



Student Stories

Name: Shanti Lamani

Age: 12

Currently Studying: 7th Standard

Shanti's background

Shanti and her family belong to the Lamani community which is classified as a scheduled caste by the Indian Government. She's from Hampi in Karnataka, the same state as KSV. Here she attended her local school from 1st to 6th Standard before joining KSV in 2017 in 7th Standard.

Shanti has four older sisters and two younger. Three of her sisters Kaveri, Chinni and Pooja are also attending KSV in 9th, 8th and 3rd Standard.

Her parents are no longer together, her father left the family home and now has a new wife. To be closer to her daughters, Shanti's mother, Yankubai, has moved near to the school, where she hopes to open a shop. Previously in Hampi she used to sell fruit and rent bikes to tourists. Before joining KSV, Shanti used to help her mother with selling after school and help at her uncle's hotel.

Shanti's achievements at KSV

For her performing arts, Shanti is learning dance and vocals. Dance is her favourite. She speaks Lamani (her local language) but also English, Kannada and Hindi which she continues to learn at KSV. Compared to other students of her standard, Shanti's level of English is very good having had experience of working with tourists in Hampi. Every day, except on Sundays, she attends vocal lessons in the morning and then academic classes until the end of the school day. She studies Kannada, English, Mathematics, Hindi, Sport and Science. Shanti loves learning English, especially as it wasn't a subject she was taught at her previous school in Hampi.



How does Shanti like about KSV and how is it different to other schools?

"I like the people, the students, the nature. I have new friends. I like meeting the different volunteers. At KSV we can learn music, dancing, and vocals. I also go to clubs like origami, study club and sports. This is different to my old school."

What are her plans for the future?

"I want to be a doctor. After KSV I will go to Dharwad to study science."



Student Stories

Name: Rakshita Metri

Age: 13

Currently Studying: 7th Standard

Rakshita's background

Rakshita and her family live in the village of Tatuangui, 30kms away from Kalkeri. She has two younger sisters and one younger brother. Her father works in the fields and her mother takes care of the household. When Rakshita goes home for the holidays, she likes to look after her sisters and brother. She likes playing with them, drawing and watching TV. Rakshita arrived at KSV in June 2011 in the 1st Standard.

Rakshita's achievements at KSV

Rakshita can speak and write in Kannada, Hindi and English. She is also studying Maths and Science. She is a bright student who obtains an average of 70% in her examinations. In performing arts, she has learnt the basics of Hindustani Classical music and is attending vocal and Katak dance lessons every morning. Dance is her favourite.

How does Rakshita think KSV is different to other schools?

"In other schools they take fees, but here there are no fees. At KSV they are teaching us music and English. In other schools if we wanted to learn music we'd have to pay a lot of money, here it is free. Before in my village school I didn't care about education, I was always playing, playing, playing. There was too much attention to games but here at KSV there is more attention on education. When I was at my village school I didn't think that I wanted to be a doctor, I didn't think like this."



What does Rakshita like about KSV?

"I like the music, the nature, academics. I like it all."

What are Rakshita's plans for the future?

"I want to be a doctor, so I will have to learn science and how to give treatment to others. I would like to continue dance on the side."



Student Stories

Name: Sohil Saiyad

Age: 16

Currently Studying: 10th Standard

Sohil's background

Sohil and his family are from Dharwad, a city nearby to KSV. He has a big sister, Jarina, who is married with one child and living in Hubli. He has an older brother, Rafik and two younger brothers, Shaanu and Japar. Sohil's father is a carpenter and his mother stays at home managing the household. Before KSV, Sohil was in a government school in the city of Bjiapur with his brothers. The boys however didn't get on with each other so their parents decided to separate them in different schools. This how Sohil came to be at KSV. He started at the school in 1st standard at the age of 7.

