

Outbound Trip 2019 – Pegasus – Dodaballapur

As our society becomes increasingly risk averse and litigious, we are in danger of suffocating our children with rules, regulations and cotton wool. Life is full of challenges and we owe it to our children to equip them with the skills to recognise risks, assess them sensibly and react positively. While it is possible to learn some basic concepts in class, there is no substitute for real life experience in the wider world. School trips provide a great opportunity for students to gain such experience and face a range of challenges that can contribute significantly to their personal development. School trips can also make a major contribution to the acquisition of knowledge and development skills.

Children may feel that they know their classmates and teachers well in their daily interactions at school, but the experience of living together outside the home can add a completely new dimension. It offers a whole area of interpersonal skills, including leadership, team work, trust and respect for each other.

Our Primary children came all set to go on their adventure to the “Pegasus Camp” at Dodaballapur, seniors with their backpacks and travel bags for a two-night stay and juniors for a day trip to the beautiful campus. The bus full of children and 5 accompanying teachers driven by Viji uncle set off for Dodaballapur shouting with joy. It was a scenic ride through nature and small mud houses, watching animals cross our path and we even saw a little village child running around bare bodied his mother chasing after him.

We reached the campus after a long drive were welcomed with a refreshing glass of lemonade and biscuits



much to the delight of the thirsty and hungry bunch of children, which they ate along with all the goodies they had got from home. Once they had finished, our camp guide took us around the campus, which was followed by an exciting obstacle course activity. Children and teachers passed through various obstacles like plank walk, wall climbing, commando crawl through a tunnel and jumping off a high wall. It was one of the most enjoyable experiences for all. Some were confident and others a little nervous, but guided by the expert staff, they all completed the course. This was truly fun filled learning and our youngsters got a chance to enhance their self-

confidence, agility, follow instructions, physical techniques, managing and team-spirit (cheering and encouraging each other).

Since the 13th of November was the anniversary of Pegasus, we joined in the celebrations followed by lunch, which was a massive spread. Children enjoyed every bit of the variety that was on the menu and finally with tummies full, a happy and tired bunch of juniors left for home soon after.

The seniors then sat around their tents after lunch, chatting away till it was time for our next activity. The children were divided into three teams, where one person from each team was taken aside, explained and shown what needed to be done. While the team leaders were out, the rest played charades and had a great time. Once they were all called out, they found each team leader standing in a circle with some tent equipment kept on the side. Each team leader had to instruct their team on how the tent needed to be built without stepping out of the circle. They were told that they would get 20 min to build it. All teams finished it under 13 minutes. During the course of those 13 min, we could hear screaming and yelling as the leaders were trying to get their teams to understand and finish as soon as possible.



After the activity, a debriefing session followed with each team member explaining what worked for them and what didn't. They talked about what was challenging, and their feelings during the activity. We all expressed that communication was the most important skill needed for success– speaking and listening skills, vocabulary, comprehension. The children explained the emotions that they felt – feeling irritable, frustrated, anger initially, followed by excitement, joy and finally relief that they did it.

Our instructors had some exercises and fun things planned to loosen up after the first activity. We went back to our tents and had more lemonade. Since we had time to spare – teachers and children went to the field and played cricket, football and throw ball. For us teachers, it was a great opportunity to bond with the children as well. We noticed the shy quiet ones of the class, had found their voices here on this trip. Each of them eager to participate and have fun. After playing till late evening, we went back to our tents to find hot coffee and tea with hot chilli bajjis and biscuits ready for us to fill our growling stomachs and quench our thirst. All the children went to refresh themselves and gathered for dinner by a comforting bonfire, welcoming the warmth against the cool wind blowing. Dinner with soft drinks – what more could the children ask for. They were absolutely delighted and indulged. Everyone was exhausted after the first day and all the lights were out by 9:30 p m.

Our day 2 started with the sound of the bell ringing outside our tents at 6:00 am. All of us in our woollies, stepped out, brushed our teeth and grabbed a hot drink each. We wished all the kids for Children's Day before we left for a mini trek over a hillock right outside the campus. It was the perfect way to begin our morning – feeling one with nature, exercise and great company. The children were excited and couldn't wait to reach the top of the hill, all excitedly climbed while chatting, helping & looking out for each other on the slippery & thorny slope. After the wonderful trek we returned to our tents, freshened up and had breakfast. They had organised a series of activities throughout the day which involved team building, understanding each other and communication. There was one activity where they were divided into teams and asked to draw what they would like to be in the future – most of them seemed very clear and choose practical goals understanding where their interests lay, and what they were good at. For others it was good fun nevertheless, and it was indeed good to know what and how children think.

At night the children enacted a skit which they worked on during their free time in the evening. It was a very well thought out skit with dialogues, accent and language enacted to perfection. The lines were hilarious and everyone was in splits, laughing and rolling on the ground. It was amazing to see their talent and the confidence with which they acted was very evident. We stayed up talking and it was good to get to know the children a little more as they enjoyed sitting around just talking about their very interesting lives – what happens back at home, friends in the apartment, what they feel about their classmates, their dreams and so on and so forth.

The following morning the children climbed the tall Burma Bridge which they had been looking forward to ever since we had arrived at Pegasus. They were most thrilled that they could do it and some even overcame their fear of heights. We left soon after breakfast, with most of the children quiet and reflective on our way back to school. But, the moment we reached school, they all bounced back and were brimming with energy again. It was good to be back home!

This trip truly helped all children come a step closer to becoming bolder, more self-confident, bonded, independent, self-managed, and working in harmony with each other. Needless to say they cannot wait for their next outbound trip!



