



Chettinad  
Sarvalokaa Education  
International School

# Imprint

by Sarvalokaa

June - November 2021



## From the Desk of the Principal



It gives me immense pleasure to connect with you through **Imprint**.

We are delighted to receive our children back in school after eighteen months. It was truly an emotional moment for all of us. It is as if the school has sprung back to life with our corridors ringing with their excited voices, joyous expressions and wonderful thoughts.

We share our experiences in the classroom and beyond through **Journeys**, a bi monthly journal and **Imprint**, published once a term. Together, they cover an integrated learning design that is a judicious balance of academics, events, celebrations and skill enrichment activities. We believe that learning should be meaningful, transformative and joyful. Even while learning virtually, we ensured that children did not miss out on important events, celebrations and wellness activities. The programs like *Leader in Me*, *Eager Reader* and *Nature and I* have made a significant impact on children. We had interesting perspectives from children who shared deep and meaningful reflections in these sessions.

When we transitioned to remote learning in the month of March 2020, little did we imagine that we would go virtual for such a long time. Teachers and children have been working together with true understanding and appreciation of each other's efforts. We thank parents for their appreciation and support throughout the journey. Long hours of planning for online learning did not deter the teachers from attempting to create best of experiences for our children. What follows in the ensuing pages are stories of adaptability and resilience shown by teachers and children throughout a unique learning journey. This issue of **Imprint** also carries a chat with our Director, Ms Trayee Sinha on Sarvalokaa and how it paves the way for preparing the citizens of the future.

We began online this year and are really glad to be back in school.

Our journey continues..

- Gowri Sivashankar

# A Chat with our Director, Mrs. Trayee Sinha



*Mrs. Trayee Sinha has recently been nominated as the Director of Chettinad-Sarvalokaa Education. She continues her role as the Vice President of Chettinad Niyogaa, the Education and Service division of the Chettinad Group and heads the functional aspects of all the education and service entities under the division.*

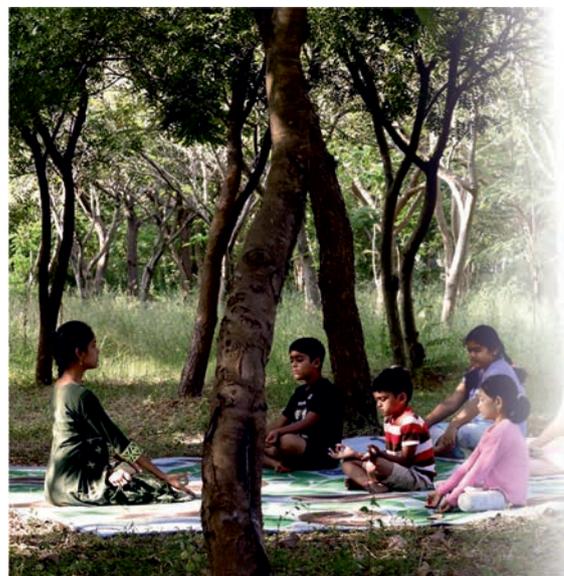
*Mrs. Trayee started her journey in education as a teacher and later worked with corporate education ventures as a curriculum developer, trainer, mentor, leading her team in the areas of operational excellence and quality control.*

*Closely working with the Founder and Trustee, Mrs Geetha Muthiah for over 10 years, she aligns with the organizational vision towards building a community of responsible global citizens who contribute towards a sustainable future.*

## You have been in the field of Education for over 20 years. How did this journey begin?

I belong to a family of teachers. I became a teacher when I was around 10 years old, in grade 5. There were 4 kindergarten children from the neighbourhood who were my students. Since then, I have been teaching. However, I never thought of being in the field of education permanently, hence started pursuing my professional courses in other fields. One day I got a call from my mother's school to work in the primary section as one of the teachers had to go for a maternity leave. With reluctance I went to help the school but eventually fell in love with the profession. Continued teaching for a few years. Later, I was chosen as a teachers' trainer by a corporate chain of schools, then started mentoring school leaders as a national head, and travelled across the country to establish schools for young children. With Chettinad, it's been over 10 years now.

## You have been a part of many ventures with our founder. How did Sarvalokaa happen?



Chettinad group has been in education for more than 90 years. When I joined the group, there were already many schools and colleges which were well known across Tamilnadu. Every institution was unique with a specific curriculum and distinct culture. However, Mrs. Geetha and myself would often discuss the need for a school which will have nature-based education, will be truly progressive, where education is not be about gathering information but is an inward journey connecting to oneself and the world at large. Learning will be joyful, experiential, and transformative. Where children's ability will not be measured only by scores but also through their contribution in different forms. A school which will create resilient leaders who inspire. When our chairman Mr. Muthiah thought of the need of a premier international school in Chennai Sarvalokaa happened. It was like a dream project which had the right combination of the vision, values, resources and the infrastructure.



