



# VMS

## NEWSLETTER 2023

As we embrace the year 2024, we are happy to share with you the heart-warming impact of your support to the school during the last year.

In this 5th edition of our Newsletter, we bring to you the stories of the positive change that your generosity has brought about. Every support has helped bring smiles to the faces of our children. We extend our deepest gratitude for your support and trust in us in achieving our mission.

### OUR BRIGHT STARS

**Sujal Pukale** won 1<sup>st</sup> prize in Shot Put at State Level Sports Competition held under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Our SSC exam results for the year 2022-23 were 100% with **Yash Jadhav** scoring 80.20%.

**Anahita Sachinwalla** from the VMS - Learning Centre scored 61.2% in the 10<sup>th</sup> Class NIOS Exam.



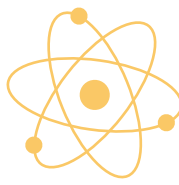
**Sujal Pukale**  
proudly displaying his  
gold medal in shot put



**Yash Jadhav,**  
SSC Topper of the  
School 2022-23



**Anahita Sachinwalla,**  
10<sup>th</sup> Topper of the school,  
NIOS Board, 2022-23

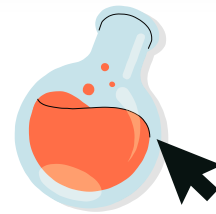


## THE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Is a residential school for blind boys providing free of cost education lodging & boarding facilities. The school follows the State Board Syllabus in Marathi Medium. Academic Education is provided to students from Classes 1 to 8. Students of Classes 9 & 10, while continuing to reside with us, study in a nearby Municipal school so as to learn to integrate with the sighted. In the current year there are 90 students.



## Tactile Lab



was introduced for the students this year. It facilitates a deep understanding of the concepts enabling a more inclusive learning environment.

Students attending class in Tactile Lab

## Annie Braille Lab



Annie Braille is the world's first self-learning Braille device for the visually impaired. It helps younger children to self-learn to type and to read Braille.

Students in the Annie Braille Lab





## Early Intervention

classes for students from 0 to 6 years focuses on developing preparatory skills, covering functional development, daily living activities, communication and basic academic concepts.

Student attending Early Intervention class



## Computer Education

for our School Students begins from Class 2. The rigorous computer training given to the students has enabled them to write exams independently for the first time this year.

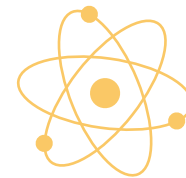


## Music

Padmashri Shri Suresh Wadkar's Ajivasan Music Academy provides music training for all school students, covering instruments like harmonium, tabla, flute and vocal training.



Music Performance by students



## Functional Academics Section:

The School helps visually challenged students with Multiple Disabilities. It prepares these students through therapies with disability specific skills and with skills to socialise, become independent and focus on academics.

## Expanded Core Curriculum:

This course includes training in activities of daily living like Independent living, Self Determination, Social Interaction, Recreation and leisure, Orientation and Mobility and so on that will help the students to be self-reliant.

**ABACUS and Vedic Math classes** help students to easily master Number & Alphabet Identification as well as mathematical processes like Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division, Square Root, Cube Root, Decimals, Geometry and Algebra.

**Dance Movement Therapy** is conducted twice a week for the students. This therapy is aimed to benefit physical and mental health and for stress reduction.

**Cricket Coaching:** Students receive cricket coaching under the guidance of an experienced coach.



**Mime:** Students at the school receive training in Mime, a unique form of performance art. It has therapeutic benefits such as enhancing body awareness, expressive communication, emotional expression, social skills, mindfulness, creativity and confidence.

**Yoga:** Yoga training holds significant benefits for the students with visual impairment as well as the intellectually challenged. It helps in regulating physical, mental and emotional wellbeing, including stress reduction, improved flexibility and strength, self-care and mindfulness.



