



ASHA KIRAN
SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOL
SERVING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS SINCE 1993

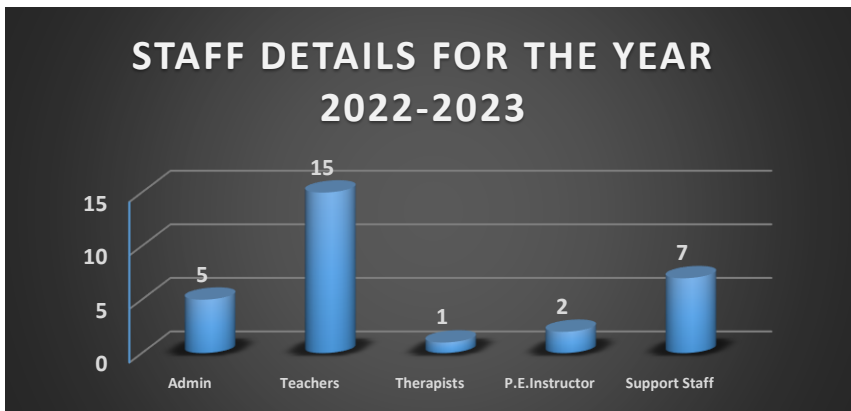
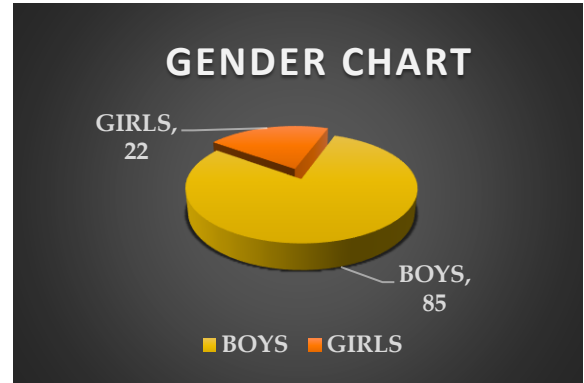


