



by
"The Rite Centre"

Research in Integrated Training & Education

OUR PHILOSOPHY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLE

ALL CHILDREN ARE SPECIAL

A child is first and foremost a child and the ability, disability or giftedness, secondary.

❖ 2 YEAR INNOVATIVE COURSE

❖ Highlights (January - March 2009)

- The **preliminary examinations** for the First Year and Second Year students of our diploma course were held in March 2009. The students are now preparing for the forthcoming annual examinations.
- A **farewell party** was organised for our outgoing students. This is our fifth batch of graduating students.

❖ Lectures/Workshops/Training Programmes

- Practice teaching continued for the F.Y. students at **G.A. Kulkarni School, Khar** and for the S.Y. students at **Sanskardham School, Goregaon**.
- Visits to the following institutions in Mumbai :
 - **Shishuvan**, Matunga: a school that promotes integration.
 - **Nehru Science Centre**, Worli. This included a workshop on **"We are the Weather Makers"**.
 - **Prince of Wales Museum**, Kala Ghoda
 - **Maharashtra Nature Park**, Mahim
 - **Besant Montessori and Dilkhush**, Juhu
- An educational trip to Pune, with visits to the following institutions :
 - **Gurukul & Rewachand Bhojwani** - integrated schools
 - **Rose & Lora Morris Trust** - remedial centre
 - **Aga Khan Palace and Kelkar Museum** - places of historical interest
- A one day workshop by Banu Ismail, Psychologist and a two-day workshop by Dr. Sujala Watve and Ms. Uma Bapat, Jnana Prabodhini's Institute of Psychology, Pune on **"Creativity & Giftedness"**
- Workshop **"Katputhli Utsav"**, organised by Malti Jayanti Dalal Centre for Pre-primary Teachers Education, Mumbai.

❖ RESEARCH / DOCUMENTATION

- **Ongoing:**
 - Evaluation of students on teacher attitude, values & opinion of the philosophy of integration, before & after completion of the D.Ed (Integrated) course.
 - Preparing questionnaires - school visits/classroom observations.
- **To undertake:**
 - Attribution of factors related to students' participation in the D.Ed (Integrated) course.
 - Survey for awareness of integrated education among schools of Mumbai.
 - Correlation between Locus of Control (LOC), study habits and teacher effectiveness.

❖ PROFESSIONAL INTERACTIONS

Participated in various seminars/workshops/conferences.

- Roda presented a paper on “**Integrated Education**” at the **5th International Conference, India – Strategies to Alleviate Poverty and Climate Change**, organised by India Development Coalition of America at Delhi.
- Rinkal attended: a workshop on “**normalisation of children with mental retardation and autism**”, organised by Saraswati Mandir Trust, as well as “**The Art Teacher: A Palette of My Emotions**” organised at Shishuvan, Matunga by the Teacher Foundation.
- Nisha Kale and Rinkal Dedhia attended a workshop on “**Word Mapping Strategy**” organised by the Maharashtra Dyslexia Foundation.
- Rashida attended workshops on “**Fundamentals of Paraphrasing & Summarizing**” & “**Paraphrasing Strategy**”, both of which were organised by the Maharashtra Dyslexia Foundation.
- Nisha and Rashida participated in a workshop on “**The Incredible Years: Effective Behaviour Management for the Adolescent Years**” organised at Shishuvan, Matunga by the Teacher Foundation
- Nisha, Rashida and Rinkal attended a workshop on “**A Blue Deeper than the Blue of the Indigo Plant Itself: Integrated Learning in the Middle School**” organised at Shishuvan, Matunga by the Teacher Foundation.
- Nisha attended a workshop on “**Get Wordy: Ideas for Creative Writing**” organised at Shishuvan, Matunga by the Teacher Foundation.
- Janhvi attended a lecture organised by S.N.D.T. Women’s University on “**Teacher Education in the new ICT Era**”.
- Mrs. Bhatia attended the Annual Day function of **Marble Arch School**.

❖ HEROES FOREVER

- Mumbai based 17 year old **Urvi Pithadia** has battled with muscular dystrophy and emerged a topper in the differently abled category of the SSC exams in 2006. Regretfully she hasn’t been able to battle the apathy of college which has no provision of support for a condition like hers and hence was forced to discontinue her studies. That hasn’t broken her spirit however - she has taken up computer animation and still believes that there are several other avenues open to her.
- California based engineer **T.V. Raman** is himself visually impaired, but he has used the circumstances to help create a number of tools that enable the blind to access and use modern technology such as the computer and cellphones. As he comments, his starting point is not asking how something should work if a person cannot see, but how it should work when a person is not looking at the instrument.
- 15 year old **Nadeem Shaikh** from Worli, Mumbai was born without hands. However he says this does not prevent him from leading a normal life since he is able to manage everything himself using his feet. He also writes with his feet and has chosen to answer the SSC exams himself without asking for the use of a writer.

