

## Site Visit Report – Asha for Education, Seattle Chapter

**Project Name:** NEET – Anubhav Learning Center  
**Organization Contact:** Risha Borooah, Founder  
**Location:** Lokhra, Balipara Block, Sonitpur district, Assam  
**Project Webpage:** <https://ashanet.org/project/?pid=1352>  
**Name of Site Visitor:** Amit Rajkhowa  
**Affiliation of Site Visitor:** Project Co-Steward  
**Date of Site Visit:** Jan 28, 2026

The North East Educational Trust (NEET), established in 2016 and based in Guwahati, works to foster critical thinking and creativity in children through innovative learning approaches. NEET operates the Community Library-cum-Resource Center in Guwahati and the Anubhav Learning Center in Lokhra, Balipara Block, Sonitpur district, Assam. The organization's FCRA registration (020780178) is valid through September 22, 2028. More information is available at <https://northeasteducationaltrust.com/>.

NEET's mission is to build educational cultures that nurture critically aware, creative, and independent thinkers who can make meaningful contributions to society.

NEET's approach focuses on working across schools, communities, families, and education systems, with a strong emphasis on language learning, pedagogy, and educational resources. The organization combines direct engagement with children and teacher capacity building to create meaningful learning environments.

NEET follows a multi-pronged intervention model that works with children, teachers, and the broader community by combining school-based learning, after-school support, and community engagement. The organization places a strong emphasis on language development as the foundation for learning and complements direct work with children through teacher training and ongoing mentorship.

A key part of this model is the Anubhav Learning Center, a community-based library and learning hub located in Lokhra, Balipara Block in Sonitpur District, Assam (around 3 hrs. from Guwahati, Assam). The center functions as a safe after-school space offering academic support, library sessions, creative activities, workshops, and community events, helping bridge the gap between school and home learning.

The center currently operates from a four-room rented facility and supports children from five nearby villages. A total of 427 children are enrolled, including 278 girls and 149 boys. Typical participation includes 57+ children attending after-school academic sessions, 69+ children participating in library and storytelling activities, and 78+ children attending weekend co-curricular programs such as dance, music, drama, art, and games.

The program is supported by a dedicated team that includes four full-time core staff members: the Center Coordinator and Assamese teacher, the English teacher and Language Learning Program Coordinator, support staff, and a Math & Science teacher who teaches four times a week. Additional part-time teachers support music, dance, English language learning, and the expansion of Assamese language instruction across nearby schools.

**Site Visit - Jan 28, 2026**

I visited Anubhav on January 28th, 2026, and spent approximately two hours at the center interacting with the children, teachers, and staff. During the visit, I observed an English lesson being conducted, after which several children enthusiastically performed poetry recitations and story-reading activities. The children were confident, engaged, and excited to showcase their learning.

The teachers and staff also gave me a tour of the center, including the different library rooms organized by grade level, with separate sections for elementary and middle-school students. They proudly showcased various arts and crafts projects created by the children, reflecting both creativity and active participation.

I had detailed discussions with the teachers and staff about the center's daily activities, the Language Learning Program, and the broader community initiatives they conduct throughout the year. These included seasonal workshops held during the winter and summer, Bihu-related cultural activities, and sports coaching programs for children.

Overall, it was a very positive and encouraging visit. The children appeared genuinely happy and eager to learn, while the teachers and staff were highly motivated and deeply committed to supporting both the children and the broader community.

**Photo: Witnessed a teacher giving a lesson to the children**



**Photo: Anubhav Center – front entrance**



**Photo: The children performing a story reading session. I am with the LLP coordinator, Bibas, listening to the story reading.**



**Photo: The teachers showcased all the arts-and-crafts works the children created.**



**Photo: One of the library rooms at Anubhav. Rooms have books per student grade.**



**Photo: Another library room at Anubhav. Rooms have books per student grade.**



**Photo: Talked to the teachers and staff at Anubhav. (Teachers and Staff at Anubhav).**



## **A: Operations**

### **1. What does a typical day look like for the children in school and hostel? What about weekends?**

#### **Anubhav Learning Center:**

- Children from five nearby villages attend the Anubhav Learning Center in Sonaipam for after-school academic support, library programs, and co-curricular activities.
- Weekday sessions (3–5 PM) provide support across all subjects, including dedicated Math and Science classes and language support through NEET’s Language Learning Program.
- Weekend sessions focus on music, dance, drama, storytelling, read-aloud, and other library activities. The center operates from 1–5 PM on Saturdays and 10 AM–3 PM on Sundays, with library engagement forming a key part of the program throughout the week.

