

80

Celebrating 80 years of

**THE
CHILDREN'S GARDEN
SCHOOL SOCIETY**

1937-2017



**“Let none be like another.
Yet each be like the highest
How can that be?
Let each be perfect in himself”**

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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From 1937 to 2017: the new branches, leaves and roots of the Children's Garden School are deeply rooted in the vision and philosophy of our founders. We look forward to the next century, where our school will continue to redefine itself to serve the needs of generations of children.



The Children's Garden School Society
(Registered under Act 21 of 1860)



Founders

Mrs. Ellen Sharma
Dr. V.N. Sharma

President

Mr. P. Viswanathan,
Senior Advocate, High Court, Chennai

Vice President

Mr. V.R.Pappu,
Retd. Exec.Director, Ashok Leyland Projects

Secretaries

Ms. Sakunthala Sharma
Mrs. Rukmini Pappu

Correspondent

Ms. Sakunthala Sharma

Members of the Committee of Management

Mr. M. Natarajan: Businessman & Consultant

Mr. J. Lakshminarayanan: Educational Consultant

Dr. M. Saravanan: Managing Director, A.V.M.Productions, Chennai

Padmashri Mr.C.N.Raghavendran: Architect, M/s C.R.Narayanarao & Co.

Dr. C.G. Sreenivas: Senior Cardiologist, Vijaya Heart Foundation

Mr. T.P.Srinivasan: Retd. Executive, Dastur & Co.

Dr. K.R.Ambuja Devi: Medical Practitioner, Chennai

Ms.Gita Sharma: Secretary, Ellen Sharma Memorial Trust

Mrs. Sita Laxminarayana, Social Worker & Member, Inner Wheel Club,

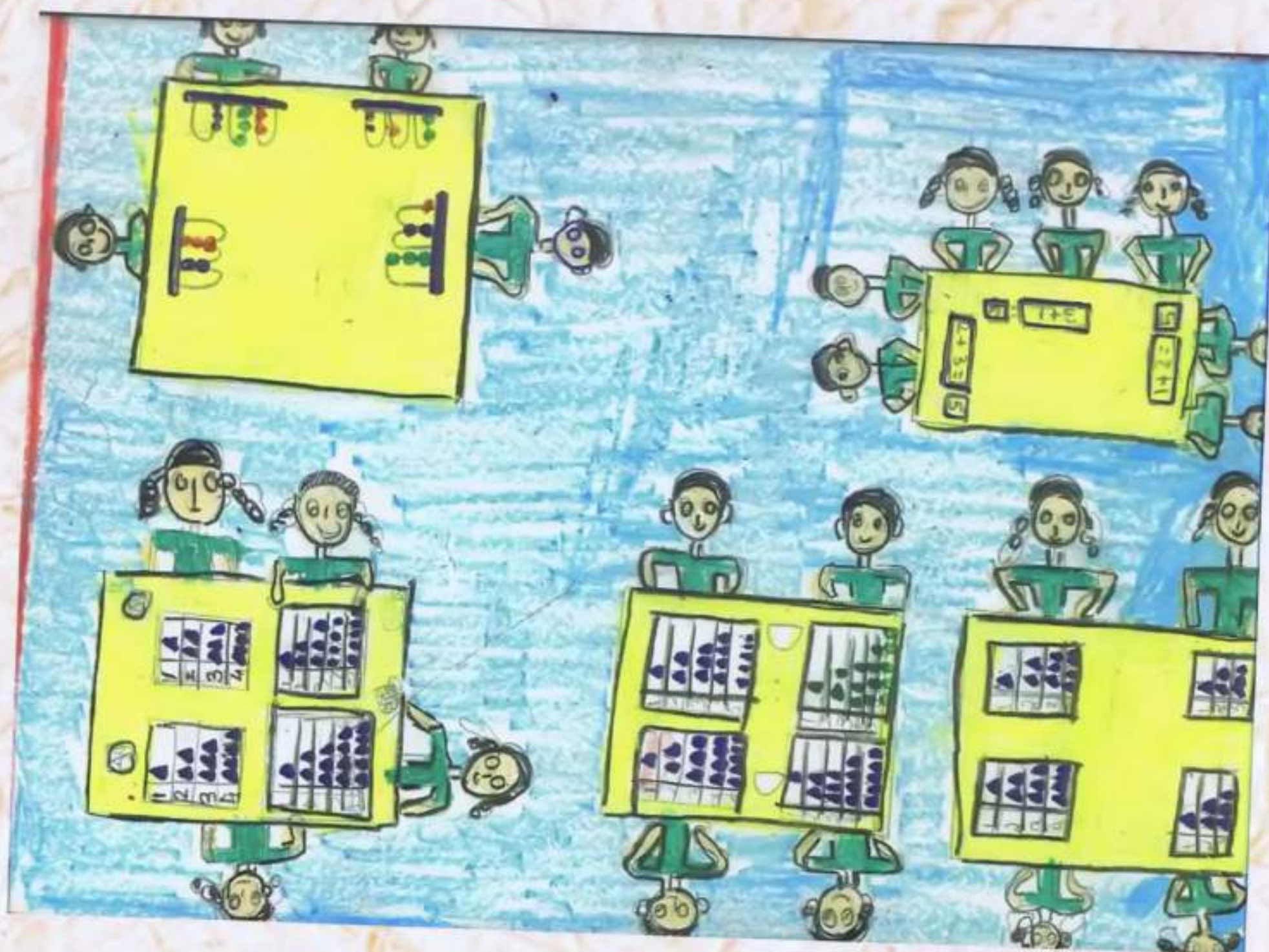
Prof. Shanti Pappu: Secretary, Sharma Centre for Heritage Education

Mr. R. Srinivasan, Official

Mrs. Kowsalya Padmanaban, Social Worker



Our primary school at Karaipakkam. Expanding our educational system and philosophy in new schools across & beyond the city.





Inner Joy: Dancing to a glorious future

The Story of an Enduring Legacy (1937-2017)

Enduring legacies begin with a magnificent vision and are sustained by dedication and sacrifice. The history of our Institution, is one of great visions translated into a reality that has grown and expanded over the last 80 years. From a tiny school with 7 children, we are now a family of over 5000 children, teachers and staff, supported by alumni spanning three generations and well-wishers from across the world.

We focus on each child, attempting to draw the best out of each individual, enveloping them in safe, loving, peaceful and cheerful school surroundings. The path is laid by our teachers, who constantly strive to excel themselves in new knowledge and methods of teaching. Bonds are built by our staff dedicated to practical issues of administering the schools.

Negating exclusivity, we focus on the underprivileged, bridging gaps between children from all socio-economic and religious backgrounds. Today our school ranges from the crèche to Standard XII, with state-of-the-art 'Smart Classrooms', science labs and libraries, seeking to teach through project-based, hands-on learning modules. Art and craft, music, dance, sports and numerous extra-curricular activities, lift our children to levels beyond rote-learning.

Mid-day meals and health-drinks and sponsorship programs for the underprivileged, begun by our founders, continue today. With a bookshop, canteen and other facilities, we have sought to upgrade our facilities over the years.

Over the years, methods developed by us, such as the Kindergarten methods developed by Mrs. Ellen Sharma have been adopted almost all over Tamil Nadu and other parts of India, including in the Greater Chennai Corporation schools. Generations of teachers have been trained by us, and visiting teachers and scholars come from all over the world to study our educational methods.

Legacies endure but to thrive they must innovate and change with the times. We have and continue to do so, adapting to the changing world around us, adopting new teaching methods and seeking to develop the best in each child...enabling them to face the world with confidence and happiness

Our souvenirs of 2007 and 2012, provide a history of our journey. Here, the folding pages of our "School Calender of Memories" unfold our legacy in the form of images and quotes from the writings of our beloved founders and from our reflections on these 80 years.



Sakunthala Sharma

Correspondent

September, 2017



**We have overcome the challenges of the past and
welcome those of the future.**

CHILDREN'S GARDEN SCHOOL SOCIETY

OUR SCHOOL FAMILY

The Children's Garden
Higher Secondary School
Mylapore

Mrs. Ellen Sharma
Memorial
Nursery and Primary
School, Mylapore

Ellen Sharma Memorial
Nursery and Primary
School, Karaipakkam

Ellen Sharma Memorial
Matriculation & Higher
Secondary School,
Sholinganallore

Mylapore crèche

Karaipakkam crèche

Sholinganallore crèche





Dancing away our troubles: we look
forward to a glorious future

Welcome to the story of the Children's Garden School!



