



Teachers change lives

Quality of teaching paramount

Teachers are a vital part of the school system and in 2016 only 89% of teacher training places for secondary schools were filled in the UK. This left a shortage of nearly 2,000, potentially resulting in the same number of classes without permanent teachers¹. In India the problem is even more dire in the two districts where Kusuma Trust UK (the Trust) works: 13% of teaching positions are vacant in Sambalpur, Odisha and 43% remain unfilled in Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh. Teachers have the capacity to change lives, but they have to be in the classroom and armed with the best skills. A World Bank Study found that many teachers were not particularly well educated themselves, which impacted on the quality of their teaching.²

“No education system can be better than its teachers.”

Lord Adonis

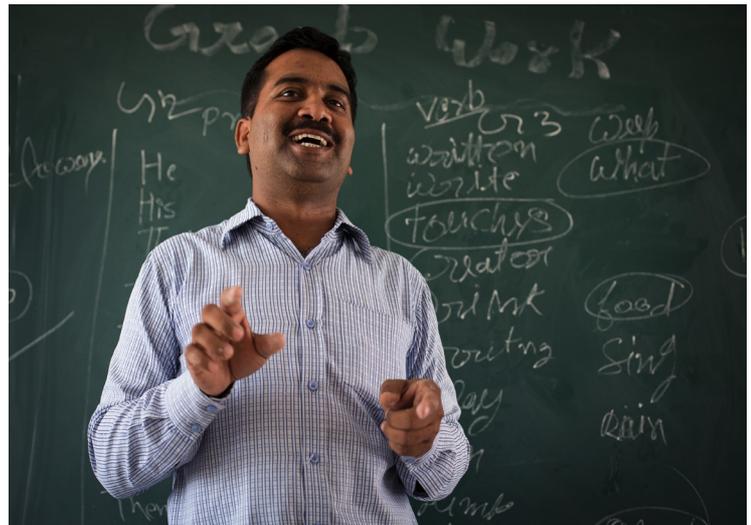
World Teachers' Day is held annually on October 5 and commemorates teachers worldwide. Its aim is to increase support for teachers and to ensure that the needs of future generations will continue to be met by teachers. The Trust recognises the importance of good teachers and the difference they can make to the education of young people and their quality of life. The Trust builds the skills and expertise of teachers whilst recognising high quality teachers who make a huge difference to their students and the wider community.

In India, the Trust supports 160 teachers in partnership schools, providing them with training in pedagogy so that they are more interactive and dynamic in the classroom. Kusuma mobilises a group of mentors who visit schools providing teachers with onsite support and coaching to translate this training into action. Kusuma creates a space for peer learning where teachers can share their experiences with each other and provides teachers with creative resources to use in the classroom. The Kusuma Excellence Awards recognise good practice, rewarding both the school and the teacher with funding to purchase additional resources, whilst also raising their profile.

The work of the Trust has been recognised by the Hardoi District Government, which in turn has led to it being expanded in the State of Uttar Pradesh to reach a further 775 teachers. The District Education Officer in Sambalpur has experienced the teacher training first-hand,

visited schools Kusuma works with and seen the impact it has. He has since become an advocate for the programme and launched it across an additional nine districts this year.

In Gibraltar, the Trust equips teachers with the relevant skills to introduce and teach computer coding in their lessons. In partnership with University College London and Firetech, teachers participate in interactive sessions introducing them to coding, specialist computer equipment, resources for lessons, and ways in which coding can be embedded into their teaching. With financial technology companies and the gaming industry being major employers in Gibraltar, the need to equip teachers with the required knowledge to deliver coding lessons is vital.



Mr Amar Ashok a teacher at the Government Higher Secondary School, Gopamu.
Photo: Sam Strickland

Teachers are the foundation for a good education and the Trust will continue to work with them, improving their skills, recognising their work and making it a profession that others aspire to. Our programmes for teachers will grow and adapt as education systems evolve, enhancing the impact on more young people.

“When each of us thinks about what we can do in life, chances are we can do it because of a teacher.”

Professor Stephen Hawking

1. <http://tinyurl.com/j79j4ev>

2. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2018>

Teacher gives back

The Kusuma Excellence Awards (KEA) recognise the valuable work of top performing teachers in Sambalpur and Hardoi. Winners of the award receive a cash prize of INR 10,000 and a choice of teaching and learning resources to use in their lessons.

Prabhudatta Hota, a teacher in Chemistry at Gangadhar Meher Junior College, Sambalpur received an award in 2016 and 2017. The head of the college nominated him both years due to the improvement in the performance of his students and his dedication to helping students outside of lessons. As part of his prize, Mr Hota chose an android-based tablet to download books, journals and research papers for use in his lessons. In the second year, he chose textbooks on organic and inorganic chemistry to help students prepare for entrance exams and professional science courses. Mr Hota believes that as a direct result of these resources two of his students have qualified for medical entrance exams, two have been accepted at the National Institute of Technology and a further 12 students have qualified for entrance exams to study engineering.

“These awards have instilled a lot of confidence in me as a person and teacher. I only received this award because of the performance of my students and therefore whatever I receive must be utilised for their development. This is why as part of my prize I chose books for my students so that they have the best possible chance to go on and achieve even more than they already have.”

Inspiring teachers through computer coding

The UK national curriculum, which is followed in Gibraltar, introduced coding and computer programming for all students aged 5 -14 years. Teaching programming skills to children is seen as a vital solution to the skills gap for technology jobs.

In 2016-2017, the Trust supported 22 teachers in Gibraltar to gain an understanding of computer science. A three-day course was led by the Computer Science Department from University College London and focused on algorithms, programming, robotics and how to embed this in the classroom. As a result of the training, the Department of Education and Kusuma have both invested in coding equipment for teachers and students.

Stuart Borastero, an Advisor to the Department of Education and previously a teacher in Gibraltar attended the training sessions. He said: *“All the work Kusuma has done on robotics and coding has really accelerated the progression of teachers in Gibraltar. Kusuma has been instrumental in planting the seed to make technology flourish in schools. Not only have they provided equipment but the training has inspired teachers to be more inventive in the way coding is taught to students.”*

Top teachers engage students

Jyoti Prabha teaches Science to classes 9 and 10 in the Government Girls Inter College, Sandila, Hardoi. Due to the large number of students in her classes she had concerns that they were struggling to understand basic concepts. She contacted Kusuma for support. Kusuma's District Resource Group, a set of mentors who provide guidance and coaching gave her resources that help explain concepts and trained her to use activities drawing on examples from daily life.



Ms Prabha teaching a Science lessons in her classroom
Photo: Kusuma Foundation

Ms Prabha now regularly uses the resources and receives regular mentoring from a mentor. Her classes are more interactive, based on real life situations and she regularly uses quizzes to introduce new topics. Despite the large number of students she now feels they are more engaged in the classroom, understand concepts better and are more confident in expressing their views. Because of the change in her students, she believes that her newfound positivity and enthusiasm is inspiring other teachers in the school.

“It is due to Ms Prabha that we get an opportunity to see, touch, use and fully understand science equipment in the laboratory. She takes us out of the classroom for group activities and we understand a topic better through her interesting activities. We always look forward to her class.”

Anjali Singh, a teacher at the Government Girls Inter College Bilgram attended Kusuma's teacher training sessions, after which she introduced letter-writing to encourage students to write letters to her every month. Students started sharing both academic and personal challenges and Ms Singh adapted her teaching methods and prioritised topics that need more explanation. Her students confidence has grown and students now share their thoughts openly in small groups.

Kusuma Trust UK new office

We have moved and from 1 October 2017 our new address is:

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