

### **Poorna Vidya A: Odaikuppam Primary School**

Asha Arizona volunteers Babu and Viji visited on February 27, 2008.

a) It was good to see the school getting Chennai corporation's attention, in part as a result of Poorna Vidya's efforts. The corporation is upgrading the infrastructure and supplying some Activity Based Learning (ABL) materials. Poorna Vidya had provided these for the last several years.

Mekala teacher, an Asha employee, is doing a fine job with the higher classes and manages the computer room and resources very well. She was teaching English using videos supplied by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and other national resources when we visited. Although the Headmistress was not there at that time, the teacher who was substituting for her, was quite enthusiastic in showing us around. The children were all in uniforms and the place seemed to be quite positive.

b) The ICDS Balwadi seems to have really grown since our last visit. It has almost 78 children and the ayah and Asha teacher, Kavita, truly seem to care for their wards. Unfortunately, by the time we went there, the class was over and most children had gone home. But, a couple of kids were still there waiting to be picked up by their parents. The ayah and Kavita showed us the material they use, including cards, puzzles and other toys and posters. First Aid Kits, medicines and cooking gas and stove for preparing the mid-day meal have been provided by Poorna Vidya.

### **Poorna Vidya B: Vaikkakaran Upper Primary School**

Asha Arizona volunteers Babu and Viji visited on February 22, 2008.

a) The nursery that we started two years ago has become quite a success. It has gone up to 35 children now from about 18 the first year. This has been the single reason for the whole school turning around its low and steadily declining enrolment: it is slowly becoming a feeder to class one. The reversal of the decline has been cited by the corporation superintendent of the school district for not shutting the school as she originally intended. The positive energy generated by this is almost infectious. The Headmistress is extremely enthused by the turn-around and a fully committed co-conspirator working for Poorna Vidya's success!

The ayah at this nursery is almost like a substitute-mom for the children and ensures everyone looks clean, tidy and always cared for. The Asha teacher, Selvarani, is an ICCW-trained graduate and is able to work wonders with the kids. We saw the tiny tots really engaged in their lesson and in very clean uniforms. They were learning to identify parts of the body in English when we were there. Poorna Vidya has provided transportation subsidies for the parents to send their kids by auto-rickshaw, since it is a very densely populated inner-city area. It is dangerous for the kids to walk the roads in the traffic.

b) The higher classes are doing well with the material and methods provided by Poorna Vidya earlier. Just three teachers are working some magic there; these

teachers, especially, Mahalakshmi teacher, are eager to learn and adopt Active Learning Methodology (ALM) in the school under the sponsorship of Tamilnadu Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Clearly, they seem to champion any good inputs and have embraced Poorna Vidya whole-heartedly.

**Note:** All the efforts at both Poorna Vidya A and B are ably co-ordinated Mallika.