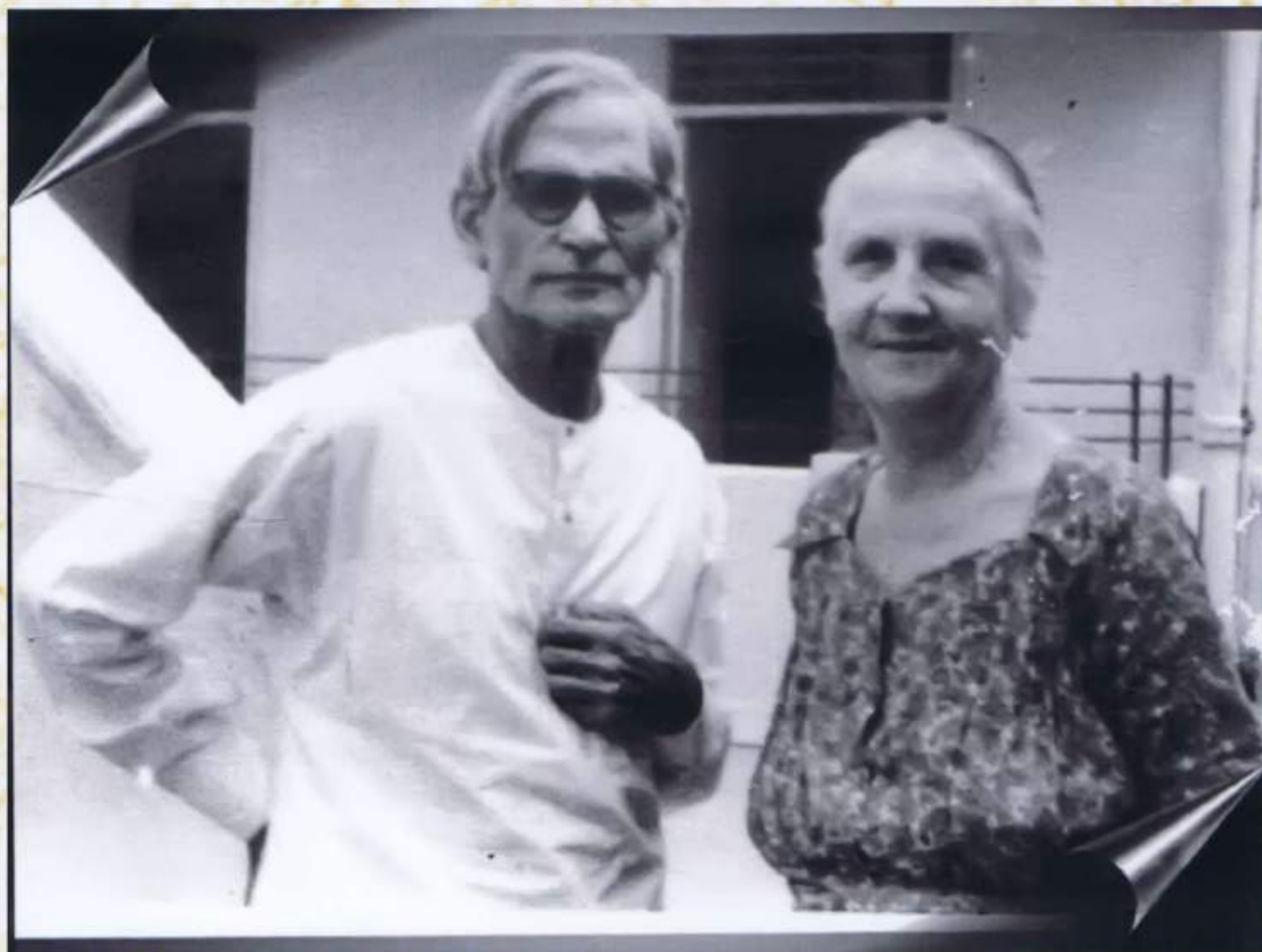


“How many such women, foundlings, street urchins, who had nothing of their own, not even the faintest hope of a future, had received warmth and hope an assured future from her hospitable and compassionate hands” (V. Krishnamurti, Consultant, ASW, Gandhigram, Madurai dt., CGHS, Souvenir, 1978).

The Story begins with our Founders

Mrs. Ellen Sharma (1898-1978)

Dr. V.N. Sharma (1897- 1986)





Every child finds a place in our school, through our philosophy of inclusive education.



Alwina von Keller, Paul Geheeb & Ellen Sharma



V.N. Sharma & Edith Geheeb

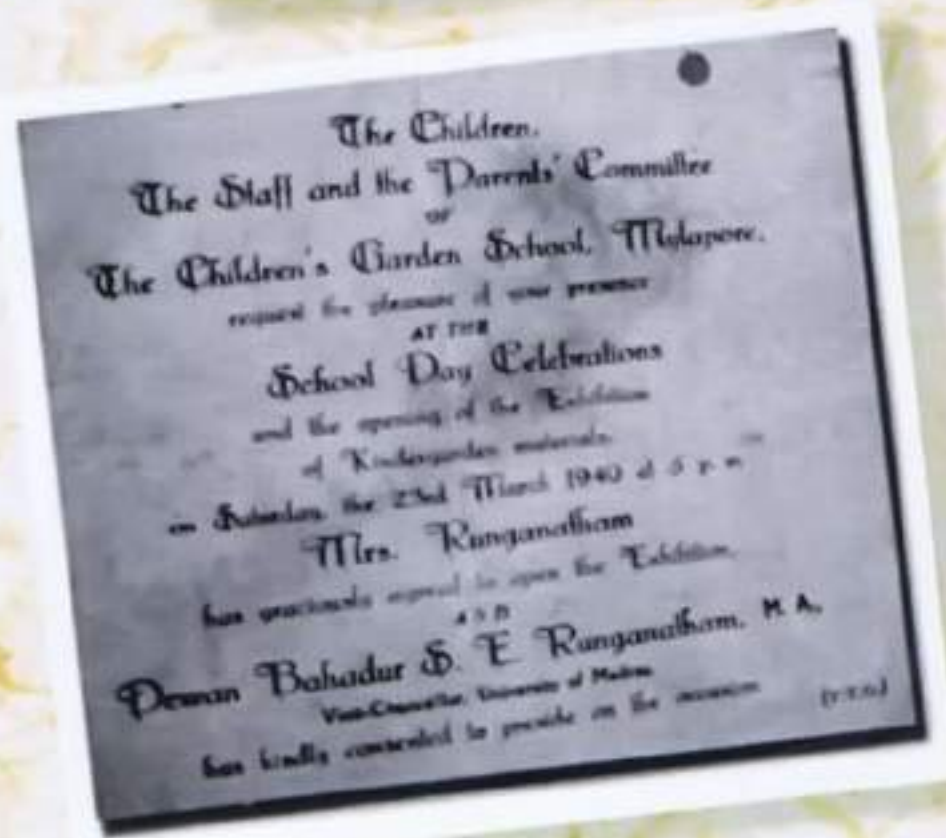
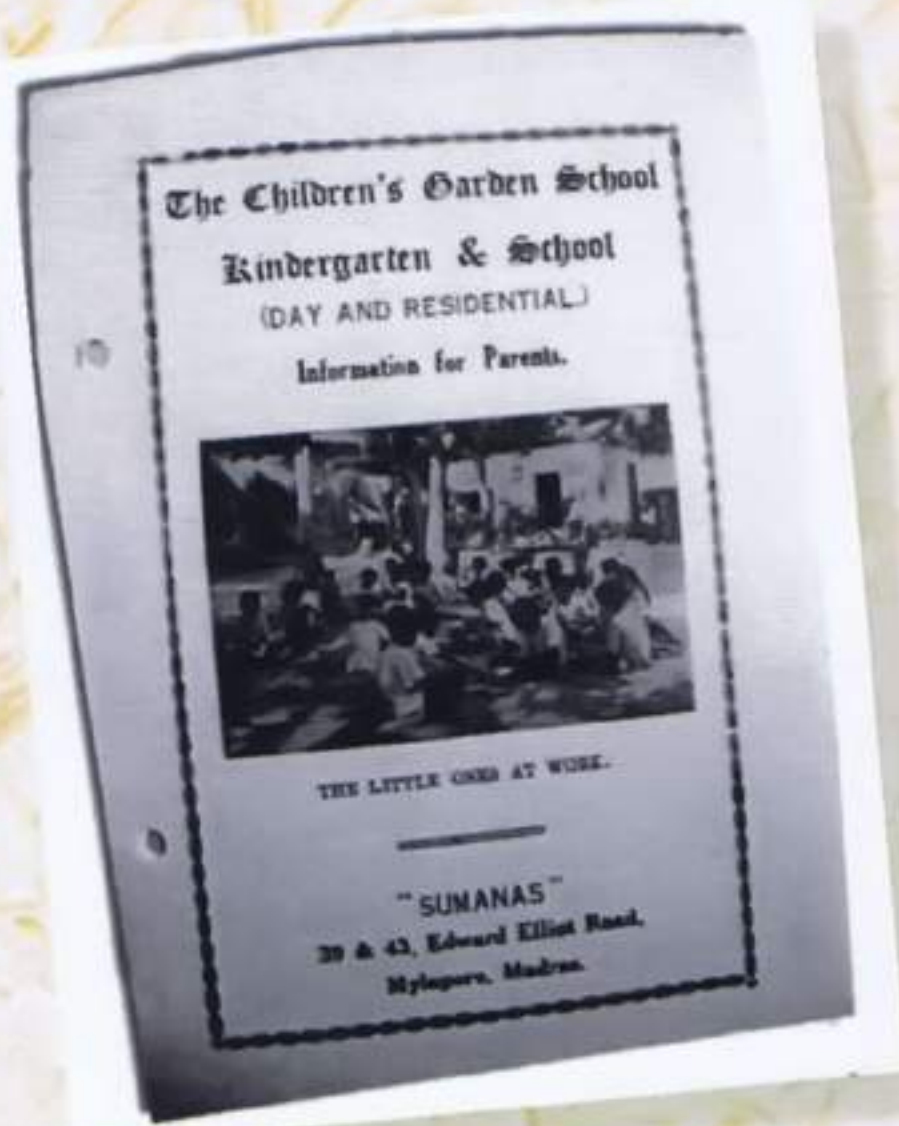


