

# RESPECTED PRINCIPALS, PLEASE TAKE NOTE



MAYABEE ARANNYA

For years, my school's "Suggestion Box" has been void of a single suggestion and has instead become home to dust and cobwebs. However, fellow school-goers always seem to have complaints about their schools and ideas on how to improve them. To get them to finally speak up, students of different schools were asked one question: "What would you do if you were principal of your school?"

Rayiana Yusuf, 18, A levels student of Mangrove School, said, "I would introduce regular sports. Many schools don't have fields for outdoor sports, so I'd like to have a huge one where students would be able to play sports like football. Football is sometimes considered a sport for boys; I'd like girls to have the opportunity to prove themselves as well."

"I would like my students to not only focus on good grades, but also learn good values. To achieve this, we first need to minimise the 'generation gap'. To understand kids, you must be young at heart and think like them. There must be a combination of energy and experience in teachers. Also, all students should be encouraged to play sports, since physical fitness is of utmost importance," answered Syed Arham Ahsan, 18, A levels, Maple Leaf International School.

Aside from sports, students also seemed to be concerned about being able to work on their talents. Mushfiq Rahman, 18, a HSC student at St. Joseph Higher Secondary School, said, "I would create more opportunities for the students to showcase their talents. I believe that everyone deserves the chance to hone their skills and contribute in their own way."

"I would accommodate a space where talented students would be able to perform and I would also start a talent hunt programme at my school. I would encourage students to participate in eco-friendly activities like tree planting, too," said Masha Islam, 18, A levels, Maple Leaf International

School.

When students consider applying for higher studies abroad, one of the biggest setbacks they face is having inadequate experience in extra-curricular activities; participation in these activities is almost always an important requirement. "I would change some of my school's rules and introduce more inter-school competitions. I would work on enhancing the extra-curricular activities offered at my school. I would also listen to my students' suggestions and take them into consideration," said Maisha Samiha\*, 18, A levels, South Point School and College.

