

## **Introduction to Prerana Vidyalaya**

Inspired by the philosophy - Madhyasth Darshan Sahastitvavaad (propounded by Hon. Shri A. Nagraj ji), Prerana Vidyalaya was established in March 2017. The school is a step forward in the direction of **Humanisation of Education (In other words, education for happiness and prosperity)**. This concept was made a reality, under the patronage of Gandhi Vidya Mandir, Sardarshahr, Churu distt., Rajasthan.

The primary responsibility of the functioning of Prerana Vidyalaya, is shouldered by respected members of Manav Teerth – a centre for study and practice of Madhyasth Darshan.

Prerana Vidyalaya is a Chhattisgarh Board school running in the medium of English. Presently, the school is running from Nursery to Class 10 and each year a class is added on.

## **Curriculum**

The process of Humanisation of Education has been attempted in three stages:

Stage 1: Determining the space available in the existing curriculum:- the idea was to identify what scope there is within the existing curriculum for innovation and introduction of more complete content and strategies in education that were unique to us and could bring to the table. We spent the first two years observing what already exists and how we can make space for **better content and pedagogy**.

Stage 2: Utilising the existing space:- We utilised what space we saw existed and while conforming to the syllabus requirements we used our discretion to identify what was necessary to be imparted academically and also in terms of values.

Stage 3: Determining how to create more space:- From the beginning, we encouraged a culture of learning among the students as well as teachers as it was important that there may be openness for all the experiments for the best education.

3a: Regular teacher training: We have been conducting regular trainings for our teachers by our in-house mentors as well as guests from outside with the intention to empower them - develop depth in their subjects, methods of delivery and have a graceful personality.

3b: Following the process of training the phase of execution is slow but gets implemented in a phased manner based on how much the teacher has grasped

The Main Curriculum of the School is divided into two parts:

1. Academics
2. Personality Development & Human Values Based Education

This is dispensed in the following manner:

- Nursery to Pre-Primary II: 80 % Personality Development & 20% Academics
- Classes I-II: 70% Personality Development & 30% Academics
- Classes III-V: 60% Personality Development & 40% Academics
- Classes VI-VIII: 40% Personality Development & 60% Academics
- Classes IX-X: 20% Personality Development & 80% Academics
- Classes XI-XII: 10% Personality Development & 90% Academics

The logic behind this distribution of time between personality development and academics is such that accounts for a child's capacity for learning. At a younger age (pre-primary) academic learning is more through **listening and activity** and as they progress towards higher grades (higher secondary) they progress into becoming independent in learning - reading and being able to **comprehend** what is written in their textbooks.

The CVMS and Personality Development part of the curriculum is imparted, on an honorary basis, by the Team of Manav Teerth. The Academic curriculum is taught, under their guidance, by eminent teachers, proficient in their respective subjects. Along with this, a lot of time is devoted to Teachers' Training, to raise their proficiency and expression, in the fields of Academics, CVMS and Personality Development.

### **Teachers**

Besides the official requirements for selecting academic personnel, the criteria that we primarily focus on while recruiting teachers are:

1. People with **pleasant personalities**, who genuinely believe that students have the capacity to understand things.
2. Also, we look for people who are **open to learning** new things about their subject and also new ways of teaching.
3. The teacher should have an **affinity towards children**. They should be able to connect with students, care about them and find joy in their smallest and most significant achievements.
4. Teachers need to have **appreciation for teaching**. They should have an attitude of teaching with a sense of humility.

5. They should be able to see teaching as one of the most important professions, which helps **shape the mindsets** of future generations.

At Prerana teachers are committed to providing a **holistic education** to their students. Experts from across the country mentor our teachers in not just their subject areas but also in their overall development. Our mentors invest a lot of their time in building depth in teachers' understanding of their subject areas and developing an openness to learning new concepts and teaching methodologies. Some of our teachers do not take any salary for this purpose and teach for their sense of satisfaction and contentment. This has further led to an enrichment in the kind of education being provided at the Vidyalaya. Students also have a strong acceptance towards their teachers and thus, they are accepting the education they are receiving from them and also the values of sociability.

