



Center for Indian Cultural Education
Bal Vihar of St. Louis

To foster and preserve Indian cultural values amongst children of Asian Indian origin



Orientation Agenda

- About your school.
- Overview of Group K- 7
- Typical Day in Bal Vihar
- Tips for your kids
- Special Needs
- Overview of the curriculum
- Yoga Overview
- Bhajan Overview
- Events in Bal Vihar
- Key Volunteers to note



About your school

- Classes follow the regular school year.(August-May)
- Classes meet every 2nd and 4th Sunday, barring festivals, holidays, school break.
- Totally volunteer run program.
- Faculty consists of over 50 adult volunteers.
- Age appropriate Indian cultural and spiritual education

How do we differ ?

Holistic Education - We are an “Indian Cultural School”
Foster Indian Culture and Religion

Offer a window to the rich tapestry of our Indian heritage



How we achieve it

Curriculum

Use Art and Technology to emphasize the curriculum

Events to emphasize what is taught

Eg- Republic Day

Community Service

Unique Community Service Projects

Ambassador in the community

Magic House

Art Museum

Bhajan Outreach

Interfaith concerts at Sheldon Hall, Bach society

Interfaith Discussions

Field Trips

Peek into our school





Let's Talk School

Typical Day:

Assembly

Class Room Instructions - 1 Hr

Yoga/ Bhajan - 1 Hr



Typical Day in Bal Vihar

Assembly at 10.00 a.m.

Time	Group K- 1	Group 1A	Group 2A	Group 3A
10:00 a.m.	Arathi Class Room # 5	Arathi Class Room # 10	Arathi Class Room # 11	Arathi Class Room # 4
10:05 a.m.	Class Instruction Room # 5	Class Instruction Room # 10	Class Instruction Room # 11	Class Instruction Room # 4
10:55 a.m.	Break	Break	Break	Break
11:05 a.m.	Transition to Yoga/Bhajan	Transition to Yoga/Bhajan	Transition to Yoga/Bhajan	Transition to Yoga/Bhajan
11:15 a.m.	Stage Right Room #6 (Bhajan)	Stage Left Room #9 (Yoga)	Stage Area Center (Bhajan)	Center Hall (Yoga)
11:45 a.m.	Stage Right Room # 6 (Yoga)	Stage Left Room # 9 (Bhajan)	Stage Area Center (Yoga)	Center Hall (Bhajan)
12:20 p.m.	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

Time	Group 4A	Group 5A	Group 6A	Group 7A
10:00 a.m.	Assembly Stage Area Center (Room 8)	Assembly Hall Area 1 (Hall)	Assembly Hall Area 2 (Hall)	Assembly Stage Area Left #9
10:05 a.m.	Bhajan Stage Area Center (Room 8)	Yoga Hall Area 1 (Hall)	Yoga Hall Area 2 (Hall)	Bhajan Stage Area Left #9
10.35 a.m.	Yoga Stage Area Center (Room 4)	Bhajan Class Room #3	Bhajan Class Room #2	Yoga Stage Area Left #9
11:05 a.m.	Transition to Class	Transition to Class	Transition to Class	Transition to Class
11.10 a.m.	Break	Break	Break	Break
11.20 a.m.	Class Instruction Room # 10	Class Instruction Room # 3	Class Instruction Room # 2	Class Instruction Room #11
12:30 p.m.	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal



Arrival /Departure

Your child's safety is important to us!

- Drop off at via the side entrance oh HTCC starting 9.45 a.m.
- Assembly starts at 10.00 a.m. in their classrooms. If late they will be held in the common area and will be allowed inside the class after Aarti.
- All Dismissals at the side entrance except for Group K and Group 1
- Group K and 1 will be dismissed at 12.20. Pick up from Parent's lounge.
- Incase of early pick up, email teachers night before or send note to teacher with the student.
- All kids will need to be picked up on time ...no exceptions !
- Bad Weather/snow day: check website or call teacher before heading out. Snow days will convert to Zoom sessions to ensure connectivity.



Some Tips for you .

Do ensure that your kids have a labeled bag/backpack .

Please make sure they bring composition book, pencil/pen, colored markers/crayons, scissors, glue in their backpack along with labeled Yoga Mat and Bhajan book.

Please ensure the children are wearing yoga appropriate outfits.

Be involved. Encourage discussions and reinforce learning with additional materials at home.

