

**RISHI VALLEY EDUCATION
CENTRE
KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA**

INFORMATION BROCHURE

***RISHI VALLEY - 517 352,
CHITTOOR DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH.***

Telephone : (08571) 280622 / 280582
Fax : (08571) 280261
email : admissions@rishivalley.org

INTRODUCTION

Rishi Valley :

In 1926, when the philosopher J.Krishnamurti decided to set up his first school, he chose a remote valley in the interior of rural Andhra Pradesh, in Chittoor District at the edge of the Karnataka Plateau, about 135 km northeast of Bangalore.

Rishi Valley is at an altitude of 800 metres. The climate is dry and temperate, the water drawn from deep borewells is fresh and potable; and, in the absence of any industries, the atmosphere is remarkably clean and clear.

Shepherds with their flocks of sheep and goats have traversed this area since neolithic times, and still claim their ancient right of access to the hills; and the farmers of the valley have grown rain-fed crops like bajra, ragi and, more recently, peanuts. Their small hamlets — clusters of thatched, round mud huts with pens for animals — are dotted all over the valleys of the region.

The largest settlement in the valley, Thettu village, probably dates back several hundred years.

The Campus :

Rishi Valley School, Rishi Valley Rural Education Centre, Rural Health Centre, the Krishnamurti Study Centre at Rishi Valley, a small hospital with a resident doctor, a dairy with about 60 hybrid cows, a farm, an organic vegetable garden, a herb garden and fruit orchards are part of this wellshaded campus.

A wilderness area, consisting of 150 acres of once-barren hillside now covered with scrub and a thin layer of trees, borders the built-in area of campus.

The valley was officially declared a Bird Preserve in July 1991, and was cited by the International Council For Bird Preservation.

Educational Philosophy :

Krishnamurti's philosophy of education, reflected in the activities of Rishi Valley Education Centre, is best expressed in his own words :

The purpose, the aim and drive of these schools, is to equip the child with the most excellent technological proficiency so that the student may function with clarity and efficiency in the modern world.

A far more important purpose than this is to create the right climate and environment so that the child may develop fully as a complete human being. This means giving the child the opportunity to flower in goodness so that he or she is rightly related to people, things and ideas, to the whole of life. To live is to be related. There is no right relationship to anything if there is not the right feeling for beauty, a response to nature, to music and art — a highly developed aesthetic sense.

I think it is fairly clear that competitive education and the development of the student in that process.... is very, very destructive.

We must be very clear in ourselves what we want – clear that a human being must be the total human being, not just a technological human being. If we concentrate very much on examinations, on technological information, on making the child clever, proficient in acquiring knowledge while we neglect the other side, then the child will grow up into a one-sided human being. When we talk about a total human being, we mean not only a human being with inward understanding, with a capacity to explore, to examine his or her inward state and the capacity of going beyond it, but also someone who is good in what he does outwardly. The two must go together. That is the issue in education: to see that when the child leaves the school, he is well-established in goodness, both outwardly and inwardly.

(Krishnamurti On Education)

The intention of the schools run by KFI is to awaken the intelligence of the student so that he or she may 'flower in goodness'. The cultivation of a global outlook and a concern for our fellow human beings are all part of this scheme of education. Some further goals of the educational philosophy of Rishi Valley Education Centre are:

- * To educate students so that they are able to explore both the natural world and the world of feeling.
- * To inculcate a love for nature and respect for all forms of life.
- * To create an atmosphere of affection, order and freedom without either fear or licence.
- * Not to condition students in any particular belief, either religious, political or social, so that their minds may remain free to ask fundamental questions, enquire and learn.

Based on this philosophy, teachers attempt to create an atmosphere of freedom, care and security in which students are helped to enlarge their horizons and grow.

The school is concerned with developing the individual talent and intelligence of each child. We feel that it is equally important for parents to be aware of their children's talents as well as limitations, and allow them to develop in their own way, and not on the basis of predetermined expectations.

Our experience shows that not all children flourish in this system. In particular, those children who tend to be dependent and who need constant prodding do not adjust to the absence of pressure at the school.

RISHI VALLEY SCHOOL

Student Profile:

There are 360 boarding students in the school, aged 8 to 17, studying in classes 4 to 12. Students are drawn from all over India and several countries abroad. Admission is highly selective, and only about 12% of the applicants are accepted. Students are chosen for character and talent, in addition to academic promise.

Educational Programme and Facilities :

The twelve years of schooling are divided into the Junior School which includes preparatory classes for campus children and classes 4 and 5, the Middle School which includes classes 6 to 8, and Senior School which includes classes 9 to 12.

