



# AURO-MIRA SERVICE SOCIETY



**Report for the year 2021-22**

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## 1. Background and Introduction

Village Kechla is in Koraput district, Odisha. One has to cross the upper-Kolab reservoir, when we go from Koraput. Auro-Mira Service Society (AMSS) started working here in 2004 with the objectives of improving the social and economic status of the almost exclusively tribal population through education, cultivating grains, vegetables, fruits, etc., environmental awareness, and renewable sources of energy.



At that time there were no roads either in the village nor to the village. To reach the village one had to come by rowboat. It would take 2 1/2 hours one way with five people rowing. Boats were not available and one had to wait for a boat to come from Kechla. Villagers always came on Sundays. On other days, we could wait for days before a boat would come. Now there are motor launches in the village. A small one has been given by the government and two large ones by AMSS. The road from Koraput now comes much closer and the remaining distance is only about 3 Km. We now have an all-weather road (since 2019) but no public transport. In 2004 there was only one cycle in all the hamlets put together. Now there are numerous motorcycles, 3 auto rickshaws and one tractor.





The first two years were spent on boats or makeshift accommodation. Initially, there was no electricity nor any water supply. The village is now connected to the grid (since 2018), but there are long outages. There are hand pumps constructed by us in all the hamlets. The government has installed a solar pump with a tank and with one spout in one of the hamlets. AMSS is not connected to the grid. We have solar electricity since 2005. We have been increasing the capacity as the buildings are constructed. Some of the systems are also in the process of being upgraded. There are solar pumps in the hostels for water.



In 2005, AMSS started sponsoring children from the village and sending them to hostels in Rayagada district, Kotpad (Koraput district) and Nabarangpur district. In 2005 only two children went as the parents were not willing to take this opportunity. The number grew over the next few years. However, we realised that the quality of education could improve. We then decided to start the school in Kechla village itself.





## 2. Auro-Mira Vidya Mandir

*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”*

Nelson Mandela

Auro-Mira Vidya Mandir (AMVM) started on 5th July'2008. It was initially an uphill task. The children would not come to school. The parents did not care as they had never acquired any education and could not fathom what there was to be gained by it. We had to go to the hamlets and run after the children. At times, the parents would hide the children. After every holiday, the children would not come to school. Skin diseases and hair lice were rampant. We would give children good clothes and many of them would come to school without taking a bath or brushing their teeth and in torn clothes. We started making them take a bath, wash their clothes and brush their teeth after they came to school. This practise continues even today.

We got a television and would show the children English and Hindi documentaries and movies. This was a great attraction as there were no televisions or mobiles in the village, and also no electricity.



It did not take us very long to come to terms with having a school functioning for 365 days in a year. We still continue in the same vein. The only exception was that the few students who were not staying in the hostel and were commuting from home did not attend school during the Covid pandemic. For everyone else the school has always been on.

### 3. Integral Education

Integral Education, as envisioned by the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, **regards the child as a growing soul** and helps him to bring out all that is best, most powerful, most innate and living in his nature.

It has been nearly 14 years since we started and it has been our constant endeavour to nurture each child physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

The school does not have classes or any promotion which is done every year. The groups have names like Rainbow, Butterfly, Joy, Smile, Peace, etc. Once during their whole schooling, the name would change from these simple names to Perseverance, Progress, Gratitude, Aspiration, etc. The name is changed whenever it is felt that the children are mature enough to understand the meaning. The children of that group collectively select the name.

Reading, writing, etc starts very late. For quite a number of years the children learn languages through stories, songs, drama, normal conversation. Mathematics is taught mentally. Focus is on learning and understanding. There is no fixed duration of this as it depends on the group and the child.



At the next stage, the children learn through projects in the younger groups and as they grow up, there is a formal element with the projects. The children also study at their own pace. As an example, one group of 12-13 year olds can have different students doing maths from class 7 to 10. Often no two students in the group are doing the same thing.

Most of the children are avid readers and make good use of the well stocked library.

The subjects are integrated in the learning process. The endeavour is to go from near to far. The children look at things from the village point of view and move towards a world view.

The children go home on every Monday at 3:30 pm. Some of them return the same evening but most come back on Tuesday for breakfast. Whenever there is a festival in the village, the day would change from Monday to the day of the festival. During major festivals, the children would go home at 12:30 pm. In case they would require going for a festival more than once in a week, the children would not take Monday off for many days and save these for the festival.