Sohil's achievements at KSV

Before joining KSV Sohil only spoke Hindi, the official language of India. Now, he can speak and understand Kannada the state language of Karnataka, as well as English. Every day, except Sundays, Sohil attends vocal lessons in the mornings and then academic classes in the afternoons. He has been studying vocals for 7 years now. In his academic subjects he is studying Kannada, English, Mathematics, Science, Computer Studies, Art and Sport. Sohil loves everything related to music. It is not rare to see Sohil awake early in the morning or late at night practicing his vocals. He has performed for many music programmes at the school and also travelled to different places in India for KSV performances.



How does Sohil think KSV is different to other schools?

"KSV is like one big family because so many students, volunteers, teachers and workers are here from different horizons. KSV brings me a new opportunity to learn music and academic for free. I will never forget this place! If I had stayed at my village school I don't think I would have wanted to be a vocalist - there wasn't much music there. Academic subjects were the most important."

What does Sohil like about KSV?

"I like the music and the nature, the Gurukul system, so everyone lives here and are friendly."

What are Sohil's plans for the future?

"After KSV I want to go to PUC 1 in Dharwad and continue studying arts and vocal. But I will carry on staying here on the KSV campus to practice. Outside there is disturbance but here it is nice nature, and you can sit quiet and sing and jam with everyone. My plans for the future are to take care of my family and if I can, help here at the school. For work I want to be a vocalist and teach students too."



Student Stories

Name: Sunil Mani

Age: 15

Currently Studying: 10th Standard

Sunil's background

Sunil and his family are from the village of Ramapur, nearby to Kalkeri. He has two younger siblings, Swati his sister in 8th Standard and his brother Anil in 7th Standard. Both of them are studying at their local village school. Sunil's father, Rudrappa, is a photographer while his mother, Mahadevi, takes care of the household and earns some money by stitching clothes. Sunil joined KSV in 2007 in 1st Standard.

Sunil's achievements at KSV

When he arrived at KSV, Sunil could only speak Kannada, the state language of Karnataka. Now, he can speak and write in Hindi and English as well. For his performing arts he chose to learn vocals and has developed as a singer with a beautiful voice. Every day, except Sundays, he attends vocal lessons in the morning followed by academic classes. For his academic subjects he is studying Kannada, English, maths, science, computing, art and sports. Alongside music, maths and science are his favourite. Sunil has performed at several music programmes and has travelled to different parts of India in doing so.

How does Sunil think KSV is different to other schools?

"Here we are getting music first of all, that's the main thing. I like it a lot. I think it is more good starting the day with music. Learning music is helpful for our academic classes also, because it makes our concentration better. If I hadn't come to KSV I would be like everyone else in our village. Not learning anything different."

What does Sunil like about KSV?

"We are in the forest, so there is good nature. There is music also. And here there are many volunteers coming from many different places so you can learn more. KSV is a chance for me. I have so many memories here it is incredible. It is like I have two families, my home and KSV."

What are Sunil's plans for the future?

"I want to take science at PUC. I was inspired by a volunteer who visited the school and want to be an architect. My parents are happy about my achievements at KSV and my plans. They are proud for me. KSV has broadened my horizons, I don't think I would have thought about being an architect if I had stayed in my village."





Student Stories

Name: Sangeeta Chavan

Age: 23

Currently studying: Bachelor of Education

Sangeeta's Background

Sangeeta only has her mother at home after her father walked out on the family six months after the last child was born. Her mother makes a living from working in other people's gardens. Before KSV, up until the age of ten, Sangeeta had never been to school. She used to work as a domestic helper in private houses in Goa. This involved looking after children, doing the laundry, washing dishes and general house cleaning.

As the oldest of six children; Sangeeta has four sisters and a brother. It was often left to her, when she was not working, to look after the family. She joined KSV at age 11 in 6th standard. Her four sisters and brother followed.

