



IMAGINE

JANUARY- MARCH 2018

Message from the Head of the School

At the deepest level, art is the fundamental expression of the human experience. Since the beginning of human history, we have decorated the walls of our caves and dwelling, offered our emotions to the heaven in songs, danced for ritual and celebration, and, through theatre, ensured that the stories of our ancestors would endure.

The ancient Greeks to whom we owe many of the present day customs, believed there were two major aspects to education: physical and intellectual. While physical education involved keeping the body fit, intellectual education was, for the Greeks, a combination of music, dance, lyrics and poetry. The aim was to nurture students in beauty and appreciation of harmony and rhythm.

As we draw closer to the end of the academic year 2017-18, we would like to thank all our parents who partnered with us in making this year an extremely delightful, productive and constructive one in terms of both curricular and extracurricular achievements. Your support and valuable suggestions have always been our inspiration to achieve mile stones. We look forward to an equal and more productive academic journey with you in the year 2018-19.

Thank you for reading this edition of Imagine and see you soon with a new volume for next year.

With regards,
Chitra Madhavan
Head of School

THE BALSAM SOCIAL

"Every parting is a form of death, as every reunion is a type of heaven."

– Tryon Edwards

It was throwback time as the alumni of Balsam Academy gathered to relive their fond memories. The 4th Alumni Meet 2018 was held on 6th Jan 2018 in the school campus. The event was hosted by our beloved Correspondent Mrs. Saroja Balaram. There were a lot of exciting events lined up to raise the nostalgia one notch up. A classical dance performance from Lasiya Performing Arts Academy was the curtain raiser for the evening. A special video was also made for this occasion, by Mr. Sudharshan to revisit photographs and the memories of their school days. Games were organized for everyone to take part and enjoy. It is always nice to see these familiar faces again, and continue to build a strong alumni community who in turn will contribute to the growth of Balsam Academy.

Mahabalipuram

Students of Grade 6 went on a field trip to Mahabalipuram on 9th December 2017. Around 73 students were accompanied by six staff members. Students were mesmerized to see the beauty of sculptures in the seven Ratha temple and the elephant cave. They were eager to learn about the Pallava kings and recalled the characters of Mahabharat.



Dakshinachitra

To understand the traditions of South India, students of Grade 7 were taken to Dakshinachitra. It was an amusing open-air, real-time museum as well as a well-known culture centre which gives us a glimpse of art and craft, lifestyle, music and dance of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The students were excited to visualise and realise the importance of the heritage of South India.



Birla Planetarium

Birla Planetarium is one of the popular attractions of Chennai that provide an insight into the cosmic world. Situated at Kotturpuram, it is an integral part of Periyar Science and Technology Museum, built in memory of the famous industrialist and visionary Sri B. M. Birla, and was opened to public in 1988. Students of G8 were taken to this planetarium on 9th December 2017 to educate them about the Solar System, cycle of stars, sky and seasons. Science park, traffic park, science on wheels etc. are the highlight of science centre. Students also enjoyed the other galleries which dealt with physical science, electronics and communication, energy, life science, innovations, transport with over 500 exhibits. This trip was an inspiration for the students to develop their interest to learn science.



Braille Language

A Special assembly was conducted on 'Braille language' on 4th January following the **World Braille Day** by the students of Grade 9A. The students participated enthusiastically to commemorate the birth centenary of Louis Braille. The boon of introducing braille language and the famous personalities who excelled in their field by adopting Braille Language were highlighted. The assembly started with an introduction on Braille Language followed by an informative video to educate students about the system of Braille Language. To create awareness among the students about Braille Language, a questionnaire on the topic was given to the students. This was followed by a video on Srikanth Bolla's inspirational speech about the tough journey of his life captured the audiences' mind. The assembly came to an end with an emphasis on the thought '*One is often unable to taste the fruit of one's own hard work.*'

