

THE Sylvia Wright TRUST

Registered Charity No. 326139

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Dear Supporters

Easter 2022

What a difficult time so many have had since Easter 2020 – first the pandemic and now the horrors in Ukraine. Sylvia herself has suffered with health problems and the projects from lockdowns. However, all restrictions have been removed, at least for now. Sylvia's health has improved and things are rapidly getting back to normal.

The nursing college was least affected by the pandemic: the students are older and were vaccinated fairly promptly. Indeed the senior students helped with the state vaccination programme. The college continues to move towards its full complement of 120 students and towards offering a degree course in nursing.

Almost all of the hearing impaired children have now returned. The school year has been extended by six weeks to allow for exams. Younger children aged three and four are now attending our school as day pupils but increasing numbers are starting at an older age, having failed to make progress in "regular" schools. The teachers are making great efforts to settle the children down and help them catch up with their studies. Hearing aids are being repaired or replaced thanks to the charity Hear the World and speech therapy has resumed. Hearing aids have been supplied to the three and four year olds for the first time.

The day centre for children with other disabilities was badly affected by the pandemic: many have compromised immune systems. Some 70% have returned so far. A small unit was added recently for autistic children. In a further new unit, those with muscular dystrophy are served by a clinic in the day centre or by home visits. A start has been made on introducing vocational workshops for older children.

In January, Sylvia completed her 40th year of work in India. She celebrated her 84th birthday with staff, students, local dignitaries and well wishers. Her achievements speak for themselves and result from her indomitable faith, hard work and determination.

However, even Sylvia does not expect to be able to work at this pace forever. Further good progress is being made on "transition" to prepare for the future.

Our shared “transition” objectives remain unchanged: to secure the services for as long as there is a need; to develop them where appropriate, subject to adequate funding and management; to ensure that supporters are kept informed; and to ensure that Sylvia is comfortable with all developments.

Four priorities have been identified.

The first is to ensure that the governing body is competent, empowered and energetic. The existing body has been slimmed down, with the least active members retiring. Two new appointments have been made and more are being progressed, seeking out those with drive, experience and a track record in similar fields.

Secondly, to find a successor to Sylvia. John Rajkumar was appointed chief Executive in March and is settling in extremely well. Sylvia will stay on site to advise and mentor. She has resumed some part time work in her old hospital on a support and development basis.

Thirdly, to develop the senior management, some of whom had become more used to following orders rather than taking individual and team responsibility.

Fourthly, to develop fundraising capacity in India. A good start has been made on planning and preparation which now needs to be turned into action.

Visits are difficult at present. A trip to India by trustees may be possible later in the year but it is doubtful if Sylvia will visit England again until 2023. In view of this we are considering an online “audience” with Sylvia in the summer: more information will follow.

The Trust is in good shape. Almost all activities except talks continued throughout the pandemic. Talks have now resumed.

We are grateful for all the work done by trustees and others and for your loyal support over so many years. This support has never wavered, even in recent difficult times.

Sylvia sends her good wishes at this Easter time and asks for your continued prayers.

With every good wish,

Tony Allinson