Sangeeta's achievements at KSV

When Sangeeta arrived at KSV it was not easy for her; she had a lot of catching up to do and was not used to a formal school environment. There were just 30 students at the school then so classes were grouped according to ability as opposed to age. Because she had never been to school, at the start she had to learn with the small children. She could only speak Lamani (the language her family spoke at home).

In six years she worked very hard, attended her classes, learnt to read and write three languages, caught up in all subjects and reached a point where she was level with the fellow students of her age. Sangeeta enjoyed music, learning sitar for six years. She passed the Karnataka Secondary Education Examination Board Junior Music Exam for Sitar and took part in external sitar competitions while at KSV winning 1st and 2nd prize. Sangeeta performed sitar with the school at many programmes across Dharwad, Hubli, Goa, and Maharashtra.



How does Sangeeta think KSV is different to other schools?

"It is very different from other schools, here there is music, and foreign volunteers who come and teach and help the students to learn."

What does she like about KSV?

"I like everything at KSV. I like the wardens, the volunteers, my teachers. All the staff. Without this school, my life would be very difficult. I would still work in other people's houses. I will always remember this school."

What has Sangeeta done since finishing 10th Standard at KSV?

"I am currently studying for my Bachelor of Education at college in Dharwad. In PUC I studied education, political science, English, geography and Kannada. I got 2nd class in 2nd grade of PUC and after that started my Bachelor of Education where I studied English literature, political science, history, English and Kannada. Now in my Bachelor I am studying education technology, psychology, social science and English."

What support does Sangeeta continue to receive from KSV as a college student?

"I study in Dharwad but I stay on campus at KSV. I go there and back daily. From KSV I receive support by staying on the campus and financial support for my college fees and bus pass."

What are her plans for the future?

"My plan is to become a teacher. I want to teach English to students from 1st to 7th standard. First I would like to teach in this school so I can give back what I have got from here. Then I will go somewhere else. All of my 4 sisters are now in college and my brother is in 9th standard. My 1st sister is studying for her Bachelor of Arts, she wants to be an art teacher, my 2nd sister wants to be a fashion designer, my 3rd sister wants to be an air hostess and my last sister wants to be a teacher. My brother wants to be an engineer. I also want to help poor people and my Lamani community."



Student Stories

Name: Dullu Adolkar

Age: 25

Currently studying: completed Masters in Music

Dullu's Background

Dullu comes from a remote rural village 4km from KSV. He belongs to the Gowli caste, a minority group that herds cattle for a living. Dullu spent his early childhood looking after the family's cows whilst his father went out to sell the milk. He was enrolled at the local primary school but, like many children from his village, seldom attended. With little or no education it was Dullu's destiny to follow in his father's footsteps, until he joined KSV in 2003.

Dullu's Achievements at KSV?

Dullu attended regular academic and music classes. For the first year he learnt the basics of Hindustani Classical Vocal Music and then started to learn sitar. He demonstrated a great talent for this instrument passing the Karnataka Secondary Education Examination Board Junior Music exam for Sitar and the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya - Praveshika 2nd Year music exam. Dullu played in many KSV music programmes.

How does Dullu think KSV is different to other schools?

"You can learn many things at KSV - education, music, games and how to live in society. You also have the chance to perform in all the programs. Everything that you need to live is possible to have at KSV. For example good food, a place to study music, to sleep and a good environment."



What does Dullu like about KSV?

"Without the school, I would be working with my parents on the field. Everything I am doing would not have been possible. I'm very thankful to KSV and the founders. They gave me a new life."

What has Dullu done since finishing 10th Standard at KSV?

"I have continued my education since finishing 10th standard, scoring 84% in my Bachelor of Music degree and then completing my Masters in Music at Karnataka College Dharwad."

What are his plans for the future?

Dullu is now continuing his studies of the sitar under the guidance of Ustad Rafiq Khan in Mangalore. The way he is progressing in music, Dullu is sure to gain employment within this field which will ultimately lift him and his family out of the cycle of persistent poverty - the situation they have been in for many generations.