Pongal Celebrations

பலராம் நினைவு அறக்கட்டளையின் நிர்வாக அறங்காவலர் மற்றும் பால்சம் பள்ளியின் தாளாளருமான திருமதி சரோஜா பலராம் அம்மா அவர்களின் வழிநடத்தலின் பேரில் பல்வேறு சமுதாய நற்பணிகளும், நிகழ்ச்சிகளும் நிகழ்த்திக்கொண்டு செயல்படுத்தப்படுகிறது. அவ்வகையில் பால்சம் பள்ளியில் 11. 1 2018 அன்று பிற்பகல் 1.30 மணியளவில் பொங்கல் விழா சிறப்பாகக் கொண்டாடப்பட்டது. தமிழர்களின் பாரம்பரியமானது விழாக்களில்தான் மெருகூட்டப்படுகிறது. அழிந்து வரும் கலைகளை நிலைத்து நிற்கச்செய்யும் விழாக்களில் பொங்கல் பண்டிகை பெரும் பங்கு வகிக்கும் மாபெரும் விழாவாகும். பொங்கல் விழாவை முன்னிட்டு பல்வேறு கலைநிகழ்ச்சிகள் நிகழ்த்தப்பட்டது. இவ்விழாவின் சிறப்பம்சமாக தமிழக பாரம்பரியத்தை நினைவு கோரும் வகையில், சிலம்பாட்டம், கரகாட்டம், உறி அடித்தல் போன்ற கலைநிகழ்ச்சிகள் பள்ளிப் பணியாளர்களால் நிகழ்த்தப்பட்டது. மற்றும் பெண் பணியாளர்கள், அலுவலர்கள் ஆகியோர் கவிதை வாசித்தல் மற்றும் பாடல்கள் பாடி விழாவை மேலும் சிறப்பித்தனர். முதலாம் வகுப்பிலிருந்து பத்தாம் வகுப்பு வரையிலான மாணவர்கள் அனைவரும் நிகழ்ச்சிகளைக் கண்டு இன்புற்றனர். பள்ளி முதல்வர் அவர்கள் உழவுத்தொழிலின் மேன்மையையும் பருவநிலை மாற்றத்தின் அறிவியல் பூர்வமான பொங்கல் திருநாளின் சிறப்புகளையும் எடுத்துக்கூறிய பின்பு விழா மாலை 3.30 மணியளவில் நிறைவு பெற்றது. 12.1.2018 அன்று காலை 7.30 மணியளவில் ஆசிரியர்கள் மற்றும் அலுவலர்கள் அனைவரும் பொங்கல் வைத்து, பொங்கல் நாயகனாம் துரியனுக்கு படையல் புரிந்து நன்றி தெரிவித்தனர். இவ்விழா இயற்கைக்கு நன்றி செலுத்தும் பொருட்டும், உழவின் உயர்வினை மிகைப்படுத்து வகையிலும் அமைந்தது. விழாவின் முடிவில் அனைவருக்கும் கரும்பும், சர்க்கரைப்பொங்கலும் வழங்கப்பட்டு 12.30 மணியளவில் இனிதே நிறைவு பெற்றது.

A Complete Day

Our kindergarten students have entered into a new agenda of schooling by having full day sessions from January 18th. It's not only about writing alphabets and numerals. They are having their best fun in academics by mastering the art of communication and storytelling. Creating patterns and moulding up clay to form explicit things are their pastime. They spend up the first half by prepping for the first grade and creating a strong basement for the next stage in their life. The second half is all about engraving their individual talents. At the end of this academic year the students of K3 will be in their perfect form to master the Lower primary classes.

ANNUAL SPORTS MEET 2017-18

“Friendships born on the field of athletic strife are the real gold of competition. Awards become corroded, but friends gather no dust.”

Balsam Academy's 9th Annual Sports Meet of was on 26 January, 2018 amidst great mirth, verve and camaraderie. **Mr. Sunny, founder of the CV Sunny Basketball Academy and a former national level Basketball player** was the guest of honour. He was accompanied by other dignitaries; **Smt. Saroja Balaram**, our beloved correspondent and, trustees **Mr. Sundar** and **Ms. Anitha Rajendran**. The students marched forward like a roar of ocean to welcome the guests and to respect our national flag as it was also the 68th Republic Day of our country.

