

INTERNATIONAL
SAHAJA PUBLIC
SCHOOL

from the pages of The Divine Cool Breeze

INTERNATIONAL SAHAJA PUBLIC SCHOOL

from *The Divine Cool Breeze*

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*Graduates
Remember
Shri Mataji's
School*

Founded

They often say that the Himalayas are like the seat of the Universe. And we know they are the Sahasrara of India and the Sahasrara of the world. It is where “the sky is always lit with the brilliance of vibrations and Mother’s divine love.” It is Her school and She is always looking down on Her children.

Gautama Payment

*I will always
feel forever
grateful to my
parents for
sending me to
this school as
the strength,
guidance,
knowledge
and experi-
ence gained,*

The International Sahaja Public School near Dharamsala, India is a place of crystal-clear vibrations, where the children have Shri Mataji in their heart. As Sahaja Yoga parents, what more could we ask for?

Anyone who has travelled to Dharamsala will have experienced first hand the loving and caring environment. When we visit the Dharamsala school and gaze from the windows, we look across the awe-inspiring mountains, where the wind blows strong and free and the vibrations are clear and pure. In our hearts we know why the children are there and can appreciate the invaluable experiences they will carry with them throughout their lives.

Dharamsala is a far and distant place and the children are attending school in one of the world’s most isolated and secluded realms, which in itself presents unique challenges. No one has presumed it would be easy, either for the children, the parents or the staff of the school, but everyone possesses the good will to work together in good faith and in the knowledge that there is no outcome that we cannot shape together.

There are many reasons behind the decision to attend Dharamsala. Some are to try to give our children the kind of wider outlook, inner strength and inherent wisdom which can only be gained in a school of realized souls, raised and enveloped with Shri Mataji’s blessings.

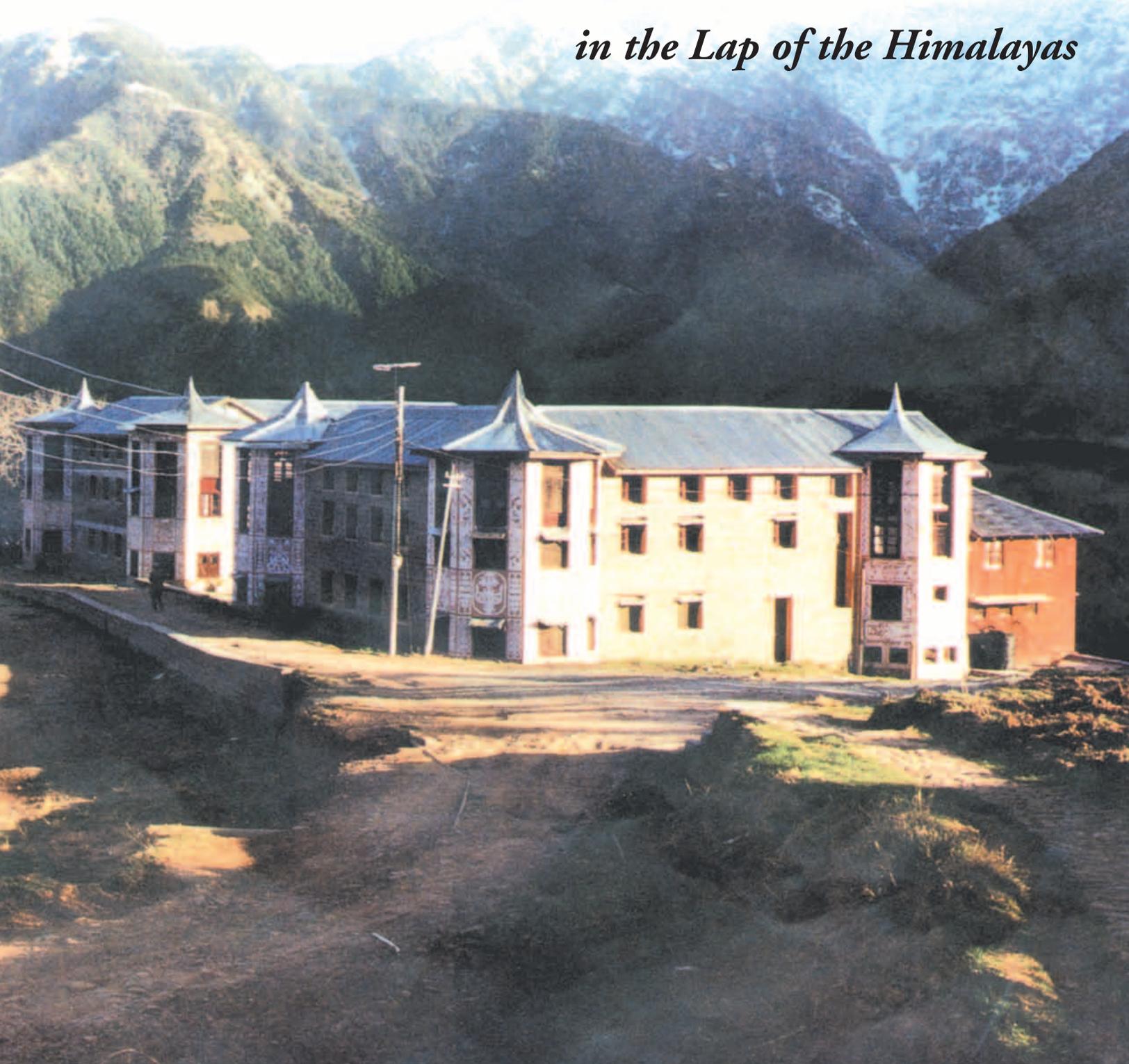
Some answers to the quandary many parents face when considering sending their children hopefully may be found in the following words from our children, each a graduate of the ISPS.

