



WORKSHOP IN PONDICHERRY

Sharing the vision

Training sessions for teachers are conducted every year by Sri Aurobindo Society, Puducherry. Our teachers were privileged to attend these sessions on Integral Education. Participants at this workshop comprised of administrators, trustees, teachers and principals from various schools across India. The main aim of the workshop is to propagate the rich educational legacy of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother through Integral Education. By engaging in a number of discussions, activities and games conducted in the workshop, participants gained an insight into the various aspects of Integral Education and they demonstrated how learning could be made more innovative and interesting. These sessions



The workshop was held from 10th to 18th May, which covered all areas pertaining to school, effectively conducted by experienced resource people. The first day saw participants indulging in an introductory session through a very interesting memory game, followed by the origin of Pondicherry's name and an introduction to Integral Education.

In the next session conducted by Riddhi didi, participants were made to analyze their feelings in numerous hypothetical situations and to introspect and find out whether their feelings were in sync or of a conflicting nature.



This was followed by a session named "Seeds of Light"- the first part of which was based on Sri Aurobindo's first principle – "Nothing can be Taught"- where Harvinder didi emphasized that learning is intrinsic and we are here to facilitate the environment of learning



Mr. Shivakumar dealt with the importance of physical education. The end of the day saw participant's engaging in educational games. On the 12th May, Harvinder didi lead us into Sri Aurobindo's second principle, which says "The mind should be consulted in its own growth". She laid emphasis on how, we, as facilitators should only help the child in exploring his learning. Our role should be to only bring out in him what is hidden, by constant observation and listening. Participants had a beautiful start to the day by witnessing a spectacular sunrise.

Harvinder didi led the participants to Sri Aurobindo's third principle 'near to far' where she very ably helped participants explore how a topic can be discussed with certain depth & meaning. Dilip Bhai conducted a very interesting Math session on the 14th May, where he demonstrated simple and effective methods to teach Math. Participants were divided into groups for the Integral project, where they created mind maps & charts for their chosen topics, which was followed by storytelling and an art session on day six. Participants visited Matriudyam on the seventh day, where they went for a nature walk which was very refreshing.

They also got to view a stunning sunset! On the last day, the participants presented their projects. The weeklong workshop proved to be a fruitful and enriching experience for the teachers.

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME - AMIS

Diving deep into the integral project

**“Tell me and I forget
Teach me and I remember
Involve me and I learn.”**

On the same lines, the AMIS teachers were actively involved in a series of workshops from the 20th to 24th of May. Each day commenced with teachers eagerly participating in ‘Powers Within’ games. These games are specially crafted to develop core faculties like concentration, teamwork, dexterity and alertness in children. Nandini didi and Soma didi conducted the Integral Project session. It was an informative workshop based on what the Integral Project is & the way in which it is handled at AMIS. They also threw light on how the Integral Project is an interdisciplinary approach, where learning is not confined to a classroom, but goes much beyond and incorporates a vast variety of subjects.

Teachers got a hands on experience of the project and they were told to make presentations in groups. Diyas explored their deeper areas of interest and came up with topics like rain, maggi, spectacles etc. Each group brainstormed and drafted mind maps. The time factor pertaining to the number of projects in a year and the time duration for the completion of each project was also discussed.

Math -E-Magic

Math is important and finds its utility in all walks of life. The ragas of music, various dance forms, the rhyming in poetry are integrated with the principles of Math. Mr.Paramashivam, who has worked in prestigious Government organizations like DRDO, NAL, IISc and has done extensive research on radar technology conducted an effective workshop for the Math teachers of AMIS and gave practical demonstrations on how to generate love and interest in the learners towards Math.

HOW TO EAT A POEM

Poetry takes you to certain heights and depths and serves as food for the soul. In poetry, focus is mainly on words and rhyme, where as in a song, the focus is on melody. A profound session on ‘How to eat a poem’ was taken up by Harvinder didi for the language teachers of AMIS. A teacher while teaching a poem should help children to focus on the meaning and the essence of the poem. Teachers were asked to divide themselves into multilingual groups where each group consisted of teachers having different mother tongues. The groups were asked to pick up any topic from the surroundings and prepare a poem on it and present it in a creative way. This task needed to be completed within a specified period of time. The groups came up with creative poems in different languages. Some interesting topics of poetry presentation were ‘How human lives are like trees’, ‘slippers’, ‘Emptiness of a classroom without students’. Thus the session inspired the teachers to discover the ‘dormant poet’ in them. This session was much appreciated and enjoyed by everyone.

