

fenestra

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From the Principal's Desk



At the Vijayanagar Colony crossroad, there is a traffic light. When it is working, almost everyone obediently awaits his turn. But, when the power is off, suddenly the same drivers become aggressive, impatient and selfish. It is only natural that without a fair and firm system in place, the law of the jungle takes over.

Children in school are no different. By nature, they are good, but they need traffic lights. With clear rules, regular reminders, well-timed praise, and some calm explanation, almost every child will behave well and develop self-discipline. The friendly, sincere policeman with his whistle in hand is more than enough for most traffic situations.

As parents and teachers, we do not need to use physical or verbal violence to raise and educate children. In fact, each time an adult beats a child or uses abusive language, we are teaching the child that people are wild beasts and that we live in a jungle. We are teaching the child that fear, pain, humiliation, and arbitrariness are acceptable parts of human interaction and the tools to inculcate discipline. Many parents and teachers think that to maintain good discipline, children must be made to fear them. And that feeling of fear is developed in children by physical punishments and abusive language, such as taunts, sarcasm, and humiliation.

Should fear be the foundation of discipline? What about the noble, dignified traffic light? Drivers do not stop at the traffic light because they fear it will slap them or because it might make fun of them in public. At most crossroads in Hyderabad, challans or fines are rarely issued. Rather, drivers stop because they understand the purpose of the light, respect the law, and trust the light is fair to all.

Our school stands firmly against corporal punishment. As parents and teachers, we must understand how to build good discipline without using the tools of fear and pain.

One of the most important elements of good discipline is having healthy human relationships—relationships that are built on dignity, love, and hope. In E. R. Braithwaite's famous novel, *To Sir, with Love*, Ricky becomes a teacher in a slum area of London. The students are unmotivated and almost illiterate. When he focused only on teaching the syllabus, he found himself colliding with the students at every turn. Then he realized that he would have to first build a relationship with his class, which he did by addressing them as young adults ("Mr or Miss So and So") and taking their input about topics of study. He organized field visits and spoke to his students about life in general. He found that once he established this foundation, he was able to guide and teach the students—at times, even better than their parents.

"Two by Ten" is a similar strategy documented by researchers Raymond Wlodkowski and Martha Allen. As an adult, imagine a child whose behaviour and attitude troubles you the most. Now, spend two minutes for ten straight days casually conversing with that child on topics that he or she initiates. The researchers found that there were remarkable improvements in the child's behaviour and attitude and that these improvements affected the entire class environment for the better.

In both of these examples, adults are giving respect to the child as a dignified, reasonable human being. One with whom we can converse. One whose thoughts and feelings have value. One who can learn, grow and improve indefinitely. When we combine this attitude with clear, firm, consistent rules (remember the traffic light), we have most of the tools we need to help children develop self-discipline.

Minhaj Arastu, Principal

The Guiding Light

Activities timeline

JULY

Heritage Walk – Charminar to Chowmohallah Palace

Selected students from C6-C9 participated in the Heritage Walk organised by Telangana Tourism. The students gathered information about the architecture – style and reasons for its existence.



Visit to the National Institute of Nutrition

Students of C9 and C10 at National institute of Nutrition, Tarnaka. The students had an enriching experience at the institute where they interacted with a scientist, learnt the importance of having nutritious food and also visited the nutrition museum.

Visit to Gangadevipally Village

Students of C7 and C10 visited Gangadevipally Village, a village with 100% Adult Literacy rate. The students were amazed to understand the working of this village. They understood differences between life in a village and a town. The *sarpanch* gave them a clear picture of the life and facilities in village.



AUGUST

Independence Day Celebration

Keeping in tune with the central government theme, the theme for this year's celebration was 'Make in India'. Various competitions were conducted on the theme. Children from the whole school came forward and did their best in making this theme more meaningful. The oath taking ceremony of the Captains and Vice-Captains was the major highlight of the day. Students of the Safety and the Gardening club also created a gardening landscape outside the school to discourage garbage dumping in its vicinity.



