

## **KHUSHBOO WELFARE SOCIETY (KWS), Gurugram, Haryana**

(Site visit was done by Rajdeep Deb and Moonmoon Deb,  
volunteers from Asha Zurich)

I visited KWS on 5<sup>th</sup> of April, 2018. I visited this place along with my sister-in-law Mrs. Moonmoon Deb, who has some work experience with childcare centers. We reached KWS around 9.30 in the morning. A guard welcomed us. Unfortunately I donot remember his name, but I would like to mention that he is also a person with partial disability of hand. But he very nicely manages his job. This particular fact is important to mention as it indicates the importance given by KWS for independent life style of special people. Then in the KWS campus, Mr. Rakesh Jinsi, the president of KWS society, welcomed us. We had nice discussion with him about the goals and achievements of KWS. Further we discussed a broader spectrum of issues regarding how Indian society deals with the special children and their requirement. Having been in Europe for last 9 years, I know it well how the different public facilities are tailored to assist the need of disability or special needs. However there are still mindset issues and attention to details missing in the approach in Indian society. The institutions like KWS makes it an important point to aware the parents and social neighborhood about the approach for special children. We have discussed a few points specific to the questionnaire of Asha Austin. I have submitted the answers in a separate report. Here, I would further discuss about how was our day in KWS and what we learned about the additional requirements in the institution.

After initial discussions, Mr. Rakesh guided us through different classes in the school. We started with children with severe disability class. This class had one teacher and one assistant. This is the norm throughout all the class. That is, they have one teacher and one assistant dedicated to each class. When we entered the class, the teacher was showing a small cartoon movie to the children. The idea was to connect the children through pictures with different seasons. I felt like children are really enjoying this class. Children were a bit shy in this class, or I must say I did not know well enough to communicate with these very special children. As this class is for children with severe dissability, I cannot judge the extent to which

this shyness is due to the conditions. But I strongly felt teachers are dedicated to improve the condition of these children. The room was filled with lot of drawings to engage the children more. Thereafter, I moved to some intermediate classes. Children are friendlier here and want to talk to me. Some disabilities have prevented them from communicating what they think but I definitely felt they want to express more in a positive way. Some of them were also very much enthusiastic to see new things. For example one of them really worked with my watch and tried to look into what more could be done with it. For children of severe disability, I must say its positive sign that they are showing interest on different technological things. Thereafter, I moved to a class where children are taught to do some basic daily life stuffs. One of the students is serving others some fruits on serving plate. Others have to receive it and thank the person. This simple life stuffs are immensely important to achieve an independent life goal of special children. There was also a class where students are taught some cooking skills. Then I moved to a music class. A number of children want to express through singing or playing instruments. They sang a song, which was lovely. I found that music is really bringing more enthusiasm among them. After this I moved to class for yoga and dance. Students participate very enthusiastically in dance particularly. They also learn some stretching exercise in the beginning of the class. It was nice to see that one student with some assistance lead all these.

I also visited the physiotherapy and rehabilitation center. They have bought a very expensive machine for movements rehabilitation. During my visit, the machine was used for a child's movement recovery. Also physiotherapists are very much engaged with other children too, to initiate some movements. I discussed with the therapist at length. I got the feeling that they are very satisfied with the school authority. One of them has been to the Netherlands recently to get some training to use some special machines. Only thing they want is to be enlightened further about different new techniques in rehabilitation and movement recovery of children.

I visited a newly established audiometry lab. The purpose of the lab is to make an early detection of hearing disability. Two very young children were detected with hearing disability since the start of audiometry lab in last one year. There is also an ENT specialist who regularly visits the institute to check for hearing and other

disabilities. When I was there, he was checking some children. There is also a newly recruited psychiatrist.

I visited the computer lab. To my delight, students are very good irrespective of severe disability in their movement, in using the computer. Some students very nicely do the simple job like drawing and making some small advertisement. I talked to the teacher and he told me that a number of students show interest in learning computer skills. Sometime the number of computer is less for number of student who wants to use them. I suggest it could be discussed with Mr. Rakesh about if there is a requirement to expand the computer facility. Further, if possible, I would be very interested to see an integration of programming learning skills for special children. It seems to me they have more ability to expand the knowledge base in computers.

