



Ms. Kavita Sahay Kerawalla - Vice Chairperson

VIBGYOR GROUP OF SCHOOLS

Educational Excellence

Responses on behalf of Ms. Kavita Sahay Kerawalla, Vice Chairperson VIBGYOR Group of Schools

W HAT ARE VIBGYOR'S CORE VALUES?

We launched VIBGYOR back in 2004 with a genuine sentiment to bring about desired changes in the educational landscape. Traditionally, most learning mechanisms had been rote-driven and academic-focused with little scope for extra-curricular activities like sports, music, performing arts and the likes.

For instance, in the early 2000s, my son was a national level tennis player, but he often had to miss his school to participate in tournaments, in most instances due to the rigidity, for lack of a better term, of the entire academic structure.

However, over the last few years, our mechanisms have evolved significantly and we are in a much better position today when it comes to prioritising a balanced curriculum for our children.

Our renowned curriculum focuses upon modern international methodologies as greatly as it focuses upon extra-curricular activities. Our deep-rooted passion for providing holistic education for our young students was also recently encoded in the National Education Policy, 2020 – a validation of sorts for our beliefs since our inception.

We strive to ENTHUSE our students with fascinating learning experiences. With our well-researched structured curriculum, new-age teaching methodologies,

digital learning tools and a wide range of extra-curricular activities and facilities, we offer students a value-added, in-depth education experience. We also work to ENLIGHTEN our students so they can discover and harness their full potential. We constantly endeavour to guide our students, nurture their interests, and channelise their energies into refining their skills, talents and abilities – whether in academics, sports or performing arts. Through our integrated curriculum, holistic education experience and emphasis on developing new-age skills, we EMPOWER students to be ready for the dynamic world of 2030.

The three core values mentioned above (3 Es) are our motivators to ensure that our students are ready whenever it is time to spread their wings and fly into the outside world.

We believe that every child is unique and presents distinctive developmental trajectories and learning techniques, varied intellectual, creative and emotional abilities and so on.

It is our moral responsibility to provide our little ones with quality education in an enabling environment in order to rightly mould them into tomorrow's leaders of their respective fields.

HOW DOES THE VIBGYOR GROUP DIFFERENTIATE ITSELF FROM THE COMPETITION?

We have been pioneers of holistic education for nearly two decades now.

Our constant focus on all-round development of our students has proven to be an effective facilitator in showcasing their talents and personal interests while also enhancing their critical thinking abilities and decision-making skills. Additionally, our programmes on offer also prioritise inculcating a genuine spirit of teamwork via extensive peer-to-peer collaboration.

We provide students with a seamless blend of modern academics, professional sports, music, performing arts, real-life community experiences and relevant experiential learning programmes. Our first-of-its-kind Sports & Performing Arts curriculum has been well-integrated with classroom learning to help strike a fine balance between the various facets that constitute a symmetrical learning process.

We also do our level best to support our students who choose to further pursue their extra-curricular activities professionally (whether international, national or state-level) by conducting additional classes, granting leaves and so on, depending upon the situation.

Another key differentiator is our scripted curriculum methodology which ensures that academic content is delivered simultaneously across all our schools. The scripted nature of our curriculum guarantees consistency in the content delivery mechanisms while also covering all learning aspects in an appropriate

manner. Our scripted curriculum also makes it possible for students to shift seamlessly from one VIBGYOR centre to another.

As an example, if a student's family relocates from Bengaluru to Mumbai on a Friday evening and the student attends her/ his new school in Mumbai on Monday morning, she/ he would have not missed out a single class, from an academic point of view.

With VIBGYOR schools being present in most major Indian cities, especially for sake of parents who are often relocating, our scripted curriculum provides the added benefit that their children's academic progression is not affected in any way, regardless of when they choose to relocate.

WHAT ARE THE PLANS FOR THE FUTURE IN TERMS OF EXPANSION AND GROWTH?

Well, firstly, I'm genuinely grateful that we are now present in 14 major Indian cities. It is only due to our parents' unwavering faith in us, along with the love of our students.

Over the years, our network of schools has been growing steadily and now includes the preschools, VIBGYOR Kids and VIBGYOR Roots, while the primary and secondary schools are under the names VIBGYOR High and VIBGYOR Rise.

WHAT STRATEGIES DOES VIBGYOR GROUP HAVE IN PLACE TO IMPROVE THE BUSINESS?

We also take pride in having stayed ahead of the curve, primarily through our innovation and pragmatism.

Our latest successful endeavor was to create a virtual classroom platform with relevant content, practically overnight, when the pandemic had hit us last year.

We, therefore, launched VIBGYOR Virtual to facilitate regular online classes, supplemented with digital lesson plans, detailed student discussions, and even parent-teacher virtual feedback sessions.

We have also started organising virtual student trips to museums,

national parks and zoos so that the experiential learning's of students can continue despite the recent travel restrictions.

As we eagerly look to emerge from the pandemic, with schools reopening gradually, we are planning to introduce a modified version of 'blended learning'. Through this approach, we intend to facilitate a smooth transition for students from at-home learning of the past one year to conventional classroom learning.

