



Balagokulam

May 2014

Press Release

CHILDREN'S DAY IN HERTFORDSHIRE

“ We stayed together, ate together and learnt together” – A living together experience

We celebrate Mother's Day, Father's Day and even Sister's Day (Raksha Bandhan) but on Saturday 24 May it was truly a Children's Day when children of all age group (5-12) displayed their talents that included puppet show, drama, costumes, musical instruments, singing at the annual Balagokulam Shibir.

Balagokulam (BG) is a place where children (aged 5+) and parents come together on weekly basis across 32 centres in the UK, with a weekly attendance of 750+.

BG enables children to appreciate their cultural roots, learn values in an enjoyable way and make good friends. They also develop a sense of Sewa, Service to the community.

Since its inception in April 2005, the BG concept has proven to be very popular with centres now in most major cities such as Borehamwood, Stevenage, London, Birmingham, Liverpool & Swindon. Just in the last one year, 12 new Balagokulams have started in locations such as Lincoln, Leeds, Greenwich, Durham, Kings Lynn and Canary Wharf.

On the Whitsun Weekend Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th May at Kings Langley – Rudolf Steiner School, 350+ parents and children descended to take residence for a fun filled, action packed learning and living together experience. At this year's camp participants came from 30 towns and cities across the country. The camp was conducted in English, Hindi and Sanskrit, with also families from another 6 Indian language speaking backgrounds.

The aim of the camp was to encourage participation in a wide range of sports and team activities, learn and share our rich culture, learn more about how Balagokulam works and an opportunity to experience 'a weekend away from home' in a values based environment.

The activities included games, talks, discussions, learning classes, role plays, entertainment drama, yoga and plenty of delicious food. In parallel a teachers training programme was also conducted for all BG teams to further develop their skills, share challenges and assist with solutions.

A team of 50 volunteers worked tirelessly to cook meals daily onsite and teachers who executed the whole camp efficiently. This is the fourth annual shibir with record attendance. Interest is growing and many more Balagokulams are ready to start in the coming year.

Comments from some parents

'We stayed together, ate together and learnt together' – Rugby

'It was amazing to see so many children and parents all in one place who were made comfortable and organised with perfection. Hats off to the volunteers !' - Lincoln

Comments from some children

'I had lots of fun and made 10 new friends' – Bromley

'I enjoyed the food and showing off my talent in singing on stage in front of all' - Swindon

Further information – go to www.hssuk.org/bg or email BG@hssuk.org

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