

A Visit to Nandan Van on Oct 17,2019

by Kg C & D

I was invited by the class teacher of Kg C to come as a volunteer for the children's visit to Nandan Van some two weeks ago. I hence had ample time to accept her gracious offer to be a part of school activities well in advance.

I had been eagerly awaiting this day for what seemed an eternity, until finally the day came. After sending my ward to school, I quickly dressed up and dashed to the school. I was giddy as if I was going on my own picnic.

I reached school around quarter-to-nine in the morning and was greeted by Deeksha Ma'm and Seema Ma'm. After a little chit chat I proceeded to Kg C where I met the class, another parent from Kg D had also come it was indeed an honour to meet them and learn they are a professor.

The children were enjoying their fruit break, Apples, Oranges and a complete rainbow of colours were present. Vikramaditya said to me "*Main bas ek hi orange khaunga*" (I will just have one orange).

Children greeted me with a traditional Namaste. While the day was for a picnic, the children still went through morning ritual of circle time along with the do's & don'ts for the day. Although I was just observing them learn. I wanted to jump and join in their circle of learning, perhaps for a day I could be a kindergartner.

The children, as it approached, nine am quickly *spent a penny* before there bus ride and boarded the bus bus with their bags and water bottles. An uneventful ride with a briefing to remind kids to remain seated brought us to Nandan van.



Nandan Van is a small yet well maintained children's park situated in Greater Kailash I, South Delhi. Lush with greenery and complemented with swings it invites kids of all ages from six to

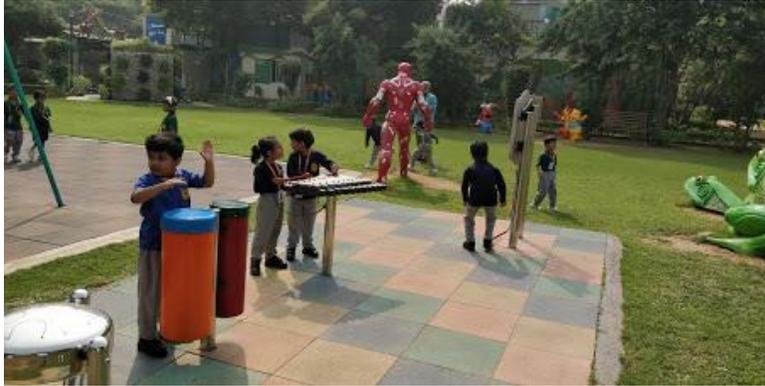
sixty. While your interlocutor is not sixty yet was pleased to be in such surroundings, for one seldom finds themselves in parks while one's abode is in a city.



The children immediately lined their bags up in one corner and ran up to play there were scores of swings disguised as ducks, sea-saw's, jumping games, merry-go-rounds and many different kinds of recreational objects.



They also had statues of Iron man, frogs and other comic characters that my generation are not aware of but I am sure if one of the students would have written would have given us a full biography of! A unique feature of this park is open air musical instruments.



The kids did not waste any time and soon started to explore their surroundings, little mishaps were to happen but the vigilant teachers and the staff had there eyes ever present.



One must admit the children were delighted, not a single child was fighting and all were sharing. The teachers were playing with them while having a watchful eye, if it was not for the uniform one would have found it difficult to distinguish between the teachers and the students.

While a thousand words may be written to describe our experience, I shall present a set of pictures.



At this stage the resistance for me was too great and I also jumped into the fun and had a little ride of the swing.



The love between a child for their teacher is immense and the innocence of such small children was evident. While our teachers acting as mothers were ensuring no child was hurt or they had water, I saw one of the children bring some flowers (fallen not plucked) for Ashu ma'm. I Do not remember how I interacted as such a tender age with my teachers but I can imagine it was something similarly beautiful.



When one is enjoying as much as we did it is hard to know how time passes and soon it was time to go back home. Our well mannered children quickly lined up and before they left there was just one thing to do, the class picture. As we came to the gate all the kids picked up a small momento of flowers.

In the bus all the kids cleaned their hands and started eating their lunch, by now I was one of them. They happily invited me for there next picnic.



We reached school by afternoon. The kids now quickly marched to the class and with parting words and gratitude I went back home.

Being a part of the picnic is a very rewarding experience. Not only does one get to see the school and how the children spend their days and how loved they are. It also brings ones childhood back. While I am selfish and wish to be part of every such trip and all possible opportunities, I am also mindful that others perhaps want to experience and reap the rewards. With this I recommend all parents to at least once volunteer for a field trip.



Gaurav Verma