

# Love and Light!

SSSSO (UK) - monthly update

3 years old  
today!  
9<sup>th</sup> March 2008



## Archive Building

Dear Readers, Sai Ram!  
Enjoy this bumper bundle on Love and Light's third birthday! This is the 37th issue. Some people are putting all their copies into spiral bind folders and enjoy the occasional look back over the past three years to remember all that our energetic Organisation achieves!

**Love and Light,**  
**Rosemary Perry, National Chair**

## Spiritual Wing

### National Multi-faith event

'Many Paths One Goal'

Jointly organised by Regions 4, 5, 7 & 8

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April

at the

**Broadway School, The Broadway,  
Birmingham B20 3DP**

Starting with Vedam chanting, multi-faith prayers and devotional singing this will be a wonderful celebration of faith with speakers from various religions all giving talks related to the theme from their perspective. There will also be an opportunity for the audience to put questions to the panel of speakers. Guests: please arrive from 12 noon onwards for light refreshments. The programme itself starts with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp at 12.55pm and concludes at 4pm.

## National UK Pre-SSS World Education Conference Sathya Sai School Leicester Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April

Complying with the directives received from the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation at the start of the year – and circulated to all Centre and Group Chairs – regarding arrangements for the upcoming Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference at Prashanti Nilayam in July this year; there is to be a UK National Pre-Conference on Sathya Sai Education. It is set for 19<sup>th</sup> April at the Sathya Sai School Leicester. Prior registration to attend this UK national preparatory conference is essential. Details have been circulated via all Regional Chairs and through the three areas of SSEd. The registration date has now been extended to 13<sup>th</sup> March in order that as many as possible who are actively interested come.

**SSEd Pre-Conf. Planning Group**

## Sri Sathya Sai

### World Education Conference

Prashanti Nilayam

July 20<sup>th</sup> – July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008

Details as to how to register to become an official delegate of the United Kingdom to this conference were circulated along with the criteria for that, earlier this year. If you feel you qualify and would like to attend please contact your Regional Chair or head of the educational strand in which you are active.

**SSE, Sathya Sai School Leicester, BISSE**

## Medical Camp to Russia 2008

I am happy to inform you that we have now finalised the dates for the Russia medical camp for 2008. This camp will take place in Ukraine this year, from 28th June to 5th July, 60kms from Kharkov. Russian volunteers will support the camp, but the host has requested for a medical team in the following specialities from the Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation UK: **General Medicine, Paediatric, Dental, ENT, Ophthalmology, Optometry, Neurology, Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Psychiatry**. Please note that the host will organise the general volunteers locally from within Russia mainly due to language barriers.

If you are interested in participating please send the following documents by 27th March to Urvi Widhani: Copy of your CV; 2 passport photographs; The main page of your passport containing your personal details and photograph; GMC or GDC relevant medical council certificate. Either email these or obtain her address by getting in touch with her at: [urvideepak@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:urvideepak@hotmail.co.uk):

Once you have been selected, you will be invited for a meeting when you will be provided further details of the camp.

Devotees can also help by supporting the camps through Ceiling on Desires Programme and sending their contributions to the UK Trust. Please see your Centre/Group Chair and/or Service Co-ordinator for further details.

**Dr Surendra Upadhyay**

The SSSSO UK Website

is to be found on:

**[www.srisathyasai.org.uk](http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk)**

## Region 2

### Service in the Community

'Health' as officially defined by the World Health Organisation is, '...a state of complete physical, mental and social being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. 'Health', as certified by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, '...is wealth', and the foundation on which human life rests. Health care has always been a high priority on the list of social activities of the Service Wing because - as Sri Sathya Sai Baba has explained - human life is most precious and should be handled with utmost care, love and reverence and is the essential requisite to achieve the four goals of human life - Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire) and Moksha (liberation).

Inspired by the successful partnership between NHS Slough Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation UK, Region 2 was privileged to organise a second Free Walk-in Health Awareness Day with the NHS Hillingdon PCT in partnership with the Health Opportunities Promotion Education (HOPE) project team on Sunday 17th February 2008 at the Cherry Lane Primary School in West Drayton. The first event of this kind was held last year at the Uxbridge College Campus in Hayes.

