



## NEWSLETTER

# HAPPY CLASSROOM

JANUARY TO JUNE 2024



Birla Planetarium

Shot on Y15  
Vivo AI camera



**FOKE**  
Friends of  
Kolkata's Elderly



*Hello friends,*

**This is the first newsletter being published officially and separately for 'Happy Classroom'. Over the last 20 years the FOKE newsletters contained the report of the education programme but with time the programme has developed under the leadership of Mrs. Piyali Sen and since January 2021 it has been officially named 'HAPPY CLASSROOM'.**

**To update friends with detailed report we thought of preparing a half – yearly newsletter for Happy Classroom exclusively to share in detail for all who are interested to learn about our education programme.**





## About us

Happy Classroom started its journey formally on 26th January, 2021 under Friends Of Kolkata's Elderly ( FOKE). The education programme was in existence since the beginning of the two homes, but when Mrs. Piyali Sen –A retired teacher of D.A.V.Public School decided to dedicate all her spare time in managing and overseeing this programme, it was a wonderful blessing. The passion to carry on with what Mrs. Sen loves most and is well equipped with, FOKE took the opportunity to humbly receive her teaching skills and time she so generously offered. The main area of FOKE's work can be understood from the name itself. We run two free old age homes for destitute elderly people for last 20 years. Apart from caring presently for the 32 elderly residents FOKE is reaching out in caring for the needy elderly in their own habitat by networking with different like –minded local groups.

Our two homes are community centres where Happy Classroom operates for the under privileged children of the local areas. Happy Classroom is a free learning centre for underprivileged students. We try to provide opportunities to these school-going students to develop their inner interests and skills. Our aim is to help the students to gain knowledge for livelihood, as well as to have self respect, fellow feeling, responsibility towards family, society and environment. We follow West Bengal Board Curriculum as our students attend government schools. Along with academics our curriculum includes art, music, dance, elocution and computer application.



# Classroom Teaching:

Happy classroom Bhalobasa Home Thakurpukur, Kolkata presently has 80 students from Nursery to class X and are taught by 10 teachers. 6 days a week students get academic lessons in the evenings and the classes vary from one and half to three hours depending on the classes they are studying.



Happy classroom Charunibash Home – Madhubati village, Diamond Harbour- Total 70 students are taught from Nursery to Class VIII by 5 young teachers of the locality. The primary section is conducted in the mornings and in the evening students of the secondary classes attend and the duration is same.



# Saturday fun day



Every saturday art, dance, recitation, computer, story telling and reading sessions are held in both of our classrooms under the guidance of professional teachers.



# Vacation is for information

*This term during Summer Vacation we arranged the following exposure programmes :*



**Bigyan o Juktibadi Samity** conducted a session on 'superstitious belief' for students and parents.



**Ritabrata Das**, a science graduate made a presentation on 'Evolution'. Students participated enthusiastically.



**Helping Hand..**a group of young enthusiastic members, made children aware about environmental pollution through activity and a joint programme has been planned to continue this.



**Atri**, (as he likes to introduce himself) a post graduate student conducted a lively interactive session on 'religion, rituals and division in society'. Ms. Sanghita Mondal gave important input from her huge experience as a social activist for 30 years.



**Rima Bardhan**, a lecturer of sociology, made students aware about 'Gender discrimination'.

## Festivals & special days

Festivals like Saraswati pujo, Dol ( Holi), Bengali New Year, Eid and Good Friday are celebrated.

Special days like Republic day, Netaji's Birthday, World environment day, Rabindra jayanti, Staff Appreciation day were also celebrated.





# Interaction with senior citizens

Students are encouraged to interact with our senior residents everyday. Regularly they do certain activities with the elderly residents where teachers play active roles.







# Celebrations

**Birthdays of eminent personalities like Swami Vivekananda , Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Rabindra Nath Tagore are celebrated. Birthdays of resident senior citizens are also celebrated with much enthusiasm.**



# Home visits :



Home visits are a part of our regular activity to have proper coordination between parents and teachers. Teachers of Madhubati Happy Classroom, a place of high dropouts, visit homes of some of the students to enquire about the reasons of frequent absenteeism. Teachers of Thakurpukur Happy Classroom also made home visits of a few students for similar reasons.



