

Newsletter 2 2003

We have started....

The children have arrived from far and nearby places...

At the moment we teach 19 local children (as day scholars) and we have 18 children staying with us in the hostel. Still everyday we welcome some new comers in the hostel.

Some are really, really poor...their parents send them with just one set of clothes, a toothbrush and a pencil...and not even bedding. Some come from very remote places and are very shy...almost scared.

It opens my heart....it opens my arms....

Sonam, a seven year old boy is very skinny and looks into the world with big eyes like an anxious little mouse. Nitesh is a very tiny miniature man...looks 3 years old, but actually is 5.

Dicky is very much at ease...singing and dancing the whole day...what a joy to be around with!!

We check the hostel children on diseases, sores, scabies, we cut their hair and wash it with anti-lice shampoo.

Few of them have hardly had any education before...one even at the age of eight!

Last Sunday late afternoon we got a phone call from further up the mountain..." We have 2 small boys here...any one missing in the school?" Indeed, 2 seven year old run away boys who had just arrived that morning where homesick...and gone.

Slowly, slowly we are getting used to a daily routine of getting up, having breakfast, running classes, doing homework, having lunch and diner. In the evening before going to bed I do a sort of ritual with the children. We sit in a circle around a candle in the hostel, we do some Buddhist chanting and sing some inspirational songs...A beautiful moment of the day.

And after that...there is the only quiet moment of the whole day...when everybody is sound asleep...The next day at before six in the morning I hear the first little feet running above my head already....

It takes a while to sort out the level of English of the children. Some have been to an English school before...some went to a government school without any English and some never went to school before.

All together it is a nice mix of children representing many of the different tribal casts of Sikkim: Bhutia, Lepcha, Sherpa, Rai, Gurung, Chettri, Tamang, Subba.

All beautiful little angels who deserve it to get more changes in their lives....

By the way...mail did arrive on the last given address...but the postman wants us to use a different address:

Hedwig Bakker