HOPE is a partnership project between the NHS Hillingdon PCT and the London Borough of Hillingdon that works especially with 'excluded' groups such as the 'Traveller' and 'Gypsy' Communities, Refugee and Asylum seekers, homeless individuals and single-parent families. These groups do not normally have access to many of the services offered by the NHS.

Ambica Selvaraj (formerly the Centre Service Coordinator for Slough Sai Centre) pioneered this initiative. She is a specialist health visitor and was seconded by the PCT to work for the HOPE project. Health professionals from both the Hillingdon PCT and the SSSSO UK together with Priscilla Simpson, the project manager of HOPE; Caroline Sherman, the Director of Children Health Services for the Hillingdon PCT; Bharat Handa, our National Service Coordinator and volunteers from Region 2 all joined forces on the day to promote health awareness to the public especially to people from the excluded communities.

Mr John Randall, the local MP for Uxbridge and West Drayton conducted a ribbon cutting ceremony to inaugurate the opening of the event to the public and was the first to experience the range of services on offer such as Blood pressure and Blood sugar tests,

Body Mass Index, Dietary advice, GPs and pharmacist advice, eye and dental checks and practical exercises. Stalls from the PCT's 'Smoking Cessation' team and the Stroke Foundation as well as information leaflets from other charities such as Diabetes UK, National Blood Service, Anthony Nolan Trust and the British Heart Foundation were also on display.

In his opening speech, Mr Randall was full of gratitude and admiration for the Sai Organisation and for the selfless and dedicated service of the volunteers in making such an event possible on a Sunday when most people would prefer to rest and recuperate from a busy week!

Indeed, all the devotees imbibing Swami's message serve with dedication and love and, since 'Hands that serve are holier than lips that pray', Slough Sai Centre closed the Centre for its usual activities on this occasion and joined together in unity to serve our needy brothers and sisters in the local neighbourhood. What a beautiful way of taking our beloved Swami's message into the community!

Altogether 418 consultations were given to a total number of 81 people. The age range was between 2 to 82 yrs with the majority from the British Caucasian community and the rest from different ethnic groups.

SERVICES	NO OF CONSULTATIONS
Blood Pressure	67
Blood Sugar	66
BMI	60
Dental	60
Diet	28
Eye	70
Exercise	28
GP advice	26
Pharmacist	13

21 Referrals were made to GPs with 18 for abnormal blood sugar level and 3 for obesity. The prevalence of Diabetes and Obesity is increasing globally. According to Diabetes UK, at least 2.3 million people live with diabetes in the UK. 500,000 people have not had their condition diagnosed and could face a future of devastating health problems such as heart and kidney disease, eye and nerve damage. While there is currently no cure for Diabetes, type 2 Diabetes can be prevented.

#### Evaluation report by HOPE

A prospective evaluation of the clinic carried out by Priscilla on the day showed that this service was highly appreciated by the

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

community. Visitors found it useful, informative, good for early detection of ill health, informal with one-to-one advice and time to talk to the doctors. More frequent clinics were requested. One comment that touched the heart was 'helpful for poor people who can't pay fees!'

Disease has no distinction and can inflict itself on anybody - irrespective of age, cast or creed. Today's modern life style takes a heavy toll on our health. Without faith we cannot perform any action for Divinity pervades everywhere ...but if we can serve as instruments in the hands of the Divine with dedication and devotion, prevention will be better than cure and service to man will be service to God.

**Gayatri Bikoo**

**Region 2 Service Co-ordinator**

---

## **Region 3**

### **Regional Annual Conference**

On 2 March 2008, a bright sunny day, in 'rural' Totteridge, about 120 of the faithful from Region 3 gathered for their annual Regional Conference. Starting with Vedic chants and multi-faith prayers to set the scene, the devotees were welcomed by the Regional Chair, Sunthar Uthayanan. Exhorting us to become aware of the divinity within, and to conduct ourselves accordingly, he urged us work together as Sai brothers and sisters to bring about the transformation that Swami is asking of us. He expressed a wish that Centres should work together to hold Bhajans, celebrate special events, and undertake Service projects, without considering boundaries. He finished by letting us into a secret: Moksha is assured for those who take up the mantle of Centre Chair, and the 'fast-track for Moksha' is through becoming a Regional Chair for two years! Thus, with humour, he urged devotees not to miss the opportunity!