SEPTEMBER

Teacher's Day Celebration

The Captains and Vice Captains of the school along with the students organised the Teachers' Day. It was a well-planned event with games, drama and speeches. It was indeed a treat for the teachers to be on the other side of the stage and watch the program while students managed it all.

Community talk

What I learnt from A P J Abdul Kalam

Naahi Abbas, C10

A P J Abdul Kalam was people's President, he was (and is) an angel for the Indians. Each and every Indian learnt something from his life. I too learnt a very important lesson of life which will lead to a successful me.

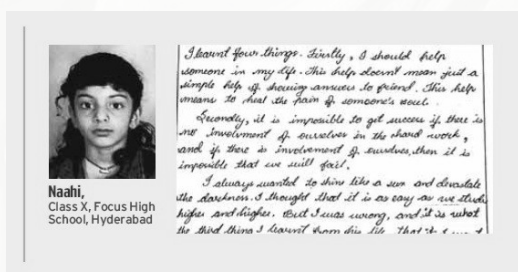
I learnt four things: firstly, I should help someone in my life, this help doesn't mean a simple showing of answers to a friend. This help means to heal the pain of someone's soul.

Secondly, it is impossible to get success if there is no involvement of ourselves in the hard work, and if we involve ourselves completely, then it is impossible to fail.

I always wanted to shine like a sun and devastate darkness. I thought that it was a cake-walk. But I was wrong and this is what I learnt from his life that if I want to shine like a sun then I have to burn like a sun; nothing but hard work.

Last but not the least - I learnt that my best teacher is my last mistake. I learnt all these principles of life from APJ's life

(Naahi Abbas wrote this essay to win 1st prize in THE HINDU IN SCHOOL-CAMLIN essay writing competition on the topic "What I learnt from Kalam" coinciding with Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam's 84th birth anniversary. Source: The Hindu in School - October 15, 2015)



A trip that I enjoyed

A brief travelogue by Syed Inamuddin, C9

In Dussehra holidays I went to our farm house, about 180 kms from Hyderabad, in Khammam. There, we have a small house to stay. We stayed for four days and did fishing at our farm house. We saw a juvenile snake near the well. I observed Venus (morning star) through our camera in the morning. Upon visiting a lake named "Maddanpally Talab" we heard noises of vessels and tin boxes. So my father asked the villagers what was going on at the mountain. They said, "They are hunting wild boars and this method is called *haka*." By this method they make sounds, irritate the animal and catch it. We climbed up a hill too. Early in the morning one can also hear the calls of peacocks. I enjoyed my trip a lot.

Parents speak 1

Mr. Mohammed Baqer Ali Khan and Mrs. Marya Fatima are the proud parents of three lovely children studying in FHS. Mr. Khan is Vice President in a multi-national company and has over 16 years of IT experience. Mrs. Mariya is a caring mother with strong emphasis on values and ethics.

Q Choosing the right school for your child is a huge decision. Why did you choose FHS?

R FHS stands out as an institution of ethics. We were concerned for not just quality education for our children but also about development of inter-personal skills, responsibility and adaptability methods along with overall mental growth. We, as parents, believe that if the head of the institution and the governing body have these values, they will transmit the same factors for growth of tender minds. Hence FHS was our ultimate choice.

Q How do you support your child's education? (e.g. travel, reading together, joint activities, etc.)

R As parents, we try our best to listen to our children's activity performed at school and what they learn daily. We instigate the responsible behaviour, investigating approach and stress on English as a medium of communication. We take full interest in their studies, check their books constantly and perform joint activities with them. We also encourage them on reading different literature to enhance their vocabulary and understanding.

Community talk

The Birth of FHS

Mirza Mustafa Hussain Baig, Board Member

One of the primary reasons to kick start this project called Focus High School was none other than to fill the vacuum of an institution which provides a holistic style of education, especially in this part of the city, which has been silently asking for it for decades now.

An institution, which produces products which are not book worms, but pupils, who could be called "educated", in real sense of its meaning i.e. who applies what s/he learns, those who impart the knowledge gained, those who study to learn and not to mug up, those who learn to quench the natural thirst within and not just to pass the exams. Those would be the ones to see this world from an entirely different perspective than everybody else.