A very large number of our students have a 100% attendance. That is quite an achievement for a school that functions for 365 days in a year. The ones who take holidays also take just a handful in a year.

To break the monotony of the schedule, we celebrate all the important days of the Ashram, the school's annual day, sports day, all national holidays and many festivals like Diwali, Ganesh Chaturthi, Dussehra, Ram Navami, Janmashtami, Raksha Bandhan, Christmas, New Year, etc. Each of these festivals take many days of preparations. Children prepare dances, plays and singing. They make traditional designs and art works and cook savoury items. At AMVM we aim to integrate learning while keeping in with the traditions and culture of the children.

We also go on long trips (about 3 weeks) every alternate year. Usually this is in 2 groups as the numbers are large and logistically it becomes cumbersome.

The children become proficient in English and Hindi. They can speak, read and write both these languages. They perform plays in both these languages. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of every month and on special occasions, the children perform a full *havan* without a book and without help. The children can chant many mantras, including quite a bit from the Gita.



The younger children sing every day in their groups. They not only sing in English and Hindi, but also in Odia, Desia (their village dialect), Kumaoni, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Sanskrit, etc. The older ones sing on 3 evenings. Once a week in the evening they practise chanting and also learn new chants. Once in the evenings and once during the day, they learn musical instruments. Most learn flute or tabla, but some also learn sitar, keyboard or guitar.



The children are very proficient in sports. The standard of football and basketball is high. The children are reasonably good at athletics. Some are good at gymnastics. The children also play volleyball, frisbee and minor games. The children can do skating and cycling. All the older children are good swimmers. Most of the older children can also ride the unicycle. Sports day is an eventful affair. We get the whole village and also the surrounding villages coming to watch. At times we have guests from outside as well.







At AMVN, the day starts with Yogasana at 6 am.

To encourage learning of life skills children do a work offering (Shramdan) at 6:30 am. The children are adept at gardening, work in the kitchen, clean the hostel, school and toilets. They wash their clothes themselves and can take care of their belongings from an early age.

We take children at the age of 3+, but they are at times a bit older as well.

Many of the students opt to continue in

AMVM and don't join a formal college outside. The older students appear for classes 10th and 12th through NIOS (National Institute of Open Schooling). In 2022, there were 13 students enrolled in Class 10th and 19 students in Class 12th. Out of these class 12th students, 5 had taken science and the rest humanities. The students do their under-grad from IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University). In 2022, there were 12 students enrolled in IGNOU. One in B. Sc, one in B. Com (Hons.) and the rest doing B. A.

Many of the ex-students who are doing their 12<sup>th</sup> or under-grad course in a college outside, come and stay in the school and hostel whenever they have a holiday. They stay focussed on learning- which basically includes academic and non-academic areas.

#### 4. Vocational Training For Students

*“We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.” – Franklin D. Roosevelt*

As pointed out earlier, the students are not motivated by their parents to study. Due to this, there is sometimes a drop-out at higher levels. Some students join other schools or colleges in Koraput town after completing their 8th or 10th from AMVM. No one as yet has completed their education. Unfortunately, there have been some who have not gone in for higher education or have dropped out after joining some other school or college.



At times there are some students who are not academically oriented. To avoid drop-outs and also get the students who are not wanting to go in for higher education, Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch has been providing an avenue to them for pursuing vocational training. There were more than 6 students in Delhi in 2022.





## 5. Teacher Resources

India has a dearth of good teachers willing to work in rural areas. Our village had no educated person when we started, but even villages of India having educated people have a



standard which is not up to the mark. The difference in the level of education is very great. Another problem being faced in India is that good students rarely want to become teachers. Even when they want to, it is in cities. Moreover, the standard of



our teacher training colleges is not very good. Keeping all this in mind, we encourage our senior students to volunteer for an hour or so everyday in teaching younger children. The older students decide the age group they

want to work with and also what they would like to learn/teach. Many of our senior students also get more clarity in their subjects



when they help others. The first batch will be completing their graduation in 2023 and will then have to take a call as to whether they would like to become a teacher or pursue some other vocation.

## 6. Brief Financials, Auro-Mira Service Society, 2021-22

### **Distribution of material**

The society transported clothes and other materials from Delhi to Kechla, which were then distributed to the children and other villagers.

