

**“We can light up the world, with the secret we're keeping”**



## **Your Purkal Journal October 2025**

### **Annual Sports**

*“A trophy carries dust. Memories last forever” - Mary Lou Retton*



One of the most significant impacts of sports competitions is their ability to build a sense of community among students. Whether it's a race or a match, students learn to collaborate, support each other, and celebrate their shared victories or losses. After completion of their semi-annual examinations, what could be more thrilling for students than the beginning of annual, inter-house sports competitions. Everyone looked forward to four days filled with exciting games, sports and euphoria. Students left for the sports field of a nearby school immediately after breakfast, as we do not have a large enough field to accommodate these events.

The first day kicked off with multiple athletic events comprising the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m and relay races, kabaddi and shot-put. Students had an exhilarating time, cheering their house teams with enthusiasm. With two events being conducted simultaneously, everyone was back by lunchtime. Post lunch, Primary and Navjeevan students competed in intra-class fancy races like "Grab the Confectionery, Three Legged, Cardboard, Cover the Notebook, Jalebi and Hurdle" races on our own field. These were followed by league basketball, volleyball, badminton, table tennis and chess matches.

Final matches were conducted on the last two days, with loud cheering from students supporting their houses. On the last day, trophies were handed out to winners amidst thunderous cheering and ecstatic celebrations. The most coveted trophy was lifted by the Gulmohar House, as the overall winner of the competition, followed by Dhak House as runners-up. Trophies were also awarded to the winners and runners-up of Volleyball, Basketball, Badminton, Table tennis, Chess and for their performance in athletic events, Kabaddi, March Past and Best Sports Person.

As the exhilaration settled, so did the students; they returned to classes with rejuvenated spirits, ready to dive into the third quarter. On being asked about their views on the Sports competitions, the unanimous view among students of all ages was, *"We must have them more often!"*



## Students' Participation in Virasat

*"Culture is the widening of the mind and of the spirit" - Jawaharlal Nehru*



REACH (Rural Entrepreneurship for Art & Cultural Heritage) was established to safeguard India's traditions at a time when it is threatened by modernisation. Every

October, this organisation hosts the fortnight-long Virasat Festival in Dehradun. The festival promotes rural arts, folklife, and heritage alongside classical music, dance, and craft, attracting huge urban audiences from every corner. A distinctive feature of this event, with a view to create long term impact, is the focused inclusion of school children as performers and attendees.

PYDS has been an active participant in the Virasat Festival since 2019. This year, our students showcased their talents across dance, vocal music, and instrumental music categories. On October 7th, Aditi Thapa and Tapasya of class XI delivered a solo Kathak dance performances on Pundit Birju Maharaj's composition and Shiv Stuti, respectively. The following day, Saloni Pundir of class XII performed a rendition in raag Bhim Palasi titled "*Ja ja re apne mandiva,*" and the bhajan "*Mahadev mahadev har har har mahadev.*" On October 9th, Dipanshu of class IX delivered a nine minute performance on the Pakhawaj, accompanied by a member of our music faculty on the harmonium. His performance was a significant milestone, as he became the first student artist to play this traditional instrument in the festival.

Through these performances, PYDS students not only demonstrated their artistic abilities but also contributed to REACH's mission of preserving and promoting India's rich cultural heritage for future generations.

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## Diya and Rangoli Competition

*"The principle of true art is not to portray, but to evoke" - Jerzy Kosinski*



Inter-house competitions are among the most highly anticipated aspects of school life. Students enjoy participating in all sorts of competitions throughout the year. Diya Decoration and Rangoli competitions were held for primary students on October 10th. In the Diya Decoration, groups of five students from each of the four houses competed with enthusiasm. They painted and decorated plain diyas innovatively, using beads and mirror pieces. The collection of beautiful diyas, set against the backdrop of happy children, portrayed a vibrant festive spirit.

The middle and senior wings participated in Rangoli competitions on different themes. Middle school students worked on 'Cultural Diversity'. Their colourful compositions represented various dance forms, languages, cuisines and architecture of India. Senior students represented their vision of 'India 2030'. Their designs portrayed development of industries, the space program, boom in the IT sector, religious and gender equality.

