# **Initiative 14**

# Leading Innovations during the Pandemic and creating a Resilient school

Rakesh Semalty Govt. Boys Sr. Sec. School West Jyoti Nagar West Jyoti Nagar Delhi- 110094

### **The School Context**

RPVV Nand Nagri is located in a resettlement cluster in North East Delhi where the majority of students belong to economically weaker section families. These students are exclusively from MCD or other Delhi Govt. schools. They require constant support, motivation and hand holding. Inspite of constraints they were able to continue their studies during COVID-19 lockdown. This became possible with the special and innovative efforts made by the school. Though COVID-19 had surfaced in Wuhan, China in December 2019, the scare of spread in India was not that much threatening in the beginning of 2020. In March CBSE examination began with usual norms and precautions but hardly one paper was over and there came Standard Operating Procedures for conducting board examination. That time I was the head of RPVV Nand Nagri and we had a big examination centre of a Govt. Girls Sr. Sec. School. A plethora of challenges stared us on face before complete lockdown across the country was declared and schools were closed down. Keeping staff in positive frame of mind, sanitising the campus and examination rooms, thermal testing and sanitising the examinees at the entrance, collecting question paper packets from the custodian bank and most important maintaining self-calm for leading the intensive exercise. Since class XII English Core exam had taken place, the spot evaluation of the said subject started and I was shouldered the responsibility of Chief Nodal Supervisor to get the extensive and intensive confidential task conducted with a group of around 50 employees comprising examiners, head examiners, coordinators and clerical staff. Thus, two big responsibilities apart from taking care of school's regular administration required added capacity, courage and commitment. Keeping my team motivated, I moved ahead with positive attitude.

Govt. Boys Sr. Sec. School West Jyoti Nagar Delhi is an evening shift school in district North East-II and have its own challenges. This school had not embarked on its own online initiatives and I had no option but to begin my second innings to mitigate COVID-19 caused learning losses. Back to back meeting of the staff were organised and they were prepared for venturing into virtual classes for the benefit of students. Majority of the students are from the families belonging to hawkers, daily wagers and unskilled labourers. Students and their families faced acute hardships during COVID closures. School not only started online education but also looked after the basic needs of the needy children and their families. Timely intervention and collaboration of the school team made it possible that these students continued their education during tough times and are doing better consistently. Now, students and their families are resilient enough



to sail through the hardships and challenges which are integral parts of life. Parents, community members and social workers have appreciated the beyond the duty initiatives of the school.

Panellist in a webinar on 'Educational Initiatives in Lockdown' organised by Creat net Education

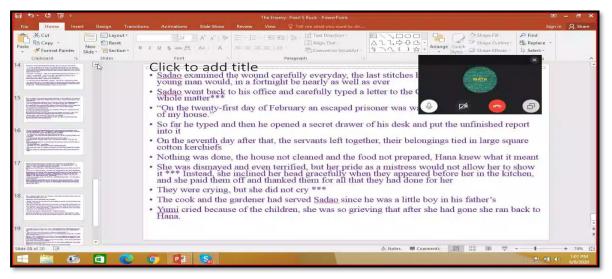
## Challenges faced due to school Closure:

School closure caused by COVID-19 brought a series of challenges many of which will take years to overcome fully. March and April are crucial months of school calendar and everything coming to a standstill was shocking setback because I had many important and innovative initiatives on cards. COVID-19 spoiled the party, everything was kept on abeyance, examinations were postponed, and evaluation was suspended half way. Teachers, students and their parents became restless and clueless. Under such atmosphere of confusion, concern and closure, Communication channel was decided to strengthen.