ANNUAL REPORT

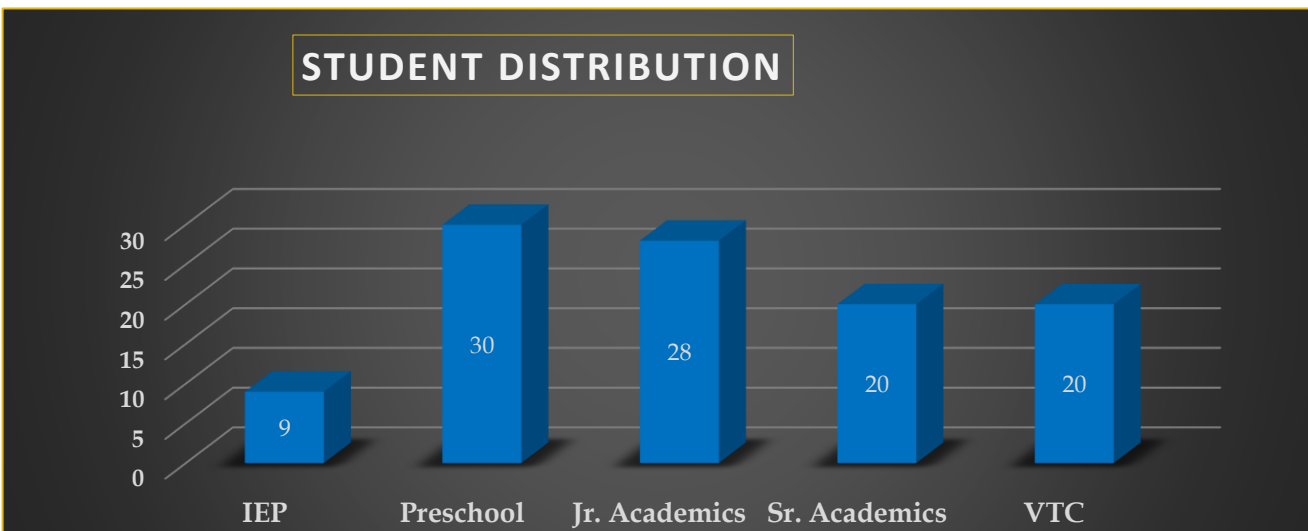
2022-23

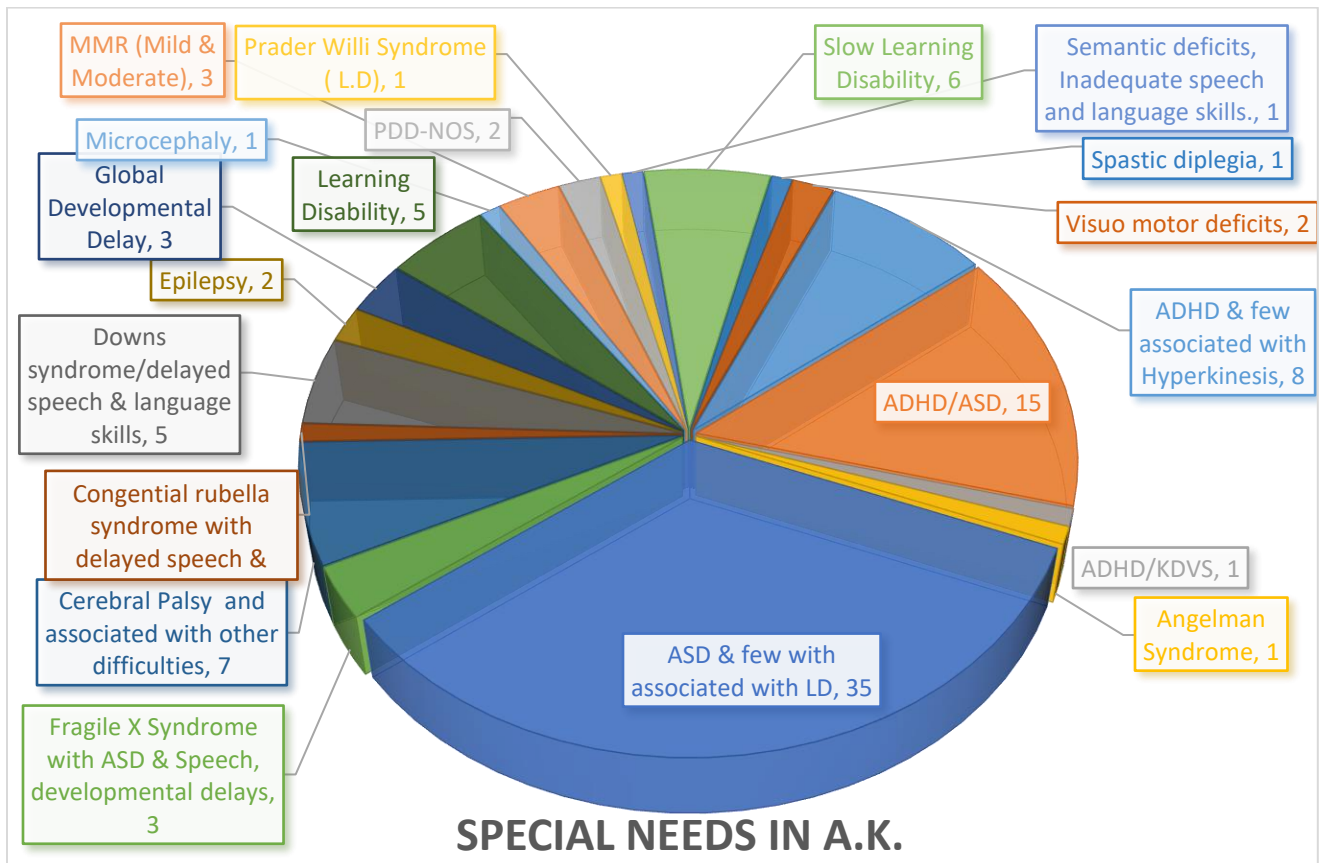
The school came alive with the return of students. On 15th June 2022, the academic year 2022-23 began with a Divine reminder “I am making everything new!” (Revelation 21:5). This was the year of RESET, a chance to restart. We saw this revelation unfold as we recruited staff, enrolled students and encountered each day.

Returning to school physically after COVID helped to better relationships with students as teachers were once again able to pay individual attention to each child. Students were happy to interact with friends and teachers personally and clear academic doubts.



We had 107 students and a staff strength of 30. Financial support was extended to 9 students who were unable to afford the full fees.





ACCOLADES

- Brainfeed School Excellence Award to our School for the AY 2022-23.
- Recognized by Dr. A.M. Reddy Autism Center for our services to children with Autism.
- Our Director Dr. Rita James was honored with a Certificate of Excellence for her outstanding achievement and remarkable contribution in the field of social services by KTK Outstanding Achievers and Education Foundation.