Chris Kyriacou

I have seen children coming from our school in Dharamsala, extremely confident and extremely humble and I asked them, "What do you do?" They said, "Mother, we meditate. We meditate in the school in the evening and that meditation helps." Imagine these small children can say that.
Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

in Dharma

in the Lap of the Himalayas



There is
a lot I owe
to the school
and it goes
beyond
words.

The International Sahaja Public School is unlike any other school I've seen.

When I was there, I was part of a larger family, where I always felt secure. I have made friends from all over the world.

In this school the attention is not on fashion or popular dress code. There are no drugs, smoking or dating. Children can focus more on studies. There are no groups of kids that are considered popular or better than the rest, so there is no jealousy between students and friendship is unconditional. The teachers are respected and they are always there to help, not only in educating, but also if you need counselling or just someone to talk to. Students who have been to ISPS continue to lead a very moral life. They have a positive outlook on life and I feel that they are more mature than most young people.

Fatima Morrissey, Canada

We were in the lap of the Himalayas, one of the most beautiful places with such a healthy and vibrant atmosphere. I've made the best of friends in school, what one calls genuine friends and I am still in touch with them.

We were given a lot of love in school and personal attention from our teachers. Also we learnt a lot of morals and values which have helped me throughout. I've notice that because in college quite a few people were into drugs and heavy smoking. There was also a bit of peer pressure, but I wasn't affected at all. I just wouldn't give in to them and then they started respecting me and, to my surprise, even decided to quit.

By being in an international atmosphere in school, I've developed a keen interest in world affairs and traditional handicrafts too, as we learnt various artistic things in school. I've developed an open mind and keen interest in a lot of things because of all the values, art, adventure and love that was given to us as children.

There is a lot I owe to the school and it goes beyond words. *Pragya Mahajan, India*