## **Innovative Leadership Practices for Mitigating Learning Gaps**

**Beginning of virtual classes:** In the last week of March 2020, school head organised first online meeting with the staff and conveyed them plan of starting online classes. Teachers worked efficiently and trained students and their parents within a few days through messages, calls or other methods. After school closure and forced home stay, school head along with the teachers and students started online classes for all classes from first April 2020. It was not an easy sail in the beginning and students and teachers all faced problems of connectivity, technicalities, bandwidth, sound clarity, timings etc. School head hopped on from one class to another and told teachers to continue classes even if there was just one student in the class. Through WhatsApp messages, the parents and students were convinced about the historic importance of those classes and

were encouraged and motivated for attending those classes from wherever they were and for whatever time that was possible. By the end of first week of April 2020, school was functioning almost virtually/digitally and it was being encouraged as there were positive impacts of online teaching-learning. On account of security issue, later classes



were decided to switch over to Skype and all students and teachers were registered



with Microsoft Teams. Wonderful experiments were made by teachers to make online teaching more authentic, effective and productive. The important thing was that with the help of some of teachers and students, teachers who were not tech savvy at all got trained. Beforehand preparation made online classes effective and engaging Communication through WhatsApp.

**Online Co-Curricular Activities:** Like during normal school, various online cocurricular competitions were conducted to keep students' personality development in view. The participation was very encouraging and the assessment was accordingly done meticulously. **Prioritising health aspects:** COVID-19 was now century's most devastating pandemic and it started affecting mental, physical and psychological health of the teachers, parents and students. The government, its agencies and medical fraternity were doing their best but it was the time that schools should step in. Therefore, Online Fitness Sessions in which sports and yoga teachers with the help of 'Sport & Yoga Club'



members started 45 minutes 'Fitness Session' from 7:00 to 7:45 am. These sessions were organised on class & section basis and were open for parents of the participating students. These sessions dealt on three aspects: healthy diet, physical exercises and precautions to keep corona infection away. These'Online Fitness Sessions' were so popular that students requested to increase the frequency of these sessions.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBAx2xWafz0,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNqeshLkJ8M

### E- Circular for Online Fitness Session to address health issues of students, parents & teachers Online Fitness Session in progress

÷	Key Queries
	Dear parents, We are holding online classes from first April2020. Please provide your feedback on E-mail id rakeshsemalty@gmail.com or WhatsApp number 9013319202. प्रिय अभिभावक, विद्यालय एक अप्रैल 2020 से ऑनलाइन कक्षाएं चला रहा है। विद्यालय के इस प्रयास पर अपने विचारों को ई मेल rakeshsemalty@gmail.com या वाट्सएप्प नम्बर 9013319202 पर भेजें। 10:28 ✓
	Dear Students, We are going to organise following competition during the ongoing lockdown period. 1 Poster Competition: Open for all students of VII,VIII,IX,X and XII Paper size- A4 White Colours- crayons or water Group A - VII and VIII Group B- IX, X and XII Theme- सामाजिक दूरी, स्वास्थ्य जरूरी/ Social Distancing for Healthy Living
	How to participate: Make poster on white A4 sheet, write your name ,class and section at right bottom corner, click a clear image and send through WhatsApp to Raj Kumar sir on: +919999802844 Last date for submission of entry 23:50 >> hours 8.04.2020.





# 'कार्य स्थल पर स्वास्थ्य का ध्यान देना जरूरी जगरण संबद्धात पूर्व दिली: आज

वहीं, विज्ञान के शिक्षक राहुल चौधरी ने कोरोना वायरस और कोरोना वैक्सीन के बारे में वैज्ञानिक तथ्यों पर प्रकाश डालते हुए कहा कि समाज में फैलाई जा रही निराधार अफवाहों की तरफ ध्यान न दें।

कोरोना वायरस से अपना बचाव करें और वैक्सीन भी जरूर लगवाएं। यह आपके और आपके परिवार के स्वास्थ्य के लिए बहुत जरूरी है। विद्यालय के वरिष्ठ अध्यापक विशंबर दयाल ने बतराय कि भारतीय जड़ी बूटियां, मशाले और काढ़े जैसे पारंपरिक नुस्खों में दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी एंटी वायरल क्षमता है। इसका भी निवमित रूप से सेवन करें। इस कार्यक्रम का समन्वय और संचालन विद्यालय आपदा प्रबंधन समिति के संयोजक रघुनाथ प्रसाद ने किया।

