



Newsletter

New Creation Bilingual School

Vol. 4, No.2

June 2009



From left to right: Kavitha, Dhinagar, Hemavathi, Aravindh, Vinisha, Tamil Selvam, Aruna, Anandh, Sumathi, Sarguna, Sivagandan, Vasantharaj. Manigandan (missing in photo)

Dear friends, vanakkam ! Looking at the photo of this year's NCBS graduates, we're sure you share with us our pride and happiness when seeing these young, confident and healthy girls and boys, formed by our school, ready to carry their lives forward with our blessings and love.

Historic transition

This was the very last batch of NCBS students to take the Tamil Nadu Elementary School Leaving Certificate Exams, and all thirteen students passed them with 60% and above. As NCBS has been accredited by India's Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in 2007, our school can, from 2010 onwards, provide the students with a CBSE-affiliated Transfer Certificate, recognised by all Indian institutions of higher education. Ten of the

graduates will proceed with their studies at Auroville's New Era Secondary School (NESS), which continues the CBSE curriculum started in NCBS. The combination of these two CBSE-affiliated schools, both monitored by Auroville, form a beautiful and strong educative channel for generations to come.

Even though this transition means quite a new venture in Auroville's neighbourhood, our school's reputation is such that parents are confident enough to veer away from the state exams, which are mainly based on learning by rote and memorisation. **This is an important step towards our aim of becoming a model school for disadvantaged areas, and we wholeheartedly thank you for your support in bringing this about!**

We knew them for 10 or 11 years...!

In this context we wish to thank and honour our teachers, most of whom saw these very same graduates enter the school as 3-year old toddlers and helped them to feel at ease, gently guiding them and gradually, with colourful play-way methods, coaxing them into the more structured world of learning, discipline and growth. The fact that the teachers have continued developing themselves, and keep progressing with the help of yearly visits from Heidi Watts and students from Antioch and other places, is commendable and we are grateful to them.



Sitting: Selvaraj, 2nd grade, sports; Shankar, Principal plus 8th grade English, social science; Murugan, 4th grade; Prabha, 3rd grade; Jothi (special needs, Tamil language). **First row:** Perumal, 5th grade science and math; Thanenjoyan, swimming, general up-keep; Irouthi, upper K.G.; Rajesh, carpentry; Muruganandham, (7th grade, science; Saskia, special needs, all grades; Mala, special needs, English and singing; Hema, higher grades Tamil; Shanthi, 3rd grade math, Tamil; Janaki, typist, teacher helper. **Second row:** Devanathan, clay, sports; Vincent, library, Tamil; Samuvel, (8th grade math, social science; Panneerselvam, tailoring; Vijaya, lower K.G., dance; Kalai Selvi, lower K.G., embroidery; Usha, crèche, dance; Kumari, crèche; Praveena, upper K.G. **Back row:** Ramalingam, arts all grades, sports; Anbu, science adviser; Rajan, English, social science, environmental awareness. Absent in photo: Navarathinam, 1st grade; Sathya, 6th grade English.



Science Fair

For the third time in a row, Aurovillian Anbu of ASSET (Auroville Schools Science Educational Training) centre organised with the help of NCBS teachers a grand, three-day Science Fair on our premises in February. The fair exceeded all expectations and directly demonstrated how much students can learn from hands-on explorations coupled with good scholarship. Students from not less than 5 Auroville Outreach schools participated and displayed different forms of transport, energy generation, recycling and all kinds of environmental matters. Main themes were 'Evolution of Transport', 'Scientists & their Discoveries' and 'How it works' and at some 50 different stands in the Kindergarten block and other classrooms, students gave demonstrations on the workings of windmills, geo-thermal plants, cycle dynamos, hovercrafts, microscopes, solar and tidal energy systems etc, also including alternative options such as energy generation by speed breakers and salt water power.

We highly value the underlying philosophy of the fair which encouraged students' scholarly and creative work, nurtured their sense of inquiry and curiosity, and gave them an opportunity to express their understanding in print, speech and products which ranged from posters to working machines.

NCBS students in particular had downloaded, explored and studied works from the world's great

scientists, and demonstrated with small replicas and self-made models in clear steps how the various discoveries and inventions of these great ones work. It was very impressive to hear them not only describe but also explain why things happen, and this with confidence, understanding and in good clear English. In general, visitors were highly impressed with the young people's commitment and obvious sense of enjoyment at sharing science. The extensive preparation of the space, exhibits, evaluation forms and certificates was exceptional.

3000 visiting students

You may imagine how inspiring and uplifting it was to see students from so many different schools participating in a joint venture and learning from each other. As for audience, altogether some 3000 students from 11 schools in the bio-region plus two Puducherry government schools visited the fair. NCBS staff and visitors expressed their appreciation for the excellent collaboration and team work between initiative-taker Anbu and NCBS science teachers Perumal and Murugaian, 2nd grade teacher Selvaraj and computer teacher Kartikayan.



Students from Kulapalayam Trust School explaining the working principle of an atomic power plant.

Next year's topic will be 'Our Universe'. Maybe a reason for you to come and visit us in February! You're most welcome!



La Piscine Water-Polo

On Tuesday 19th February, a team representing NCBS won the 'La Piscine Water-Polo Champions Trophy' for 2009 by beating Auroville's Udavi School 9 goals to 1. Every year, Sue, the mom of a British Aurovillian, comes to teach water polo once a week to 6th through 8th grade students who take swimming class. A special feature is that girls and boys play on the teams together, and Savitri, in charge of the sports area and swimming pool in the New Creation settlement, provided the players with proper (and cute!) swimming suits and other gear. Our children also wholeheartedly participated in this year's Earth Day, and at the time of writing this letter, students of our four highest grades are enjoying cool air in the Kodaikanal hills, where they join the Auroville students in the annual Auroville Nature Camp.

