

Canford India Partnership 2019

Twelve Canford pupils plus a number of teachers travelled to the Goodwill Children's Home in Tamil Nadu for this summer's Canford Partnership. Here pupils document the *"reflections, discoveries and adventures"* experienced by the group.

On arrival at Goodwill, the group received an *"overwhelmingly cheerful and friendly welcome"*. Canfordians immediately got involved in the life of the orphanage teaching children in India a variety of subjects, including Maths and English.

They also choreographed and rehearsed a cultural exchange dance which they performed for children at the variety of destinations that they visited.



In addition to academic lessons, the group taught children of a variety of ages arts and crafts too. Emma documented the challenge of the language barrier during this experience:

"We moved onto arts and crafts with the 2nd standard, decorating wooden hot air balloons in the theme of different letters of the alphabet, which turned out to be harder than we thought considering they spoke hardly any English".



They also experienced authentic Indian cuisine with the Vice Principal of Goodwill, at his house. Alex reports:

"We were honoured to be invited to the Vice Principals house for the afternoon, so we set off on a trek down in the direction of the local tribal village. We had some drinks and local snacks down amidst the coffee plantations and were amazed by the hospitality of the Vice Principal and his wife".

Later in the trip, as part of a four-day excursion, the group visited an orphanage for boys in Samapati, where the group played the famous cricket match.

Reflecting on the group's experience teaching at the boys' orphanage, Finn reported:

“Teaching the very youngest children, some of whom spoke almost no English, proved challenging, but we found smiles and gestures went a long way and all had a great deal of fun (including the children’s teachers)”.

The group also gained an appreciation for the difference between Canford’s catering services and those at the orphanage. Finn noted that *“it was amazing to watch just two cooks prepare food for almost 100 children”.*

The group’s adventure included visiting a number of local villages. During their visit to each village, Canford pupils presented children *“with new school bags containing a dress for the girls, and jeans and a shirt for the boys”.* Reflecting on the experience, Ellie reports:

“It was a day filled with excitement, happiness, and the experience of being slightly emotional to see the excitement we brought the children through the gifts of new dresses and shirts”.

Before leaving, there was a ceremony where bags and items of clothing were donated. Holly highlights the value of these donations for the children:

“[For] the local children, these gifts make a huge impact to their everyday lives, similar to what we see at Christmas. After a few speeches of the Headmasters of the schools and the committee members of Goodwill, the gifts were given each and every child. This was a moment to savour, where like I said above, holds a sentimental value, a moment the children won’t forget...and neither will we”.



Reflecting on the experience of the group back at base, Goodwill children’s home, Holly concluded *“we all felt so special to be welcomed so eagerly into their lives”.*

Additional reporting by Alice Martyr