Classroom spaces and other facilities in each section of the school are suited to the needs of the students and staff at that level. The Senior School facilities include an excellent library (with audio listening stations), well-equipped science laboratories, audiovisual rooms with an extensive collection of video tapes, Internet facilities and an actively used computer centre. The Junior and Middle Schools occupy a separate complex which has recently been extended to include new and larger classrooms, an open assembly space, a mathematics curriculum-cum- activity room, and a junior science laboratory. There is also a well- stocked library for the Junior and Middle Schools, and computer facilities are available for Middle School students. In non-academic areas, the facilities include provisions for all major sports; an arts and crafts department with a range of activities such as carpentry, pottery, weaving, batik and fine art; and special interest clubs for topics such as photography, mathematics, electronics, current affairs, birdwatching, cookery and dramatics.

The Junior and Middle Schools :

At the Junior and Middle School levels, Rishi Valley teachers have a high degree of autonomy in deciding curriculum, teaching methods and evaluation systems. Emphasis is given to developing basic concepts in subject areas, skills of various types, and wider perspectives that incorporate the educational values of the school. A flexible curriculum, periodically reviewed and updated by the staff, has been developed keeping in mind current trends in education and the development level of children at each age group.

In the Junior School classes, a rich learning environment is provided. Painting, craft, music and drama are an integral part of the curriculum. Students are encouraged to pursue their interests beyond curricular learning. There is an ongoing programme to create learning materials that enhance the concrete experiences which are the basis of concept formation and skill development in languages and mathematics. The immediate natural and human environment of Rishi Valley provides the starting point for curricular themes of environmental studies. Field trips, discussions and project work help to enhance children's awareness and understanding of the world. Evaluation is based on ongoing teacher observations and classwork. Minimal home work is assigned at this stage.

In the Middle School — that is, from class 6 onwards — the curriculum is broadened to match the growing abilities of students in assimilating information and grasping abstract ideas. Specialized subjects and greater academic rigour are progressively introduced. In classes 6 and 7, students learn General Science, History and Geography, in addition to Languages and Mathematics. Subject matter and concepts are presented using audiovisual media, teacher-designed worksheets, visits to the laboratory and to the mathematics room, project work in the library, and field trips and excursions to surrounding areas. Students are encouraged to participate in classroom discussions, think for themselves, and develop an enquiring attitude. Written assignments, oral presentations and homework exercises are a regular part of the learning and evaluation process at this stage. In class 8 — which is a transition class into the Senior School — the specialized science disciplines of Physics, Chemistry and Biology are introduced and a beginning is made towards teaching the class 10 examination syllabus. Periodic tests, conducted at the discretion of the subject teachers, are now a regular part of the evaluation process as are self-assessment exercises, self-study worksheets and group projects.

The medium of instruction is English. In addition, all students study Hindi and Telugu until class 8. One among these two is the second language, and the other, the third language. (The second language is studied in greater depth.) The study of the second language is continued up to class 10.

The Senior School :

At the Senior School level, instruction is offered in the Sciences, the Humanities, Art, Commerce, Accounting, and Hindi and Telugu literature. The educational programme is oriented towards preparing the students for the ICSE (class 10) and ISC (class 12) examinations. At the end of class 9, students take final examinations for the first time.

The academic curriculum is balanced by dramatics, sports and work experience which includes participation in the other activities of the Centre, such as, rural education and reforestation.

The last two years at Rishi Valley School form a separate programme for which admissions are open and students of class 10 are screened anew as candidates. Each student in the 'Plus-2' course chooses four subjects in addition to English, which are then studied intensively for two years.

Students of class 11 take a programme of courses in General Studies (outside the ISC syllabus) aimed primarily at broadening the students' concerns for the human condition and for the natural environment, and bringing them into contact with contemporary issues. Visiting villages, stints at the Rural Education Centre and at the Rural Health Clinic are part of the programme.

For all classes, one period a week is designated as a 'culture class' where any topic of interest may be taken up for extended discussion. The aim of these classes is to enlarge students' intellectual and emotional horizons.

Between one and three periods a week are reserved for the class teacher to discuss and help solve specific problems, and to facilitate interaction between students.

Academic courses include Maths, Science, Literature in English, Hindi and Telugu, Commerce, Accounts, Economics, History, Geography, Art, Music and Computer Science.

Student Residences :

There are 21 small hostels, each of which accommodates a number ranging from 12 to 22 students. Boys and girls belonging to classes 4 and 5 live in the same house, while older ones live in separate houses.

Members of the teaching staff, who live in staff quarters within a house, act as house parents. Life in the hostel is meant to instill the values of co-operation, self-restraint, and sharing. The interaction between

teachers and students outside the classroom is considered a very important part of living and learning at Rishi Valley. The school does not have a system of house prefects; no student has authority over another.

