

1. School name, location and complete address, phone number, mail id

Eklavya Model Residential School in Gangyap, Tashiding, District Gyalshing in West Sikkim

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2. A brief profile of the School which includes total student and teacher strength, classrooms, administrative staff, infrastructure

The school is under NESTS (Ministry of Tribal Affairs) and is completing just 17 years since its establishment in April 2007. Today the school has about 415-420 students from classes VI-XII (co-educational) and every class is divided into 2 sections (each class having 2 sections with 30 students each).


The number of teachers (permanent, contractual, volunteer/guest teachers + non-teaching staff) is about 33 today.

Compared to a number of years ago, the infrastructure has greatly improved. Now the school has a proper administrative building along with two hostels for the girls and one for the boys. We have two very good basketball courts for the students to practice on.




Building temporary classrooms with the community & parents in early 2008. I got the 70+ students to be involved in the building so that they would have a sense of belonging and love.

From a non-entity then, today EMRS Gangyap is well known in the nation & globally in the fields of basketball & music.



Today, in 2022, much of the infrastructure has come up and the school boasts of over 419 tribal students.




Now we have over 10 smart classes, an excellent library, separate science & computer labs, good hostel facilities and much more ...

Today after 15 years basketball has created quite a sensation. EMRS Gangyap stands out as 2 time CBSE Basketball Champions, 2 time EMRS National Champions, 10 consecutive North East Basketball Champions with an alumni, Ms. Nima Doma playing for the nation.

Early in 2007 no one had heard of basketball. I introduced the game as an innovation to teaching and nurturing interest among the tribal children.

Drop Out Rate is 0 in the last 8-10 years now

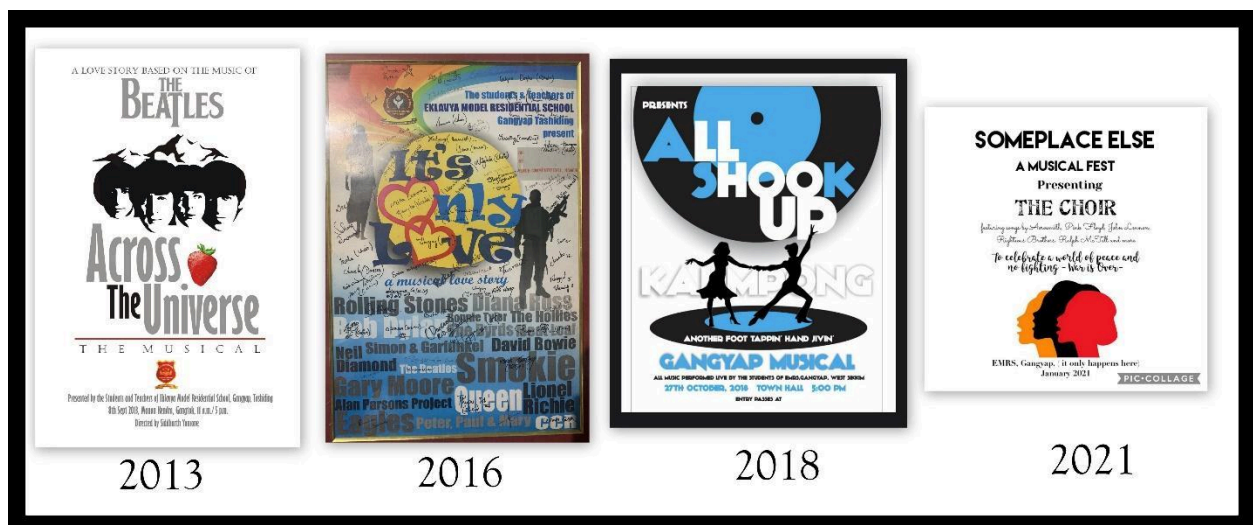


3. The present scenario; key strengths and weaknesses of the school (Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat Analysis).

Key Strengths- The records of the school especially in sports(basketball), music and academics have been exemplary and a lot of emphasis is being laid on in carrying on the with the same zeal. The Girls Basketball Team have been winning the CBSE North East Regional Basketball Championship since 2010 (12 consecutive years) and have also won GOLD at the CBSE National Championship in 2011 & 2013.



In Music EMRS Gangyap is the only school in Sikkim to have staged three very good musical plays that have been staged all over the State and well as in a few places in West Bengal.



Academically wise too, many of the students have been declared as State Toppers in the CBSE Class X & XII Board Examinations since 2012. Thus the school is continuously excelling in the same and more efforts are being made in other disciplines etc.

Weaknesses- The remote location of the school alongside the distant miles that are needed to be travelled from the District Headquarters and the Capital is challenging. Since the school caters to students from 2 districts, it is often difficult to assemble all the parents for important PTAs etc. The internet and the electricity supply is often erratic and unreliable. During the monsoons, due to landslides the school is inaccessible at times.

The area of the land is hilly and uneven and so we lack a lot of open and free space.

Opportunities - The students (who are 1st generation learners) are exhibit a hunger to learn. The distance from the bigger towns also provide lesser distractions etc.

We have thus been able to do so many things that have emerged as success stories and made a huge difference in the lives of the tribal students.

Nima Doma who is currently working with the Indian Railways is an International Basketball Player has represented the nation in Basketball. She is the first woman from the entire North East to have achieved this feat. Kursongkit Lepcha is currently studying at Havard University after being accepted on scholarship. Many of the students have become doctors (the very first ones in their villages and their families).