Communicate with the group teachers, we love feedbacks whether it is a pat on our backs or suggestion for improvement or a question regarding the subject matter. Make sure you are in the whatsapp group

Our recommendation: After every class instead of asking the kids how was the class? what did you do today? Ask specific questions such as name any two things that were taught in the class? etc.



Some requests

- During Dismissal , please do stand away from the Prasad distribution area.
- Ensure that the children are well rested and have had a good breakfast before coming to class.
- Please refrain from talking to the teacher or children during transition times or class times. Admin Volunteers are always in the lobby direct queries to them.
- Encourage children to refrain from touching or playing with any School property.



Special needs ?

- We strive to accommodate kids with varied abilities
- Please let the teacher know if your kids have any special needs.

Prasad - We make every effort to distribute nut free prasad. But - recommend you teach your kids to check

To Mask or Not to Mask?

We follow CDC regulations applicable to St.Louis County

Right now its mask optional

Recommend Masks

If Kids are sick - please keep them at home



Grievances ??

- Bal- Vihar is a community wherein the children, teaching, administrative volunteers and parents are equal partners.
- Every effort is made to provide a safe and happy environment at Bal -Vihar.



Two Step Process for Grievance Resolution

Step:

Inform the group teachers verbally or via email about the situation. Work with them to quickly resolve it.

If the above step did not resolve then

Next steps:

- Written complaint (forms available at school website)

Grievance form should be downloaded and a written formal complaint should be made. Email this complaint to teacher co-coordinators – Komal Sabherwal and Shanthi Krishnan.

- Komalsabherwal@hotmail.com and
skleo14@yahoo.com

- Meeting with all parties concerned and the grievance committee will be formed to resolve it.

High Level Overview of Program

Grade K-7 : Focus on Culture/Religion/History of India

Introduction to Epics – MahaBharat and
Ramayan

Art Projects in line with the curriculum

Bhajan and Yoga.

Youth Program from Grade 8

Gita Chanting and Discussions.

Community service Projects

Guest lectures

Religion contd..

- An appreciation of Hinduism and its place in the world religions.
- The ability to explain the religious significance of various Hindu festivals.



Curriculum contd..

- **CULTURE:**
- To understand the cultural aspects of various Indian festivals and their significance in our lives.
- An understanding of Indian art forms, architecture, literature, sports, and music.
- An appreciation for the diversity associated with various cultures and ethnicities in India.



History

HISTORY:

- An understanding of the Indian historical facts and context
- The ability to analyze and identify change in India over time and its drivers
- An appreciation for the role of India played in shaping the human story. Vedic era to modern India.
- The ability to speak and present effectively about Indian history.
- The ability to peruse library and internet resources for relevant materials



GEOGRAPHY:

Goal

- identify the location of India and identify its neighboring countries.
- identify the major physical features of India (The Great Himalayan Mountain Ranges, the Indo-Ganges plain, the desert region, and the peninsular south Indian region), urban centers, and rivers.
- An understanding of the role of rivers in the development of India.
- Understand the meteorological processes, the resulting seasons (summer, monsoon, post-monsoon, and winter), and its influence on agriculture.
- The ability to speak and present effectively about Indian geography.



Summary Balvihar Youth Program

Goals of the youth program

- Concrete spiritual knowledge
- Character development by teaching values from the scriptures, discussions, presentations, hands on projects and debates
- Service projects and helping the community
- Align with the vision and mission of Balvihhar

Youth program

Unit 1 - Religious Connection

Unit 2 - Interactive classroom discussion, Student presentations and home work

Unit 3 - Service Oriented: Community service activities (Y4 group)

Unit 4 - Bal Vihar Classroom Volunteers (Y4 and Y5)

Unit 5 - Field Trips (all groups)



Bhajan Overview



High Level Goals

- Generate interest among children and familiarize them with the various Shlokas, bhajans, their meaning and importance in the Indian Culture.
- Overall appreciation for Bhajans/Shlokas and their meaning
- Learn and understand the meaning of 5 main assembly Shlokas/ prayers and aarti



Introduction to Teachers

Main Teachers

Shanthi Krishnan- Grp K &1
Kavita Pradeep – Grp 4 & 5
Reena Upmanyu – Grp 4 & 5
Gunjan Vohra – Grp 3
Sowmya Batchu – Grp 6 & 7
Padmaja Suresh – Grp 2, 6 & 7