ANNUAL SCHOOL EVENTS

Independence Day – Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, 15th August 2022;

The Chief Guest Mrs. Uma Maheswari emphasized the need to respect each other’s differences and come together being interdependent, to build an Independent nation.

The Pride of India by preschoolers was a beautiful tribute to national heroes who played a significant role in shaping new age India that is fearless, multi-faceted, powerful, and determined. It was succeeded with the song “*Bharat Humko Jaan Se Pyaara Hai*” by our Nightingales. Vocational students showcased state-wise ethnic wear through a parade – *Colours Of India*. The eager participation of the audience in the quiz regarding India was thrilling. The Academics students presented a thought-provoking skit and dance – “*Rise India Rise*” with a message to rise above unhealthy differences and rather spread Love, Humanity, and Peace amongst all Indians. Students’ art on the theme “*Mera Bharath Mahan*” was displayed.



Several parents expressed that this event re-kindled memories of Independence Day celebrations during their school days. For many, it was coming out of the daily hustle and pausing for an hour to witness and honor their country. All left with the reverberating sound of “*Jai Hind! Jai Bharat!*” and a sense of pride in being an Indian.

Teachers Day; 5th of September 2022.

Students expressed gratitude with a marvelous display of talents from each department. A meaningful song, dance, and captivating drum performance touched our hearts.

A fun twist, that raised the teachers’ spirits and had students raging with excitement when staff played childhood games like Dog and the Bone, hopscotch, and paper dance.



The teachers became children receiving gifts of appreciation and the sumptuous lunch.

Teachers found the celebration and the participative games, unique and special. Students had fun cheering teachers and watching them play.

Children's Day; 14th November 2022.



To celebrate every child at *Asha Kiran*, and give them a memorable and unique day, teachers engaged students in a lively singing session of music and dance. Students were fascinated by the Vocational teachers' splendid dance performance capturing the humor and wonder of childhood.

Academic teachers performed an Indo-fusion dance that depicted various Indian states from Kerala to Punjab. A quiz allowed students to display their knowledge on various topics. The entertainment was taken a step further with a vibrant and youthful dance performance by Preschool teachers.

The smiles on all the faces and gleeful cheers from the students evidenced that Children's Day celebration had been memorable for them. The students loved the music so much, that it is now a crowd favorite and a part of their assemblies. It was just as exciting and meaningful for the staff too. Their efforts and commitment to making the program a success highlight their passion to serve and make a meaningful difference in the lives of each child.

Founder's Day; 28th of November, 2022.

The staff and students were reminded (through a Powerpoint presentation) of the history of Asha Kiran School - the year of origin, the vision and mission of Dr. Rita James, the growth process, and the impact that the school has had through the years on many lives. We had the performers of Kalangana displaying their acts which were much appreciated. Singing, dancing, fancy dress presentation, and instrumentals were performed. Students and staff from various departments shared their experiences and learnings at Asha Kiran.



Christmas program – *The Season of Joy*, 22nd December 2022

Students put up spectacular performances that captured the true meaning of Christmas, through song, dance, theatre, and music. The joyous carols by the choir provided the perfect start to ring in Christmas celebrations. The preschool students dressed as little angels and



shepherds danced to a song telling the story of the first Christmas. The Academic Section put on a theatrical skit, portraying the true meaning of Christmas celebrations depicting the *Reason for the Season*. The Vocational students performed a meaningful action song, using colorful props, proclaiming the wonderful news that Jesus came as the light of the world to save each of us.

Dr. Rita James spoke about how easily each of us experience fear, yet at its heart the recurring words through the story of Christmas is *'Do not be afraid'*. This was a beautiful promise and takeaway for all those present.

The beautifully orchestrated program deeply moved everyone who attended. They appreciated the efforts taken to train and equip each student to be a part of the program.

Sports Day; 25th of January 2023.

The event began with the traditional torch run by students from each department followed by the declaration of the opening of the *Asha Kiran Sports Meet 2023* by chief guest Mr. Aldrin Bogi. An important tenet we maintained is to ensure the participation of all our students during this



program. The lively audience encouraged students applauding them for showing great strength and perseverance. As fillers, we had friends from the UK present a puppet show thrilling the students and audience. Our lively cheerleading squad encouraged the crowd to continue encouraging participants.

Parents felt that they had to learn a lot from the students regarding organization, precision, and focus that they witnessed on the day.

New students mentioned that this was the first time they were given a chance to participate, and they were so happy to be a part of the events, and also as a volunteer.