Threats- The idea of co-curricular activities enhancing the interest and performance of the students is often not perceived by many here despite the records of the past. The positive ambience that is full of creativity and opportunities that we have created here is still fragile and we hope that the younger generations continue to take the standards of the school to higher grounds.

4. The description of community - cultural pressures; values, attitudes, needs and expectations; skills, chief occupation.

The students are mainly from the ethnic Lepcha, Bhutia, Limboo, Tamang and Sherpa tribes of the state. The entire village of Gangyap has a population of hardly eight hundred and most of them (the senior lot) are illiterate. Since years the dangers of alcohol has always been a problem. The entire community depends on simple farming and of late a few businesses have started. Local carpentry, basket weaving etc. are some of the skills that are found here. Very few vehicles run here.

5. The problem situation – what and why; the challenges and issues;

Problems or rather challenges since the inception of the school have been countless and unending. The concept of residential schooling was new and the vision of introducing an unconventional focusing on the all- round education with emphasis on co-curricular activities and sports to the young tribal students was challenging.

Especially when the school just started it was seen that a lot of resources were still required for the running of the school

The students all lacked a proper base and had absolutely no confidence in themselves.

6. The change initiated, the Plan of Action, Strategy, Outcome,

Almost immediately I realized the main plan of action would be to keep the students interested in staying on in school and thus through basketball, music, plays, creative writing and more I began the school in early 2007. All this slowly built their interests as well as their confidence. Tribals are generally shy but the exposure given through sports and these activities made them more confident and assertive.

The musical productions that were staged around the State raised money with which we were able to use to fund the basketball expenses. We purchased kits and jerseys and also used those funds for travel etc. especially during the National tournaments.

Their confidence to speak fluently in English also removed a lot of their lack of confidence and eventually they started to elevate their own ambitions and dreams.

The girls' basketball (now popularly known as the Girls of Gangyap) have created their own success stories that have spread within the country and even internationally. Documentaries that

have been telecasted by the National Basketball Association on Sony Six and more has been made. We can boast of the fact that one of my students has represented the country in Basketball. Many of the basketball players are well placed today having got admissions in good universities as well as professional universities (NEET etc.) & reputed colleges and universities like LNIPE Gwalior (because of the successes of the basketball) outside Sikkim.

Many are pursuing MBBS while others are doing well in their own spheres. Some in the field of Law, Engineering and of course in the teaching profession in many of the government schools as well as in this EMRS. All this has led the younger generations want to continue in the same manner.

Despite so many years having passed, the younger basketball teams of today continue their winning ways especially the record 12 consecutive years of winning GOLD at the CBSE North East Regional Basketball Championships since 2010. Even the Boys teams have improved so much and won their 1st ever gold in that same competition earlier this year.

A team of ten students and two teachers were selected and given a chance for basic mountaineering program at the ABVIMAS at Manali. Eleven out of the twelve of the team excelled there and have qualified for the advance course in September 2024 as well.



7. Time taken to bring the change, the processes involved, the failures, the successes, most importantly; the learning

Nothing can be expected overnight and similarly these things have taken time. Change definitely has come about but in some areas there will be more time needed ...

April 2007 was when this all started and now after 17 years the progress and development have been amazing.

Failures have been many but they have also helped us introspect and change different strategies over the years. Failures accompanied by a lot of criticism have always been there but it has often been a source of motivation as well.

We have been blessed with a score of successes which in turn has served as precedents for students and teachers to follow ...

Learning has been crucial as one of the biggest examples come from our former students (Old Eklavyians Gangyap). We have 9 teachers who are OEG's (the alumni) and they set a different

example in their performance now as teachers here. We often have the Alumni (OEG's) who return to help and assist the school time and again.

Excellent team work amongst the school and the State Authorities as well as NESTS (at the Ministry) have helped develop EMRS Gangyap further. This excellent team spirit has played a crucial role and EMRS Gangyap has been selected as a 'Centre of Excellence' for Basketball for which the International Level Infrastructures will be made very soon now.

8. The role of school leadership, behavior modeling and example setting by the head of school and other factors relevant to the transformation, other key influential personalities/groups – their feelings/views (expressed in verbatim as quotes)

As a leader I have learnt so much over the years understanding the different personalities and nature of my fellow teachers, the parents, community and most importantly the students. At times it has been frustratingly challenging and difficult but there have been a lot of success stories that were the result of proper team work and understanding.

Often I have had well-wishers who have visited the school and talked to us and contributed in so many ways to the development of us all. Media houses like local newspapers (SIKKIM EXPRESS, NOW, TALK SIKKIM, GOOD NEWS etc) to national media papers and magazines like India Today, Caravan and Sony Six including the NBA (National Basketball Association), Doordhashan and more have visited the school and covered stories in their media pages and channels. Many teachers are now happy in their profession and the students enjoy every day of their school lives.

9. The theory of change – which means the turning points for the school head/leader, the reflections on what worked and why or the 'mantra' for change.

'For Humanity & Enlightenment' has always been our point of emphasis and so the main vision here is that we are not preparing our students just for examinations but actually for Life. Thus, focus, determination and allowing oneself to be inspired and motivated have been key points in this change. Our mantra has been focusing and remaining steadfast and consistent to our dreams. Cultivating a shared sense of purpose amongst the teachers and creating a space to experiment

and innovate has also been a mantra for change here. Setting a belief in collaborative and a shared leadership has been a focus as well. All this can be seen in so many of the success stories of the students.