

## **Khushboo Welfare Society - Site visit on Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016**

My name is Mohit Sood, a volunteer with Asha Austin. I visited Khushboo Welfare Society on Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016. I have uploaded the pictures and videos from my visit here -

<https://www.flickr.com/gp/149384138@N06/8506ky>

I reached the school around 11:30 am that day. This was a surprise visit. First thing I noticed from my last visit was the new construction. The new construction is in front of the old building including a ramp that goes all the way to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. This was funded by Carrier India (known for air conditioners and refrigeration). Construction on the back-side is ongoing. This is based on funding from a couple of other organizations. There are two mini-vans and two busses in the school currently.



I entered the reception area through a door on right side of the new building (see above). I first met with Vijay Pal, school director. He introduced me to Rakesh Jhinsi, President of Khushboo (see picture below) and Kiran Goel, Executive Director. Rupali Awade had recently left the organization so I could not meet her. Kiran mentioned that she has taken over her work for the time being. I explained that the surprise visit was intentional. They were happy to accommodate.



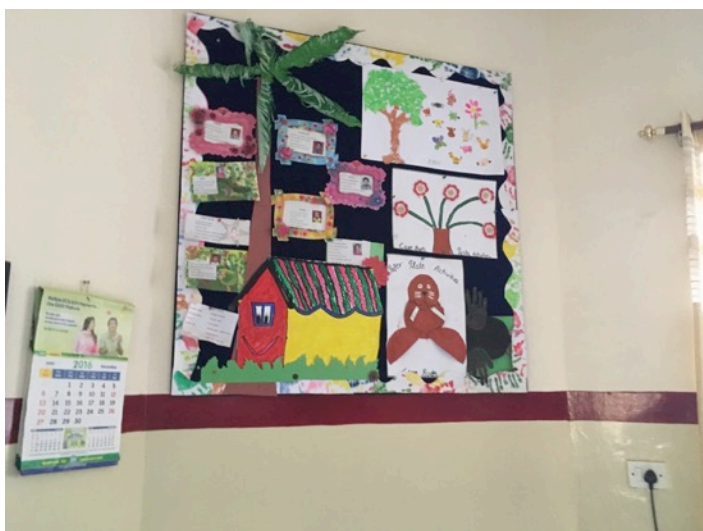
We all sat in their conference room for some time and chatted. I briefly gave my background. I mentioned that I had visited KWS 5 years back. I explained them site visits are a requirement for us to sending funding. I asked them about plans for meeting Rs. 20 lakhs deficit after Asha Austin funds Rs. 10 lakhs. They mentioned that the Airtel Marathon raised about 5 lakhs, while ONGC is in the process of funding for 19 students (was either 12 lakhs or 16 lakhs – Kiran could not remember clearly at the moment – we could confirm this later once the funding comes through). I asked them how was Marathon fundraising different this year vs last year. They mentioned that one of the partners decided not to participate this year so funds raised through were less this year. Last year they raised 13 lakhs. I requested a tour of the facility. Mr. Jhinsi said goodbye since he said he spends half-days at Khushboo so he will not be available when I come back from the tour.

Vijay Pal gave me the tour. We went to the old building and entered “Little Lily”, a Blessing classroom for children with mild disability, age group 6-12 years. I recognized the teacher from my last visit. The room was bigger as they had combined old office and OPD room. The room is equipped with Multi-touch white boards powered by PCs and projectors. The teacher uses this as part of the teaching plan. It provides ability to draw and watch videos. I took videos of teacher giving a demo (See below).





The next room was "Care Buds". This is for children between 6 and 12 year with more severe disability.





Next room was "Marigold". Since it was around noon, all the kids had wrapped up lunch and were sitting outside in the lawn.



Vijay then showed me pottery machine that is used in pottery class and some pots made by children.





Next I visited the multi-sensory room, which again was bigger than before. I have uploaded a video of this online. A child was being given physical therapy with multi-colored lights flashing. Vijay explained that they use it for assistance in keeping child calm (depends from child to child).

