

Zaaro ke Bacche

A school for children
with autism & Down's syndrome

Children of the stars

तारों के बच्चे



in Varanasi (India)

Newsletter – November 2017

News from the Association in Geneva

Marie-Françoise returned to Geneva mid-April 2017 and our Annual General Meeting took place on 4 May. We sent our reports, including the balance sheet, to all our generous donors and friends.

We have a new treasurer, Alexandra Dupraz, who has joined our committee. We take this opportunity to thank her for her commitment to the association.

During her six-month stay in Switzerland, Marie-Françoise kept in touch with our donors and worked on fundraising. In early 2017 we received a spontaneous donation of CHF 300.- from the commune of Choulex and two other major donations from Chêne-Bougeries and the municipality of Bernex respectively (CHF 3,000 each).

A funding request has been submitted to the Lord Michelham of Hellingly Foundation and we are eagerly awaiting a reply.

The big event this summer was the fundraising concert which brought together more than 100 people. It was a great success.



Kathak dance by Fanny & Priscilla and the Puppets of Rajasthan with Tina & Michel

We are most grateful to all the artists, the 'Maison de Quartier' in Carouge, Didier and François, our chai-walas, and all our volunteers and donors for their support of the children in our care.

School life in Varanasi

Marie-Françoise arrived in Varanasi on 8 October 2017. It was still very hot and humid, but the weather has gradually become more pleasant and the nights cooler.

We are very happy in our new environment which is calm and pollution-free.

Two children have now left us: **Niyanta** (12 years) who will live at home with her mother, and **Vihaan**, for whom the duration of transport was a problem. However, we have stayed in touch with these two families.



In July we welcomed a new 10-year old boy named **Karthik**.



Four families with **young children aged 3 and 4** have contacted us. We will focus our efforts on early intervention and care and set up part-time school support with their mothers, for whom we will draw up a programme for them to follow at home. The crucial question which we need to discuss with the families is transportation.



We have had to make some changes within our team for two major reasons. Firstly our special-needs educator Kusum has had serious health problems and in 2018 Subhash will be joining a government school outside Varanasi.

However, about a week ago we hired a new special-needs educator, Rakesh. We are looking for another special-needs educator to replace Kusum.

Secondly, Marie-Françoise felt that the presence of a psychologist would be beneficial to the quality of our work, so in early November she hired Neela, a clinical psychologist, who will be working with us two days a week.

In cooperation with Marie-Françoise, Neela is responsible for the following tasks:

- contact with the families,
- on-the-job training of our educators,
- evaluation of each child's educational project every two months,
- assisting Marie-Françoise with the implementation of part-time care for the new young children and their mothers.

In early November Odile, a French speech therapist and friend of the Taaro ke Bacche Association, came to Varanasi for a week to share her experience with us. She provided great support to Marie-Françoise.

We have also started the procedure of registration with the Ministry of Education as a school for children with learning difficulties.



Some more pictures of our life in Varanasi



Our website:

www.taarokebacche.org