**V.N. Sharma with
Rabindranath Tagore &
Paul Geheeb**

Our founders were inspired by the philosophies of Mrs. Alwina von Keller (the mother of Mrs. Ellen Sharma), Rabindaranath Tagore, Sri Gadicherla Hari Sarvottama Rao, Paul and Edith Geheeb, Peter Pederson, and other great thinkers.



Celebrating India: its unity in diversity through music and dance.



“To meet the wishes of parents and guardians living in Mylapore, Royapettah and Triplicane, it is proposed to open such a school for small children based on the latest methods from September, 1937, in the new garden colony, “Dvaraka” in Brindavanam Street, Mylapore. Mrs. Ellen Teischmueller-Sharma and Dr.V.N.Sharma will direct the work of the school with the help of a few co-workers (Ellen and V.N. Sharma: Reprint from “The Children’s Garden. A School for the little Ones” Mylapore, Madras).



“Children’s blessing are holier than others and they are more effective than any other things; that is why our ancestors said that speech of a child is as vital and forceful as that of Brahma” (Dr.V.N.Sharma, letter from Heidelberg, 1952).



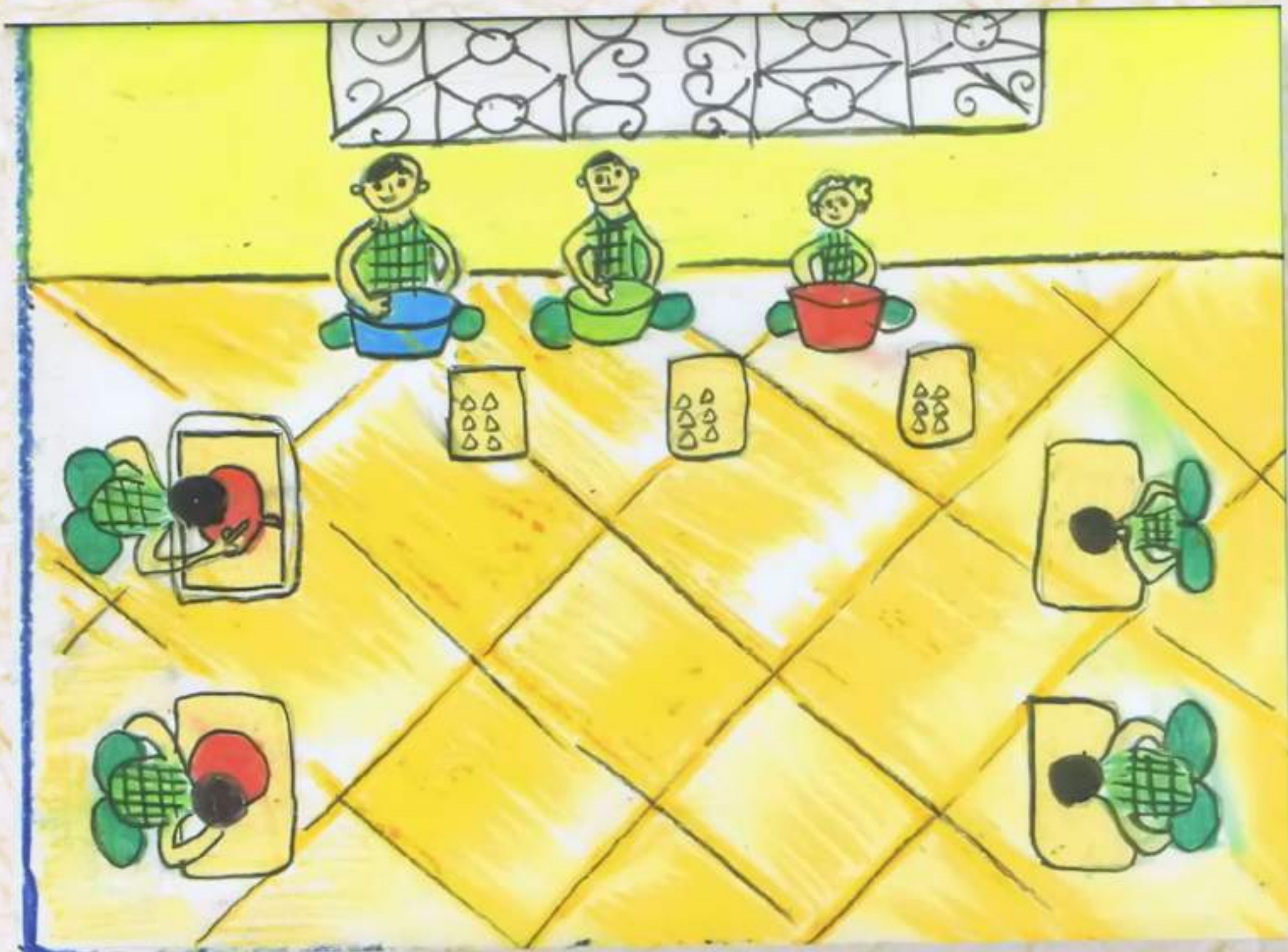
“On the 7th September, we went to open our Kindergarten.....It was really a wonderful thing. We had a big exhibition of all our toys and Kindergarten material, e.g. a room for the small ones, little houses, animals, dolls, cars, doll-house, pots and pans....The Head Swami of the Ramakrishna Math opened the school with very clever and profound words...” (from a letter written by Mrs. Ellen Sharma to her mother, Mrs. Alwina von Keller, 8th September, 1937).



Coordinated movements and activities bring children together to work as a team to express their inner creativity.



**"We welcome children of all races, religions and castes. All children are equally loved...we have neither a religious class nor a cult...but we try to teach religion through the atmosphere of school life, i.e. to be good and kind towards others, respect and love others"
(CGHS Annual Report, 1938).**







Children were the world for Dr. and Mrs. Sharma: "The world of children to which Mrs. Sharma belonged all her life will for ever remember her as a mother-figure who lived and dreamt and toiled hard for them in a manner equalled by very few" (K.S.Ramanujam, Correspondent Hindustan Times, CGHS Souvenir, 1978).





Dance and music forms from all over India build bridges in our society.



“Despite the increasing number of children, the sense of all being one family was not lost.... the older ones, the teachers are the careful gardeners of the delicate plants, the little ones. Thus the school has endeavoured to encourage children to move freely with the teachers, freely like the members of a FAMILY” (CGHS Annual Report, 1938).



Freedom of expression amongst our children is
one of the key concepts of our founders.





Celebrating Indian heritage through classical dance forms.



**“Education need not necessarily mean only reading and writing, but the building of all faculties of the whole body towards a definite aim”
(Our Founders).**





“ The school will provide all possible opportunities for the expression of the most varied activities of the child. ..” (V.N.Sharma and E.Sharma, An Appeal, Madras, 1937).



