



# Aikiyam School

New Creation Bilingual School

Harmony Oneness Unity

ஐக்கியம் பள்ளி

January 2024

**Education to be complete must have five principal aspects corresponding to the five principal activities of the human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. Usually, these phases of education follow chronologically the growth of the individual; this, however, does not mean that one of them should replace another, but that all must continue, completing one another until the end of his life. The Mother**

## From the Principal

The aim of education should be to help students to steadily develop integrally so that future generations can continue to learn and progress, creating a youthful society.

For this purpose, a workshop on Sri Aurobindo and the Mother's ideal of INTEGRAL EDUCATION was conducted for all the teachers in Auroville on behalf of SAIER. The program created awareness related to education, and we shared very fruitful discussions about the possibilities of quality, integral education. The teachers and students of our school share the

experiences of this workshop and the way the principles of integral education are applied, throughout this newsletter...

I am also very happy to inform that 6 teachers have been selected on behalf of our school to participate in the IEP & NEP 2020 (Integral Education and New Education Policy) special seminar to be held in the capital of India, Delhi, in December and January next year.

*G. Radhakrishnanan*

## Integral Education Workshops

The Integral Education Workshops were a great platform which gave a wide experience and knowledge about awakening the soul of students in a joyful way.

I did the residential course which was quite interesting and challenging for me. All three days started with yoga at 6 am, breakfast and then followed by a talk by different educationists and devotees of The Mother. The speakers were Dr Alok Pandey, [about Integral education] Jean-Yves [about the four-fold personality] and Ananda Reddy [about sharing guidance that he received from The Mother]. These talks gave me much knowledge about free progress and integral education.

After that we had reading and sharing sessions about physical education, vital education, mental education, and physical education.

We learnt that there are three principles of true education:

1. Nothing can be taught.
2. The mind has to be consulted in its own growth.
3. To work from the near to the far.

In the afternoon we had choice time of different activities. I chose Sanskrit chanting, social emotional learning with Gopa, puppet show etc... In the evening there were games.

In the second workshop, Sivakumar, Deepti and Dr Ananda Reddy were also interesting. The sessions were similar to the



first one but there was no Yoga due to rain. I chose different activities during choice time and had a chance to meet new teachers from different schools. Gopa's session was about class management from which I learned that discipline does not involve punishment but talking positively to the students. The 6 days of the two workshops helped me to understand the basic principles of Integral education deeply. It will help me in planning my classes by bridging new concepts through Integral Education. Overall, it was a wonderful learning opportunity and gave lovely experience along with about 150 teachers and facilitators. I would like to sincerely thank all the organisers. *Mala*

**Knowledge is not attained by thinking. It is what you are: It is better that you become. There is nothing mind can do than cannot be better done in the mind's immobility and thought-free stillness. When the mind is still, then the truth gets a chance to be heard in the purity of the silence. The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught.**

*Sri Aurobindo*

## Special Needs

This is Sathyavani, working in Aikiyam school as a special needs teacher for 16 years. I was trained by Stacy (occupational therapist) and also by Marion. Also, I attended a one-year special needs programme in Auroville with Heidi



Watts, Stacy and with Marion's guidance. I got the chance to attend many workshops in Auroville regarding my work, I explored a lot and developed my learning experience and teaching techniques in this field. For example, ATB (Awareness through the body) and NDP (Neuro Dramatic Play), and Speech therapy training in Deepam School and Montessori training with Ana.

For 3 years I have been teaching Hindi (basic level), as an optional language for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> standard, once a week for 1 hour class. I am very happy to share my experience with my children at the school.

Usually, every year I have children with learning difficulties from 3 years till 12 years of age. The class teachers refer them to me for extra support. We both discuss the child, their strengths and difficulties, then I fix a time to observe them in their normal classes. After the observations, I take them out of their class once or twice a week for 45 minutes and work

## Kindergarten Update

In Aikiyam, the Montessori Early Childhood classroom feels more like a home than a school. You won't see desks, nor will a teacher stand at the front of the room delivering a lesson to the whole class. Instead, you'll see children happily working individually or in small groups, at tables or on the floor near small mats that delineate their own space.

Specially designed learning materials are displayed on open shelves, easily accessible to the children. Classrooms also include low sinks accessible to the children, child-sized furniture, cosy spaces for quiet reading, reachable shelves with work available for free choice, and child-sized kitchen utensils so the students can eat, prepare, and clean up their

according to their needs. The children are having different kinds of learning difficulties like hyperactivity and lacking concentration, poor memory, physical weakness, reading or writing difficulties, social and emotional behaviour etc. With these children I work in a small group and also with 1:1 support for a few.

As we are practicing integral education in our school, all the sessions should provide physical, mental, social and emotional creative work to the children to strengthen their areas of weakness. I mainly work on sensory development and basic skills (gross motor and fine motor) activities with younger kids from 3 to 7 years old. From 2<sup>nd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade children, we do a lot of reading and writing, basic maths skills through games and also using a phonics book. They are also engaged with more creative work, making crafts, body awareness activities, problem solving puzzles, cross coordination movements etc. I do activities like brain gym, write dance, NDP, ATB, speech therapy, imagination and acting out the story etc. I also get volunteer support sometimes.