Every single student of the school participated in the preliminary heats conducted during their PE classes and around 300 finalists across all 6 divisions competed in several track and field events, during the dry runs that took place on 11th and 19th January. Apart from this, the Inter-House sports competitions were held in the month of September. Having honoured these winners already, only the most awaited and enjoyable events were saved for this ultimate Sports Day, which otherwise was an exciting and a rather long venture. There were also some mind-blowing drill performances from the students of Grade 3, 4 and 5. Each drill was based on a unique prop like bamboo poles, dumbbells and Indian clubs or just the clap of their hands. Girls put up two mass dance drills using hand fans and some wings. It was a brilliant afternoon and everyone competed with great commitment and team spirit. The prizes were distributed and the individual champions from each division were felicitated. And finally the House of Alpines was presented the overall championship for the academic year 2017-18. The event came to an end with School Council Body members performing the closing ceremony. This Sports Day turned out to be a competitive and challenging one, from which these young sportsmen learnt how to focus on the challenges they may face in the future.



ஐந்தாம் வகுப்பு மாணவர்களின் செயல் திறன்கள்(8.1.18)

நாடகம் நடத்தல்

போரைத் தடுத்த புலவர்

மாணவர்களுக்கு முக்கியத்துவம் தரும் வகையில் இச்செயல்திறன் நிகழ்த்தப்பட்டது. பள்ளிக்கல்வியில் நாடகத்தைக் கற்பித்தல் கருவியாகப் பயன்படுத்தும் போது மாணவர்களின் தன்னம்பிக்கை, செயல்திறன், மொழிவளம், தொடர்புத்திறன், படைப்பாற்றலுடன் கூடிய விமர்சனச்சிந்தனை ஆகியவை மேம்படுகிறது. இத்திறன்களை விவளிகொணரும் பொருட்டு ஐந்தாம் வகுப்பு மாணவர்களுக்கு நாடகங்களில் நடிக்க ஊக்கப்படுத்தப்பட்டது. பின், போரைத் தடுத்த புலவர் - என்ற கதையை நாடகமாக நடிக்க குழுக்கள் பிரிக்கப்பட்டது. மாணவர்கள் தங்கள் குழு மாணவர்களிடம் கலந்துரையாடி அவரவர் தங்கள் கதாப்பத்திரங்களை முடிவு செய்தனர். பின், மறுநாள் மாணவர்கள் தன் கதாப்பத்திரங்களுக்கான உரையாடல்களோடு தயாராக வந்தனர். ஒவ்வொரு குழுவும் நாடகத்தை சிறப்பாக அரங்கேற்றினர். இக்கதையை நாடகமாக நடித்ததில் மாணவர்களுக்கு மனநிறைவுடன் கூடிய மகிழ்ச்சி ஏற்பட்டது. அப்பாடவேளை மகிழ்ச்சியோடு இனிதே நிறைவடைந்தது.

Madras Dyslexia Association Training Program

The aim of MDA is to create a 'Dyslexia Sensitive' society that identifies and nurtures children with Dyslexia to fulfil their potential.

The training was held for middle and secondary teachers on five consecutive Saturdays starting from 27th January 2018.

Resource people **Harini** and **Renuka** handled the sessions that covered various areas such as reading, writing and study skills etc. that needs to be developed among students. They helped the teachers, not only to identify, provide help and support the child but also to actively develop their hidden strengths and talents. Study skills like reading-model reading, pair reading, group reading, vocabulary etc. were suggested to be incorporated for the students to learn, retrieve and prevent forgetting the answers. The session was very essential to improve the prevailing teaching-learning process.

Phonics Training

Phonics Training session was organized in the Balsam Academy on 20th January 2017 by **Mrs. Shalini Devi, Founder Of Phonics Power**, a UK-certified Jolly Phonics trainer from Chennai for the kindergarten and primary school teachers. This session was focused on the importance of familiarizing themselves with the sounds of each letter and the role of phonics in the beginning stages of reading. The Resource person's teaching methodology gave the teachers, a clear idea on how to teach students based on their age level. To put it in a nut shell, it was a productive day where the Facilitators learnt to teach with proper techniques.

Career Guidance

With a view of updating the students to the present trends in careers, a Career Guidance a workshop was conducted at Balsam Academy on 3rd February 2018 for the students and parents of Grade 9 and 10. **Mr. Samar Nischal of Inspiring Minds, New Delhi** threw some light on several existing and some exciting new career options out there for the students.

The students had an interactive platform where questions about their future were addressed. Their strengths and related career goals were analyzed through a questionnaire and the school was taught how to interpret their responses and guide them appropriately. In the activity session, they were made to categorize and prioritize their goals in a visual form.

