

# Report of the Board of Trustees of the Ceylon School for the Deaf & Blind

The Board of Trustees of the Ceylon School for the Deaf and Blind is pleased to present this report for the year 2014, in respect of the Ceylon School for the Deaf & Blind, which governs the School for the Deaf Ratmalana, School for the Blind Ratmalana and Nuffield School for the Deaf & Blind Kaithady, Jaffna. This report covers the activities during the year under review.

## Mandate and Mission

To provide a professionally managed service using quality trained manpower, appropriate technology and methods, to facilitate and enable those lives that have been placed in the care of the Ceylon School for the Deaf and Blind.

## Governance and Oversight

While the Board of Trustees governed and laid down policy for the schools, the Executive Committee ensured and supervised the implementation of the policies set out by the Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee which met monthly, in the months that the Board of Trustees did not meet, also monitored the progress of activities in the schools, though the respective Principals are responsible for the daily operations in the schools.

During the year under review, the Board of Trustees met on four occasions and the Executive Committee on eight occasions. The Annual General Meeting was held on a day that the Board of Trustees met and preceded the Board of Trustees meeting.

Sub Committees in various disciplines such as Education, Welfare, Infrastructure Development etc, comprising of members drawn from the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee, maintained an oversight on the schools and advised / assisted the Principals to manage the schools.

## Schools Statistics

Student Numbers as at 31 December 2014

	Males	Females	Total
School for the Deaf	114	83	197
School for the Blind	96	37	133
Nuffield School	97	83	180

Staff as at 31 December 2014

	School for the Deaf	School for the Blind	Nuffield School	Total
Academic	36	29	30	95
Non Academic	26	18	31	75
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>170</b>

As seen from the table above, the student population as at 31<sup>st</sup> December at the School for the Blind Ratmalana was 133, School for the Deaf Ratmalana is 197 and Nuffield School for the Deaf and Blind Kaithady is 180, making a total Student Population of 510..

## Important School Events

### School for the Deaf

In January the Bakery Project funded by the American Centre commenced operations, the chief guest for the opening ceremony being Mr Christopher Teal Director Press, Cultural and Educational Affairs of the American Centre.

Ms Samantha de Costa Project Coordinator of the American Centre of the U.S embassy Colombo, was also present. In January the Mushroom Cultivation Project also commenced, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Colombo. In the same month, Mrs Nirmali Wickramasinghe was appointed as the Manager, replacing Mr Eksith Fernando who resigned after many years of service as the manager. The annual Inter house sports meet was held on 07<sup>th</sup> February, the Chief guest being Lion W.A. Ranjith Fernando and the Guest of Honor Mr Henry Dissanayake, Assistant Director of Education (Western Province). For the 37th successive year the Lions Club of Colombo 306-B donated Rs 50,000/= to make this event a success. In March the Education Ministry organized a meeting for the Managers and Principals of

Special Schools, where many issues which are relevant to the school was discussed. In April the Parent - Teacher Association organized an Aurudu Pola to raise funds to uplift the classroom environment; nearly one hundred thousand was raised from this project. The new Chairperson of the Executive Committee Mr Chandra Schaffter visited the school for the first time, on 18 September and met with the tutorial staff of the school. At an event organized by Ms. Susila Hensman, Rs 12,400.00 was earned from the vocational training center. The official handing over of the 14 hearing aids donated by Mr Ajay Amaleen, was distributed among the students of grade 1-3, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of July, in the main hall.

#### **School for the Blind**

A book Launch on the history and lifestyle of Rev.Fr.Sarath Hettiarachchi was organized by the Presidential Secretariat and the students sang two songs at the launch. 100 students and 10 staff members participated in the Brandix Scholarship Program "Nethraloka", all the children received a pocket radio each. 12 students participated in the All Island Music and Drama Competition held at St. John's College, Nugegoda, they were ranked in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place. At the Colours of Friendship, a musical program at the Ladies' College auditorium, the students presented a Sinhala song and a Broadway dance item. 05 students took part in the "Raising Voice for Child Rights" program, organized by the Rotary Interact District 3220. A friendly debate was held between the school debating team and the Ladies' College debating team. The students participated in the 03 day Adhyapana Exhibition 2014 which was held at the BMICH. The history of the special education system up to date was exhibited at this event. The Girl Guides participated in an evening of song and dance named "We are special" which was held at Kingsbury Hotel, Colombo. They also participated in another program "Challenge Day", which was held at Our Lady of Victory, Moratuwa. 16 Students participated in the "Gospel in Perfect Harmony", a program organized by the SCM of S.Thomas' College Mt Lavinia, the students sang an English gospel song. Officers from the Ministry of National Languages had a seminar for the students regarding "Student Rights." This program was organized in connection with World Children's Day.

