



PRERANA SCHOOL, KANPUR SITE VISIT – NOVEMBER 2015

The school has improved by leaps and bounds thanks to an excellent new building featuring a computer lab, well-furnished classrooms, water coolers, whiteboards and a room for a future library. These four videos give an in-depth update.

- New School Building - <https://youtu.be/mXcRaIszrhk>
- Classes 1-5 (Bal Nikunj site) - <https://youtu.be/ZgBfAaU1tNM>
- Conversation with Principal and Sponsor - https://youtu.be/fh_ibR1m784
- Career Coaching - <https://youtu.be/6tHs59tvpEY>



**New School
Building**

**New Computer
Lab**

Library Room

**Career Guidance
Empowerment
Fund**

**Art, Sports, GK
Competitions and
more...**

PRERANA SCHOOL
Kanpur

[https://www.ashanet.org/
projects/project-
view.php?p=375](https://www.ashanet.org/projects/project-view.php?p=375)

[https://www.facebook.co
m/PSV.Kanpur](https://www.facebook.com/PSV.Kanpur)

Introduction

Prerana School is Asha for Education's model project in Uttar Pradesh, India. It is a school that has continuously improved since its inception over 30 years ago. Please see this video for a quick introduction to the school <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kb8tLErxxKg>. I would also recommend visiting the Facebook page for the school for additional content <https://www.facebook.com/PSV.Kanpur>

Asha for Education adopted this school 15 years ago and has provided nearly \$30,000 in funding so far. For details please visit <https://www.ashanet.org/projects/project-view.php?p=375>

The project has been championed by Salil Dave, Vibha Chhatwal and Sachin Bansal. Some of the key people "on the ground" are

- Mrs. Saroj Budhwar – an 85+ year old lady who serves with selfless dedication. She has taken personal interest in the students and has contributed her time and money without holding back.
- Mr. S.V.G. Menon – in his 60s now, he is a respected figure in the Kanpur education circles, having run the most sought-after coaching classes for well-to-do kids. He founded the Prerana Shishu Vidyalaya in early 1980s.
- Mr. Nanhi Dhar – the school principal, she has been involved with the school from its earliest days when volunteer-teachers were replaced by paid staff.
- Daniel Sarkar – he is an education professional himself and provides help and guidance to the school.

I made a trip to the school in November 2015 and visited both the sites where classes are run – the new building next to the original location in the open park and the second location in the Bal Nikunj community center. The new building houses PlayGroup (PG) class and grades 6-8. The other location has classes 1-5.



I am organizing my comments into four buckets – accomplishments, pains, needs and aspirations. For additional details, please review the videos from my site visit

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Accomplishments

The biggest accomplishment since my last visit is the new school building. It has dramatically improved the learning experience. The multi-story structure has nicely done classrooms and a computer lab and library. The students have good benches and chairs. The classrooms are well-lit and have whiteboards. The computer lab has multiple workstations as well as a TV. They are expected to have an internet connection soon.

The schoolchildren have many opportunities beyond the regular academic curriculum. They participate in sports, cultural events (art and general knowledge competitions), and more.

As part of the Swachh Bharat (Clean India) initiative launched by Narendra Modi, the school partnered with Kanpur Parivartan Forum <http://www.parivartankanpur.org/> to conduct cleaning and painting drive. Here is an the school wall that they painted.



Pains

- The Bal Nikunj site has fewer rooms than the classes – so it is crowded and multiple classes are held in the same room.

- The rent for the community center has been steadily increasing, cutting into the limited budget for the school.
- The school does not go beyond 8th grade because it doesn't have the facilities to be registered as a High School. This means that the students have to transfer to government-run schools.

Needs

- The new building doesn't yet have a formal address, so is unable to get an internet connection.
- The library room is empty as funds are needed to buy books.
- The computers run on Windows XP. It would be nice for them to be upgraded to the latest version of Windows. It would also be nice to have Office.
- The students will benefit from sports and arts resources.

Aspirations

- Meritorious students aspiring for higher education and professional careers need support beyond what the school can provide. Mr. Menon describes the vision for an Empowerment Fund to finance coaching and counseling for these students.