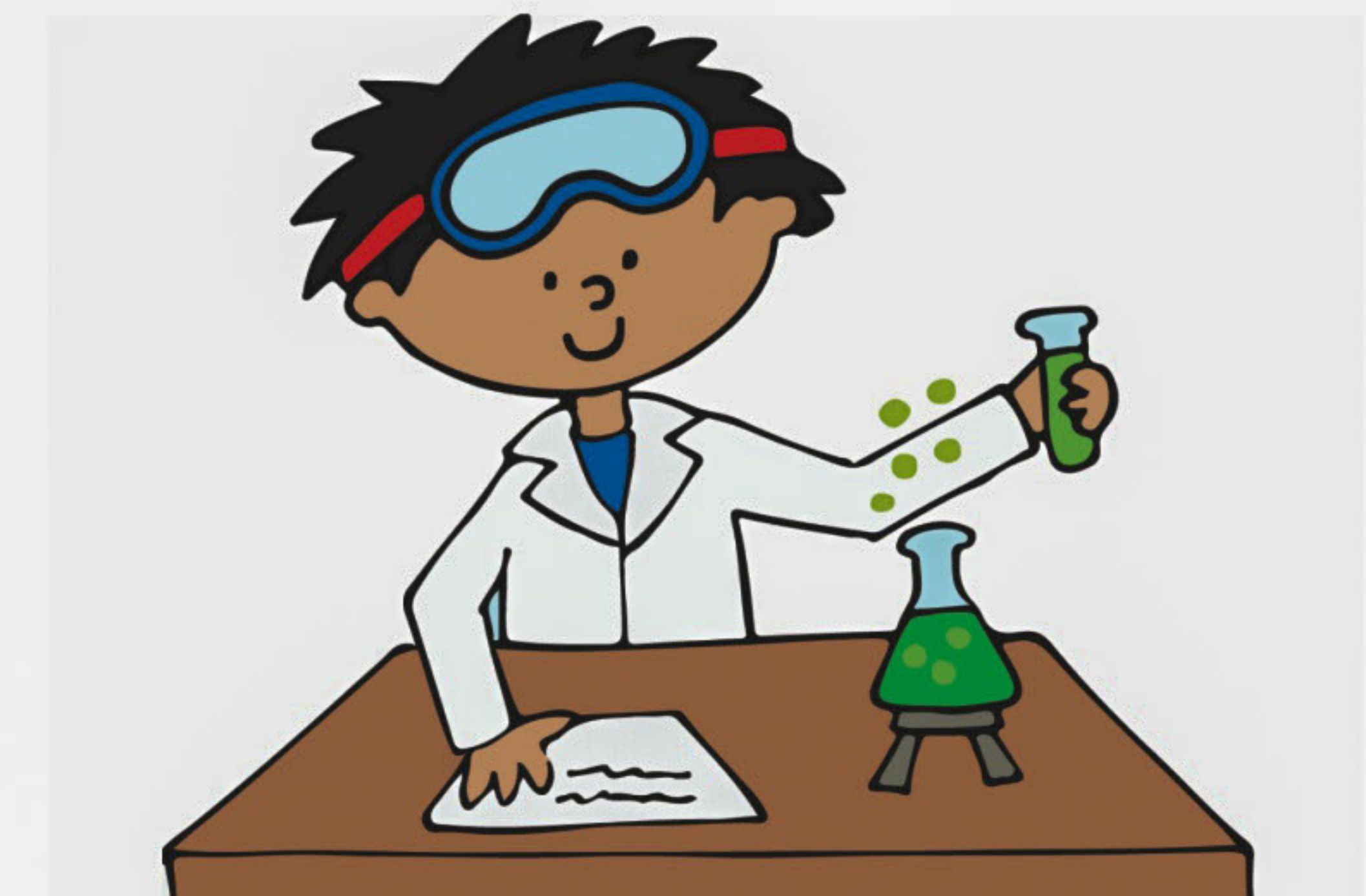
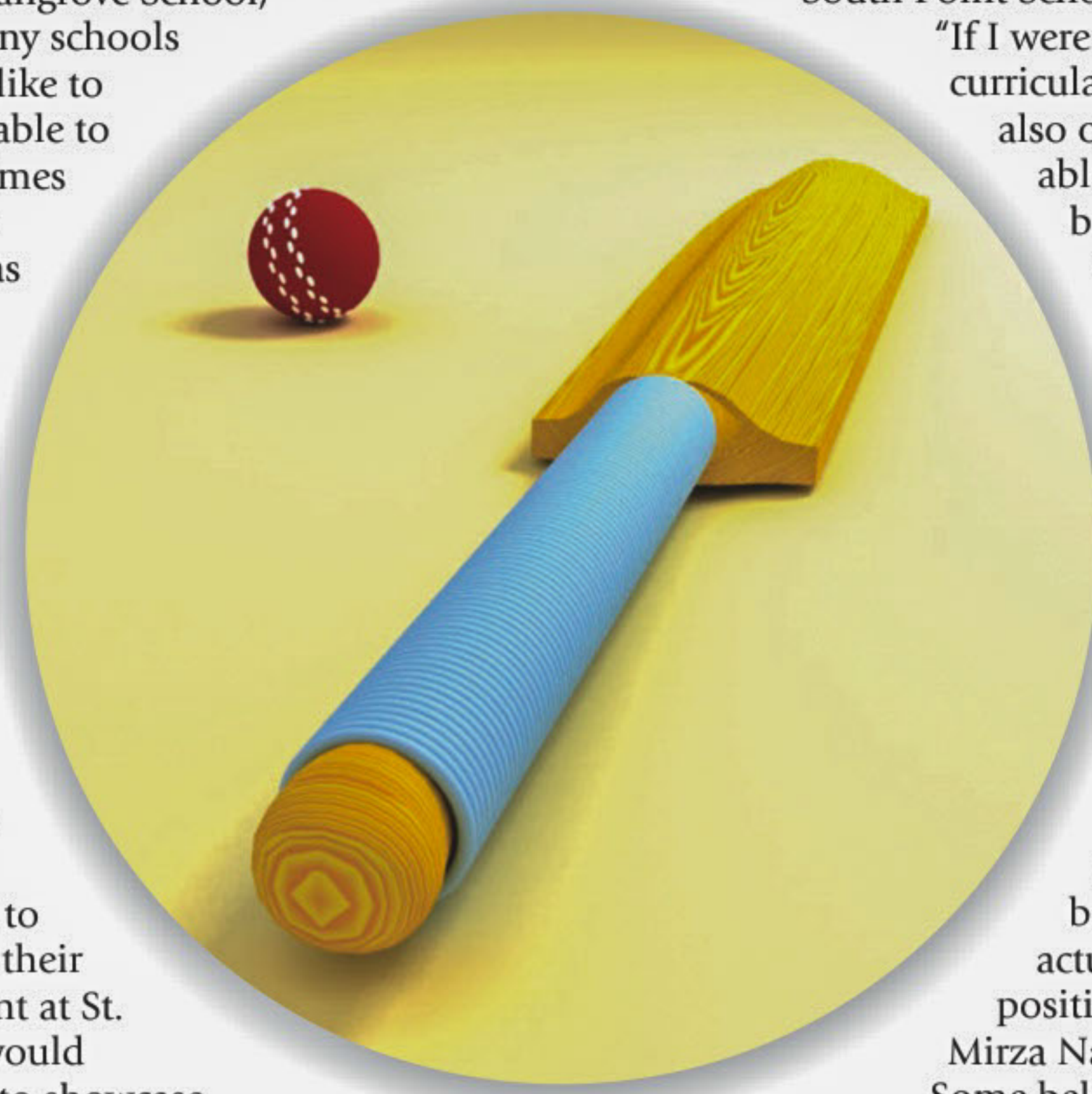
"If I were the principal, I would introduce a lot more extra-curricular activities, and hold events and festivals. I would also open laboratories so that the students would be able to apply knowledge obtained through textbooks," said Sumaiya Akter Rupanti, 19, A levels, Dhanmondi Tutorial.