Next, we went to pre-vocational room A (for children 14 years and above). The room was empty so Vijay explained that two students have gone to for training for 10 days in Muksaan, an NGO based in Vasan Kunj, Delhi. An educator also had gone with them. Rest of the group joined another class.

Next, we went to pre-vocational room B (same age group as the other pre-vocational room). The room used to be a meeting room but now was used as second classroom for pre-vocational training. It was also made bigger by combining with storeroom. The room had student's bags but students were not present. Vijay said some of them have gone to computer lab and others are practicing for World Disability day on Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Next, we went to the cafeteria, which had a long table with 10-12 chairs. This is used by pre-vocational students for eating lunch and also by staff after the students leave around 2pm.

Next, we went to kitchen. This was not changed. This is still used by pre-vocational students. They still do the same activities. I saw three children present in the room, one cleaning and other two sitting.



We then went to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The accounts room has been converted to store room for sellable items. I asked him if they still are making sellable items. Vijay said that they are reducing it since they have to send staff to sell these items. We then looked at the area, which they were using for overnight observation of those students who they needed more time to assess. They also work on night training for children. This gave parents some confidence that children can be independent and can leave them with someone for 3-4 days if needed. They give a checklist to parents so that they know what to drop off – clothes , medicines. Then the school also keeps an assessment of child's level so that they can work on them. This area is now under construction so they have stopped that activity for now.

We then went to the right side of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor which used to house vocational activities. This was also under construction. They will have two dedicated vocational training rooms - one for bubble cutting and other is not decided yet.

Next we went towards front-right of the new building via the ramp. Vijay showed me the new space here for doctor counseling and registration. They are planning to use this space for initial assessment and registrations of new children. Pediatrician visits every Wednesday. New kids undergo medical checkup, while existing students get a follow-up check. If there are any medical issues, they consult with parents as well. The doctor typically sees 2-3 students per visit, so every child gets check-up once every 6 months.

We then went to the computer lab. There were 3 children in that room and 7 computers. Other children were in World disability day practice. One child, Vipin who was also physically disabled was using a motorized wheelchair. They have two of these in Khushboo. It has a horn and joystick. Children who are using them are independent and can operate it and come to the lab on their own without any assistance. The wheelchairs cost Rs. 80,000. Some of the parents are thinking about purchasing such chairs for their kids. The computer teacher came in and introduced himself as Satinder. He has been teaching for 1.5 years. He said he tries out different visual software like paint and corel-draw. There was one child, Vipin who had cerebral palsy, who he was teaching corel-draw. He was taking a newspaper ad and was attempting to re-create it on corel-draw. The keyboard and mouse was special. It was colored coded with vowels, consonants, and numbers with different colors. Vipin had made several drawings in paint. Satinder explained me that the first thing he does is assess a child's ability – see how the child is moving the mouse, typing the keys. They start with paint, then go to typing, and then corel-draw. There was another child, Mohit, who was good at typing. He opened up the typing software and Mohit started practicing. The child was quiet proficient in typing. Computers were donated by Salwan group and are being maintained in-house. Satinder comes from 11:30 to 12:30 pm daily.

Next, we went to speech therapy room. The room had a mirror and a mat on one side, a table + chair for speech therapist and raised patient table to lie down behind it. Speech therapist comes for 3 days a week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 am to 12 pm. Mirror is used for verbal exercises. There were also some picture cards – to practice saying name of objects. They plan to install a computer here in future so that they can use softwares for assistance in speech therapy. Each session is typically 10-15 mins depending on a child's ability. For those kids, who need more attention spend more time with the therapist. Some kids who are severely disabled are taught to use picture cards, booklets or ipad to point to objects to see what they need. They currently have one speech therapist, one occupational therapist, and one physiotherapist. They are looking into hiring assistants who have diplomas in these areas to be able to provide more care.

Next we went to Multipurpose hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, where kids were practicing dance for World Disability Day on Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> in Delhi. There were 5 older children practicing dance and 5 younger children with 2 educators observing. There was also one dance teacher. Vijay mentioned that there was one child Priyanka won 4 bronze medals for power lifting in Special Olympics held in Los Angeles in 2015.