Photographs

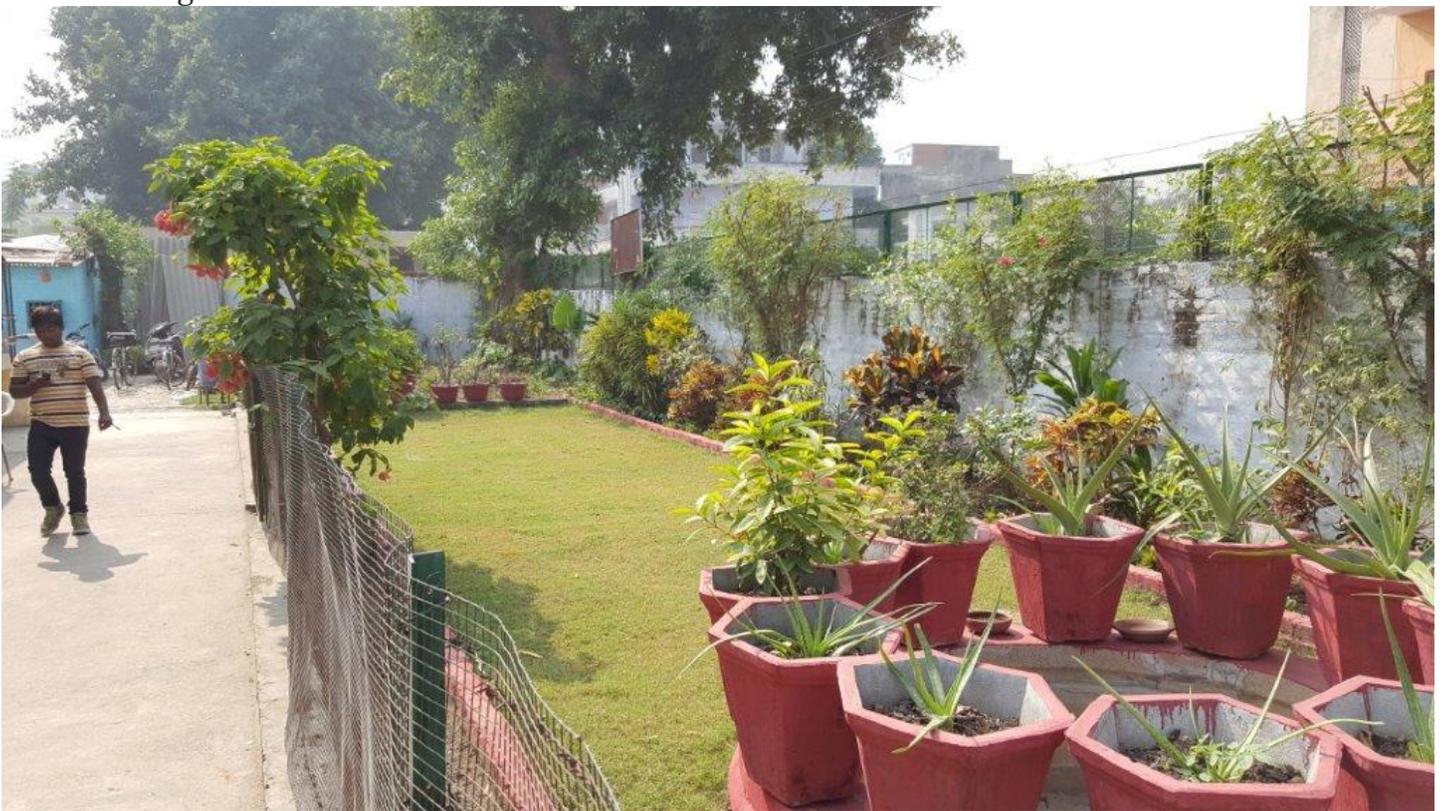
This is a classroom in Bal Nikunj.



This is the Bal Nikunj building.



It has a nice garden.



This is the Principal, Ms. Nanhi Dhar, standing in the Bal Nikunj Center verandah.



This is the new school building – from L to R are Tushar Nene (Microsoft alum who has moved back to Kanpur, Daniel Sarkar, Sanjay Bhatia, Mrs. Saroj Budhwar, two volunteers from Arya Samaj Swaroop Nagar Seva Samiti and Mr. Rakesh Ranjan Pandey – one of the earliest volunteer-teachers at PSV).



This is the computer lab in the new school building (from L to R are Mrs. Saroj Budhwar, Daniel Sarkar, Mr. SVG Menon, Salil Dave, Mr. Rakesh Ranjan Pandey and Tushar Nene).



These are classrooms in the new school building.









Thanks

I would like to close out by thanking Asha for Education, Dallas Chapter for the fantastic support of this school. A special thanks to Bobby Kishore, GM at Microsoft, for being a generous donor over the years. You all are making a huge difference to the lives of these children in Kanpur.

If you have any questions or comments, you can reach me at salildave@hotmail.com or +1-425-442-2671.

Salil Dave