### **Capital expenses**

An amount of Rs 44,88,012 was spent on the hostel building.  
Rs. 3,04,009 was spent on furniture.

### **Corpus Donation**

Corpus donation was received of Rs. 1,25,00,000.  
Other Donations including FCRA, CSR and Scholarship amounted to Rs. 2,06,53,992/-.





## 7. ANNUAL REPORT FOR AURO MIRA VIDYA MANDIR (AMVM) 2021-2022

*“All can be done if the God Touch Is there.”- Sri Aurobindo*

Another year has gone by amidst the Covid waves. The school continued its functioning in a bubble, just like it had done in the previous year. The country continued in



anguish and in pain with the second wave of Covid-19. Every morning the school courtyard echoed with The *Mahamrityunjaya* Mantra, which everyone was collectively chanting, with an aspiration of goodwill and a healthy life for all.

During the pandemic, it was an uphill battle and struggle for us to keep the school open. It only became possible because of the dedicated parents, teachers and students. This dedication is reflected in the children moving a step forward in our unending journey.

Some changes did take place. Many of the parents of younger children (4+ years), who were not staying in the hostel came and fervently requested to keep their children in the hostel. It was a very difficult decision, especially because these children are first generation learners and have no other avenue from where they can learn. There is no internet facility also in the villages. Finally, the older children took it upon themselves to convince the parents to not send their children to school. They did manage to convince some but acceded to the requests of others and allowed some of the little children to stay in the hostel and attend school. Seeing this, many of the parents who had been convinced for not sending their children, returned the next day and refused to take no for an answer. The numbers swelled.

These little children were not capable of washing their clothes. We put hooks near the gate and the children would put their dirty laundry in bags made of gunny sacks and hang them on these hooks. The parents would take these and replace them with washed clothes. Some home-made savouries would also find their way into these bags. There were some teething troubles- like bedwetting or crying in the middle of the night- but the older students took charge and actually saw it in a humorous vein.



It was only in February'22 that schools finally opened. We were now back to normal functioning. The little children started staying at home and coming to school every day. The ones who were even younger also started attending school. Some new admissions took place. All those students who had taken admission in colleges outside, but were continuing to stay in the hostel, as here there were internet facilities and also an atmosphere in which they could study, went back to their colleges. Now they come



only when they have a break.

Every Year, many children would go to colleges outside after completing their 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> from the school. However, this year some decided to continue in Kechla as colleges outside were not functioning and without

internet in the village, it would have been impossible for them to study.

At the physical level, the new hostel building, which was incomplete was opened for the girls. The reason was to increase social distancing. Ours is a sparsely populated area and all our buildings are spacious and airy. There is natural social distancing without making any effort, but one has to always look for ways to make things even better.



We did not hear of Covid in the surrounding areas. The number of deaths were also not more than normal. However, many of the children who were

studying in schools and colleges outside, dropped out due to the pandemic and did not go back to study.

Apart from preparing the children to qualify for purely academic demands, special efforts are being made continuously to enable them to face the challenges of the competitive world.

## Highlights of 2021-22

### NEWCOMERS

This year we welcomed around 40 new children.



### CLASS 10<sup>th</sup> RESULT

This year 7 children appeared for the exam. They put up their best efforts and all of them passed with good marks.

### BASKETBALL COURT

A new basketball court was constructed for the children. It was inaugurated on 12<sup>th</sup> of Feb 2022. The children made a decorative altar for The Mother. Everyone gathered on the court and concentrated on The Mother's music and chanted some mantras. Then the children played a match.



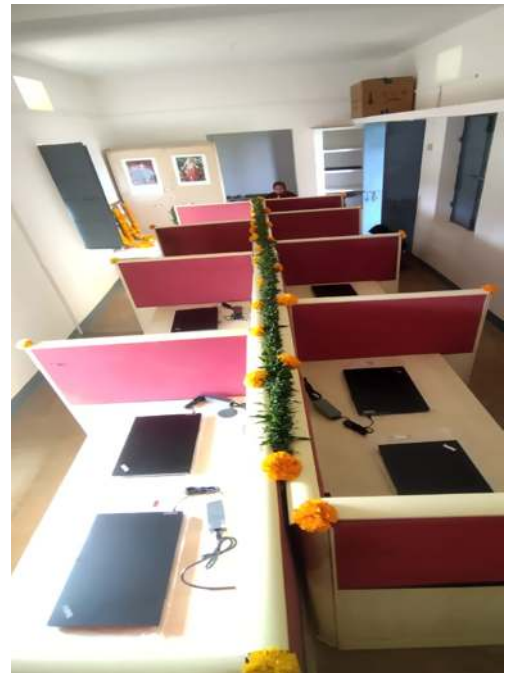


## Upgradation of Computer Technology Lab

The Upgradation of Computer & Technology Lab in Auro-Mira Vidya Mandir commenced in the month of September 2021 and was completed in March 2022. The items were purchased with the CSR

