

JOURNEY OF APURBA

Apurba, a 12 years old boy, is a student of class IV in Arikuchi Balika established in 1946. The school is under Borbhag CRC of Pub Nalbari Block of Nalbari District. It is 3 K.M. from DIET Nalbari. Ashyut Baishya is the Head Teacher of the school.

He lives at Arikuchi village. The village is 1 km. far from the school and 10 km. from the district headquarter. He was transferred from another school at class III to Arikuchi Balika LPS. He has speech impairment and learning difficulty.



Apurba and his school

There are two number of Assam type buildings with 3 class rooms. One classroom and the office room are connected with ramp. The classes are from ka-shreni to class V. There are 3 teachers for 6 classes in the school. CWSN friendly toilet and safe drinking water are in place. Teachers are sensitized on CWSN.



Apurba lives with his parents and his younger brother at Arikuchi village. His mother's name is Namita Bezbaruah and father's name is Bhusan Bezbaruah. Bhusan is a dailay wages earner and Namita is a housewife. Both of them studied up to class IV. Apurba's younger brother is also studying in Arikuchi Balika LPS in class I. Apurba's father joined the heavens when he was 3 years old. After death of his father his mother got married to her husband's younger brother.

Apurba started his schooling at the age of eight. He was suffering from severe kidney ailment since the age of 3 years of age. A long time passed in his treatment at Guwahati Medical College Hospital. Due to his ill health, his parents could not get him admitted to school at an appropriate age. He was on medicines and it took three years of him to recover.

Apurba started his formal study at Arikuchi Santeswar LPS which is nearer to his home. He was transferred to Arikuchi Balika LPS at class III where mother feels, her son will get proper care and attention that he needs.

Apurba started his first speech at the age of 2 year. He has no problem in hearing but he is speech impaired. He is able to listen and understand what others speak. He is diagnosed speech impairment with 40% disability. He is unable to follow curriculum due to speech impairment and his achievement level is that of class I while he is in class IV.

Another problem of Apurba is that he has little attention span in study. He is irregular to school. His mother feels that his intelligence level is low due to the medicines he has been taking for a long duration to recover from the illness at early age. She also complained that he is not interested to coming school and reading at home. He likes to visit the houses of the relatives and neighbours. Apurba's father is a daily wage earner, therefore they have little interest to spend money for the health and education of the children.

Apurba communicates with peers and other children in the school. He shows less interest in playing with the peer group. He is well behaved in the classroom and obedient to his teachers.

In the beginning he was very irregular to the school. He was hesitant because children mocked his speech impairment. This is one of the reasons he could not be able to follow the lessons in the class.

The investigator and one of the trainees of D. El. Ed course of DIET visited the school to give support the boy. As there is a gap between Apurba and the peer group, trainees take extra effort and teach him separately after school hours. The teachers of the school extend their cooperation with trainees and provide attention to the child. DIET faculty who is a master trainer of inclusive education trains the trainees and visits the school intermittently to monitor the progress of Apurba.

To make the teaching and learning appropriate and effective for Apurba, an Individualized Education programme (IEP) is prepared with the help of DIET Faculty and trainees to bridge the achievement gap and address his needs. The areas where Apurba needs assistance, his specific strengths and needs has been mapped and his achievements are built up on the mapped baseline. The baseline revealed that Apurba

- Can read alphabets (Assamese and English)
- Can read simple words
- Can write word number concept up to 50
- Has concept of addition with single digit
- Cannot pronounce words properly.



Apurba in school beyond school time

Monthly goals were set up and weekly parental meeting and counselling began. Colour picture and word book, story books with picture, drawing books, colours, ludu (game), marbols etc. are in use.

His mother was suggested to send Apurba school regularly. His achievement is shared with her weekly that encourages her to send Apurba to school regularly and see him growing.

The teachers of the school are very cooperative and helpful. The three numbers of teachers of the school have to look after six classes in the school. The case of Apurba is a challenge for the teachers. They consult DIET and master trainer and follow the instruction. They have taken the responsibility to go to the Apurba's house, when he is absent to know the reasons, and bring Apurba's mother to the school in every week for counselling.



Apurba using blackboard

The peers of Apurba's class are become helpful and cooperative to Apurba when there is a group work or playing games during leisure time. Apurba's mother who are less interested to her son's education because she expressed that it is become wastage of time to send Apurba to school and he will not be able to do anything in future life. Apurba's step father also not interested to his study. At present Apurba's mother become attentive to him at home and try to send to the school regularly.



Apurba engaged in learning

After one month of support, Apurba become regular to the school. He shows interest in study at school and at home. He is now able to write simple sentences when dictation was given. His pronounce is not clear but tried to read the books. Now he is interested to colour the pictures and draw few pattern. His number concept increases to 70. He is accepted by the peer group and seems to be happy in the school.

Apurba is happy with his peer group and he likes to learn through different activities and he wanted to come regularly to the school. The teachers of the school wanted to be trained on teaching strategies for children with special needs to overcome the challenges of such type of children .They feel that ***inclusion helps CWSN to learn more than segregation.***