CAST A SPELL

Fun way to learn spellings - Teaching spellings becomes a tedious job for the teachers. Children as well as adults fail to remember spellings due to the peculiar arrangement of letters. To find a solution to this problem, Harvinder didi came up with a beautiful session for language teachers whose aim would be to devise various fun ways and techniques to teach spellings and help children retain the same. Discussion on the various ways to make spellings easier to remember were made, for example, by highlighting a particular letter in uppercase, using different colours for the repeated letters etc. and various other ideas were also explored. Teachers were divided into different groups and allowed to introspect on the ways of making spellings comprehensive for learners and they presented various techniques of teaching spellings by using pictures, flash cards, designed to lay weightage on their methods. Everyone got enriched through this session and it proved helpful to devise effective methods to learn spellings.

OPTIMUM USE OF SPACE

'Using Spaces Creatively', was the session conducted by Gunjan bhaiya, where he asked teachers to view different spaces of the entire school, and identify different venues especially for performing arts. He gave diyas an insight on effective use of available spaces on the campus. He took diyas to various venues of the school and gave them very interesting ideas of using them.

CRAFTASTIC

A session on the beautification of soft boards and making it an essential tool for classroom management was taken up by Selvi didi for all the teachers. The session started with a power point presentation (PPT) emphasizing the practical aspects of the usage of soft boards. Various innovative methods of decorating the board with beautiful borders were explained through slides. She demonstrated a few patterns, which the diyas replicated later on. The session was enjoyed by one and all.

UNDERSTANDING LEARNING AND THE CHILD

(course for parents and teachers)

Don't stop believing

“Education in the true sense is helping the individual to be mature and free, to flower greatly in love and goodness.



The weeklong workshop commenced with Yamini didi welcoming parents of AMIS and introducing the Principal. This was followed by Harvinder didi explaining the purpose and objective of the meet.

Yamini didi then proceeded to explain the significance and importance of the early morning 'Powers Within' games sessions, which also happened to be the first event once children reached school.

Janaki didi and Sharmin didi explained the content matter of the pre-primary assemblies which comprised of active discussions as well as songs and skits suitable for the levels of the tiny tots. The parental session ended up with a melodious song sung by Kevin bhaiya bearing the theme, 'how one should have the courage to explore and experiment'.

Parents exhibited great enthusiasm the next day, in participating in the 'Powers Within' games session which was to be ritually followed during the rest of the days.

Soon after that, parent volunteers conducted a value based assembly on the week's theme, 'Cooperation' which revealed that only when people are united in thought and action, they could accomplish common goals with ease and comfort.

Harvinder didi then enabled the audience to explore the origin of values for which the audience responded eagerly. During the second half of the session, Yamini didi facilitated in giving a glimpse of the integral projects that helped children to brain storm and discuss within groups and later present it to the whole group. She uttered strongly that such projects would eventually enable children to evolve as independent learners.

The next day's workshop began with the routine parents' assembly after which Harvinder didi hit the thought 'Nothing can be taught' from various points of view where she reassured parents that intrinsic learning can happen only by an awakening from within. A teacher she said, is not a giver of knowledge, but one who inspires the child for a lifetime. In the second half of the session Harvinder Didi stressed the importance of the 'Reading Habit' and its prominence in a child's life. She explained how at AMIS, the DEAR period promotes the imagination and creativity of children when they drop everything and just read choosing comfortable places and positions. The next day, after the value based assembly conducted again by parent volunteers, the audience witnessed a very interesting session revolving around the topic, 'Freedom and Boundaries in School Life' led by Harvinder didi and supported by Yamini didi and the Coordinator, Sheetal didi further who offered suggestions to parents about the type of nutritious food that is expected to be packed for children at AMIS.

She took a keen interest in settling the worries of parents related to food matters, prone to occur in that particular age group. The parents' assembly, the following day, commenced with a Kannada song after which a Hindi poem recitation and a fascinating story from the Panchatantra were presented. The session then focused on the best practices adopted in AMIS projected by Yamini didi and Sheetal didi which included Buddy Systems, Green Initiative Plans. Parental Enrichment Programs, Co-Curricular Activities, etc.



IT'S NOT A TEAM, IT'S A LIFESTYLE.

**You must understand the whole of life, not just one little part of it.
That is why you must read, that is why you must look at the skies,
That is why you must sing and dance, write poems, suffer and understand, for
all that is life.**

Had the litchi tree standing majestically with widespread branches right in the centre of the wisdom courtyard, the power to speak, it would have narrated success stories about the parent orientation program that lasted for five days. The total involvement of parents throughout the week deserves special mention here.