contribution in the year 2021-22. The laptops and printers have been kept in the lab and the rest are being used by the senior students and teachers in the school.

The Upgraded Computer & Technology system in AMVM will help the learning process as the old laptops were very few and were 12 to 15 years old. With this enhanced technology system the students and teachers will get more exposure to online and distance-learning classes. It



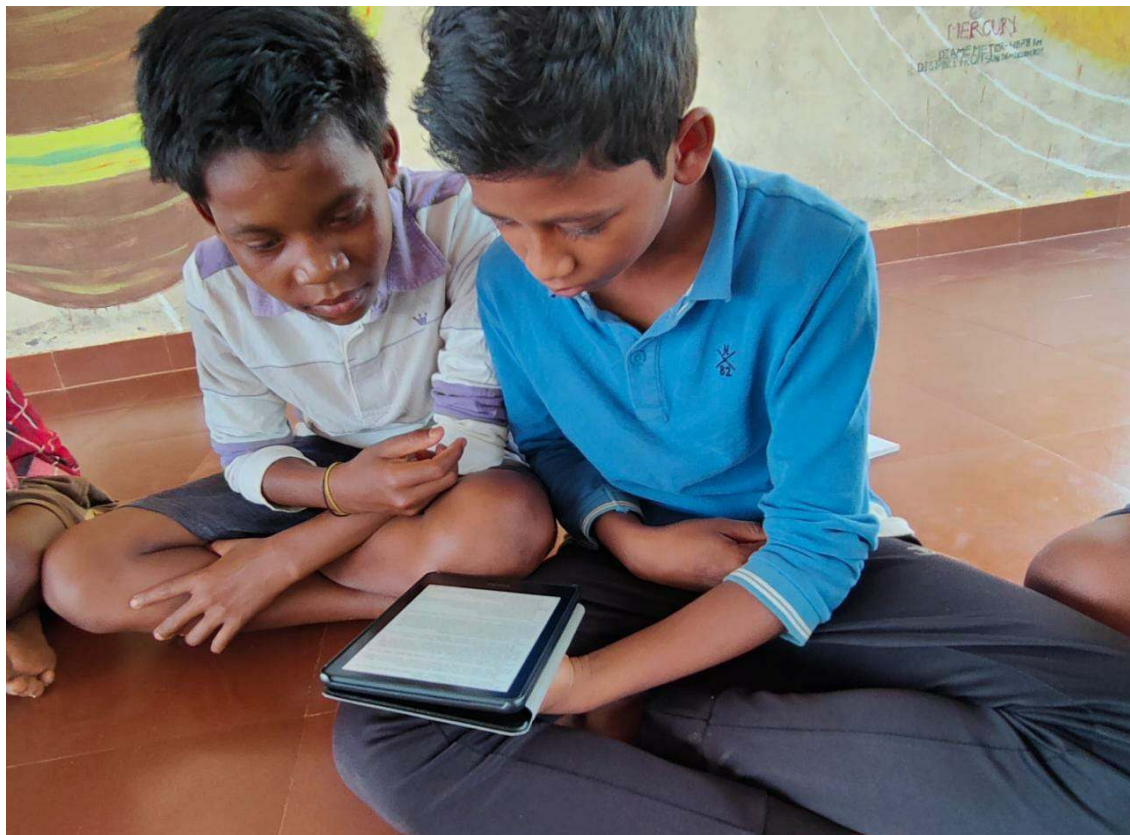
will build the computer skills in students and make them better in Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, Power Point presentations, also will support them for a better understating of Data Management, and a good knowledge of Hardware and Software Management.



Besides these, Kindles, Phones and pen drives been provided for the school children, as we have been trying to procure books for the children for their graduation and Class XII, which has been a challenge. They have been taking online classes and studying on computers.



