

Governance and Management

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The organisation of our three projects in India is firmly established. The governing body, titled the Rangammal Memorial Rehabilitation Society (RMRS), has nine members, six of whom are long-serving and three relatively recent, with three more new members in the pipeline. John Rajkumar CEO and the heads of departments form an Operating Committee. Managers are growing in confidence, teamworking skills and “ownership”. They are gradually taking responsibility for fundraising and cost control.

Unsung Heroes

Our three projects in the Indian State of Tamil Nadu are thriving. The Trust supports a residential school for 200 children who have hearing impairments; a day centre for 80 children with disabilities; and a nursing college for 120 students. The staff of all three humanitarian projects continue to give great service to children with disabilities and to young people aspiring to a career in nursing.



Our Staff Team

Behind the scenes however, another group work hard to keep the show on the road.



Led by Mr Vinayagam, the staff team deal with cooking, cleaning, laundry and the maintenance of the buildings and equipment.

Vehicles also require maintenance: transport scheduling requires careful planning and monitoring. Utilities, including water boreholes and storage, sewage disposal, and electricity supply are vital. Four generators are maintained in place to deal with interruptions to the mains supply.

A water purification plant supplies the whole campus. The warm water therapy pool needs close attention to both sterility and temperature.

To help with safeguarding, 60 CCTV cameras and a modern fire alarm system are in operation.

All of this is managed cheerfully and energetically by Mr Vinayagam and his staff who deserve every credit.



Well-Maintained Grounds

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Empowering Lives

A Message from CEO John & Priya



Warm greetings from all of us at Rangammal Memorial Rehabilitation Society (RMRS), Tiruvannamalai. My wife Priya joins me in extending a heartfelt “Hello” to our friends and supporters at the Sylvia Wright Trust.

The academic year that has just concluded was both exciting and encouraging. The performance of our children on the academic front has been commendable. We are proud of the progress they have made. New initiatives were introduced across our three institutions, with a strong focus on extracurricular participation. Sports, gardening, community service, arts, crafts and awareness creation have provided our students with opportunities to experience diverse facets of life skills, nurturing their confidence and holistic growth.

On the academic side, we took a significant step forward for our students with hearing impairment. As part of advance preparation, a **structured 12-week computer and digital hands-on training programme** was conducted, using Indian Sign Language as the medium of instruction. This initiative enhanced our students’ digital literacy and introduced them to the fascinating world of Artificial Intelligence, opening doors to future opportunities.

Our vision remains steadfast: **to empower the differently abled and rural young people** by means of education, skills and dignity. While we continue to make concerted efforts to mobilise local funds for sustaining these services, results have been modest so far. Nevertheless, our commitment to this mission is unwavering.

On the governance front, we are pleased to share that two new members have joined our society, bringing expertise in **Finance Management** and **Organisation Development**. Their involvement strengthens our organisational framework and ensures that RMRS remains resilient and future-ready.

As we look ahead, we remain deeply grateful for the support and encouragement of the Sylvia Wright Trust and all our well-wishers in the UK. Together, we continue to build pathways of empowerment, inclusion and hope for the children and communities we serve

With warm regards John & Priya

Supporting

Residential School for 200 profoundly deaf children
Education & Therapy Centre for 100 severely disabled children
Nursing College for 120 students



Friends of Sylvia



Sylvia is well and still occupying independent living accommodation in a Methodist home in Leeds.

It was a great shame that her initial home with the Little Sisters had to be closed due to structural problems.

The Sisters hope to open their new home on the same site before too long: Sylvia has made her application to move there in due course.

She sends her sincere thanks for all the support you have given her since 1982.

And of course she also sends her sincere thanks to those in the friends of Sylvia group and others who have given her personal support since she came back to the UK.

This support has never flagged and has provided many visits to her own flat, many escorted excursions and help with many domestic matters.

After over 40 years of course, India changed a good deal and so did this country. Adapting has not been easy, but we are gradually getting there..

She is now actively considering giving the same support herself to other residents of the Methodist home.

Before Sylvia went to India, she was a member of a large, very active prayer group. Each year the group held its annual conference at Ampleforth Abbey which is set in beautiful surroundings in North Yorkshire.

Ampleforth has guest accommodation for those on retreats or for those who just want a quiet visit with access to the Abbey Church services. We have arranged for Sylvia to spend some time there in August.

Welcome our New Headteacher



Rangammal School has welcomed a new Acting Headteacher, Mr Elanchezhian, who began working in his new role at the start of this term in June, the beginning of the school year in India. He joined the school in 2015 as a senior teacher of Mathematics, in which subject he had great success. Eight of his students recently scored 100% at GCSE level. His wider contributions have included, at various times, managing catering, the dairy, the hydrotherapy pool and audiology services - a true polymath! We wish Mr Elanchezhian well in his new role.