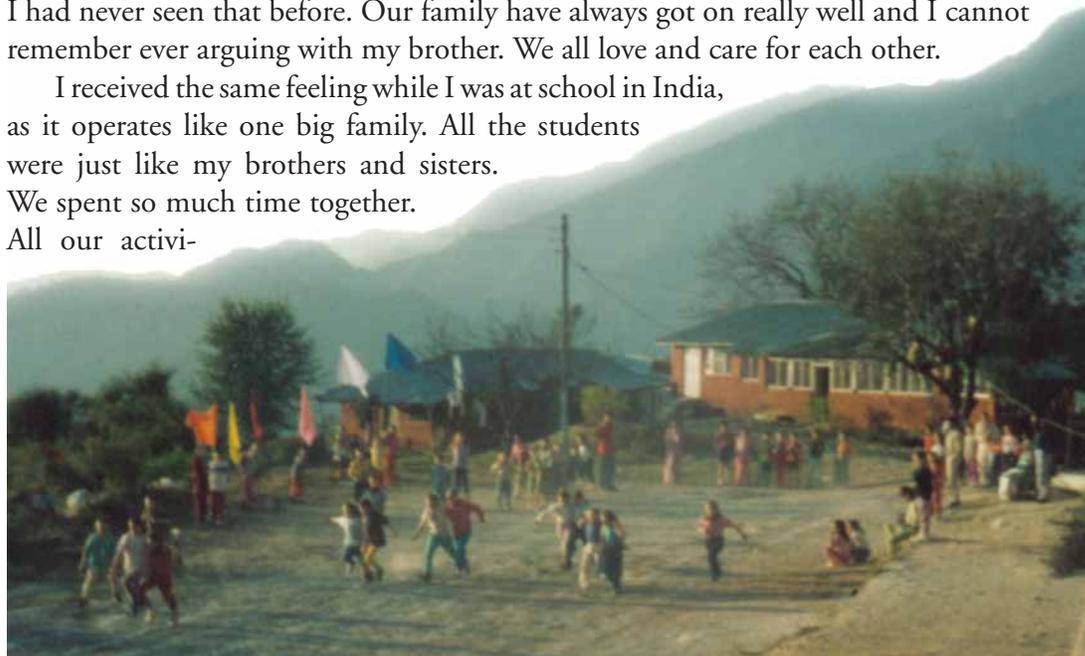
One of the nicest parts about going to school was coming back to see your family and all those whom you love, after such a long time. This somehow strengthened the bonds between my family and I, making the time I spent with them so special and precious. You just enjoy being around everyone. Your love for them just seems to grow and grow.

I noticed that a lot of my friends in Australia were embarrassed when they were with their families. When I have stayed overnight at my friends' homes, I just could not understand why they were always shouting at each other and arguing. It made me concerned, as I had never seen that before. Our family have always got on really well and I cannot remember ever arguing with my brother. We all love and care for each other.

I received the same feeling while I was at school in India, as it operates like one big family. All the students were just like my brothers and sisters.

We spent so much time together.

All our activi-



ties are done collectively. We learned to enjoy the different qualities that each culture offers, without realizing any difference. To us, we were all the same. We were all just students doing the same thing. It made no difference if we were English or French or German or Indian. My friends came from all over the world and so now, virtually anywhere I may go, I will always find a friend.

The friendships that I have made are so deeply rooted that even the problems of language and communication cannot prevent us from enjoying each others' company.

I will always feel forever grateful to my parents for sending me to this school as the strength, guidance, knowledge and experience gained, I will forever cherish.

Celeste Jones, Australia

Dharamsala is a very special place, almost a second home to me, although I haven't been there for a few years. Growing up there ensured exposure to a whole new culture, one which many will agree is very beautiful and moral.

Small class sizes and good teachers also meant that I could always rely on good contact with the teachers. Eastern schools are far ahead of any Western curriculum at the same level. This meant that when I did come back to continue my schooling in Scotland, I had no problems whatsoever in quantitative and scientific subjects.

Furthermore, unlike in Western schools, the teachers were our friends and we often enjoyed a good pillow or snowball fight. Hence, whenever we had any problems, we always felt that we had someone to speak to. We also grew up in a huge amount of freedom, which has had a huge influence on the way I am today.

Unlike many people my own age, I have seen and experienced much more of the world, making me a lot more independent, strong in character and very open-minded.

Above all, however, the school has brought me many, many friends from around the globe, all of whom are very good friends of mine and are like my brothers and sisters.

Hanuman Kaluzny, United Kingdom

School is supposed to be the building of a person's life, interests, personality and career goals. It is in school that a person figures out how to live in a world with peace and harmony, how to interact with other human beings and how to adjust in the huge, beautiful, inter-racial society we live in.