The parent's session was conducted in the afternoon. The parents interacted with the resource person and were enlightened with lots of information about careers and opportunities. The main objective of this workshop was to make students and parents understand that students are supposed to choose a path that suits their personality and strengths, and there are a number of opportunities for them out there which they were not aware of.

Patterns

The children of LKG children had a special day for Patterns on 2nd March, 2018. Kids were introduced to the concept of forming patterns and they picked it up quickly by creating multiple patterns out of different things they found in their surroundings. There were patterns made up of twigs, leaves, clay rolls, stones, beads, pulses and cereals. Interestingly, all the things they had learnt this year were reflected in the materials they used and even in the patterns they formed.

Origami Day

The UKG children had a special Origami Day on 9th January 2018. The kids spent this day crafting the origami paper into any kind of object or pattern they wish. It was surprising to find them playing with the paper and come up with things like boats, snake, fan, pouch, pen holders, guns and even frogs in. All from the hands of our little champs. Their constant request for more paper suggested how much the kids loved Origami.

INTER-HOUSE CONTESTS

Music

“Music expresses which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent”.

- Victor Hugo

An Inter-house Music contest for G1 was conducted on __ January 2017. The students took care of their diction, intonation, expressions and notes as they sang songs that imparted a spiritual process in them. The children were very much delighted to sing and they were judged based on the completion of song, lyrics, tune and confidence. The House of Grands came out triumphant.

Calligraphy

“Handwriting is a spiritual designing, even though it appears by means of a material instrument.”

- Euclid

An elegant writing always holds a special place. A Handwriting contest was conducted for students of G1 on January 11th, 2017. The kids were asked to pen the suggested passage from ‘The puppy and the kitten’ in the best of their handwriting. Students actively participated of their work with a healthy competitive spirit. They winners were selected based on legibility, font formation, uniformity and spacing.

Recitation

“Poetry comes through recitation”

Recitation contest for Grade 1 was conducted on 19th January. The poem, ‘Pitter-Patter Raindrops’ was chosen for each child to recite. The children recited without any clues or prompts in their own tones was quite fascinating for the facilitators. The

winners were judged based on their physical presence, accuracy, voice and articulation and completion.

Math Mania

Math Mania Contest was conducted on 1st February 2018 for G1 and G2. It was conducted to analyze the mental mathematical ability of the students. Mental Math questions were posed from various age-appropriate topics. Students observed the questions keenly, solved the problems mentally and answered orally. The winners were finalized based on their problem-solving ability and time taken.

Art

“Drawing is an exercise for a restless imagination”

– Tim Burton



Art contest for Grade 1 was conducted on 13th of February 2018. This contest helped the facilitators to trace out children’s interest and their creativity in art. Students presented their ‘Snowman’ elegantly. The teachers witnessed a healthy competitive spirit among the children. The winners were picked on their creativity, image quality, colors and presentation.

Spell Bee

Spell bee contest was conducted for students across all the levels. This contest is a platform to showcase students' spellings, syllabification and vocabulary. These skills develop even further when they attempt to crack the spellings of some difficult words. It was a fun experience. The winners were selected based on their spelling, time taken and their confidence levels.

Story Telling

Story telling contest for Grade 1 was conducted on 21st of February 2018 on the topic "Elephant and the friends". Students came out with different themes like loyalty, friendship and helping others. This contest helped the students to enhance their comprehending skill, improve their vocabulary, express themselves and develop a love for stories. Winners were picked based on their voice projection, gesture, pronunciation, pause, pitch and completion.

Thinking skill

Students divided in groups of three were tested for their thinking skills with puzzles. Winners were selected on grounds like time duration and accuracy.

Debate

"Just as I wouldn't like to be a slave, I would not like to be a master"

- Abraham Lincoln

Debate contest in both English and Tamil was conducted on 6th February 2018 for the students of G5 and G6. A healthy competition was

observed among the students when they debated on topics 'The best way of reading is, a playful way or Intensive reading' and 'Agriculture vs Industry, which helps for the development of a nation' for Grade 5 and 6 respectively. Not only did they make strong arguments for their side but they also came back with strong replies to the opposition's argument. They quoted poems and famous proverbs to support their argument. It was an experience that stimulated their thinking and problem-solving skills.