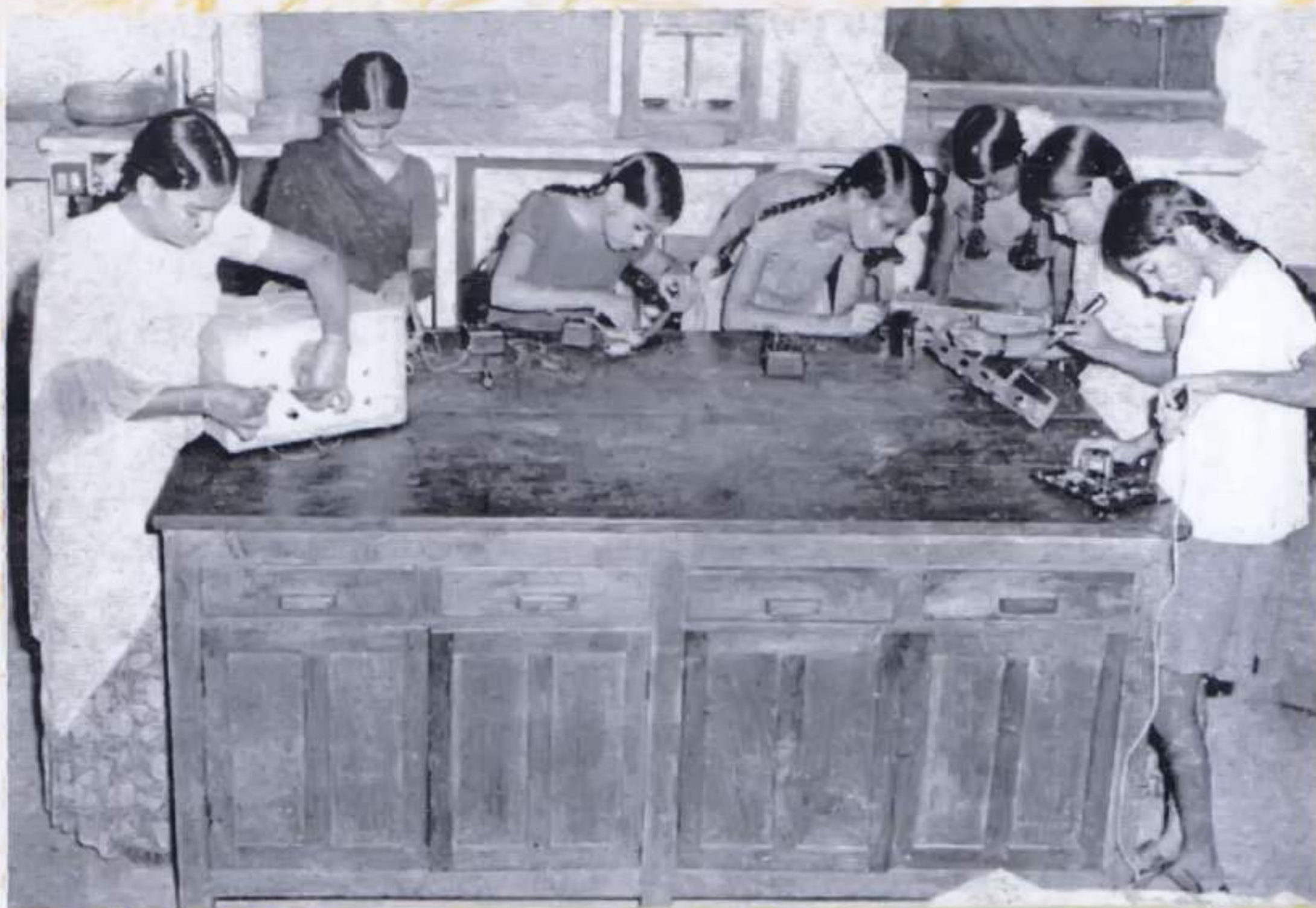
"Since my arrival in Madras, it has given me particular satisfaction to observe the excellent work that is being done by Dr., Mrs. and Miss Sharma....in providing a fine education to India's citizens of tomorrow in accordance with most modern and progressive methods" (Inaugurating the Pestalozzi Centre, sponsored by the Children's Garden School of Madras, on 20th September, 1966, Dr. Edgar R. Reichel, Consul-General of Federal Republic of Germany).



“...writing should not be forced on minds and hands not prepared for it, but could be prepared by lots of joyful occupations like drawing or painting on big light boards and large sheets of paper, or by clay modelling and bead threading, which makes fingers skilful and sharpens the eye” (CGHS Souvenir 1963).



"It is they who made me happy and cheerful whenever I was in a depression and desperate on things which worried me and Mrs. Sharma from time to time" (V.N. Sharma, letter, 1952).



"It can thus made an endeavour to make children happy, balanced and independent..." (Ellen and V.N. Sharma. Reprint from "The Children's Garden. A School for the little Ones" Mylapore, Madras).



“How can I forget my dear and sweet children, those babies in the Kindergarten who played with me every day and demanded that I should lead them down the steps of the front hall when they went home in the forenoon?” (V.N. Sharma, letter, 1952).



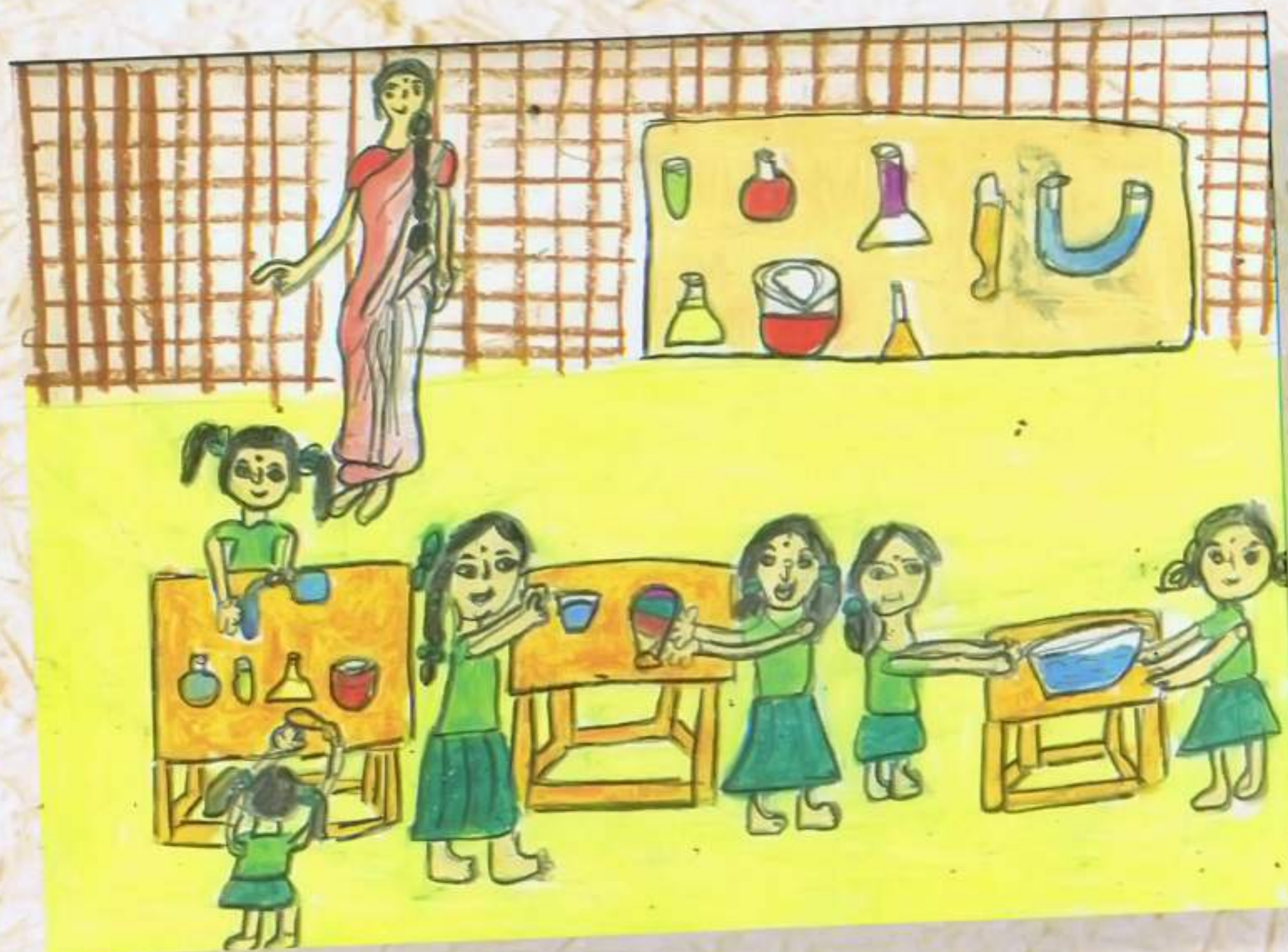
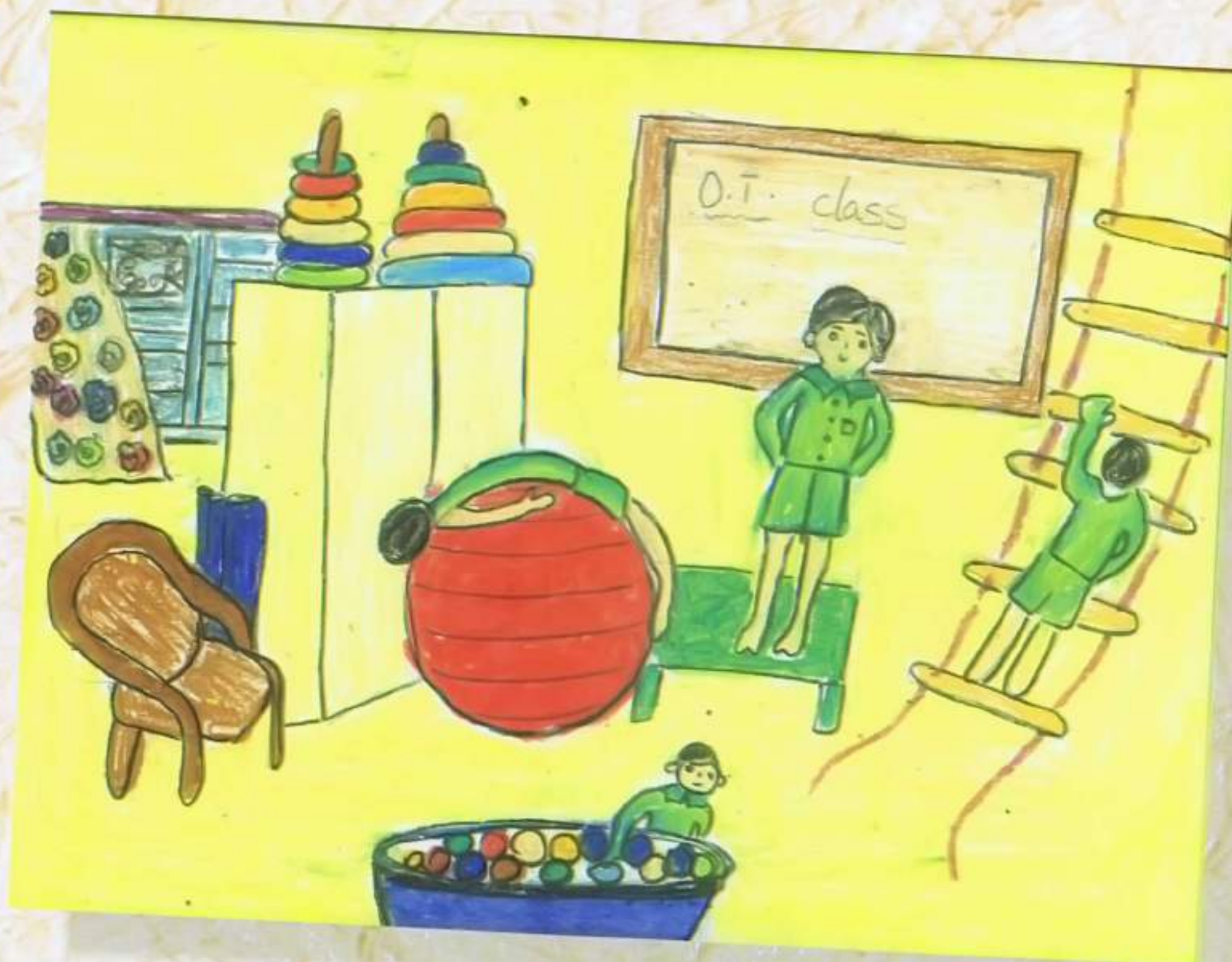
**“..Hand work, music, dancing, eurhythmics, drawing and painting, clay modelling and paper cutting and many of the latest educational toys and materials specially made for the training of senses and mind as well as for the development of social responsibility will be utilised”
(V.N.Sharma and E.Sharma, An Appeal, Madras, 1937).**



