



NEWSLETTER Jan - March 2013

As with our neighboring farmers the month of March has been one of reaping the fruits of seeds sown last year. To start with, the heartwarming stories of our very special children with very special (dis)abilities.

The story began last year in August when, Raju, Manu Anamika, Poonam and Mahua started attending the Shaurya School. The school aims to impart skills to disabled children. Skills that will help them integrate better in their social environment and allow them to become self-reliant. The first feedback that our children received was very good. The environment they have had at KM meant that they had a huge advantage when it came to their ability to communicate, to respond to their teachers and moreover they were able to help the other disabled children attending the school.

Mahua began to hear sounds perhaps for the first time in his life! His teacher sent us a video of Mahua responding to audio signals with the help of a hearing aid. He has made remarkable progress in a very short time and his obvious delight at going through the audio exercises was a treat to watch.



Poonam has developed into a determined young lady with an remarkable ability to stay focused on her task, she has turned out to be quite a leader and organizer and the school has taught her to make presentation to visitors.

Anamika has been able to recognize her behavior problems and learnt to find a way around them. She has always been interested in Kitchen work and has learnt a number of new dishes and mocktails.

Manu has turned out to be a focused young man with a good deal of self respect. He is learning to read and write and use electronic devices such as cameras, and telephones. He is a keen learner and is showing speedy progress.

Raju has shown a talent for packaging and cooking. He is a keen learner and is working on increasing his efficiency and speed.

All five of them have shown a remarkable improvement in their behavior and self-confidence. They are even better integrated and will soon be able to take over the new bakery unit that is being set up on our campus.



Home

The new boy's hostel is finally complete! We also have a new warden for the boys. It is good for the boys to have an older man, among our women dominated staff, whom they can relate to.

The last three months were a little low on outside activities as exams are coming up and the children have been focusing on their studies. Some children are taking extra tuitions, and everyone is participating in the increased physical and sports activities and well as computer and cooking classes.

Indu has brought in a new and very positive energy. With her experience she has been able to fulfill their need for individual attention and address their emotional needs. Very skillfully with the use of verse and rhythm she made up short songs about each of the children, these served as a gentle reminder to them to improve their behavior, and grooming.

Thanks to Indu's initiative the younger kids learnt about soil and plants. They got an opportunity to plant their own vegetables for the first time. In addition to this they learnt how to make jams and marmalade from the mulberries and oranges on our trees. We had a diverse and abundant crop of vegetables this time and the children learnt many different ways of cooking each of these vegetables.



Rahul our new physical educator keeps everyone busy with lots of exercise and innovative games. Using waste materials he has designed games that teach children the importance of team-work, coordination and communication. This has been a great especially for the boys and keeps them occupied and out of trouble.



The children took their board games off the boards, which keep on breaking and painted them on the floors instead. The colorful floors have added some more fun to our already colorful campus and they have permanent games on the floor.

Education and career

The months of January, February and March typically see the children preparing for and writing exams followed by the joys and sometimes no so joyous results. This year all of the 9 primary students did very well with Manju topping her class in with the 1st Position. All the five girls at the secondary and senior secondary levels passed their exams and were promoted to next level. Six boys also cleared their exams, only Rajkumar is still waiting for his result. His was the 10th class board exam.

Lakshmi has been accepted at the Aurobindo Ashram for further vocational training. Ruby and Basant have also been accepted to the next level in their respective training programs and will stay at the Ashram for one more year.

Deepak has been enjoying art school and has been promoted to the next level. He now has another three years at school ahead of him.

Veena worked with the older kids giving them advice and guidance as to which careers to choose.

Health

All the children except two have been in good health during this quarter.

Abdul is suffering from an unknown disease, which the doctors are not being able to diagnose properly. After conducting a number of tests the govt. hospital in Faridabad had referred him onto the TB hospital in Delhi. After conducting a number of tests they have referred him back to Faridabad with the advice to give him DOT medicine for tuberculosis. He is now going to the hospital every alternate day to take his medicine.

Rukhsar came down with Typhoid three weeks ago. She is recovering now, but very slowly. We also found her to be in a state of depression and are arranging sessions with a counselor.

Govinda is also going for counseling as he seems disturbed and is facing behavior issues.

Poonam is also being taken care of by a counselor.

We have conducted a series of workshops on behavior and sexuality.

Festival and other Highlight

While on the subject of color, Holi (the festival of color) was a great hit again this year. We had a great time smearing colors on old and new friends before dunking them in water. The days before Holi were spent experimenting with different materials to make eco friendly powdered colors. organic holi colors out of material available on our campus...like...multani mitti, kumkum, stone powder, maida, haldi and flowers. Later in the afternoon, washing off the color under the @water fall@ gushing out of our neighbor's tubewell, came as an unexpected treat. You can see some very funny Holi pictures on our facebook page and hope you will be motivated to join us next year.

We had a flag hoisting ceremony on 26th January to mark the republic day.

On the 13th Jan we celebrated Lohri on the campus.

7th February celebrations this year were relatively quiet. Our two German volunteers played many new and creative games with the children. On the following weekend we all went to see the movie "Anybody can dance".

Admin

We have been successful in implementing regular reporting both for the staff and the children. This keeps us in touch with the needs of each individual at KM and helps us to be more efficient and sensitive in our work. We do regular staff meeting and inadvisule contact with children for smooth running of the home.



We have had regular inspections from the child welfare committee and the feedback we have had has been very encouraging. We have applied for a license again and going by the feedback have strong chances of getting it this time.

We conducted a workshop with our staff on the child protection policy and how to deal with children.

21st March - workshop attended by Veena and Navneet on Sexuality

We thanks to our all staff for their hard work.

Volunteers

Our two young volunteers Maria and Sophia, from the south of Germany had a great time creating new games and learning activities for the children. They taught the children English, tried out new computer related activities designed to help the children learn how to use computers, as well as taught them to cook European food.



New Projects and Jugaad

Our newest income generating venture, the baking unit has started to take shape. The oven has arrived after a long drive up from Pondicherry. You can expect our freshly baked whole wheat bread very soon brought to you by our very special children.

We participated in the Dastkari haat exhibition at Dilli haat, as well as the Dastkar Nature Bazaar at Mehrauli and Dastkar Daram at Hyderabad.

We also conducted a workshop at the annual fair of the Shri Ram School. The children there learnt how to recycle waste material.

Budget

We have to raise a total of Rs. 817,200 (\$ 15,715.00) in the coming year to keep our activities going. (All expenses are on a yearly basis)

- Shaurya school expenses (for our special needs children) including school fees, transport and other miscellaneous expenses – Rs. 6,20,400.00 (\$ 11,930.00)
- Deepak extra care for Art school expenditure – Rs. 60,000.00 (\$ 1,155.00)
- Training for Vikranata – Rs. 60,000.00 (\$ 1,155.00)
- Professional Counselor fees (visit twice in a Month) - Rs. 76,800.00 (\$ 1,475.00)

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