Our teachers are now well-trained to deliver educational content via a balanced mix of classroom teaching and virtual resources, which would provide students with the added flexibility of freely tailoring their learning methodologies as per their preferences.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY GOALS THAT MS KAVITA SAHAY KERAWALLA AND VIBGYOR GROUP HAVE ACHIEVED SINCE THEY'VE BEEN THERE?

Apart from our passion and motivation, VIBGYOR was also established with a goal to create a vast network of schools, which would be perpetually-evolving models of excellence while adhering to the latest international standards.

After establishing 40 schools since our launch, we know that we have already come a long way, but there is still some distance to be covered.

For now, we are looking to get back to school as soon as we possibly can!

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS: PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR JOURNEY AS A WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

I started teaching in schools in the early 90s. After a little while, I realised that my students were also learning from the same books which I had, when I was in school. It seemed like the world outside was rapidly changing but our teaching-learning methodologies had remained static through the years.

Hence, during the inception of VIBGYOR, when I led a team of teachers and professional educators, our key focus was to design a curriculum that blended modern global learning methodologies with our traditional Indian school curriculum. I genuinely wished for our young children to be learning and applying more advanced levels of knowledge than the earlier generations.

Even after the VIBGYOR launch, my entrepreneurial initiatives did not cease. Soon, I introduced VIBGYOR Viva, which is an annual interschool cultural festival that offers a platform for students to showcase their talent on a grand stage.

VIBGYOR Model United Nations was then launched to acquaint students with the various prevalent challenges which we face as a global community. The innovative solutions provided by our students over the years truly make me believe that a few of them are already on their way to the United Nations and World Health Organisation in the near future!

I additionally also launched several other campaigns, like Novella and VIBGYOR Voyageur which focus on holistic development of our students while also being interesting for them.

Each day, I do my best to keep the entrepreneurial spirit alive within me, which will hopefully inspire our little students to become even greater entrepreneurs in the future.

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE TRUE ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

Apart from working long hours, true entrepreneurship is also about adapting and evolving with the changing times. Entrepreneurship provides you with a genuine opportunity to make a real impact on society in an appropriate manner. Hence, it is imperative for an entrepreneur to realise the actual worth of her / his product or services, along with also being equally accommodating towards the realigning of certain goals, if need be.



WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE OVER THE YEARS WORKING IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR?

I started teaching at a time when teachers were only supposed to teach what they themselves had studied in school, with practically no differentiation in the delivery mechanisms when compared with the earlier generations. Though computers arrived much later, they initially had minimal impact on student learnings, and were more of an aesthetical inclusion for most schools. For a long time, the main purpose of schooling was limited to preparing students for their board examinations so that a prestigious college would be within reach.

Going forward, I intend to make learning even more rounded by integrating practical life subjects into our curriculum, like basic carpentry, cooking, electronics skills and so on.

The above skills are fairly easy to master and are often handy in day-to-day life. Since they cannot be taught in isolation, we are looking at ways towards integrating them with our existing classroom concepts.

Besides being adept at academics and extra-curriculars, our students should also be self-reliant if the situation arises, knowing how to correctly change a light bulb, prepare their own delicious meals, or fix a broken table.

Hence, in 2021, I feel lucky to not just have witnessed the coming-of-age of our curriculum and delivery mechanisms, but to also have been

a significant contributor towards this impending transformation.

WHAT HAS MADE YOU SO SUCCESSFUL AS AN ENTREPRENEUR

I would like to believe that our entrepreneurial success over time has primarily been due to our constant focus on making quality education accessible for as many students as possible.

From a single brick-and-mortar centre in 2004, to the 40 schools we operate today, our growth story could be termed inspiring for many. However, we have not let this upward graph impact the quality of our service, or our core values, in any way. With each new centre, we are even more determined to climb higher, while always holding our beliefs close to our hearts.

Our comprehensive training and retraining programmes for our teachers, along with our scripted curriculum, have ensured overall uniformity and high-quality output levels to a significant degree without any compromises.

However, for ascending to the ultimate summit of success, there is no substitute for hard work, as an entrepreneur, as a student or otherwise.

AS A WOMAN LEADER, WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE TO WOMEN WHO WANT TO START THE ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNEY?

According to a recent survey, there are presently more than eight million women entrepreneurs in India alone. This number is

increasing each day and bringing about a radical change in the demographics of the traditional 'business world', which is highly encouraging for us as a nation. All-women and women-led organisations are now playing a more significant role in the economic and social growth of our country, and generating large-scale employment.

Despite the more than eight million women entrepreneurs already present in India, I would ideally like to see even more women entrepreneurs taking charge, especially after the pandemic, which has inevitably ensured a fresh start for numerous sectors and industries, with a plethora of new opportunities surfacing for budding women entrepreneurs.

My advice to women entrepreneurs would be to stay focussed on your goals, have a great sense of self-belief and never stop innovating. In most cases, there will be a fair share of challenges and obstacles which could sometimes be demotivating, but with dedication, patience, hard work and a genuine intent, success will always be around the corner.

Especially because it's Women's Day, I would also want to add that it is important for women entrepreneurs to also empower other women wherever possible. This multiplier effect will go a long way in ensuring gender equity and social harmony.

Wishing you all a very Happy Women's Day!