

Annual Report 2013-14

(Presented on 15th February 2014 on the occasion of the 6th Annual Day Celebrations)

Distinguished Chief Guest of this function, Dr. C G Batsurmath, Beloved Secretary Mr. D Sudhanva, Dear Correspondent, Mr. H M Prashanth, Trustees and Members of the School Managing committee, my Colleagues at Excelsoft, Dear Parents and invited Guests, Members of Staff and Faculty of Excel Public School and my dear children, a very good evening to you all.

I don't intend to make you feel bored with the statistical description of the year gone by. Rather, I would like to use this as an opportunity to reassert our vision and commitment to the cause of imparting quality education.

The world we live in is highly dynamic and the only constant in it is Change! Preparing the young generation towards being able to not only hold their own, but to also thrive, calls for a different system of education. A way of learning that enables children to think for themselves, understand and evaluate their thoughts, their surroundings, and to be able to separate the chaff from the grain is the need of the hour. This, then, will allow them to tread on the path that Rabindranath Tagore so passionately wrote about - "Where the mind is without fear, and the head held high..."

Our children need to address real world problems, social issues and have a perspective that includes far more than only the individual self.

J.Krishnamurti is known to have said that we have to unlearn everything we learnt in schools in order to have true education!! It may well seem to be the thought of a non-conformist, but if we allow ourselves to dwell on the statement, we may just begin to realize that it does convey the truth.

Luckily, the scenario isn't so bleak for us now. All over the world, attempts are being made to reinvent education and to ensure that the purpose of education leads us beyond mere "schooling". We have to ensure that it becomes an effective tool that will help bring about the most desired social transformation. Today, education is not merely about acquiring knowledge, but also about empowering our children with the right values and strength of mind. This automatically equips them with the necessary skills to navigate and negotiate the road they travel upon in any circumstance of their lives.

I quote here a short passage on the function of education from a book aptly titled "Think On These Things" by J.Krishnamurti.

"What does this so-called education mean, and what is it all about? This is really a very important question, not only for the students, but also for the parents, for the teachers, and for everyone who loves this earth. Why do we go through the struggle to be educated? Is it merely in order to pass some examinations and get a job? Or is it the function of education to prepare us while we are young to understand the whole process of life? Having a job and earning one's livelihood is necessary, but is that all? Are we being educated only for that?"

Surely life is not merely a job, an occupation! If we merely prepare ourselves to earn a livelihood, we shall miss the whole point of life. And to understand life is much more important

than merely prepare for examination and become very proficient in mathematics, physics or what you will. “

We at Excel Public School believe that this is our mission and purpose of existence. Let me take this opportunity to quickly take you through 5 salient and distinguishing features of the EPS approach which contributes to the uniqueness of the ‘EPS experience’.

1. OUR PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

We, at EPS are committed towards developing a system of education that is flexible, creative and challenging. We are optimistic that it will address the rapidly changing world, filled not only with exciting new possibilities, but also challenging problems. We expect this to help our students think creatively, learn independently but work collaboratively. An earnest effort is being made here to redefine education in the context of contemporary researches and innovations in the field of school education. Our mission is to ensure that the learning experience at EPS will make learning an exciting and enriching journey that prepares our children for the future. The focus is predominantly on ‘constructivist practices’ which refers to student centered learning, where there is a healthy collaboration between teacher-student and student-student, and co-construction of knowledge. All this, in contrast to the conventional teacher centered practice that is most familiar but not all too satisfactory.

2. HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Creating a healthy school environment has always been a top priority for us. It refers to the provision of an environment that encompasses the emotional, psychological and physical well-being of students where they are protected from abuse of any sort – verbal, physical, emotional, including indirect forms of abuse such as discrimination, exclusion and isolation by responsible adults or peers. A safe school is one that is free from danger and possible harm, where learning happens in an environment free from hassles of ridicule, intimidation, harassment, humiliation or even academic pressure. We also believe that a safe, clean, and well maintained school is a window to our soul – a positive psychosocial climate and culture can foster school connectedness, which in turn boosts the student and staff health as well as students’ educational achievement. Pressurizing the student and make performing fleas out of them is not the agenda at EPS. To the contrary, we wish to encourage and motivate them to become self -directed learners. Not all children learn at the same speed and no child learns at the same speed all the time. Learning is an inherently creative act, and it requires a system that can move with the individual making of each child. At EPS, the belief in the philosophy of ‘one child at a time’ is strong and therefore we do not set an arbitrarily determined pace of learning towards all learners.

3. TEACHERS AS FACILITATORS

Teachers are the medium through which a child absorbs knowledge. It is the teacher who grasps and clasps a child’s hand and slowly steers him/her through the winding lanes of learning, helping him/her to assimilate the knowledge thus garnered and encourages the child to flower into a well -rounded human being. The values that a teacher fosters on a child contribute to the making of a humane, just and civilized society. We have been making tireless

efforts to mould teachers who are appreciated for their love for children, compassion, patience, knowledge, judicious thought process and a 'never say die' spirit. We want our teachers to move away from the role of an authoritarian, towards one of a facilitator and guide, who orchestrates information and gives learners the ability to turn information into knowledge and knowledge into wisdom. We encourage teachers to cultivate and maintain the student's interest in gaining knowledge by showing how this knowledge is applicable in the real world, apart from increasing the student's curiosity and helping them become learners with good judgement.

4. ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

A blend of both physical and virtual resources is used at EPS, effectively integrating it with contemporary pedagogical approaches. With strong belief in innovation and sustained quality, we aim to seamlessly integrate technology into the teaching-learning processes, without losing focus on humane aspect of learning. The emphasis and promotion of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in education for increased student engagement, uninterrupted learning process and improved learning outcomes is gaining wider acceptance in the field of educational reforms across the globe. The range of possible benefits of the use of ICT covers practically all areas of teaching-learning practices. We believe that our children cannot be deprived of the advantages of this critical 21st century skill i.e : digital literacy. We must also recognize the role of technology as catalysts for change; change in working conditions, handling and exchanging information, teaching method, learning approaches, scientific research, and in accessing information.

5. HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EDUCATION

Children have to develop adequate academic capacities as these are required to live a comfortable life in today's scenario. At the same time, we believe deeply that educational institutions also have the responsibility to prepare students to meet the challenges of living, which is to equip them with 'learning for life'. The emphasis that we lay on life skill education is intended to promote in children, better self-awareness, ability to manage emotions, build good relationships, resist peer pressure, and for communicating and negotiating safer life situations. We see this as a continuous effort on our part to develop these skills in our children as an important component of the EPS learning experience.

To sum all this up, I would like to say that our motto is to bring a paradigm shift in the two essential activities that happen in a school – 'the way children learn and the way they are helped to learn'.

Currently we have 825 students from Playschool to Class 10 on our rolls. The first batch of our Class 10 students is going to appear for their Board Exam in a couple of weeks from now. I take this opportunity to wish them all the best in their forthcoming examination and thereafter. I wish and pray that these 18 students live by all the values and principles that they that their teachers have inculcated in them. The strength of the staff stands at 92, which include 59 teaching, 5 administrative and 28 ancillary staff.

As you are aware the current learning facilities that we have at EPS is unmatched for its quality and learning effectiveness. Our '*Activity Centre*' for experiential learning and extended learning activities, has been running events at regular intervals both for our students and for the

students of other schools in Mysore. So far we have had 25 events conducted for our students of various classes, as well as for the students of other schools in the city during the current year.

One of the key features of the learning experiences at EPS is the use of technology as an effective enabler in the learning process. We continue to research and innovate the use of technology in this direction. I am happy to say that we have effectively integrated tablet computers in the classroom transactions, and would be extending this facility to more classes from the beginning of the next academic year. We have renovated our existing computer lab with 37 numbers of latest All in One touch PC's at the cost of Rs. 25, 00000. We have also procured 90 tablets for the students to use the regular teaching learning process, costing Rs. 15,00000.