These equipment will be a great help in ensuring that the educational needs are met, and studies of the children do not get impacted.



## FESTIVALS AND CELEBRATIONS

*"To celebrate a festival means: to live out, for some special occasion and in an uncommon manner, the universal assent to the world as a whole."*- Josef Pieper

4<sup>TH</sup> APRIL Sri Aurobindo's arrival in Pondicherry

A special meditation in the Ashram.



24<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

The Mother's final arrival in Pondicherry Ashram- A special meditation in the Ashram and Marching, The Mother's flag hoisting and lighting lamps.





5<sup>TH</sup> JULY

### School's birthday and Tara didi's birthday



One of the most eagerly awaited occasions was our School's and our dear Chairperson-Tara didi's birthday. On this occasion, the girls' hostel building was inaugurated. There was great excitement. The preparations began much before. The school as well as the hostel buildings were thoroughly cleaned by the students. The students participated in the cultural activities. It was an opportunity for everyone to showcase their talents and perform their skills. Girls were especially elated to shift to a very beautiful and modern building. The boys were also actively involved in cleaning the surroundings







and decorating the place. There was fun, frolic and amusement. Decorating the venue of the function was an opportunity for everyone to experience the joy of teamwork and togetherness.









The celebration was spread over three days. All the events were selected very carefully based on their importance and vibrations. They were recorded by the children and uploaded on YouTube.

The programme started with concentration on The Mother's music and special meditation in the Ashram. It was followed by Hawan by the children in the new hostel building.



The programme was as follows: -

Gita chants by the children

Poems- Who, Krishna, The golden Light, Surrender, God, The Blue Bird, Tree, Invitation

Play- *I Must know the Truth* by the senior students and teachers

Orchestra by the children of gratitude, Humility and Aspiration Groups.

Sambalpuri Dance by Parul and Amita

Flute by Ganesh Bhaiya and Bhavna

Solo Song- *Zindagi Tera Shukriya* by Bikanti

O My Friend Ganesha by Joy Group children

Dance on *Dhol BaaJe* by Gratitude and Humility Group children

Kumaoni Dance by the senior students and teachers



Book release- Srinath bhaiya's book on initial mathematics was released. Everyone congratulated Srinath bhaiya. The event started with a welcome address by Pranjal bhaiya. Sukant Bhaiya released the book.

The programme ended with Savitri reading by the children and the teachers in the new hostel building.















12<sup>TH</sup> JULY- Rath Yatra

The auspicious occasion of Rath Yatra was celebrated on 12th July. The idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra were decorated on the sanctum in the meditation hall and children sang devotional songs. Mantras were chanted to invoke the power of the deities. The teachers narrated some stories on the festival. Everyone enjoyed the prasad.

## AUGUST

We remembered the freedom fighters who selflessly sacrificed their lives for their country. For us the joy multiplies as we celebrate the



birthday of our revered Sri Surendra Nath Jauhar (chacha ji) who is the founder of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch, Shri Babaji Maharaj, an educationist and disciple of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo and our Guru Sri Aurobindo's 149<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary and India's Independence Day. The auspicious ceremonies were observed for three consecutive days.



13<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST-  
Chachaji's  
Birthday

August 2021  
marks the 118<sup>th</sup>  
Birth  
Anniversary of  
Surendra Nath  
Jauhar. At the



age of sixteen, he joined the freedom struggle of India. We paid our humble homage to Surendra Nath Jauhar on his birthday. As he was a member of Arya Samaj, we performed a hawan. The children also recited poems which they had written themselves. Bhavna played flute on a tune in Bhairavi Thaata and a



speech on his selfless work was given to the children. They enjoyed reading humorous stories composed by Chachaji.







14<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST- Babaji Maharaj's Birthday

Babaji Maharaj played a vital role in organising study circles for raising the level of consciousness of the



common people of Odisha. He emphasised on naam jap and its effect in our life. On his birthday we had a special naam jap

programme for 15 minutes and then we started the programme for the Independence Day and Sri Aurobindo's birthday.

The children of joy group performed an Odia play on Dhammapada who sacrificed his life at a



very young age to save the lives of 1200 masons. Their acting was so animated and energetic that they left the audience dumbfounded. A small skit on Bhagat Singh was



performed by the Progress group children. They also sang a patriotic song “Vatan Wale Vatan Na Bech Dena”. The students of Gratitude and Humility group put up a short drama in English- ‘Tribal Movement’. The senior students and teachers



performed a Bihu dance. A few boys from our school presented a band using different instruments.