## **School Environment and Culture**

At Prerana, a lot of time and energy is spent **nurturing the relationship** amongst teachers and between teacher and student. Such sound relationships provide a conducive environment **for the academic and overall growth of a child.**

A conducive environment for the student refers to:

- a. **secure** environment to feel safe,
- b. **healthy** environment to have able bodies,
- c. **loving** environment to feel comfortable in sharing their thoughts,
- d. **thinking** environment to help them nurture their intellect and creativity/innovativeness
- e. **expressive** environment to help them become confident
- f. **interactive** environment to become sociable

In order to provide this environment we encourage inculcation of the following values in the teacher and school:

### **1. Inspiration in place of Competition: The focus at Prerana is on ‘inspiration’ – being inspired by the other rather than competing with the other.**

- This is constantly conveyed to the students in different ways. For example, our sports day entails students running a certain distance in a certain amount of time. This time is set based on the individual. Thus, the focus is on seeing if a student manages to run this distance faster than before, has he/she been able to build speed and stamina based on his/her age and previous track record, etc.
- We do not promote a ranking system in our classes. Students are given their grades (uptil class 8<sup>th</sup>) and marks (after class 8<sup>th</sup>) where the teacher spends time with the student and parent discussing the child's progress. The child's progress is not compared with another child. **The improvement is compared with the child's previous performance.** Based on the progress, a further plan of action is decided. In this way, the child's focus is set on themselves rather than feeling a lack of confidence on being outperformed by his/her peers.. This always motivates the child to work harder and perform better. Once a month, we make the children **meet inspiring personalities**, who help them understand how individual effort can help improve one's performance.

### **2. Teacher Student Ratio:**

- By maintaining a healthy balance in numbers between teachers and students we ensure that the class/school isn't too crowded. Having too many children implies less attention towards each child's development. A child can get lost in a crowd. There is a lot of fear one feels in crowded spaces. There is also a sense of disorientation. An example is at the beginning and end of the day when the bell rings all children rush out of the classrooms,

into the corridors to head to the bus. There is chaos and this is particularly stressful and intimidating for younger children.

- The idea is to also maintain a healthy school strength that is balanced and allows for enough attention to each child without overcrowding.
- The intention is also to avoid too many sections in order to avoid crowding as well as competition.
- Discipline and good behaviour require a healthy /appropriate number of students. Too many would lead to a crowd which could lead to chaos.

**3. Assembly:** Overcrowding is also a reason why the assembly size is small.

- There are smaller groups of pre-primary, primary, middle and secondary in which the assembly is conducted.
- The duration is also longer so that there is thorough interaction between the teachers and students.
- Also, each child gets a chance to express themselves in four languages - local (Chhattisgarhi), English, Hindi and Sanskrit - before the whole group about once a week. This helps garner self confidence in them.
- The reason for the smaller groups is also so that the younger children don't get restless when the elder children are being addressed or expressing themselves. The content and company remain relevant to each group according to age.
- Once in a week the whole school gathers for assembly so that each group is still in touch and gets to participate together. It also gives each child the sense of our strength.
- **Our intention is also to seat the children in such a manner that the elder children and younger children sit next to each other.** This shall ensure discipline and also help the younger children understand better when there is a programme going on for the elder children.

**4. Time Table:**

- The time table is the spine of a school. A school's strength, philosophy, culture and ethos are reflected in its time table.
- The time table is designed in such a manner that a heavy subject is alternated with a lighter one or an activity period, like sports, dance, craft or music.
- The purpose behind this, apart from recreation for the child, is that there is better absorption of content if there is variation in the part of the brain that is active during that activity. (*Refer table indicating subject distribution across the week*).

ACADEMIC							
CLASS	SUBJECT						
	Hindi	English	Math	EVS	Science	SST	Sanskrit
Nursery	4	4	4	-	-	-	-
LKG	4	4	4	-	-	-	-
UKG	4	4	4	-	-	-	-
I	5	5	6	5	-	-	-
II	5	5	6	5	-	-	-
III	5	5	5	5	-	-	-
IV	5	5	5	5	-	-	-
V	5	5	5	5	-	-	-
VI	4	4	6	-	5	5	3
VII	4	4	6	-	4	5	4
VIII	4	4	6	-	5	5	3
IX	4	5	6	-	5	5	4
X	4	4	5	-	6	5	4

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT														
CLASS	SUBJECT													
	Circle time	Dance	Music	Art & craft	Story time	AV	Expression	CVMS	Sports	Peer Learning	Reading	Quiz	Guided Learning	Computer
Nursery	6	3	2	5	4	2	NA	NA	6	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
LKG	6	3	2	5	4	2	NA	NA	6	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
UKG	6	3	2	5	4	2	NA	NA	6	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
I	5	3	3	2	2	2	NA	NA	4	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
II	NA	2	2	2	NA	2	2	1	3	5	NA	NA	NA	NA
III	NA	1	2	1	NA	1	1	1	4	5	1	1	NA	1
IV	NA	1	2	1	NA	1	1	1	4	5	1	1	NA	1
V	NA	2	2	1	NA	1	1	1	3	5	1	1	NA	1
VI	NA	2	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	2	3	1	1	NA	1
VII	NA	2	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	2	3	1	1	NA	1
VIII	NA	2	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	2	3	1	1	NA	1
IX	NA	1	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	2	2	1	1	NA	1
X	NA	1	1	NA	NA	1	NA	1	2	NA	1	1	1	1

## 5. Recess:

- At Prerana, we give two recesses one short - 15 mins and one long - 30 mins.
- This duration is longer than usual as we believe that children should get sufficient time to eat, play and relax between classes.