Volunteers

Also this year NCBS was blessed again with fresh input from a team of bright and spirited volunteers, infusing the school with their original approaches, skill and lively 'internationalness'. Their presence was invaluable for both students and teachers and immensely appreciated by all.

Writes Aaron: ***"I believe that it is because of the teachers and role-models who help mould NCBS, that the children from these villages will grow for generations, to become confident and valuable contributors to the future of their villages and India. A thank-you is in order to Principal Shankar. His consistent smile and gentle words are the passionate, open arms that embrace and characterise this unique school."***



Volunteers we welcomed this year, from l to r: Dianne Coventry, Aaron Cinquemani, both M. ED students from Antioch University New England who did their teaching internship at NCBS; young Sheila Oluborode, just fresh from High School in Germany came to us via the Weltwaerts volunteer organisation; Sandra Ellis, volunteer English teacher from the UK; Matt Halpin from University of Washington who also made a lovely little film clip on the school's organic garden; and last but not least Chris Gould, elementary bilingual teacher in USA, who also taught in Spain, Mexico, Guatemala, South Korea. *Thank you all!*



Organic Garden

The school's garden has been a joy for all and enriched our lunches with different kinds of tomato, lettuce, various spinaches, sweet basil, chillies, maize, tapioca, radishes, onions, ginger, bitter gourds, cucumber, pumpkin, papaya, various ladies fingers, and green pepper/capsicum (one!). Also flowers such as zinnias, sunflowers, Mexican sunflowers, 'Radha's consciousness' flowers, and marigolds. Plans for the coming year include: fewer varieties of tomatoes, more capsicum, more spinach, many big sunflowers, and... a new herb garden with medicinal and culinary herbs, tulsi, lemongrass and more. *Thank you, Rajan & friends!*

The outer life of the world..

We here share with you the reminiscences of graduate Surguna, a lively girl of 14 years, looking back at her time in NCBS during one of her last days in school:



In our school we did so many things. We learned essential grammar so that we can speak English well with foreigners. Our Principal told us about the outer life of the world, and that Tamil only is not enough there. Knowing English helps us in the outer life. We have a good school. Teachers are friendly. Other schools ask fees for learning, but our school has many friends, in Auroville and far away. So we can come. My aim is to have a new job. I don't know which one yet, a child doesn't know many things. Maybe I can become a teacher.

This year we made a garden in school, all by ourselves. It is a good idea for our bigger life, to know we can do that in our own place, by ourselves. Vegetables in shops all have chemicals. I have a poem:

*"There is nature.
The God gives us nature.
It is a good thing for us.
We can hear the silence and the birds singing,
we can eat Nature's fruit.
It makes us strong."*

MISSION STATEMENT OF NCBS

The school's mission is to provide an appropriate kindergarten, primary and intermediate education to children from Kulilapalayam and other villages, which are geographically connected to Auroville, based on the principles of integral education, as defined by the founders of Auroville, the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. The school strives to maintain a creative and joyful atmosphere, where the uniqueness of each child is respected and nurtured.

The school's aim is to provide a quality bilingual education in Tamil and English, covering all of the standard academic subjects, physical education, and a wide variety of vocational options to prepare children for life in a rapidly changing world, while still maintaining contact with their Tamil cultural heritage. In the near future, children may also earn equivalency certificates so that secondary education can be continued in a school which is recognised by the Tamil Nadu Government.

New Creation Bilingual School is an Outreach day-school under the Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research (SAIER) for more than 200 children, with classes which range from pre-kindergarten to the eighth grade. All tuition, educational supplies, nutritious snacks and mid-day meals are provided free of charge.

Help
us
keep up
the
strong
momentum



The new building is rapidly coming up !

Once again you see on this page an image of a busy construction site! And yes, one more structure is coming up, containing a space for a real Library, a Special Needs Room and a well equipped Science Laboratory. This urgently required building, which may very well be the last one as our small campus is getting overcrowded, is partly financed by a German government grant obtained through Auroville International Germany, and partly by friends in France, U.K and Germany. We are extremely grateful that this could come to pass and thank all who were instrumental in this!

We see it as a true blessing, and clear encouragement, that presently the psychological shadow of financial uncertainty has been somewhat lifted from us and specially thank those of our friends who were extra generous this year with funds for our running costs and children's nutrition. May you please stay with us, so that the current strong momentum won't be broken, and the good work can proceed unhindered.

We here remind you that the easiest and fastest way of sending your donation is via the Internet: **www.auroville.com/donate** . In this way, we get immediate notice of your gift, receive the money in a few days' time, and can acknowledge receipt to you straightaway.

Thank you for keeping us afloat!

With much love from us all,

The New Creation Bilingual School Support Group

Principal Shankar, and Dianna, Franca, Françoise, Janet, Mauna, Suriyagandhi and consultant Jeanne Korstange, along with all the school's children, teachers and other personnel.

(Dr. Heidi Watts of Antioch New England Graduate School in USA, Martin Littlewood of Auroville International UK, Satyakam Karim and Devasmita Patnaik of Auroville International France, all long time friends and supporters of the school, attend our meetings when present in Auroville.)

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www.auroville.org/education/village_schools/newcreation_bilingual.htm