Dancing their way through school.



“...The children are always encouraged to work out a self initiated task alone or with a teacher or in natural groups.....”
(Mrs. Ellen Sharma, Annual Report, 1949).





"The little ones do not learn reading and writing at this stage, but begin to experience the joy in painting and building, music and movement with other little ones." (Mrs. Ellen Sharma, Annual Report, 1949).



Healthy minds and bodies: Health care facilities, "Little Doctor" programs and education on hygiene are provided for all children right from the 1930's onwards.



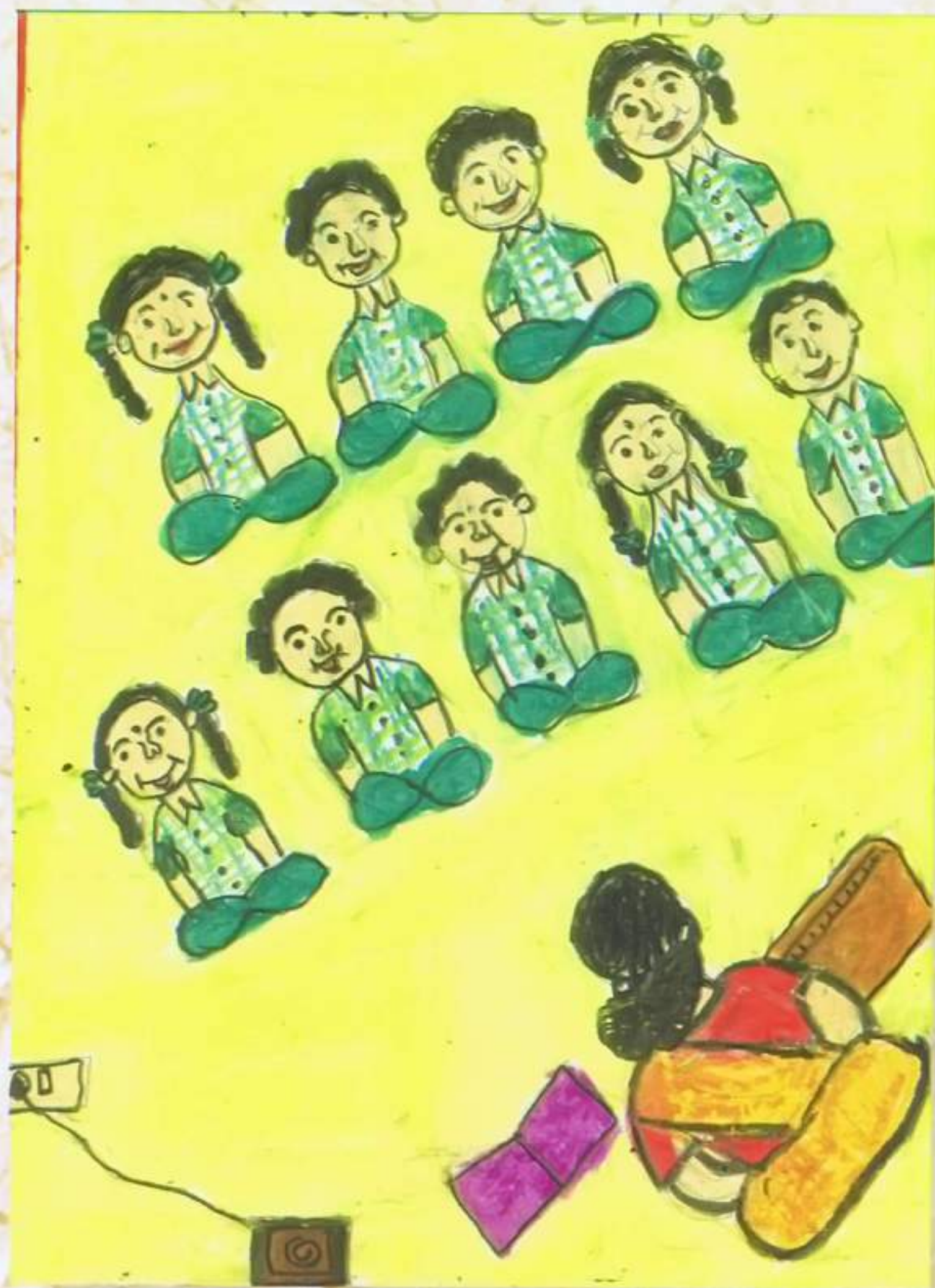
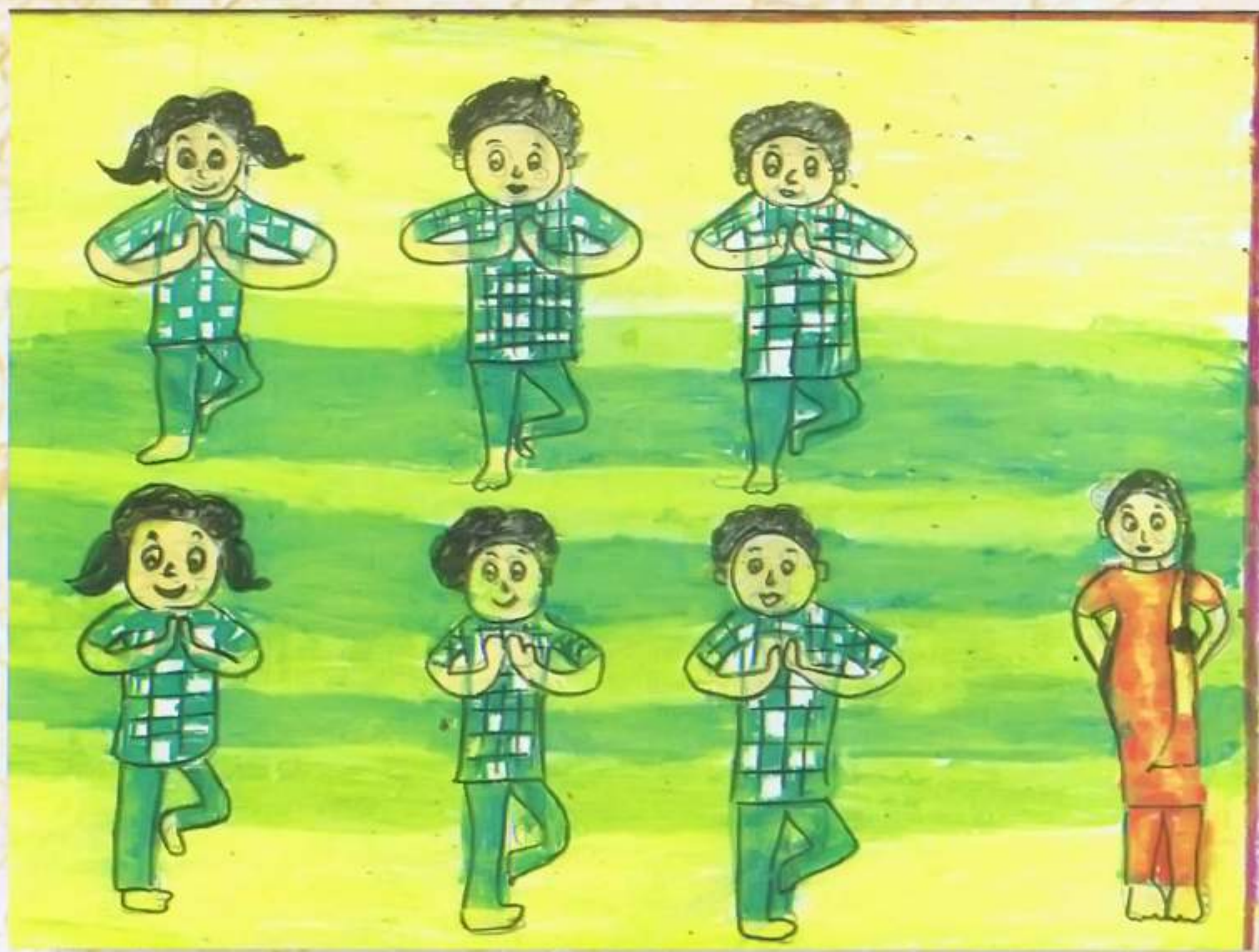
"...By means of same freedom both in their life and in their work, and thus teach them to find their own peace in life and realise the way, to be like the Highest, which is the aim of all true education" (Ellen and V.N. Sharma. Reprint from "The Children's Garden. A School for the little Ones" Mylapore, Madras).