## 15<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST- Sri Aurobindo's Birthday

Everyone went to the Ashram for meditation. Our hero warriors got ready with their marching clothes to



salute The Mother's flag early in the morning. Srinath Bhaiya hoisted the flag and everyone saluted the flag while marching. It was followed by collective prayer in the Ashram meditation hall. Several events were prearranged as offering by the students and teachers.

The programme started with concentration on The Mother's music followed by Srinath bhaiya and Mani didi's- Sri Aurobindo sa



bhakti pranam



Joy Group- Bharat Natyam and Jhansi Ki Rani- full poem recitation and an Odia song- *Ei desa ei mati*

Gratitude and Humility group song- *Thare vaste mai re*

Aspiration group- Play on Sri Aurobindo



Bhagat Singh- A poem by Surekha di

Poem recitation by Ramesh bhai

Savitri enacted by teachers and senior students





## 22<sup>ND</sup> August –Raksha Bandhan

On Raksha Bandhan, the children tied the knots of brotherhood on each other. They made beautiful *rakhis* using papers, glitters, beads and thread. The older children weaved complicated patterns and decorated the plates with their colourful bands. The event was celebrated with full enthusiasm and zeal. Some children cooked sweets for everyone.

The children of Gratitude and Humility Group expressed the values behind the festival through a few stories. The Joy Group children sang an odia song *Suna Rupa Gauni* which illustrates the bond between brothers and sisters. The children of harmony group danced on *Vande Mataram*. The Progress group children shared their creative poems and stories.





30<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST-  
Janamashtmi

We celebrated Janmashtami with passion and zeal. Children donned the role of Krishna and Gopis. Their attire of Krishna and Gopi won the heart of the spectators. Everyone enjoyed the pranks



of Krishna in the plays.

Joy group children sang- *Hai ye katha sangram ki* and *Artha sri Mahabharat katha*

Progress group danced on Krishna act

Senior students and Teachers-

Kashmiri and Kumaoni dance

Progress group -Orchestra

Yoga dance- Gratitude and Humility group girls

Ramesh bhai (Papa ji)-  
recitation of Krishna Sahasra  
naam



*Radhe kishori Daya karo*-song by Jagat

Dance by Smile group on- *Kanha Soja Zara*

Everyone had Prasad.







5<sup>TH</sup>  
SEPTEMBER-  
Teachers'  
Day

This year the programme was organised by the senior students. It was a pleasant surprise for the teachers.



The programme began with presenting flowers to all the teachers. The function started with concentration on The Mother's music. Followed by chorus Mantra *Gurur Brahma, Gurur Vishnu* performed by the children. They also made beautiful cards for everyone.



The children of Gratitude and Humility Group wrote beautiful lines in each card. They had cooked sweets for the teachers. Some programmes like dancing, quiz and singing were arranged for the teachers. Children enjoyed seeing the teachers perform on the stage. At the end a few children mimicked the teachers and the children guessed the name of the teacher very easily. It was amusing and amazing for both the teachers and students.







## 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER-Ganesh Chaturthi

The children made a Ganpati idol in clay. They painted it artistically and beautifully decorated the stage with bright lamps along with magnificent flowers. The aroma of the flowers along with the fragrance of the incense sticks filled the environment with peace and positivity.



The puja rituals began at 9 am when the idol of Lord Ganesha was venerated by all the members. The Lord was offered prayers and invocations, followed by aartis as well as distribution of Prasad among the members.

Ganesh Vandana

Joy and Progress groups- Flute and vocal

Smile group- song- *Jay Gana Naya shri Gana naya*

Joy group- How did Ganesh get his elephant head

Gratitude group girls-*Jay Ganesh Jay Ganesh Jay Ganesh Pahima*







Progress group play- Kuber and Ganesh

Gratitude and Humility group boys- *Karte Hain hum Teri hi Seva*

Humility group girls- *Eka Dantaya Vakra Tundaya*



Progress group- Ganesh and the Moon

Yoga Dance by the girls

Flute- Bhavna- Shyam Kalyan







15<sup>th</sup> October-  
Dusherra

*Dusshera* celebrations began with collective meditation.

