



Pragat Shikshan Sanstha

**Annual Report
2023-24**

Pragat Shikshan Sanstha

The Pragat Shikshan Sanstha is registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 and as a trust under the Bombay Public Trust Act of 1950.

Governing Council

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Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar, Vice-President

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Cover painting: Gatha Bhujbal and Swara Kumthekar, grade 6. Painted using natural colors and material like soil, leaves, flowers, turmeric powder etc. as a part of their library activity.

Remembering Meenatai



Meena Chandavarkar, well-known educationist in Pune, died on April 17 at the age of 85. Meenatai was the principal of the Abhinav Vidyalaya English medium pre-primary school for thirty years. After retirement she worked in other institutions, and for some time served as the Director of the New India School in Pune.

The Pragat Shikshan Sanstha, and especially I myself, owe a great debt of gratitude to Meenatai. She was closely associated with our work in starting the Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan. She began helping us in 1985 when we started the balwadi and was the President of the PSS from 1995 to 2001.

My own training had not prepared me for working in pre-primary education. All I knew was that I wanted the school to have a free and happy atmosphere. It was Meenatai who gave me invaluable guidance on the methods and materials necessary to lay the foundation for our efforts. For that I am eternally grateful.

Meenatai's husband Bhaskar Chandavarkar, musician, composer and sitarist, died in 2009 at the age of 73.

Meena and Bhaskar Chandavarkar are survived by their son Rohit, a journalist, and his wife Gayatri. Our condolences to the family.

Maxine Berntsen
Founder Trustee

Preface

We are happy to present the annual report of the Pragat Shikshan Sanstha for the year 2023-2024. The report covers the period of one year starting from July 2023 to June 2024. In the report, we present a broad picture of our activities, programs, and achievements as well as our reflections on the future.

We take this opportunity to thank all the donors, both individual and institutional for their generous support which has enabled us to continue our work for quality education. We thank **SPA Education Foundation**, Mumbai for supporting our balwadis and a small library at Apli Shala. We thank **Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar** for donating to the corpus fund. **Mr. Surindar Singh** for giving Gauri Deshpande award for young avid readers at Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan. We are grateful to the **Granny Cloud** for making us partners in their venture. We thank **M.G. Charitable Trust** and **Vibha Malani** for supporting poor students to pay their fees. M. G. Charitable Trust has provided us with their generous and sustained support over the past several years and we are immensely grateful for that.

We thank the **H.T. Parekh foundation** for making it possible for us to work with anganwadis and primary schools in Maan (Dist. Satara) and Ausa (Dist. Latur) blocks. We also thank all the government officials and educators for responding positively to the efforts. We thank **Gautam Patel** for supporting us to conduct '*Pustakmaitri Abhyaskram*' trainings for people working with children and books. We are thankful to **Wipro Foundation** for funding the workshops for the capacity building of ECE educators for foundational skill development among children. We are also very thankful to **Cummins India** for constructing an outdoor reading plaza for children.

We would like to thank **Shri Prabhakar Keskar** for his generous endowment donations, Late Krishnaji Shankar Keskar Scholarship for three students annually and Late Pramod Yeshwant Keskar Fellowship for a teacher to do educational research. We thank **Milaap Social ventures** for providing their online platform for the fundraising organized for the retirement ceremony of KNB's former Headmaster and many former KNB students who helped raise the fund and make the program a success.

We are grateful to our trustees, members of the governing council and friends who always support and advise us. We thank all our teachers and staff members who are committed to the mandate of PSS and work tirelessly in the pursuit of excellence. We are grateful to all the parents and students of Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan and Apli Shala for being with us.

Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar
Madhura Rajvanshi



Annual Report 2023-24

We dream of a world where no child will be deprived of education or be forced to attend a school that will mutilate their spirit.



Educational Outreach

Bridge Between Pre-primary and Primary: A Continuum in Education

From 2021-22, with the financial support of the H.T. Parekh Foundation, Pragat Shikshan Sanstha has been working to strengthen anganwadis and primary Zilla Parishad (ZP) schools in the Ausa block of Latur district and the Maan block of Satara district through the project- Bridge Between Pre-primary and Primary: A Continuum in Education (BBPP). The program consists of capacity building of anganwadi workers (AWWs) and primary teachers, providing materials to anganwadis and schools, evaluating children's learning, and community dialogue.

After seeing our successful work with 25 anganwadis and 25 Zilla Parishad schools over two years in Ausa, the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) department requested that we expand our efforts to the entire Ausa block. We chose to conduct direct interventions in half the anganwadis (180) and indirect interventions in the remaining half.

In the year 2023-24, we worked with 25 Zilla Parishad schools and 180 anganwadis in Ausa, as well as 50 anganwadis in Maan. The Maan project concluded in October 2023 with a district-level consultation on Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Satara. Government officials from all Zilla Parishad departments were invited, along with Child Development project officers (CDPOs) and anganwadi supervisors from each block. Many interested AWWs also attended.

ECE expert Dr. Neelima Gokhale delivered the keynote address, discussing the changes in early childhood education due to advancements in technology and in-depth brain and learning studies. She emphasized the importance of a stress-free environment and emotional safety for children. The consultation featured four panel discussions involving anganwadi workers, helpers, and supervisors.



Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar and Anganwadi workers and helpers in a panel discussion on the impact of capacity building of the anganwadis

Topics included capacity building of anganwadis reflected in classroom practices, the most effective practices in the project, bridging the gap between pre-primary and primary education, and capacity building for non-project anganwadis.

The highlight of the consultation was an exhibition showcasing children's pictures, stories, projects, worksheets, and art. A model anganwadi setup and a library corner were also displayed. The consultation was attended and appreciated by close to 300 people.



CEO Satara Zilla Parishad Shri. Dnyaneshwar Khilari, Deputy CEO (ICDS) Smt. Rohini Dhavale, H. T. Parekh Foundations' Educational Consultant Mr. Ujjwal Bannerji, Director of PSS Mr. Zia Quraishi and Vice President Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar visiting display of anganwadi work during the consultation

Although the project in Maan is over, the work is being sustained by the anganwadi workers and supervisors.

PSS's work in Latur district has been noticed by the government, and they have asked us to conduct training for 87 AWWs selected from the entire Latur district.

You can read the extended annual project report on this [link](#).

Strengthening the Foundation: Capacity Building of ECE Organizations

The NEP 2020 has advocated strengthening early childhood education in the country. As a result, many new players have entered the field. However, there is a paucity of good ECE programs based on research and practice. PSS has been acclaimed as one such institute and hence Wipro Foundation approached us with the request to carry out a course in Early Childhood Education for its partners from the Hindi belt. We got our ECE course translated into Hindi and offered the course in dual mode.



A discussion session in progress

The first contact period of the course was carried out for 16 participants in Pune at the beginning of July 2024. The highlight of this period was the visit to PSS balwadis at Phaltan where the participants could actually see all that was being discussed in theory.

Pustakmaitri Course

The Pustakmaitri course in Marathi is a unique initiative by Pragat Shikshan Sanstha. It was developed in 2022 for people interested in working among children with books. The course was developed with financial assistance from Parimal and Pramod Choudhari foundation and a pilot was made possible with financial assistance from Tata Trusts.

The first dual mode course of 4.5 months duration is being offered in 2024 beginning in June and ending in October. This course is being supported by Hon. High court Judge Shri. Gautam Patel (Retd.) and social worker Malashri Patel. Twenty five participants were selected from almost 60 applications.



A display in the course about understanding and repairing books

The first contact period was held in Pune from 12 to 15 June. Reading material in the form of two volumes of Marathi readings (mostly original and some translated) were given to the participants. The participants will complete 3 assignments with the help of their mentors before the second contact period in August 2024. They will visit the KNB library in the second contact period and explore a library related topic in depth in their field project.

An offshoot of this program was a short, two month activity of distributing good books worth Rs. 90,000/- to 13 remote schools accompanied by four on-line trainings.

All these books related activities have helped us form a community of book lovers all over Maharashtra, sowing seeds of reading among the children.

Library Outreach

During the lockdown, we started a small library program in Apli Shala (AS)* for the children living in Mangalwar Peth, a Dalit area of Phaltan town, with the help of funds from the SPA Foundation. This program is ongoing. One of our balwadi teachers, Rajashree Kakade, who was one of the participants of the pustak maitri pilot, runs this library. Last year, 15 students joined the AS library.

Rajashree Tai observed a significant issue: the children were not interacting with a particular girl. Using books on friendship, Rajashree Tai facilitated the friendships between the students and her. The girl, an avid reader, is now assisting other children with their reading.

Additionally, a library program was initiated in Golewadi village, situated 10 km south of Phaltan. KNB librarian Pradip Dhekale currently runs this library for 32 children in grades 1 to 5. He reads aloud to the children, conducts various library activities with them, and issues books for independent reading. He has observed an increased interest in books among the children. In addition to Marathi, the students also borrow Hindi and English books.



