

New Creation Bilingual School Auroville, India

NEWSLETTER

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NCBS Newsletter

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To our many friends and supporters,

We want to start by expressing our regrets for the long silence from New Creation Bilingual School. The school has been in the process of reorganization, and has gone through many changes in the last year, but we expect to be able to resume publication of this newsletter on a regular basis from now on. Thank you for your patience.

The New Creation Bilingual School Support Group (NCBSSG)

OUR SCHOOL

The New Creation Bilingual School has been at the entrance to the New Creation Community for 20 years, serving the Tamil children from nearby Kuilapalayam village as well as from other villages in the vicinity of Auroville. This is no ordinary school, as you can see by the white futuristic looking classrooms dotted amongst the gardens. You may also catch sight of some of the 213 happy children here, learning and growing in a healthy, interactive educational environment. The children pay no fees and since many of them come from very poor families, the school makes sure

they get a nutritious lunch and snacks during the day. Their education is based on the ideals of Auroville and strives to maintain the highest standards.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

The children begin their day with an assembly where they can gather themselves in a few moments of silence, sing songs in Tamil, English or Sanskrit and listen to a talk given by Shankar, the school's new principal. As Shankar has a Master's Degree in Tamil and philosophy, he has a wide range of stories, poems and anecdotes in his mind through which he conveys to the children the richness and wisdom of their culture.

For instance, this month's theme is social justice and he talks to them about how we can learn to take care of and love each other; the children sit in long rows on the floor, captivated.



One of the eight school buildings

If it were not for this school, most of the girls over 10 years old would have been taken away to do house or field work. Here they are able to study close to home, and in addition to the usual subjects they are taught sewing, computer skills, English and many other things that give them skills and confidence. Their parents see how the girls can become an asset to their families and not a liability. A vocational training centre built with a grant from the European Union enables the children to get trained in carpentry and tailoring. Later in this Newsletter we will give you a more complete description of two of the various optional activities offered to the children in addition to the academic programme - art and sports.

THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Each of our principals since the opening of the school, namely Andre, Roy, Mike and Sue, and most recently Anna, have contributed to the growth of the school in numbers and in quality, and each has added some special characteristics to the overall programme. We remember them with gratitude and appreciation, even as we celebrate the qualities in our new principal, Shankar, who was born in Kailashpalayam and manages to keep relations with the village well-oiled. Shankar is a long-time Aurovilian and is well-known to

many Aurovilians coming from abroad because at one time or another they were students in his lively Tamil class. The school and principal receive advice and assistance from a Support Group composed of several seasoned Aurovilians with experience in accounting, management, and educational leadership. They are joined by a teacher from the Core Group, a body which represents the teachers.

The new leadership team has been actively engaged in improving the campus, repairing buildings, and working on a development plan, as we are sadly short of classrooms, library space, a science lab, play areas and staff room/facilities. They are also working actively on a teacher training and professional development programme to improve the quality of the educational experience for the children. It will involve a lot of hard work from a lot of people, but after all, this really is a New Creation.

ART AND SPORTS

In each issue of the Newsletter we would like to introduce two or three of our teachers. Here we feature the art teacher, Ramalingam, and Savitri, who runs the New Creation sports ground. Ramalingam is a qualified art teacher, originally from Pondicherry, who has planned a varied programme of arts and crafts for the children.

Every child has the opportunity to do drawing, painting, and pottery, as well as carpentry, Indian classical or folk dance, and even gardening. Ramalingam and his students have painted a huge map of India on the outside wall of the office which adds colour as well as



Ramalingam, our art teacher

the visual image of India for the children to use in different studies. posters, and other educational materials. Later this year, Ramalingam hopes to have an exhibition of the children's art work somewhere in Auroville, which will be a big event for them.

Savitri, a French/American lady who runs the sports ground and gym, makes it possible for the children to engage in an hour and fifteen minutes of sport a day. It is now the games season which culminates in Auro Games and competitions with other schools. Later in the year it will be the athletic season and time for the Auro Olympics.



Savitri, our sports coordinator

A team of seven teachers helps Savitri to run a varied programme of running, jumping, throwing the javelin and shot-put, and twice a week all the children go swimming in the beautiful, recently built New Creation pool.



Play-way method project of our 1st grader kiddies

A FINAL THANK YOU

In closing we would like to thank all of you, our friends and supporters, because without your help this school could not exist. This is a lively joyful place, filled with the laughter and chatter of children, the sounds of blocks and balls, songs and presentations, questions and answers, and turning pages. We would be delighted to hear from you and to answer any questions you may have, and of course, any support is more than welcome. You may contact us at <ncbssg@auroville.org.in> or by calling the office at 0413-2622358 or 09443860106.

Thank you for being with us, with love,

The New Creation Bilingual School Support Group

Janet, Mauna, Priya, Shankar, Suriyagandhi, and Core group representative Murugan, along with all the school's teachers, other personnel and friends.

(Dr. Heidi Watts of Antioch New England Graduate School in USA, Martin Littlewood of Auroville International U.K., and Satyakam 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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