**Mrs. Sharma always said, "One cannot learn on an empty stomach".
Mid-day meals and health food snacks are an intrinsic
feature of our school since its early days.**



“Moreover such a school for small ones, over they should feel complete freedom so that could express themselves freely with the utter absence of fear, and become a centre for creative activity” Ellen and V.N. Sharma. Reprint from “The Children’s Garden. A School for the little Ones” Mylapore, Madras).





Seeking to inspire the inner creativity in every child.



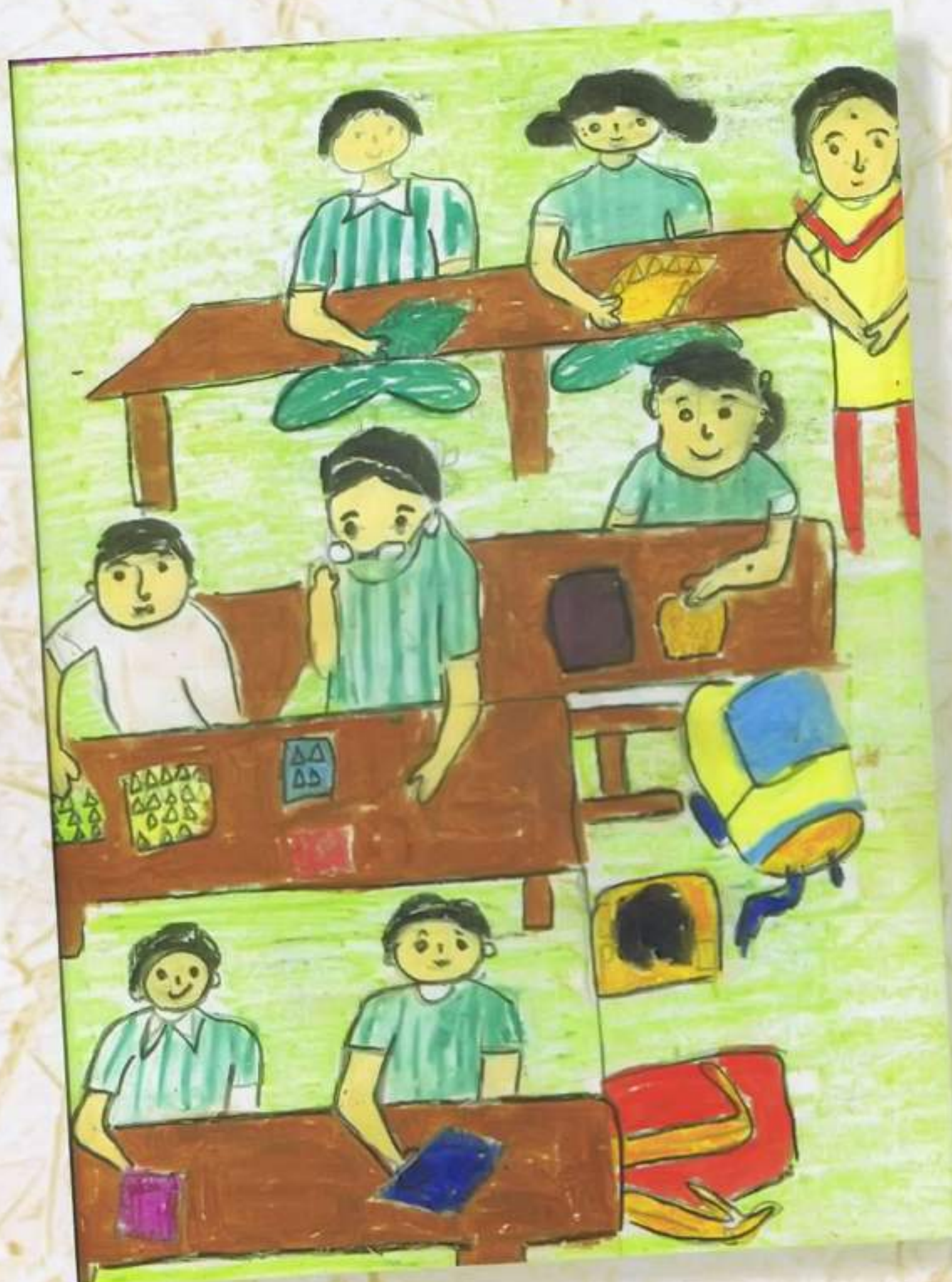
Winning awards at Republic Day Parades,
and displaying our skills on the sports field.



Dance and music bring alive hidden talents and allow freedom of expression.



From cleaning up India to social activities... our girls make us proud.





Beyond the classroom: children are exposed to many different activities that bring out their innate abilities.



Honoured guests step in to wish the school and to help in many ways.



From art to science: children move beyond text books expressing themselves in many ways.



Ellen Sharma with Mr. Kamaraj Nadar



“Trusting that ours was much needed work, we started the school without any financial help and never imagined the Himalayan task that we had unwittingly undertaken” (Ellen and V.N.Sharma).



“It is the good fortune of Mylapore that such opportunity for true education has been provided for it, thanks to the selfless, enthusiastic understanding and loving work of Dr. and Mrs. Sharma...” (Letter by Sri S.V. Ramamurthi, Kt., C.I.K. then Prime Minister of Udaipur and Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras).