A reading aloud session in progress at the Golewadi library

* PSS runs two balwadis in Phaltan- Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan (KNB) and Apli Shala (AS), the latter being situated in the underprivileged area of the town. Apli Shala also provides space for the sewing class for women and a library program.

PSS Personnel as Resource Persons

The personnel from PSS have often been invited as resource persons to share their expertise and experiences at various educational events and workshops. Here are a few notable instances from 2023-24:

Contribution in the State Curriculum Framework

Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar was invited to join the committee of the [State Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage](#) (SCF-FS) and the committee for developing a six-month course for anganwadi workers.

National Conference on Nurturing Vibrant Libraries

On March 16, 2024, the Center for Microfinance (CmF), Tata Trusts, in collaboration with the Rajasthan Council of School Education (RCSE) and the Rajasthan State Council of Education, Research and Training (RSCERT), organized a one-day [national conference titled 'Nurturing Vibrant Libraries for Children in Schools and Community'](#) in Jaipur.

PSS was invited to participate in the panel discussions, which aimed to share the experiences, knowledge, and insights of various practitioners who have been instrumental in promoting and nurturing library spaces for children. These practitioners included library educators, administrators, policymakers, members of non-profit organizations, and individuals with significant contributions to this field.



Prakash Anbhule speaks in the conference

Prakash Anbhule represented PSS at the conference. He shared valuable insights into the work PSS has been doing in the realm of libraries. He highlighted the specific role that libraries play at the foundational stage, particularly in Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) and early grades such as Grades 1 and 2.

Training Workshops for BBPP Project

Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar conducted language education sessions for Anganwadi workers and ZP teachers as part of the Latur BBPP project. The resource team from PSS Balwadi, consisting of Sameera Qureshi, Nilofar Shaikh, and Swati Kadam, also played a vital role in the BBPP project in Latur. They visited anganwadis, conducted training sessions for the workers, and enhanced the capacities of the field team.

Additionally, Priyadarshani Sawant, the headmistress of the primary section at KNB, and librarian Pradip Dhekale provided capacity-building training for the BBPP project team. They also conducted foundational literacy training for grade 1 and 2 teachers at ZP schools in Latur.

Trainings by PSS Balwadi Team for Schools

Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar and the PSS Balwadi team conducted a 2-day activity-based workshop for the core committee, heads, and teachers of Indian Education Society, Dadar. Another workshop was conducted for the teachers of Urja Gurukul, Ahmednagar by the resource persons from PSS balwadis.

Shikshan Parishad

On the last Saturday of every month, the Phaltan Municipality Shikshan Mandal organizes a 'Shikshan Parishad.' During this event, teachers from various schools in the city give presentations on diverse educational topics. This year, two teachers from KNB participated in the Parishad. Mayuri Dhumal presented on the topic of determining each student's learning level as per learning outcomes, while Sanjyot Unde guided the teachers on writing *navopakram* (an initiative of the department of education for encouraging innovative practices in teachers).

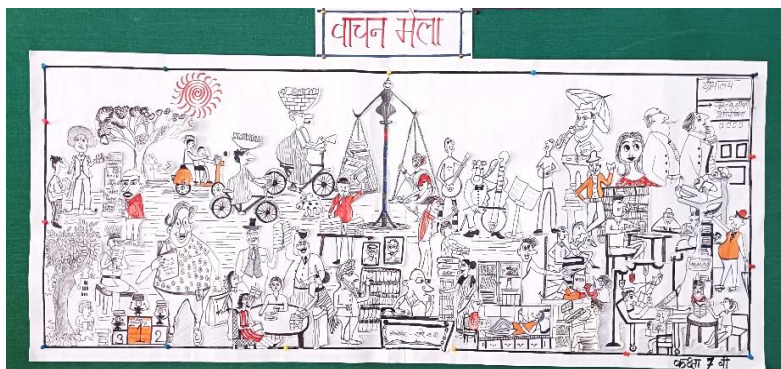
Online Presentation for APU Students

Madhura Rajvanshi was invited to give an online talk in the practicum session with M. A. Education semester 2 students at the Azim Premji University (APU), Bengaluru for a course titled 'Schools as Organizations'. The session featured resource persons from four different schools, each sharing their experiences of 'school culture' in various school contexts. Madhura presented on the culture of KNB. Students from the APU Bhopal campus also participated remotely in the session.

TISS Winter School

The Centre for Excellence in Teacher Education at Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, had organized a week-long Rachana Fellowship Winter School for student teachers from across India in November 2023. The target audience included B.Ed., B.El.Ed., M.A Education, and M.Ed. students.

Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar and Madhura Rajvanshi were invited to speak on the topic of sustaining innovative schools. They [presented](#) their thoughts and work in the school and showcased students' projects and artwork. The artwork of grade 7 students created in the style of Mario Miranda for their Hindi class was especially appreciated.



The student teachers found the concrete examples and ideas discussed very beneficial in connecting the theory they were learning to actual practices.

These contributions by PSS personnel have been instrumental in spreading best practices in education and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in various contexts.

Early Childhood Education

PSS's Early Childhood Programme is a very well thought out programme, based on latest research and practice all over the world. since the COVID lockdown, we have found that parents have become extremely protective. As a result, children are showing a great deal of separation anxiety and taking more time than before to settle down in school. Hence, for the past two years, we have been inviting newly admitted children and their parents in small groups to the school before the school actually begins, to familiarize them with the environment. The parents also take part in making the classroom ready for the opening. It is a good way for children to get to know the teachers and the school and for the teachers to get to know the children and parents. This practice has greatly benefited all the stakeholders ensuring smooth operations once the school begins.

Balwadis at PSS are joyful learning spaces. Every year we make khau (snacks). Children make lists of the ingredients needed to make their khau in their invented script and then visit the vegetable market or the supermarket to buy the material. Children themselves carry out all the transactions, referring to their lists with the help



Visit to a grocery store



Let's shell the peas

of the teachers, who help only when requested. Back at school, children engage in different processes of khau making, such as cleaning, pounding, and soaking. They were actively involved in the entire process, and teachers maintain a continuous dialogue with them.

Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan

Children's Activities

The Annual Project

Annual project work and the subsequent exhibition is a significant activity in any academic year at KNB. This year's topic for the Annual Project was '*Salokha*' or harmony. Given the abstract nature of the topic, we adopted a unique approach. Children worked in small groups on chosen subtopics and created various presentations, including puppet shows, rap songs, collages, mimes, food stalls, installations, documentaries, and more.

The first to fourth-grade students made a "Salokha House," with walls adorned with their writings and paintings. The fifth-grade students performed a [drama](#) on the harmony between humans and nature. Sixth-grade students presented a [puppet show](#) based on daily classroom experiences and depicted a harmonious wedding ceremony scene. They also performed a [skit](#) based on the life and work of Dr. Maxine Berntsen, the founder of PSS.

In this area, bangles are sold by Muslim bangle sellers, and women from all religions and castes have their bangles placed in their hands by Muslim men. This practice is a beautiful example of religious harmony. Sixth-grade students visited a bangle seller in the Phaltan market, learned about their history, and collected broken bangle pieces to create a beautiful collage.



Visit to the bangle shop



Collage made from broken bangle pieces

Seventh-grade students made a photo wall and arranged a food stall. Eighth-grade students created a [mime](#), a [rap song](#), and a short [documentary film](#) on religious harmony in Tirakwadi village near Phaltan. They also organized games for the parents. The ninth grade students made a wall painting, a quilt and salokha chariot.



Parents play a *salokha* snake and ladder game created and painted by grade 8 students

The project exhibition was held on January 11, 2024. "Salokha Sathis" (volunteers) guided groups of parents through the entire project in two hours. Children performing dramas and rap songs gave performances throughout the day. You can watch a short clip about the exhibition [here](#). KNB Teacher and education coordinator Madhura Rajvanshi's Marathi article about the annual project was published in the [March 2024 issue of Palakneeti magazine](#).

Arya Rothe, a filmmaker and visiting faculty member at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune, learned about the project and wanted to make a documentary film about it with her FTII students. Her team came to Phaltan for a week and helped the eighth-grade students create a music video for the rap song they had composed. The whole process of making the music video was captured by the FTII students for their documentary. It was a great learning experience for all the children. You can watch the rap music video [here](#).

Classroom Decoration Competition

A classroom decoration competition was organized for 8th to 10th-grade students. The children were asked to decide on a theme and decorate their respective classrooms without any help from the teachers.

The eighth grade chose "space" as their theme. The ninth grade selected "nature and rain," and the tenth grade chose "class memories." All classes had one week to prepare. The students formed groups to distribute the work and made lists of the materials they needed for the decorations.



The eighth graders painted planets on the walls and created a scene showing astronauts walking in space. The ninth graders collected bamboo grass and created a jungle-like scenery using bamboo and vines, along with writing poems and slogans. The tenth graders collected photographs of their class and organized them creatively.

Teachers visited each class to observe the decorations and asked students questions about their themes and the ideas behind them. The tenth graders won the class decoration competition.

