

## Visit to VTCL (Viveka Tribal School for Learning)

September 5, 2023

By Melli Annamalai, Asha Boston

Praveen has been focusing on overhauling and reenergizing of VTCL, here are some of the recent activities and updates:

### Enrollment

Rather than making it a school that is focused on being just a service for the poor (without equally focusing on quality), Praveen is focusing on making the school an excellent one that will draw students to its campus. We can see the impact now. With the slow growth of private schools even in remote areas the enrollment had been dropping, but this year enrollment has really picked up. They had aimed for 520 students, and have enrolled 569 students.

### Class X results

The rigorous focus on academics is paying off. The class X results in the past academic year had a 98.5% pass rate (67 of the 68 students passed the exam, and 49 of them got First Class or more).

VTCL SSLC Results Comparison									
	2022 2023			2021 2022			2018 2019		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Distinction	1	1	2	3	0	3	0	0	0
First Class	26	21	47	11	10	21	12	2	14
Second Class	7	8	15	3	4	7	7	7	14
Pass	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	0	2
Fail	0	1	1	1	8	9	3	2	5
Total	35	33	68	19	23	42	24	11	35
Pass %	100.0	97.0	98.5	94.7	65.2	78.6	87.5	81.8	85.7

### Confidence among the children

I also had the opportunity to interact with students from classes 8 and 9 at the Guru Manthan program held on September 1 and 2. This is an immersive workshop and competition for teachers in Mysore, where teachers teach students from several schools in the Mysore area and are judged and awarded prizes. They also learn to collaborate, and interact with several education experts. VTCL students were part of the program, and I noticed how confident and articulate they were. This used to be the case in the early years of VTCL, but then they had become quieter and more timid. It was really good to see them vocal and not shy, on par with some top private schools in Mysore.



### Emphasis on Arts Education

The school got lucky and was able to hire an alumni Manoj as an Arts teacher. All kinds of Arts activities are blossoming now. Praveen's goal is to make the school a springboard for tribal aspirations (not just a school they go to because there are no other options). Talent Enrichment Program (TEP) is a program launched last year to help students pick an area of interest, beyond academics, to learn and excel in that. Students have chosen athletics, games, arts and crafts, tailoring, electrical and electronics, photography, and so on. The tribal children have long had a natural inclination towards doing well in creating Art. Here they are busy making Ganesha idols for the upcoming Ganesha festival.



### Emphasis on Sports

Tribal children are also good at sports. As discussed in my last report VTCL has made some investments in good sports equipment and playing fields. The final photo is the dining hall.