Sakuntala Sharma with Mr. Anbazhagan

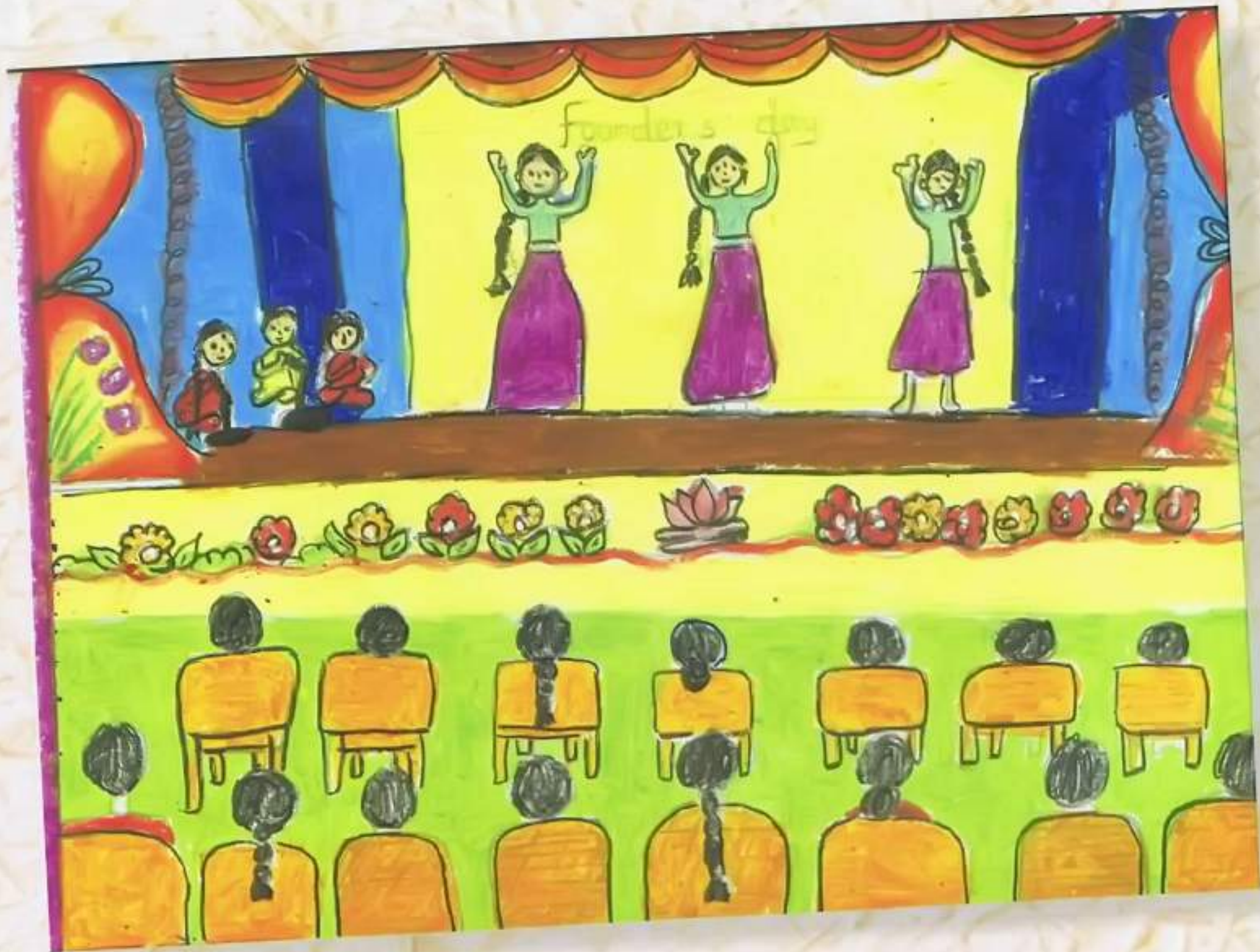
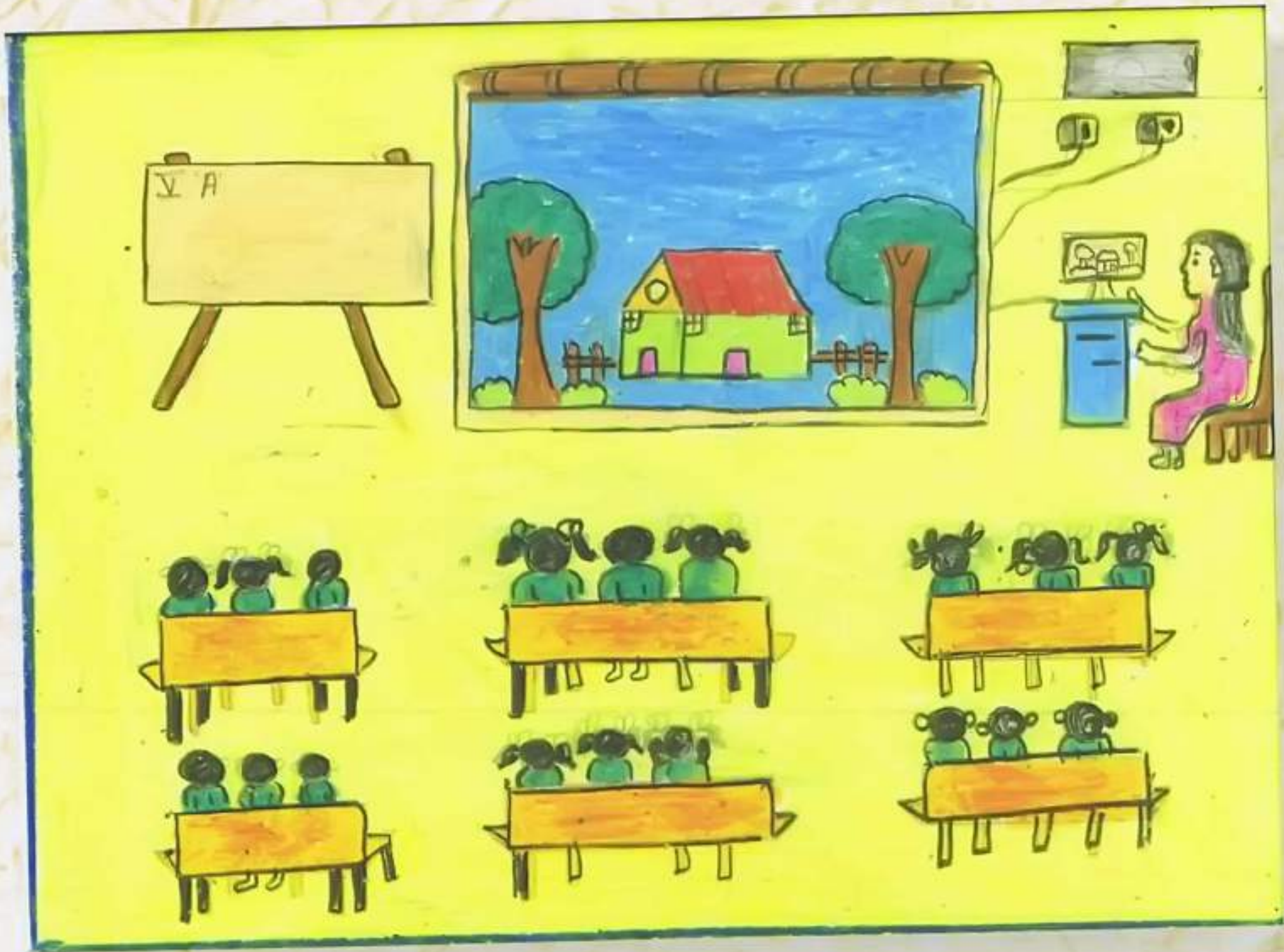


**Celebrations, guest of honour and well-wishers
have enabled us to grow over the years.**



The Middle and High Schools: where girls blossom into confident young adults.