#### **Language Learning Program:**

- From 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM on weekdays, NEET Resource Persons visit eight government schools as part of the Language Learning Program, teaching Assamese and English.

- The LLP Coordinator and English Resource Persons conduct English classes three times a week across six schools, while the Anubhav Learning Center Coordinator teaches Assamese at two schools multiple times weekly. In addition, Nayalabarghari LP School receives dedicated art-based learning sessions through the program.

**2. General well-being of the children - do they look happy at the school?**

During my visit, I observed that the children were happy, enthusiastic, and actively engaged both in the Language Learning Program (LLP) sessions at the schools and at the Anubhav Learning Center. The teaching approach across both programs was clearly activity-based and child-centered, with children actively participating throughout the sessions.

**3. Quality and nutritional value of food being served in the hostels.**

Anubhav is an after-school learning center only (no hostel facilities), and food is not served.

**4. Is the learning and progress of the students on par with the expected level?**

Yes, based on my visit, the students' learning and progress appear to be on track and meeting expected levels. The impact is also reflected in the assessment data, which shows that regular participants at the Anubhav Learning Center demonstrated a 41% improvement in reading and a 62% improvement in writing between the baseline and midline assessments over a one-year period.

**5. For special needs, customized plans for each student?**

There are no special needs students at Anubhav. There are no individualized learning plans for each student. The program follows an inclusive approach, welcoming all children and conducting instruction in groups by class level. However, baseline assessments are used to identify learning levels, and support is adapted accordingly within the group setting.

**6. Girls - boys ratio, hostel facilities, wardens, safety**

Anubhav Learning Center: Total Enrolled 427 – Boys 149; Girls 278 (Ratio 1: 1.9)

The total enrollment includes their two programs, held yearly: the summer 3-week workshop on creating expression (dance, music, and art) and the winter 4-week workshop on oral skills (debate, extempore, and poetry).

On a typical day, 55-70 students attend Anubhav after school; on weekends, attendance is slightly higher, at 70-80 students.

There are no hostel facilities at Anubhav Learning Center; therefore, wardens are not applicable.

Child safety is a key priority for the organization. NEET has a Child Safeguarding Policy in place and follows it strictly to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all children.

**7. What do the children who graduate from the project do?**

In Sonitpur district, children transitioning out of the project generally continue their formal education with stronger foundational reading and writing skills, improved confidence, and greater classroom participation. Through the Language Learning Program (LLP), the project helps children remain engaged in their education and supports retention in a region where dropout rates can be a concern.

The program's activity-based, child-centered approach makes learning enjoyable and meaningful, encouraging children to continue their studies and progress to higher classes at nearby schools.

**8. Staff and Teachers - Do they think it is a great place to work?**

Based on my visit and interactions with the staff, they appear genuinely committed to the program and see their work as meaningful. The team's continuity and growth reflect a positive and supportive work environment.

For example, the Anubhav Learning Center began in March 2023 with a single Assamese teacher, Banashree, who now serves as the Center Coordinator, while another early team member, Dibas, has grown into the Coordinator role for the Language Learning Program (LLP). The team has continued to expand over time, indicating both staff retention and professional growth within the organization.

**9. Is the student list accurate in the field vs. what has been shared?**

Yes, during the visit, the student records on the ground were found to be accurate and consistent with the lists shared.

**10. Is the teacher and support staff list accurate on the field vs. what has been shared?**

Yes, the teacher and support staff records were also verified during the visit and matched the information shared.

**11. Is attendance being taken for both students and teachers/ support staff?**

Yes, daily attendance is maintained for both students and teachers/support staff across Anubhav Learning Center and the Language Learning Program (LLP).

**12. Dropout rate of students?**

The Anubhav Learning Center does not have a significant permanent dropout issue. While some children are temporarily absent during local festivals and community events, they generally return afterward, supported through regular community follow-up visits.

For the Language Learning Program (LLP), dropout trends are broadly consistent with those seen in government schools across Sonitpur district.

**13. How do they recruit the teachers and support staff?**

Teachers are recruited through advertisements in state newspapers, online job platforms, and NEET's social media channels. Shortlisted candidates go through interviews and written assessments before selection. Support staff are primarily hired through local community networks.

**14. Is there a nearby school or project working on a similar focus area?**

While several organizations operate in the development sector in Sonitpur district, NEET is currently the only organization specifically focused on education initiatives in the area.