#### **Nuffield School**

58<sup>th</sup> School Anniversary was celebrated on 20th February, with services in the Chapel. The World Teachers' Day was celebrated by students in October. Annual Carol service and concert was held in November, Revd. S.S.Jebachcelvan, Vicar of Church of Holy Immanuel Vavuniya, graced the occasion. A group of students participated in the Combined Carol Service programs at St. Johns College in November 2014. In the months of November and December, our students and teachers took part in the Carol services, organized by YMCA and Zonal Education Office, Thenmarachchi

#### **Education**

The schools continued to offer an education up to the GCE Ordinary Level examination, in line with the Department of Education curriculum. Those who qualified for GCE Advanced Level gained admission to Private and Government schools, for which we express our gratitude to the respective Principals. Students, who do not qualify, have the option of remaining for a further period of one year in the school, to continue vocational training or apply for job placements where possible, through the schools.

#### **School for the Deaf**

25 students sat for the GCE Ordinary level Examination in December. The school has drawn up several plans to uplift the educational standards of the students. The school has started a pilot project to strengthen the auditory, speech language and educational standards of the primary school children in grades 1,2 & 3, Mr. Ajay Amalene donated the hearing aids for all the children who are participants of this project. In September Lions Club of Colombo, presented a Multimedia Projector and a Laptop to the school. 06 used computers donated by Mr Chandra Schaffter, was installed in the Primary computer lab. Educational excursions for all grades were held in month of July. 07 students sat for the scholarship examination held in August and 06 students obtained more than 70 marks. Dr Harsha Alles, Director of Gateway Language Centre and Ms Carmeline Jayasuriya Head of CSR Operations John Keells foundation, organized an English Language program named "English for Pre- Teens and English for Youth". The Inauguration ceremony was held at the school main hall in July

#### **School for The Blind**

Out of the 14 students who sat for the examination 6 students were successful and are presently in normal schools. The IT unit was expanded under the patronage of the Commercial Bank PLC. The students now have access to individual computers as well as an opportunity to access the Internet during the computer lesson. The use of audio aid was introduced with the compliments of Brandix Essentials who provided 13 Home Theatre systems, practically to all

the classrooms. The students make use of this system to listen to lessons and improve their knowledge. Extra classes were conducted for the G.C.E. O/L students, Grade 5 scholarship students and for those who are weak in Braille. A volunteer teacher conducts extra English classes for the GCE O/L students and reads English stories to the primary students every Wednesday. This is a project initiated by the former Bishop of Colombo. Apart from this, every Friday afternoon the entire school engages in special classes, conducted by volunteer teachers and our English teachers under the guidance of the Principal..

#### **Nuffield School**

24 students sat G.C.E.O/L examination; however none of the student qualified to study for G.C.E. Advanced Level. 09 students sat the Grade 05 National scholarship examination, 01 student obtained 147 marks which is an achievement by a differently able child. The Jaffna district qualifying marks was 150, two students obtained above 70 marks and 03 above 50 marks. There are competitions in subjects such as Tamil, English, Mathematics, Science, Music, and Art, at Zonal and Provincial levels, our students actively participated. For religious studies, Christian children are sent to the School Chapel every Friday and on special days such as Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and school birthday. Hindus children are sent to the temple near to the school on Fridays.

#### **Information Technology and Computer Aided Education**

All three schools have their own computer laboratories and Information Technology is a curriculum subject. While talking computers and computer aided magnifiers, are utilized to teach the blind and low vision students, computers with narrations, are used for the education of Deaf children.

#### **Staff Training and Development**

##### **School for the Deaf**

03 teachers attended a seminar conducted by the Ministry of Education in June at the National Institute of Education, Maharagama, the seminar was based on Braille training and skills development. 03 teachers attended a seminar conducted by the Kalubowila teachers training centre held in June, the seminar was based on development, of teaching skills and methodology. 02 teachers attended a seminar conducted by the Zonal Education Piliyandala in September at the Mampe Dharmaraja Vidiyalaya Piliyandala, the seminar was based on Practical Technology skills. 03 teachers attended a seminar conducted by the Zonal Education Piliyandala in September at the Soysa Vidiyalaya Moratuwa, the Seminar was based on Information Technology for the Primary section. 02 teachers attended a seminar conducted by the Ministry of Education in July at the Information Technology & Communication centre at the Ministry of Education. The seminar was called by "E THAKSALAWA ". 03 teachers attended a seminar conducted by the Ministry of Education in July at the National Institute of Education, Maharagama, the seminar was based on development of special education skills and methodology.

