

Student groups wield brush to give govt schools a makeover

SruthySusan.Ullas
@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: The grimy, cracked walls of government schools are getting a makeover, thanks to two student volunteer groups.

Campus 2 Community, a group of college students, and The Teaching Brush, comprising high school teens, are seeking permission from government school principals to breathe life and colour into classrooms.

Campus 2 Community ropes in art students from design schools like Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath (KCP) and Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, architecture students and a large number of NSS volunteers, to paint walls. "We take permission from school principals and head there with a team of 40 volunteers consisting of four design and 10 architecture students and some volunteers. While artists make the sketches and draw the outline, rest of the students fill in the pictures with paints. Villagers arrange for students' food and accommodation during the period, giving volun-

TIMES VIEW

Student groups adding colour to school campuses are not just bringing about visible change, but also intrinsically perking up little minds by engaging them in edutainment, albeit refreshingly, without gadgets in these cases. It's a two-way path to discovery, where the city-bred are seeing up close what ails government schools, while rural kids are getting to explore new vistas of creativity. The youngsters' pursuit, which is spreading much cheer, shows change can be initiated at any level and leave a lasting impact. Projects such as these are lessons in social responsibility and should be emulated.

teers a memorable and fulfilling experience," said Prem Jain, an organiser of Campus 2 Community.

So far, the group has covered 18 schools and planning to rejuvenate 150 government institutions across remote villages in Karnataka to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Planned in co-

ordination with Art Matters, the project called School Bell will have over 500 volunteers, painting the walls with 25,000-plus litres of paint.

Poorvima Prabhakar, a third-year sculpture student at KCP who is part of the project, said: "We ensure whatever we paint has some education-related element for children. While the compound walls are painted with Warli and Madhubani designs, the classroom walls are mostly painted with academic stuff. We also try to involve school students. For instance, we ask them to make hand impressions on the walls. This brings a smile on their face."

The Teaching Brush functions on similar lines. This group of high school students teach government school kids art and engage them in repainting their walls. "The school gives ideas for the paintings — from a solar system to alphabets and water cycle. We teach kids how to paint and sketch the diagram for them. The kids enjoy the activity," said Ankit Ratakonda, a class 12 student of Greenwood High and founder of the initiative. They have repainted three schools.



STUDENTS SPREAD THE GREEN WORD

Undergraduate students of the department of media studies at the Centre for Management Studies, Jain (deemed-to-be university), organised a photography

exhibition on the streets of Bengaluru on Sunday, the eve of Ozone Day.

The students decided to hold the photo exhibition, themed around saving the

ADMISSIONS WENT UP THIS YEAR

The school in my village in Huladenahalli was painted by Campus 2 community. The place became more attractive than private schools in the neighbourhood. Admissions went up by around 20 students this year. While elementary classes had cartoons painted in them, it was more of academic stuff in the higher classes, which also helped us

Srinivas K | TEACHER, GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALAHALLI, HOSKOTE TALUK



COLOURING LIVES: Campus 2 Community ropes in art and architecture students and NSS volunteers to paint school walls

environment, on roads rather than a gallery to create a wider impact. "Art has the power to impact society at a greater level. That's why we decided to exhibit our photographs on the streets rather than in galleries," said

Harshitha Jamadagni, a second-year student.

Around 12 students stood on MG Road, Church Street and Cubbon Park holding photos pasted on recycled paper with captions on protecting the environment.