# Updating ourselves

An interactive session on pedagogy was held on 13th of April by Ms. Piyali Sen. It was attended by all the teachers of our two centres. Teachers discussed the challenges that they face in their day to day teaching process and gave suggestions to each other to overcome them. The Monthly Review Meetings are also conducted by Ms. Sen to discuss about academics, teaching learning materials, mental health of the students and other issues related to pedagogy.

# Parent Teacher Meetings :

First Parent Teacher Meeting of the academic year 2024 was held on 2nd January. The morning session for the primary students started on the same day at Madhubati village H.C Next Parent Teacher Meeting was held on 24th May at Thakurpukur H.C and again on 27th May at Madhubati village H.C to inform the parents about their ward's progress.



# Skill development



We are happy to inform you that two of our students have successfully completed their Assistant Nursing Course conducted by the Rotary Club and the St John Ambulance. Now they are persuing Higher Secondary course.

Manisha Mondol, another student, got financial support from us for six months Basic Computer Course and her Higher Secondary education.

We have also sponsored two of our teachers Ms. Prita Roy and Ms. Swarnali Raha for persuing advance course of computer application from Aptech Limited and counselling course conducted by the Pavlov Institute respectively.



*My pride, my students:- Piyali Sen*

'Education is an act of optimism', one of my favorite quote is proved to be correct by my students of D.A.V.Public school. They have been a strong support system of Happy Classroom. Students from all over the world, whether they were the first batch or the last batch of my tenure, all have come forward to join this mission. Be it sponsoring projects, providing logistics or volunteering in teaching, in every field you will find the names of my ex-students. I am not going to thank them but I feel proud to be their teacher.



*"Bosudharibo kut umbakam..."*

We try to practice this saying i.e. The world is one. People from different sectors of society like members of NGOs, religious organizations, social welfare groups, popular science teams, music bands etc. and many individuals often visit us. Some of them come to celebrate their special days, some bring gifts for the residents and students, some just volunteer with there time.



# Our Challenges

Economic and family distress creates a huge negative impact in the young minds. We need to address these challenges every moment while dealing with the students.

## Special thanks:

We are very thankful to all our visitors for their love and support. Students enjoy visitor's company and get exposure to different types of activities. Our door is always open to all the visitors. I will always be grateful to Mr Rathin Mukherjee and Mr Sajal Sinha Roy of Behala Sujon Welfare Society, who got me introduced to FOKE and gave me this opportunity to do whatever little I am doing.

I am very thankful to all our sponsors and well wishers .First of all a big thank you goes to 'CARING HANDS-USA' for sponsoring the teachers salaries for 2024-25 session.

I feel blessed to thank all of my sponsors and well wishers, namely, Ms.Manjari Chowdhury, Mr. Sthitodhi Ghosh, Ms.Shankhamala Sen, Ms.Sreetama Basu, Mr.Pratim Chowdhury, Mr.Bappaditya Chowdhury, Mr.Ananda Banerjee, Ms.Satakshi Chakraborty, Ms.Binita Mahato, Ms. Urmi Mukhopadhyay, Ms.Shima Ganguly, Ms.Sutapa Roy, Ms.Aditi Pal, Mr.Mrinmoy Das, Mr.Soumya Chattopadhyay, Ms.Shila Ghosal, Ms.Soma Chandra, Ms.Alo Chakroborty, Mr.Snehashish Chatterjee, Ms. Nupur Mukho padhyay, Mr.Koustav Kundu, Mr. Sonjoy Ghosh and Mr.Avinash Srinivasan.

## Volunteers

A big Thank You to Mr.Atri, Mr.Sudhriti Chandra, Ms.Adrija Bhattacharjee, Ms.Bipasha Howladar, Ms.Shiulie Sikdar, Ms.Chandana Das Ms.Chitrolekha Ghosh, Ms.Geetanjali Banerjee, Mr.Ritabrata Das, Ms.Saheli Ghosh and Ms.Rima Bardhan for your love for the students of Happy Classroom. From providing teachers to arranging events and conducting special sessions, whenever needed you all came forward to bring light to these children.

## Thank you!

I thank all the staff members of FOKE and teachers of Happy Classroom for their sincerity, dedication and love for the cause.

No amount of gratitude will match the love and support I am receiving from the committee members and especially our Secretary, Ms. Sanghita Mondal. Sanghita has helped me to live a joyful, meaningful retired life. Thank you, Sanghita !



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