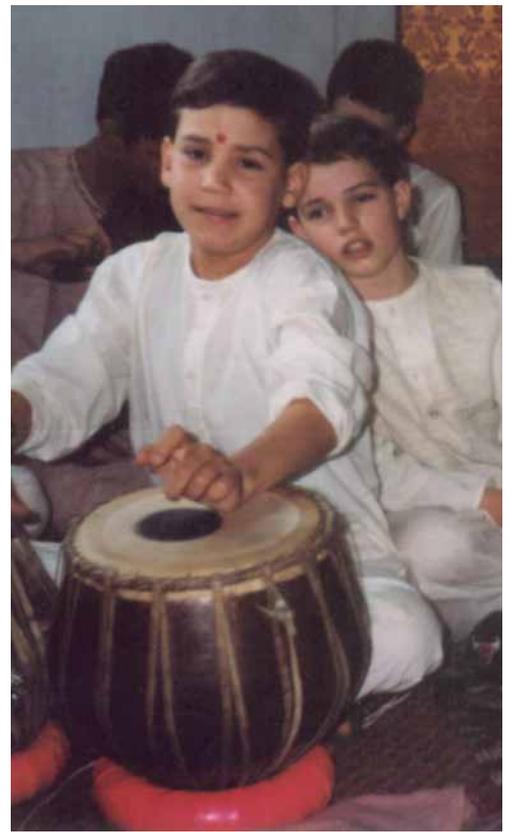
I can think of no school to do this job better than the International Sahaj Public School. This school doesn't just give the best possible grounding for a development of an ideal human being, but also the spiritual guideline that we all need to become better individuals in society.

Analyzing the totally unique nature of the school, the International Sahaja Public School is not only the ideal school for students, but also a ground where better human beings are made and creativity is acknowledged.

I would have no hesitation in recommending this school to any parent who cares about the welfare of their children and their development into better human beings. It is a society of better human beings that, ultimately, will result in a better world for all.

And that is exactly what this school has been doing, is doing and will keep on doing.

Rishi Nicolai, Australia



To us, we were
all the same.
We were all just
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I was taught
to search
for answers
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I found them.

I was at my happiest at the International Sahaja Public School, where I was accepted and loved for who I was. In Australia I feel tremendous pressure to conform to the superficial standards kids have here. I can resist because of my time at the school.

Although I was there when quite young, it showed me other standards and what fun can be had in simpler things. It also taught me a great understanding of all people and to abhor racism in all forms. These things come from inside my heart.

Anthony McHugh, Australia

I enjoyed my time at the school – both the experience of the physical beauty of the surrounding countryside and the staff and my fellow students. It has widened my horizons culturally and given me friends all around the world.

My appreciation of the school, however, has been greatly increased this year, as I see my peers at my current school struggle with the moral dilemmas of drugs, alcohol and sex. The values imbibed, meditation and introspection, practised at the International Sahaja Public School have given me a confidence about myself and a peace that I do not see in students here.

If it was not for my time at ISPS, I am sure I would now be lost and I would not be striving to reach my full potential.

Anna McHugh, Australia

At Dharamsala, in a pure and healthy environment, we were given the chance to grow into adults without the threats and dangers of today – no drugs, no alcohol, but an absolutely strong feeling of security and love.

This school let us grow up in something comparable to an intact family. At such a young age, the feeling of being protected is one of the greatest needs and the school gave it to us, totally in contrast to the situation I found later in Europe.

I have met many people who have no back-up from their families and I have seen their state. Aggression, hatred, insecurity have become their guidelines. Quarrel and disorder within families of this Western world are the cause. I was taught to respect my parents.

I was taught to search for answers within the family and I found them. Although we were often separated from our parents for months, I never felt left alone. In fact, the bond to my parents grew and so did the respect. It was they who had to let loose and overcome their conditionings on how children should be brought up, to give me the chance to grow up in a functioning and working community.

