

The Essence

June – July'24 Edition

A NEWSLETTER FROM TATVA



"If we do not believe within ourselves this deeply rooted feeling that there is something higher than ourselves, we shall never find the strength to evolve into something higher."

- Rudolf Steiner

From The Director's Desk - Freedom and Boundaries

Freedom, today, is one of the most misunderstood concepts. Rather than being a license to do whatever one pleases, freedom comes with clear boundaries because if every single one of us is free, no one is free to violate other people's freedoms. As the old adage goes, one man's freedom to swing his arms ends where the other man's nose begins. Educating children for freedom therefore means educating them in full consciousness of boundaries.

Every parent brings in boundaries for their children. Whether it is in choice of food, clothes, toys, or even time to go to bed, it is the parents, as adults, who set the boundaries of what is acceptable and what is not. A lot of the modern ideas of parenting of today believe in offering and respecting choices of children ignore the fact that children know little to make such choices and need parents to make them on their behalf. In fact, making such choices is usually highly stressful and damaging to the children themselves.

Educating children in freedom means enabling them to deal with and eventually work within the boundaries drawn by the fact of universal human freedom. This work is done all through the school years, from the Kindergarten to the High School. The kindergarten teacher holds the children in tight rhythms while giving them freedom within those boundaries. The Grade School teacher is the benevolent authority whose wishes are practically, though not literally, the children's command because the children just do whatever teacher says out of love for the person of the teacher. By the time children come to the High School, they experience a lot greater freedom but are now expected to bear the consequences of their own choices. It thus enables the children to learn that while freedom is a blessing, it must be used with responsibility.

By the time they are ready to leave school, this constantly evolving mix of freedom and boundaries helps them develop to the point where they are fully cognisant of their boundaries and are ready to exercise their freedom within them. This is how they develop into morally discerning adults ready to enrich the world with their deeds.

The joyful experience of young children as they navigate and embrace a new social setting in our Kindergarten

It has been a wonderful year to start with. As you know, this year we began our kindergarten program for children aged 3 to 6 years. For some, it is their first year, for others, it is their second, and for a few, it is their second school. We were pleasantly surprised to see how happily the young children settled into school on the first day, even though we were prepared for some tears.

Now it's been two months, children appear comfortable and confident. Initially, one child expressed displeasure, saying, "I don't like this school because they keep me out of the class, and I liked my old school where I could lie down on my table and the teacher would stay inside the classroom." I chuckled and reassured her that we could also spend time inside the classroom. She replied, "I want to go to my old school." Now, she tells me a new story: "I will bring my teacher here, and we will play all day together."

By establishing a consistent rhythm and rituals in the classroom, we help the children feel safe and secure. Their day begins with a welcome message, followed by an hour of free outdoor play to explore nature. They then move into their classrooms for a movement circle followed by a fruit time for nourishment. After that, there is an hour of indoor play with open-ended toys to foster creativity. Each day, they engage in different activities such as free drawing, beeswax modeling, handwork, painting, and cooking.

After these activities, the children join for a community lunch, listen to a story, and then pack up for the day. This established rhythm has greatly helped our children settle well into our kindergarten program.

Rose Ceremony – Grade 1 & 8

We began the first day of the Grade 1 academic year with the Rose Ceremony. The children of Grade 8 met the kids entering grade school for the first time.

They formed a circle, symbolic of the inclusivity within these walls. The event commenced with a prayer. The high school children greeted the little ones with a song, soothing their jittery nerves, calming them with a tune.

Every child entering the first grade shook the hands of a senior and received a welcome card. The senior, in turn, received a warm hug and a return gift as a token of gratitude. The class teacher representing the Eighth Grade also received a card. The circle ended with another song.

In a Waldorf community, this ceremony symbolizes a major transition in a child's life. Like the flower, a child unfolds, finding his/her way within and into the world.



Introduction to Chemistry- Note from Ms. Chaitanya – Grade 7

Grade 7 children have delved into the wonders of chemistry, with many hands-on experiments that sparked their curiosity and a deeper understanding of the natural world.

One of the highlights of the chemistry block was the exploration of combustion. Students gathered around a bonfire, observing the vibrant flames and the transformation of wood into ash. This real-life demonstration of combustion sparked endless questions and discussions, making the principles of chemical reactions and energy release tangible and memorable.



One of the most exhilarating experiences was exploring different types of combustion. The students' excitement was palpable as they witnessed various ignition and combustion processes. They were in awe of the fiery blaze from petrol, the airy and instant flames from butane gas and the mesmerizing waterfall-like fire from ethanol. The spontaneous combustion demonstrations left them wide-eyed, while the reactions involving a heated rod on zinc and sulphur provided thrilling and unexpected results. Among the experiences, the petrol combustion demonstration was the clear favorite, with its intense, dramatic flames sparking endless questions and discussions.

The journey continued with an introduction to acids and bases. Through engaging experiments, students learned to identify and differentiate between acidic and basic substances. The excitement peaked during a neutralization experiment, where an acid and a base were combined to produce water and a salt. This hands-on experience allowed students to witness the practical applications of these concepts in real life.

Crystallization was another area of exploration that captured the students' imagination. Crystals were created from supersaturated solution. Watching the delicate and intricate patterns emerge from a solution was a mesmerizing experience that highlighted the beauty of chemical processes.



Additionally, students explored the lime cycle, understanding how limestone transforms through various stages such as quick lime and slaking lime. They were all awestruck when we ended up with lime again! They kept wondering looking at the whole process starting with lime, which turned to quick lime on heating, then to slaked lime when combined with water and back to lime with absorption of carbon dioxide and release of water.

Throughout these experiments and activities, the students' curiosity remained boundless. Their eagerness to ask questions, make predictions, and observe outcomes demonstrated a genuine interest in understanding the world around them.

