

## Inclusive Education and its Handbook

Situated in the heart of the city, Normal School Jorhat is one of the oldest teacher education institutions in Assam. It shifted from Guwahati to Jorhat In 1906 to impart training to teachers of M.E. Schools. It has been accredited by NCTE to run two year Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.). The school has proactive enthusiastic teacher educators and student teachers.

Recently the school has been entrusted to conduct D.El.Ed. courses through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode under the banner of SCERT Assam while one batch is under the banner of K K Handique State Open University for untrained teachers.

Mr. Ranjit Saikia is a blind teacher trainee undergoing D.El.Ed. Course through ODL mode. He is posted at Borbheta Public M.E. School since 2007. He is a graduate and speaks Assamese fluently. His blindness is never detrimental to his teaching learning process. When learnt that a handbook on inclusive education for teachers has been published by SCERT Assam, in collaboration with UNICEF, he became curious to know the content of the book. Fellow trainees at the school discuss the content with him and his first gentle response comes – He had never dreamt of such a handbook during his student or teaching days. He begins to deliberate on inclusive set up. Unlike other trainees he did not have much to do in the classroom until the school faculty started inclusive practices.



*Ranjit Saikia*

“The journey of inclusive practice begins with the arrival the handbook in the school. It becomes a subject of discussion among trainees. Ms. Mousumi Baruah, faculty member at the school who underwent a training programme on inclusive education conducted by SCERT Assam in collaboration with UNICEF, enters the classroom with the ideas learnt during training and the handbook on inclusive education for teachers,” utters Ranjit.



In a class of one hundred trainees, Ranjit generally sits in the middle with his fellow trainees where he feels comfortable. He further says that the handbooks acquaint them with the concepts of Inclusive classroom, Learning needs of CWSN, CCE in an Inclusive set up, Role and responsibility with respect to CWSN and Skillset desired to make the classroom inclusive.

He further states that the handbook helps to recognize values & respects “difference” in learning among all children. Children experience difficulty in learning at some time or the other and therefore their learning needs to be supported. This refers to an education system that accommodates all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social emotional, linguistic or other conditions.

By virtue of having this handbook he could learn how to promote an inclusive society; one which enables all children/ adults, whatever their gender, age, ability, disability, ethnicity to participate in and contribute to that society.

He suggests to get this handbook in braille for the benefit of visually impaired teachers. “Audio version of the handbook will certainly enhance understanding of such teachers/trainees and will have an edge on making an inclusive classroom.” Pronounces Ranjit.



*A class of trainee teachers in progress at Normal School Jorhat.*

- Ravindra Kumar Mishra  
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