



WHAT WE DO:

- School Setup
- School Self Review & Evaluation
- School Improvement
- Leadership & Management Programmes

"We are here to grow children, not champions!"

Adhyayan welcomes a partner into the network



The Children's World Academy (CWA) is currently a pre-primary school moving into primary, with

33 students. The founder, Soniya Mawani and the parents who found that their children loved school decided to extend the school up to the secondary. For this, Soniya chose to work with Adhyayan as school's academic partner. The Green Schools Education Trust is in the process of forming, set up by the committed parents who know that the future of their children and that of many more in Nagpur, will be secure.

Adhyayan's work so far has included support on leadership and management, vision building and teacher support. Adhyayan has also been a part of putting together the school's initial business plan and its effort to locate land that will provide holistic educational opportunities for children up to secondary school.

We welcome CWA into the fold!

Adhyayan Quality Standard goes to Uttar Pradesh

Pushp Niketan School is an island of tranquility in a sea of metal, sounds and smells that makes up what was the largest sugar production unit in India. On the edge of the small town of Dhampur in Uttar Pradesh, this school founded by the owners of the sugar mill, serves children both from the locality and within the factory itself. Their vision is to bring a school of quality and innovation to the local families of small town and rural Uttar Pradesh.

Not surprising then that the Director Maj. Rajesh Ranjit and Principal Mrs.



Nisha Subramaniam of Pushp Niketan, now in their sixth year leading the school together, were keen to check their progress against the Adhyayan Quality Standard and to train a team of 10 members in how to undertake School Self Review and Evaluation (SSRE).

Over the week it took to complete the SSRE and the Quality Dialogue, the school team enjoyed the experience of identifying its priorities together and beginning to plan the school's next steps as it prepares its first batch for grade 10.

As educators, we were most interested in Pushp Niketan's vision of providing a child-centred education for the whole child. What we saw was a school whose spiritual, emotional and creative side complemented its academic and sports focus. To quote the Head of Sport, "We are here to grow children, not champions!"



How enlightened yet how unsurprising it was that the Director and Principal chose to include two Standard 9 students to be a part of the school leadership team reviewing this school's effectiveness!

Now, drum roll please! Pushp Niketan achieved the Adhyayan State Gold Standard. Our congratulations go to the school and our thanks for giving us the chance to get to know the school and its community. We look forward to following their journey towards excellence.



By Spokey Wheeler,
International Director

I learnt a really important lesson on the final day of my first headship in a school. Teachers and support staff, as much as children,

thrive on proper appreciation and feel pride in recognition.

On the left of my desk, by my telephone, I used to keep a pile of compliments slips. For the past three years, I had been writing personal notes on these slips whenever one of the staff had done something really good. I must have written many hundred notes for things as various as congratulating a teacher on a great piece of student's work to leading a residential trip. And the great thing about a compliments slip is that you can't write too much on it, so it is cost effective!

At a farewell party, one of our teachers' wives told me that her husband had kept every one of the notes I had written to him since I had become the principal. He wasn't one of the stars that glittered with the staff or in the classroom. He was a good, conscientious teacher who loved children. He also created wonderful stage sets for our school plays. No matter how complex or challenging the task at hand, he always exceeded expectations. So when I discovered that this teacher had valued the notes that had taken such little effort on my part, it confirmed my natural instinct.

In my last school in West London, the first team to become high performing was the cleaning team. In a challenging inner city school, within four months, there was no chewing gum on the floors of the corridors and no graffiti on the walls. They checked the school three times a day, and always after break and lunch time. Even though they worked harder and to a higher standard than

they ever had before, they were proud because their work was valued both by the staff and many of the children. One of my most valued possessions is a black, rectangular, gold-rimmed badge pin which has 'Achievement' written on it. It was given to me by the Head of the Cleaning team.

Leaders should take every opportunity to appreciate their staff even if they are the principal, but only for that which is worth valuing. It doesn't matter whether it is part of their regular job or something they are doing beyond their duties. Appreciation begins with a word and a smile for a job well done. But giving someone something tangible written by one's self in appreciation of their contribution, will only increase their commitment to the school, and importantly their own self worth.

Adding value to Adhyayan Schools

Susan Hillman, a consultant specialising in maths education from Saginaw Valley University, USA, and I packed our bags and took the overnight train to the schools supported by Adhyayan. Our mission: to work with the teachers on their Math and English pedagogy.

Our first stop was Children's World Academy, Nagpur where Soniya Mawani, the principal,

gave us a warm welcome and a walk around the wonderfully decorated school. The first thing we saw was happy children – a

trademark of Adhyayan schools!

Observing preparations for Independence Day and various activities on the month's theme of food including a sandwich preparation and discussions on junk food kept us busy initially! The professional development itself started on the third day and coincided with Independence Day so of course we

started with the national anthem. In the spirit of Independence Day we looked at the vision and the ideal: 'where we want to get to', brainstorming the values that the school aimed to foster in the children and seeing 'what good looks like' for maths.

The fourth and final day was down to the details and we explored 'how to get there' with the help of a trusty dragon (of Dragon books fame!). What came across was the great variety of strengths among the teacher team – all of which will contribute to carrying the school forward.

The second school was the Shri Manubhai A. Sheth English School, Ranpur. Once again, everyone was very warm – I don't think I've ever been welcomed to so many homes in such a short period of time!

The school was in full swing when we arrived with nursery class singing songs about vegetable vendors, junior kindergarten singing 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' and Class 6 discussing an article about the first Indian-American in space – we had walked in on a busy day! After observing and contributing to some lessons in the mornings we had the afternoon for 'question time' and sessions on 'how do we do it differently?' in Maths and English.

The teachers' confidence in letting us hear their capability with English grew and grew over the time that we were with them. On the final day walking through the village with the teachers and encountering students, the relaxed interactions between the teachers and the students were particularly evident. We were left with the sense that Manubhai Sheth School is truly part of the community in which it is embedded, a good sign for a school starting off!

Susan and I left both schools with the sense of their vibrance and drive for improvement, hoping to return in a year's time to see their progress.