Kitchen Science

The kitchen science contest was held on 30th January 2018. Students of grade 6 A&B participated in the contest and came out with a lot of experiments related to surface tension and density. They were very interesting and enjoyable for the students. The Lava Lamp and the density column experiment were particularly stand out.



Poetry Contest

The students of Grade 5,6, 9 and 10 showed great interest in participating in the Poetry contest. The rhyming schemes and figurative speeches they utilized, added on beauty to their poems.

Geo Quiz

The Geo Quiz Contest for Grade 7 and Grade 8 was conducted on 21st February, 2018. The objective of the geo quiz is to ensure the students have a grasp on world geography.

Over a preliminary, a rapid fire round and final few rounds, students were tested on their knowledge on Geological definition, Rivers of the World, Countries and Capitals, Indian States and Capitals and Current Affairs. The competitive spirit helped in their overall improvement in this field.

Young Scientist 2017-18

It was yet another science filled day at Balsam Academy on 24th January 2018. The students of Grade 7 and 8 worked on the topics "WASTE MANAGEMENT & RENEWABLE RESOURCES OF ENERGY" and "AUTOMOBILES & TRANSPORT AND SAFETY", respectively. They presented their creative models to judges from across all the levels and the best ones were awarded the Young Scientist Awards.

Math Olympiad

The aim of a good Olympiad exam is to provide a unique competitive platform, identify the young geniuses and create a talent pool for the future. A rank in the Olympiad develops a sense of confidence in the students and their parents. Tricky and more conceptual Olympiad problems help students understand the topic well and ultimately improving class results.

Students of Balsam Academy took their Math Olympiad on 15th February 2018 and exhibited their interest and urge to learn math. The top 3 performers from each Grade were awarded.

Staff Day Out

To take a much needed break from their non-stop schedule, the staff of Balsam Academy went out on a short trip to Pudhuchery on 9th and 10th of February. They started out with experiencing the cooling sea breeze at the Rock beach. It was followed by several exciting experiences including a boat ride on the Seagull Sea. It was a good opportunity for all the facilitators to spend some quality time with their colleagues, outside of the school atmosphere. The entire day was fun packed as they drove back with a tummy full of appetizing pondy food and some sweet memories.

National Science Day

National Science Day was observed in Balsam Academy on 28th February 2018. It was aimed to

- Bring awareness among students about the importance of scientific applications in the daily life.
- Encourage the students to get involved in Science
- To popularize science and technology.

Our students unleashed their scientific skills to their peers on this occasion. Distinguished students showcased their research works which they had featured for 'Raman Young Scientist Innovator Award'. Some of them demonstrated a few exciting experiments to the audience such as elephant's tooth paste, dragon's egg etc.

The scientific fervour was kept ticking and students wished to make their presence evident on stage as well as science.



Feelings

Assembly on 'Feelings' by K2 students, on 4th December 2017 was conducted to help them to learn and experience the different types of feelings we have in life. After a short video on feelings, questions were posted to the kids where they were asked to share how they would feel if they were in a particular situation. On the whole the event was filled with knowledge and fun.



Water

Assembly on Water by K3 students on 24th January 2018 was performed to make the students understand that water is a great source of life and is in the verge of depletion in many countries. The topic was picked for the kids to realize this and start saving water for themselves and their future

generations. Some important notes and facts were shared about the importance of water followed by songs and videos played for the kids. The assembly concluded with a discussion on ways to save water and what can be done to avoid water depletion in other areas.

Charles Dickens

Grade 1 conducted an assembly on 21st of February 2018 on the topic 'Charles Dickens' to celebrate his 206th birthday. The assembly started with the National song and proceeded with a skit by the students, where the young Balamites shared information about Charles Dickens life and his career. Students Lithika, Janitha, Aditi and Divyashri sang 'A child's Hymn' and Jhanavi from G1 shared a Dickens quote; "A person cannot truly improve, if he does not help others to improve". The objective of the assembly was to familiarize students about Charles Dickens, his literary career and to look at the positive legacy of Charles Dickens' life and consider that we can all have a positive impact on the people we meet.



Being good with Money

On the 3rd Jan, thematic assembly on Being good with money was conducted by the students of Grade 2. The assembly started with students explaining the origin of money. An Informative Skit on being good with money was exhibited by the students to explain that money is not everything in the life. The moral which was imparted through the skit was to use money wisely and it should be used only to meet our daily needs.

