

Rinbow and Butterfly Group
Half Yearly Group Report
2008-09

I am the child
All the earth waits for my coming,
All the earth watches with interest
What I shall become
Civilization hangs in the
balance,
For what I am,
The world of tomorrow will be.

I am the child
I have come in to your world,
About which I know nothing,
Why I came, I know not,
How I came, I know not,
I am curious, I am interested.

I am the child
You hold in your hand my destiny,
You determine largely,
Whether I shall succeed or fail
Give me, I pray you those things
That make for happiness
Train me, I beg you,
That I may be a blessing to the world.



**From 'child appeal'
Mammie Gene Cole.**

Starting of school

The school was officially inaugurated on 5th of July 2008. A few days went towards the function. It was only on Thursday, 10th July that for the first time children came to the school now christened Auro-Mira Vidya Mandir. We started with thirty children between the age group of four and six. As the children are very small, we decided to have a weaning in period where we would first get the children accustomed to teachers who come from outside, a different environment and also a different style of cooking.



It was a surprise for the facilitators (called didi or older sister) that the very first day all the little ones came with a cheerful smile on their face. Most of them were quite settled except for two or three children who also settled quite fast. For the children a warm environment was created. In the beginning itself the facilitators were very friendly to them. When the children came to school the facilitators cleaned the children and gave a lot of affection and care. A nice bond was created between the facilitators and the children.

All the children with the facilitators collectively aspired for their personal as well as collective growth. We started with the book "Prayers and Meditation" and ended with some nice songs and chanting. The small ones could sit patiently in the meditation hall for a long time. At the end they offered flowers of Aspiration and cheerfulness. We all went to the group and sang some action songs and rhymes for the children.



Games

In the field of activities children explore more on the physical



ground. Children play different types of fun games like kho, musical chair, dodge ball, dog and the bone, rat and cat, I sent a letter, ice and water, hide and seek, etc. All children besides four children participate in the games. Everyday before playing games, they do some warm up exercises. Most of the children can understand the instructions for games very quickly and some children play properly after playing two-three times. Ample opportunities are being provided to help the children to overcome physical fear and to build up their stamina. Some children did rappelling very boldly. All of them enjoy running, jumping, climbing, aiming, rolling, etc. Children also enjoy relay race immensely. Everyone enjoys tree climbing and swinging. Some children do overhead rolling, cartwheel, arch etc. and some children try doing.

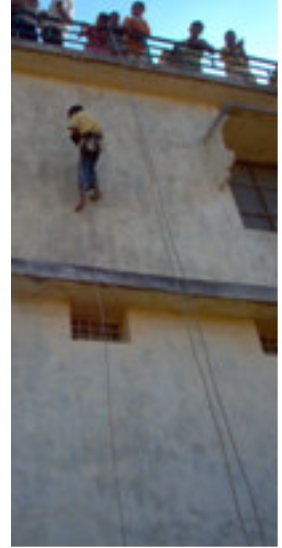
A lot of activities happen in the sand pit. The children pour sand into a mould and



make cakes. They like to dig deep holes and fill them up with water and also construct tunnels and bridges. They make temples, buildings, etc. and decorate them. Almost all the children enjoy playing in the sand pit.



Physically all the children are quite flexible and supple. They have a natural and inborn rhythm in their body. All the children dance well and in rhythm. Generally during their festivals they dance in a group and enjoy it. But in school some children come forward to dance and others feel shy and hesitate to do.



Health and hygiene

Apart from these we are taking care to make the children aware of their health, hygiene, toilet habit, checking their nails, hair, and help them to get a habit of brushing their teeth. A complete change cannot be expected till the children start staying in the boarding and not go home at all. The children had never seen the inside of a toilet, leave alone using one. They are now toilet trained. Now they have made a habit of washing their hands and legs before entering into the group. Before having their food they clean their hands with soap and after having their food they rinse their mouth. All children have started allowing new taste in their food habit. After food they clean their plate neatly.



Circle time

To settle the children and to know each other we started our first day sitting in a circle. The children did not take much time to settle down in the group. Slowly they got to know their friends and the new *didis*. It was good to see that all the children mingled with each other very quickly and involved in the group discussion. Everyday after the games all the children along with *didis* sit in a circle for few minutes and pray for some time. Children also share their thoughts and talk about the incidents that happen on their way home.

Language

All the children have progressed tremendously in learning language. Their constant effort to pick up new words and their usage in conversation is really remarkable.

Initially all the children were talking in their own mother tongue. But they quickly learnt Hindi and now can converse amongst each other. Almost all the children have started speaking in Hindi. Before starting concentrated work in the group, children were given some time to talk and converse among themselves. They share their experiences, thoughts, fantasies, etc. It opened their gate to communicate with each other and to listen to others. But the main scope of widening their language was through songs and story.

It is these songs and stories that are being used to introduce them to English. Hopefully, we will have something more to write on this in the subsequent reports.

Singing

Everyday after the circle time children sing different rhymes and songs. All children show interest in singing and sing loudly. Through action they understand the meaning and enjoy singing with action. Children have learnt different *slokas* and chant in the circle. They have memorized the rhymes well and sing in tune. Through the rhymes and songs they develop new vocabularies and use in their usual conversation. Children have learnt many rhymes in different languages like Oriya, English, Sanskrit and Hindi. Children learn the songs by repetition. Some children do not sing and listen to the songs in the group but sing the same songs, very well while doing other activities. Some children have started making their own songs.