Scout-guide Activities

In the year 2023-24 students participated in various *khari kamai* (earning money by doing some jobs) activities organized by the scout-guide. Grade 5 and 6 students carried out housework or garden work in their own or neighboring houses, the seventh graders put up a vegetable market in the school while grade 8 to 10 set up food stalls. A sum of Rs. 20,905/- was earned by the students from grades 5 to 10.

Eight girl guides from grades 9 and 10 participated in a 4-day Guide Rajya Puraskar (State Award) camp organized by Bharat Scouts and Guides in January 2024 at Sonthali, Kolhapur.



Grade 10 Guide from KNB, Sakshi Hendre, Leading an Exercise Session

Krida Mahotsav

The annual Krida Mahotsav (celebrating sports) is a chance for students to organize, compete, have fun, and engage in physical activity. It fosters a competitive spirit, encourages cheering for one another, and helps students manage their emotions. As usual, the tenth-grade students designed the two-day program. The events included relay races, dodgeball, cricket, kho-kho, kabaddi, badminton, lagori, chess and volleyball matches.

Farming

Since last year, we have initiated a farming session for Grade 7 students. Each day, a group of 6-7 students works in a small space behind the school. Our office clerk, Mr. Santosh Kadam, who is also a farmer, guides the students. Last year, the students planted brinjals, chilies, and beans, and learned various farming practices such as bed preparation, weeding, sowing, and manuring. We plan to continue offering this farming experience to Grade 7 students every year.

Field visits



Every year, field visits are organized to complement students' academic work. This year, the Grade 3 students visited a goat farm in Rajale, while the Grade 4 students explored a garden. The Grade 8 students went to Banganga River, where they drew pictures by the shore. The tenth-grade students visited the historic temples of Jabareshwar and Lord Ram to study the intricate designs on the walls.

Nutrition Week

The first week of September was observed as National Nutrition Week. The school took this opportunity to educate both students and parents about the importance of balanced meals. Nutritionist Dr. Prachee Ghodake held separate sessions for students and parents. Key points

from her talks, along with a weekly menu that included green leafy vegetables, salads, protein-rich foods such as soybean, paneer, eggs, or meat, sprouts, and fermented foods, were shared in the parents' WhatsApp groups.

Each day, children brought one item from the provided list. The nutrition week received positive feedback from both students and parents, with some parents continuing the suggested menu.

Art Activities

Mumbai based artist and art teacher Mr. Ranjit Kokate has been working with KNB students for over three years now. He conducts frequent online sessions for children and visits once in three months to work with them. Mr. Kokate along with our art teachers Ms. Harshada Shinde and Kalpita Dandavate have been consistently working on children's artistic expressions. Mr. Kokate has shared insights about these art activities in his Marathi blogs on Facebook. We have included the links in the titles of the activities.

Fan

To help 4th-grade students develop an understanding of the visual element 'shape', they were asked to draw a table fan from their perspective. While drawing the table fan, students were encouraged to focus on its shape and visual perception rather than just seeing it as a machine. They were to consider the visual imagery of the fan while drawing.

The students sketched various fans using pencils. Each student typically made 5 to 6 sketches and then selected one to create a final drawing. They connected the main shape to different themes, such as a fish tank with a fan emerging from it or a fan in the shape of Ravana with ten heads. Through this exercise, students realized that shape is not only hidden in objects but also exists in the viewer's mind and perception.



Abstract sculptures

To clarify the concepts of tangible and abstract, 6th-grade students were tasked with creating sculptures using waste material and natural items. The students brought various materials, such as boxes, cotton, and string, and collected some items from their surroundings.

They worked in groups to create these sculptures. Initially, they made sketches on paper and then transformed those sketches into three-dimensional forms. The students themselves

found suitable places to display their creations, understanding that the presentation of artwork is just as important as the artwork itself.

Mask making

The grade 7 students were tasked with creating masks using waste materials and natural items from their surroundings. However, the goal was not just to make an external face mask, but to think about how they would design it if they wanted to change their appearance. After creating the mask, they were to try it on. Before starting, they were shown pictures of different masks to help them understand what they needed to do. With this clarity, the students made some sketches and then began creating their main mask.

The students worked in pairs. Using one member's facial measurements, they designed a mask together. They were instructed to create non-representative designs. This activity showcased their imagination, curiosity, and perseverance.

Impressions of Manipur

The students created symbolic representations of the violence in Manipur by lying down onto newspaper and drawing various forms of deceased bodies. They then wrote appeals regarding women's rights. Their goal was to create a visual impression that made it seem as though the victims themselves were directly addressing the violence surrounding them. Observers would walk around these symbolic depictions of corpses, compelling them to reflect on the horrific incident.

The Wall of Lanterns



The grade 10 students painted their classroom wall, with each student tasked with individually drawing a lantern. To provide further clarity, the students were shown paintings by Picasso and other artists and discussed how each artist had interpreted the same object through their own perception. Working within a vertical rectangular space of one by two feet, the students used a single color and mixed shades of black and white to create their artwork.

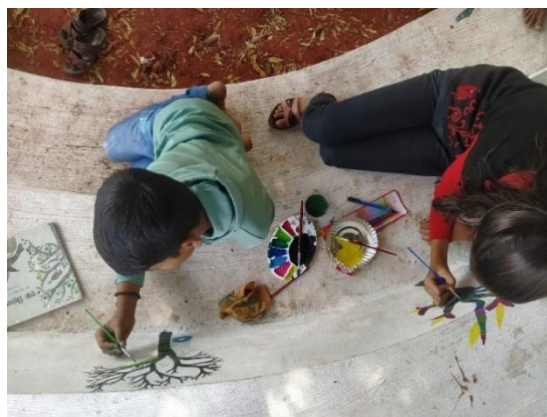
World Peace Calendar

A total of 35 KNB students from grades 6 to 10 sent their paintings for the World Peace Calendar competition organized by Aaghaz-e-Dosti, India. Paintings of the ninth standard students Reva Jog, Sai Dixit, Zeel Karne, Sanskruti Kadam and Jaykeerti Randive were shortlisted for the calendar and Sanskruti and Reva's paintings were selected for publishing in the calendar.



Painting the Reading Plaza

A reading plaza was constructed by Cummins India outside the library, and students from grades five to eight had the opportunity to paint it using images from their favorite library books. The process began with students creating rough sketches, which they then completed using primer colors. For many of them, this was their first experience painting on a wall. The diverse range of characters and imagery chosen added to the visual appeal of the plaza.



Sexuality Education

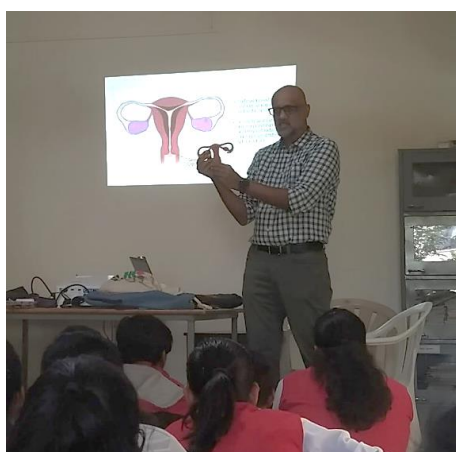
Every year, Arogyabhan Sanstha from Pune conducts a three-day workshop on sexuality and relationships for children aged 14-16. This workshop takes children on a journey of their birth and other aspects of health and sexuality using songs, acts, debates, and discussions, culminating in the students presenting their learnings to their parents. While it is a wonderful

program, the school recognized the need for a comprehensive sexuality education program for all students as it is the need of the hour.

In response, a program called SaHaJ (Sanman, Hakka, Jababdari) was initiated in August 2023. Designed by the Prayas Health Group, Pune, and based on the Rights Respect Responsibilities (3Rs) program by Advocates for Youth, SaHaJ aims to promote healthy relationships and responsible behavior among young people.



Grade 8 girls presenting in front of the parents after the Releshani workshop



Dr. Shirish Darak from Prayas explains the structure of uterus to the grade 8 students

Seven sessions were planned for all grades from 1 to 10, conducted by four resource persons from the Prayas team. These sessions covered topics such as boundaries, healthy and unhealthy relationships, consent, bullying, the human body, and the reproductive system. The Prayas team also showed some videos to the students, followed by discussions. Students openly asked many questions about periods, wet dreams, masturbation, love, and relationships, fostering an open and informative environment.

Library Activities

A total of 331 new books were added to the Iravati Karve Library of KNB. The library now has 12651 books. Some were gifted by parents and teachers while a few came in Parag Honor List Book Box 2023.

For the past year, an extra reading period was held for students in grades five through eight before the school. The main objective of these periods was to encourage children to read in a quiet environment, improve their concentration, and develop a habit of continuous reading. Books appealing to adolescents were made available, and students had the freedom to choose their books. Attendance was around 80%.