**15. Do they deny access to education for a student from an underprivileged background?**

No. The program is specifically designed to support children from underprivileged backgrounds and follows an inclusive approach to ensure equitable access to education

## **B: Financials**

**1 Is the project partner maintaining a good record of all transactions?**

Yes, the organization maintains proper financial records. Bills and supporting documents are systematically stored, and transactions are recorded in Tally Prime.

**2 Is the project partner doing cashless transactions?**

Yes, the project partner conducts cashless transactions.

**3 Are the salary payments being made on time?**

Teachers and support staff confirmed that salaries are paid on time, typically within the first week of each month.

**4 Are the salaries in line with the budget line-items?**

Yes, they are in line with budget items (last year, this project was sponsored by Asha Beyond Borders, who partially funded the salaries)

**5 Does the project partner have accounting software, or is it vouchers and handwritten?**

The organization maintains handwritten vouchers, which are subsequently entered into Tally Prime for accounting and financial management.

**6 Any new programs being added?**

Several new initiatives are being added, including:

- A contextual Environmental Education program for Classes 3–4 in Sonai Miri Nepali LP School, with a dedicated Resource Person teaching EVS.
- A livelihood project in Dollongbasti focused on handloom-based home décor products. This is a CSR-supported initiative of Technip Energies.
- Community sports centers offering free handball and volleyball training in Ghoramari and Chariduar, respectively. This is also being implemented with CSR support from Northern Aromatics Private Limited.

**7 Any new hiring needs?**

The organization plans to hire an Assamese Resource Person to support the expansion of the Language Learning Program to additional schools.

**8 Attrition rate of support staff and teachers?**

The organization has not lost any staff or teachers since the center started in 2023.

**9 Sources of funding ?**

Current funding support comes from organizations including Asha for Education, M Foundation, Dabur India Limited, Sunit Breweries, and Kamala Bezboruah Memorial Trust.

**10 Is the project partner charging beneficiaries fees?**

No, the project partner does not charge any fees. All programs offered by Anubhav Learning Center are designed to support the educational needs of students from marginalized communities and are provided completely free of cost.

**11 Is the fee nominal and in line with the region?**

**12 Do they have dropouts because of a student not being able to afford the tuition?**

Not applicable for the two above questions, as the project partner does not charge beneficiaries any fees and all programs are provided free of charge.

## C: Surveys

## **1 Please check with a few students on the project.**

During my visit, I interacted with several students who appeared genuinely happy and enthusiastic about being at Anubhav. The children performed poetry recitations and story-reading activities with great confidence and energy. They shared that they enjoy coming to Anubhav every day to read books, receive help with their homework, and spend time learning and interacting with other students.

## **2 Teachers and Support Staff**

During my visit, I met with the two full-time teachers—the Assamese Teacher/Center Coordinator and the English Teacher/Coordinator of the Language Learning Program—as well as the Math/Science teacher, who teaches four days a week, and the support staff.

The team appeared highly motivated, engaged, and deeply committed to the children and the program's mission. They were enthusiastic about showcasing the students' language work, reading activities, and arts and crafts projects, and spoke with pride about the progress the children have made over the past year.

The staff also shared details about their broader community initiatives, including the newly launched sports center and the organization's annual events, which help strengthen student participation and community engagement. Overall, the team demonstrated strong ownership of the program and a collaborative, positive working environment.

## **3 Parents**

I did not have the opportunity to interact with parents during this visit, as no parents were present at Anubhav at the time.

## **4 Other Board Members**

Board members meet very quarter:

- Risha Borooah – Founder
- Jayanti Borooah – Trustee
- Dr Indranee Dutta – Trustee
- Monisha Behel – Trustee

## **5 How has Asha's support helped them?**

The Anubhav project was supported by Asha Beyond Borders for teacher salaries for 7 months and for rent/electricity required for the center's functioning. They have mentioned that Asha funding is critical to the center's functioning, as it provides teachers' salaries.

## **6 Plan for the next 5 years**

- Expand Community Library program:
  - Establish 1 new Community Library in Balipara block, Sonitpur
  - Establish Community Libraries in 2 new districts of Assam (starting with Karbi Anglong) also scale NEET's Flagship Language Learning Program in these 2 new districts.
  - Launch School Library Programs in 70 government schools in Karbi Anglong.
- Strengthen Teacher Education Program by:
  - Training new grassroots organizations
  - Conducting more teacher training workshops with them
- Extend presence to Nagaland through a partner organization and establish a Community Library there.
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## **7 Would you recommend support for the project?**

Yes

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