'Best Student of month' from every class

The School's Investiture Ceremony was held at the beginning of the year when we proudly announced the selection of the Vice-Captain, Captain and Head Boy for the year.

To encourage our students to put in their best, we recognize "best student of the month" from each class and "best Class of the Month".



Investiture Ceremony





Students participated in Educational Trips – visit to banks, markets, Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and enjoyed picnics in the midst of nature contributing to a more enriching learning experience.

Visit to BNHS Taxidermy Centre

## VMS LEARNING CENTRE

Is a Day School where we provide Individualised Education Programmes for children with special needs, catering to both boys and girls. It welcomes children with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Mental Retardation, Muscular Dystrophy, Slow Learners, ADHD and those with other diverse needs. The curriculum is customized to meet each child's specific requirements.



## The VMS-Vijay Merchant Centre for Life-Skills & Development



Classroom session with Pre Primary students



Students in Pre Vocational Programme engaged in a tailoring class

## Therapy services

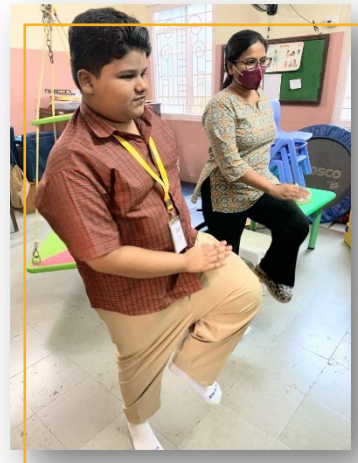
Students have access to a range of therapeutic services like speech therapy, occupational therapy, educational therapy and counseling.



Health Camp



Counseling



Occupational Therapy

During the year students engaged in a range of interschool competitions like sports, singing and quizzes. They showcased their ability and talent securing numerous prizes.



Kashvi Mehta (Right) and Alifiya Kanorwala (left) winners of the interschool Quiz Competition



Rishi Yadav won first prize in Shot Put at the Interschool Sports competition





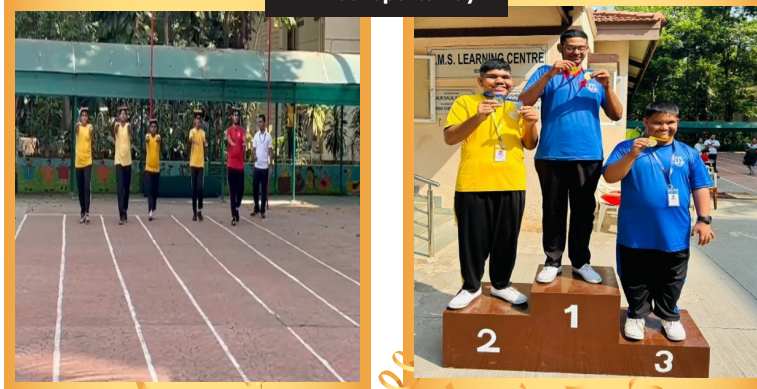


A Science Exhibition was held in December 2023, at the VMS Learning Centre, the Topic being "Evolution of Technology." Students participated with great interest and enthusiasm. Students from neighbouring schools were invited to view the exhibition.



A student presenting invention of Telephone

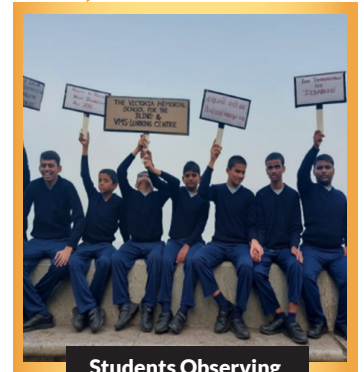
### Annual Sports Day



## CELEBRATIONS



Green Day Celebration



Students Observing  
'World Disability Day'



Christmas Celebration



Republic Day Celebration



Summer Camp



Picnic fun with friends

## Capacity Building Workshops for Teachers and Caretakers

**Teachers Training Programme** – Educative training sessions were conducted for the teachers during the period to enhance their professional growth and to contribute to the success and growth of the students.