The librarian, Vidyadevi Nimbalkar, observed the sessions with the seventh-grade class and studied changes in their reading habits, overall reading skills, reading speed, and writing improvements. Based on her observations she submitted a *Navopakram* titled '[Improving Grade 7 Students' Independent Reading.](#)' She noted many positive changes in the students.

From the calendar published by the Parag Initiative of the Tata Trusts, students were introduced to famous children's literature authors and illustrators such as Atanu Roy, Nina Sabnani, Proyati Roy, Priya Kuriyan, and Rajiv Eipe. Their books were displayed in the library, and students were encouraged to explore these books and draw in the styles of these illustrators. For instance, they created illustrations in the Gond art style inspired by the book 'Bhil Katha.' Additionally, students watched films based on these books, further enhancing their understanding and appreciation of the illustrators' works.

Based on the illustrations from Atanu Roy's book 'Gijigaadu,' students were asked to draw objects that stand out in the dark, using various textures to make their artwork more vivid and creative. They drew objects like books, ears of jowar in the fields, sunflowers, gold and diamonds, candles, and many other things.

Questions about what the students liked or found unique in the illustrators' artworks were posted on the display board. Students wrote their answers, learning to notice the details in the illustrations. After reading the book 'O Ped Rangrez,' sixth-grade students created artwork using natural colors made from flowers, leaves, soil, turmeric, etc.



Painting with natural colors

Students wrote on diverse topics for the KNB's annual publication 'Navneet'. Grade 9 students with the help of the teachers worked in the editorial team.

Students from fifth and sixth grades interviewed the school's former student and poet, Rupal Patole, and were inspired to start writing their own poetry.

Granny Cloud



A student from grade 5 reads aloud a story to Jackie Granny while his classmate helps him

The Granny Cloud program for grades 4 and 5 continued this year. Children connected with grannies around the world once a week using the Skype platform. The activities included read-aloud sessions, art and craft projects, games, singing, discussions and internet searching.

Examinations

Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Exam

For the academic year 2023-24, the results of the tenth board exams were declared in June 2023. Out of 28 KNB students who appeared for the examination, 18 achieved distinction (marks above 75%), with 15 students scoring above 80% and 6 students scoring above 90%. Additionally, 7 students received a first-class grade, two received a second-class grade, and one received a pass class.

Ganesh Dhaigude, with a score of 97.4%, was the highest scorer in both the school and Phaltan taluka.

Drawing Grade Exam

A total of 57 KNB students participated in the 2023 grade-level drawing exams conducted by the Government of Maharashtra.

For the elementary grade drawing exams, 23 students participated: 7 received an A grade, 5 received a B grade, and the remaining 11 received a C grade.

For the intermediate level exam, 34 students participated: 4 received a B grade, and 29 received a C grade. One student did not pass.

Yoga Sadhana Exam

Yoga Sadhana Institute, Pune conducts 6 different levels of yoga exams every year. In 2023-24, 63 KNB students from grade 4 to 10 appeared for the exam and passed with the first class.

Competitions

Sports

The School Education and Sports Department of the Government of Maharashtra organizes various sports competitions every year. KNB students participated in tennis, badminton, yoga, and chess competitions.

Shreyan Kumar Gandhi from the ninth grade was selected for the interzone level in both soft tennis and lawn tennis tournaments.

Five girls and four boys from KNB participated in district-level badminton matches held in Satara. The under-14 girls' team reached the semifinals, and the under-14 boys' team reached the quarterfinals.

Three boys and ten girls participated in the taluka-level yoga competitions. Five students were selected for the district level, and Yash Nale from grade 8 advanced to the interzone level.

Divya Gandhi from grade 10 and Priyanka Gandhi from grade 7 were selected for the district-level chess matches.

Science

A joint venture by Satara ZP and Panchayat Samiti, Phaltan taluka, the 51st taluka-level science exhibition was held at Gunaware. Three 8th standard students displayed a model of space irrigation, and two 9th standard students presented a model of vertical farming. Additionally, two 10th standard students showcased a working street light model based on the concept of electricity saving. These students also participated in the secondary-level quiz and secured first place.



Students at the Gunaware science exhibition with science teacher Asawari Shinde

Furthermore, 32 students from grades 7 to 9 participated in the Vidnyan Ranjan Competition, an open book test conducted by the Marathi Vidnyan Parishad, Pune. They had to solve 150 challenging science questions by discussing them with peers, and adults, searching in books or on the internet, or by conducting experiments.

Out of these, 9 KNB students were selected for the next round, which took place on 3 March 2023 at the Pimpri Chinchwad Science Park. All the participants received certificates of participation.

The Phaltan branch of the Marathi Vidnyan Parishad organized an educational visit to the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) in Pune. Twenty-two students from KNB participated in the visit, where they explored the scientific displays and had the opportunity to hear from and interact with the renowned scientist Dr. Jayant Narlikar.

Essay, Elocution, Book Presentation Competitions

Fifty students from KNB participated in elocution and essay writing competitions held by Janseva Library in Phaltan and all performed exceptionally well. Two ninth-grade students excelled in the essay writing competition: Abhinav Jangam secured second place, and Zeel Karne took third place.

Additionally, ten KNB students attended a book presentation at Chhatrapati Shivaji Library in Satara. Adiba Tamboli from grade 8 and Ganesh Dhaigude from grade 10 were selected for the second round. Adiba presented on 'The Breadwinner' by Deborah Ellis, while Ganesh discussed 'Bhura' by Sharad Baviskar.

Teacher Professional Development

Keskar fellowship

In memory and honor of the late Pramod Yeshwant Keskar and with the financial support of Mr. Prabhakar Keskar PSS has established the Late Pramod Yeshwant Keskar Memorial Teacher Research Fellowship to support educators in their research and academic pursuits. The first fellowship was awarded to science teacher Mrs. Geeta Bobade. Over the past year, she collaborated with her mentor, Dr. Shirish Darak, a Senior Research Fellow at Prayas Health Group, Pune, to facilitate discussions on sexuality education between teachers and students at Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan, and to develop a comprehensive teacher's handbook. Mrs. Bobade is currently finalizing her report.

Art Workshops

Mr. Ranjit Kokate conducted two art workshops for the teachers about art integration with other subjects. The main objectives of the workshops were to understand the role of art in the school, discuss the knowledge and prejudices related to art, think about children's expression, explore ways to incorporate art or teaching methods into their subjects, and most importantly, to enjoy the entire process.



In the first workshop each participant had to create a crown representing their personality. Initially, all the teachers wrote down the aspects of their personality they felt were significant. They then sketched symbols that represented these aspects. Next, they experimented with the materials they would use, exploring different mediums. Before moving on to the final artwork, scaffolding was used to clarify their ideas about their crowns. They also looked at the images of unique and diverse

crowns or hats from the fashion world, which were different from traditional crowns. This step was crucial in helping them think about new possibilities for crowns.

Once everyone had created their ideation sketches, they began working on the final pieces. As each crown gradually took shape, everyone's enthusiasm and confidence grew. Once the crowns were complete, they wore them and appreciated each other's work.

In the second workshop, the teachers first made a list of adjectives and then used them to write individual stories. Afterward, they drew pictures related to their stories. Working in groups of 3-4, they combined their pictures to create new stories and made props for the storytelling sessions.

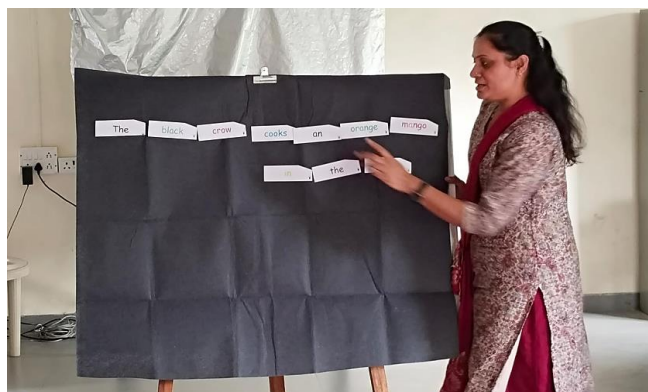
Accelerated English Program

Priyadarshini Sawant and Madhura Rajvanshi completed the Accelerated English training program offered by Shikshamitra, with financial support from the Wipro Foundation. Shikshamitra, a Kolkata-based educational organization, provides training in foundational literacy, creative writing, worksheet making, and art education.

The primary objective of the Accelerated English program is to assist teachers of 8- to 12-year-old students who have not met the English learning outcomes for their class. The program aims to ensure such learning for older children in a short period.

The workshop was designed in two phases. The first phase focused on listening and introduced concrete methods and materials to help teachers master basic communication, phonetic awareness, and vocabulary, enabling students to write simple sentences. The second

phase concentrated on children's creative writing skills and essential grammar, helping learners comprehend texts and develop the skills to answer questions.



