

FROM THE VICE CHAIRPERSON AND SCHOOL LEADER

In April 2022, The DN Wisdom Tree Global School opened the doors of the school campus at Sundarpur in Bhubaneswar to the world. After a two-year confinement imposed by the pandemic, the joy with which children embraced the campus, classrooms, teachers and friends, was poignant and heart-warming. Amidst this joy of freedom, "Back to School" also threw light on the criticality of post-pandemic behavioural issues in children, a challenge for educators worldwide. The learning fabric had to now be tailored to enable children to find their bearings as well as ensure gradual and smooth adaptation from online to offline mode. After one year, we are delighted that our children have been able to overcome the niggles, big and small, and, our immersive classrooms and activity areas are resounding with chatter, laughter, and, of course, the discourse of knowledge and wisdom.

The New Education Policy (NEP-2020) arrived amidst the pandemic with far-reaching ramifications on the education system in India. Recommending a 21st century global tilt in curriculum and pedagogy, the policy paper seeks to layer the learning process with life-skills, value systems and meaningful knowledge, towards a framework of holistic learning. In this regard, we are proud to reiterate that as an institution, our fundamental vision and philosophy were based on these very criteria. Our mission since inception in 2018 has been to set up a learning space that amalgamates the core competencies of children with modern learning techniques, simultaneously inculcating skills and values, so that they evolve and emerge as empowered and empathetic human beings and as confident leaders of the future.

At The DN Wisdom Tree Global School, we genuinely nurture and celebrate the uniqueness of every child. Every new milestone is a cause for applause because we believe that every step, small or big, contributes and is imprinted in the genetic code of a child's learning curve. No two children are alike; hence we discourage comparisons. We know that inside a classroom, all twenty or thirty children react differently to stimuli, and, it is these differences that make the learning

space vibrant, challenging and enriching. Our mentors are trained to understand and appreciate these differences, to nurture children with utmost gentleness and make the learning process joyous through the language of love. An array of co-curricular activities that encourage hobbies and enhance life-skills, including our one-of-a-kind Wisdom Finishing School Programme (WFSP) enable children towards personal enrichment and gaining the requisite world view. We have received great commendation from education and thought leaders for managing to weave a finishing school curriculum into the mainstream curriculum, a rare feat in educational institutions. Our upcoming playground infrastructure with international level fields and courts will soon score an ace in the arena of games and sports. We hope that as we forge ahead, we will watch the growth and development in our children with a sense of pride.

At this point of time when digital mediums and Artificial Intelligence are being perceived as game-changers, it is our paramount duty as educators to harness these advancements to innovate teaching and learning practices and accelerate progress towards SDG 4. Adoption of technological advancements must aim at a human-centric approach by addressing and finding solutions for current inequalities in access to knowledge. Digital Mediums must at best be tools in the hands of educators, never a replacement for human interface and intelligence in the education space.

Children are pure, pliable, unfettered. As elders, we must revere the sanctity of free-spiritedness in our children as we nurture them towards expansive minds and healthy bodies. As someone who works closely with nature and environment, I have observed that children naturally veer towards the outdoors as it gives them opportunities to bond with their roots, to connect with their inner selves, to enjoy the essence of life. It also helps them to understand that they share this earth with other sentient beings and teaches them to empathise, co-exist and collaborate. Let us encourage and facilitate our children to rejoice in the natural world, to be adequately attentive to sounds, sights and smells around them, because attention is the beginning of devotion. And, Devotion, is the greatest pre-requisite for excellence.

