

Review 2025-26 and Budget 2026-27

Fig Tree Learning Centre (FTLC) was started by Jane Sahi, along with teachers who worked with her in Sita School. Sita School functioned till 2017 and was supported by Asha Bangalore. The school had to be closed due to stringent legal requirements that they couldn't adhere to. Presently, FTLC functions as a resource centre for children for extra-curricular learning. The Centre is run by Gousia, guided by Jane and other outside facilitators. Their activities include visiting the Government- run Lower Primary Schools at Tarabanahalli and Pakegowdanapalya once a week and, and workshops in their premises. All these places are located on the outskirts of Bangalore close to the erstwhile Sita School premises at Silvapura. During the year, Simonil visited them on April 7, 2026 and reviewed their work for Asha for Education. The report is [uploaded here](#).

During 2025-26, FTLC sought support for the following expenditure heads:

	Amount (Rs.)
Salary - Gousia Taj	2,40,000
Salary - Margaret (part time)	84,000
Auditor fees	10,000
Total	3,34,000

A detailed report on the activities by the project partner during 2025-26 is presented as an annexure. The project partner has submitted a copy of the audited accounts for the year.

The proposed budget for the year, 2026-27 is as follows:

	Amount (Rs.)
Salary - Gousia Taj	1,80,000
Salary - Helper	96,000
Auditor fees	10,000
Maintenance of FTLC	10,000
Books and materials	4,000
Total	3,00,000

The salary of Ms. Gousia Taj is partly contributed by Nature Classrooms for her Nature Immersion workshops held at FTLC in the coming year.

Annexure 1 - May 2025- September 2025

In June work resumed in three local government primary schools – Tarabanahalli, Kempapura and Pakangowda palya. The work has focused on three areas: environmental and nature awareness, library work and support for children with reading and writing difficulties. In addition some support has been given with English teaching at Tarabanahalli as it was recently declared by the government as an English medium school beginning this year with the 1st standard. Gousia has been going regularly though there has been an interruption for the last five weeks with the Dussehra holidays and then the schools closed because teachers were commissioned to do caste census work.

Remedial work at Tarabanahalli

In July Anita, the HM of the Government primary school asked us to work with twelve children from 4th and 5th standards who were having difficulties with reading and writing. Gousia has been working closely with these children every week. She began by doing a brief assessment to find out where they needed help and divided them into four different groups. Some children could recognize a few letters, others were confused by the matras and others needed support with specific difficulties such as letter formation.

Gousia has been using a mixture of games, reading cards, the Kannada primer we had developed during the Covid time and songs, riddles and stories. She has done a lot to increase children's confidence and address different children's particular needs.



ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Class on Snakes at Kempapura and Tarabanahalli

Spoorthy Shetty, a volunteer came with a three dimensional story box which introduced the children to the importance of keeping surroundings clean so that snakes should not be a threat if hiding. She mentioned various other ways of taking precautions such as covering the opening of pipes with mesh, not growing creepers on the walls of buildings and piling firewood above the ground.

Spoorthy also advised what should be done in the case of a snake bite and what should not be done. Gousia read Shankar's memorable story from "Life With Grandfather" relating the humorous story of the panic of the grandparents when they mistakenly think he has been bitten by a snake.



The children had many questions that they asked which included: and advised Advisable not to have branches or creepers on buildings where snakes could conceal themselves. Cover entrance of pipes with mesh . Avoid throwing waste food near the house. Care of arranging firewood above the ground. Cut long grass near the house

Among the many questions the children asked some are given below:

- Why does the snake shed its skin?
- Why does a snake have a divided tongue
- Where does a snake keep the venom?
- Do snakes take revenge if we hurt another one?
- Why do snakes try to disappear when someone goes near?
- Should we leave milk for the snake to drink?

Classes on Flowers at Tarabanahalli and Pakangowdapalya

Over several weeks Gousia did a series of classes round the theme of flowers in two schools. The classes included close observation, stories and a drama, drawings and making flowers from paper, learning about the parts of the flower and pollination and writing about their memories of flowers and their different uses.



Comparing two flowers in pairs after watching Gousia doing a similar exercise.



Close observation and drawing of flowers



Children writing their memories of flowers to make a chart to add to a display

Observation of birds and discussion about nests

The children played games for identification of birds and also learnt about different kinds of nests. In Kempapura the children constructed nests out of found materials



Support for English teaching

Anita (HM of Tarabanahalli Gvt. Primary School) asked us to help with the English teaching as from this year the first standard children are studying through English medium. Jane has worked with the teacher to introduce basic vocabulary through stories, rhymes and games.

Initially Lalitha, the first standard class teacher, was a little hesitant to join in but over the three months she has become increasingly keen to learn. Once a week a weekly plan is prepared and Jane demonstrates some of the activities which can be carried on through the week. In the pictures below it is clear how Ms. Lalitha soon enjoyed conducting the classes.



Library/ borrowing books

In Tarabanahalli and Pakengowdapalya the children have made their own library cards and enjoy selecting books to take home and later share what they have read. In Kempapura the children are browsing and reading the books in class but in the course of the next two months we plan to let them take books home.



Children sharing books together at Pakangowdapalya.