Students' picnic (Level A and B); 24th February 2023 @ Rangoli Gardens (Model Village), Thannisandra

They went on a fascinating and close-to-reality sculptural journey to experience food habits, cultural traditions, religious events, recreation, and living conditions in Karnataka. A depiction of village life in statues where siblings were playing in a house, a market scene, a cow shed, a postman delivering mail, women drawing water from a well, and other home scenes from a regular day in a village fascinated our students. They were thrilled to go on a Tonga ride too. Given our modern lifestyle, the picnic site turned out to be an educational experience as it reminded us of our roots and the age-old traditions of our villages.



Students' picnic (Preschool in two batches); On 27th and 28th February, 2023 @ Kids Funville Play Zone located in KR Puram

The play zone was perfectly suited to meet the sensory and play needs of each child. The students loved exploring the space and found a section of their liking and immediately began to play. Kids Funville allowed them to explore and respond to various stimuli, strengthened motor skills, encouraged curiosity and problem-solving, to apply their cognitive skills and creativity to solve puzzles, build objects and use new equipment.

The play zone was an excellent choice for the students' outdoor trip, and it had several positive benefits for all the children. Although it was a short trip, the students had a wonderful time exploring various activities and playing together with their friends.



Overnight Camp (conducted by Rocksalt) @ the school premises); 17th – 18th February 2023
The objective was to help students experience independent living while instilling confidence, leadership qualities, and teamwork with a range of activities conducted for them.



This unique attempt to bring VTC and Academics senior students in a partnership eyed enhancing social skills and bringing inclusivity and synergy among them. They were encouraged to devise a war cry, design a flag for their respective teams, and name themselves. They then hit the ground for some adventure activities like ladder climbing, archery, and parachute games. By the evening as exhaustion set in, while they socialized with peers, they had a bite and then set up their tents before night. The thought of sleeping under the open sky in a tent with friends was exciting. The organizers lit a bonfire and prepared a banana-chocolate split and marshmallow sandwich on fire to treat the students to a warm dessert right after dinner.

“The campfire and sleeping in the tent were the best experiences of the camp,” claimed some students.

The morning began with dancing to lively music for a Zumba session. Post-breakfast they packed their belongings and headed back to the ground for some more adventure like river



crossing and balancing activities. Teachers marveled to see determined students who had limb issues, climb the rope ladder.

As the students walked out of the school gate towards the anticipating parents with their bags, we knew that they had a plethora of memories to talk about and were slightly more grown up and far more confident about themselves. Parents remarked that they could perceive increased confidence levels after the camp. Goal Achieved !!

Subject-based Project Work and Student Presentations were encouraged across all



departments to enhance students' learning and to bring lessons to life. Delightful projects were displayed in the dining hall during the final Parent Teacher Interaction and elicited great appreciation from parents as project work facilitates applying concepts learned in day-day life, and integration of knowledge and skills while helping encourage creative and critical thinking. On a specified day students also got an opportunity to present their projects in the department, thus encouraging them to talk about their learning through the project activity.

NIOS Secondary and Senior Secondary board examination was conducted in our school premises during April-May 2023 serving as a wonderful opening for us to interact with students and parents of other institutions.

Internships – This year we had 7 Bachelor and Master level students interning with us from St. Josephs, Garden City College, and Jyoti Nivas College. It was a great exposure for them as they observed and learned to deal with different types of special needs and behaviour issues. It was a hands-on training for them. They expressed that interacting with our students helped to change their perspective on special needs education. What was most striking about the institution, was the disciplined and organized way of functioning and well-defined structure.

INTER-SCHOOL EVENTS

Quizabled; 28th of November 2022, (Finals 3rd of December 2022)

6 pairs of students from our Academic and VTC participated (as the organizers asked for teams



of 2). Participants had to take the preliminary quiz on the Quizabled web portal. 20 questions were asked which were to be answered in 15 minutes.

They went for the finals in person with their parents but were disappointed to have missed winning the

finals. *Quizabled* is a good platform to help imprint knowledge in students' minds, laying the groundwork for the next learning step.

Kalaangana; 17th - 19th November 2022

The most-anticipated inter-school event of the year, helps children with special needs across institutions showcase their talents. 35 represented us in the fancy dress, art, dance, vocal and instrumental competitions and won laurels in each category. Our students felt proud to represent the school, and parents were thankful for this platform as their children were able to showcase their talent along with other special needs children across the state.