We then walked down the ramp to 1<sup>st</sup> floor. We went to the room, where children were practicing singing – this was the second group that was planning to participate at World Disability Day celebrations. There were two music teachers, one educator, and 14 children. Students who were able to sing were singing a little bit, some were clapping and others were just enjoying the music. One child while sitting got an epileptic seizure. The educator and Vijay went for his assistance. He recovered after some time but was exhausted physically so they gave him a pillow to rest. I spoke to the teachers in between and asked them about their timings. They come 3 days a week for 1 hour from 12.30 to 1.30 pm. He mentioned that couple of students would play some instrument also.

Next, Vijay showed me a conference room where board members or staff meets. The room had a long table and 14 chairs. Behind the room was a Restroom accessible to both music room and meeting room.

We then walked to the left-side of the new building on 1<sup>st</sup> floor. This houses occupational / physical therapy room. Shruti along with another lady were giving physical therapy to a child. Occupational therapist was working on his desk. Vijay showed me several equipment used for occupational therapy – ball throwing hoop, lock and latches box, pegs in board, zipping and buttoning, for hand-eye coordination. There was also equipment (two support rails with facing mirror) for students with scissor gait so that the therapist can improve on their gait. There were parallel bars to help children stand with support and work on their posture. They had a treadmill, rotating standing table, suspended walking trainer. They are also planning to get sensory mats of better quality. Occupational therapist said he comes full time and gives 20 min session to students - either 3 or 2 days in week depending on severity of disability - ADHD, Cerebral Palsy and Autism. Vijay mentioned that Physiotherapist was in a training program, which is why he was not present. Vijay continued to show me weighted cuffs and dumbbells to help with motion stability. Occupational therapist showed me assistive devices – walking canes, walkers, with arm-support, wheelchairs, and crutches. While walking out they showed me a wall-mounted adjustable bar used for shoulder movement. They mentioned that Vipin is training in walker so that his parents can buy that to use around the house since wheelchair is more expensive.

We then walked down the ramp to ground floor. I saw that they have kept a trampoline, which was recently bought. Teachers or caretaker bring children to use the trampoline. They take one child at a time inside.

We then went to the pre-school (3-6 years), started in 2009. Kids who are in OPD, while they have one to one, they realized learn more when they are in a group setting. Kids come with their mothers 4 days a week, 9 am to 12 pm. Mothers also get training. After they are more than 6 years old, kids are moved to blessings. The room had a plays equipment for climbing and crawling through tunnels. There was also a ball pit filled with lots of colored balls. It also has Microsoft Xbox with sensor. Older Kids play tennis, jumping, and badminton around 12.30 pm in the same room. The room also had small chairs with tables for children to sit and do activities.

We then walked out to the lawn. The playscape outside is closed due to construction. Lawn has been rejuvenated recently. Kids were playing a game outside. They were sitting in a circle and passing a soccer balls after calling the name of student who they are going to pass the ball. 3 special educators were guiding children. Special educators help in sports, including when children go outside. They are going with some students to Hissar for Cycling competition – they will participate in national championship selection. Children also go to trainings given Special Olympics – soccer, athletics, cycling, power lifting, etc. He mentioned that Priyanka got some training from Special Olympics training. A neighbor who is a model/actor also helped out by giving access to his gym.

Flour Daniels might give them a Tata Ringer bus. They currently have 2 busses and 2 mini-vans.

We then walked back to the reception/main office area. One side were offices for accountant, Ashok and Rupali, resource mobilization. One the other side, there is a small meeting room for board members. Next to that are Vijay and Kiran's offices. They have a backup generator in the rear side of the building. Carrier donated 1.6 crores for the new construction in the front side. BASAID and Rozalia foundation gave 11 lakhs and 20 lakhs, respectively for the remaining construction in the back side of the campus.

I then met with Kiran Goel. We spoke about what she contributed since she has take up the job. She had helped bring in new initiatives – occupational and speech therapist, music and dance teachers. I asked her about the challenges that they face – she said getting funding for expanding the school has been challenging. She was interested in understanding our thought process behind funding new initiatives. I explained her how Asha for Education and Asha Austin operates and decides. I also told them about our vision and how funding new initiative aligns with our vision.