Some schools also have a lack of field trips, limiting the students' learning to the four walls of a classroom. Israk Iram Oyshe, 17, an A levels student at European Standard School, shared how this could be changed at her school: "I would arrange a programme called 'Let's explore Bangladesh' and take my students to visit new locations every year. On a side note, I would also keep the washrooms cleaner."

"I would try to ensure mutual respect between teachers and students. Teachers should respect the privacy and rights of their students and try to be their role models. Only then would students actually pay attention in class and be inspired to bring positive change in themselves and the school itself," said Mirza Nayeem Ahmed, 18, A levels, Dhanmondi Tutorial.

Some believe that principals need to have a more hands-on approach with their students. Swad Jabir Islam, 15, a 9th grader at Scholastica, said, "I would observe the classrooms myself and provide feedback to both teachers and students. I would instruct my students on how to do better academically and also provide them with life lessons that would help them down the road."

"I would personally read short stories that contain moral lessons to my



students and encourage them to share their thoughts and experiences with teachers and fellow classmates. I would also see to it that difficult subjects aren't taught one after the other so that my students are able to absorb the lessons more efficiently," said Tanaz Jahan, 19, A levels, Mastermind School.

Tahmid Rahman, 19, an A levels student at Mastermind International School (Chittagong), said, "I would talk to foreigners associated with schools to get to know their perspectives. This way, I would acquire ideas that might not be apparent. My main motive would always be to spark interest in students to study by themselves, without the teachers or myself forcing them."

In Bangladesh, most students are not privileged with the best facilities or the best learning methods but there's no dearth of talent and willingness to learn. Here's to the future nation-builders and teachers; hope they can revolutionise our education system.

\*Name has been changed as per the interviewee's request.

Mayabee Arannya is a confused soul still searching for a purpose. Give her advice on life at [facebook.com/mayabee.arannya](https://www.facebook.com/mayabee.arannya)