## 6. Discipline:

- Discipline and learning are throughout school and also on the school bus.
- Focus on language, emotional and intellectual well-being are key in the school.
- Attention to addressal, language, cleanliness, health and hygiene, management of time, following a regular routine, cooperation are some of the aspects of discipline that we take seriously at Prerana.
- A school is a space for discipline, that is why a student is called a disciple.

## 7. Addressing different requirements of the brain and mind for development:

- This falls under Stage 3 of Prerana Vidyalaya's curriculum evolutionary journey. There is regular introduction of new activities to do with hands and legs during the sports, music and dance classes for increased brain development.
- Through all this, the main intention is to increase the brain and mind's capacity for absorption, as well as the tendency of the brain to focus better during a particular activity. This also helps garner interest in the child for a variety of activities.
- The introduction of different activities has been called 'extra-curricular' or 'co-curricular'. At Prerana, we believe they are an extension of the main curriculum and essential for brain and mind development and overall education of the child, they are not regarded as 'extra'.
- An intended exercise in the near future (for which teachers shall also be trained) is the introduction of observation classes. The idea is to get children to become more observant and curious about their surroundings and to also become reflective in the process. The more observant and curious we are the more aware we become and learning becomes all the more powerful. The way the brain and mind evolve in the process also aids in sharpening of memory and ability to draw connections and see the interrelationships between things, events and processes.

## Academic Excellence:

1. Our **syllabus is divided into three parts** – highlighting priority in teaching based on:

1. Chapters **covering concepts** which are relevant for life (**life long concepts**)
2. Chapters **crucial for examinations**, especially board examinations
3. Chapters that don't fit in 1 and 2 but help students **practice their reading and comprehension** abilities.

2. We have developed '**Concept Books: Understanding Concepts for Lifelong Learning**' for **Classes I to VIII**.

- The objective of these books is to help students build (or rebuild) **conceptual clarity on the most fundamental concepts** – that act as building blocks for understanding a subject.
- For example, understanding noun. Nouns are 'names' or naming words. We use this simple definition with examples to explain the concept of nouns. This concept is shared in class 1 and is repeated (with some additional information on nouns) till Class 8.
- In this way, a student is **repeatedly taught a fundamental concept, ensuring that they never forget it** and can further build their understanding of that subject.
- Learning and remembering important concepts **helps a student perform better academically and improves their self-confidence**.
- If, for some reason, a student couldn't understand a concept in their previous class, through this concept book, they get an opportunity to revisit and understand that concept and come up to par with their class syllabus.
- In addition to essential concepts, the **concept book has corresponding worksheets for students to practice that concept**. For example, each class has a separate concept book for each subject divided into 20 chapters (one chapter/class). Each subject has two parts – one part lists all the concepts in simple language with examples and some pictures. The second part has worksheets to practice those concepts.
- The **concept book is taught once a week by the teacher** in a quiz format in our '**Quiz period**.' It is also taught **five times a week in the 'Peer Learning Class'** (*details available in Personality Development section*) where **senior class students teach younger students in a 1:4 ratio**.
- The purpose of facilitating this process is that through this, there are concepts getting carried forward for each child in the next class that will be relevant for them to know life-long. The elder children will help facilitate this process and this way, they too would get an opportunity for revision and to also to evaluate where they stand with respect to their knowledge.
- In classes VI-VIII, our intention is that the students can be up to date with concepts from classes I-V so that maximum of their foundation is prepared. It is only when the academic



base is prepared that we can further help build the foundation for higher learning in mainstream education.

- We intend to conduct three monthly assessment/evaluation based on these concepts.

### **3. Repetition:**

- Getting children to repeat what they have learned helps establish connections with newer content each year. When younger, if the children are exposed to certain words which they shall be required to know life-long, chances are they will grasp those concepts better when they reach higher classes.
- With this intention, we intend to introduce teaching words such as atom, cell, molecule, organelle, relationships, family, constitution, society etc from early classes onwards, so that by the time they are in class VIII or IX they are familiar with these terms and understand them better.
- Eg. in class I we introduce the word cell, atom, family; in two, organelle, molecule, relationships, constitution and so on. These are certain concepts which are the building blocks of all matter in existence. Knowing them would help humans relate with the world we live in.

