

Roshni

Reaching Out to Serve Humanity with New Initiative

About Prabhat

The Prabhat Education Foundation reflects a journey that began in 2003 through the identification and nurturing of children with learning difficulties struggling in mainstream schools. In time, Realizing the need for education and learning of this group and particularly of children, Prabhat conceptualized an institutional facility to provide systematic learning and rehabilitation services that could be accessible for those challenged by poverty and mobility. Working with and through local communities is Prabhat's hallmark.

What started as a modest beginning, with one child in 2007, has now reached to 3000 persons with special needs in Ahmedabad as well as to their families, neighbours and communities.

An experience

Mahezabin was only 5 years old when she was brought to the Centre. She has cerebral palsy with mild intellectual disability. We were happy that her parents brought her to the Centre early as benefits of early identification of disability and appropriate rehabilitation then on is well proven. When her mother brought her to the Centre, she had severe behavioural issues, couldn't walk and would cry at the slightest instance. After having counselled her mother, she was brought to the Centre regularly even though Mahezabin did not like it. She was not toilet trained, so would inevitably soil her clothes just the moment she would reach the Centre, hoping her mother would take her back, but alas she didn't, so she had to wallow and sit, but kept a keen eye on what was happening around her! She did not use verbal communication at the time and only her mother could understand what she needed, so we learnt few signs she used, so that it would help us communicate with her better. I remember few incidents when she would crawl somewhere and go hide when her mother was not around, we were very worried at first, but then we decided to turn that into a game of hide and seek, and that's when she started smiling seeing us and was ready to come sit with us. With majority of the children with disabilities it takes a very long time to bond, make them comfortable of your presence around them, but it is not impossible, with a little patience and warmth it would be done sooner than later. In our experience we have learnt that, there is no point of forcing a child to do something, but just letting the child be and do what they are comfortable doing helps us form a bond sooner. The same thing happened with Mahezabin. She now loves getting dressed up and is very particular of the clothes she would wear for different occasions; she enjoys doing puzzles playing with beads and scribbling. Today she walks up to her mother and uses few clear words to express what she wants or feels. She loves being photographed and is indeed very photogenic, her photos were displayed in the Like Us exhibition across the country, if you ask her about it she would blush!



Bhavnisha Kerala
Special Educator

In December 2020 the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, govt. of India partnered with Prabhat for promotion of the Unique Disability ID also known as UDID. This project by the government is being implemented with the view of creating a National Database for PwDs and to issue a unique disability ID card for each person with disability. The project will ensure transparency, efficiency and ease of delivering government benefits and will also ensure uniformity for them. A rigorous process of assessment is to be conducted while filling the forms, attached with medical certificate and other documents. Prabhat till date has assisted 85 people, to fill the forms and do the other requisite processes. This is an exceptional step by the government which will smoothen the delivery of schemes and other services for people with disabilities.

For more information: <http://www.swavlambancard.gov.in/>

Learning and learning material: the learning session for children mainstreamed from Prabhat and other students from the school continues. From December, the school program team from Prabhat has been visiting different schools, meeting the parents and children mainstreamed. Each session has 5-6 children along with one parent. Every week a new curriculum-based topic is introduced and children are provided with assignments related to it. The assignments are hands-on and prepared by the team at Prabhat, this provides better understanding of the topic. Visits are conducted to 2 schools per day, each school gets its turn once a week. These sessions are an extension of the resource room initiative.

Virtual buddy interaction: Prabhat's students had been missing their buddies, so this month onwards Prabhat along with Riverside School have started the Buddy Interaction sessions online. Few students in rotation are invited to the Centre where they interact with their buddies on zoom. Students at both ends have been thrilled to see and talk to each other.

Assistive services: has been an integral part of Prabhat's working. Providing access to various government schemes and aids and appliances is essential for people with disabilities from marginalized section of the society to lead a comfortable life and in some cases a completely independent life. In December Prabhat conducted detailed physical and mental assessment with support from experts, for 16 people who would now be referred for various aids and appliances.

Gathering knowledge: the pandemic has provided the opportunity to learn and grow tremendously, we now have access to experts across the world and Prabhat is making the best of this given opportunity. This month the team attended 2 intensive webinars, the first one was on ADHD its causes and intervention for parents and professionals. The other one was organized by Vidya Sagar an organization based in Chennai founded by Ms. Poonam Natarajan. The session was conducted on Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), a term used to describe various methods of communication that can help people who are unable to use verbal speech to communicate. This session was extremely helpful as majority of the children at Prabhat do not have verbal communication, to make the online sessions more effective regular speech therapy training for the team has also begun from this month.

Virtual Speech therapy training: Ms. Birgit Martin an expert speech therapist from Germany, spent 10 days helping the educators and therapist at Prabhat training them on specialised speech therapy techniques 4 years ago. She continues to be an ambassador for Prabhat back home as well. This year as she was unable to make her trip to India, she is collaborating with Prabhat for online speech therapy training, focussing on how to provide speech therapy virtually. We are very grateful that Ms. Martin is taking time out from her busy schedule to do this for Prabhat and we are also overwhelmed with her continues love and support for the team and the children.

Play with clay training: clay has always been a fascinating piece of engagement, spending hours moulding and shaping. Srishti a student from NID spent close to 9 months with the children of Prabhat engaging them in this sensory experience using clay since 2019. The clay used by her was the moulding clay used by potters as it is environment friendly and is not harmful for the children. Over the course of time, she studied the effect of clay among children with varied disabilities, and the role clay plays in learning and therapy. In December she conducted a fun interactive sensitization session with the team of Prabhat and introduced the final products (she developed during her time Prabhat) a step wise curriculum for using clay for learning, therapy and play. These will soon be available on Prabhat's website.

Insightful discussions: the team met students and faculties from NID for a discussion on orphan children and the difficulties they face, focussing their discussion on children with disabilities. There are a few children at Prabhat who have been abandoned by their parents and are now being looked after by their relatives or grand-parents, the team could share their experiences and how the society and their own families look at them. These discussions facilitate capacity building, advocacy and knowledge sharing.

I remember walking in to the Vatva Centre and being awed at the transformation and the facelift that the lovely team from Riverside school had given the Centre, from a dilapidated old "police station" to a space so warm and colourful, that I could spend my entire day there! As I was eyeing up the stories on the walls, I felt a warm and soft touch on my hand, startled I turned around and saw this adorable little 11-year-old Sanofar tugging on my kurta and smiling. Her smile use to reach her eyes! Having met her earlier she recognized me and was excited to see me, though a little upset with me for not visiting more often. She was so excited and proud of her new Centre, that she took me by hand and showed me all around...she showed me her favourite spot, I got the dramatized version of the monkey story painted on the wall, she showed me her class and then made me sit with her holding my hand, she did not want me sharing my attention with anyone else, even the teacher!

Today when I think of her, I remember all those lovely memories, her cute smile, her energy, her enthusiasm and her warm embrace. She has left us with a lot of love. We all miss her a lot!



Divya Wesley

Snap-shot of the month



Meeting with the schools



Making the best of the winter sun,
discussion and learning!



Getting our hands dirty for the sake of
creativity!



Clay training with Srishti



https://www.instagram.com/prabhat_education_foundation/



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCe1oxuBWMDvyCRk2EPzzjIA>



<https://www.facebook.com/Prabhateducationfoundation/>

Phone: +91-79-4890-305

Email: prabhat@prabhatedu.org

Website: www.prabhateducationfoundation.org

Prabhat Education Foundation

A-4, Sujal apartment
Opp. Satellite bungalow
Ramdevnagar
Ahmedabad 380015