Everyone recited the *Durga Stotra* and chanted mantras. Gauri read the Maheshwari Roop of The Mother and the children sang songs and bhajans.



4<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER-Deepawali

Children made candles and diyas. They went to the Ashram in the evening to light diyas. Candlelight dinner was arranged for everyone.







24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER- The Darshan day for *Siddhi Divas* was celebrated by collective meditation in the ashram

















## 29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER- Pranjal Bhaiya's birthday

The day began with meditation and a hawan.

The children put up a number of performances.

Grace group- Odia song

Joy group- Odia song- and a play- *Paanch*



*Rupay ki Kauwa Biryani*

Smile group play – The Polite Elephant

Gratitude group- Odia song-

*Shubha janama dina*

Bliss group- Dance

Gratitude and Humility groups Play – Ouch

Progress group- Bandar Ekadashi





#### 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER- Sri Aurobindo's Mahasamadhi day



A special meditation was organised in the Ashram.

#### 24<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER- Christmas Eve

The celebration took place in the school courtyard. The students of Aspiration Group had decorated the Christmas tree with lamps, toys, flowers, stars and Merry Christmas tags.

The cultural programme started with prayers to the Almighty, meditation on The Mother's music followed by everyone chanting together to invoke the power of God to spread love and peace. Children sang carols and danced to the tune. Santa Claus came and gave each student toffees. Everyone enjoyed the day very much.

Joy group sang- *Christmas aaya re* and drummer boy

Smile group sang- *Away in a Manger* and danced on



the song *Jingle bells*

Bliss group dance on- *I am a little star*



Grace  
group sang-  
Every tiny  
star, living  
water and  
danced on  
Jingle Bells

Progress  
group sang-  
Joy to the  
world and  
*Arasanu Aa*



(a Punjabi  
carol)

Gratitude and  
Humility groups  
danced on  
'Jingle bells  
classical tune'  
and sang 'Go  
tell it on the

mountain'

Aspiration group sang *Tere aane se-* (Hindi carol)

Malti, Swati, Surya and brishti- Danced on Jingle Bells contemporary tune.



Gratitude group sang a carol-*Raat  
Christmas ki*

Everyone enjoyed the delicious  
special food.

Surprise gifts were kept on the beds  
of the children, which they found  
when they retired for the night. Small  
children believed that real Santa had  
left gifts for them.





31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER and  
1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY- New  
Year

On 31<sup>st</sup> December,  
after dinner,  
everyone gathered in  
the common room to



thank and pray the lord almighty to have made 2021, a year of progress and we also bid farewell to 2021. Children presented skits, plays, sang and danced to make the event a memorable one. The fun filled celebrations concluded with special greetings from the teachers and students to each other.

The New year celebration started on the same day at 11.45 PM with special meditation in the Ashram meditation hall. At 12.15 AM everyone got a new calendar of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo and special prasad. A 12-hour naam jap (repetition of the mother's name) was arranged. All students and teachers selected a slot and chanted with lots of love and devotion.

Joy group- song on Solar System- Different children enacted as different planets and beautifully sang songs on them

Progress group performed plays– The Mouse Trap and the King and the Wise Man

Girls of Progress group  
danced

Grace group girls sang  
a song *Naya saal*





## 2<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY- Picnic



The students went to the forest next to the reservoir. They carried all



the water for drinking, cooking and washing for over a kilometre. They did a host of activities like trekking, rock climbing and

tree climbing. The younger children played fun games and took pleasure in dancing with music. Everyone savoured the sumptuous meal. All the teachers and the students collectively had lots of fun in all the adventures.







### 9<sup>th</sup> JANUARY- Sports Day

This year too no physical demonstration took place. The reason was that we would not be allowing any parents or outsiders. However, we had athletics competitions.

The day started with marching and salutation to The Mother's flag followed by *Vande Mataram* and student's prayer. The following events took place: -

Running 200 metres- Progress, Gratitude, Humility and Aspiration groups.

Running 100 metres- Joy and Grace groups

High Jump and Long Jump- Progress, Gratitude, Humility and Aspiration groups.



Triple Jump- Gratitude, Humility and Aspiration groups

Basketball Match and Football match organised by Jagat and Basant

Long Jump- Joy and Grace groups.