Don't Cry Over Spoilt Milk

Assembly on 'Don't Cry over Spoilt Milk' was conducted on Wednesday, 14th February by the students of Grade 5B. The Students enacted a skit emphasizing on not to worry about the past and to think about their future. Quotes related to happiness were shared followed by a scintillating dance performance by the students.

Synonyms of laughter

"A good laugh is sun shine in the house"

To make it true the students of Grade 6A performed an assembly on Feb 8th 2018. The assembly started with the 'Laughter song' with one of the students on the guitar. A video on 'Synonyms of Laughter' was played. Students were made to guess the different types of laughter. It was followed by a skit to highlight how a person with sense of humour at workplace creates a positive environment that builds up bonding between colleagues and encourages innovative and positive thinking for better communication. This was followed by a presentation on 'Laughter is the Best Medicine', emphasizing on the physical, mental and social benefits of laughter. The assembly came to an end with a video on science behind laughter.

Special Teachers' Assembly

A special assembly was organized by the teachers of Grade 1 to 5 on 10th January. Each teacher expressed their thoughts in the form of bustle, puppet show and songs which highlighted the value of 'Self Appreciation' and 'Give the Best of All'. The assembly turned out to be an eventful time of the day.

Multilingualism

Morning assembly is a time of peace where everyone gathers in one place and join hands to praise the lord for blessing us with a new day.

Assembly on 'Sustainable Future through Multilingualism' was conducted by the students of G4B. The audience were introduced to the topic through dance forms of various culture. A meaningful skit was enacted followed by a tamil song which signified multiliguasim. The assembly made the students realize the importance of language.

Parents-Teachers Meeting

"Education is a shared commitment between the dedicated teachers, motivated students and enthusiastic parents with high an expectations".

- Bob Beauprez

Communication between parents and teachers is essential for the students to fly with colourful ribbons in the classroom. As part of this, Parent's teacher conference was organized on 6th of January 2017 to discuss what is being taught and how the students are progressing. In addition we, the facilitators also discussed briefly regarding the concerns over the student's specific academic and behavioural issues. Parents were happy to know their wards level in academics. We the facilitators and the parents exchanged our healthy feedback and suggestion for the betterment of the child.

हिन्दी गतिविधि

जी पाँच के बच्चों ने घोंसले पर गतिविधि की | जिसमें बच्चों ने सूखे पत्ते , टहनी , धागे और अपशिष्ट सामाग्री का प्रयोग कर घोंसले बनाए |

साथ में बच्चों ने चिड़िया और घोंसले पर कविता व कहानी भी सुनाई , जिससे उनकी भाषा व बोलने के कौशल में वृद्धि हुई | स्वयं कविता व कहानी सुनाते समय बच्चे बहुत उत्साहित हुए | बच्चों ने इसका पूरा आनंद लिया।

जी 4 के बच्चों ने महाभारत के एक अंश पर नाटक का प्रदर्शन किया।

जिसका नाम था 'वीर अभिमन्यु '। जिसमें अभिमन्यु की अदभुत वीरता, मातृभक्ति और युद्ध में नियमों को क्यों तोड़ा गया यह बताया गया है | शीजल ने अभिमन्यु का और रिम ने युधिष्ठिर का पात्र निभाया। जिसमें वह चक्रव्यूह को भेदने के विषय में चर्चा करते हैं |

सभी बच्चों ने सलमान ने जयद्रथ , जय कीर्ति ने दुर्योधन और तनिष व खुशी ने सैनिक का पात्र बड़े अच्छे से निभाया तथा संस्कृत व हिन्दी शब्दों का सही उच्चारण किया

भाषा कौशल व हिन्दी उच्चारण के साथ बच्चों का यह नाटक सराहनीय था। बच्चों ने इसका पूरा-पूरा आनंद लिया।



Bridge Academic Gap Program

The Academic bridging program for students of various levels in the Mathematics, Science, English and Social Science was conducted between 19th and 27th March 2018 for Grades 6 to 9, with an attempt to enhance their understanding of important concepts. The faculty members engaged the learners with a unique set of activities and games to break the monotony of a formal classroom. This helped the students to understand things with ease and learn to appreciate the subjects a little more.