Providing opportunities to connect their learning with the world outside the classrooms, through various field trips and cross curricular projects have always been our approach and so far we have conducted 35 such events for the students of various classes during the current academic year.

We have two library-cum- reading rooms, with a total of 4709 volumes of books, both reading and reference together, 19 periodicals and 315 of educationally relevant DVD's and CD's. I am happy to say that this facility is being put to the best use by our students and staff. We have spent Rs. 152, 946 towards the purchase of Library books this year.

Developing an attitude of social sensitivity and civic responsibility among our students has been one of the primary objectives of EPS's existence. I am happy to testify that our parents and students have been responding positively to all our efforts in this direction. From the charity fund that our students and staff maintain, we have been able to donate an amount of Rs 282,888 during the current academic year to as many as six organizations and individuals who were in need of help and assistance. These supports were extended both in kind and cash and were directly handed over to the beneficiaries by our staff and students. I must place on record my deep sense of gratitude to our parents, students and members of the staff for their positive gesture. I also take this opportunity to thank all the parents who have actively contributed to the success of this year Kids Carnival, in which we could generate an income of Rs. 176,807.

We have 10 students who have been admitted to our LKG under the RTE and apart from these 15 students study under various scholarships that involve fee waiver of 50% to 100% which amounts to a total amount of Rs. 289,500

Our students have been representing the institution in various events within the district of Mysore and at the state and national level. My congratulations to all the students and their parents who have been able to bring laurels to self and their institution.

Before I conclude, let me place on record my sincere gratitude to all those who are helping and supporting us to take this institution to greater heights. An enlightened management is the biggest asset of any educational institution and we are fortunate to have progressive visionaries, who work so selflessly and earnestly, for the growth of this institution at it helm. I am grateful to all of them. I would like to thank our beloved Chairman and visionary Prof. M H Dahanajaya who is a great source of inspiration and motivation to all of us. My thanks to our

honoured Secretary Mr. D Sudhanva, whose able guidance and support always remains the most compelling factor behind our success. My sincere thanks are also due to Mr. H M Prashanth, the School Correspondent, whose infectious passion and zeal always becomes a morale booster to each and every one of us.

A word of gratitude and appreciation to all the members of the School Managing Committee, Heads, Managers and our colleagues at Excelsoft, especially the Administrative and Accounts Departments for their support and timely assistance.

Let me also place on record my sincere thanks and appreciation to all the members of the K-12 Team, Instructional Design Team, Activity Design Team Project Maker Team and the Facilities Team, headed by Ms. Prameela, who always extend the most needed support to our parents, teachers and students.

Committed and dedicated faculty is the bedrock of any educational institution. We are blessed with a small, but excellent, team of teaching and non-teaching staff who always keep the welfare and progress of the institution in mind and work diligently towards the realization of this goal. My sincere appreciation and words of gratitude to all of them.

Our sole ambassadors, during the past five years, have been our students and parents, who always stand by us, at all times, both good and bad. They have been our constructive critics, benign guides and active supporters. We are confident that we can always count on them and my sincere thanks to all of them for everything that they have been to us and we look forward to your continued support and guidance. Special thanks to all those parents who have been directly involved in the various programmes of the school like, club activities, field trips, special lectures and industry visit as part of the extended learning activities.

We are fully aware of the tremendous task lying ahead of us and we will put our best foot forward to ensure a distinctive and unmatched learning experience to the students send in our direction. We will utilize all our experience and expertise to make sure that EPS becomes a synonym for contemporary education in India. The unwavering trust of our parents, the love and respect of our students, and the commitment and dedication of the faculty, and of course, the presence of an enlightened Management are our strengths.

Let me end this report before, with a relevant quotation by -J. Krishnamurti, "*The highest function of education is to bring about an integrated individual who is capable of dealing with life as a whole*"

Thank you one and all.



Mathew K G
(15th February, 2014)

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