### **How do you envision Sarvalokaa?**

Sarvalokaa will be a school which will build a community of effective contributors who will not just thrive academically but will use their learning mindfully for a sustainable future. Nature based education is a major step towards it. It helps children to be rooted, to develop life skills, to understand that there is a balance between consumption and contribution. Every element in nature contributes in some form, nature teaches to co-exist and to collaborate. Knowledge and values are imbibed naturally when children work with nature. The learning in nature becomes a part of the learners. It is not imposed rather internalized. Sarvalokaa will be a school to make a mark in the field of progressive education.



### **What are your thoughts about how children and teachers have adapted to new learning during the pandemic?**

Since learning in Sarvalokaa has been hands-on, initially it was quite a challenge to plan the curriculum. It was tough for the educators to break down the lessons in smaller units to suit the platform and reach out to children while making the learning experiential. However, both the children and the educators were comfortable as the classes started. We could continue our exploratory learning with mindfulness sessions, art, music, theater along with the core academics. We could celebrate every festival and reach out to each child through support time and office hours. Parents were extremely supportive in the journey and their feedback has been encouraging.

### **What is your message to our parents?**

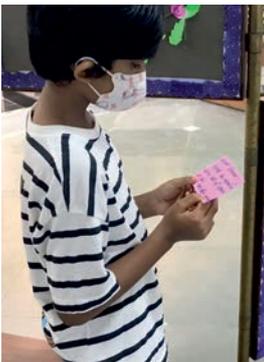
Learning happens when children take ownership of what they learn and enjoy what they do. A deep learning experience goes a long way and makes children believe in themselves. Learning is a process and needs to be unhurried. Trust this transformative journey. Together, as a community we can bring out the best in each child and help children become truly contributing global citizens.



# Back to School!



We opened school after an unprecedented break of 18 months, on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The excitement knew no bounds not only for children but for us too !



# ...and the Journey Continues..



# Initiation of Our Integrated Farm And Forest



Sarvalokaa, with the support of Chettinad Academy, has created a forest and an integrated farm to contribute towards a sustainable future and facilitate rich learning experiences that will help individuals understand, care and connect with nature, natural habitats and understand biodiversity. As a part of the initiative, 2500 saplings of 200 varieties of indigenous trees were planted in 4.5 acres and a farm with animals and paddy fields, vegetable and fruits is ready for children to return to when they come to school.



**Our Founder Mrs. Geetha Muthiah (Centre), our Director Mrs. Trayee Sinha (Left), Mr. Arunachalam (Extreme Right) during the plantation of the first sapling.**

Forest learning and farm learning is an integral part of the Waldorf-inspired curriculum which believes that children should experience the natural rhythms of life and understand their relationship with all living things as they grow.

We are all interconnected and interdependent. Man, animals and plants connect to support each other in harmony. Children get abundant opportunities to learn and experience farming, harvesting, caring for animals, learning about how the food comes from the farm to the table, the process of seed to seed and much more. Subjects like Science, Mathematics, Global Perspectives and Languages will not be merely through textbooks, but through explorations and experiences that can happen in the forest.

Classrooms become limitless and so do the possibilities. As children walk through the forests and the fields, nature leads them to deep self-discovery. The compassion and respect one finds for Mother Nature, for farmers and for our heritage, shapes young minds become future thinkers and leaders.