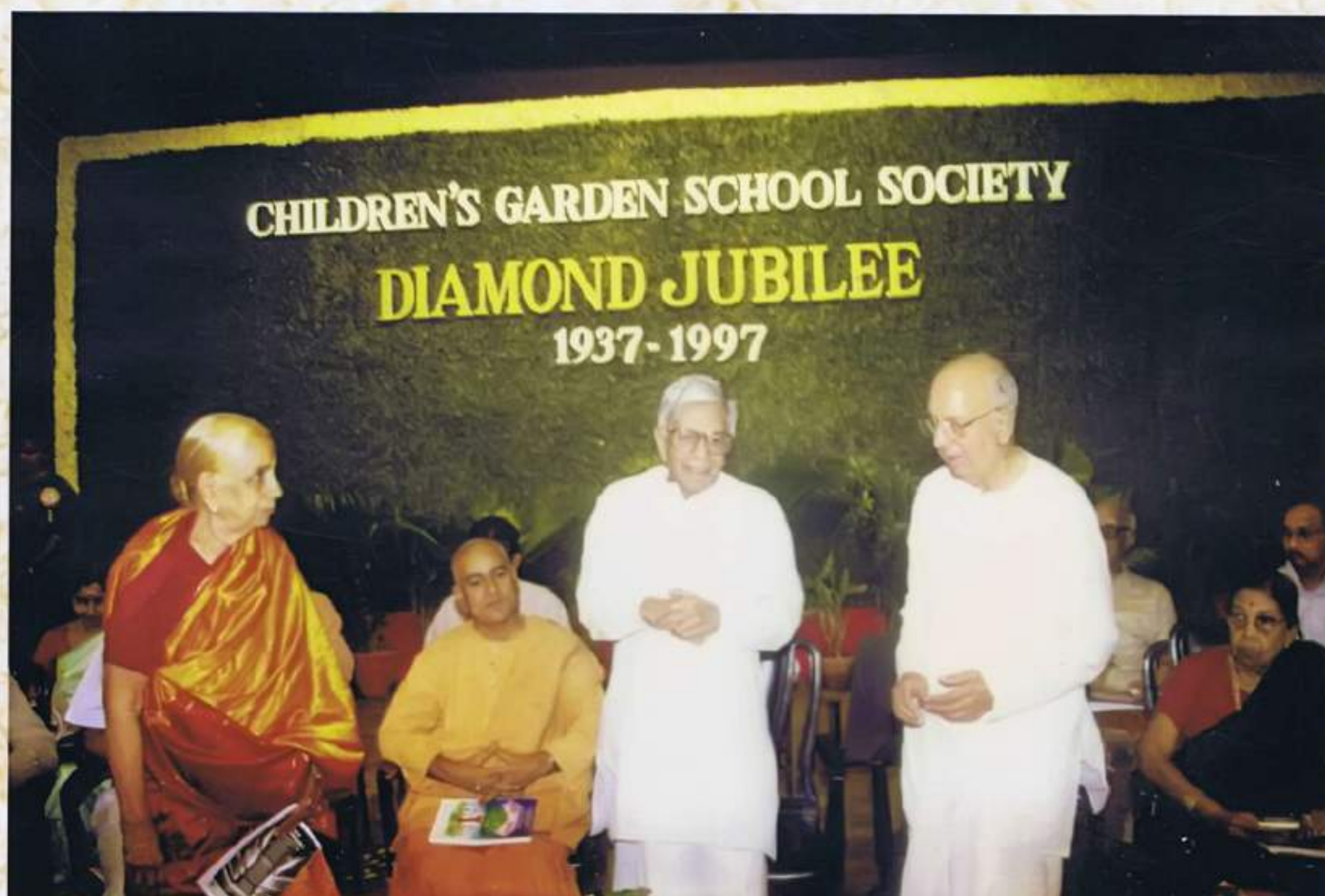




The banyan tree grows taller and stronger: Celebrating our Golden Jubilee with the Honourable President of India, Mr. R. Venkataraman.



Beyond the classroom: Children learn all about nature and participate in workshops in the archaeology and ancient heritage of India.



Founder's day through the years.. From our Diamond Jubilee with Mr. C.Subramaniam, and moving forward to our 71st founder's day.



"...If we are proud to say today or tomorrow among Society that we are doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers or a graduate of any respectable field brought up by our school it is only due to the untiring work of Mrs. Sharma that we enjoy all these privileges"
(R. Sivakami, old student, 1978).



Honours, awards and celebrations through time.



“....A beautiful, at the same time, simple environment is needed so that the small ones could live close to nature.” (Ellen and V.N. Sharma. Reprint from “The Children’s Garden. A School for the little Ones” Mylapore, Madras).



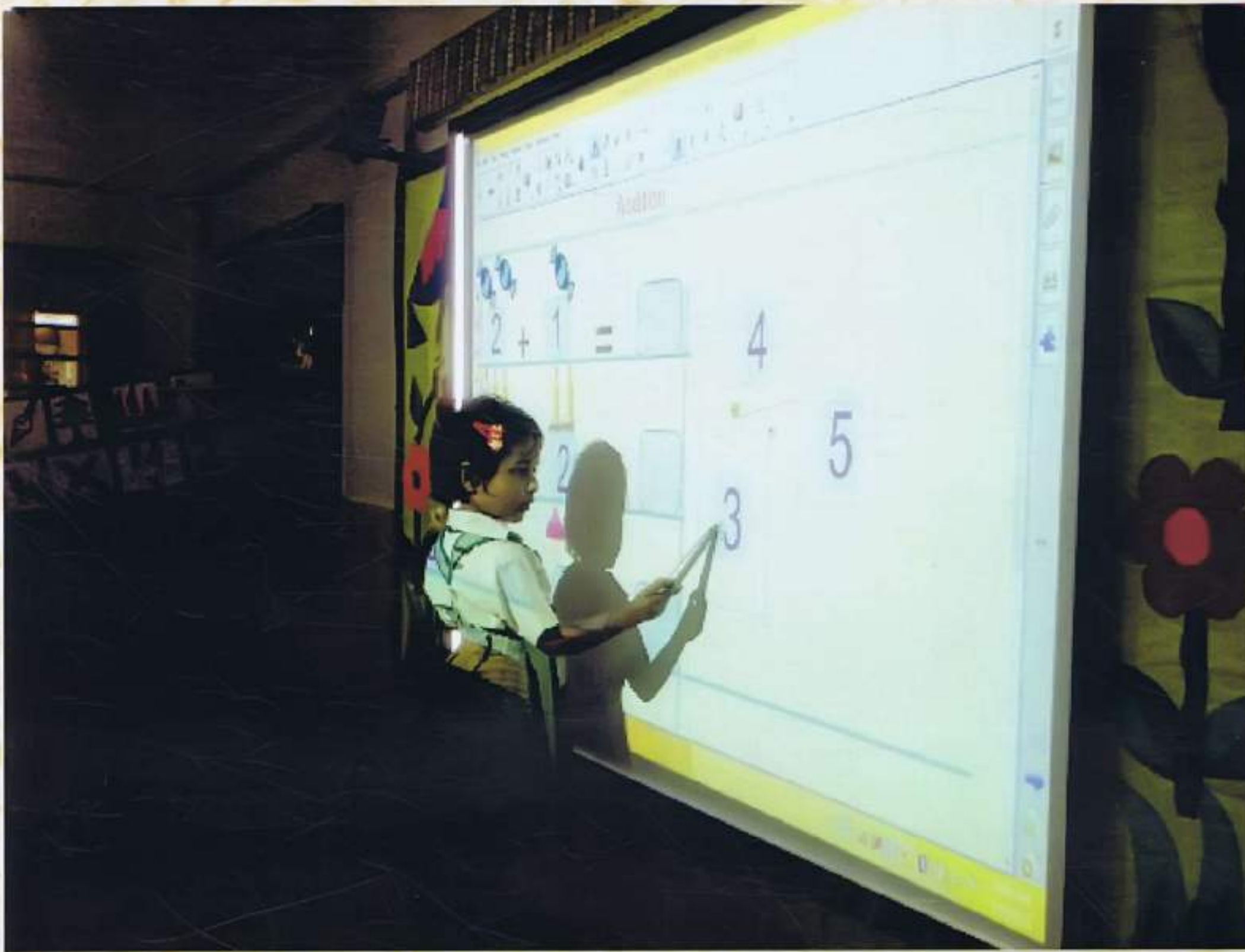
From the oldest alumni to the youngest ones: Celebrating our students!



“....Thus, they will lead gradually from the often neglected play world to the domain of the more intellectual training in reading, writing and arithmetic” (V.N.Sharma and E.Sharma, An Appeal, Madras, 1937).



Functions are occasions to remember our teachers, honour our guests and thank our well-wishers.



From slates to Smart Classrooms: we've come a long way!



**“The AIM of this school has been to create an atmosphere of happiness, trust and encouragements, in which the child can learn with joy and without fear, helping him to develop the best of his capacities, and acquire a sound, broad knowledge, independent thinking, and feeling of responsibility for the greater community in which he is living”.
(Founders and Ms.Sakunthala Sharma, Headmistress, from Annual Souvenir for the year 1967).**



“ The Directors (The Sharmas) will watch the activities and interests of the child, keeping careful records of its psychological and mental reactions.” (V.N.Sharma and E.Sharma, An Appeal, Madras, 1937).





Our primary school.... "Out of their questioning and working will come the first real instruction" (Ellen and V.N. Sharma. Reprint from "The Children's Garden. A School for the little Ones" Mylapore, Madras).



Our Crèche and Day-Care Centre: Shelter and care for babies from 3 months onwards was established in our early days; while toddlers enjoy playing and learning in a loving environment.





"It is due to the initiative of Mrs. Ellen Sharma that the Children's Garden School has been an important centre for the training of teachers in the Kindergarten system of education which today is very widespread"
(K.S.Ramanujam, Correspondent Hindustan Times, CGHS Souvenir, 1978).



“We were struck with the freedom and happiness, with the joy with which the children played and we felt that the spirit of their play was itself an indication of the success of the school” 1943. (Letter by Sri S.V. Ramamurthi, Kt., C.I.K. then Prime Minister of Udaipur and Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras).