The School Faculty

The school has a highly qualified and dedicated staff from all parts of India, engaged in giving instruction in both academic and non-academic subjects. Most have done postgraduate work, many have doctorates and a few have engineering degrees. The student teacher ratio is about 7:1.

There is a regular teacher exchange programme with the Krishnamurti Foundation Schools — Brockwood Park in England and Oak Grove School in the United States.

We welcome as teaching faculty persons genuinely interested in education, and try to offer them an atmosphere that encourages innovative work.

We also welcome as visiting faculty, persons who would like to teach in the school for limited periods ranging from a term up to two years.

RURAL EDUCATION CENTRE

The Rural Education Centre (REC) was set up on the Rishi Valley campus in 1976 on 14 acres of land, with three objectives.

The main aim was to extend the educational resources of Rishi Valley School into the neighbouring impoverished countryside.

A second objective was to regenerate the landscape in this drought-prone district consisting of degraded forests, denuded hills and small valleys.

Lastly, a village-based educational system was promoted with the hope that in due course village schools would become the nucleus for the establishment and growth of village commons where fruit bearing trees, fodder and fuel would be grown, which would lead to the regeneration of rural life.

Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources (RIVER), its Teacher Training Unit, Curriculum Development Cell and 2 model school are located on campus. The training facilities include dormitories and dining facilities.

A residential Middle School and a Back to School Programme are also situated on this campus.

The many distinct components of the REC programme are described below:

Rishivanam is a residential Middle School that caters to students from our Satellite schools, with an emphasis on the girl child. Health care, midday meals and clothes are provided free to all the children of the school. It is an experimental school, where students are taught in vertically grouped classes, with the help of innovative material; students are prepared for the class 7 examination of the Andhra Pradesh State Board. Academic training is supplemented by a rich programme in craft, music, athletics and puppetry.

Vellugu (Back to School) Around 40 students, formerly engaged in work, from two nearby *mandals* (or blocks) are currently enrolled in the programme. They live and study on campus, with the willing consent of their parents. The children, the youngest of whom is seven years old, attend a “bridge school” that will prepare them for entrance to local government schools.

Satellite School Scheme: Fifteen one-room schools have been built up to now, several of them located in village commons. Rishivanam serves as the resource centre for these schools, and in turn, each satellite school is a resource centre for its village. Each school has one teacher and around 30 students of various ability groupings. In the evening, most of these schools double up as non- formal and supplementary schools catering to the needs of working and school going children. The schools are involved in adult literacy, land reclamation schemes, reforestation, beekeeping, health, hygiene and family planning.

Curriculum Development: In consultation with well-known educationists and writers, and based on the teaching methods of the satellite schools, we have developed a comprehensive educational package for formal and non-formal elementary schools. It covers Telugu, Mathematics and Environmental Studies. The ‘School in a Box’ contains almost 1500 illustrated study cards, large-sized letters made of rubber, handwriting templates, puppets, various other teaching aids and toys. The Kit is available in Telugu and Hindi. A 9-volume Teacher Resource Pack contains resources and instructions for classroom teaching, craft activities and music, plus papers by educationists in the field on the multi-grade programme.

Teacher Training Programme: We offer a variety of programmes for agencies that wish to learn about the multigrade, multi-level pedagogy. The training is practical and its varying duration depends on the experience of the trainee. The Rishi Valley programme has been extended to formal and non-formal schools in the states of Tamil Nadu, UP, Jharkhand and several districts of Andhra Pradesh. More recently, under the auspices of UNICEF we have entered into a ‘Quality Improvement Programme’ for 8 states in India. The programme will ultimately result in the setting up of 1000 multi-grade schools in one district in each of these states.

RISHI VALLEY RURAL HEALTH PROGRAMME

The Rishi Valley Rural Health Programme serve the large village population in Rishi Valley's immediate surroundings, with particular emphasis on caring for the population of villages where the Rishi Valley Satellite Schools are located.

A health clinic located on campus has special facilities for Eye care and for the treatment of Tuberculosis. It also runs a 'Safe Mother and Child Care Programme.'

There is a diagnostic centre recently opened on campus

An Ayurvedic doctor regularly visits villages around Rishi Valley, raising awareness among women and children regarding issues of health, hygiene and nutrition and also treating chronic problems with the help of locally grown herbs, vegetables and fruits.

RISHI VALLEY ESTATE AND DAIRY

The Rishi Valley Estate oversees the agricultural and afforestation operations of the Centre. It has plantations of coconut, fruit orchards, and grows groundnut, ragi, maize and other seasonal crops. There is an organic vegetable garden which fulfils some of the needs of the kitchen..

The Estate is engaged in conducting experiments in sustainable agriculture. Improved methods of organic agriculture, construction of scientifically designed compost pits, mulching, vermiculture and small scale water conservation schemes are areas where expertise is being developed.