##### **School for the Blind**

Teachers participated in a training( special education) program, organized by the Ministry of Education at Isurupaya. The Principal participated in a training program at Pattiala School for the Deaf and Blind in India designed to improve education. The Principal also did a training program in Orientation & Mobility for them. A training program was conducted for the Teachers for a period of one month, organized by the Western Province during the holiays(primary teaching).An observation Trip by the Principal and the sectional heads was made to the Tangalla School for the Deaf and Blind. A Braille training seminar was conducted by the Zonal Office for 10 teachers. 08 teachers were trained in IT; this training was done after 2.00 pm. A three day Braille training program was attended by three teachers at the NIE. The English Teacher attended a training program based on *New Methods of teaching English* the training was based on Life Skills / Spoken Activities. A one day Seminar was attended by a Blind teacher on the new English syllabus.

##### **Nuffield School**

Teachers participated in the seminars and workshops related to special and general education conducted by the Zonal, Provincial and the Ministry of Education.. Ms. Anne East from United Kingdom, who is a specialist in sign language visited and conducted an Advanced Skills Training Program for selected teaching staff in August, she also advised on improving students' performance. 06 teachers completed their 02 year training program at Kopay Teachers Training

College and rejoined the School in May. Another 03 teachers entered Kopay Teachers Training College for the 02 year teachers training program in January.

### **Vocational Training**

Vocational training continued in all three schools. The vocational training imparted to the students varied from school to school depending on the ability of students and the resources available in the respective schools.

#### **School for the Deaf**

Carpentry, Horticulture, Printing, Bakery & Pastry, Cookery and Sewing were the continuing subjects. With the assistance of Singer SL, a scientific dress making program spread over a year commenced. A Mushroom Cultivation Project sponsored by the Rotary Club of Colombo Metropolitan, which commenced with the assistance of the Mushroom Cultivation Centre Ratmalana, is continuing.

#### **School for the Blind**

To enable the children to feel the leaves of plants and to identify them, an Osu Uyana was commenced. Various types of plants have been grown in this orchard. A cookery classes for Blind children commenced. Making of cloth mats, serviettes, bead Chains, table mats, appliqué work on table cloths, Floor Mats, wrapping paper etc are done as vocational training. Masseur (foot and head massage). Training is given to students

#### **Nuffield School**

Vocational training is continuing, the main vocational training subjects are Beauty Culture / facial, Hairdressing, Carpentry, Agriculture techniques, Poultry and Sewing. It is planned to start Home Science training for girls and boys, because it could help them to find the job in the hotel industry. VT courses are conducted for all students from Grade 08 to 11.

### **Sports**

#### **School for the Deaf**

Volley ball practices commenced for the senior students, tennis practices are continuing. The Annual Inter house sports meet was held in February. Zonal special schools sports meet was held in the school grounds in March and most of the students were able to secure first places. Candle Aid commenced swimming practices for 10 students on Tuesdays and Thursdays. A soft ball Cricket match was played with Rotary club of Colombo in May.

#### **School for the Blind**

The students took part in the Zonal and Provincial Meets and the School was awarded the first place. They also participated in the Sunshine Games organized by the Rotarians and won many gold and silver medals and certificates. The Inter-house Sport Meet was held in February, the event was sponsored by Brandix Essentials and the sports meet was followed by a DJ Night for the children, which they enjoyed thoroughly. Cricket is very popular among the partially sighted students, who assist the totally blind students to appreciate the game. Every evening the boys play cricket for about a hour. Swimming classes were held on 02 days of the week, for 10 students at the St. Sebastian's College pool, Moratuwa. This program which is sponsored by Candle Aid Lanka had their swimming Awards Ceremony and all 10 students received certificates of excellence. The rest of the students in the school are trained by a dedicated master in the pool at the school premises. The NGO Hope for Children, continued to provide facilities for indoor games such as Chess, Carom, Draughts, Cards and provided a CD players with individual headsets for the listening pleasure of the students.

#### **Nuffield School**

Scouts, Little Friends, Guides and Cubs participated in the school activities and social activities. A special training was conducted by the Scout Commissioner for the new scouts and badges were awarded. A Guides get together organized by Sri Lanka Scout Union, was held in January. The school won the second place at the Zonal level athletic meet. For the first time, a 30 over friendly cricket match was played at the school grounds, against Chavakacheri Drieberg College in March. A 30 over friendly cricket match was also played against St. Thomas College, Bandarawella in March. 19 students participated in the Provincial level Karate competition organized by the Department of Education at Vauniya in May, 07 Gold medals, 01 silver medals and 01 bronze medals were won and 06 students obtained 04<sup>th</sup> Places. 13 students were selected for the National Level competition in Colombo. The annual inter house sports meet was held in February.