One of the children sharing the book she had borrowed by re-telling the story to the class.



Due to excessive rain this year the children were provided with plastic bags to carry the books home from school



Selecting books to take home . The choice of books is changed frequently



A 4th standard boy entering the date and the name of the book he wants to borrow in his library card.

Reorganizing the library

Over the long holiday for Dussehra and a further two weeks' closure on account of the census, time has been spent reorganizing one section of the library dedicated to "nature around us". Charts, books, teachers' resources have been arranged for easy access. We have also a small shelf to display seeds, nests, feathers, and seedpods etc.

Future plans

In the coming months we are planning to document some of the work that has been done on environmental awareness. This is in collaboration with nature Classrooms.

We also have plans for workshops in TFTLC for four workshops with children from the nearby government primary schools.

We would appreciate it if you could let us know if this will be possible as we very much hope to continue our collaboration with ASHA.

Jane Sahi, Gousia Taj

October, 2025

Annexure 2 - October 2025- March 2026

Library and language work

Gousia has been going regularly to three government primary schools: Tarabanahalli, Kempapura and Pakengowdapalya. The remedial work in Kannada with children at Tarabanahalli has continued and library activities have been going on in the three schools.

Through language games, writing activities and reading the children's confidence and competence in literacy skills has greatly improved.



Library activities at Kempapura. Children have read aloud, paired reading but also encouraged to read individually.

Classroom activities and Immersion in nature workshops

Work has focused on four topics – Flowers, Insects and Spiders, Animal habitats, and the Summer season. The work in the classrooms was extended through four Nature Immersion workshops. Between January and March 2026 four workshops were held for the children of three nearby Government Primary Schools. Unfortunately due to a prolonged holiday on account of local elections, the census we were not able to have the workshops as planned in November.

Flowers

The children drew from flowers and observed closely the different structures and colours.



The children explored different forms of pollination and examined more carefully the parts of the flowers in relation to fertilization and the different pollinators.



One group of children wrote about their memories and associations of flowers.



They also made a book about the uses of flowers. This led to creating a display of related books, songs, craft work and their observations.

Insects and “mini beasts”

From December 2025 to early January 2026 Priyanka Prakash conducted a series of workshops around art and nature learning that had been shaped by her training at the Art Sparks Foundation in Bengaluru. Together with Aditi Rao and Gousia Taj from TFTLC she worked with the 4th standard children from Tarabanahalli Government Primary School for about 4 weeks. Taking the theme of Insects the children did activities such as drawing from close observation of insects, creating imaginary insects and making a shared collage from paper on the topic of insects. These sessions provided a model for Gousia to work with children in Pakengowdapalya.



The theme of minibeasts was carried through in a workshop with Tarabanahalli children. Activities included singing “A Never Ending Story” Madikere Mudika. and a discussion about parasites, a Spider bingo, making spiders from natural materials and matching images of mini-beasts and their homes.



The children were told a West African story about Annancy the spider-man who brought stories to the world. Below are some pictures of children sharing the webs and spiders they had made.



The children after doing exercises in symmetry made butterflies and together with other activities made a display round the theme of mini-beast

Animal habitats workshops and classroom work

Using a Bingo sheet to search for animal homes in cracks in the wall, on the bark of trees, on the ground and under stones. The children also looked for different kinds of nests, webs and structures including a termite mound.

This was followed by drawing activities where children observed more closely the termite mound and different kinds of webs.

One group of children looked at different kinds of nests and then made their own constructions.



Following a Santhali folk tale called “ The First House” the children constructed homes from natural materials found in the garden and string.

Summer season – seedpods and seeds

Work round the summer season with Tarabanahalli children from 2nd and 3rd standards was done in Pakengowdapalya and 2nd and 3rd standard children of Tarabanahalli school.

In Pakengowdapalya children explored, collected and drew different seedpods and seeds.



With Tarabanahalli children activities included a walk around and observations about the changing season, collecting fallen materials and making designs, smelling the seeds that went into the rasam they had for lunch and making headbands or crowns from natural materials.



Visit to NCBS

At the end of February Priyanka and Aditi organized an outing to NCBS and Gousia and Ms Anita, the HM of Tarabanahalli School accompanied 17 children. It proved a wonderful opportunity for the children and they were able to ask many questions about the exhibits they saw.

After the visit each of the children recorded their impressions through writing and pictures and these were put together.

Documentation of materials related to nature study

At the end of December there was a discussion with Priyanka and Aditi from Nature Classrooms about documenting some of the work round the environment that had been done at Sita School and the Fig Tree Learning Centre. A fellowship from Nature Classes was given to Pranav Niyogi to digitalize these materials and gather information through interviews and looking at other sources such as children's pictures and texts, reports and lesson notes. Pranav has succeeded in following closely a plan to do the first phase of this work and this will close by the end of March. This has been an intense activity and has required sourcing and arranging materials some of which date back to more than 40 years! The work of organizing the material in a way that will be useful and accessible to teachers will continue in conjunction with Aditi Rao of Nature Classrooms.

Since October 2025 there has been a much closer collaboration between the nature educators of Nature Classrooms and The Fig Tree Learning Centre. This has been a significant support for the environment work.

Jane and Gousia, March 2026