NEW LEADS

Dell Technologies – Our Vocational staff and students were excited to interact with the employees of DELL Technologies during their visit to our campus on 14th October 2022. Our students greeted and interacted with them politely and confidently, and also performed boldly for the audience. Meeting new people from various industries instills priceless confidence, vision, and aspiration in the students.

Continuous assessment was proposed this academic year to help identify learning gaps and bridge them promptly. *Continuous assessment* helps us provide early indications of the students' performance and provide them with a constant stream of opportunities to prove their mastery of the material. It sends the message that everyone can succeed if given enough time and practice. It provides an accurate and complete picture of the student's level and their understanding of their learning.

Students were assessed orally, through worksheets, activities, and project work. Parents were also allowed to mark their children and discrepancies were discussed during Parent-Teacher Interactions.

Independent Living Checklist (ILC) was introduced to parents this year, after a series of training sessions to enable parents to understand that training their child to be independent is more important than academics. Independent living skills are needed to perform daily personal activities, (eating, cleaning, and maintaining personal hygiene). Students will need to pick up these skills through hands-on practice and experience. Parents were asked to honestly fill out ILC forms, marking the level of independence in the above-mentioned areas. Individual counsel and guidance were given to parents where students required specific progress.

Next year, parents will be split into smaller groups based on the self-help areas their child needs to improve. Need-based training will be provided, mainly targeting the independence of the child in that area. Thus, empowering our children to make choices, move forward toward new goals and approach their futures with hope, self-confidence, and self-respect.

Lift and Building Extension Project in the Academic block began in March 2023 to facilitate the transport of wheelchair-bound students, people with physical difficulties, and our preschool children. The project is expected to be completed by September 2023.

The appointment of the New Vice-Principal was made on the advice of the members of the Board, to develop second-line leadership. The Preschool Coordinator, Mrs. Sugandhi Satish, a Clinical Psychologist, and a dedicated employee of Asha Kiran for the past 7 years was appointed as Vice-Principal on 1st July 2023. Apart from coordinating Preschool programs, she assists the Principal in overseeing the affairs of the school.

The Teachers Training Academy conducted several trainings for the parents and teachers this year.

Outdoor Training

Our Director Dr. Rita James was invited to give her consultancy services at the Bubbles centre for Autism, a Unit of Biswa Gouri Charitable Trust. They cater to 50 children with developmental disabilities in the age group of 3 years - 15 years in Hennur, Bangalore.

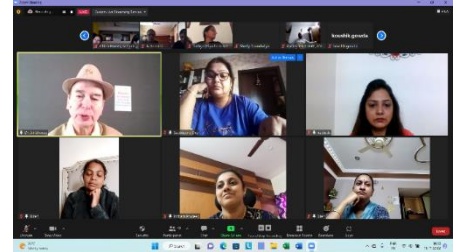
Like the entire world, their students learnt from the comfort of their homes. from 2020 - 2022. Their teachers became trainers for the caregivers as the families found it difficult to engage their wards by structuring the day. Post Covid, their students and teachers came back to the offline mode after a gap of two years. For these quick transitions, they did not have enough time to prepare their staff, that's when Dr. Rita stepped in to guide them.

She contributed to the Bubbles' program in the last academic year, by bringing about discipline in the teachers, she provided the levels of teaching- matching sorting, identification, recognition etc. which helped bring an understanding of progression for the teachers. Teachers were trained on the learning ladder in English and Maths which are highly engaging and easy to implement. She also helped the Founder Director to strategize for making the program more holistic by bringing newer ways of teaching concepts.

Thus, Dr. Rita was able to spread her knowledge and learnings of her experience in nurturing Asha Kiran, to Bubbles as well.

In House Training

- 7th September 2022: Online session on ‘Training your child to be Independent’ focusing on Self-Help Skills, Communication, and empowering the child to sleep independently. The Independent Living Checklist was initiated as an outcome of this training session.
- 18th November 2022: Dr. Ali Khwaja, Founder, Banjara Academy addressed our Academic and Vocational parents on ‘*Understanding Today’s Teens*’. Parents found this session very useful as it gave them an insight into the teenage mind, helped reflect on their interactions with their child, and better their communication to improve their relationship with their teens.
- 2nd December 2022: Ms. Renu Singh, Director, Project Suvridha addressed our parents and teachers on the importance of ‘Sexuality Education’ for special children. Given the importance of this subject, further training was requested and provided as follows: –
 - 4th March 2023: A 6-hour training was given in A.K. for a few parents and teachers addressing the sensitive topic of sexuality with growing special children.
 - March-April 2023, two of our staff underwent a 25-hour online training, dealing with various aspects of Sexuality Education. They will in turn train parents, staff, and students next year in dealing with matters of sexuality.