❖ TAKING STRIDES

- **Babar Ali** from Berhampore, West Bengal seems an atypical teenager who is not content with just living his own life, but contributes to helping others make something of theirs. His mission started when he was 11 years old and began teaching children whose parents couldn’t afford to send them to school. The 16 year old now runs a makeshift school for almost 600 children in his courtyard, where he teaches after his own classes get over.
- **Initiatives of Change** (IofC) is an organisation that would like to make a difference and bring about change in the lives of people, based on the idea that each one should reflect on their life and be an instrument of change. As a member of the Managing Council of IofC in India, Dr. R.K. Anand, puts it, “if you want to solve a problem, you must be a part of the solution”.

❖ WEBSITES OF INTEREST

- **www.sitesforteachers.com** : Contains almost 25 pages of links to various other websites that provide free downloadable resources including lesson plans, worksheets and activities for the pre-primary to Std XII level. Sites have been sorted according to popularity. Besides, there is a provision for adding a site to the list in keeping with prescribed guidelines.

❖ CONCERNS

- The Maharashtra Government is planning to raise the **eligibility criteria for entry to D.Ed programmes**. Till recently, the criteria was completion of Std XII only, but graduation is now being considered as the minimum, in the hope that it will improve the standard of teaching.
- Though the computer entertains as it teaches, parents, educators and psychologists are concerned about the trend of children **multitasking on the computer** while doing school assignments. They feel that the performance suffers when concentration is divided.
- A high profile 27 member national committee has been constituted by the prime minister to look into the apparent **mushrooming of deemed universities** across the country. It is felt that though these institutes charge very high fees, many of them have not been very successful in providing quality education.
- It is generally agreed that easy access to colourful books does have an impact on both the readings levels and habits of children, but most schools seem unable or unwilling to afford a **library hour** within the timetable. This is especially so at the higher levels where even if an hour is scheduled for library, it is borrowed to complete the syllabus in other subjects.
- Unlike LD, **autism is not** a condition regarded as a **learning disorder** by either the CBSE or ICSE Boards, and no concessions are offered during board exams to autistic students. Recently the assessment & remedial wing of SOL, an NGO, has started a signature campaign to get it included in the PWD Act, to get some benefits.
- Alarmed by the number of **colleges functioning without a principal**, the Bombay High Court has issued an order stating that colleges failing to ensure appointment of a full time principal will be barred from effecting admissions to the first year of their academic courses. This will be applicable to government run, aided and private unaided colleges in Maharashtra.
- The NGO **Pratham's Annual Status of Education Report** on rural India shows a marked improvement in enrolment and consequently a decrease in the number of out of school children, which reflects the success of the government's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme. It also indicates that Bihar has done remarkably well in getting children into school, with the percentage of out of school children in the 6 - 14 age group dropping from 13.1% in 2005 to 5.7 % in 2008.

❖ OVERHEARD

- Studies for the University Grants Commission have shown that Christians are far ahead of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs when comparing **gross enrolment ratios** in undergraduate courses in India.
- One of the aspects of globalisation has been the use of other languages besides English on the world wide web. Global businesses are now looking at ways to translate **their sites into different languages**. These include the diversity of languages in India as well as in Russia, Brazil and South Korea.
- Though **play schools** nowadays offer a lot more in terms of child-friendly ambience and skill-developing activities, **parents seem to have many more demands**. These include focus on hygiene, nutrition and availability of large open spaces.
- IGNOU has decided to launch a **graduate course in Applied Sign Language studies** in collaboration with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan). The first of its kind in India, the course will offer two certificates to its graduates - one from IGNOU and one from UCLan.

- The Maharashtra State Board has not only upgraded its syllabus, and also planned training in math & science for 15 S.S.C. teachers in the **constructivist methodology**. These teachers are expected to adopt 10 schools each and impart training to teachers in those schools.
- **Admission to reputed pre-primary** schools in Mumbai is a very expensive proposition, with donations ranging between Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 2 lakh. This has worried the school education department which is all set to bring in new rules to stop commercialisation of pre-primary education by bringing in new rules for admission.
- While Braille itself is more than a century old, the **availability of Braille texts** is still rather insufficient. State Governments have printing presses, but other dilemmas exist - for instance, some of them like the one in Tamil Nadu have not been functional for some time now, besides which the cost of Braille printing is quite prohibitive.

❖ FUTURE PLANS

- The Foundation plans to develop this centre into an INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATED EDUCATION with –
 - A Demonstration School
 - A Teacher Education College
 - A Research and Documentation Unit and
 - A Resource cum Pedagogy Centre



NEWSLETTER

The Rite Step

Sir Shapurji Billimoria Foundation

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