Finally, I visited the sports training ground. I found that there is quite a lot of participation in the sports activities. I heard that 2 students participated and won medals in disability Olympics for weightlifting. The sports teacher are very much dedicated and want to further excel in sporting ability of the children.

I wrapped up my visit with a second set of discussions with Mr. Rakesh. He explained me the sustainable way by which they manage the functional cost of running the KWS facilities. They have a large donor base of short and medium degree of donation. They are also thinking of expanding the facility by including a hostel. Currently they are looking for a plot for the hostel. They currently have a short night shelter for temporary stay for weekend. This is particularly used to train the children an independent life.

I have following suggestions for Asha Austin:-

1. I definitely believe it will be very valuable to continue the support to KWS. The institute is not just teaching the special children but trying to make them self-dependent.
2. The physiotherapists are very interested to know the new techniques of rehabilitation and treatment for special children. Movement is one of the most important things for special children. Every degree of movement they achieve leads them to have some more independence in the life. Therefore, it will be really worth to provide some scholarships or training sponsorship for KWS physiotherapist in Europe or USA. I

wanted to mention this because I feel that rehabilitation training knowledge and technology are much advanced in western world.

3. The computer facilities are very much used. It will be quite possible to help to expand this facility.
4. The music teachers can also be supported with more musical instruments etc.
5. Overall, I assume the KWS board is looking after the requirements very well, but still Asha Austin can always proactively help them in all those points.

1. We have been supporting the new initiatives teacher and therapist salaries since 2016. It would be good to know how their programs are doing, the schedule of these teachers, impact on the children.

Ans :- The presentation provides a snapshot of different school activities. I talked to the teachers and therapists. They are very happy with the working conditions. Given more support, they would have liked to learn new techniques in teaching special children.

Particularly the physiotherapist suggested to bring new equipments for students training and treatment. But usually they ask the school authorities about it. They are satisfied with the seriousness with which the different demands are taken care of.

2. Status of their audiometry lab, new hires for the same

Ans:- Audiometry lab is well set up. I have provided few pictures of the lab. It was also used to find few more cases of hearing disability. Three children are found to have hearing disability using audiometry lab.

3. Would like to know how number of children have changed over the years, before and after construction and what is the anticipated growth in number of children in next couple of years. What are the current challenges they see in adding more children. Has the overnight facilities for children been restarted ?

Ans: The maximum capacity of children intake in the school is now around 200. Currently school strength is about 110. They usually accept any children with special needs.

4. What a typical day looks like for kids in each of the sections (from little kids all the way to vocational classes)

Ans: Picture of time table is provided. The presentation also explains the different activities in the school.

5. Would like to know more about the requirement for a pottery instructor and if he/she will follow a curriculum and how it helps the kids.

Ans: Pottery instructor visits the school twice a week. The main purpose of the pottery class is to provide muscle movement flexibility.

6. Funding needs for this year 2018-19 and how last year was for their fundraising 2017-18

Ans: Funding is usually enough for school activities. A proper hostel construction proposal is considered. The land is being looked into for construction of hostel. When the hostel construction will be in progress, then more funds may be required. Also if children number increases, the cost may rise, particularly staff intake, buses etc. Currently 5 vehicles are used. About 65% come by these transport vehicles.

They have wide donor base with small donations. This leads to good stability in terms of funding.

7. Learn more on their plan for the night time respite center

Ans: Currently a small night shelter is operational. But it is usually used for very specific purpose like one time picnic for children. This is used mainly to provide students some opportunity for independent life style.

8. Learn more on their plan for a residential home for their alumni

Ans: The land is being looked into for construction of hostel.

- ❖ One teacher for a group of students
- ❖ Two assistant with each teacher
- ❖ A group of students consists of all students of similar degree of special assistance required.
- ❖ A print out of daily school schedule is provided





# Activities

- ❖ Regular class room activities include sports, physiotherapy, yoga, dance etc.





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# Activities:CSR

- ❖ Physiotherapy and other therapies are important part of the school schedule





# Activities

- ❖ Main focus is to make students independent



# Activities:Music

- ❖ Regular music classes. Students participate very enthusiastically.
- ❖ Important for speech therapy





# Audiometry Lab

- ❖ Audiometry lab is well set up. Used mainly to detect hearing ability of the children.
- ❖ Few cases of hearing disability were detected using audiometry lab.



# Thank you

