

## Hope Trust School Site Visit

Date of Site Visit - October 8, 2018

It has been 5 years since my last visit to Hope School. It was a sudden decision to visit them, as I was passing by their school for a personal errand. I just called the school 15 minutes before and told them I am on my way. I had no idea on how much the school has developed into.

### **Ambattur Special Need School**

From a small one floor construction with class rooms divided by a separator wall to a two storied building with eight individual class rooms. With the growing number of kids each year, the teachers/staff ratio has doubled.

### **Aminijikarai Shelter home for Special Kids**

\* About 60+ mostly grown up kids in their mid teens, share a two floor good sized home, which was once owned by the State govt.

\* The inmates of the home have a tradition of welcoming their guests by singing a heart melting Tamil song with starting lyrics as “Kadavul Ullame” which basically means that God resides in the heart of those compassionate ones.

\* The kids here are trained so well that they make the best use of their time & effort in making the Sambrani (incense) sticks, handmade bags, window decorative etc. They have just started on their training to make paper gift bags. The people in-charge said the kids do their work so fast that they soon reach their targets & sometimes run out of raw materials. Some of these products are even sold in Amazon India.

\* There are a variety of pet animals raised in this home for the kids can connect to them, play/watch & feed.

\* The kids are trained to take each of the responsibilities themselves without expecting any help from outside. For example, the security who let us in was a high functioning adult who himself was an inmate. He asks the reason for the visit, communicates with the person in-charge & basically follows the procedure of asking us to sign the register etc. It adds meaning & purpose to each of their life's & make them feel important. I also noticed that many low functioning kids were paired with their high functioning peer to help them in their daily

routine. This was very touching to see these children get a sense of purpose and accomplishment for their effort.

### **Project Mala for Mom's of Special Needs**

\* This project named Mala was a started as a pilot program last year. I met with the lady who runs this program. Looking at the impact created on the Mom's who participated, they were able to help nearly 18 mothers this year.

\* They teach vocational training to equip them to live an independent life with their special kids. Their curriculum includes strengthen the emotional wellbeing to handle to ups & downs of their kids who needs a lot of support.

Hope Trust staff thanked Asha and it's volunteers on behalf of the kids, for the support they have been receiving. It was an overwhelming feeling to see the monetary support provided by Asha for Education, being put to good use by the right people. I promised them all to convey their heartfelt thanks 🙏🙏 to you all(volunteers), for your time & commitment.

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