

Site Visit – Shaaron School

Early this year I had the privilege of visiting Shaaron School and meeting Ms. Prema Thangaiah. Hers is a story of kindness, courage, perseverance, compassion and will power. Her vision and zeal to do make a difference in the lives of mentally challenged children made her start this school in the year 1998. Through years of painstaking hard work, she was able to transform this school from a little operation with 2 students to a concrete building with 53 students.

The school provides occupational therapy, speech therapy and educational programs designed for special-needs children. Apart from that, she says, one of the things the children thoroughly enjoy is the daily lunch and snacks that are provided. But the overarching part of the conversation that stayed with me after the visit was the financial hardship that the school is facing in meeting their month to month needs (like paying the teachers their salaries, paying for their conveyance to & from the school) in addition to the projects that have had to be stopped mid-way due a shortage of funds. Currently, the school is entirely run by donations provided by an extended family of friends.

I got a chance to shoot some pictures in her school. But the experience was so moving that I wanted to go beyond that and that is the main reason for me sharing the story in this forum: to see if reading through her experiences and what this school is doing in the life of special needs children prompts some of you to financially support this institution which is doing some tremendous work. The school is registered under a government approved charitable trust and so all donations are tax-deductible. The school also has the necessary approval (FCRA) for accepting foreign donations.

The school just launched their website (<http://shaaronspecialschool.org/>) (thanks to donors who sponsored that effort) and it has all the detailed

information on how the school is transforming the lives of these children and how you can support this school, both in terms of your money & time).

If you have some time on your hands and if you are closer to Rajapalayam, I sincerely request you to make a visit to the school and see in person the kind of inspiring work that is being done over there.

Name of the school: Shaaron Special School

Address: Shaaron Garden, K.R.Nagar Post, Kalangaperi Road, Rajapalayam, Tamil Nadu, India – 626108

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The enclosed project proposal document lists in detail the immediate and future requirements of the school. Any help on this regard will be a huge support for the school, which is in need of funding. The school needs the following items immediately.

1. Desktop Computer – Rs. 40000
2. Safe for Files and other stationaries - Rs. 16000
3. Physiotherapy Exercise Equipment – Rs. 20000