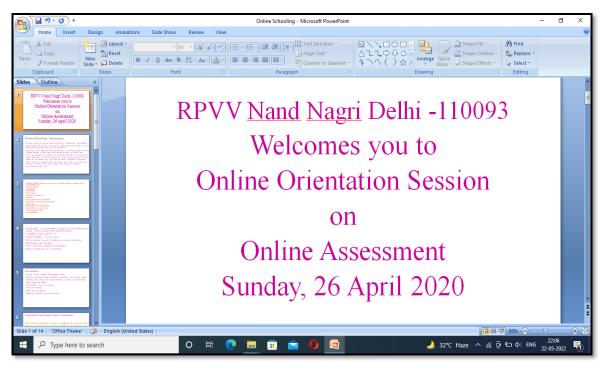


वेस्ट ज्योति नगर स्थित राजकीय बाल विद्यालय में कोरोना से बचाव के लिए व्यायाम करते प्रधानाचार्य राकेश सेमल्टी ( बाएं से दूसरे ) व अन्य शिक्षक ● सौजज्य- विद्यालय के लिए कार्य स्थल स्वास्थ्य की तरफ शक्ति से अधिक मानसिक शक्ति

के लिए कार्य स्थल स्वास्थ्य को तरफ शक्ति से अधिक मानसिक शक्ति ध्वान देना अत्यावस्यक है। सेमल्टी ने और सकारात्मक हढ़ता से किया जा प्रसिद्ध मनोवैज्ञानिक विक्टर फ्रांकले सकता है। कोरोना वायरस से घबराने की पुस्तक 'मैन्स सर्च फार मीनिंग' की आवश्यकता नहीं है। बस मास्क का जक्र करते हुए कहा कि किसी भी पहनें और शारीरिक दूरी के नियमों का प्रकार की चुनौती का सामना शारीरिक अच्छे से पालन करें।

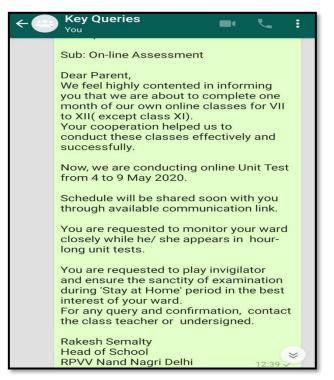
जब संपर्ण विश्व कोरोना महामारी से जूझ रहा है तो स्वास्थ्य की चिंता होना स्वाभाविक है। इस प्रकार की लंबे समय तक चलने वाली चिंता हर व्यक्ति के कार्यों के ऊपर प्रतिकुल प्रभाव डालती है। यह बातें वेस्ट ज्योति नगर स्थित राजकीय वरिष्ठ बाल विद्यालय के प्रधानाचार्य सकेश सेमल्टी ने शिक्षकों को संबोधित करते हुए कही। विद्यालय की आपदा प्रबंधन समिति ने 'कार्य स्थल स्वास्थ्य- राष्ट्रीय संपदा' कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया गया। इसमें कोरोना वायरस व कोरोना वैक्सीन से संबंधित वैज्ञानिक तथ्यों पर चर्चा हुई। इस दौरान शिक्षकों को व्यायाम भी कराया गया।