In my long-term work experience, I have seen many children progressing in this special-needs programme and going back to their normal classes. Some children really need a long-term process to be continued every year and to get more support from the parents and others as well. Every year I write an individual report for the child and recommend something to the class teachers and parents to follow up regularly.

I can proudly say that our school is working to provide integral education. We are trying our best to develop our children by giving great opportunities, benefiting from extra-curricular activities and a lot of support from the teachers as well.

Wherever they go they will show their best performance and will step into a bright future.

*Sathyavani*







snack on their own. We Teachers gently guide students to help maintain the organization and cleanliness of this environment, to keep it orderly and attractive, and to help your child understand how to care for materials and clean up after themselves—skills you will be happy to observe carrying over in your home.

The Leadership Year: During the first 2 years in an Early Childhood classroom, Montessori students look forward to their turn to be a leader. In their third year—often known as

Kindergarten—children get their turn and take pride in being the oldest. They serve as role models for younger students; they demonstrate leadership and citizenship skills. They reinforce and consolidate their own learning by teaching concepts they have already mastered to their peers. In their Kindergarten year, they express confidence, develop self-esteem and self-sufficiency, and show responsibility.

Kindergarten students are introduced to progressively more advanced Montessori materials and sophisticated, fascinating lessons. And they experience an important period in which their previous learning from working with concrete Montessori materials begins to become permanent knowledge. Our Montessori Kindergarten student sees and feels their personal growth as they watch others learn topics, they have mastered themselves.

Kindergarten is the culmination of the Early Childhood program. Children exhibit the independence, critical thinking, collaboration, and leadership that they have been practicing during their previous years in the Early Childhood classroom, exercising them independently as they prepare to transition into an Elementary program.

*Jothi, Usha, Shanthy, Praveena, Rajalakshmi, Revathy, Jaya Bharathi ( Volunteer)*

## Student Visits

### Sanjay 8<sup>th</sup> Standard



We are delighted to share with you some of the events held in our school this year. Last July we went on a field trip related to agriculture with our science teacher and our Tamil teacher. We saw the modern equipment and ancient equipment needed for farming. Also, we were very surprised and interested when we

saw directly how a paddy is cultivated and the irrigation system. While going on the field trip, we enjoyed seeing a variety of local and foreign birds.

### Harini 7<sup>th</sup> Standard



Last September we got an opportunity to go to the Sriharikota satellite launch. Accordingly, we went to the Sriharikota satellite launch site with five teachers and 50 students to witness the launch of the Indian satellite Aditya 1A with great enthusiasm.

When we toured the launch pad in person, it was more surprising than what we expected and imagined. The science-related displays increased our wish to learn science. Scientists working at Sriharikota satellite launch pad talked with the students about rocket fuelling and working principles and gave very clear explanations to our queries.





We were very happy to witness the rocket launching. After we returned to school we asked our teacher for some detailed information about the satellite.

### Duraisri 8<sup>th</sup> Standard



Last September we visited the Nilgiri Biosphere Centre and the Coimbatore AD D Naidu Museum. There we got much information concerning our science lesson. We saw the tea plants that are grown in terrace farming. Following this, we went to the tea powder factory and saw how tea is produced there. We learned about the variety of Teas. Then we went to Tamil Nadu's largest mountain peak Doddabetta. The rhythm of the Doddabetta was a pleasure.

After that we went to the Masinakudi and Mudumalai Tiger Sanctuary where the animals live in their natural environment. We also understand the difference between animals in the zoo and the animals that live naturally in the sanctuary. It was astonishing that the Kumki elephants went to the place where they were provided with a breakfast. When we went to GD Naidu Museum in Coimbatore, the staff explained us a variety of scientific discoveries. We were amazed to look at a variety of old cars.



Students at Doddabetta Mountain near Ooty

## An Appeal - Aikiyam Building Maintenance

Some of the buildings at Aikiyam School are now more than 40 years old and their maintenance is more and more costly each year. The school gets a small grant from Auroville each year for "summer repairs", but this is normally only sufficient to do some essential repairs to classrooms, such as painting and repairs to furniture. This year we also made some improvements in the kitchen to improve the food



One of our heritage cluster buildings needing structural repairs preparation area and the overall hygiene, we also repaired the cycle shed roof as it was in a dangerous condition. However, there are more serious repairs necessary and we need to fundraise for these, including the repair of one of the

original "clusters", some of the distinctive original classrooms of the school which need major structural repairs, adding up to around Rs 6 lakhs (€6500). Other essential repairs add up to around Rs 8 Lakhs (€8700), including more minor structural repairs and leaks. We are anxious to get these repairs done as soon as possible, as delays cause worse problems for the future.

future.

If you would like to contribute to these repairs, donations can be made either directly to Auroville or via an AVI Centre in your country. Details are given below.

Thank-you!



Cycle shed with new roof

Aikiyam School, New Creation, Auroville 605101, Tamil Nadu, INDIA. email: [aikiyamschool@auroville.org.in](mailto:aikiyamschool@auroville.org.in); ph: +91 (413)-2622358 or +91 (0) 9786211534

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