My experience in the school enriched my personality in several ways. Firstly, it gave me an open and tolerant attitude towards other cultures that I found was lacking in some European public schools I went to later. Being at boarding school and far from home, it also developed my skills of handling situations independently. I also learnt how to cooperate, coordinate and live with other students my age, with each of us, our habits, likes and dislikes.

The different system of teaching lead to the fact that, when coming back to Europe, my levels of math and sciences were superior to those of my classmates. My years at the school have been of the most instructive and enriching of my life, precisely because it offered so much more than just the usual academic curriculum.

Niranjana de Kalbermatten, Switzerland

From an academic point of view, the school has given me all the knowledge I needed to enter into school in Germany, to adapt to the system. In fact, the level of science and math were higher. It provided a large variety of possibilities for us to work on our talents and find an expression for creativity.

Although I have found my place in society here and have found friends, it is the time in India that I look back to as having been the best moments of my life. I have found my true friends there and, for the time I lived there, my family. I was given the strength and motivation to face the problems of society and to find a way to live in it, but to try and change it for the better.

Shyam Fein, Germany

The time that I spent at the International Sahaja Public School was the most rewarding and fulfilling experience of my life. It affected every aspect of my life. It made me value education, appreciate nature, respect my elders. But none of these things were taught as such. They were simply there in the environment.

Some of the things I loved the most about the school were the mountains, the rain and the trees. I loved learning dance, music and history. But most importantly, the friends I made were so deep. In those friendships, we connected on such a deep level because we were the same. Such a connection I never experienced with friends in Canada.

In Dharamsala, most importantly, I learnt who I was. I understood who I am. This is a gift which can be gained nowhere else and is the most important lesson you can ever learn.

Shreya Payment, Canada

From my seven years at the International Sahaja Public School in Dharamsala India, I have gained a lot – and not only academically. Living and studying in a place which is so diverse, has helped to teach me to be a collective and broad-minded person, as well as independent. I now have a keen interest in world affairs. It has also given me the ability to live in both Western and Eastern cultures, as well as appreciate them.

I had a very enjoyable time over there, a once in a lifetime experience, making friends from around the world, with whom I still regularly keep in touch. This has also helped me make friends here in Australia.

The standard of academics is very high and has been more than adequate to prepare me for school in Australia.

Sometimes material I have done in India has even been repeated here. One of my teachers here in Australia said, “Being in India has given you an enthusiastic approach to your studies. You have something many children do not.”

Mary Brownscombe, Australia

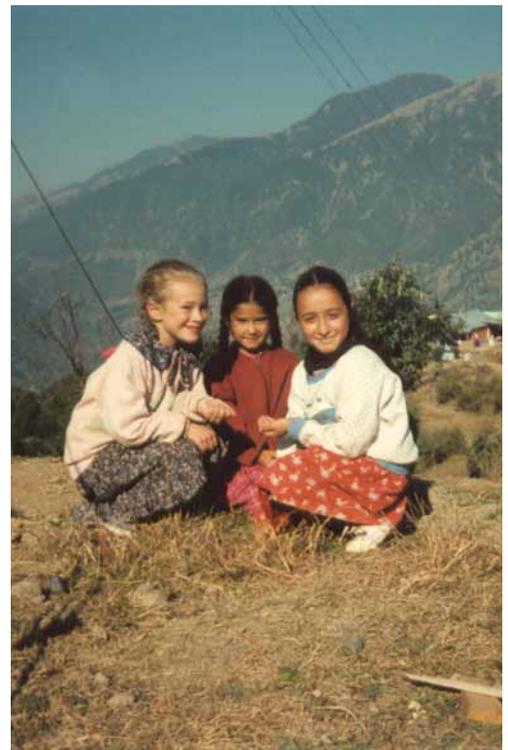
I went to the ISPS for seven years. In the beginning, I was nervous to go to a new school, in a new country, but I soon got used to the friendly staff and found it easy to settle in and was happy. I made many really good friendships there that will last through my life. I also gained a wider understanding of many cultures.

Learning in the Himalayan foothills made learning fun and different. I liked living in the dorms with my friends. We had so many good times. Most of my best memories till now are from my time spent at India school.

In India, all the students were closer than in Australian schools. We had a wide variety of activities outside the normal school lessons.