Fun Relay- Smile and Bliss groups









26<sup>TH</sup>  
JANUARY-  
Republic Day

Everyone  
came to the  
school  
premises at  
6.30 a.m.  
The  
celebration  
opened with



flag hoisting by Ramesh bhai (Papaji). This was followed by an inspiring speech and a beautiful procession with patriotic songs. Tricolour flags and photos of Sri Aurobindo



in the hands of the children fostered patriotic feelings in everyone.



The procession started from the school and went to the hostel. A special hawan was performed after breakfast. The children watched the Republic Day celebrations at Rajpath on the television. The beautiful ceremony came to an end with a standing ovation to the national flag and anthem.





## 5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY – Basant Panchami

Basant Panchami marks the beginning of the spring season. This is the day we worship *Maha-Saraswati* and invoke her to distribute knowledge and wisdom. She is also the goddess



of music and instruments. The day was also offered to our Late Guruji Barun Pal ji who always inspired us to live with music. To commemorate this day, the children organised an orchestra.







21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY- The Mother's Birthday

We had special meditation in the ashram at 6 am.



This was followed by marching by the children and hoisting of The Mother's flag.

Bliss group sang- O Sweet Mother.

They also danced on *Chanda mama* song.

Smile group performed a play on the sun, moon and wind

Joy group performed a play on Ideal Child.



Progress group presented many plays- The Initiation, The Perforated Coin and The Perfect Gift. They chose their plays from the book 'Stories Told by The Mother'.







Gratitude and Humility groups enacted a play- Team Work and recited the poem Bride of the Fire by Sri Aurobindo. Shri Prashant Khanna explained the poem to them.

Basant gave a solo flute performance

Suparna did a solo Kathak Dance

Srinath Bhaiya sang a solo song- *Kuaum kalisa*.

Children put up on display boards, poetry written by them in Hindi and in English. They also displayed their paintings.



In the evening we had Lights of Aspiration.

27<sup>th</sup> February

Late Mrs Anuradha Sapru's birthday- A special hawan was performed.



### 18<sup>TH</sup> MARCH- Holi

The Holi celebrations started with sweets prepared by the children. After the luscious breakfast, children went to the school where the facilitators had arranged various games for them. The children of progress



group onwards participated in carrom and chess and the children of smile and joy groups played with tangram. Though the tangram was challenging, none gave up easily. For the youngest three groups fun games were arranged which the children thoroughly enjoyed. In the evening all the boys and girls put turmeric paste on their body and took a bath. We had moonlight dinner. Everyone felt the warmth and tenderness of the celebration.

### 29<sup>th</sup> MARCH- The Mother's first arrival in Pondicherry

The day started with special meditation in the ashram.

Children sang a few bhajans and mantras





## VISITORS DURING THE YEAR



The presence of guests who come to our campus to spend time with the children is very precious for our school.

We welcome them whole heartedly. There were very few



visitors during the year and most who came were in the last two months when the schools had opened.

Ipsita di from Rourkela spent a month. She taught Biology to Gratitude and Humility groups.



Meeta di from Lucknow- taught Chemistry and Biology to class 10<sup>th</sup> and



12<sup>th</sup> and psychology to Biikanti

Neelam di from Lucknow- taught English and Social Science to class 8<sup>th</sup>, Social Science to class 6<sup>th</sup>, History to Kamli and English to Madhumay and Bhavna.



Neha Aghi didi and her mother, Krishna didi, visited Kechla for a week. Neha didi spent a few hours teaching children Vedic math and she also did a few activities on the cognitive development of the children. Her mother, Krishna didi helped the children with their Hindi.





Srikant bhaiya from Hyderabad spent a few days in Kechla and enjoyed his time with the children and inmates of the Ashram.

Suudipto Bhaiya, Harpreet di, their children Suhasini (class 12<sup>th</sup> student) and Saraansh from Guwahati visited for about a week. Sudipto Bhaiya helped the class 12 children and Jagat with Geography. Harpreet didi taught English and Social Science to Gratitude, Humility and Progress group children. Suhasini helped the children with painting and home science. She also taught Kathak to the children of Smile Group and the interested children of Progress Group onwards. The children performed what they had learnt, the day before the departure of Suhasini. Saraansh, a very young boy spent his time with the children. It hardly took any time to mingle with the children of different groups. He loved Bunty (our Labrador) very much and took good care of him.

The year has ended on a beautiful note and we look forward to new beginnings filled with The Mother's grace. May we all continue to grow in Her divine consciousness.