It took the judges considerable time to announce the results, as all designs were innovative and well executed. With the Diwali festival approaching, all of the decorated diyas and rangolis were viewed with much interest and appreciation by the entire school community.

# The Good School Retreat

*"You may not come out as the same person who went in"*



The Good School (GS) is an alliance of schools that fosters social and personal growth for students. It organises activities to encourage: Service, Sports, Skill and Study among students.

Three of our students: Abha, Garima and Kavin, and our teacher Akriti attended a four day retreat organised by GS and hosted by Sunbeam Grameen School, Varanasi. The retreat was attended by 16 schools across North India.

The four fun-packed days passed in the blink of an eye. Mornings had Yoga and Zumba sessions for an energetic head start. Students visited the Banaras Beads factory and witnessed the entire process from melting glass to the artwork of creating beads. They also visited the Kiran Society, which teaches differently abled students crocheting, tailoring, woodwork and making handicrafts. On field trips, they went to the Sarnath Stupa, Assi Ghat and the birthplace of Manikarnika, listening to interesting stories about them from the guides. They had reading and reflection sessions, along with activities that encouraged collaboration, coordination and networking. During the talent show, our girls Abha and Garima performed a folk

song, while Kavin gave a soulful flute performance. On the last day, students filled a flip-chart listing the activities they participated in during the retreat.

Our teacher found it to be a holistic experience that enabled students to visit a city of significant historical importance, meet new people and acquire new skills. Garima's brief feedback was, *"The experience at the retreat was very special. I attended a Zumba session for the first time and was absolutely fascinated by it. Visits to Sarnath and Assi Ghat were full of fun and learning. The new friends I made, together with the delicious food served by the host school, made it an unforgettable trip."*

## Hostel Diwali Break Activities

*"You do not find the happy life. You make it"- Camilla Eyring Kimball*



The school had Diwali vacation from October 18th to 23rd. While most hostel students went home to celebrate with families, some, whose homes were in far-off locations, stayed back.

To maintain a festive spirit and keep these students happily engaged, several enriching activities were organised. They visited the nearby Asan Barrage located on the wetlands of the river Yamuna, where they enjoyed the natural beauty of the surroundings, spotting a variety of migratory birds amidst lush flora. On another day, they trekked to a nearby hill cafe, where they enjoyed a sumptuous lunch and a panoramic view of the Doon valley.

They celebrated Diwali on campus with great enthusiasm; they decorated diyas, laid colourful rangolis, and embellished doorways with strings of flowers. Special lunch and dinner menus featuring sweets like rasgullas and pastries for dessert were served. With utmost attention to safety, students lit crackers, including phuljhari, chakri, ladi and anar, filling their festive evening with light and joy.

On other days, students watched movies, painted flower pots and participated in cleaning activities across the campus. They celebrated Bhai Dooj by visiting the nearby temple and performing the ceremonial teeka ritual. Laddoos were distributed to mark this auspicious occasion. The overall effort was to provide the students who stayed back with warm, happy feelings, as PYDS is their home away from home.

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## **NJ8 Admission**

*“The child who desires education will be bettered by it; the child who dislikes it disgraced” - John Ruskin*



Ten young children who had been selected after a rigorous process arrived at PYDS with their parents. They came after travelling long distances from Seem village in district Almora, Devalsari in district Tehri and Berinag in district Pithoragarh. As the families entered our campus, the relief and happiness on their tired faces were clearly visible.

After a brief introduction by our Program Coordinator, everyone proceeded to the Auditorium for form-filling, where the School staff helped parents with paperwork. Society Secretary Mr Anoop Seth addressed the parents, familiarising them with PYDS's principles and philosophy. He assured parents that the children would be well cared for, while strongly emphasising the importance of discipline, conduct and values as the joint responsibility of the School and parents. Students from the first Navjeevan batch, who are now in class XII, were introduced to parents to show them what their children would become in the next seven years. Our Principal, Ms Diana Luji, welcomed everyone to the PYDS family, urging them to view admission as the beginning of a journey, not an end.

Before proceeding to the infirmary for medical checkups, parents and children posed for a group photograph. Once the formalities were over, everyone had lunch, parents hugged their children, bidding them goodbye with moist eyes and brave smiles.

The newly admitted children were excited to see the campus, just as the NJ7 students were eager to make new friends. They were happy going to their new hostels, where they were familiarised with the daily routine, preparing them for their first day of school on Monday, October 27th.