## **Extra Curricular and Other Activities**

### **School for the Deaf**

The Annual English day event which was organized by the Muslim Ladies College Colombo was held in May. In March the school entered 10 students for the Duke of Edinburgh International awards. In March, under the Deaf & Hearing exchange project, the Overseas School organized a fun fair sale & exhibition at the school premises & one stall was reserved for the School for the Deaf vocational items. All grades had their educational excursions in July

### **School for the Blind**

The Oriental Band of the school is well established and is often invited to perform at various functions. The Oriental choir has taken part in many Zonal Competitions and was well placed. Oriental dancing classes are conducted by a dedicated Master. The Western Choir is being trained and is making steady progress; the Western Band too is being resurrected. The School Choir was invited to sing in churches such as the Christ Church Dehiwela, St. Mary & John, Nugegoda, where they sang hymns at the services. The Western dance troupe won the second place in the Zonal Special Schools' competition and took part in the Western Province year end Concert "Flowers Bloom" at the Navarangahala, Colombo 7. The Choir together with the School for the Deaf presented a beautiful act of worship at the annual Carol Service, which was held at the Chapel of the Holy Child on the 01<sup>st</sup> of December. They were honoured by the presence of the Lord Bishop of Colombo, who officiated at the service.

### **Nuffield School**

A dance and a musical program was held to celebrate the children and elders day, at the Elders Home in October. An extensive educational tour was organized in April. A dance and musical program was performed on the Disability day organized by Department of Social Services in December.

## **Schools Health and Welfare, Infrastructure development, Health and Welfare**

All three schools were visited by Government Medical Officers who checked on the health of the children, and the Public Health Inspectors who examined the premises and made recommendations. Medical, Ear and Dental camps were also held in the schools. The children were sent to the respective specialists as when necessary. Student counseling and Physiotherapy have been given special emphasis and trained Counselors and Physiotherapists visit the schools to look into the needs of the students.

At Nuffield School for the Deaf & Blind, hearing aids and white canes received from donors, were issued to the Deaf and Blind students respectively. Dr. Ranjith Thambyrajah an ENT Surgeon resident in the UK and his colleagues continue to visit the school, examine the students and gave Ear Moulds & Hearing Aids in August.

### **Infrastructure Development & Maintenance**

The infrastructure maintenance and development in all three schools is given priority. The buildings continue to be maintained satisfactorily, thanks to the assistance rendered by agencies, donors and well wishers. The Board of Trustees too spends for the maintenance where necessary. There are more buildings that need major renovation as they are now getting old, for which donor assistance is solicited.

### **Finance and Funding**

#### **Resource Development Committee (RDC)**

The activities of the RDC are, operating the Meals Program, Sponsor a Child program and organizing fund raisers. The total sum raised by the RDC from all the undertaken activities was approximately Rs 47Million. As at end of December, totally 356 children were sponsored.

#### **Fund Raising and Meals Donations**

Considerable emphasis and priority was given to fund raising in order to meet both the operating costs and infrastructure development of the schools. We have also received donations from organizations & well wishers specifically for infrastructure development. The Board office and the Resource Development Committee continued the fund raising programs and raised a total of Rs 55Million during the year. Much appreciation is due to the general public, who respond readily to the Bishop's appeal sent out thrice a year to about 2000 addresses on each occasion, requesting for donations.

The Hahn Air Foundation of Germany sponsored 22 children at an approximate cost of Rs 2.2 Million. Apart from the normal grant, the Christoffel Blinden Mission of Germany, awarded a special grant of approx Rs 8 Million for Nuffield School for various development activities and staff salaries.

The Meal Donations Program ran smoothly, the response for the appeals was encouraging in respect of the Ratmalana schools, where most of the meals consumed by the children are donated. In addition the Clarendon Foundation, a charity registered in the USA, continued to fund the meal cost in the year under review, for which we are thankful.

### **Income & Expenditure**

The annual statement of accounts gives a detailed analysis of the financial position. The total income and expenditure was Rs 126 Million and Rs 120 Million respectively.

### **Past Pupils Associations**

Past Pupils Associations were active in all three schools, where the members of the PPA interacted with the students of the schools, by playing games and conducting other events.

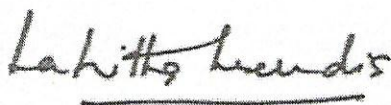
### **Obituaries**

It is announced with regret, the demise of Rev.Dr. Jebamohan Jebaratnam, Former Manager of the Nuffield School who passed away in January.

### **Acknowledgement**

The Board of Trustees of the Ceylon School for the Deaf and Blind, wishes to thank all Organizations, Donors and Well Wishers, who rallied around to make life more meaningful for our students and also helped by way of donations, meal donations, grants, child sponsorships and other facilities for us to continue to operate the schools.

The Board also expresses its gratitude, to the Ministry of Education, the Provincial and Zonal Educational Offices, the Ministry of Social Services, and all other Governmental and Non Governmental Agencies, for their financial and other assistance



*Cmde Lakitha P R Mendis*  
*Secretary, Board of Trustees / Executive Director*