Priya demonstrating use of colour coded cards for sentence making
in English teachers' workshop

After completing the course, Priya and Madhura conducted workshops for the English teachers and prepared a remedial program. The teachers identified students from grades 1 to 8, conducted baseline tests, and started remedial work with groups of students for 45 minutes, three days a week.

The Retirement Ceremony of Vishwas Jagadale sir

Mr. Vishwas Jagadale, a math and science teacher at KNB since 1993, and headmaster of secondary division since 2012, retired in March 2024. He has been a favorite teacher of many students due to his friendly nature and vast knowledge on eclectic topics, especially sports and politics. He has taught all 28 SSC batches and remains in contact with many former students.

To honor Mr. Jagadale's dedication and commitment to the school and students, we organized a [ceremony](#) where former students and teachers were invited. Three former students interviewed him during the event, and there was informal chatting and appreciation. A book titled '[Pimpalpan](#)' was released on this occasion, featuring writings from students and teachers about Mr. Vishwas Jagadale.



Although formally retired, Mr. Jagadale has decided to remain with the school and continue teaching. He has been appointed as an Honorary Advisor, where he will guide new headteachers and the administration team.

Visits to the PSS

Many schools, organizations, and individuals visit PSS every year to understand its philosophy and working methods. The visits typically include class observations, discussions with teachers, and learning the use of various teaching-learning materials.

In the year 2023-24, the visitors included teachers from Sondara Gurukul, Dongri, Dist. Beed; Swadhar IDWC, Pune; Sajag Sanstha, Kalyan, which works with children from urban poor communities; Mandar Pofale from Praj Foundation; members of Doorstep School Foundation, Pune; educators from Indian Education Society, Dadar; Quality Education Support Trust, Sonale; and Tara Mobile Creches, Pune.

A teacher couple from Thulir, Sittilingi, Tamil Nadu, Ram and Archana, along with their two daughters, visited KNB for a week. They are part of the Alternative School Education Network. They observed the processes in the school, interacted with teachers, and created some excellent English teaching material for the KNB teachers.



Tenth standard students showcase old annual project work to the guests from TN

A Fulbright Scholar, Dr. Sharolyn Pollard Durodola, who is studying how vernacular medium schools develop multilingual abilities in children, chose KNB to be part of her study. She conducted Zoom interviews with the headmaster, one parent, and one teacher each from grades 1 to 3. She visited the school in January 2024, observed the primary English classes, and interacted with the teachers.

Financial Matters

The work of Pragat Shikshan Sanstha is divided into four units. They are as follows-

1. **Apli Shala** is the oldest program based in Mangalwar Peth in Phaltan and works with the underprivileged. The Apli Shala programs consisting of balwadis, a library, and a sewing class do not charge any fees and are supported by funds received from donors. For the past five years it is being supported by SPAEF. The funds provided in 2023-24 were Rs. 6,97,800/-

2. **Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan (KNB)** is a government recognized unaided Marathi medium school offering an opportunity to learn Math and Science through English from the fifth standard onwards. KNB charges fees and it has a very affordable fee structure. For the academic year 2023-24 KNB charged full fees at Rs. 14,300/- for balwadi, Rs. 15,125/- for grades 1 and 2, Rs. 16,335/- for grades 3 and 4, Rs. 16,940/- for grades 5 to 7, Rs. 17,545/- for grades 8 and 9, and Rs. 18,755/- for grade 10. The amount of school fees collected over the year were Rs. 54,77,220/- . We have successfully collected the 100% of the fees for this year. In spite of the reasonable fee structure, many students are unable to pay the full fees and are given partial or full concession.

25% of children in each class from std. 1 to 7 are given admissions without any fees under the Right to Education (RTE) act. The fees of these children are reimbursed by the government. However, we have received only Rs. 2,56,310/- in the year 2023-24 out of the total of Rs. 31,42,540/- receivable since 2019.

3. The third unit is the **Educational Outreach** unit under which we carry out programs with the government schools or community or other educational enterprises. In the previous year, we have carried out direct intervention in 25 Z.P. schools and 180 *anganwadis* of AUSA block (Dist. Latur) and 50 *anganwadis* in Maan block (Dist. Satara) under the project Bridge between 'Pre-primary and Primary schools—a Continuum in Education' supported by H. T. Parekh Foundation. We received a total of Rs.1,30,81,000/- from the foundation and the whole amount was used. The PSS received an amount of Rs. 12,36,000/- for hosting the project and sharing its premises and resources for running of the project.

Another outreach program we have started this year is 'Strengthening the Foundation: Capacity Building for Early Childhood Education Organizations' with support from Wipro to build the capacities of its partners from all over India. We have received a grant of Rs. 14,81,900/- out of which Rs.1,28,290/- will be paid to PSS for administrative and resource support.

4. The fourth unit is **Early Childhood Education (ECE)**. The ECE team runs six balwadis in Phaltan and carries out ECE trainings in the outreach. Their contribution to the BBPP-A Continuum in Education project is extremely important.

The income from donations received, both foreign and domestic, in the year 2023-24 was Rs. 98,103/-. The interest on banks and investments was Rs. 23,95,327/-. We received a total of Rs. 8,84,306/-.

The royalty on sale of books by Jyotsna publications was Rs. 72,137/- and the amount from sale of books (in-house publications) and other resources was Rs. 89,464/-.

We had a sum of Rs. 4,79,565/- available under the income tax act at the end of the year 23-24 for spending on the objects of the trust over the next 3 years. That was set apart u/s 11(2)(a) of the Income Tax act for carrying out major building and maintenance work, purchase of capital goods and other revenue expenditure on the objects of the trust. Of the above amount, Rs. 2,72,210/- has been spent on repairs and maintenance activity and revenue expenditure.

We have a Corpus fund of Rs. 1,98,67,287/- to which we have been able to contribute Rs. 75,000/- received as a donation from Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar.

The Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950
SCHEDULE VIII
[vide Rule 17 (1)]
Name of Trust: Pragat Shikshan Sanstha
Registration No : F - 787

Balance Sheet as on 31st March 2024

Funds & Liabilities	sch	Year ended 31st March 2024 (Rs.)	Property & Assets	sch	Year ended 31st March 2024 (Rs.)
<u>Trust Funds or Corpus</u>			<u>Immovable properties</u>	6	
As per last balance sheet	1	19,792,287	As per last balance sheet		6,074,509
Addition during the year		75,000	Add: Addition		-
Utilization during the year		-	less: sale		-
		19,867,287	Less: Depreciation		292,566
<u>Other Earmarked Funds</u>					5,781,944
Depreciation Fund		-	<u>Investments</u>	4	36,159,848
Sinking Fund		-	<u>Loans & Advances</u>		
Reserve Fund		-	<u>Other Fixed Assets</u>		
Any Other Fund	2	10,268,730	As per last balance sheet		1,630,238
<u>Loans (Secured or unsecured)</u>			Add Additions during the year		77,756
From Trustees			Less Sale/Disposals during the year		1,200
From Others			Less: Depreciation		248,787
<u>Liabilities</u>					1,458,007
For Expenses	3	493,323	<u>Deposits & Advances</u>		
For Advances		-	To Trustee		-
For Rent & Other Deposits		-	To Employees		-
For Sundry Credit balances		-	To Contractor		-
		493,323	To Others		10,995
<u>Income & Expenditure Account</u>					10,995
Balance as per last balancesheet		15,494,168	<u>Income Outstanding</u>		1,585,233
Less: Transfer to Accumulation Form 10		-	<u>Other Current Assets</u>		
Add: Surplus as per I & E A/c		1,940,875	Stock in Hand		-
		17,435,043	Tax Deducted at Source		500,009
Inter Branch/ Divisional Balance			Affiliated Institutes		-
Notes to Accounts	15		Cash and Bank Balances	5	2,568,346
Total		48,064,381	TOTAL		48,064,381

The above balance sheet to the best of my belief contains a true account of the Funds and Liabilities and of the Property and/Asset of the Trust

PRAGAT SHIKSHAN SANSTHA

For Pragat Shikshan Sanstha

Trustee

Trustee
Date : 12/09/2024
Place -Phaltan

C. Nimkar
Trustee

Trustee



As per our report of even date

For KVMDS & Associates
Chartered Accountants
FRN 121347 W

CA Samrat Amil Garule
Partner
UDIN :24159024BKEHZU6308
M No. 159024

The Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950
SCHEDULE IX
Name of Trust: Pragat Shikshan Sanstha
Registration No F - 787

Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2024

Expenditure	sch no.	Year ended 31st March 2024 (Rs.)	Income	sch no.	Year ended 31st March 2024 (Rs.)
<u>To Expenditure in Respect of Properties</u>			By Rent		-
Rates, taxes, cesses		228,294			
Repairs & Maintenance		100,509	<u>By Interest/Income from Investment</u>		
Insurance		8,233	On Fixed Deposits/Investments		2,360,660
Salaries		-	On Loans		-
Depreciation		-	On Savings Bank Account		21,557
Other Expenses		-	On IT Refund		13,110
					2,395,327
To Establishment Expenses		23,879			
To Remuneration to Trustees			By Dividend		-
To Legal Expenses		23,210	By Donation		142,838
To Audit Fees		32,000	By Grants		-
To Contribution & Fees					
<u>To Amounts written of</u>			<u>By Income from other sources</u>	8	
(a) Bad debts		-	School Fees		5,846,700
(b) Loan Scholarships		-	Training Fees		157,484
(c) Irrecoverable rents		-	Sharing of premises & resources		1,236,000
(d) Other items		-	Sale of Books / DVDs etc		89,464
To Miscellaneous Expenses		47,922	Royalty		80,152
To Depreciation (other than property)		541,352	Miscellaneous Income		76,449
			Other Sources		-
					7,486,249
To Amounts transferred to funds		-			
<u>To Expenditure on objects of the Trust</u>			Transfer from Reserves		-
(a) Religious	7	-			
(b) Educational		7,078,140			
(c) Medical Relief		-			
(d) Relief of Poverty		-			
To Surplus Carried over to Balance Sheet		1,940,875			
TOTAL		10,024,414	TOTAL		10,024,414

Notes on Accounts

9

As per our report of even date

PRAGAT SHIKSHAN SANSTHA

[Signature]
Trustee

Trustee

C. Nimkar
Trustee

Trustee

Date : 12/09/2024

Place -Phaltan

For KVMDs & Associates
Chartered Accountants
FRN 121347 W



[Signature]
CA Samrat Anil Garule
Partner

M No. 159024

UDIN:24159024BKEHZU6308

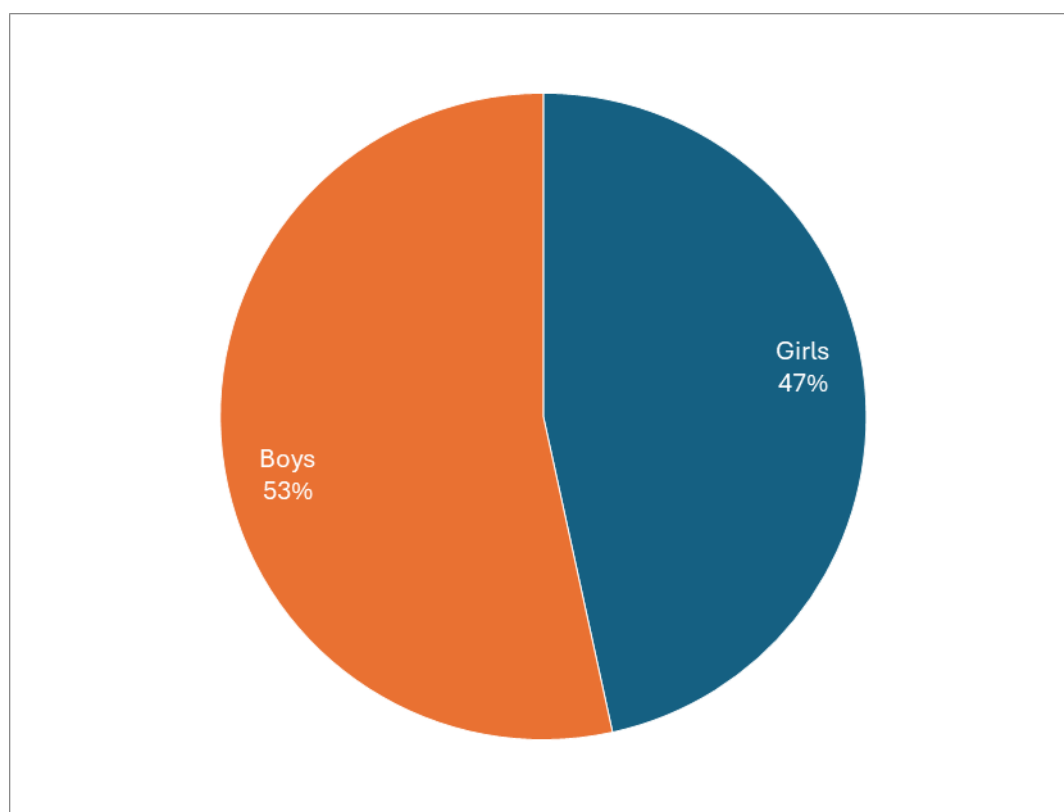
Annexure 1.1

Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan 2023-2024

Table 1. Enrollment by gender

Standard	Girls		Boys		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Balwadi	50	49	51	51	101
Primary (1-7)	120	48	131	52	251
Secondary (8-10)	40	40	59	60	99
Total	210	47	241	53	451

Fig.1. Enrollment by gender



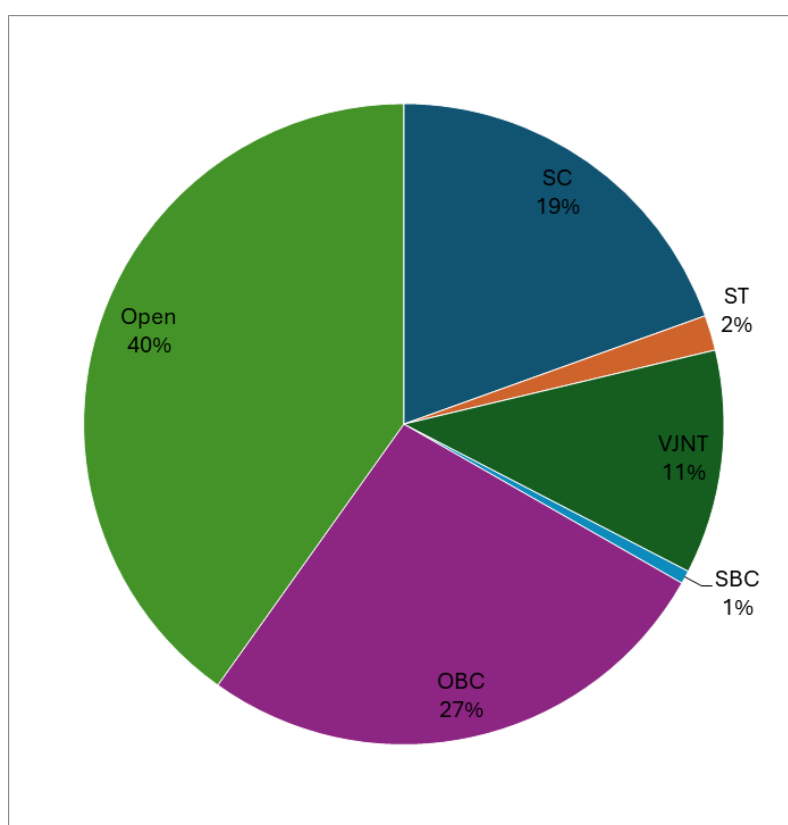
Annexure 1.2

Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan 2023-2024

Table 2. Enrollment by caste category

Caste	SC	ST	VJNT	SBC	OBC	Open	Total
Balwadi	15	0	10	2	39	35	101
Primary	52	7	28	0	50	114	251
Secondary	21	1	13	1	31	32	99
Total	88	8	51	3	120	181	451
%	19.51	1.77	11	1	27	40	100

Fig. 2. Enrollment by caste category



SC Scheduled Castes
ST Scheduled Tribes
VJNT Denotified and Nomadic Tribes
SBC Special Backward Class
OBC Other Backward Class
Open All other castes not falling in the above categories