इस दौरान राकेश सेमल्टी ने जोर देकर कहा कि देश के समग्र विकास Online Assessment: After running online classes for one month, we planned to test the outcomes, and devised planning for one hour long 'Online Unit Test'. The test was descriptive in nature and required different planning and preparation. An orientation session was planned and organised by the school head for teachers on online assessment and discussed all minute deliberations to make the proposed assessment fair, effective and transparent. In another round of online meetings, parents were oriented for this online assessment and made them ready for working as invigilators during the said online assessment sessions. Parents happily agreed and were brought one step closer to their role in education of their children. After teacher shared his/her screen having question paper or passing the same through WhatsApp on class group, we saw parents efficiently invigilating the examination of their children at their home. Seeing parents' vigour, rigour and tenacity, it was concluded that parents were very smart and effective invigilators and could be deployed during school examination in case of shortage of invigilators. Ten minutes time was given to students to scan their answer sheet and mail that to school's specially dedicated email for assessment purpose. In case of any trouble with email, students could also send the answer sheet to their subject teacher through WhatsApp. The marks statements were shared by the subject teachers with examination in-charge and concerned subject teacher for further communication to students and their parents. The result was encouraging and the planning was executed perfectly. Thus, COVID-19 closure could neither stop teaching-



learning nor assessment. It could easily be visualised that this innovative initiative was going to become practice in days ahead.

Orientation of teachers for Online Assessment and related preparation



#### E-Circular for students and their parents about organisation of Online Assessment

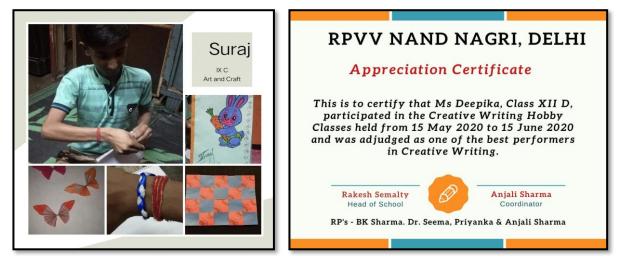


Media covered this initiative of the school and home as exam centre became popular Virtual question paper of Online Assessment- Class XII English Core



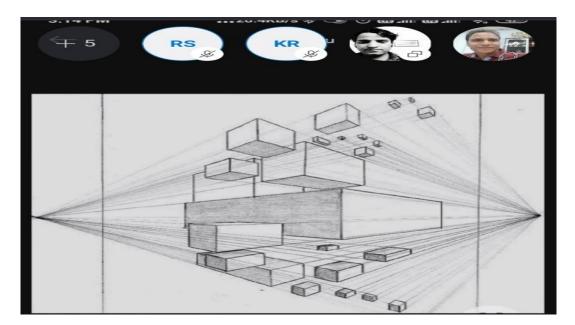
Mother is the first teacher but can play the best invigilator if situation demands so

Online Hobby Classes: To break the monotony and fatigue of one and a half months study and assessment, we devised planning for conducting 'Online Hobby Classes'. For this too, school head took online sessions to orient teachers to run these classes efficiently. Students were asked and motivated to apply for these classes through Google form. And we started 'Online Hobby Classes' of one month starting on 15 May, 2020. These classes were planned for alternate days of the week and opened for senior students too. There were eleven themes namely: Science Quest, Healthy Living, Drawing & Painting, Dramatic & Theatre, Creative Writing, Public Speaking, Music & Dance, Social Science, Quiz Crackers, Digital Living and Art & Craft. The timing of these classes was 3:00 to 4:30 pm so that the regular classes of seniors were not affected. Students and teachers took keen interest and we were able to tap on potential of students and keep them engaged productively. After two weeks hobby classes, a three hour long grand finale 'Pratibha Fusion' was organised on MS Teams in which all the hobby groups gave their vivid and praiseworthy presentations. All the participating students were given e- certificates. The second fortnight of June 2020 was given to students for their own fun, pleasure and pursuits to get refreshed and join school back in July 2020



with extra energy, enthusiasm and experiential learning.

