

Marrur Govt School

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Site visit report for Marrur government middle school

Marrur village, located in Nakrekal mandal, Nalgonda district, is located almost right in between Vijayawada and Hyderabad, in A.P. It was spring like weather in Vijayawada during January and hence a very good time to travel. I requested my uncle to let me borrow his car for a visit to Marrur village; he went one step more and offered to chauffeur me to the village and back. He had been hearing about Asha and its activities for some time, so thought it would be a good idea if he accompanied me and checked it out in person how donor's money is put to use. Of course, I took him up on his offer and on a perfect spring weather day we left around 9:00 AM.

The 4-lane highway between Vijayawada and Hyderabad was still under construction at some places, which caused some delays, but other than that the travel was nice and easy. There is a road that branches off from the highway from Nakrekal that leads to Marrur village. Mr.Chalapathi, who is the India contact, was waiting for us by the highway in Nakrekal. It was around 1:00 PM when we reached there and met him. We followed his car to Marrur. The road to Marrur from the highway started off well but soon the pucca road ended and the recent rains did not make things any better.

It was lunch time at the school when we reached and the children were busy with their activities, some still eating but most playing/chatting. After a briefly introducing myself to the teachers present nearby, I went to check out the newly constructed classrooms. The classrooms were almost complete with finishing work yet to be done. The 2 classrooms had built-in shelves and blackboards. After a taking a few pictures of the classrooms, I met with the school teachers and the school education committee chairman. The head master, Mr. Meena Reddy, and Mr.Chalapathi Reddy were explaining the problems they had faced during the construction.

The proposal for Marrur was received early 2003 and the funds were sent by September to the school. (The delay was caused due to FCRA clearance.) They were short on money for the construction of class rooms as the price of cement/bag shot up from 95.00 Rs when the proposal was sent to 140.00 Rs by the time when the received the money. (I had confirmed this rate increase by enquiring at 2 other separate places). This left them with 8,000.00 Rs short for the construction of the rooms and no money for setting up running water facilities.

After these discussions, I had requested to go visit other classrooms and talk to the children. The children were generally shy but seemed very enthusiastic. I did manage to get a few students to open up a bit and had a good discussion on how things went in their school. They seemed happy in general with school and studies. They do have a mid-day meal scheme and the students said the meals were good. Government gives each student from classes 1-5, 120 gm of rice and 1.20 Rs other items and students in classes 6-7 are allocated 125 gm of rice and 1.25 Rs.

The school education committee chairman is Ms. Saidamma. The chairman is elected from the local community. Ms. Saidamma also works in the school as a cook. There are 5 government qualified teachers and 3 temporary teachers. They have requested the Govt for more teachers but this has been pending for several years now. The government has a policy where they will pay for

temporary teachers if the school elects to employ incase of inadequate teacher strength. The temps receive 1000.00 Rs /month. They are usually employed from August-March.

I sat down with the Head master and one of the teachers to go over the student records and their requirements. I was very glad to know that **Posham Uppama who belonged to the first batch from the school to appear in the 7th grade public exam stood first in their district.** She secured (512 marks out of a maximum 600). I was very glad to hear that she is continuing her studies at the nearest high school, which is 8 KM away. **All 30 students who appeared for the exams passed in First Class (75% and above).** The teacher attendance was around 90%.

The school does not have a lab or any of the lab equipments. It does not have running water and no toilets. (It has bathrooms that are in completely unusable state). They have requested the government to provide funds for this and they have been waiting for a long time. They provided some approximate estimates on how much it would cost for some of their requirements.) Please see details below.) We wrapped up our discussions with the teachers, talked to few more students, took some photographs with them and left for Vijayawada.

On my way back, I could not help but involve myself in a deep thought of how these students keep themselves motivated in spite of their surrounding. What makes a girl like Uppama motivate herself to the highest marks in her district? What makes her travel 8 KM one way to the nearest high school? How does the entire class secure 75% and above in a public exam when, many well to do school who offer the best of resources, fail? Why do the parents, a good majority being daily labors, take so much pains of sending their children to school and support them? How are there more girls than boys in a school that does not even have a working toilet?

I did not attempt to find answers to all of these questions but I was absolutely convinced, if I was not earlier, that the best thing we could do for these children is provide them an opportunity to learn. It is such opportunities that will create many more Uppamas.

Some details:

The 5 government qualified teachers are

1. Meena Reddy (BA TTC)
2. T. Sreenu (Bsc, BEd, Dform)
3. K. Butchi Reddy (Msc, BEd)
4. K. Shankaiah (MA TTC)
5. P. Markondain (BEd, BA)

I was able to meet only Meena Reddy and T.Sreenu. I was informed that rest of the teachers had gone on a 2 day teachers training course.

The total student strength of the school is 216. (121 girls and 95 boys)

Class wise break down

Class 1 – 39

Class 2 – 37

Class 3 – 26

Class 4 – 27

Class 5 – 35

Class 6 – 29

Class 7 – 23

Amount received by the school	157,000.00 Rs
Cost of constructing 2 classrooms	165,000.00 Rs

Deficit	- 8,000.00 Rs

Requirements:

1. Running water	
Rebore + motor =	18,000.00 Rs
Overhead tank	12,000.00 Rs
2. Constructing/Restoring bathrooms	25,000.00 Rs
3. Science lab equipment	20,000.00 Rs
4. Maps, others	10,000.00 Rs

	85,000.00 Rs
	8,000.00 Rs (earlier deficit)

	94,000.00 Rs