Each Regional Wing Co-ordinator then gave a brief Report on their Wing Activities. Region 3 Youth Co-ordinator, Pari Badiani, told us that the Young Adults in Region 3, in addition to taking part in various Programmes such as LOTUSS and helping out at Sai functions, are also assisting with the Sathya Sai Bookshop. Many joint events are taking place between the Youth and Spiritual Wing. Whilst declaring that the Youth are responsible for the future of our Organisation, she also urged them to make the most of their lives. It is important to have a healthy sense of humour, as seriousness doesn't simply equate with spirituality.

Durga Selvarajah, of the SSE Wing, said that the aim of SSE is to impart 'true' education, ukccnews@hotmail.co.uk

and that there are now about 250 children and 50 teachers involved in SSE Classes in the Region. The LOTUSS Programme is being piloted with children (the 16 to 18-year olds between the SSE and Youth Wings) at the Region 3 SSE School and at Mill Hill Centre. A new SSE curriculum is being piloted, again at the Region 3 SSE School. The emphasis in 2008 will be promoting unity in diversity, coupled with enabling professionalism, and the raising of quality and standards.

Next was Surbhi Vaghadia with a report on the Service Wing. She said that spirituality lies within everyone's heart, and that it is our duty to serve all who come into our life. There is ample opportunity for service within the day-to-day running of our Centres, and with the myriad of Service Activities that the Organisation undertakes in partnership with outside bodies (such as the Blood Bank, the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust, Mencap, etc.). Health Awareness Clinics are being undertaken for the benefit of marginal communities. The Ceiling on Desires Programme has supported the 'Eye-to-Sai' Project, 'Sai Net' and the SSE School. There is an active programme of recycling ink cartridges and mobile phones, in order to acquire funds towards the Sathya Sai School in Leicester. Surbhi also said that legislation is rapidly changing and that the Organisation is taking steps to keep in line with this. In addition to opportunities in our Region there are possibilities for Service at Prashanti, especially at the General Hospital and at the Chaitanya Jyoti Museum during the month of November, (an annual time that has been allocated to UK devotees, both men and women).

Subra Krishnasamy next presented a report on the Spiritual front. The thrust in 2008 will be Vedic Chanting. Workshops on this topic will be organised, and former Sai students from Prashanti will conduct Vedic Chanting classes. Subra urged us to work with the local community in building cohesion - principally through Interfaith Organisations who often organise Multi-Faith Walks that visit places of worship. He described a 'Meditation Walk' organised by the Sai Centres of Luton, Bedford and Milton Keynes last summer, when, after three Aums, the gathering had walked in total silence through woods for two hours, being at one with nature and God. He encouraged other Centres to replicate this.

Next came a report on the British Institute of Sathya Sai Education (BISSE), by Suresh Nesaratnam. He outlined the aims of BISSE and how important it is to inculcate good values in children through Truth, Love, Peace,

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

Right Conduct, and Non-Violence. There is much interest in Human Values worldwide, which has led to material being translated into Mandarin, Arabic, Spanish, etc. A Diploma in Sathya Sai Education in Human Values is being formulated with modules covering 'Empathic Communication', 'Food', 'The Environment', 'Personality' and 'Leadership', all being written by well-known Sai devotees. A long-term strategy for BISSE is being drawn-up, to increase the impact of BISSE in the UK.

The Ladies' Wing was next, and Bhavane Manogaran said that ladies play an important role in soothing, nourishing and cultivating others. She urged the Ladies Wings in Centres to have short-term goals, in order to achieve quick results, and said that the benefits of networking were immense. She said that at Walthamstow Sai Centre, real bonding had taken place amongst the ladies. She finished by quoting from Swami that, "Women are the real treasure of a nation".