Student displaying his craft in Online Hobby<br/>class of 'Art & Craft'E-certificates were issued to participants of Online<br/>Hobby classes



Basics of three-dimensional drawing explained in online hobby class of Drawing &



#### Painting

**'Endeavour: Education Expansion':** ICT played pivotal role from the beginning and in the last week of June 2020, we brought out a comprehensive e- magazine 'Endeavour: Education Expansion' which covered everything from our first online meeting to Pratibha Fusion and Students' WhatsApp Notice Board to Education Minister's message. It was first of its kind e-magazine

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NmSyo1X7RF6954tdHshzYeJKsJ2aUh-

<u>q/view?usp=sharing</u> and was released Online by Hon'ble Dy. CM of Delhi on 28 June 2020. Dty CM of Delhi also announced about the magazine on Facebook. The link for that is attached here

## https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\_fbid=3748181451875591&id=53076734028 3701



School's E- Magazine: Endeavour Education Expansion

**Evening Online Classes:** Almost all students in this school belong to economically weaker section of society and majority of the parents were hit hard by COVID-19. For them, survival was priority over education of children. Now lockdown was lifted up but schools were still closed. We observed that very few students were able to attend online classes of the department because that time the parents were out for work and carried the mobile phone with them. These parents often returned home around 6:30 to 7:00 pm. Therefore, we started online classes for students from 7:00 to 8:30 pm so that the students could have access to the smart phones of their parents. These classes started with low note but soon these picked up momentum with continuous counselling of students and their parents. The massive gap created with such digital divide was bridged to some extent when schools were opened for senior classes intermittently from September 2021 onwards.

**Teachers' Resilience Sessions (TRS):** Many of our teachers, including the Guest Teachers were put on COVID-19 duty and went through tough times as some of them suffered infection, some lost near or dear ones and some developed psychological fear syndrome seeing loss, suffering and troubles on ground and media platforms. School head strongly believe that only healthy and strong teachers can prepare their students for healthy life and sustainable education. Therefore, Teachers' Resilience Sessions was started through which development of resilience, coping spirit, confidence, optimism, never die attitude and celebration of life mindset among teachers became possible. During COVID-19 duty, school head talked to them regularly and ensured that their service, financial and welfare matters were attended on priority. The impact of TRSs was so strong that many teachers offered their services to school and students even while on COVID-19 duties. On return to school, all these teachers were felicitated and

honoured for offering their services as corona warriors. Now the team is well motivated



and its impact is seen in every sphere of the school functioning. Teachers' Resilience Sessions (TRS): Building Confidence, Clarity and Collaboration

Activity Supported Learning (ASL): Co-curricular activities have very strong role in motivating students towards learning and school system. During pandemic period cocurricular activities generated interest among students and also deviate them from negative emotions like fear, scare, anxiety, stress etc. Therefore, teachers were given motivation for planning in such a way that almost all occasions, festivals and days were celebrated and observed either online or physically. Students were engaged online as well as offline as per the demand of the situation. These activities were organised in such a way that there was some construction of knowledge, development of perception and extrapolation of themes incorporated in their regular study subjects. This strengthened the oral and written expression of students and expanded their imaginative horizons which helped them in understanding some valuable and generic aspects of science, social science, literature, environment, history, law, polity and languages. These activities supported the school in making the students interested in learning through participation, presentation and collaboration. And, thus we were able to develop soft and 21 century skills of children which facilitate and augment learning more effectively. In some activities parents were also engaged for deeper impact. These all were well documented and were also covered by media.

### **Innovations for Improving Learning Outcomes:**

**DDH (Delivery on Demand Hour):** Apart from school hours, every teacher sets apart one hour which he/she spares for resolving students' and parents queries either on live telephone calls or though WhatsApp / SMS messages. The teacher avoids other calls, engagements and interactions during this hour so that this dedicated time can be utilised to cater to students' needs. This hour's timing is shared with students and their

parents by the concerned subject teachers. Students are regularly motivated and encouraged to avail DDH facility without any hesitation and inhibition. This played pivotal role during COVID-19 school closures and is equally effective and useful even during normal school days because DDH is either before or after school's scheduled timings. It has been noticed that shy and introvert students made best use of DDH and thus, improved their performance by getting conceptual and fundamental clarity. Teacher maintains the details of DDH and uses the same for internal assessment and further planning of his/her lesson.

