

### **Friends for life: Ryan Schools strengthens its relationship with the Graveney School, UK.**

On 20 April, a teacher from Ryan School Mumbai received an email from Sophie, a Head teacher from Graveney School UK. It mentioned that one of their key staff members, Jennet along with other 2 of her lady friends are stranded in Mumbai airport due to the Volcanic Ash cloud issue which had compelled the flights to be cancelled. They were badly stuck without proper care, accommodation and with no money. The Ryan School Executive Team immediately got into action and organised their accommodation, made them comfortable in Mumbai and ensured their travel back. Jennet now believes that their partnership with Ryan will go from strength to strength and events such as these can only serve to galvanise the friendship.

The cluster partnership between Ryan and Graveney is just one year old. This partnership was initiated in 2008-09 with the aim of bringing internationalism to the classrooms, increase the use of ICT and work towards professional development of all involved. 6 schools from Ryan International Group of Institutions have joined hands with 4 schools from Wandsworth, Central London and are successfully working together to develop a joint curriculum of projects that offer the students and teaching community a global platform.

Mrs. Margaret Peacock, head teacher from Chestnut Grove School in Central London, who visited Ryan Chembur last year, shares her experience: *“We are proud of our partnership with the Ryan and are enjoying every moment of interaction with the educators and students of Ryan schools. We extend our full support in sharing the best technological practices with Ryan group, so that your students can connect with our students and teachers in the UK.”*



The ideology of the UKIERI partnership has been towards sharing the best teaching and learning practices of both the countries. All activities under this cluster school partnership were thus well planned with considerable deliberation amongst cluster of schools in both India and in the UK.

Some of the key activities included:

- Student presentations that included articles and photographs on various celebrations in each school that fosters cultural awareness, permeate the use of ICT among the students and develop skills of writing and narration.
- Exchange of works of fine arts and of crafts created by students, between the schools of the two clusters to foster internationalism and professional development along with an understanding of the difference in methodology, technique and approach, adding global dimension to traditional art forms.

- Exchange of audio and photographs of students playing musical instruments during celebrations and performances in schools to comprehend and appreciate each others proclivity of music and identify the typical qualities inherent of the art form.



Francis Joseph, Head of Organisational Development at Ryan says “The UKEIRI relationship adds a lot of value as our cluster partner schools of the UK works very closely with our schools in various joint initiatives such as curriculum development & delivery, sharing of teaching practices and more specifically it will allow teachers from both countries to visit each other’s institutions to get a deeper understanding of the teaching-learning process.”

A significant strength of this partnership has been the thought to provide students with a new, different and very exciting audience for their creative work.

The project has facilitated interactions with teachers and students of partner schools and has tremendously increased the use of ICT such as e-mails, blogs, digital cameras both by students and teachers. The teachers are now excited to take up more collaborative projects with their enhanced learning of ICT. One of the teachers who attended the UKIERI ICT workshop quotes “The future of education lies in continuous innovation and appropriate incorporation of technology to education, both to learning and teaching processes.”

The project has encouraged the cluster schools to think from global perspectives. The schools are now focusing on teaching methodologies that are more student centred and lessons are more compelling and relevant to the needs of the student of our global economy.

The project has offered a platform to interact, exchange ideas and collaborate amongst the students particularly. It has facilitated common understanding of education systems of the UK and India and has helped to integrate various educational practices followed in each other’s countries with the power of technology.

The cluster schools are making tremendous progress towards shared learning and initiating global citizenship which was the key objective of this partnership.