# Let us be Nature Wise...!!



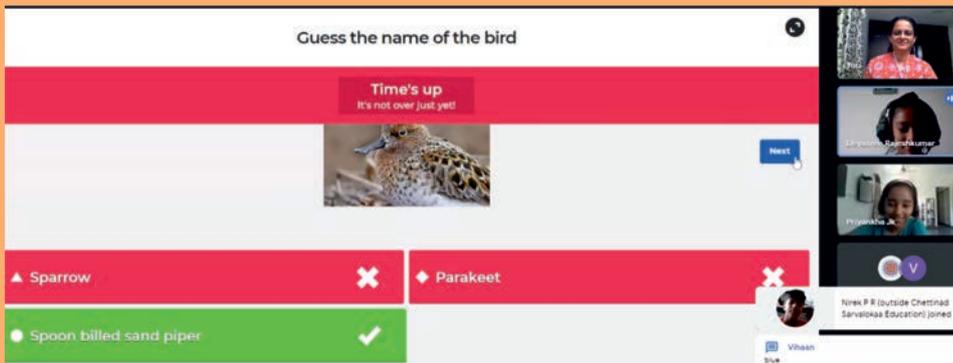
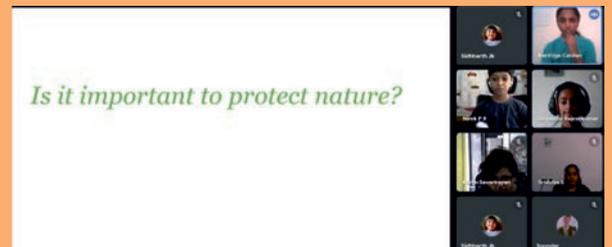
## Glimpses from the Inauguration



# Beyond the Curriculum- Our Enrichment Programs

## Nature and I

Sarvalokaa is blessed with abundant natural resources and a team of teachers who design opportunities to learn through them. The **Nature and I** initiative aims to bring awareness to students of the vast natural resources around them and to understand their responsibility in protecting Nature. Students enjoyed discussing the importance of the benefits of Nature and the need to protect it. The students focused on waste management in the months of June, July and August. Students became aware of the waste they generate every day, analysed the different kinds of waste and came up with a plan of action to reduce, reuse and recycle. Even though we had our sessions online throughout the term, the discussions were thought provoking and help children knowledge while online to explore with more depth when they return to the farm and the forest in school



## Eager Reader Program

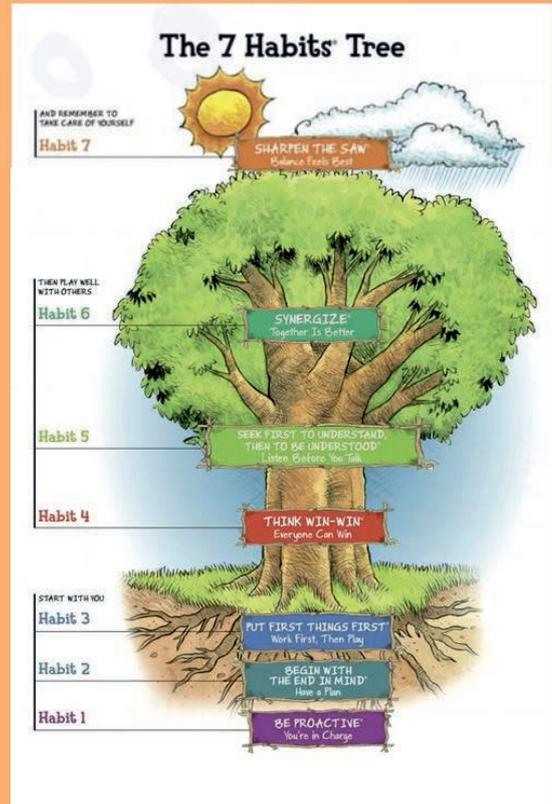
We introduced Eager Reader this year for grades 2 to 8 with the objective of making reading a habit for life. Reading is an important skill and most impactful if children are inspired to read rather than doing it as a part of work. We believe that cultivating a habit like reading would enrich the child for life. We discuss our favourite books, have reading sessions or make crafts that connect them to a character or book. We also try to read books together and have discussions. We also celebrated the World Literacy Day in the Eager Reader program. The reading program will culminate in a conference during the Book Week wherein children will be presenting their reading to an audience.





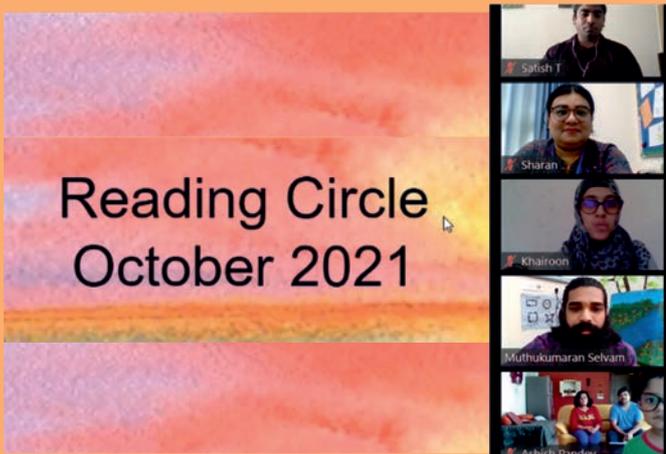
# Leader in Me®

Every child has the potential to be a leader. It is about the opportunities we create for them throughout their learning journey. We have introduced an international leadership program - **Leader in me** based on Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People this year. Leader in me helps children to be self-reliant, plan and track goals, lead by taking initiative, be responsible, caring and compassionate. They learn the skills of personal excellence that make them true leaders. It is amazing to see children trying to implement their learnings by prioritizing their work, being responsible for their actions, taking initiative and many more during class activities and homework. Discussions are vibrant with children bringing new perspectives each time.



