Creating self reliance and an understanding of options in young minds  puvidham narumanam

Looking back at 2011 and welcoming the New Year is this painting of a seven year old boy. We all “Wish all of you the very best”. We hope for a lot more awareness about the individual’s role in bringing about social change, and hope to see more and more people devoting time, thought and action towards protecting the interests of the Earth. 

*We pray for good health of the earth and all of you.*

This year we worked with the children on the new curriculum. We have gone through the first three modules of learning which include the sun module, the water module and the earth module. The following pictures with captions depict their understanding and interest.

The sun, in shape and colour collage and drawing, learning to use soil, leaves, turmeric , limestone, blue ink for painting with the brush, collective building of a huge sand castle by lkg ukg children

Observing and drawing the effects of the sun, observing and painting the way a leaf slowly turns yellow and dries, using dry leaves to trigger imagination to make leaf collages in the 1st and 2nd class. Below is the concept drawings for one of the stories about the sun as a life giving force, a few lines about some animal or bird of their choice, a song about water and learning the flow by blowing on paint.
The 3rd and 4th children made interesting observations about shadows, they tried to draw shadows of buildings and people, traced the flow of the Cauvery river on a map.

They made concept drawings about the effect of extinction of one of the species on the overall environment, soil formation, tried to understand the shape and core of the earth using clay modeling, and wrote interesting stories.

The children of 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th apart from doing similar things in the course of their lessons also made greeting cards, calendars and wooden spoons and bamboo products like pen stands.

Besides entertaining and educating themselves and other children about how to handle snakes and identify the poisonous and non poisonous ones!

During the Deepawali vacation, Meenakshi spent time with the teachers trying to do some documentation of their experiences in the class room during their work with the children using the new curriculum. On the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday on 2nd of October, the children went to Chennai for a performance requested for by some friends from The Siddha Consciousness Research Foundation. They exhibited their understanding of various phenomenon and performed science experiments. They put up an exhibition explaining the history of GOD in relation to the history of the Earth. They also performed a cultural program.
Mrs. Renuka Balaji organized a magic and mimicry show for the children on 22nd December on the occasion of her child’s birthday. All the children had a memorable time and a fantastic feast.

This year we have not yet taken the children on any outings because we are constructing some more space for the arts and crafts and all our energies are locked up in getting the work done. The old Lkg and Ukg class room is being extended on to the first floor to accommodate a crafts and painting room.

But we will be going for a trip to Bangalore with all the children from 5th to 8th in the middle of February. This trip has been promised by one of our mentor well wisher Mr. A.K. Manikkam. And Mr. Puyish, a friend of Puvidham has offered to host the younger children on his farm which has all facilities and a good stream flowing and lots of fun waiting!

**More visitors and trainees:**

In the early October we had three students of the Azim Premji Foundation, Bangalore, who were doing their MA in Education and had their training. They observed our methodology and had discussions with the teachers about the new curriculum.

After their deepavali vacation the children came back with their worksheets and the teachers had the job of evaluating the work of the children. We had another set of teachers from Vidyodaya School Gudalur for observation of our teaching and learning methods.

Mape Modiba, a student from South Africa, from the college of the University of Cape Town came on the 18th of November. He will be here till the middle of January. He is learning organic farming principles and practices. He is also interested in seeing how we use organic farming as the core activity to teach all that needs to be taught.

Our new curriculum based on the five elements seems to fit the bill. While he is here he is helping the children to learn computer skills where by they will be able to write a story, make drawings on the computer and compile a book and print it out. They also learn to make tables and graphs, geometry and areas by measuring and plotting the campus of the school using the computers. The seventh standard children are busy doing a measured drawing of the land on which the school is built.

We had just two machines and one laptop in our school. Ms Sabina Fernandes a good friend of ours and Mr. Mohsin Presswala | Administration Manager Global Engineering Services and their company Black & Veatch Consulting Pvt Ltd, Powai, Mumbai have given the school nine machines. We are extremely grateful for this. This has helped a lot more children to have access to the machines.

All in all we have found that children, when they are allowed to grow naturally in an inspiring environment and allowed a lot of time to be with peers without the supervision of adults, develop a lot of self control, tolerance, accommodation, sensitivity and creativity! This hut was made by two children from ukg in their study of homes in the earth module.

Do look us up at [www.puvidham.org](http://www.puvidham.org) or come to Puvidham in person any time.

If you would like to foster one or more children or contribute to any of the activities, do contact us at [puvidham@gmail.com](mailto:puvidham@gmail.com)

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