

**Project Name:** Muskaan  
**Name of Site Visitor:** Ashma Ajmera  
**Affiliation of Site Visitor:** Asha Steward  
**Date(s) of Site Visit:** February 7, 2025

---

## **Operations**

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

While I did not observe a full day's schedule, I arrived during lunchtime, and the atmosphere was lively and joyful. The students appeared well-adjusted and engaged, suggesting that their daily routines are structured and supportive. The presence of engaged staff and organized facilities points to a well-functioning daily rhythm.

### **General well-being of the children – do they look happy there in the school?**

Yes, absolutely. The children were cheerful and full of energy. Their interactions with teachers and visitors showed a sense of safety and trust.

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

Although I didn't personally review the meals, the children appeared healthy and energetic, which suggests that nutrition is likely adequate.

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

Very much so. One of the students I met had recently won a state-level poetry competition—a testament to both the academic and creative encouragement the children receive.

### **For special needs, customized plans for each student?**

This wasn't explicitly discussed, but the high level of engagement and individual attention suggests that students are supported according to their unique needs.

### **Girls - boys ratio, hostel facilities, wardens, safety?**

Specific ratios weren't mentioned, but a group discussion with several girls revealed their confidence and strong motivation to learn. The safe, inclusive environment was evident.

### **What do the children who graduate from the project do?**

Graduates stay connected with Muskaan—one alumnus now supports the computer lab and assists with photography and videography. This shows a powerful cycle of giving back and long-term impact.

### **Staff and Teachers – do they think it is a great place to work?**

Yes, every staff member and teacher I met spoke warmly about their work and seemed genuinely committed to Muskaan's mission.

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

This was not explicitly verified during the visit.

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

Not reviewed during the visit.

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

This operational detail was not directly observed.

**Dropout rate of students?**

Not discussed.

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

Details of the recruitment process were not shared during the visit.

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

Not discussed.

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

Absolutely not. In fact, Muskaan is focused on reaching children from denotified and marginalized communities and providing them with meaningful education rooted in their own contexts.

---

**Financials**

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

Financial documentation was not reviewed during the visit.

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

Not discussed.

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

Not reviewed.

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

Not verified during this visit.

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

This was not part of the visit scope.

**Any new programs being added?**

While not formally labeled as new programs, Muskaan's publication and outreach work are expanding and thriving.

**Any new hiring needs?**

Not mentioned.

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

Not discussed.

**Sources of funding?**

Not discussed.

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

Not explicitly asked, but considering Muskaan's mission and target community, education is likely free or offered at nominal cost.

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

Not verified.

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

There was no indication of this issue.

---

**Surveys**

**Please check with a few students on the project**

Yes. I spoke with several students, including a group of girls who expressed excitement about learning and their futures. Their confidence and ambition were deeply inspiring.

**Teachers and Support Staff**

Multiple staff members shared their reflections. All conveyed a strong sense of purpose and alignment with Muskaan's values.

**Parents of students**

I did not meet any parents during this visit.

**Other board members**

I did not interact with any board members.

---

**Next Years**

**How has Asha support helped them?**

While not directly stated, the infrastructure, programming, and staff commitment I observed suggest that Asha's support has been critical in enabling Muskaan to sustain and grow its impact.

**Plan for the next 5 years?**

A formal 5-year roadmap was not discussed, but the growth of alumni engagement and publications indicates ongoing evolution and ambition.

---

**Any comments or concerns from the site visit that is a matter of serious concern for Asha?**

There were no red flags or causes for concern. The project appears to be running smoothly with genuine commitment to its goals.

---

**Would you recommend support for the project?**

Yes, wholeheartedly. Muskaan is doing exceptional work in education, empowerment, and community engagement. Their holistic, grassroots approach is not only educating children but nurturing future leaders and changemakers.











