

Report of project Manigal at Kottur school (2017- 2018)

The Project Manigal was started in kottur to bring gypsy children into main stream schooling, to prevent children from dropping out of school and becoming child workers at an early stage. The attempts of the project have started paying results and the regularity and the learning levels of the gypsy children is improving steadily. Coming to school is slowly becoming a habit amidst gypsy children. For the first time in 2017 four gypsy children passed the class 10 Board exam from the school.

Primary school- At the primary school the project posts additional teachers who give personal attention to the children. The learning levels of the children are very diverse and varied.. The project offers a variety of activity based teaching learning materials to motivate gypsy children to come to school. The children relate to each other in their own mother tongue and feel safe and secure amidst their peers. Enrolments and regularity of children is steadily improving.

Assessments conducted by a variety of agencies show that the learning levels of gypsies have improved and they are in better position to continue schooling. Parents have also started cooperating and leave behind school going gypsy children and do not take them to work.



Empowering the gypsy children at the primary classes is helping them to stay and cope with middle school learning. Children are also learning to pick up school norms, routines and are able to adjust to other children. Gypsy children have also started participating in various programs and their acceptability in school is improving.

Art and crafts are conducted regularly for primary children to foster their creative skills. These classes are also extended to other classes of the school.



The children are encouraged to take part in all extra curricular activities and cultural activities and project staff make special efforts to train the gypsy children. Earlier they were never seen in school on such special occasions and now the children are present in full strength and participate with enthusiasm.

Gypsy children performing a dance at a school function





.Support to Primary school.

This year project donated a variety of math lab materials procured from different sources. A variety of charts were also given to the school. Learning material used by the project is regularly shared with other drop out children and neighbouring classes, where necessary. Teachers are using smart room effectively. A projector and screen were installed at the primary last year.



Art classes- The project conducted art and craft classes regularly for all the classes. The children of the school thoroughly enjoyed these creative pursuits.



Middle and primary school

The children who were given special attention in the primary have settled down better in the middle school. Having proficiency in basic alphabets and math concepts, they are now able to cope with learning requirements of higher classes. Earlier many children were quitting schooling in 6th or 7th and were joining work. At the middle school the project continues to give additional inputs, collaborates with the school, interacts with the parents and helps in their

gradual integration. Friday attendance continues to be low and is a cause of concern for the teachers but it is improving steadily.



The School is also encouraging gypsy children to participate in various competitions and improve their confidence. They participated in school annual day and gave a dance performance. Vignesh and Harikrishnan got cups and certificates for regular attendance and behaviour. Some gypsy children participated in the volley ball interschool completion.



Harikrishna with his prizes

This year, One girl child from the school has appeared for class 10 Board exams. She was earlier a drop out child but re-joined school after a gap of two years in class 9. She was very regular and serious and picked up the learning concepts steadily with additional inputs from the project teacher. She also attended after school evening classes at the project teacher's house and managed to catch up with learning concepts. The school gave her all the encouragement this year and the child is confident of clearing her class 10 exam.

Other Issues

As the gypsy children get older adjustment problems do crop up between them and other children due to cultural and language differences. Teachers constantly call the project staff and brief them. The project teachers constantly mediate and counsel the children and also take up issues with their parents and see problem areas get addressed where necessary. The education deptt. authorities suggest whether we can use the open school option to educate children who are having difficulty in class 8 or 9 and help them complete class 10 so that they can take advantage of vocational courses. However the project does not have a mechanism to follow up or educate them outside of the school.

The project helps in other aspects like finding Rh grouping, issue of aadhar cards to gypsy kids, locating birth certificates etc.



Gypsy children at the colony on a rainy day