In order to fulfill the above requirements, a good infrastructure, a productive environment were must to have, but more important than that was, to have a visionary leader in the capacity of a Principal, who not just heads the team, but walks the talk, one who not only draws a roadmap based upon the artifacts but when something unexpected occurs, and his team is pulled into uncharted waters they will look up to him for hand holding.

And then comes one of the most vital ingredients without which the recipe of a good school is incomplete and that is the 'Teacher'. But not those, whose resumes are loaded with a ton of degrees / diplomas / certificates, but those who understand the real meaning of the terms like *education* and *teaching* and those who love their profession, are committed to it wholeheartedly, who think differently, who are accustomed to change, are caring enough to go that extra mile when a student needs it and know their students like the back of their hand. Hence, those chosen, were very carefully handpicked for this cause.

To end with, each one of us quite well realizes that if we are going to combat the ignorance in generations in the making, then there is no other way but to diligently educate the very same children who make the forthcoming generation, as these very children are going to shape their families for better progress of their neighborhood, take their communities to the next level and consequently contribute in the advancement of the nation.

This is the brief tale, as to how and why FHS came into being.

An Ode to FHS Family

Mustafa Zaidi, MYP Coordinator, FHS

What do you teach, O ye teachers
That learning is sacred to life.
You provide the keys to the future
And the strength to endure in strife.

What do you learn, O ye children
From the teacher's warmth and concern
The darkened lives you will brighten
Are truly highest grades to earn.

What do you heed, O ye guardians
For the flowers of your orchard
Watching nascent branches harden
Into trees preserved from ways morbid.

(inspired by Sarojini Naidu's *In The Bazaars of Hyderabad*)

Parents speak 2

Mr. Mohd Raoofuddin & Mrs. Fahmeeda Sultana are the proud parents of a ninth grader at FHS. Mr. Raoofuddin is a professor of Hindi. Mrs. Fahmeeda has years of experience in teaching.

Q What are your thoughts on the new educational reforms brought in by the education department?

R The Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation system has definitely encouraged the students to think analytically than just mugging up and lot of research was done by the education department in an effort to contextualize the curriculum in the view of changing times.

Q How does your child's education differ from your own experiences as a student?

R Present education being given to the children is quite different from the old system of education under which we have studied. We were not so analytical. However, the grace and impact of knowledge was much stronger than today. Now a days, a child learns new things and forgets the things learnt earlier. In the past, new learning was to be followed by reinforcement of things learnt earlier. Thus, there was little or no chance of forgetting. In earlier days, the basic principles or the fundamentals were given more stress and, today, I hardly see such learning.

Community talk

To Nick

Syeda Rukhayya Fatima Razvi, C10

I have no arms and legs
I can't walk, I can't write
What God did seemed not right
Going to school was hard to do
But my parents wanted me to pursue
I thought my life was a waste
Until I relished its taste
When a life-story got me inspired
From inside I got fired
I tried everything impossible
To show that everything is possible
Even if I fall on the ground
I will still get up feeling profound
I will try again and again
Until I reign

(Rukhayya wrote this poem as a tribute to the life of Nick Vujicic whose inspiring biography is a part of her English course)

Protecting the World Heritage

A reflection by Mohammed Jalaluddin Junaid, C9, in Social Studies class

Should world heritage sites be protected? Support your answer with reasons.

Yes, heritage sites should be protected because of various important reasons. Firstly because, the heritage sites house important things of great value in them that tell the story behind these structures. The heritage sites should also be protected as they are the symbols of a country's culture, art, tradition and history.

They should be protected because of their marvelous architecture and uniqueness that cannot be re-developed if they are destroyed. They should be protected because they tell us about the architects and rulers who made them. Heritage sites should be protected because they are visited by millions of people. The presence of a heritage site in a country

makes that country popular.

Finally, it is important to protect heritage sites from the careless and selfish people who will try to spoil or plunder it.