Play at KFI – Grade 12 & 13

Children from our twelfth and thirteenth grades performed a play at The School KFI as a part of an inter-school event. Drawing inspiration from their main lesson block on world literature, the entire performance was planned and scripted by them.

Their teacher shares her experience:

Title of the play: Shape-shifting Contours of the Psychological Profile of a Confused Teenage Mind

The entire process of our play began much before the block, with movement and expressive art run by Shivali Agarwal. She led the group through the process of becoming aware of their kine-sphere, the space around them, and slowly, the world around them. This led to our World Literature Block.

We experimented with the idea of using all of the elements we were studying stream of consciousness, the theatre of the absurd, modernism, surrealism and seeing if we could work in complete fluidity. This meant rehearsals were spent trying to find a semblance of order in chaos. Dialogues were entirely improvised (right up to the day of the performance), so we sat through something new every day. Through this improv process, several scenarios emerged that became scenes. It was only a day before the performance that we finally had our last scene.

The play portrayed the identity of a teenager in today's world, the expectations the world places on them and how they try to navigate those

while trying to stay true to themselves. The whole play felt light, keeping the element of the 'absurd' alive while also exploring real situations. The play, of course, was a big hit. Everyone laughed and enjoyed the performance, and many students and teachers walked up to us after the play to congratulate us. The panel discussion was extensive, as everyone wanted to know more about the process and the play and our students spoke confidently and clearly. I am so glad that they had this opportunity; it was an enriching experience.



Music Band

We are excited to announce a new project for this year - the formation of our school band! As we start this band, our intention is to perform, experience different cultures and ideas through songs from different parts of the world, and come together to revel in the power of music. We dream of a band where children who sing and play instruments get a platform to immerse themselves in the world of music. We have started working with 18 passionate budding musicians from among our high school students

We are deeply grateful to have someone as passionate and talented as Mr.Vedanth Bharadwaj lead this effort. In Vedanth's words, 'Working in a band is akin to creating a safe space where one can freely express their creativity and experience the bond of being a part of something beautiful and heart-warming. School bands are the place where the passion for music can really blossom into something deeper and life-transforming.

Our music teachers, led by Vedanth, will work with the selected students once a week on Wednesdays from 3:00 to 4:00 PM.



Class Orientation

The new academic year began with parents and teachers meeting. Every year, the new parents are welcomed and introduced at the orientation. The class teacher talked about the child's consciousness and development related to the age and also shared the academic plan for the year.

The parents also met the sports, art and language teachers. The session included discussions, singing and movement along with warm cups of tea that was served to all parents. The directors met all the classes to highlight the importance of our growing community and mentioned the event led by the parent community last year and how the school benefitted from it.

Sunrise Beach Visit

Only the sunrise and sunset are natural; all other divisions of time are human inventions."

We start each academic year with a cherished tradition: a sunrise beach trip shared by students, parents, and teachers. This experience fosters a profound sense of togetherness and purpose within our community, providing a fresh start and a clear mind. As we begin the year, the rising sun spreads hope and light that we carry it forward. We also bring homemade snacks for everyone, adding warmth and a sense of sharing to our gathering.



Spacial Dynamics Workshop

When Bernard Thiry first visited our campus in April, he showed us the subtle power of movement and the significance of space in facilitating it. We had this esteemed dancer, movement educator and therapist again, this time for three days between the 19th to 21st of July. In this exclusive workshop for educators, therapists, and parents, the participants were exposed to interactive exercises and games that portrayed the power of space within and around us, which can help shape a child's personal growth.

Participant Experience: The Spacial Dynamics workshop at Tatva School was an invigorating and enlightening experience for all the participants. Led by Bernard Thiry, who is known for his great enthusiasm and love for anthroposophy, the workshop provided participants with a comprehensive understanding of movement and its educational applications.



Dr. Karthiyayini, a guiding presence throughout the workshop, ensured that each session was both informative and engaging. Her expertise in spacial dynamics was evident as she skillfully assisted the participants through the training.

The workshop covered a range of topics, beginning with the five spaces. Participants later delved into the dynamics of movement. The training also included an array of games and line dances from various countries, each tailored to suit different age groups.

The participants remained active and engaged, enjoying the hands-on nature of the workshop. They appreciated the opportunity to be on their toes, literally and figuratively. By the end of the workshop, the participants gained valuable insights into the principles of Spacial Dynamics and how these can be applied to enhance their educational practices.

Lullabies Beyond Borders



On the 13th of July, the school hosted two renowned musicians on our campus for a unique blend of a concert and a workshop curated by our parent volunteer and high school music educator, Vedanth Bharadwaj. This event was marked by exclusive performances by Vedanth along with his fellow musician Gurupriya Athreya. They held the audience in a trance with their tunes that have transcended time.

Community Lunch

The community lunch is a cherished tradition that fosters togetherness and gratitude. Parents and teachers come together to prepare and share a nutritious meal on a regular basis. This communal experience reinforces

the values of cooperation, respect, reverence, and appreciation for food and each other. It nurtures social and emotional well-being, creating a harmonious and supportive atmosphere that is integral to the holistic education philosophy of Waldorf schools.



Other Events @ TATVA

- ❖ Kindergarten Monthly Workshop
- ❖ Dr. Karthiyayini's Session on " Food, Sleep and Rhythm " for Kindergarten Parents
- ❖ Dr. Karthiyayini's Session on " Movement on Primitive Reflexes"
- ❖ Parent Reading Circle
- ❖ Tatva's Unique High School Program Workshop for Parents
- ❖ Biodynamic Farming Project for High School Children
- ❖ Internship Presentation from High School Children
- ❖ High School Children's Trip to Angadibail Forest

<<< Lovingly prepared by TATVA Parents >>>

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