While addressing the audience, Harvinder Didi was able to make them travel through the school history, its ethos and its humble beginning that eventually proved to be a giant leap. She enlightened parents about the school's vision and approaches especially, focusing on the essence of space and freedom that needs to be and will be assured to each child in the school. She further sought the cooperation of parents suggesting that every challenge that is prone to pop up must be considered as a situation, not as a problem.

Her sharing was followed by Uma didi's guidelines about the school's pattern of functioning and the related norms. The next event was the diyas and support staff introducing themselves and explaining the significance of their class flowers given by the Mother who not only recognized their divinity but also their uniqueness and individuality. As an act of honouring the thought, parents were led to the gate area of the school where saplings of the Casia fistula (the golden shower tree) waited for them to be planted.



As Yamini didi rightly pointed out, parents would enjoy the privilege of watching both the saplings

They did have memories to take back home to be cherished long. An orientation program for the IX grade parents was organized in the post noon session where parents interacted with the Management team and clarified all their doubts related to High School affairs.



BETTER TOMORROWS!

**To be in your children's
memories tomorrow
You have to be in their live to-
day.....**

The parent orientation program on the 8th of June, commenced with the customary practice of AMIS that is, beginning each session with silence. The program was designed keeping the first grade parents in mind, whose kids were undergoing 'the supposed to be difficult, transitional stage' from UKG to Grade one.

The program commenced with Sheetal didi welcoming parents followed by Yamini didi enlightening parents about the various procedures at AMIS that originated from absolute consciousness and sensitivity towards the needs of children. She also focused on the modifications that awaited children in the areas of school timings, day long sessions, short and long break criteria, etc.

Yamini didi further highlighted the advantages assimilated in the school system and curriculum to help children spend their time at school with ease and comfort. Predicting well ahead, the discomfort children may experience coping with the additional hours in their daily schedule, a special naptime was designed immediately after the lunch schedule. This system, she added, would be in practice until children fall into place contentedly with the new timings. Children also had the support of the buddy system wherein, each child had a buddy of the same age group who gave them company throughout the school hours.

Yamini didi further assured parents that, apart from the absolute care rendered by their didis, the buddy system was inculcated considering the fact that when friendship springs within the same age group, it would make children more confident and relaxed. Didis handling Grade one classes further introduced themselves to parents along with their class flower names and their respective implications.

Parents effectively utilized the opportunity given to them during the discussion time to clarify their doubts and concerns. The orientation ended with silence after which refreshments were served. As a whole, the program proved to be very meaningful and interactive to the core.



EID

India is a land of festivals, where people from different religions coexist harmoniously. Festivals bring people of different religions together and help them bond together. It is our endeavour at AMIS to respect all religions and celebrate festivals of all faiths with equal joy and enthusiasm. A special assembly was held on the 4th of June to celebrate Eid. The significance of the festival was explained.

They believe that fasting will bring them closer to God. The scientific benefits of fasting and why children and people with ailments were exempted from fasting were discussed. Dry fruits were distributed to mark the celebration of Eid.

YOGA DAY

Yoga is considered to be an ancient practice which originated in India. The word 'yoga' has been derived from Sanskrit which means to join or to unite, symbolizing the union of body and consciousness. Yoga was developed as a



The practice of yoga has immense benefits and helps in curing many diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure and alleviating physical injuries and chronic pain. Yoga improves the quality of our memory and overall brain function. Therefore, Yoga becomes an integral part of our timetable at AMIS. On the occasion of World Yoga Day, on 21st June 2019, the students and diyas of AMIS practiced yogasanas, ably lead by Guru bhaiya. The asanas were demonstrated by a group of students on the stage, which was followed by students and diyas. The benefits of these asanas were explained parallelly. The session took place from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. It commenced with warm up exercises, which was followed by Suryanamaskara or the sun salutation, which is done facing morning sunlight. This was followed by various other asanas like Vrikshasana, Trikonasana, and Balasana etc.

The end of the session saw everyone feel invigorated, calm and rejuvenated by these asanas. It was a treat to the eyes to see the students and diyas perform the asanas with effortless ease. Students were encouraged to practice yoga on a daily basis, for an enhanced quality of life.

PARENTS' FEEDBACK ABOUT ORIENTATION

In the first place we truly appreciate this initiative by AMPS. We do know that most schools have an Orientation programme to help parents understand the do's & don'ts of the school. However, a workshop to help parents understand the what's and why's of the system their kids are getting into is really beautiful.