Story telling

Stories create strong feelings and emotions in children. Everyday children want to listen to new stories. Most of the time children are told stories based on fantasy. The children are so engrossed during story telling that they absorb the feelings of the character. To tell stories we use illustrated picture books, different types of puppets, flash cards and sometimes the teachers enact. Some children using the book make their own story. Almost all the children listen to the story very attentively and comprehend them well. Sometimes they are asked questions to complete the story and this brings the liveliness of the story. This has given a wide scope to the children to develop their language. Some children have started making their own stories and their stories are mainly based on fantasy.

Children also like to play with masks and puppets. While handling the puppets they create their own stories. Sometimes while making the story they take some portions from the narrated story. Some children can tell story confidently in front of everybody. Some children can organise their ideas and tell the story in a sequence and some children start their story with a character and end it with another.



Movies

On most of the days children spend some time in watching movies. Children watch various animated movies. They like to see movies based on mythology or about animals. Some children repeat the dialogues and hum the songs while watching a particular movie. Movies have also enhanced children's language to some extent.



Drawing



All children like to draw. They sit for a long time to complete their drawing and make them colourful. Everyday they spend some time on



drawing and they name their drawing. Most of the children create stories related to their drawings. Generally children are encouraged to draw anything so that they use their imagination, thoughts and fantasy.

Painting

Children paint freely with brushes. They do different types of paintings like spray painting, thumb painting, sand painting, thread painting, marbling, etc. Children make different designs and patterns on the floor with liquid as well as dry powder. They do experiments by using different colours and enjoy colouring with flowers and leaves.



Drawing and painting not only allows the children to develop the language but helps to work alone as well as in a group, providing opportunity to explore and express their thoughts and appreciation. Children have started sharing their things amongst each other and they work in small groups efficiently.

Clay work

Children enjoy clay work very much. They spend time to explore the lump by making various objects. Most of the children can give recognisable form to the clay. Some children can make details such as



texture on the crocodile, on the wheel, tortoise, etc. Children have developed large and small muscles and eye hand coordination.

Different skill works



To foster fine motor skill as well as eye hand coordination we do a lot of activities like stringing, weaving, cutting, pasting, collecting different objects from outside like shells, colourful pebbles, etc.

tearing, paper folding, stitching, etc. and all the children participate actively.



Material Organisation

After the activities and free play some children wind up the things and keep them properly and other children need a reminder to put back the things. A few children use the materials



sensitively and also help the teachers to arrange the group properly .

Initial mathematics

Mathematics for this age group of children is done as a part of language. Sharing biscuits in the group, counting different objects, counting the number of children, their



body parts, during nature walk, playing in the sand pit we do mathematics. Most of the children can count up to twenty and have an idea of big and small, far and near, long and short, more and less, etc. Some children can solve the word problem up to number ten. Many children can recognise different shapes like square, triangle, rectangle and circle. They have started assimilating these shapes in nature. Children have also an idea about full, half, quarter and empty. Children can distribute even number of things among themselves. They can also classify things based on common characteristics like texture, colour, shape, etc. They can also discriminate between similarities and differences. Using various shapes they do different designs and can follow the given pattern. Some children can weave paper mats following the pattern.



Nature and environment

We spend some time in nature which brings joy in the lives of the children.

Children do observe different things and become aware and sensitive towards nature. It helps the children to develop their curiosity to know about different things. Some children have developed a questioning ability. Some children have become sensitive towards the plants, flowers, insects, etc.



Toys, games, puzzles and blocks

After coming to school all children like to play with different toys and blocks.

They make beautiful things like house, temple, bridge, different types of vehicles, street light etc using blocks and make their imaginary story. With the blocks they do lot many things, often by force, to make a thing according to their own planning. It helps when children solve their own problems.



After lunch children play with jigsaw puzzles. Initially most of the children could solve puzzles of around seven to eight pieces. Now many children can solve puzzles of around forty to fifty pieces. Children concentrate for a long time and help each other while sharing the puzzles.



Memory is an integral part of cognitive functioning.

Teachers arrange various memory games for the children which children enjoy very much. Some children have a good memory power. It helps the children to develop recalling power as well as their observation.

Celebration

We celebrate most of the festivals like *Raksha Bandhan*, *Deewali*, *Dushera*, *Janmasthami*, *Ganesh Puja*, Christmas, etc. To tell the stories based on the festival, sometimes the teachers enact a play or they use picture books or arrange a puppet show. During *Raksha Bandhan* all the children made simple *Rakhis* and tied on each other's hands which gave them a sense of belonging and a feeling of oneness. They also learnt many songs related to *Raksha Bandhan*. Some children during *Janmasthami* enacted the *makhan chori* part from Krishna's life story. Children were also dressed like Krishna to give them a feeling of festivity. To celebrate *Deewali* children made their own *diya* and lighted them. Some children made *rangoli* using colour powder and decorated beautifully with the help of their teachers. Children enjoyed *Ganesh puja* very much as it included a lot of hand work for them. Most of the children made an idol of *Ganesh ji* and decorated the altar using colourful clothes and flowers made of paper. Celebrating different festivals helps to widen their mind and to know about their culture and heritage. Children also observed the national days like Independence Day and Republic Day. They made Indian flags and holding them they went around the village singing different patriotic songs.

