

Understanding Shivam

Centre for Civil Society is working on a project to implement Section 12 (1) (c) under the RTE Act (25% reservation) with the support of Tech Mahindra Foundation. The project, *Patang*, aims to take ideas from policy to practice. We are implementing a holistic inclusion programme with academic and social aspects to improve learning levels of EWS children. Currently, we are working in two private schools in New Delhi.

Delhi Public School, Vasant Vihar, is one of these schools. We are facing several challenges and seeing numerous opportunities. One such story is that of a boy named Shivam, who has shown immense growth, in both the *Patang* class and his regular school classes.

Shivam joined DPS in grade 1, last year. At the time he joined, he could neither read nor write. This made him inattentive at school. Not only would he not pay attention, but he would also disturb the children sitting around him. His class teacher, Jyoti Bhalla, recommended that he join the *Patang* remedial classes.

He soon joined Nudrat's (*Patang* teacher for grade 1) class. After observing his behaviour for a while, she realized, that Shivam was not a naughty child. He was acting out only due to his lack of understanding. She had also been noticing similar traits in other children of her class. Like Shivam, most of the children in her class were struggling with basic reading. To overcome this problem, she focused on phonics in the first few months. She also read aloud short stories containing lots of pictures in her classes. This contributed towards building Shivam's interest in class. He also started trying to read on his own and became sincere in class.



"I would encourage Shivam to try to read the text below the pictures in story books. Slowly, he became interested in reading." – Nudrat Ma'am

The class teacher, also noticed this positive change in him and appreciated him for it. Once he started showing sincerity in class, she also started making an extra effort to help him. She would have one on one conversations with him and made sure that he followed classroom content.

"The one on one conversations helped Shivam become more confident in class. He did not hesitate to get his doubts clarified." – Jyoti Ma'am

Both Shivam's class teacher, as well as his *patang* teacher, worked hard with Shivam. While teachers are important in a child's life, it is not possible to create long-term impact without the support of his/her parents. Shivam's parents took interest in their child's well being. His mother picks him up everyday after *Patang* class and always asks Nudrat about his behaviour and academic levels. His father also talks to the teachers several times.

" They would take books from me and help him read at home. They would also make sure he completed all his homework." – Nudrat Ma'am

Support from *Patang*, his school teachers, as well as a positive environment at home, have helped Shivam grow academically as well as behaviourally. He continues to be an inspiration for all other children and for the project as a whole.