The Estate is involved in intensive afforestation work. In the past eight years over one lakh trees have been planted in about one hundred and fifty acres of degraded hill slopes. Extended soil and moisture conservation programmes have also been started outside the Rishi Valley campus, funded by a grant from the National Wasteland Development Board.

The Rishi Valley Dairy produces about 560 litres of milk that meet the requirements of the school. It is considered one of the finest in Andhra Pradesh and has won several prizes. Over the years, it has participated actively along with the Animal Husbandry Department of the Government of Andhra Pradesh in improving the livestock in the neighbourhood.

ADMISSION PROCEDURE

We register only children who are at least seven years old. No weightage is given for early registration. Parents need to apply during the year prior to the academic year for which they seek admission for their wards.

The entry points into the School are classes IV, VI and VII, at the ages 8+, 10+ and 11+ respectively. We do not normally admit children into classes higher than class VII and we do not have classes lower than class IV. Admissions into classes V, VIII and IX are typically considered only when there are withdrawals of students from these classes.

We have only a few places for outside students for the 'Plus Two' ISC (12) course because we have our own students, approximately fifty in number, from the ICSE (10) class to accommodate. Of this number, some twenty-five or so are admitted to the Plus Two programme. We also admit a few students from our sister institutions at Bangalore, Madras and Varanasi. This leaves us with a very limited number of seats to offer to outside candidates and of necessity it has to be done on a highly selective basis. The candidates for selection to the Plus Two course are interviewed after their Board examinations are over, which is typically in the third week of March each year.

Correspondence regarding admissions for an academic year commencing in mid-June of a particular year will be considered only between 1st August and 15th December of the preceding year. Application forms are available on payment from the School Office during this period. The application should reach the School Office, duly filled in, not later than 15th December.

In early January (early February for class 11), these Application Forms are examined by a Selection Committee and a shortlist produced of those candidates who will be called for a formal test and interview.

Registration of the application form is no guarantee of admission. The registered children are invited for a formal test and interview, typically conducted in February/March of each year. The written tests are in English and Mathematics only. There is also an oral interview at which the parents or guardians are expected to be present. The tests conducted are meant to assess the child's aptitude, comprehension capacity, computational skills and so on; they are of a fairly general nature and there is no prescribed syllabus as such. The standard of the test would correspond approximately with that of the class the child has just completed. Admission offers are made in early April; the parents or guardians of selected candidates are notified of the date on which the children are to be brought for admission.

VACATIONS

The School is closed for a five-week winter vacation during October and November and for a ten-week summer vacation during April, May and June. All boarders are required to go home during the holidays. At the end of the term, travel groups are arranged, escorted by staff members, to Bangalore, Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Hyderabad, Madras, Tirupati and Visakhapatnam. Similar arrangements are made for travel groups to return to the school from the above-mentioned places. Parents or guardians have to make their own arrangements to receive and to see off children at the relevant stations.

LOCATION

Rishi Valley is situated about 16 kilometres North of Madanapalle in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. To reach Rishi Valley from Madanapalle one can either hire a taxi or ring up the School and ask for the School transport.

The nearest airports are Bangalore, Tirupati and Madras.

Madanapalle can be directly reached by road from Bangalore, Hyderabad, Madras, Tirupati and Cuddapah.

From Bangalore (133 Kms.) :

The road route runs via Hoskote, Chintamani, and Madanapalle

- a) Buses every hour to Madanapalle from the Kalasapalayam bus stand, Bangalore.
- b) Express buses to Cuddapah, Proddatur and Tirupati (via Madanapalle), some starting from the Kalasapalayam bus stand and some from the KSRTC bus stand.

From Hyderabad (524 Kms.) :

- a) Overnight buses to Madanapalle. (Both APSRTC and Private)
- b) Overnight bus to Kuppam via Madanapalle.
- c) The Venkatadri Express from Secunderabad to Tirupati halts at the Madanapalle Road Station.

From Madras (260 Kms.) :

The road route runs via Vellore, Chittoor, Palamaner, and Madanapalle.

- a) Direct APSRTC Express buses.
- b) Madras to Chittoor and Chittoor to Madanapalle, with a change of bus.
- c) Madras to Katpadi by train and Katpadi to Madanapalle by bus.

From Tirupati (123 Kms.) :

Buses every hour during the day.

From Cuddapah (125 Kms.) :

Buses every hour during the day.

From Bombay, one can either travel via Bangalore (the Udyan Express) or catch a Madras train (e.g. the Dadar—Madras Express) and alight at Cuddapah.

ACCOMMODATION

Limited accommodation is available at Rishi Valley School. Parents/guardians may come and stay at the guest house after receiving prior confirmation from the School. The limitation of space means that the periods of stay need to be limited to a three-day stretch and the frequency of visits limited to one per term.