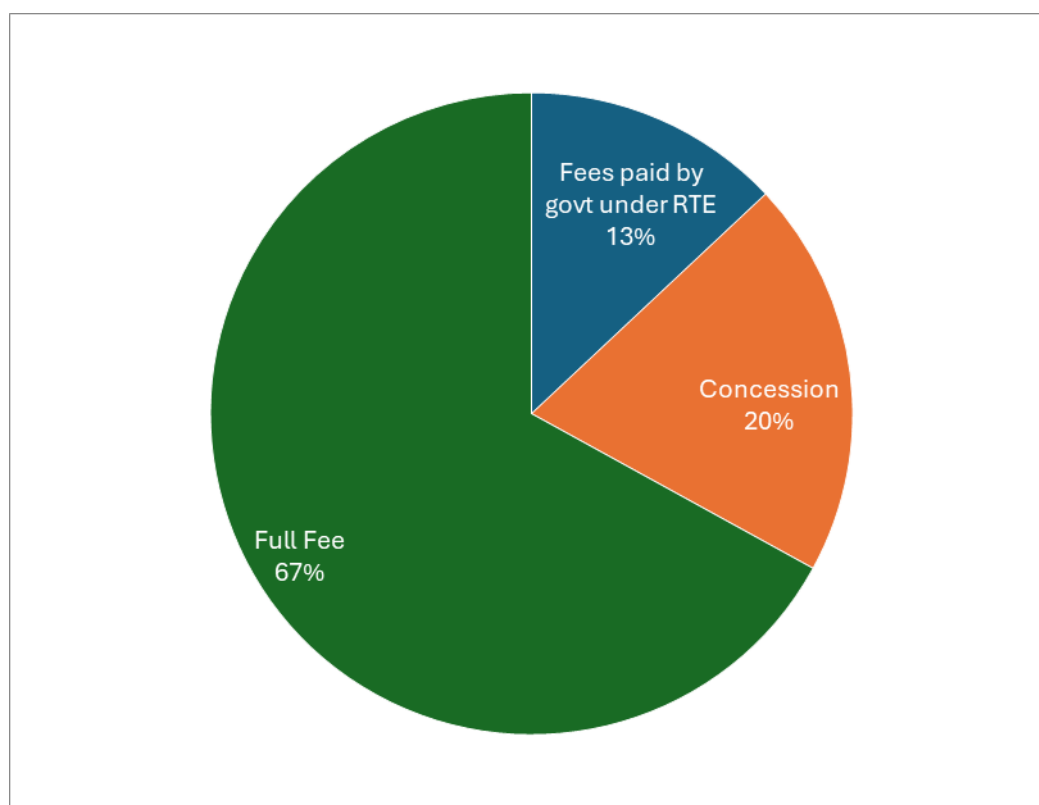
Annexure 1.3

Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan 2023-2024

Table 3. Fee Structure

Unit/Std.	Fees						Total
	Fees paid by govt under RTE 2010		Concession		Full Fee		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Balwadi	0	0	9	9	92	91	101
Primary (1-7)	59	24	44	17	148	59	251
Secondary (8-10)	0	0	35	35	64	65	99
Total	59	13	88	20	304	67	451

Fig. 3. Fee Structure



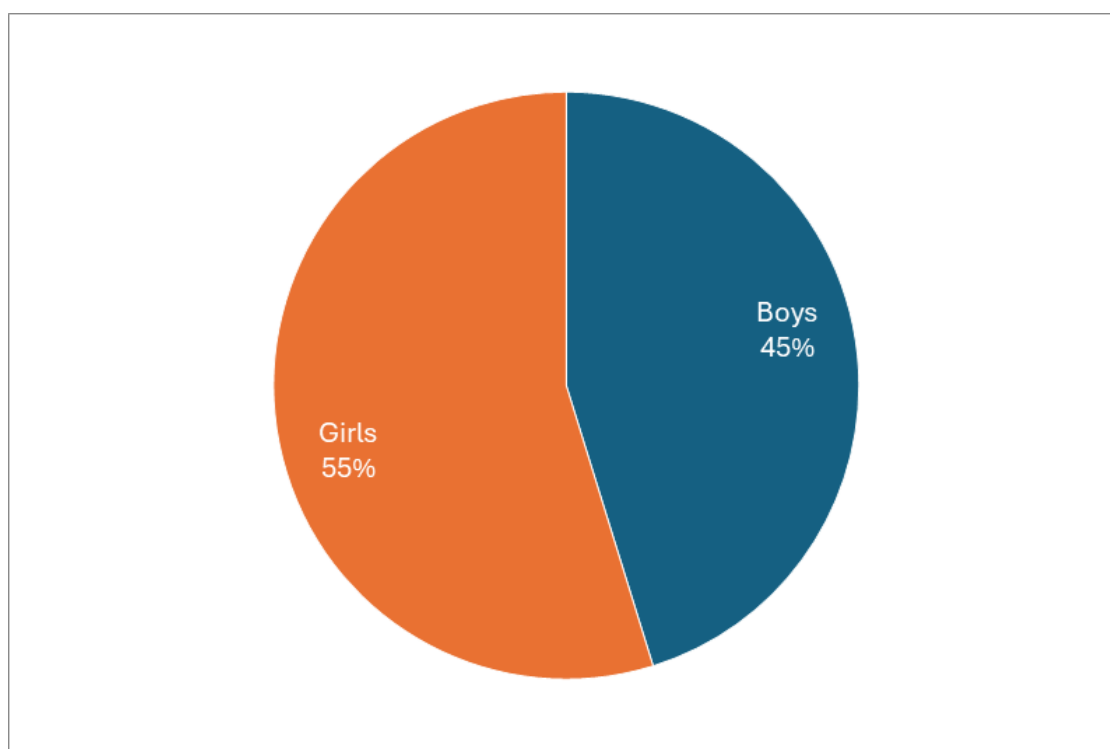
Annexure 2.1

Apli Shala 2023-2024

Table 5. Genderwise enrollment in Balwadis and sewing classes

Balwadi	Girls	Boys	Total
Shishu gat Balwadi	9	10	19
Madhla gat Balwadi	12	10	22
Motha gat Balwadi	11	13	24
Sewing classes	8	0	8
Total	40	33	73
%	55	45	100

Fig 5. Genderwise enrollment in Balwadis and sewing classes



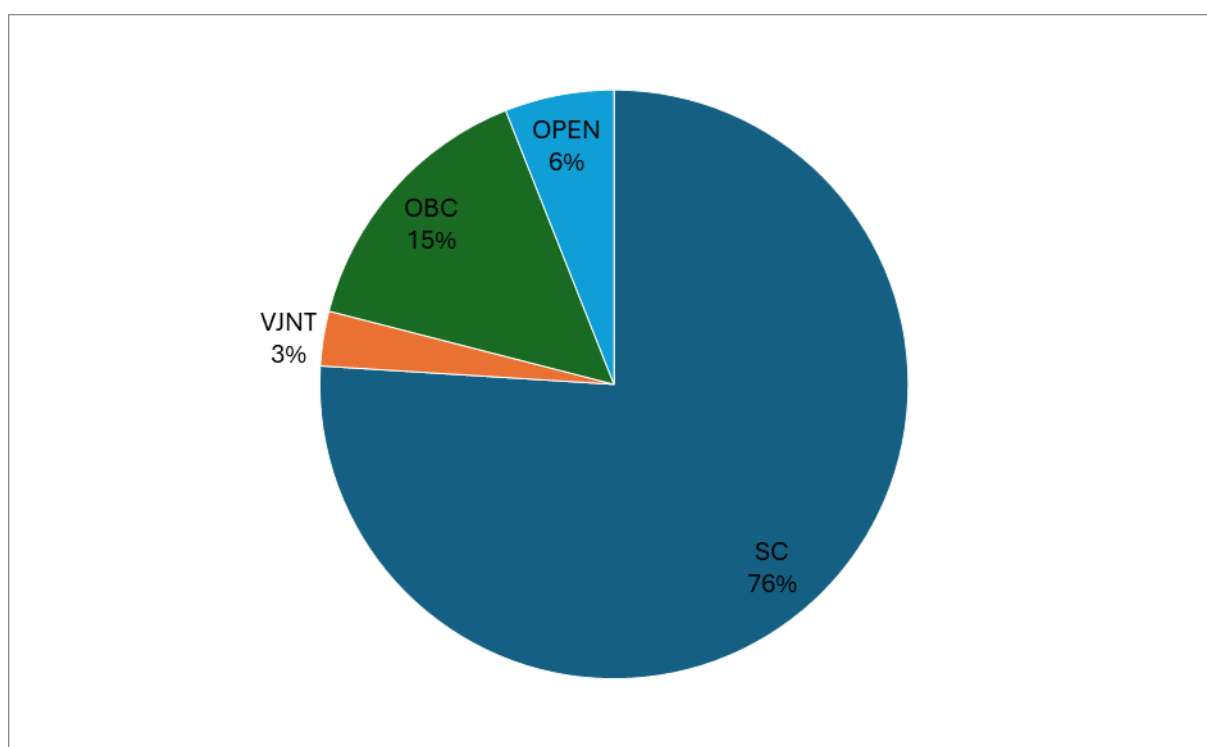
Annexure 2.2

Apli Shala 2023-2024

Table 6. Castewise enrollment in Balwadis

Balwadi	SC	VJNT	OBC	OPEN	Total
Shishu gat Balwadi	17	0	1	1	19
Madhla gat Balwadi	12	1	9	0	22
Motha gat Balwadi	20	1	0	3	24
Total	49	2	10	4	65
%	76	3	15	6	100

Fig. 6. Castewise enrollment in Balwadis



SC
VJNT
Open

Scheduled Castes
Denotified and Nomadic Tribes
All other castes not falling in the above categories

Summary

Table 7. Total number of beneficiaries of PSS programs 2023-2024

Unit/Program	No. of beneficiaries: children	No. of beneficiaries: adults
PSS teaching, non-teaching and project staff	-	65
KNB	451	902
Apli shala	65	130
Sewing class	-	8
Outreach Program	11825	8875
Total	12341	9980

Note:

1. The adults in KNB and Apli Shala are indirect beneficiaries as they are the caregivers of the students who are the direct beneficiaries.
2. The direct beneficiary adults in the outreach program are the teachers, Anganwadi workers, and helpers who are receiving capacity building trainings. The indirect beneficiaries are the parents of the students, as well as the teachers and workers who have attended the beat meetings.
3. The direct beneficiary children in the outreach program are the Anganwadi and ZP school students under the BBPP project, while the indirect beneficiaries are the students of the indirect beneficiary adults.

