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Awareness with a pop of colours

● Vaishali Vijaykumar

Sunflower, ladybugs and duck feet... these were a few among the many pictures painted on the floor and pillars of Sankalp — The Open School in Shenoy Nagar. The splash of colours across the building is the creative effort of 60 final year students of the fine arts stream from Stella Maris College. As a part of their service learning project, they gathered at the school to contribute to the Learning Disability Awareness campaign. The murals mostly featured animals, plants and natural elements in all colour combinations.

"The students painted last year as well. Children find drawing and art therapeutic and comforting. Most kids sit and paint their favourite pictures during break time. In an effort to give them movement rather than restricting them to the four walls, we came up with the concept of using art. The colourful murals improve the bilateral coordination and sensory stimulation by activating the left and right sides of the brain. The sensory and gross motor skills also improve," says Rashma Shenoy, deputy director of the school which has children with learning disabilities, language disorders and dyslexia. The school was established in 1999.

Alongside murals and artwork, there were hopscotches painted so that children can learn the traditional game but with a twist. Numbers and alphabets were painted inside boxes and pictures to make learning easier and visually appealing. To make it more interesting, a maze-like structure along with arrow marks was also painted on the floor. This is to bring a sense of direction to the kids as they move along the instructions. During the activity, the children get to jump, hop, crawl and run. "We use other art mediums like music, dance, and weaving. Every individual has a talent and the kids are grouped accordingly. This is a flag-off event for the Dyslexia Awareness Week which is celebrated from October 1 to October 7. We have more programmes lined up. There is a tremendous increase in the awareness created for special children. We're doing our best to help accept and embrace them. This is just one such initiative. We want to expand and open more schools to educate more children and bring out their creative side," shares Lakshmi Krishnakumar, director of the institution.

Details: 04447201623/
www.sankalpnet.org



The murals featured animals, plants and natural elements ● Debadatta Mallick

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