**SB2TB4 (Subject Based 2 Text Based 4):** In order to strengthen and develop foundational and experiential learning among the students of classes VI to VIII, 2 periods every week in every subject are exclusively dedicated to basic, foundational and generic knowledge of that particular subject. On the remaining 4 periods of the week, the prescribed text/syllabus units are covered. This leads to generation of curiosity and interest of students in different prescribed subjects of study. It has been observed that SB2 facilitates, complements and augments the progress of TB4 which helps in improving scholastic performance of students. The Subject Based classes focus on those aspects and components the clarity of which is crucial for up scaling of the knowledge in that particular unit / chapter.

**AAA (Ask Assess and Assist):** Learning happens anywhere anytime and, therefore, whenever we meet our students outside classrooms like on play field, veranda, water point etc, we ask them about any concise concept, term, spelling, formula, theory, fact etc. We pat the students on back if they respond well and provide quick explanation if they have problem in that. This generates interest among keen learners and also puts a tab on habitual washroom/ water point visitors. It also builds ownership among teachers and strengthens responsive attitude of students. AAA is not mandatory but its use help in multiple ways in building connect, concept and clarity among students and teachers both.

**CC** (Capsule Content): We conduct one Subject Committee Meeting every day. Planning, preparation, progress and pedagogical practices are discussed and a Capsule Content is developed with consensus. 'Capsule Content' which carries definition, concept, principle or idea or is suggested by faculty members and finalised after detailed discussion. Capsule Content comprising a maximum 50 to 80 words is sent to students of all classes through class WhatsApp groups. On that very day the concerned subject teachers also discuss that Capsule Content in their respective physical/ online classes. The CC is of generic importance in nature and thus, useful for all including parents and teachers. It strengthens the General Study and General Awareness of students and arouses their curiosity for broadening their scholastic horizon. When examinations are round the corner, the Capsule Content becomes class, chapter and content specific which helps students in sailing through the objective or short answer questions they encounter during examination.



जोड़ने के लिए प्रेरित किया। हैने कहा कि इस समय सभी ारप् आरत किया। उन्होंने कहा कि इस समय सभी विद्यालय एक ही लक्ष्य को लेकर चल रहे हैं कि किसी भी तरह विद्यार्थियों को पाद्व सामग्री देकर परीक्षा ले ली जाए। आधारभूत साक्षरता अप्रासंगिक बना रही हैं। इन संबका समाधान केवल यही है कि विद्यालयों आकर्षक बनाकर वहां भौतिक से

उन्हान बधावा कि रहा नहल का लेकर उनका विद्यालय कुछ नवाचारों के साथ आगे बढ़ रहा है जिसका सकारात्मक परिणाम विद्यार्थियों में देखने को सिल रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि हमें हर एकू बच्चे को सीखने का अवसर देना है।



Subject Committee Meeting for assessment, analysis and action for loss mitigation

**QRV (Quick Recap Video):** Teacher delivers his/ her lesson using all possible and useful resources and spares half of the board for key points and notes. During the last five minutes of the class, the teacher summarises the lesson with the help of the said notes and value points. This summarising phase is video recorded and sent to the class WhatsApp group for ready referral of all students and specially those who are either absent or not attending classes due to COVID-19 concerns. It is equally useful for the students who are attending the class as they can revisit the class deliberation at their ease later on. QRVs turned up very handy and useful in MCQ based Term I examination and also cater to VSAQs of Term II examination. With the help of TDC and Computer Science teacher these QRVs are archived in school's data base – Academic Bank for reference of students, teachers, resource persons and visitors.

**EAT (Elder as Teacher):** During COVID-19 closures, the students of classes VI to VIII suffered huge learning loss and now they need regular hand holding from all available and competent stake holders and support systems. Therefore, under EAT programme every willing elder is roped in to assist these students in achieving the desired learning levels, especially in Hindi and Mathematics. Elder includes parents, relatives, siblings, family friends, neighbours and even family guests. Class XI and XII students are leading this initiative of the school and there is an explicit progress in FLN skills. The school felicitates those individuals who offer their services as EAT volunteers. Class XI and XII students who are taking forward EAT initiative are given certificates to this effect which become important document of their Personal Portfolios. Parents, SMC members and School Mitras are given special orientation sessions for making EAT popular and effective.