Capacity building  
sessions for  
teachers



Team building  
workshop for  
caretakers

## NAVNIT SHAH LIBRARY AND RESOURCE CENTRE

Our **NAVNIT SHAH LIBRARY AND RESOURCE CENTRE** open to all parents, senior citizens and visually challenged is equipped with Braille Books, Audio Books, Large Print Books, Job Access With Speech (JAWS) enabled computers with Internet access and many other reading aids. Approximately 1035 visually challenged members are registered.

**Smart glasses** were distributed to **300 individuals** with Visual impairment with support from UTI Asset Management Company Ltd.

**Online Competitive Coaching Classes** are conducted for any Visually Impaired youth in the field of Banking, Public Service and MPSC exams. Classes continue to be conducted online post pandemic so as to accommodate students PAN India. Guidance, study material and training is imparted to help succeed in the exams and interviews to secure government jobs reserved for them.



## Testimony from Competitive Coaching Students

I am an ex-student of the school, I am thankful to the school for my academic and career achievement.

**Vaibhav Khade, NABARD (clerk)**



I attribute my entire success to my school, which helped with schooling, computer skills and encouraged me to appear for competitive exams.

Thank you sincerely VMSB  
**Rahul Singh, Junior Secretariat Assistant,  
Defence Ministry of India**

**VOCATIONAL SERVICE** – Our Massage Therapy Training Programme that has proved truly successful was restarted recently after a long gap due to the pandemic. After a 3-month training session, trainees are able to get good jobs at salons, hotels and be self-employed as well.

**New Initiative:** The School has collaborated with MANN Foundation for skilling and employment opportunities for adults with visual impairment and Intellectual Disabilities.

### **“EYE WAY HELPDESK” IN COOPERATION WITH CIPLA & SCORE FOUNDATION –**

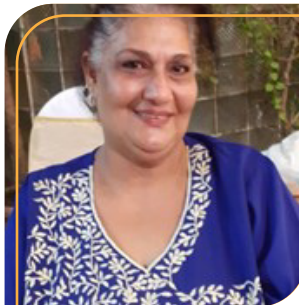
Persons with Visual Impairment calling on our Toll free number – **1800532046** are provided with information vital to them in the areas of education, employment, health, assistive devices, government schemes and any other assistance that they may require.

## Some Testimonials from Students, Parents & Teachers



I've been a student at The Victoria Memorial School for the Blind since grade 1, and now I'm in grade 8. My journey here has been enriching, learning academics, Braille, music, Mallakamb, gym, and computer skills. Introduced to music early on, I can now play the flute proficiently. My ambition is to become a musician and a flute teacher in the future.

**Saurabh Umar, Head boy- School for the Blind**



I'm Mrs. Sachinwala, parent to Arzaan and Anahita. I express deep gratitude to VMS for warmly embracing my children despite their learning disabilities. Today, their growth is a testament to the dedication of the teachers and staff. I'll forever appreciate the encouragement and motivation provided by the teachers. Thank you for making my kids feel special and proud of themselves.

**Mrs. Mahnaz Sachinwalla, parent**



My son, Kaivalya, studies at The Victoria Memorial School for the Blind in class V, having joined in class I. The devoted teachers provide excellent education and engaging activities like Mallakamb, yoga, and cricket. The school offers classes in music, computer, and painting. The School and Hostel facilities are very efficient. I deeply appreciate this school.

**Mrs. Bharti Rahul Nangre, Parent**



I'm Anjana Watvesa, a computer teacher at VMS Learning Centre since 2011. Working here, I've found that every day brings new learnings from my students and colleagues. Adapting my skills and knowledge to meet the students' needs has been a rewarding experience. I consider myself fortunate to have the opportunity to work with them. Thank you.

