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## Nurturing youngsters for a better future



Healthy: Students stay in school after their formal classes to engage in physical activities.

IT is common knowledge that the children of former sports administrator, the late Mobarak Ahmad, share their father's passion. Mobarak's selfless contribution in his pursuits resulted in his children being keen in sports.

Recently, the Mobarak family spread their wings to another field to continue their father's legacy.

Zarina Mobarak, 61, serving in her capacity as Beaconhouse Malaysia resident director, took up the task of putting things in order at newly-acquired Beaconhouse Sri Inai primary and secondary school in Petaling Jaya.

"Our family's involvement in education can be traced back to our great-grandfather at Clifford School in Kuala Kangsar," said Zarina, who is the fourth of 11 siblings in the Mobarak clan.

"Our aim is to nurture the younger generation for a better future. Although we teach the children, it is interesting to note how much we learn from the youngsters instead," she added.

After obtaining her teaching qualification from Bradford University in Britain, Zarina put her trade into practise in Pakistan for 30 years.

She started her career as a teacher and rose to her current position.

"I worked for the Beaconhouse Group education provider with 90 schools in Pakistan for 22 years. I then decided to come home to contribute to the community," she said.

The education provider incorporates pedagogical methodology from Britain with emphasis on continuous teachers' training programmes.

Beaconhouse is established in Bangladesh, Oman, Pakistan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Britain.

For the new academic year, Beaconhouse Sri Inai primary and secondary school in Petaling Jaya recorded an enrolment of more than 300 students from Year One to Form Five.



Variety: Students selecting their food for morning tea break.

“Our enrolment has increased by 100% compared to last year.

“We have about 40 teaching staff. Our teacher to students ratio is one to 15.”

The school follows the local education curriculum to prepare the students for local public examinations combining conventional teaching methods with new approaches.

“We are not an international school with international teaching syllabus. Our aim is to provide quality education for the middle class at a reasonable rate.

“We want to arm our students with holistic values through physical, social and academic development to nurture thinking students. We even cater to those with learning difficulties, to give them an opportunity to learn,” said Zarina.

Following a major renovation over the recent school holiday, the school has been given a major facelift.

National Sports Council (NSC) junior development coach for athletics Ishtiaq Mobarak, who is the fifth sibling, said their upbringing moulded them to take on new challenges.

“Family members with diversified professional skills are chipping in to assist,” said Ishtiaq, who volunteered to assist as a sports consultant.

Shirin and Shaheen are the other two siblings involved in the running of the school. Shaheen looks after the food and beverage.

Plans to transform the lush area at the back of the school, complete with auditorium, swimming pool and outdoor adventure course, are in the pipeline for the second phase to provide better facilities.

Currently, sports facilities available at the school's premises are indoor badminton courts, table tennis, futsal court, basketball court and netball court.

In addition, cricket cages will also be set up at the school to encourage the students to pick up the game.

“Our students enjoy playing at the school after their formal classes, which ends at 3.30pm. Some will stay back until 5pm for physical activities. It is only fair that we provide them with a safe place to play,” said Zarina.

Athletics initiation programmes drawn up include multi-lateral training in athletics and gymnastics.

“Former top national wushu exponent Ho Ro Bin will guide the students when mastering the art. The budding footballers will undergo training programme with the Arsenal Soccer School,” said Ishtiaq.

“We are inculcating sports culture among the students at school. In future, we will try to incorporate sports science subject for the students.”

Three other Beaconhouse pre-schools are located at Subang Jaya, Bangsar and Jalan Gasing.

“Our next goal is to expand our services to other parts of the country,” said Zarina.