A very warm greeting to all our friends and well wishers in India and abroad. It is almost more than one year since we had our annual report of 2021-22.

Now, while going to pen down the annual report of our school, like every year in the past, the feeling is not the same as before. It seems as if it’s a new beginning! The school was closed for more than 2 years, (some times during that period school was opened for a few days only and very few children joined school at that time) and we didn’t have any opportunity to meet or interact with the kids. There was a silence between us and the children and naturally there was palpable anxiety about our meeting when the school reopened. There was also apprehension on both sides to make up for the lost academic days and for the ability of the students to adjust to the syllabus of the higher class after a long period of absence from regular classes. To some extent this apprehension was not baseless. When the school finally opened a good number of children didn’t return mainly for the fear of being unable to cope with the pressure of making up for the lost time. But at the same time, we noticed another encouraging change. The children who did return were prepared to face the challenge. We guess the pandemic has made them mature. They not only have grown taller (there are some girls, whom we couldn’t even recognize) but also have developed more understanding of nature. They made themselves ready to work hard with the teachers to become fit for the new class.

Now the strength in the hostel is 71 which includes both old and new children. Some new children are waiting to join us in June. Now the school is running normally. As the teachers are residential they can spend more time with the children as required. During the lockdown period when some children were with us for one & half month our children got a chance to participate in an inter school competitions on Elocution, Essay writing, Solo-dance, Group-dance, Drawing & Rangoli. We are proud that with the help of the teachers and with the online guidance by You Tube, our children prepared well and bagged many prizes. Besides this, to improve their skill in speaking and writing, we had conducted competitions among our school children and the children of Basundhara’s children’s home on different subjects in that period also.

There is a good news which I am delighted to share with you. One of our girls named Dayamuni is getting married on 5th of June 2022. She is a complete orphan and has been staying with us since she was only 7/8 years old. When the school started, she studied and passed the school final and then continued +2 in college. She couldn’t get through in the first attempt. Now she is again appearing in the exam and it will be over on 29th May. Her would be husband is a graduate and working as a priest in a local temple and his own business in the temple complex. He belongs to a good family having a widowed mother, one married sister and two brothers. After having talked with the prospective groom for some months she gave her consent to the marriage and seems happy with it.
I feel myself blessed to inform you that, the year 2022 has greeted our school with many new hopes and promises. It is not in words only. We have already started working on it. A group of volunteers comprising of (dedicated for education of the children in the deprived sector ) engineers, educationists and personnel from other fields based in Delhi, Bangalore & Ranchi have started training our teachers & teaching the children online. Educationists from our own town Cuttack, have started taking weekly classes (once) on life value education by interacting face to face with the children on different aspects of their lives - through storytelling, biographies of great personalities etc) Children are enjoying that class very much. Now we are also getting requests from retired teachers of reputed schools in our town, to teach children on a regular basis (weekly 2 or 3 classes) online. We already have made the necessary requirements for this and are going to make more arrangements to facilitate this type of teaching on a broader scale.

During the lockdown period it was not possible for us to be focused on the academic & emotional growth of the children. So we utilized that time & money on the physical development of the school, which needed to be done badly since a long time, but couldn’t be made possible due to dearth of funds, time & attention. During this period we could complete plinth protection and started the construction of the kitchen. The work has been completed up to the window level. It has been postponed now due to severe heat and will be resumed - probably towards the last week of June when the monsoon begins.

We at the SAIS- on behalf of Basundhara family, express our sincerest & warmest gratitude to you all - who have reposed their trust on us, who have believed in us - who unceasingly have been supporting & loving us during all these years - throughout the journey of Basundhara from December 1985 till today. Though we reside in different parts of the world, but all of us, who have love and empathy for the distressed - be it man, woman or children, we are one and with our small efforts & limited energy we work together for the well-being of humanity. Hope, with the blessings of the Almighty, we shall work in the days to come, to make the world a better place to live in.

Thanks.

Namaskar.

Snigdha Biswal
Photos

November 14, 2021

Some photos of our children participating in various competitions in our school on 14th November {Childrens Day} and receiving prizes and also of a project on science.
Jan 12, 2022
Our students had participated in an inter school competition arranged by “Saraswati Kala Parisada, Cuttack” on its 18th anniversary held on 25/12/2021 & 26/12/2021. Our students participated in 1) Debate, 2) Essay writing, 3) Drawing, and 4) Dance. You will be glad to know that our students have topped in all the events to sweep the prizes. Here are some photos and videos of the said function.
Children have started coming back to the hostel in batches. Today the student strength is 61. Among them the number of the old children is 39 and the rest are new comers. Some older children haven’t turned up yet and also there is no news from them about coming back to the hostel. Some of them did come when the schools opened after the second lockdown and went back to their homes when the school again closed for third lockdown. During that period of one & half month, perhaps the pressure of studies (in the school the exams, and in the hostel regular studies to make up for the lost time) was too much for them, as they were not at all in touch with their studies for the entire period of lockdown. They were those girls, who in order to be put in the classes in accordance to their age had to skip classes more than once, from the very day they joined our school. Had they been with us during the lockdown period we could have managed to prepare them for the respective classes they were made to sit after the school reopened. We think this might be one of the reasons why they didn’t turn up. There are other reasons also like family issues. We are still waiting for them to come.

But as expected the request for new children have increased a lot after this COVID problem. This pandemic has had a very serious impact on the economic condition of the poor class. More over the price of everything, mainly food items has risen to a high level, which makes it difficult for the poor sections to feed a large family. Before lockdown we had with us 70 children. This time also we have decided to keep the same number of girls, including both old and new children as we also are facing difficulties in maintaining them.

Children and teachers are now busy with the regular activities of the school - both curricular & extra curricular. You must be knowing that Mr. Biswajit Parida from Delhi has joined us with his team mates (a group of volunteer educationists helping the organisations in India, who are working for the under privileged children, by providing orientation classes & training programmes for the teachers and teaching the children different subjects as required. Very recently Mr. Parida paid a visit to our school and spent nearly a full day with the teachers and children. Everyone here, from the staff members to the children were very happy and enjoyed his company very much. His association & future plans for our children filled each one of us with new hopes & aspirations. That day we also had a virtual meeting with Mr. Rahul Pandey and his team which was very encouraging. Now very soon with them we are going to start the class in English for both small and older children in two groups. Mr. Pandey has sent us a projector and a laptop(used) Mr. Parida is also taking Maths class of class X girls.

Sending you some recent photos of the children in the school & hostel.