Overall, my time in India was helpful to my life, fun and I don't regret one day of my time there.

Radhika Aerfeldt, Australia



I found my
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I can not express in words how lucky and how privileged I feel to have been able to attend school in India, at the Sahaj School in Dharamsala. I cannot even pretend to imagine the difference to myself, my personality, if I had not been there, for it is what I learned during those young years in my life that has made me who I am today.

Most obviously, the education I received was of a much higher standard than what is offered in Canada, where “perfect” in the Western education system is the “satisfactory” that is expected by the Indian International Board of Education that I studied under. Along with a second language, the experience of Indian classical music, dance and art, I have come away with an international perspective on a very diverse world.

But it is not just the academic education I received at the International Sahaj Public School which is of such a high standard, but more importantly the deeper values that I learned through the spiritual aspect that underlies the way in which the school is run. These are values that developed qualities of my personality and matured them much beyond my peers back in Canada.

Most importantly, I was allowed to learn about myself and the world around me and, in doing so, become more self-confident and secure in who I am, a quality very much lacking in the West, where insecurity, problems of personal identity, family and social dysfunction are dominant everywhere.

It is also due to the simple meditation techniques I learned that allow me to reduce any stress in my life that comes from university course work, job work and even day-to-day problems that arise. My friends are envious that I am able to remain peaceful and balanced in my life while under pressure and, at the same time, top the class in almost every course and receive high praise from my lecturers. My attention is more focussed and my mind is clearer. I fall asleep with no effort at night and wake up in the morning well rested, something I have come to know that most people around me do not enjoy.

Gautama Payment, Canada



Time spent in the International Sahaj School taught me how to be collective and to communicate with others. Making friends with children from all around the world, of different culture and language, was a wonderful experience. I am against any racism and cultural problems and I easily manage to pass over my point of view to others from my society.

One more thing, and probably most important, which I had gained in the ISPS is that it had taught me to live a fun, happy life with no need for alcohol, nor drugs. After seeing the real beauty of life in ISPS, I feel no need in taking to any addictions, as I know that all my problems can be solved easily.

In the Sahaja Public School everybody was like one family and we would always help each other to overcome any problems and worries.

Today, having been brought up this way, it is very easy for me to understand other people and their needs and this must be why so many people from my school society come to me for advice and help.

I found the ISPS to be the best school I had ever been to because children over there not only learn English and other subjects at a high standard, but also learn how to live a good, proper, tolerant life, with no violence, no problems and no sex abuse. Many years after coming back, I can feel the positive effect it had on my character and world view.

Neelam Turczyn-Zalewska, Poland

My time at school in India was amazing and, as the time passes, I realize more and more how valuable it was and how much it has meant to the person I am now. The city I live in is very diverse, ethnically and culturally, however, the experience is nothing like going to an international boarding school. Going to a school like the ISPS cuts away barriers of discrimination and stereotypes. How could it not? Children are very flexible and do not yet have as strong preconceptions and conditionings as adults do.

As a student there, I think I subconsciously became much more open-minded to different kinds of people and to different cultures. I returned home and to my high school with what I felt was a much wider scope for understanding people and for learning from experiences.

I very much value the friendships that I made while I was at the ISPS, as well as the mentors I remember, the principal and teachers whose friendship and guidance I turned to and appreciated.

The ISPS is an international school, however, it is in India and that is definitely an important factor. In contrast with American teen culture, Indian children and teenagers seem to be brought up with more self-esteem and a greater sense of value in themselves, in others, in parents, teachers and elders and in morals. Their culture is founded on dharma, which is an inner sense of values, of knowing what is right and what is wrong. There isn't really a concept like that here, at least not that is taught to children in schools.

Having been brought up with a set of values, I am secure within myself and have not needed to go through the same roller coaster of confusions in searching for my identity.

Time has flown by and I have now been back in the US for almost six years. Since returning from India, I feel that I've been able to stay focused and determined. I work hard, but I also know how to find much joy in life.

