinations with
25 to 30 marks on each of the
subjects the students could not pass.

If any student fails to come out
successful in the trial examinations,
the authorities even gladly permit
him or her to take admission into the
next higher class for fear of losing
students.

Despite shortage in teaching staff
and other limitations authorities in
some important Bengali medium
schools of the city are now opening
the English medium units with a view
to gaining greater financial benefits.

A vast majority of the teaching
staff of these English medium
schools are not acquainted with the
'O' level syllabus of London Uni-
versity and lacking adequate educa-
tional qualifications, teaching experi-

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