

Dear Freinet Comrades,

We acknowledge receipt of your letter to us and express our appreciation for your concern and willingness to accept us into the Freinet family.

Concerning members in the Freinet Movement Ghana who teach in Missionary schools (Methodist, St. John’s and Catholic schools) we state categorically that they are teachers trained by the government of Ghana in Government Teacher Training Colleges and are on the payroll of the government of Ghana. Teaching in such schools in Ghana is not determined by the faith that one (a teacher) adheres to. It is determined by the government of Ghana, availability of vacancy and where one’s services are needed. One can be an atheist and yet be posted to a Methodist, Catholic, Zion, Anglican or Presbyterian schools to teach. The teacher who has been posted to such schools has his personal rights which are respected. Indeed, in Ghana human rights and freedom of association and other personal liberties are held in high esteem.

We have written extensively on the system of education in Ghana to the Freinet Headquarters in Canada. We stated how the educational system in Ghana works. The entire educational system is under the control of the central government. It is responsible for the provision of infrastructure, training, posting, transfer and payment of teachers and their salaries, supervision, policy implementation, design and development of curriculum for the schools.

On why some of the schools in Ghana still maintain names of these churches, we attach a write up on the situation as **appendix A** to this letter. It explains how some schools in Ghana have such names. We state emphatically that their names do not in any way imply their influence on the schools and their teachers. All schools in Ghana are under the full control of the government of Ghana.

Teachers who have accepted the Freinet pedagogy use the skills and knowledge in Freinet pedagogy to apply the content of the syllabus designed by the government. This makes lessons interesting as it becomes child centered (the child as the reference point).

We state unequivocally, that Freinet Movement Ghana will fully adopt the guiding document of the charter of the Modern School Movement.

**Appendix A**

**THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN GHANA**

Ghana’s school system is patterned after the British system, but underwent a number of changes over the past 60 years. Before 1974, for instance, the system was structured into six years of elementary education and four years of secondary education. At some point, it also changed to ten (10) years elementary (six years primary and four years middle) schooling. After elementary school, students could further go on to do five years secondary education or pursue technical vocational education. Those who pursued five years secondary education could further go on to complete a two-year UK-based equivalent advanced level (A-level) university-preparatory curriculum before enrolling in three-year undergraduate programs (10+5+2+3).

At present, the system is divided into two years kindergarten, six years of primary, three years of junior high education (jointly referred to as **basic education**), followed by three years of senior high education and four-year university programs (2+6+3+3+4). Basic education until grade nine is compulsory for all Ghanaian children, but senior high education is not but free for all who enroll.

Basic education in Ghana begins at age 4 when the child is expected to enroll at kindergarten one.

**THE INVOLVMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS BODIES IN GHANA’S EDUCATION SYSTEM.**

Missionary involvement in education in the then Gold Coast now Ghana, dates as far back as 1828 when the Presbyterian Church started operating schools. These efforts were complemented by the Methodists and the Roman Catholics. Since then the church has, been at the forefront of education in the present day Ghana.

The missionaries used education as a tool to propagate the gospel. They taught it more convenient and easier to evangelize people who could read and write than illiterate community. They, therefore, set up schools in all parts of the country to teach people how to read and write so that they could read and understand the Holy Bible. The missionaries also set up training colleges to train indigenes to become teachers and pastors (catechists) in the schools. This eventually led to the establishment training colleges across the length and breadth of the country. Missionaries operating schools in Ghana include Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, A.M.E Zion, Roman Catholic and the Salvation Army. As socio-political climate of the country changed with the attainment of Ghana’s independence, the curriculum of the various schools and training colleges also changed to prepare the human resource for the country’s developmental needs.

With the attainment of independence in March, 1957 the education of the masses became part of the responsibilities of the government. With the religious organizations already involved in education of the people, government thought it prudent to share these responsibilities and not be seen to be usurping the frontiers of these religious bodies. Government, consequently, took over all schools in the country, as policies regarding education changed, but allowed the religious bodies to assist by running the administration of the schools. It must be emphasized that schools started by government after independence are being administered by the district and municipal assemblies within their jurisdiction. The central government has absolute control of all schools in Ghana. Thus, government became responsible for the supply of logistics, provision of infrastructure, payment of teachers’ salaries, supervision, design and implementation of policies and programmes, design of curriculum and training and posting of personnel. This is to ensure uniform education for all children in the country.

Currently, all teachers in schools in Ghana (both missionary and non-missionary) are paid from government sources. Teachers’ remuneration is based on teacher qualification, experience and grade.