Youth Assistants

Mira Iyer
Tarini
Aditi

New Teachers

Mala Sharma
Vineeta Singh
Nirmala Renganathan
Dipsy Patel



Operational Aspects

- We will have 30 mins of bhajan every Balvihar class. Grp 4 thru 7 will be in the first half and Grp K thru 3 will be in the second half.
- Bhajan teacher will pre-record the bhajan / Shloka to be taught in subsequent class and upload them on the class google site in the respective class group folder.
- Pre-recorded bhajan / Shoka and its meaning will be introduced in the class
- Bhajan teacher will also update the Bhajan Website on the bhajans that were taught for that class
- Teachers will work with students and divide them into batches to get the feedback on the song that was taught



Student and Parent Expectation

- ❑ New parents required to purchase Balvihar Bhajan Book
- ❑ Students are expected to have their bhajan book with them during the class session
- ❑ 100% participation and need to respect and maintain discipline during the session
- ❑ Expected to listen to pre-recordings of Shlokas / Bhajans before the class
- ❑ Stay involved and encourage kids to practice Shlokas / Bhajans at home. Help us by recording your kids songs and share in class what'app group or class google sites

Additional Events

- ❑ Diwali Laxmi Pooja (Bhajans by older kids)
- ❑ Community Outreach Events (Older Groups)
 - ❑ Participation in fundraisers,
 - ❑ Interfaith Concerts
 - ❑ Temple Events
- ❑ Patriotic Songs Vocal / Band & Orchestra Ensemble for Republic Day
- ❑ Annual Bhajan showcase (All Groups)





Yoga Overview

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~ Yoga is the practice of quieting the mind. ~ Patanjali



What is our GOAL?

Our goal is to encourage an interest in lifetime health and a stress-free life in our children.

At the end of 7 years we hope our children will have a life skill tool they can use to manage their health and life

Bal Vihar Yoga Team

Our teachers are experienced, creative and compassionate

Adult Teachers

Sudhir Brahmmbhatt

Shrikanth Gopalan

Surekha Bidap

Jwalant Ahir

Rekha Giri

Swetha Gopalan

Anupama Singh

Gayathri Venkatesh

Youth

Assistants

Anurag Venigalla

Diya Patel

Sejal Shekar

Nikhil Contractor

Anjali Bharadwaj

Anuj Kelkar

Jia Patel

How do we do that?

Physical Awareness
through Asanas

Emotional Awareness
through Pranayama,
Meditation and
Mindfulness
techniques



- Children will learn 45 to 50 asanas
- 3 -5 kinds of pranayama
- Meditation techniques
- Introduction to the Eight Limbs of Ashtanga Yoga

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/11anKG9YKzSZX1mTagvudqtljTLR6qxZ56vUKkyrftA/edit?usp=sharing>

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1W_kEIBH5qbQwIEhmjXVwanVo7vgHD7hK_UpYKuq3p7o/edit?usp=sharing

What else do we do?



Participate in Community activities such as Arts Museum event that includes Yoga and more

What do we expect from students

Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape

Flexible minds

Come with an open mind ready to learn and explore

Flexible outfits

loose and comfortable clothes
avoid jeans, belts, necklaces etc
girls should wear shorts/tights if wearing a skirt/dress

100% Participation

Yoga mat



What do we expect from Parents



Support your children's efforts in learning yoga

ensure they wear attire suitable for
yoga, encourage home practice,
practice yoga with them.



Yoga Bhajan Showcase



May 5th is set aside to show case what your children have learnt during the year.

***Please support them by attending
Thank you and Namaste***

Parent expectations





Parent communications

- Website updates
- Whatsapp Groups for every class



Events in Bal Vihar

- Diwali
- Picnic/Family Night
- Republic Day
- Holi
- Variety Show



Become a Bal Vihar volunteer -

- WE NEED YOU
- Teacher Volunteer Training Sessions



folks to know..

- President : Sudhir BrahmBhatt
 - LogisticsTeam : Jinal and Mayur
 - Education team : Komal and Shanthi
 - Youth : Ashok. Nandeeta
- Yoga Co-ordinator: Jay Ahir
- Bhajan Co-ordinator: Kavita Pradeep
 - Events team -Vaishal Soneta, Shashi Dhar



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We are looking forward to a fantastic fun
filled year of learning together !!

Parents

- For sharing your children with us
- For giving us an opportunity to nourish them culturally and spiritually and hopefully make a difference in their lives.