**Ms. Anjana Watvesa, Sr. Teacher - VMSB- LC**



I have been working as a special teacher at The Victoria Memorial School for the Blind for 17 years. Witnessing students transform from newcomers with blank slates to independent, self-respecting independent individuals brings immense joy and satisfaction.

**Ms. Meena Sorte, Sr. Teacher, School for the Blind**



I feel proud of our institution's transformative education which is beyond sight limitation. We focus on comprehensive education, skill development, mobility training, and assistive technology. Our goal is to equip students for independent navigation and create a collaborative, inclusive learning environment. Together, we challenge stereotypes, shaping a brighter, more inclusive future for visually impaired individuals.

**Ms. Rajani Hiremath, Principal - School for the Blind**



Reflecting on my time as principal at VMS learning Centre, it has been a remarkable journey. The collaborative efforts of our dedicated educators, enthusiastic students, and supportive parents have created an environment where every individual thrives. Together, we have combined to create an educational environment that enhances the overall learning experience. I am grateful to be part of a school that values innovation and encourages a holistic approach to education.

**Ms. Shampa Roy, Principal- V.M.S-Learning Centre and Life-Skill Centre**



## Our Volunteers



Since 2015, my journey with Victoria Memorial School for the Blind has been truly enriching. Providing reading support and exam preparation has been a fulfilling experience, and I feel blessed to be part of this school.

**Mrs. Sushila Gopalkrishnan, Volunteer**



I have been volunteering at the Victoria Memorial School (VMS) since 2016, teaching basic math and spoken English to college students. Mesmerized by the positive energy at VMS, I quit my 25-year IT career to serve in education for the blind. This volunteer work brings me joy, peace, and a sense of purpose, making me feel fortunate to contribute in a fulfilling and grounding way.

**Mrs. Nandita Damble**

## In Memoriam



In loving memory of our dear Head Teacher, Mrs. Shyamla Alyshetty, whose wisdom and kindness left an indelible mark on our school. You will be dearly missed and your legacy will continue to inspire us.

# A Big Thank You

## to Our Current Major Donors –2023

Lubrizol Advanced Materials  
Tribhovandas Bhimji Zaveri Ltd  
Standard Chartered Bank  
UTI Asset Management Co. Ltd.  
Morgan Stanley Advantage Services Pvt Ltd  
Cipla Foundation  
Sahachari Foundation  
Navnit Manilal Shah Foundation  
Nihchal Israni Foundation  
Alkyl Amines Chemicals Ltd.  
Lions Club of Bombay Cuffe Parade Charity Trust  
Krishnadevi Deviprasad Kejriwal Matrisdan Trust  
Australian Consulate General  
India Capital Research And Advisors Pvt Ltd  
Vibhuti Investments Co Ltd

Coomie Adi Gazdar  
Jamshed Wadia

## Our Stalwarts

Dr. Preeti Varma - Academic Consultant,  
Dr. Salil Jandyal - Executive Officer,  
Ms. Shampa Roy – Principal, Learning Centre,  
Ms. Rajani Hiremath – Principal, School for the Blind

## Our Management Committee and Trustees

The Honourable Chief Justice  
of the High Court of Bombay

Ex-Officio Chairperson

Mr. Ramesh D. Chandak

Vice Chairperson/Trustee

Mrs. Mala Goenka

Hon. Secretary/Trustee

Mrs. Anjali Laud

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Mrs. Janhavi Apte-Kothari

Member

Mr. Jagdish Thackersey

Member

Mr. Anami Roy

Member



## MISSION

To provide quality education and rehabilitation opportunities to the differently abled.



## VISION

To encourage, nurture and develop differently abled individuals; to empower them to take their place in the world and society, as confident and productive.



## VALUE STATEMENT

To strive for a better quality of life for every visually impaired and intellectually impaired individual by providing education, training and rehabilitation opportunities, thereby making them self-reliant individuals.

We thank you for your interest in our activities for the welfare of the challenged and take this opportunity to wish you a safe, healthy and happy 2024

The Victoria Memorial School for the Blind

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