



The rains really bring back all lost hopes! Our wells are full and the farming activity has started with renewed energy. This year too our well wishers in Dharmapuri, a group called 'Udavum ullangal' is regularly giving us some ragi and some cash donations. We are extremely lucky to have them visit us frequently and share their experiences with the children. Mr. Devarajan, took time especially for our **teachers** and **took Yoga class for 15days teaching us Pranayama and self healing techniques.**

The vegetables are plenty and children happy. We planted 150 trees on our hostel land including pogam and neem. The farmers group has finally taken off and the organic farming farmers group now have meetings every month and save small cash for emergencies.



We also helped two farmers to plant trees in their fallow land. We hope to get some saplings from the District Rural Development Centre . Our 7th , 8th and 6th group **children go to their farms**

every 15days for observation and record work. The children have started to prepare herbal repellants to give to the organic farmers. We plan to have a vermi composting training program next month.

After the april science fair, the children and teachers all spent time brushing up their basics. Two teachers **Samanthi and Rameshwari went for the Story telling workshop held by Kathalaya.** Though the work shop is exorbitantly expensive we decided to give them the exposure so that we could implement this year our curriculum which is based on our experience of the past 10 years. After they came back from the work shop we had a teacher training program for some teachers from a small school in a small village in Andhra Pradesh run by Sandhya from Chennai.

Both Samanthi and Rameshwari shared what they had learnt. It was a very useful session for those teachers and for Samanthi and Rameshwari, it was the first time they had performed in front of other teachers and shared how to write a relevant story and deliver it properly in the class room.

This experience gave us the confidence to write our curriculum and try it out in our class rooms. **The skills for story telling and drama are essential to put this curriculum into action.** The LKG and UKG are clubbed as one class and the 1st and 2nd are together. The children are given a lot of time to share their experiences and the class is directed at enhancing these experiences while relating them to the senses and the elements.

The children experience the five elements through their five senses and through the two languages that they need to learn, Tamil and English. There are songs about the sun, colors associated with it, shapes associated with it and stories about the properties of the sun like heat, light, shade etc.



The children are outside the class a lot and are telling the teacher what they know about the sun and what they think is the importance of the sun. We would think that young children would not be able to discuss topics like this but surprise of surprises they do and they also comprehend the lessons much better. The numbers come through collection of objects, comparison and classification. They use one to one correspondence to get the right number of objects which are often edible to make the experience a joy.



Our friends from Darjeeling came down and we all had special integrated class for one month. At the end of the month we took them and our children from 5th to 8th on a tour to Madurai, Kanyakumari, Mundandhurai sanctuary and Karayar dam and the kuttralam falls. It was a three day tour and all of us had a great experience. They were seeing the ocean for the first time and were thrilled to see the sunrise in Kanyakumari.

They played in the waves on one side and bathed in a fresh water stream on the other. All the children were enchanted by the presence of the two side by side. This exchange with the Gurukul in Darjeeling is something that both are keen on and this year again we will send a group on an exchange program in October if the funds permit. We have found that the children who had been on the long train journey and stayed in the Gurukulam for a month have confidence in themselves and are very outspoken. This is the one quality we need to bring change into our society.



Last year our school started a **friendship with a school in Canada called La Parle**. The children from our school made cards and sent them to the children there and the children there responded with cards and sent lots of small children's things to our school. Now our children are busy **making friends bands, knitted ribbons, and hair bands and cards to send to them**. Their enthusiasm is infectious.

Twelve of our children attended a karate test and received their belts of the next level.

Meenakshi was invited to share her experience and give her suggestions for change in the Right to Education act in a work shop conducted through UNICEF. She made a presentation and suggested that the curriculum development should be a right of every school that wants to take it up.



Do look us up at 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@gail.com

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