

As a senior Educationist and Principal, how are you nurturing the teachers and students in your school?

As a School Head, I look at every opportunity in school and outside to foster professional growth for teachers and holistic development for students. Each day, each school event is a possibility to learn, grow and display talents and skills.

- Grooming Teachers to become leaders of tomorrow by creating awareness of new and progressive practices and encouraging their participation in conferences, workshops and initiatives in education. Peer-mentoring and micro teaching sessions are used to evaluate classes and give objective feedback to teachers by subject specialists. In-house training for professional courses for technology updations, skill and enquiry based workshops and seminars are organized at regular intervals.
- Every child is gifted with an innate skill or ability. SSA provides a sound platform to nurture such talent and gives each child the room to grow and learn yet more. The morning begins in school for each child with 20 minutes of Yoga, circle time, meditation and pranayama after a morning prayer. Academics is coupled with Games, Library, Activity time and excursions to give an all-round school experience and nourish multiple intelligence. All students from the age of 8-14 participate in a fun, interactive and process based workshop which instill values and create self-awareness. These are called the Art Excellence Programme and the Youth Empowerment Seminars organized by the Art of Living Teachers trained specially by the Trust.



Suvina Sunglu
Principal, Sri Sri Academy



- The curriculum till class V includes lessons by qualified professionals in Karate, Computer Programming, Performing and Visual Arts, Music, Non-flame Cooking and Story -telling, all taking place within school hours. The Cub and Bulbul movement also begins from Primary school to inculcate discipline, patriotism and leadership. Many games and educational tools are provided to sharpen sensory skills, to nurture the children to grow into happy, well-read and responsible citizens. The Math and Computer lab visits are part of their weekly timetable.
- From Class VI, the students choose between a sport, (basketball, volleyball, throw ball, football, badminton, table-tennis) and aerobics. They further make a choice from the performing arts like drama, music, dance and yoga and creative art which is a once a week activity. Library classes for reading, story -telling and talks to encourage reading on a favourite author or a book is also a weekly routine. Computer class on programming and Laboratory work to validate scientific concepts and theories are compulsorily for each class from class V.

- Beyond school hours Sports coaching for cricket, basketball, football, badminton, table tennis and throw ball and activities with clubs like Literary, Debating, Science, Math, Film- making, Photography, Web-designing, Quizzing, Creative Dance, Art, Heritage and Nature are held on alternate Saturdays.
- Membership in various institutional forums has been started from Class VIII to develop leadership and make them a part of the larger educational fraternity such as the Interact Club under the aegis of Rotary Club, the Model United Nations, and International Association for Young people and the Youth Nature Leadership Programme. Students regularly participate in Inter-school Festivals and are bringing back accolades.

How important do you think are values and how are these being imparted to the students?

- At SSA, we invest in the intellectual and holistic development of our students and seek to provide them with opportunities and experiences to discover their true potential. Further, we emphasize the core values that are integral to our school and should be recognized as an indispensable part of its culture.
- We nurture each student's personality and academic achievements and reward both academic excellence and positive attitudinal change. Year round opportunities are provided for students to participate in performing arts, sporting activities and inter school competitions thereby providing an active platform for growth.
- We emphasize an Indian identity and traditional roots in dress, dance, and culture while adopting the Western values of punctuality, courtesy, hygiene, and professionalism.

- We accept and respect all religions, peoples, and communities and stress unity within our multiculturalism.
- We emphasize the need for service, compassion, friendliness, mutual courtesy and considerateness.
- Sri Kripa a free learning centre, for the under privileged children of the neighbourhood has been started to give back to the community.
- We deeply value the constant need to be non-violent in thought, word, and deed in the resolving of differences.

As an Institution Head how do you bring about a balance between the traditional approach and the dynamics of modern education at Sri Sri Academy?

The School believes in imparting holistic education with a focus on developing universal human values and life skills to make them citizens of a fast evolving world. For this it uses ancient techniques of meditation and yoga in combination with technology and modern methods for developing critical thinking and problem solving in the students.

Sri Sri Academy has a very good infrastructure. Every classroom right from the nursery is equipped with smart boards and students are able to understand what is being taught through this visual medium. Our school has two well-equipped InfoTech labs. Students are encouraged to research here for their projects. The school also has well equipped physics, chemistry and biology laboratories besides a Maths lab & a geography and are encourage to learn by doing instead of rote learning. Teachers are trained in the latest child centric methods to develop creativity and logical thinking. All this helps us to bring about a balance between the traditional approach and the dynamics of modern education.



"My Message for parents is that there is no substitute for your time and guidance. You are their role model. They learn from you, while giving them all that you missed in your childhood, do not forget to give them what you had. Also we need to be discerning and stop pandering to every demand of theirs. Distinguish between their needs and demands. The immediate compliance of all demands often leads to lack of motivation and even disenchantment with the real world and an inability to cope with failure and challenges.

For Students I always say Give in your 100 per cent. Hard work pays. There is no substitute for diligence and sincerity of purpose and resilience. Know that every failure is a small step towards success. Aspire towards larger goals and give back what you have got from parents, school and largely society."



Do you believe technology is helping the students to gain a better insight into their curriculum? Do you think the library based assignments are being missed today?

While Technology is used by teachers to enliven teaching and to give a deeper insight into abstract concepts in teaching but Sri Sri Academy actively promotes a reading culture. Since we have 2 well equipped libraries together with the smart board system in classrooms as well as 2 InfoTech labs, I think both are being well used for any project work given.

The journey of developing good reading skills begins at the preprimary level. Pre reading skills are nurtured in Nursery classes where children hear stories to identify themes and build vocabulary. Oral phonic analyses form an integral part of Upper Nursery. Children start recognizing and associating sounds with letters. Sound sorting and matching are done through hearing stories. In Kindergarten, children's reading skills widen with the introduction to bigger words, blends, phonograms and some sight words. Now they are ready to pick up books of their level and read independently.

How has the relation between teachers and students changed? What are the expectations from both sides today?

In the primary, pre-primary and lower middle school – there is a very strong bond between the teachers and pupils. However as these young boys and girls grow older, there is the usual growing up pains and changes. At this point peers and their opinions are far more important than parents and teachers. There is a tendency to defy authority. Notwithstanding all this, I feel the values that have been instilled in them right from the beginning does seem to influence a lot of their thoughts and actions. Expectations from teachers are that they walk out from school to be good and kind human beings. Obviously if they do make a mark in the world – we would be very very proud indeed.