

Christmas greetings from Child Link! With Christmas fast approaching we wanted to take a moment to thank you, our faithful supporters, for your continued and much valued support for Child Link. There have been a few changes for us at Child Link and we hope this means a better and more efficient means of communication. We are excited to share with you all that has been happening in India and Nepal over the last year.

An Update from Gnana Deepam School in India

Surviving Covid

Through help from Child Link, the school was able to maintain all its staff on salary despite no school fees coming in as the government had decreed that families did not have to pay fees due to Covid!

Since the school was able to retain its staff, Gnana Deepam was one of the few schools in the district to continue providing education to its students through on line classes. It was tricky to manage but it was important for the children to have some kind of continuing education. A big challenge was internet connectivity and lack of suitable devices in the more remote villages, some children having to walk to other villages daily to share a mobile phone and internet with another student.

The past academic year was the first year that Gnana Deepam has been able to run without any Covid related interruptions.

The school was thrilled to achieve the highest marks in it's A-level equivalent exams in the entire district! The girl who secured the top marks, Sheeba, has been sponsored by Child link for the last 7 years. She is from a Scheduled Caste which is the lowest and most looked down upon by society. Her father has been put out of work due to a serious injury and her mother was struggling to afford her education with her meagre field earnings. Child-Link stepped in to enable Sheeba to continue her education.



Also, a special mention for Rama Bairavi, another Child-Link sponsored girl, who came in second in the district. These two girls topped the government exams from around 20,000 students in total. An achievement well worth celebrating and one which demonstrates what giving a girl a chance can mean and also what an effective school we have teamed up with.

This past year has also been a year for getting the school's strong sport ethos back on track. In August this year, the school was able to host its first Annual Sports day since Covid. This was well attended by the families of the students and was a very special day for the school.



The Junior and Senior girls hockey teams are back in full swing now. Two senior girls in the photo below in blue tee shirts, have taken on the regular after school coaching of the girls hockey with much success



Changes in Gnana Deepam School

Stephen and Beth Devaraj have moved back to England with their two children. After 18 years, Steve therefore has resigned as principal of Gnana Deepam and a new principal has stepped in. The school was pleased to welcome Ezra Samuel along with his wife Ruth, in May this year. They have settled in really well. Ezra oversees the daily running of the whole school and Ruth teaches maths and helps with accounts as well. They have one son who attends the school and two older boys who are in higher education in another part of India. Together as a family they have embraced the vision and ethos of the school as well as gained acceptance by the wider local community.

Nepal - Things are Going well !



The pre-school classes are in full swing. They are being taught by the young people from the church youth of the same community and so are well received. They regularly have devotions and prayer time with the children and are able to teach the good news of Jesus. They are able to counsel, encourage and pray with the children during these devotion times.

A number of parents have expressed how much of a burden has been lifted through the feeding programme in the pre-school, as many struggled to provide regular nourishing food for their children. The children are also eager to attend school as they know a wholesome hot meal awaits them !



The bus that was sponsored by Child Link is proving invaluable as the children who graduate from the pre-school in the slum are admitted to a local school nearby and the bus is used to pick up and drop these children to the school. So far, all the children are doing very well as they continue to study.



In Salisbury

The stall at the Fisherton Warehouse continues to be an active part of the fundraising efforts of Child-Link, raising around £800 a month after costs. Our Child-Link trustee Diana heads this up, sourcing and selling antiques, furniture and suitable artefacts. If you would be able donate some good collectibles and artefacts, or furniture please do get in touch with her directly on: 07736541079.

Alternatively, if you are local to Salisbury do pop in! It's a great place to find unique and special Christmas gifts and they are very reasonably priced.

Coffee mornings and Bazaars continue to be another source of fundraising.

Please do get in touch by email if you would like to fundraise for Child-Link through other ways. We would be happy to support you as best we can with information, leaflets, etc.

We are looking to speak at a number of groups and churches this coming year, so if you would like us to speak at a group or church you go to please do contact us by email.



Please also do get in touch by email if you would like to fundraise for Child-Link through other ways. We would be happy to support you as best we can with information, leaflets, etc.

As a charity, we are excited about the year ahead and all that will be in store for us both here and overseas. As we enter the season of gifts, we would like to thank you for your ongoing gifts throughout the year. May you also know a season of blessing in the coming year.

Beth Devaraj

On behalf of the Child-Link trustees.

**f Find us on
Facebook**

facebook.com/childlinkuk/