

APPENDIX 1

Baslow St. Anne's C of E Primary visit to Kolkata, India.

Baslow St. Anne's C of E Primary is a small school in the heart of the Peak District with 123 children on roll. As a Church school our Christian vision and values threads through everything we do:

'Life in all its fullness.... growing healthy minds and hearts together.'

Respect, Kindness and Diversity

As Headteacher at Baslow St. Anne's Primary School it is a privilege to be able to work together as a strong team and community to enable our children to thrive and enhance our children's experiences and awareness beyond our rural village of Baslow. Through our SIAMS and self-evaluation, we are aware that the need to drive courageous advocacy and global awareness is an imperative part of our curriculum. Therefore, when the opportunity to work alongside the Diocese of Derby to work out in Kolkata came up, I snapped up the opportunity.

On January 24th 2020 myself and 39 teachers and students from Derby University set out from Birmingham Airport heading to Kolkata and what an incredible experience my visit to India proved to be! From the minute we landed in Kolkata, it was a non-stop exciting week of the most amazing experiences. From seeing the Ganges and peoples' lives around this river, temples and being fully immersed in a Hindu festival, to spending three days with a host family out in the village of Mahamaya and really getting a flavour of true Indian life: cooking, shopping, going to the water pump for water, cows and goats wondering along the paths – a really simple, but content life.



A highlight was being based in a school where, although a very early start, the children came in so keen to learn and be at school. Working alongside the committed teachers and finding ways to further improve classroom life and learning for these children, who sat on hard wooden floors with a simple blackboard and piece of chalk. This was a real learning curve for our children at Baslow, where they could see the difference in their school lives and the way we learn and the privileges we have. This instigated our School Council to organise raising funds to enhance provisions for our link school and children in Kolkata.



A visit to the slums and Brace Bridge School really left an impression and although the surrounding area of the slums and the poor living conditions were a challenge to see, this little oasis of a school central to this was thoroughly uplifting.



The finale was a hot day (although the children were wrapped up in hats, jumpers and scarves, whilst we had sunhats and sun cream on for the 25-degree heat) with over 500 children from the schools that we had worked with coming together to enjoy a celebratory sports day: everything from the traditional sack race, football and three-legged race to enjoying activities with the parachute. The children then all had their lunch of rice, curry, fruit and salad followed by an ice-cream...smiles beamed from the sports field.



I feel privileged to have had the experience and the importance for us as a school to keep this link with Mahamaya School strong and as a prominent part of our curriculum, global awareness, alongside courageous advocacy and fundraising. Please do take a look at our school's website: Baslow.School under: News and Events – India.

Marie Clark

