



Raphael Ryder Cheshire International Centre Newsletter, July to December 2024

We wish all our readers a happy, peaceful and healthy 2025.

We extend a warm welcome to the following staff who have joined Raphael in the last six months: Ankush Rehan, Kapil Pooniya and Sakshi Nautiyal as special educators; Anjana Kukreti, Houseparent in Barbara Cottage; Ravinder Singh, Houseparent Martyn Cottage; Kavita Devi and Pooja as resource persons for two new outreach programme; Sunil Prasad as a Pharmacist; and Vijay Rawat and Balak Ram Semwal as guards.

We bid farewell to Pooja Rana, Pooja Negi & Kanchan Yadav, special educators; Santosh Lal, Houseparent who left for personal reasons; and Lal Singh, office peon and guard who retired after 40 years of service.

In July, Ms Lata Chamoli took on the role of Director Education and Ms Megha Bisht as Principal of the school.



Some of our students participated in **VIRASAT**, an art and heritage festival in Dehradun. Nikita, Sonali, Isha, Sanya and Khushi also had the opportunity to perform a short classical dance for a big audience at the Virasat venue.

SPIC-MACAY (The Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music and Culture Amongst Youth) hosted an Odissi dance performance by Arupa Gayatri Panda at Raphael. The students were thrilled by her engaging performance. She ended her session with a workshop, teaching the young students some of the basic Odissi dance steps.



SPORTS DAY: On November 14, celebrated as Children's Day, Raphael hosted its second annual Sports Day. The day commenced with a March Past which all the students took part in. This was followed by track races, wheelchair walk, walker walk and musical chairs. The high point of the event was the tug-



of-war between staff and students, with the students emerging as winners!



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OUTREACH PROGRAMME: Raphael continues to run its local outreach programme in 5 centres in Dehradun district. Over the last few months, parents with their children from these centres have attended intensive five-day training programmes held at Raphael. A group of 5 parents with their children are accompanied by the centre resource person. The parents are given hands-on training and also have the opportunity to discuss challenges and strategies.



Apart from the two District support centres in Rudraprayag and Uttarakashi that were set up in 2021, we have now set up two more centres, one in Dugadda block, District Pauri Garhwal and the other in Gazza block, District Tehri Garhwal. The Duggada

centre has 7 children while 8 are reached through the Gazza centre. We are deeply grateful to the Lady Ryder War Memorial Trust for their support for the centre in Duggada for the year 2025.



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: 3rd December:



This years' theme was "Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future. Raphael hosted a fun-filled fete and invited students from both regular and special schools to participate. This included students from Oasis, Welham Girls', Aasra Trust, Laxmi Devi Academy, Doon Girls' and Gyananda school. There were many games stalls and a couple of food stalls, selling items made by our students.

with Raphael acknowledging its special workforce Geeta, Bharat, Mukul, Sachin, Deeraj, Krishna, Ajay, Alok with a small cash prize, much to their surprise and delight!

The day concluded



TRAINING CENTRE: 32 young trainees enrolled in the 2-year Diploma in Special Education (Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities) 2024-2026, recognized by the Rehabilitation Council of India. It is heartening to see an increasing interest in this course. All the candidates from the previous batch have been fortunate to get jobs in special and regular schools.

Several disability awareness programmes were held in and around Dehradun. Programmes were conducted at Graphic Era University and Social Baluni School, AIIMS Rishikesh and around 300 students were sensitized.



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BARBARA COTTAGE: We are grateful to our generous donors for their support to renovate and refurbish Barbara cottage. The kitchen and bathroom are well-equipped, the roof has been repaired, electrical wiring changed, and the cottage has been repainted. It is surrounded by a fence and gate and huge beds for all kinds of bushes and flowers.



OPD CLINIC: The inpatient facility was closed with effect from 01 March 2024 and the OPD clinic has now been relocated to a new building next to the main office. The outpatient department continues to see all kinds of patients at a nominal registration fee. They are entitled to free Xrays, blood tests and some medicines. Lab testing has now been outsourced to a local pathology centre. An average of 35-40 patients attends the Centre on a daily basis.

INTERNS / VOLUNTEERS/VISITORS

We are glad to share that in the past six months we have had 13 volunteers and 12 interns:

- Namrata, Purnima Sharma, Ruba Sharma from All India Institute of Medical Sciences.
- Ayush Dwivedi, Ayushma Negi, Aditya Tripathi from Graphic Era Deemed to be University
- Shivani Chanchal, Chhorten Pema, Karishma Choudhary from SGRR University
- Pallavi, Manorama Rawat from MKP College
- Aarushi Sinha, Komal Mishra and Dimple from Himalayan Institute of Medical Sciences.
- Stuti Gussain from Chandigarh University
- Gayatri Kathait, Himashi Bhatt, Sonal Mittal, Ishani Bartwal, Agrima Pant and Shreya from Dev Sanskriti Vishvavidyalaya, Haridwar
- Priyanshi Singh from Banasthali Vidyapith, Rajasthan

Apart from our regular overseas volunteers, James Nicholson and Ellie Harrison, newly qualified doctors from University of Bristol, spent three weeks at Raphael as part of their medical electives. They were sponsored by the Lady Ryder of Warsaw Memorial Trust.

Bishop Drennan and James McCartney, both regular visitors to Raphael, spent the month of November with us. It is always good to have them back with us.

We remain indebted to all our donors, Indian and overseas (Institutional, corporate, foundations and individual), for their continuing generosity and support that enables us to achieve our mission to relieve suffering.

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