Formula 1, 2, 3....

We have designed a structured format of 40 minutes' class to make it all inclusive, effective and engaging. 40 minutes of a class are utilised as per the split here under.

1 Minute: class observation/ overview and settling class set up/ sitting issues if any.

2 Minutes: sharing by a student or teacher of any good news, event, happening and latest experience that he / she finds share worthy and useful.

3 Minutes: brain storming on the theme/ topic being covered in the chapter in that class.

24 Minutes: content delivery and transaction which may include reading, explanation, discussion, role play, group/ pair activity etc.

5 Minutes: addressing students' questions /queries/ doubts and concerns.

5 Minutes: written work by students- self/ guided / group/ pair based on the content transacted in that period.

**Parents' Orientation Programme (POP):** When we faced challenges in making the students attend online/physical classes, we called parents in small groups and organised orientation programme for them. In POPs we gave parents tips on Effective Parenting, Time Management, Conducive Home Atmosphere, Monitoring of Children, Digital Know How, Importance of Education, and Department's Interventions etc. These POPs helped us in increasing students' attending classes and participation in learning activities. During these POP sessions, parents were also briefed about the strategies regarding their collaboration with school in effective education of their children, especially when schools remained closed for almost two years and there prevails uncertainty further.

**Collaboration with community and parents to ensure student learning:** COVID-19 taught the world that pandemic requires collaborative efforts of all stakeholders and community plays key role in this.

**Community Collaboration for Participation in Education:** We organised community meeting for addressing the issue of cleanliness, safety and sustainable education. The social workers, civil defence volunteers and local residents were involved for providing their key inputs about regularity of students, support to needy students, parents counselling and spreading awareness about water conservation, ban on single use plastic and locality greening drive. The school campus remained venue for COVID-19 vaccination from 17 May 2021 to 31 March 2022. In the early phase there was vaccine hesitancy among the people. With the help of medical team at the site and civil defence volunteers, I organised special vaccine awareness drive and was able to increase the footfall of the beneficiaries. It was also ensured that there was zero wastage of the precious vaccine doses. The school celebrated 100 crore vaccine milestone achieved by the country. The vaccination team and civil defence staff were felicitated for their outstanding, tireless and patient service for the cause of community health.

**Parents' Counselling Sessions (PCS):** After interacting with parents and students, it was concluded that there was an urgent need of orienting parents towards the holistic education of their children. Therefore, it was decided to organise Parents' Counselling Sessions to make parents more aware about changing scenario of education, students' basic needs, quality of home atmosphere, social and neighbourhood impacts on children's education and close collaboration with school. These sessions were organised class wise and under a planned schedule. The feedback of parents, students, teachers and community was very encouraging. Many parents have requested to increase the frequency of PACs since these have contributed to improvement in children's overall achievement and personality development.



Parents' Orientation Sessions were organised for strengthening their stake holding



Help desks to address multiple issues caused by COVID-19



Counselling community members on importance of COVID-19 vaccination

### Way Forward:

The school is hopeful that now onwards the school will run with 100% physical capacity and our vision of making education an enjoyable, enriching, experiential and experimental experience will be realised up to best of our satisfaction. Even if there are some circumstances which lead to school closure, we have sufficient know how, patience and potential to move forward and continue the chariot of education make way forward. Through the initiative of 'Delivery on Demand Hour', teachers have been able to create personal relations with the parents and students. These connections will help them build parents' trust. As this initiative have led to regular communication of teachers with parents, teachers can now engage parents in educational process of their children more effectively. School head and teachers of the school are now resilient enough to make teaching -learning more innovative, effective and productive.

# **Conference Presentation**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WtEA1EX7\_KVqeCtzAJmfmGnaeRpgDYsQ/view?usp=sharing