We did have a few apprehensions about ~~the~~ certain aspects of the school like the ^{no} uniform culture. However all the sessions over the last 5 days have truly been helpful for us in understanding the reasons & logic behind these practices.

The opinions/questions & discussions by other parents have also helped us gain a little different perspective about various aspects. In fact ~~the~~ certain aspects highlighted during the session were truly an eye-opener of sorts for us.

We truly liked every bit of this workshop and look forward to any such sessions by the school in the days to come.

Poonam & Lokesh
Heesha's parents (Nursery)

A huge 'Thank You' to all the people who organised the 5-day workshop for the parents. My husband and me had an amazing experience, learning and understanding, how we can co-operate with the school, to bring out the best in our child.

Some of the topics were an eye-opener for us, Especially the discussions on television, we know it is bad, but the impacts were something that had me go home and say 'No' to my child.

These profound discussions about 'how well we can bring up our child?' ~~is~~ are things I will discuss with my parents, my in-laws and extended family and friends. So they may understand, the world ~~is~~ need not be a rat race and their kid part of it.

Again, with all my heart I would like to say 'Thank You'!

June 1, 2019

Feedback on Parent Orientation.

Firstly, thank you for all the time, effort & thought that was put into conducting the orientation programme.

It was instrumental in understanding the ethos & the cultural fabric of the school. Now I am assured that ~~they~~ value that the school functions with education in a true sense of the word.

Being someone who believes that the primary job of teachers is to 'INSPIRE' children to learn, I am elated that this is one of the fundamental principles followed by you.

~~DEAR~~ As a by-product, we all get time to ~~not~~ spend sometime introspecting thoughts & beliefs that form who we are. Truly meditative!

Thanks for the orientation program which gave us comprehensive and realistic view about the school, It helped us to understand the school and that is very assuring.

- Rajasreekan.

Feedback; Name of Parent: - Parag Sathie; Days Attended = 06

First impression when I heard about workshop was how AMIS team going to fill 5 days. Upon attending it was why only 5 days!!!
Discovery, self awareness & reflection are my key takeaways.
I am sure these values will be seeded in my daughter Siddhi.
Siddhi means a power within & I am sure concept of "Powers within" are going to hone her inner powers exponentially.
I will continue to contribute in my little way in school activities as I now believe in path shown by Motherji & Anubindoji.
Heartfelt & sincere gratitude to Harvinderji & entire AMIS team for ideating & executing such a beautiful space.
May the force be with you.

BHARAT SENGH Attended (1, 3 & 5)

Initially we thought what we will go through in five days, it appeared to be a big ask. However, when we landed here on day 1, we ~~were~~ couldn't stop ourselves coming again & again. It was great to understand in detail school philosophy & vision & we feel ~~to~~ much more settled over thoughts. I got answer of lot many questions, which before you are parent. learnt good things from other parents, & understood best practices of this school. Thank You.

1st June 2019

Respected Madam Principal,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for this week. It has been an enriching and wonderful experience for me.

Kudos to the entire DIYA team for developing and executing this spiritual and emotionally transforming workshop.

We are sure both our children are in safe hands and that they will be groomed to be wonderful human beings with strong values and principles.

They say school is a second home for children and now we are even more confident that we have made a right choice.

Thank you again for this week and we look forward to all the upcoming experiences and interactions, which I believe will be great for the children and us alike.

Great work and congrats to the entire DIYA team for the successful workshop and wishing you the very best of luck for the upcoming academic year.

Thanks and Regards

Rachna

RACHNA MANGHANI

Jesha.V.J

Sagar.V.J

One word Impressed!! It was an extremely well planned, organized & executed workshop. Every aspect was taken care so well, seating arrangements, food, Q & A session, opportunity for parents to involve It shows the kind of commitment & how synergize the management works. Kudos to the team!

The session gave a glimpse of Harvinder didi & Yonini didi's wit, understanding, observation, involvement, clarity, patience which is commendable. It not only reminded our childhood, & rejuvenating, woked as digital detox, and overall an eye opener. As a whole, a lot of positive things to look forward, work on & achieve together. It gave a whole new perspective for the term "education". How simple, easy, satisfied & happy we can be if we follow & understand the child's need. Glad I attended this (4 out of 5 days workshop).

If my son Daksh (UKG) is able to get some percent of what is practiced at school, am sure he will turn out to be a good, sensible & responsible adult (wish I too had got such school/mentors which would have made me a better individual & parent than what I am). Thank You for everything, sharing views, experience & the assistance.

Mother of Daksh Kota (UKG)