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GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS AT HAPPY BY NATURE  
SCHOOL, DUNDA, UTTARKASHI

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DECEMBER 12, 2022

GANGA VALLEY EDUCATIONAL TRUST

## Intentions of the Volunteering Program

Happy By Nature School runs purely as a social enterprise – the primary aim being impact and not profits. We are focused on good education, on changing the lives of the less privileged children and on creating local employment, to the extent possible.

We welcome volunteers to help us in this mission. There are some definite shortcomings of rural education. Every effort to overcome those shortcomings - by way of regular or occasional interventions, through volunteering programs is welcome.

We appreciate that volunteers can bring their wide array of experiences and skills to the children. The benefits flow both ways. Children get to interact with people from across the country and the world, learn about their perspectives and acquire useful knowledge that may otherwise not be taught in the classroom. Volunteers get exposed to realities and hardships of rural life, get an opportunity to serve those less privileged and can go back enriched with myriad of experiences themselves.

## Before You Volunteer

While people behind the school come from diverse backgrounds, they are all either academicians themselves or just passionate about good quality education for children. Essentially, they are all volunteers – albeit in different measure.

A common thread that binds us together is our familiarity and belief in the framework followed by Krishnamurti Foundation (KFI) schools. Our points of convergence also clearly are, a strong belief in the power of holistic education and a deep rooting in the Indian value systems, culture and heritage.

The school avoids needless regimentation, cut-throat competition, punishments or any such measure – that can inhibit the natural tendencies of our children. An insight into these will be provided to you during the introductory presentation. It is important that you align with the philosophy of the school before deciding to volunteer.

## What Do We Expect of Volunteers?

As a volunteer, you shall be expected to:

- a) Travel to Devidhar, Dunda (in Uttarkhand) and engage in activities with the children and teachers, for a duration of 2 weeks or longer
- b) Curate your program in detail, in consultation with us. Let us know any teaching aids, instruments, stationery etc. that you may need in the process
- c) Undertake activities beneficial to the children and aligned with the objectives of the school

## An Ideal Volunteer

Every human soul is noble and innately possesses the desire to do good. We all want to give back to the society – especially to those who are less privileged than us. Therefore, we shall always be open to anyone who wishes to volunteer and

- a) Strongly believes in the idea of selfless service
- b) Is undeterred by hindrances & focussed on achieving what we have set out to achieve
- c) Is willing to rough it out, especially if visiting the school
- d) Revels in the boundless happiness that any such work generally entails

There is no constraint on the age or qualifications of volunteers. We are happy to welcome Pre-University and University level students, teachers, professions from all fields.

The school shall pay no remuneration for the volunteering work. However, we shall extend all support to best utilize your time and effort for the period of your involvement.

Please sign up for the volunteering program at least 3 months before your scheduled arrival. Due to logistics constraints, we only accommodate maximum 3-4 volunteers at any time.

## What Can Volunteers Do?

We encourage interested volunteers to take up any of the following activities. The list is indicative and broad list and not meant to be comprehensive. You can conduct either of the following:

- Technical Workshops – That help students to improve the analytical, creative, problem-solving, decision-making skills e.g. Making Mathematics more meaningful, Science Workshops, Computer Skills or Programming Tips and Tricks, Scientific experiments etc.

- Creative Workshops – Essentially in areas that help in exploring body movement, expression, creativity and social confidence E.g. through Art, Dance, Music, Theatre, Photography and Video Making, Translating Emotions into Pictures,
- English Writing & Reading, Interview and Language Development, Poetry Recitation, Interactive Story-telling, Book Reading, Debating etc.
- Socially Relevant Projects – Short projects in areas such as environmental awareness, waste recycling, garbage disposal, reduce-reuse-recycle plastics, water conservation, afforestation etc.

Volunteering programs may be constrained by the time for which students can be available. This must be taken into consideration while planning your workshops. In general, availability of children:

- a) Is limited to 1.5 hours per day during the school session
- b) Can extend up to 6 hours per day during vacations

### The Volunteering Process

- Signing Up – You can do this through our website by sharing your basic details
- Introductory Session – We will get in touch with you to
  - Familiarize you with the school
  - Understand your expectations of the volunteering program
  - Discuss how children will benefit from your presence and participation
- Curating The Workshop(s) – Over the next few weeks, we will agree on
  - Start and End Date of the activity
  - Subject / Content to be delivered
  - Daily Schedule
  - Teaming Up with other Volunteers
  - Local support from teachers / resources required to deliver your workshop(s)
- Seeking Enrolment from Students
  - Flyer - Basic info is shared with students and their parents by means of a flyer
  - Introduction to Students – Online session to introduce the volunteers and the participating students
  - Pre-work – If any pre-work has been agreed to, students can be asked to submit the same before the commencement of the workshop(s)
- Finalizing the Logistics
  - Travel & Arrival and Departure Schedule
  - Stay – Blocking of the guest rooms
  - Meals, local transport and any other arrangements
- Conduct the Workshop – By now, volunteers are ready to conduct their activities. At least one local teacher will attend when the children are present.
- Conclusion

- Volunteers are expected to submit a feedback closure report including a small synopsis of the activities done, the learnings, expectations met (or unmet), and suggestions for future volunteers.
- GVET will issue a Certificate of Gratitude on successful conduct of the program

### Social Media Policy

We expect all teachers, staff, volunteers, students and members of the Happy By Nature School / Ganga Valley Educational Trust community to strictly abide by our Social Media Policy.