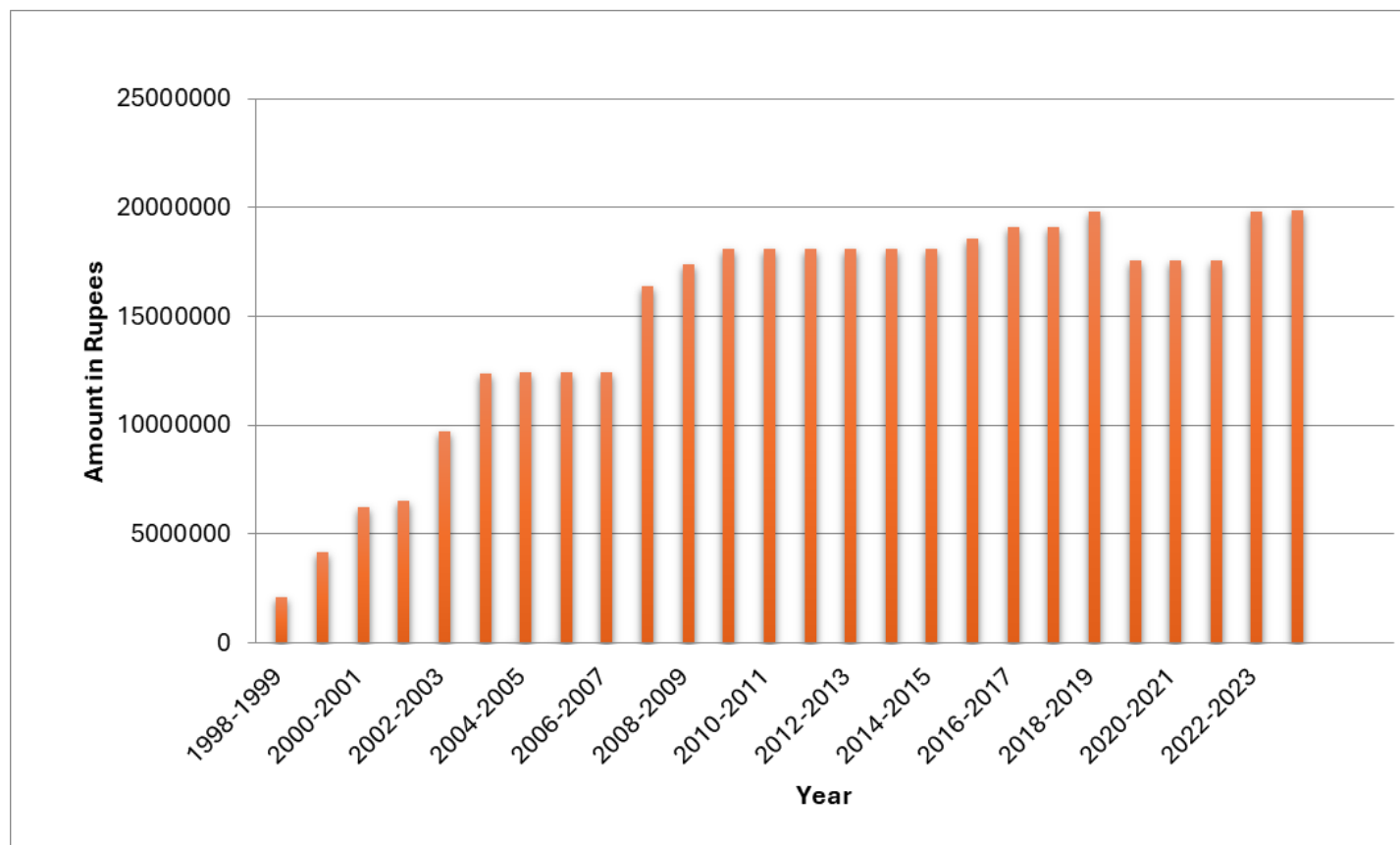
Annexure 4

Resources Developed by PSS

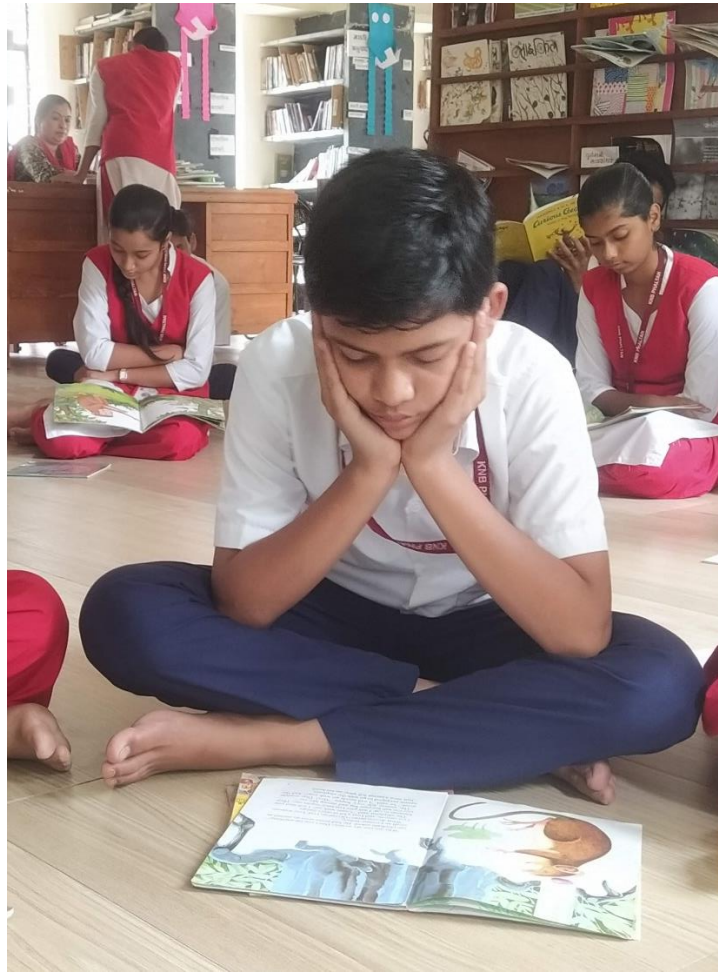
A	Publications
	For Children
1	17 Readers developed under NELPSPB Project
2	A set of 3 books compiling children's songs
3	Everyday English part 1 and 2 by Jane Sahi
4	Teaching English Through English by Jane Sahi
5	16 Navneet (KNB's annual publication of children's writings) issues
6	English work books and dictionaries
	For Parents and Educators
1	Teacher Manual 'Mule Shikti Kartana'
2	Compendium of articles by reflective teachers
3	A set of 7 course books for an Early Childhood Education course
4	11 Palakneeti magazines issues edited by PSS team for the year 2015
5	Everyday English Book - 1 (Teacher Manual)
6	Everyday English Introductory book
7	Mulanche Srujanantmak Likhan by Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar
8	Teacher training modules for grade 1 and 2
9	Navopakram by teachers
10	Reports by CLLC Research fellows
11	Mulanche Granthalay: Pustakanshi Nate Jodtana edited by Dr. Manjiri Nimbkar
B	Films
	Documentaries
1	A Chance to Dream- A documentary on KNB school
2	Documentary on the work of NELPSPB project
	Training films
1	16 Balwadi training films (dubbed in Hindi and English)
2	13 Early literacy teacher training films
3	Everyday English training film- Here is a Tree
4	11 Anganwadi best practices films of Ausa, Latur
C	Online Resources
1	Web Based Portal for Teachers support
2	112 articles by teachers and well known educationists on PSS website
3	Around 160 educational videos uploaded on YouTube channel of Pragat Shikshan Sanstha
4	6 Photo stories of village libraries on the Tata Trusts website
D	Printed posters and library photo stories
1	6 Photo stories of village libraries
2	43 Posters of ECE
3	10 Posters of children's songs
4	9 Posters explaining constructivism

Annexure 5

Figure 8: Corpus Growth



Get Involved



*Every child has a dream, and quality education is probably the best path to that dream.
You can help a child to achieve her dream!*

- Donate to the corpus or any of our programs.
- You can also sponsor one or more children from Kamala Nimbkar Balbhavan. The school fees are relatively modest- a maximum of Rs. 14500 to 18500 per year, per child, all inclusive. You may opt to sponsor a boy or a girl of any age between 3 to 16.

You can donate to us or sponsor a child by using any of the following options.

- **Bank Transfer**
Account Name: Pragat Shikshan Sanstha
Account No: 38590200000157
Bank: Bank of Baroda
Branch: Phaltan, Dist. Satara, Maharashtra
IFSC code- BARBOPHALTA
- **By Cheque:** Draw the cheque in the name of Pragat Shikshan Sanstha and send it to our address.

You can avail of a tax benefit under 80G of Income Tax.