SUCCESS STORIES

Preschool -

When Prasanna came to Asha Kiran six years ago, he had a severe hunchback, limited physical mobility, poor balance, and lacked stability in his hands. His physical limitations made it difficult to hold a pencil or even turn the pages of a book. He couldn't feed himself and needed constant assistance with basic tasks. But despite these challenges, He was a curious and bright child, who pushed the boundaries around him with his love for learning, hard work, and commitment.



As he progressed through school, he blossomed in various domains and excelled in academics, and was able to communicate with his teachers and classmates effectively. One big achievement was the ability to adapt to the school environment and socialize with peers. He was initially shy and withdrawn, but with time and effort, he learned to make friends and became an integral part of his class. He even learned to feed himself, and today he eats all his meals without depending on anyone.

In all that he does, Prasanna displays initiative and independence; during class activities, outdoor play, or through his interactions with his peers and teachers. Even when he struggles with certain motor activities, he can be seen pushing himself to complete the task on his own.

Prasanna's parents are his biggest supporters, constantly encouraging and training him in all he does, and they provide him with all the resources that he needs to grow his skills. With their guidance, he was able to pick up typing and has now honed and developed his typing skills to a competent level. With his self-motivation and adaptability, Prasanna was able to continue his journey, and after six years in preschool, he will now be graduating to the next level along with his classmates.

Academics - Juniors

Melwin Jai Vianney (student of Level A3) at the beginning of the academic year, showed signs



of unwillingness to participate in class-related activity. He was often spaced out, in his 'own world'. Teachers had to call out his name at least thrice to get his attention. Gradually, he showed attention as classmates were enthusiastic about activities and about learning, in general. He began to make friends, began to share food, and engage in two-way communication. During the

games period, he started to play tag with his friends and learned to finally let go of his inhibitions. Towards the end of the academic year, we found that Melwin had strong leadership capabilities and a commanding power which we tried to utilize especially during the morning assemblies and Brain Gym. He also corrects mistakes/behaviors almost immediately when pointed out. He ensures he has a good relationship with everyone (teachers, staff, and non-teaching staff). Melwin shows genuine care towards his classmates when they seem upset.

Academic – Seniors

Ashish, Senior Secondary, initially always needed instructions to do things. But as the year progressed, he became more spontaneous and proactive. In social interaction, he would blurt out just anything he thought. He has now learned to take time to think and answer. Always a hard-working, academically-oriented student who gives his best, he used to be dependent on his mother, in decision-making, and day-to-day life skills. However, due to his mum's health condition, he is learning to take small decisions like choosing his dress, planning his day, etc. He independently does the essential grocery shopping too. Generally, he avoids physical activities, as he feels inadequate. But in the camp, he actively participated in all activities. He is gradually building confidence in his public speaking skills. We were amazed when he delivered a speech on Women's Day during the school assembly. Ashish displayed his acting skills when he played the role of Joseph in the Christmas program and is slowly but surely shaping up to be a confident young man, willing to take the needed steps to develop to his full potential.



VTC

Krishna was a new admit this year and took time to settle as he seemed to be missing his old school and friends in the initial months. We gave him time to explore his areas of interest and found that he displayed a keen interest in outdoor sports, physical activity, and dance. Incorporation of dance and music during morning assembly, dance practice, and performance during events, camp, etc. helped develop an interest in school.



The *Buddy System* helped him gel with peers and make a new set of friends. Krishna's caring side showed in interactions with fellow students. He was given the additional responsibility of cleaning the classroom with a peer and he was completely dedicated and sincere in his task. He made efforts to converse with the teachers and progressed very well. He has improved overall – functional literacy, sports, extra-curricular activity, social interactions, etc. Now, he is

very interactive in class and shows great interest in participating in dance, and other physical activities. He has a very cheerful nature, is kind, and displays a positive attitude.

These heart-warming and encouraging testimonies remind us that through hard work, dedication, and the right support, everything is possible!

We praise God for a successful academic year 202-23! Our sincere thanks to our Board of Trustees, prayer and financial supporters, and volunteers for their involvement and support in encouraging Asha Kiran to live up to its name - A Ray of Hope.

God bless you!

Respectfully Submitted

In His Service,

Dr. Rita James (Director)

Mrs. Myra Theodore (Principal)

Dated March 31st, 2023