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## **Green Gurukul Competition**

*“Because we don’t think about future generations, they will never forget us”- Henrik Tikkanen*



Green Gurukul is an inter-school competition that brings together students to take the lead on solid waste management and climate action. Organised by the Waste

Warriors Society, this competition aims to make learning active, meaningful and rooted in real-life problem-solving. Out of 39 participating schools, this year, our school bagged the 4th position, taking a big leap from the 19th rank last year.

Our students enjoyed participating in the following 10 activities of the competition:

**Seeds of Change** - Students had to grow plants in upcycled containers and make a progress report of their growth.

**Climate Jam** - The team was tasked with crafting a musical jingle with compelling lyrics that not only entertain but also educate and ignite action.

**Canvas of Change** - The mission was to decorate a tired old wall with a fresh coat of inspiring art.

**Plastic Gullak** - Participants had to set up a "Plastic Gullak" in their school premises to collect plastic waste, which would be sent to a material recovery facility for recycling.

**The Holmes Protocol** - Issues within the school campus, like leaking taps, dirty washrooms, broken benches, faulty fans, or poor lighting, had to be identified and reported.

**Photo Essay** - A story had to be woven with the photos and captions to illustrate how even small actions can bring about meaningful change.

**Speak for the Earth** - This was an activity in which students debated the waste crisis, sustainable solutions and the environmental policy.

**Short Film Festival** - Teams created and prepared a short film highlighting issues on solid waste management and climate change.

**Share Your Spare Clothes** - Students organised a collection drive to collect gently used clothes for those in need.

**Trashion** - This was a challenge to design wearable fashion from discarded materials by thinking beyond textiles.

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## Towards Anaemia Mukht Bharat

*"One way of preventing disease is worth fifty ways of curing it" - Trevor Howard*



Iron deficiency anaemia impairs cognitive and motor development in children, with the most severe effects occurring in infancy and early childhood. The Anaemia Mukh Bharat mission launched by the government addresses this issue by targeting different beneficiary age groups.

Our school launched this program on October 6th, after receiving a stock of tablets for three months. Students in classes I to V were given one weekly tablet of 45 mg iron and 400 mcg folic acid, while students in classes VI to XII received one weekly tablet of 60 mg iron and 500 mcg folic acid. These tablets are administered with water on the designated day under the teacher's supervision.

Students readily took the tablets after learning about the impacts of anaemia and the benefits of supplementation. Occasionally, some younger children found swallowing them difficult and got upset. However, teachers patiently coaxed them, ensuring every child successfully took their medication.

# Inclusion of AI Lab



The Atal Tinkering Laboratory at PYDS was established in 2018 with a vision to develop technological skills, foster curiosity and build imagination among students. Keeping pace with changing times, the lab has been upgraded and integrated with AI (Artificial Intelligence) to facilitate students with futuristic skills.

The new version of the lab is now divided into two visually distinct spaces: the AI and Tinkering. Wall-to-wall vinyl flooring has been installed to enhance visual space and to subdue noise. New furniture comprising six cupboards, 22 tables and 40 chairs has been installed to increase work efficiency. Two new laptops and eight new PCs have been installed to enhance students' learning experience.

The upgradation has sharpened focus on accessibility, inclusivity and innovation. Forty AI and Machine Learning kits have been added, enabling students to work individually. Additionally, students will now have access to modern equipment, such as the Jetson Nano, a powerful AI and robotics development kit, to enhance their technological skills. Students will also get Quarky Robotic Kits to facilitate their

learning in robotics. To further support the new inclusions, 70 AI processors and seven servers were added to the Computer Lab.

With all of the above, we look forward to building a multi-year learning pathway from fundamentals to projects and preparing a group of students for competitions and advanced work.

## The Back to Roots Program

*“Strong roots produce beautiful leaves” - Anonymous*



As an institution serving beneficiaries from across Uttarakhand, we endeavour to keep them connected with the socio-cultural traditions of our State. Toward this aim, we run an annual program for class VII students titled 'Back to Roots'. This year's focus is the Jaunsar Bawar region on the western border of the State, which is known for its distinct traditions, dialects, and customs. Students will study the lifestyle, cuisine and sacred places of this region. As part of this program, PYDS hosted a musical concert led by Dr Gauri Bisht on October 17th. She is a senior

healthcare professional and a talented singer with a deep connection to Uttarakhand's arts and culture.

