

Charity Commission Report to October 2022/23

We are delighted that Roy Blatchford CBE has agreed to be our patron. We have one new Trustee, Anne Spurr. This gives us a greater depth in educational approaches including for children with additional needs.

We continue to provide Shree Pathibhara Q. Learning School in Hangdewa, Province 1, Nepal with full funding for 260 children between the ages of 3-c14. There are 19 teachers for classes 1-8, a computer room with 30 laptops and headsets, a practical science room and a creative room for music and art which doubles up for a library. We also fund 14 students in class 9 at Kangchenjunga School in nearby Taplejung, and 1 undergraduate student studying agricultural science at Itahari University.

In this year, we have funded the school to widen their offering beyond the narrow confines of the Nepali curriculum (which is followed in 9 subjects including Maths, Science, Nepali, English). The school is open 6 days, Sunday to Friday, and on Fridays boys and girls equally all engage in sports (badminton, football, table tennis, volleyball), although sport is also built into other days for individual classes. Also on Fridays, students dance, sing, paint and play the guitar, local madal drums and wooden flutes. The school's boy team won the schools' football league in the district (20 schools) and the chess championship.

The school is not selective and has nearly 50% girls and some of the lowest caste amongst all its classes and yet has achieved **outstanding success in public exams** (Basic School Leavers' or BSL) in May 2023 with all 14 students passing with an average score of 'A' or 3.6/4.0 Grade Point Average across all 14 students in all 9 subjects. This compares with a Government Target (which has not yet been achieved) of 'D' or 1.6 GPA for 75% of rural students. All the top-class students are prefects and contribute to the running of the school. This year's Head Boy was from the lowest caste.

Science, computers, and technology are continuing to grow at the school. The practical science room is fully equipped and re-stocked every term. Students work in small groups of about 3 for all experiments. More laptops have been brought to the school from UK and the children have access to both Microsoft and Apple formats. They have had lessons in virtual reality and the very beginning of programming. New teachers in computers and science have been appointed.

English has continued to be a focus with an exhibition held showing different authors and correct grammar (e.g. prepositions in 3D and in their places). The school has introduced a daily 10-minute reading slot for all children from UKG to Class 8. This has coincided with an influx of books for the library brought from the UK from a primary school which has changed its reading series, and from Millfield School when 33 students visited each bringing 8 books with them. Nepali has been given more support too (for many, this is a second language) with a new and well-qualified teacher, 100s of new books and two subjects being taught in Nepali (rather than English).

The school estate has been improved. The larger building has been repainted inside and outside. Fences have been mended. All buildings are insured. Money has been set aside for constructing 2 more classes so that the school can teach to GCSEs equivalent (classes 9 and 10) and the land and water rights have been purchased. We await approval from the local government for Classes 9 and 10 but have been officially approved up to class 8 this year.)

As a remote school, where children have often been no further than Taplejung a few miles away, we have found ways to connect them with global thinking. All children read books, watch movies, and have access to computers (Google and the like). About 25% have a Mentor/Sponsor with whom they

communicate by email several times a year. Volunteers have brought new energy, skills and improved pedagogy and have included teachers from Pangbourne College and musicians from the Birmingham Conservatoire. 33 students aged about 17 and 5 teachers travelled from Millfield School UK to combine a trekking holiday with volunteering at the school (where they stayed for 10 days in 2 groups). They ran projects in science and the environment, photography, art, music, drama, and many sports (cricket, rugby, football etc). Class 8 again had a school outing before they left the school, this year visiting Darjeeling, India, and the tea growing area of Ilam. This enabled them to see a different country, culture, visit temples, museum, zoo, see a train and stay in a hotel. This helps them prepare for studying away from home the following year.