

Aarti Home and Aarti School Virtual Site

By: Sree Geetha Dandapanthula (Steward)

Date: 3/13/2023

Attendees: Anita, Franchesca, Madan, Nandita, Jamuna, Sridhar, Prema- from Asha Seattle

Kabir ji, Sandhya garu, Aruna garu, Bhagya madam, Obulesu garu- from Aarti School

Aarti Village- Aarti Home moved here in 2014. Before that Aarti Home was in a rented place. There are 123 girls in Aarti Home. There are 9 cottages in all for the girls.

Aarti village is a gated campus has 2.5 acres of land-.

Aarti school Primary school (1 to 4) moved to here as they didn't have enough space at the Aarti school. They are using 2 of the living quarter blocks and a big hall.

It has an administrative building which was held Mana bidda and Abhaya project.

Net zero energy and zero wastage campus. Composting. There is rainwater harvesting system. As part of a project, a teenager Abhiram constructed a solar vegetable dehydrator with local materials.

2 solar units (30 KB and 5 KB) and solar water heaters also.

There are 4 servant quarters.

Campus is green with trees and plants. Has a vegetable garden also.

There is a sports ground with sports equipment.

There is a kitchen and dining hall with water purifier and 2 refrigerators and biochulhas. There is a cook and warden. All the children have breakfast and lunch here.

We spoke with Primary school coordinator, Ms. Seniorita who trains the teachers to Montessori methods. She showed other teachers also. There are 15 teachers at this Primary school.

After the Covid affected years, many students couldn't even read/write because they didn't have any smart phones to attend classes. With the help of these committed teachers the kids are now able to read and write stories.

We spoke with one of the students, Dhana Lakshmi. She likes being at Aarti Home and school. She has friends there and she wants to be a teacher when she grows up.

Grade 1 to 4 has about 330 students. Children were going into the classes.

Sandhya aunty spoke about how she started Aarti Home with one orphaned girl. She started a home for the girls 33 years ago. The most vulnerable section of the society are girls and women.

They have a psychologist Dilpreet and counselor Indhumathi Ravishankar. They along with Sandhya aunty work with the children coming to Aarti Home with psychological issues.

Aarti School:

Aarti School is located in Kadapa town. There is a small garden in front of the school. There are few benches in front of the school and a small playground for the prayers and assemblies. The actual sports and games are conducted in the municipality grounds next to the school.

We were introduced to the principal Mr. Obulesu. Aruna madam walked us around the school and classrooms. The school follows the AP. State curriculum. The students are divided into sections by comprehension level. Some students need more help and some can learn faster. The weaker students don't feel left out and can learn at their pace. After Primary school moved to Aarti Home they are using the rooms for more sections in each grade. All classrooms have distance learning enabled TV's. AP state has an app called Deeksha with all lesson plans, experiments and learning material. All the teachers have logins with the information and videos about their subjects.

There are English lab, math lab, biology and Physics labs.

Other than Academic curriculum, students are taught computers education, music, Sports, drawing/Arts, clay making etc.

There are 2 computer labs. In 1 lab, there are 30 computers with internet. They have a collaborative partner from Bombay, "Innovation story". They have 16 sessions in a course. They teach MS office, Scratch etc. Students from grade 6 learn these courses.

There are two rooms for Makers' space. They are starting courses like Avishkar, Robotics, electrical tinkering and mechanical tinkering. It will be starting this summer.

There is a big hall for the dining and other multipurpose use. All the students and teachers have breakfast, lunch at school for free. Students are also given school uniform, text books, notebooks and learning materials for free. They are not charged any school fee, but they pay a nominal fee for transportation. The school has 4 school buses to transport students from various places.

There is a library with lots of subject books, encyclopedias and story books.

All the grade 10 students passed successfully in 2022-23.

Aarti Home students are supported after grade 10 for higher education and other vocational training.

Children for Children is a program where children from schools in Hyderabad and other cities are coming together to support children with academic and economic difficulties. They raised funds and support education of more than 330 students with scholarships.

Some short term goals for the school- they have identified some children with learning difficulties. They want to connect with experts like organizations that can train the teachers and help these students to catch up to their regular grade studies.

Long term goals- Anyone who need any help in education- primary, higher education, any trainings and corporate jobs can look up to Aarti for getting help. Aarti is connecting to organizations and companies like Freshworks, Aakasa, JP Morgan etc.

Aarti Home runs Lalitha Coop Society and also starting a wellness center for women.