Distinguished patrons of PYDS were invited to witness the program, the first to be held after the School Auditorium's upgradation. Students welcomed the guests with a traditional teeka and by marching to the traditional instruments, *dhol* and *damau*. They were ushered into the auditorium by our Society Secretary, Mr Anoop Seth and Principal, Ms Diana Luji. After a brief introduction, Dr Gauri initiated the program by singing the Shiv Tandav Stotram. She presented several soul-stirring renditions on Lord Shiva, Goddess Parvati, and the holy Ganges, drawing the audience to clap and sing along. Having captured the students' attention, she reminded them of the importance of having gratitude and respect for nature. She entreated everyone to protect the environment to avoid nature's fury, like the recent cloudburst that wreaked havoc in Dehradun.

Dr Gauri's performances were supported by our students, who sang along with her. We are grateful to her and the troupe for presenting a scintillating show that emphasised the importance of preserving customs and practices rooted in our history.

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**We are proud of ...**

**Anchal Tailwal PYDS batch 2021**



Anchal joined PYDS in class XI in 2019. Her family, which includes her parents and an elder brother, lives in Kolhukhet village, which is 15 km from Purkal. Her father runs a small general merchant shop. Her mother is a homemaker.

Anchal happily shares her story....

*"I have completed B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering, specialising in DevOps, at the University of Petroleum and Energy Studies (UPES) in 2025. I am overjoyed to share that I have joined Maruti Suzuki India Limited as a Graduate Engineer Trainee with a package of 7.4 lakhs in June.*

*I come from a humble background. When I joined the PYDS Learning Academy, it changed the trajectory of my life, as we had to pay no fees; the financial burden was lifted off my family. More than just a school, PYDS became a nurturing ground for my personal and educational growth. I came across countless opportunities to excel academically and to explore extracurricular activities. I actively participated in sports and the debate club, which played a crucial role in boosting my confidence and honing my public speaking skills. These experiences helped me to stand out in college and face the challenges of life with poise and determination.*

*The faith my faculty, peers, and donors had in me inspired me to step out of my comfort zone, challenge my limits, and achieve milestones that I once thought were unattainable. I was always enthusiastic about learning and maintained a good academic record. Apart from studies, I actively participated in co-curricular activities, especially debates and oratory competitions, which led me to be awarded as the Best Debater of the Year.*

*In sports, I took part in basketball and volleyball competitions, which kept me physically active and taught me the importance of teamwork and resilience. Life in the hostel was a memorable part of my PYDS journey, as it taught me independence, discipline, and the value of friendship.*

*Transitioning from PYDS to UPES came with its own set of challenges. At PYDS, I was surrounded by people from similar backgrounds, with common experiences, values, and struggles. At UPES, I found myself in a completely new environment with people from diverse and often more privileged backgrounds. Initially, it was intimidating to be among people whose lifestyles and experiences were so different from mine. But this phase also brought immense growth. I learned to be independent, take ownership of my responsibilities, and push through moments of discomfort. Though the beginning was tough, college gave me some closest friends of my life.*

*At UPES, I immersed myself in academics, projects, and leadership roles. From developing an AI-powered voice assistant to participating in national-level*

hackathons, leading club activities and creating impactful projects like Career Compass and Swift AI Bot, my journey was a blend of learning, growth, and self-discovery.

While securing placement at Maruti Suzuki is a significant achievement, I see it as just the beginning of a much larger dream. My time at PYDS has taught me that no dream is too big if you have the determination and resilience to pursue it. Words cannot fully express the gratitude I feel towards PYDS Learning Academy, its faculty and the donors who made my journey possible. Every opportunity I have had and every success I have achieved is rooted in the nurturing environment provided by PYDS.

As I step into the next phase of my life, I carry with me the lessons, values, and memories of my time at school. I am committed to giving back to the community that has given me so much, and I hope to inspire others to dream big and turn those dreams into reality.”

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**Donate to spread smiles!**

The warmth of the Sun lifts our spirits, and together we thank our well-wishers for their good wishes and support. Take care till we meet again.



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