Our former Headteacher, Mrs Alamelu, has retired. She joined Rangammal in 1996 and was an extremely hard working and successful senior teacher. Many supporters will have come across her as she led our very successful sponsorship programme. We thank her for her years of able school leadership and dedicated service to our children. We wish her a long and happy retirement.



School Moves



Our children with autism and their teachers

Our Day Centre for disabled children is in three sections. The main sections provides education and care for pupils with additional needs and is on the main school campus. The second section looks after 20 infants (aged under five) with additional needs. This section was recently moved into a mainstream school in the town. Though still managed by Rangammal School, the move was to facilitate some integration with children without such disabilities. The third small section educates children who have autism. This section also will shortly be integrated with a school in town.

Examination Success



Our sixth form students, ready to take twelfth grade(A-level) examinations, holding their entry papers.

It has been another year of outstanding examination successes at Rangammal School.

Our hearing impaired students achieved near perfect results in the 2026 Twelfth Standard examinations, the Indian equivalent of GCE A-level. Teachers, students and their parents are delighted with these superb performances.

Our students were examined in six subjects for the Tamil Nadu State Board XII Standard Public Examinations:

Tamil, English, Commerce, Economics, Accountancy and Computer Applications.

Rangammal School has a proud track record in delivering academic qualifications which enable students to go to degree level studies. Over the years, high numbers of hearing impaired former pupils have gone on to study in higher and further education.

This year nine of our 10 students have applied for admission to St. Louis College, Chennai, to study for a Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA). All the students are to be commended for pursuing programmes of intensive revision. Teachers conducted evening study sessions after every school day in the months leading to the examinations and led additional coaching classes on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays to support the students in their preparation.

Our Tenth Standard students also achieved excellent results this year.



Our Tenth Standard Students

The new IT resources at Rangammal School enabled the students to benefit from digital lessons, online practice tests and access to previous years' question papers.

The Sylvia Wright Trust provides a bursary fund which supports the most needy learners, thanks to a donor related to one of our very first Trustees. Six new bursaries are available to each cohort starting their degrees. Usually 18 students are being supported at any one time. Congratulations to the students, teachers and parents on these hugely impressive achievements

Transport in The Projects



A fleet of yellow buses provides transport for pupils students and staff.

Staff and a number of day students are collected each morning from various stopping points and then returned each evening.

A similar service is operated for the day centre for disabled children, all of whom are day students and not residential. Some of these children are accompanied by their mothers who stay to help. Most of the nursing students are residential but they do undertake numerous placements in hospitals, clinics, care homes and other medical environments. They also attend external courses in places such as the big city of Chennai, 180 kilometres away.

In addition, the children and the students are taken on away days to points of recreation or interest. All of this makes for a complex routing and timing operation, managed by Mr Vinayam, our Facilities Manager.

Over the years, the Sylvia Wright Trust and its supporters have provided the required buses to meet these needs. Buses in India do seem to last a long time but, even so, they need replacement eventually. A new bus has just been purchased at a cost of £20,000.

Trustees to visit in September 2026



SWT Trustees meet the Indian Governing body

The projects in India have been operating now for 44 years. In the early days, travel was difficult and visits from the UK were fairly rare. For the last 24 of these years, a small group of SWT Trustees have regularly visited the projects in India to encourage Sylvia, the governing body, the staff and the children. The visitors check on progress and plans and review the accounts. This year, a long standing Trustee, Anthony Gilpin will visit again in September, together with his wife Joanna, his son Anthony and Tony Allinson. (Over the years, SWT visitors have funded all their own travel and accommodation expenses.) More recently Our Chief Executive and his wife Priya have been able to visit us here in the UK every second year to discuss progress and plans and meet as many supporters as possible. Communications have of course changed greatly since 1982, when post and occasional phone calls were the norm. Now emails and Zoom are in regular use.

Maithree: Together We Make A Difference



John and Priya

The Indian word Maithree means *loving kindness and compassion*. It is the name of a charity, based in Chennai, which was founded by John and Priya Rajkumar, together with other parents, over 30 years ago. Its mission is to care for children with Intellectual and Developmental Disability. Education, the development of vocational skills, assisted employment and residential services are provided across 15 locations to 600 children and young adults with special needs.

The provision of services by Maithree is highly professional. The charity is effectively governed and most funding is raised locally. Maithree has given support and advice to our own day centre in Rangammal for several years now. It is hoped this will develop into a more formal partnership.

Rangammal Vocational Training Centre



Skills training leads to employment.

The children in our Day Centre do, of course, grow up and then find life difficult in the outside world. We have begun to copy the Maithree formula, giving intensive training on a range of relatively simple tasks. Currently 20 young adults work in this section. The product range is currently six and will rise eventually to around 20. The goods made are genuinely saleable. Proceeds covers the costs and allow the young people to earn a small wage, greatly enhancing their dignity and self respect. Maithree have been very helpful in sharing their expertise in this area of service.