## Parent Circle

We believe in a learning that promotes a sense of joy, wonder and reverence. We want the child to experience an unhurried childhood. Our Waldorf- inspired early childhood embraces Rudolf Steiner's philosophy and aims to lay a strong foundation with its development-need based experiential curriculum while meeting the outcomes given by the Cambridge curriculum. The objective of Parent Circle is to help parents understand and align with the school's philosophy on learning. The parent circle is a once a month discussion on Steiner's book "Kingdom of Childhood" - a compilation of lectures that helps us understand the developmental needs of a child. Parents read along, reflect and share their observations and thoughts. The quality time that parents give children will help lay a strong foundation for life.



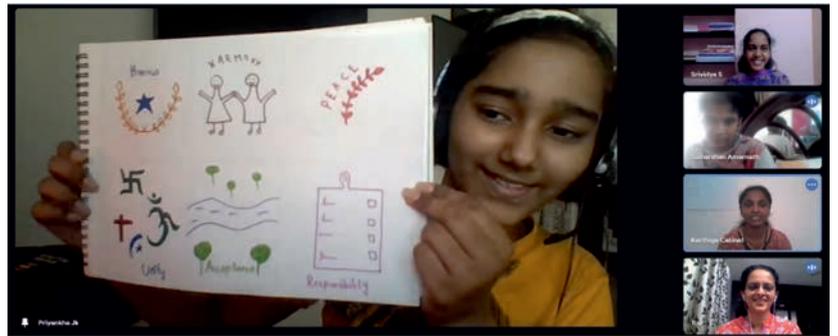
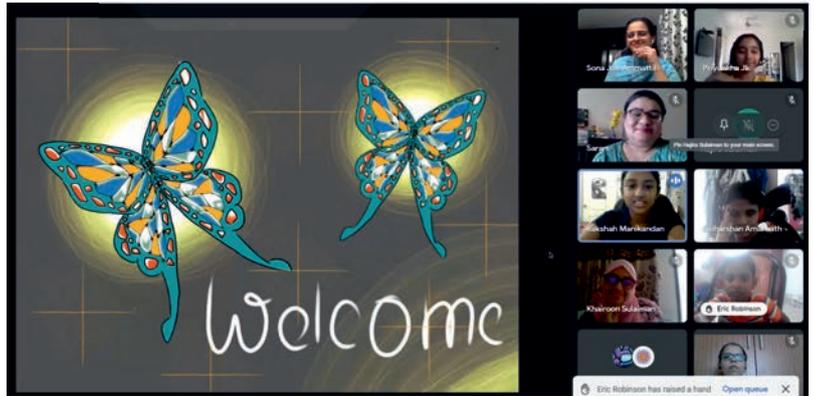
# Events and Celebrations at Sarvalokaa

## Imbibing Values for Life

Sarvalokaa believes in providing holistic learning to the children in its fold. Thus events and celebrations are opportunities to connect, understand and imbibe values as they learn.

We celebrate national and international days of significance. All events and celebrations are explored at three levels: *what we do* (celebration, food, clothes, prayers, music, dance related to it), *why we do what we do* (the history, tradition and its purpose) and *what it means to me as a person* (value for life).

Children collaborate, learn and share thoughts on qualities like respect, obedience, honesty, truthfulness and in the process internalise the values. We are astounded by the various perspectives our children bring to the table when they inquire deeply.



# Summer Connect



Cinderella Plant:



While it seemed like we had some respite from the pandemic around the New Year, we were back indoors with the onset of the second wave of COVID-19 in the month of April'21. Lockdowns and restrictions followed. Our team of teachers came up with the plan of helping children stay engaged through this period of confinement and boredom. Thus was born '**Sarvalokaa Summer Connect**' with a galore of fun activities-reading, hands on math, art, story-telling and so on. Children enjoyed the creative challenges and more importantly, connecting to their teachers and friends once a week during the forced stay indoors.