I am often asked how it was to go to boarding school at the age of thirteen and even more so, a boarding school on the other side of the world. In beginning to answer, I say, "It was amazing. I wish everyone could have an opportunity like that."

Radha Partridge, USA

Many years after coming back from the school, I can feel the positive effect it had on my character and world view.



I wish everyone could have an opportunity like that.

INTERNATIONAL SAHAJA PUBLIC SCHOOL *Talnoo, Dharamsala Cantt., H.P. 176*

INTRODUCTION

The school embraces the principles of the Central Board of Secondary Education, but beyond this, it is an opportunity for the child to enjoy the precious, magic days of childhood. It is a school with a difference - the child is nurtured with loving home care and prepared to appreciate the world outside. Classroom lessons then become an integral part of the total learning process. Each lesson learnt is a joyful experience enriching the child's awareness.

The school is nestled in a remote serene hillock facing the snow line where the disturbing city elements do not hamper the tending growing awareness of children. In small personalized classrooms individual attention is given to each child. The ascent is more towards the development of aesthetics of life through various expressions of spiritual joy under a special system developed by Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. To realise these objectives, we have a staff of highly qualified, talented, and compassionate teachers. They are themselves very self-disciplined and compassionately sensitive people so that the students can absorb from them higher values, practices, and percepts of the ideal to which they are wedded.

The strategic location of the school offers unlimited scope for expeditions, treks, camping and fishing. All our whole-hearted effort is to inculcate a love for nature, a care for the environment and a lure for adventure. The child would be surrounded with everything that enriches human spirit and life.

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER, SHRI MATAJI NIRMALA DEVI

The message of the school is universal love and sharing through self-discipline to create spontaneous collectivity.

The school will foster personal relationships which will establish purity, innocence and awareness of chastity. The emphasis will be on dignity, decency, and decorum of good manners, so that students will learn to respect their sense of morality and sacredness of the body which is the temple of God.

One of the main objects will be to undertake a comparative study of all the religions to show that the essence of all the religions is the same. The aim will be to put the attention of the students towards the spiritual life of sharing, tolerance, real peaceful co-existence, and the mutual solving of problems with joy of sacrifice and generosity.

The atmosphere of the school will be peaceful as such an atmosphere allows for greater absorption with less distraction of the attention.

EDUCATIONAL AIMS

The seeds of our future benevolent and compassionate leaders, statesmen and virtuous heroes are sown in childhood. Hence, utmost care will be taken to sow and nourish the seeds through a living method of the living sprout. All policies are naturally moulded for the pupils to attain the full development of their potential through the actualisation of their spiritual evolution. The aim of the school is to introduce and establish a firm foundation for the learning process that:

1. Provides basic knowledge in all subjects in a happy, friendly, homely, and vitalising environment as visualised by Mahatma Ghandi.
2. Encourages and stimulates the pupil's natural curiosity, creativity, and imagination in a peaceful environment.
3. Provides a practical way for the pupils to understand spiritual and moral principles.
4. Allows each child to develop personality and individuality and yet retain the ability to relate, work, share, and play harmoniously without evoking competition, and enjoy the reality of the collectivity.
5. Brings out the innate human quality through respect and love in each student of kindness, honesty, courage, propriety, sensitivity, dignity, compassion, consideration and spontaneity. By this system, the child becomes strongly grounded in himself. He easily recognises falsehood, deceit and superficially projected values. A common-sense understanding will be developed through awakening the sense of wisdom in children. For instance, a knowledge of day-to-day life will be taught, such as grandmother's medicines, so that the students can help themselves and their fellow men.
6. Makes the child mindful of his individual and collective responsibilities such as respect and duty towards his parents, elders, teachers, fellow men, public property, country and the world at large.

OTHER INFORMATION

Boarding facilities

Students live in homely cottages under the personal care and supervision of a senior teacher to whom a student may turn at any time for counselling and guidance.

The dormitories have attached bathrooms with running hot water. The school provides both vegetarian and non-vegetarian diets. Four meals are served and students take turns in serving and clearing up at tables.

The messing is not contracted but purchases and cooked by our own staff under the experienced catering Manager who keeps it calorific, nourishing and wholesome.