



ACHYUT PATWARDHAN SCHOOL

A Krishnamurti Foundation School

A story of unwavering commitment to communities,
education and children.



KRISHNAMURTI SCHOOLS:

The intent of the schools is to enable the child to develop fully as a complete human being. This means giving the child the opportunity to flower in goodness so that he or she is rightly related to people, things and ideas, to the whole of life. To live is to be related. The child must also be equipped with the technical skills to function effectively in a changing world, but with a quality of mind that is reflective and compassionate.

Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986) whose life and teachings spanned the greater part of the 20th Century, is regarded by many as having had a profound impact on human consciousness in modern times. He stated in 1929 that his purpose was to set humankind unconditionally free from the destructive limitations of the conditioned mind. To this end he travelled around the world till the age of 90 giving talks and meeting innumerable people individually and in groups. In addition to the books that he wrote, several of his talks and dialogues have been transcribed and published. The Krishnamurti Foundations in India and abroad continue to be very actively engaged with archiving and disseminating his teachings. They also oversee the educational work in schools and a college, as well as various outreach initiatives.



INTRODUCTION:

Born out of his deep compassion for fellow beings, Krishnamurti invited his friend and social reformer Achyut Patwardhan to engage with the villages in and around Rajghat. Thus was born the Achyut Patwardhan School using the erstwhile facilities of the Agricultural college. The school currently has about 300 children from nursery to class VIII. The children mostly come from the surrounding villages of Sarai Mohana, Kotwa and Bharoti. In addition to academics, the school focuses on extracurricular activities like sports, art and craft, music, gardening and farming.

Over the years, the teachers have developed a keen understanding of the social issues in the villages and their causal linkage to school attendance and performance. The gender mix is maintained at close to 50%. These efforts assume relevance in light of the established linkages between girl child education and achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



ACADEMICS:

APS has a team of about 15 teachers who on an average have been with the school for over a decade, thus acquiring a keen understanding of the children, parents and the locality. In-house and outsourced training resources are used to develop the competencies of the teaching body. Teachers also assume specific areas of responsibility in running the school in a cooperative manner.

On the academic front, the school focuses on inculcating two key skills in children to prepare them for life beyond school: language and numeracy. Proficiency in the local language has a direct bearing on a child's comprehension of all subjects. Hence, the local language programme is implemented with rigour. Apart from the U.P. board's requirements, book reading is a thrust area. APS has a well-stocked library, and a qualified

teacher works with children across all age groups during compulsory reading periods. The need to equip children with basic English language proficiency is not lost on the school. Classroom efforts in this direction are supplemented by intensive workshops.

The program to develop numeracy is woven around working with hands, through games and real life experiences (apart from classroom teaching). In order to bring about an interest in developing numerical skills and also develop comfort with information technology tools, computer classes are now conducted for the middle school on regular basis. The school has a dedicated computer teacher as well as an internet-ready computer centre. Teachers are also being educated to be able to use such tools effectively.

BEYOND ACADEMICS:

In APS, an attempt is made to connect with the immediate surroundings, through street walks, environmental care, sports, art and music.

The street walks through the villages and Varanasi's ghats, the visits to the museums and to Sarnath, the tasting of local food, are all ways to connect the children to their

neighborhood. These are also occasions for children to take up the responsibility of planning the logistics of an outing, handling cash and managing events. Also, with a realization of the increasing disconnect of children with mother nature, the school has integrated caring for trees and plants, growing food, composting and keeping the surroundings clean, into the program. Girls are especially enthusiastic participants in such activities.





There is a strong emphasis on sports in the school, which has a large playground and a dedicated Physical Education teacher. Sports not only brings out the best in the children but also develops leadership skills that can eventually help address issues that communities face. APS conducts its own annual sports events, but its children also participate in Rajghat Besant School's sports events and in other local events.

Art, in addition to being an effective learning tool, can promote creative expression of the feelings of children. At APS, art finds a place in everyday teaching, and is integrated in the curriculum, local events, health campaigns and fun events. Environment, health and culture are dominant themes in the sphere of art at APS.

Music is embedded in the lives of the community. At APS, the morning assembly starts with songs to calm the mind and bring children and teachers together. The school has consciously attempted to integrate local language songs and folk music by celebrating cultural events. APS has a dedicated music room with a full time music teacher who trains the students not only in music but also in drama and stage performance.



STAKEHOLDER APPROACH:

The emphasis at Achyut Patwardhan School has been to develop a stakeholder spirit in the community of well-wishers: teachers, alumni, parents and donors. A child will thrive in an environment when all these stakeholders share the school's intent. At APS, the efforts spanning over six decades stand

testimony to this sense of shared purpose. Our Facebook page, newsletters, brochures, alumni meetings, Parent-Teacher meetings and face-to-face meetings with donors/patrons are intended to communicate a shared purpose. We welcome your views and suggestions.