# Doctor's Day

We owe our deep gratitude to the doctors for their contribution to the society through their untiring work. Celebrating Doctor's Day was a great way for the children to reflect upon the profession. We discussed the kind of hardships doctors had been through, how their contributions were crucial, thus gaining insights into different aspects of the profession. Children reflected upon the qualities that make a good doctor like kindness, patience and service mindedness which are integral to the profession and understood what it meant to make it one's career.



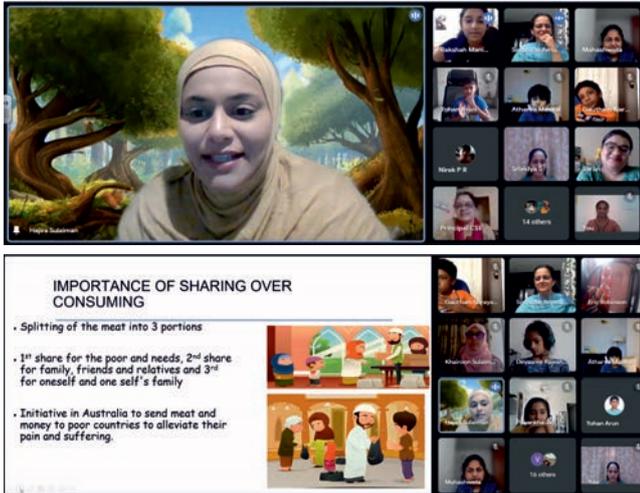
# Yoga Day



India has led the way for the world in wellness through Yoga. To mark the International Yoga Day this year, we chose SuryaNamaskara to understand its value. Surya Namaskara is a complete workout for your entire physical system, one that does not require the use of any equipment. Our students along with parents and teachers engaged in the mindful practice of yoga. We learnt the importance of physical, mental and spiritual health and reflected upon the significance of having such practices as part of our lifestyle.



# Bakrid



We celebrated Bakrid online.

Ms.Hajeera Sulaiman our guest speaker elaborated on the story of Prophet Muhammad and his sacrifice. As a part of understanding the culture, our music facilitators introduced some of the middle eastern instruments. To mark the festival, children reflected on the values of sharing and caring. We reflected upon what sacrifice means to each one of us. We also prepared falooda and had the delicious dessert together, even if online.

# Krishna Jayanthi

It is important to understand the impact of our culture in the global context. Verses of Bhagavad Gita have been the beacon light for many in the world. We celebrated the birth of Lord Krishna and the story of Krishna's friendship with Sudama. We made laddoos out of poha and jaggery. We reflected upon the qualities of selflessness, acceptance, humility, mindfulness, self-control, sacrifice and friendship.

## Reflections

**Krishna was selfless, kind, even went to fight in a war without a weapon and was even nice to the bad guys.**

**Krishna basically means to tell us that we should control our anger and find a solution before making a bigger fuss.**



# Tiger's Day



The concept of extinction is meaningless unless you understand the importance and significance of the life in question. To drive home the seriousness of the situation and the importance of tiger's contribution to the ecosystem, we learnt about the different species of tigers, their habitat, and the reason for their extinction. We also delved into the steps taken to conserving the tigers and why it is necessary to have a World Tigers Day.

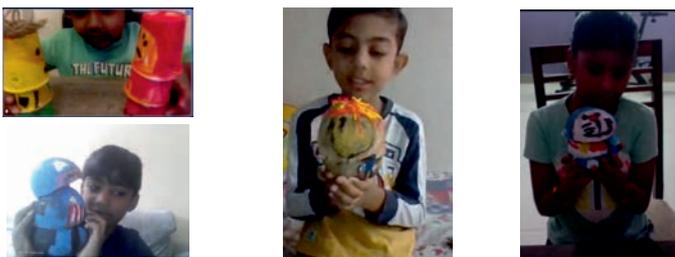


# Ganesh Chaturthi

Students of pre-primary and Grades 1 and 2 celebrated the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi by making a model of Ganesha out of clay. Clay play is an important part of early development. It is a great sensory stimulator, develops coordination and motor skills, extends attention span and increases imagination. The theatre session elicited the attributes of Lord Ganesha through story telling followed by reflection from the children.