In the age of Internet



**"Dear Andy: How have you been?
Your mother and I are fine. We miss you.
Please sign off your computer and come
downstairs for something to eat. Love, Dad."**

Talking the heart out

An initiative by a parent, the motivational talk by Mr. Abdul Kareem touched the hearts of many students in our school.

Mr. Abdul Kareem is father of an eighth grader at FHS. He takes deep interest in counseling the students. He is enriched by years of experience in talking to students about behavior issues and strategies for improvement. He extends his voluntary service for many schools only for the joy of transforming the young minds. He believes that the young minds are extraordinarily receptive to the goodness or evil around them. Therefore, he talks to parents to help them create a better surrounding for their children. We are deeply appreciative of his efforts.



Classroom peek



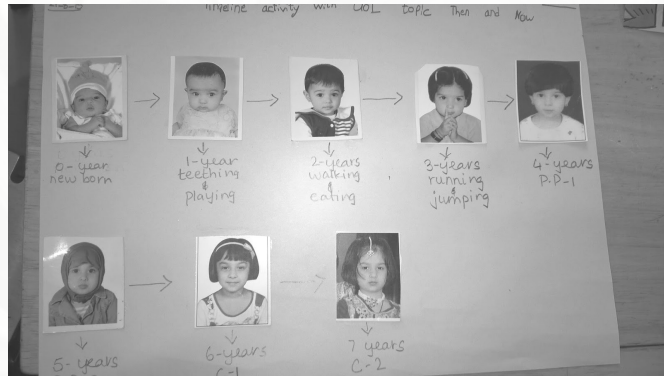
Class 2: circle time and class discussion



Class 5: Designing 3D symbols with colour chart papers in Rangostav Colour and Writing Competition



Class 3: Inquiring how body systems work



Class2: Timeline activity with the photographs of children — real life connections makes learning easier and more fun



Class 3: Inquiring how body systems work



Class 1: Fieldtrip to Active Farm School, Gachibowli

Class 4: Paper modeling activity



Activities timeline

SEPTEMBER

Visit to Parle-G Biscuit Factory, Masqati Dairy Farm and an agricultural field

The students of C6 were thrilled to understand the making of their favourite biscuit Parle-G. They got a glimpse into the history of the product. They intently watched the process of mixing, moulding, baking and packing Parle-G biscuits. Students of C6 experienced the production of various milk products at Masqati Dairy Farm, Sagar Road. They learnt what goes into the packing of the milk they get at their doorstep. This gave the students a close exposure to the effort behind manufacturing and packing milk products. They also visited the agricultural farm known for its biodiversity with eco-friendly plantation and learnt about organic farming.



PYP Job Alike

Our science teachers from PYP participated in Hyderabad PYP Network Job-alike session hosted by The Aga Khan Academy. The topic of the session was 'Science in PYP' which guided teachers in making learning more engaging and to turn almost any learning engagement into an experiment.

Student Parliament

Student Parliament was an interactive session in which the School Captains and House Leaders discussed two important issues of concern. The students came forward and expressed their views on deforestation and its impact. Along with this, the 'need for a canteen in school' was also an important topic of discussion. Both the resolutions were passed after a brainstorming debate.

Grandparents' Day

The end of unit celebration by PPI was marked by Grand Parents' Day. The students sang songs on the theme 'Family'. This celebration led to a better understanding of their unit of inquiry on family. The grandparents enthusiastically participated in the activities and also shared their educational experiences.



FHS promotes activity-based collaborative learning

Glimpses from the activities of the 1st term in 2015-16



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Mujahid Danish Ghori	6
Sukhaina	6
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Md. Iyyan Hussain	7
Syed Asghar Hussain Zaidi	7
Ali Abbas	8
M Abdul Hameed Subhani	8
Syed Inamuddin	9
S M Murtuza Ali Khan	9
Mohd Saifuddin	9
Syed Abdul Nabi	10
Mohd Haji	10
Naahi Abbas	10
Asma Fatima	10

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Best wishes from the devoted FHS family