## **Personality Development**

At Prerana Vidyalaya, we focus on developing and maintaining **an environment** in school that **fosters emotional stability and confidence** in children along with the ability to **deal with academic rigour**. To be able to stand up in today's world, a child has to excel both academically and in terms of their personality. They have to be able to perform well in all their subjects and at the same time be able to interact with different kinds of people, express him/themselves in all sorts of situations, ask questions without fear, deal with stressful situations, speak fluently in English and other languages (Hindi and Local), know how to work well with technology, etc.

For this purpose, we work on the following areas:

a. **Sambodhan (Addressal)** – teachers address students as '*beta ji*', students address each other as '*bhai ji*' and '*didi ji*', teachers address each other as '*bhaiya ji*' and '*didi ji*'. This provides a caring and affectionate environment for the students, and they are thus able to express themselves without fear.

b. **Audio-Visual Classes** – helps them understand concepts faster through audio-visual material

c. **Peer Learning Classes** –

- helps foster interaction between the senior and junior students. These interactions revolve around studies. The younger students learn concepts faster from their seniors. Two, the younger and senior students develop a bond, which in turn avoids situations of bullying.
- The younger children learning the concepts and the elder children teaching it get more practice and better acquainted with their studies
- Through the interactions between the students, the teachers get to know more about students' personalities and the kinds of problems they might be facing socially as well as academically as they tend to be more free with their brothers and sisters as compared to the teachers.

d. **Music, Tabla, Dance and Sports Classes** – singing, playing instruments, and dance helps build focus in students. Dance and sports also help build physical stamina, body strength and coordination abilities.

e. **Spoken English Classes** – builds fluency in the English language.

f. **Computer Classes** – develop computer skills.

g. **Chetna Vikas Mulya Shiksha (Value Education based on Consciousness Development)** – develops a sense of confidence in oneself, nurtures relationships with family and society, develops sensitivity towards nature and working towards sustainability.

h. **Skill-based workshops** - filmmaking, acting, craft, gardening, mechanics to foster creativity.

i. **Educational workshops** - such as learning science through experiments, vedic maths, etc to build students' acumen.

j. **Guided Learning Classes** – Students of senior classes conduct their own class four times a week. On a rotation basis, each student prepares a presentation on his / her favourite subject and

teaches the rest of his/her class. This helps improve the child's presentation abilities, understanding of the subject and also enhances their confidence.

k. **Assembly** – The students conduct the assembly on a class-rotation basis. Assembly focuses on students coming in front of the entire school and expressing themselves confidently on the stage in English/Hindi/Sanskrit and Chhattisgarhi.

l. **Contests** – Weekly contests are organized for children to improve their math and language skills through class contests on speed math, spell bee, essay writing, etc.

m. **Prerana Talent Exam** – A scholarship exam that tests a student's aptitude in Mathematics, English, Hindi, Science, General Knowledge. This examination is designed to build a student's aptitude and also prepare students keen on appearing for competitive exams in the future.

### **Prerana Highlights 2021**

- Lockdown report unveiled by Hon. Minister of Education, Delhi, Manish Sisodia Jan 2021
- 3 day Psychology and Human behaviour workshop with the teachers of Prerana Vidyalaya in October 2021 with Mr Naresh Baluni, CEO Richlite, Management and Human Behaviour Trainer
- The Progress Global Award for Academic Excellence awarded to Prerana Vidyalaya, Nov 2021
- Prerana students qualified for the State level Art and Culture competition hosted by the Government of Chhattisgarh, 'Kala Utsav', Nov 2021. They went through 3 rounds of qualification and maximum students from Prerana have qualified for the same.
- Spell bee; Mental Math Quiz
- Social Science and Science Exhibition

### **Team:**

#### **Board of Management:**

Sadhan Bhattacharya

Himanshu Dugar

Ganesh Verma

Mridu Mahajan Pogula

### **Mentors**

Seeta Verma

Nivita Kakria Chopra

Gowri Srihari

Vandana Singhal

Ajay Jain

Rakesh Gupta

Ravikant Mani

Suryakant Agarwal  
Gopal Gadodia  
Shrawan Kumar Shukla  
Puneet Chawla  
Kalpana Sancheti  
Renu Bhatia  
Naresh Baluni  
Awashesh Patel

**Guest Lecturers**

Anurag Sahay  
Shashwat Chandra  
Dr Pratibha Kolte  
Seema Chopra  
Sarthak Singhal  
Sanjeev Chopra  
Rajiv Kakria