# Dussehra: Celebrating the Good and Renouncing Evil

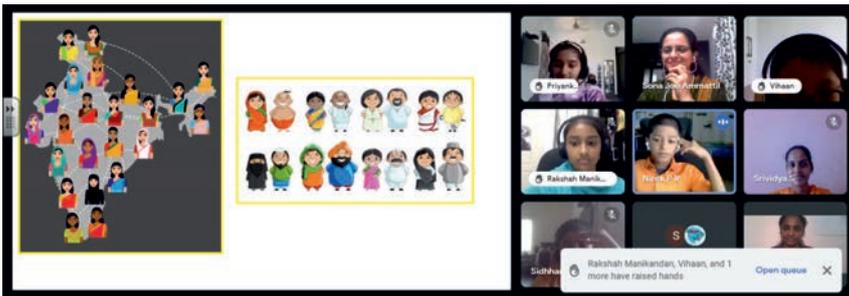


This year our Dussehra celebrations centered around understanding this binary. Our week long celebration started with understanding traditions and reasons for the nine days of celebration. Children learnt about the different ways people celebrated in different parts of the country and made their own gollu dolls. Our celebration also extended to our teachers who upcycled their own gollu dolls to celebrate a sustainable Navratri.

# Independence Day



What is freedom? What freedom means to me? These were the profound questions that we pondered upon this Independence Day. We had a week-long in-depth discussion and reflection on what being free truly meant. It culminated in a whole school assembly where we revisited our thoughts on independence. The lockdown did not stop us from doing what it takes to celebrate our Independence. The Principal and staff were in school for the flag hoisting which was shared on the facebook for children to understand the significance of celebrating Independence Day and respecting the flag.



# Teacher's Day

“A teacher takes a hand, opens a mind and touches a heart”. Our educators looked back on their teaching journey this Teacher's Day. Looking back on why they chose the profession and how they reached the place they are here today. Some of them knew this is what they wanted to do, some of them didn't think they would be here and some of them worked harder than others to get here. Collectively they realised that though each of their journeys and reasons may be different, they are here for one purpose and the joy of being with children and impact for generations and the responsibility that comes with it.



# Diwali



The festival of lights was celebrated with great cheer. Students made beautiful rangolis online, shared their traditional recipes with the class and also shared their respective traditions of Diwali. Together the educators and children explored to understand the significance of the festival and its meaning. The story of lord Rama's return to Ayodhya helped children reflect on values of obedience and respect.



# Halloween



Halloween originated with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain was celebrated in Sarvalokaa, like every year. This year's Halloween celebration was dedicated to our ancestors and connecting to the values and their wisdoms. Teachers scripted, directed and acted in a play to help children know about the essence of traditions while identifying their fears and facing the fear within.

# Children's Day



“What an exciting way to celebrate ‘Children’s day’ by welcoming them ‘back to school’ after 18 long months of online sessions!

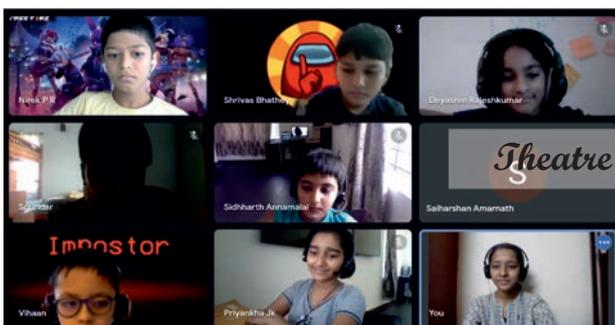
Every child was greeted with warmth and great joy!

Children were celebrated in their classes with their teachers. They had a movie day at school and started off their adventure with warmth, laughter and fun!



# Dance, Music and Theatre

We ensured that children do not miss out on their co-curricular learning even during the online learning time. Thus dance, music and theatre were very much a part of our weekly schedule. Children look forward to the session. It is amazing to see how they have adapted so beautifully to the online platform during these sessions.



# Learn . Unlearn . Relearn



Our teachers engage in learning about the latest trend in teaching - learning throughout the year through workshops, discussions, case studies and reflective sessions. Teachers have attended National and International conferences during the term.



## Teacher Circle

**"Wherever you are, be there totally" - Eckhart Tolle**

Our teacher circles encourage reflection - to let go of the past and create a better present. Mindful activities designed to support teacher wellness and expression, creates an environment of growth and help develop fresh perspectives.





**We look forward to Celebrations**

- Christmas.
- Pongal.
- Holi.
- Melting Pot [ Art & Cultural Fest].



**We**  
*welcome*  
**a**  
**new**  
**member**  
**into**  
**our**  
**fold**

*We look forward to hearing from you. !*



**Important Days**

- Farmer's Day.
- Republic Day.
- World Wildlife Day.

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