The first Guest Speaker of the day then took to the podium. Priya Balaraman, who started SSE Classes at age 15, and then promptly went on to become an SSE Teacher, drew on Jesus the Carpenter and said that the more contact we have with the Sai Organisation, the more we get chiselled and transformed! She said it is important to be sensitive to the youth, and to be constructive in giving criticism. In planning for succession, she said posts should always be passed to a better pair of hands than ours but support in the transition stage is critical. She said that all crises that come into our lives are great teachers.

After a hearty lunch, we had another Guest Speaker – Brahmacharini Sumati Chaitanya. With her dulcet tone, and using the analogy of archaeology, she said that we had to excavate within ourselves to reveal the diamond within. The best way to get rid of the soil covering the diamond is to serve others. The divinity within each of us would be revealed when the ego is lost, together with our likes and dislikes. True transformation will be achieved when we see Baba in everyone. Love means total acceptance, seeing God in everything – both 'living' and 'non-living'. Then Brahmacharini went on to take questions from the floor. Her lucid answers reinforced the feeling in the audience that this was one of those realised souls that one usually only reads about!

The comperes for the day were Shilpa Sharma and Dulmi Gunatilake. Gurmail Singh, the Vice-Chair of Region 3 rounded off the day by giving a summary of the

presentations, and thanked everyone who had contributed to making the Conference a success. It would be true to say that everyone went home uplifted! (Written up by R3 Co-ordinating Committee)

**Chinese New Year 2008 'Year of the Rat'** was celebrated at the Ilford Centre on the 16th February 2008 in the Chinese traditional way and Stephen Ooi from the London Central Sai Centre spoke about the significance and the practices surrounding the arrival of the Chinese New Year.

**Mothering Sunday** was celebrated on the 2nd March with devotional singing to our 'Mother' - our beloved Swami - and children together with adults expressed their gratitude to their mothers in a very emotional way. It was a unique occasion for all the mothers who attended.

#### **Mill Hill Centre Mahashivaratri**

The first Mahashivaratri at the Centre's temporary venue, St Andrews school in Totteridge was just held; initial concerns about potential parking problems and other worldly matters disappeared the moment the inspired volunteers walked into the hall to set up the special altar from scratch plus all the other and seemingly necessary modern paraphernalia of sound systems; all this together with rugs and white sheets for the seating was all accomplished at Sai speed and with beautiful empathy within one hour.

It was a pleasant surprise to see so many new faces, some of whom had only come to know of this programme through what one can safely assume is our dear Sai's Leela: a South African devotee couple came after a completely 'chance conversation' about Swami with someone - the wife had been intensely seeking a satsang with some fellow devoted souls on this holiest of nights but did not know of any Sai Centres; they left after spending the entire night in satsang.

Similarly, recently, a newly arrived Canadian family, who have moved to Arnos Grove, were also seeking Sai satsang; they came, having found the Mill Hill Centre website through Google. They were inspired enough to want to come back regularly for the Sunday morning Satsangs. It has become increasingly noticeable that more and more new devotees have been coming to the Centre in recent weeks.

The Centre is seeking to strengthen and deepen its SSE teaching resources - the immense singing and musical talent the children showed after only very few bhajan practices was a delight and they will be given many more opportunities to practice and perform in the main hall.

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

The adults' bhajans were, as usual, of a very high standard and it was heartening to see that after intense Shiva Stotram practices over the last two months, the vibrations were there for all to absorb, admire and savour. It is through this incredible high quality that the Centre seeks to inspire its children and any new and aspiring lead singers.

This was the first Shivrathri where the 'support group' of new and aspiring bhajan singers sang as a group. It was an absolute joy to be part of so much positive and enthusiastic devotional energy.

This helped make huge inroads into the early hours of the morning - usually the difficult time for quick 'shut eye' or seeming 'meditation'! Their talents will certainly be used in the Akhanda bhajans but to keep the enthusiasm and pure devotion flowing we seek to give many more opportunities for practice and singing in the next few months.

Finally, heartfelt thanks to the silent workers in the kitchen, on car parking and all the other necessary duties without which none of the Centre activities could take place.

(Written up by Kirti Patel)

**Sunthar Uthayan, Chair Region 3**

---

## **Region 4**

### **Regional Annual Conference 'Heart to Heart'**

Region 4 held their Annual Regional Conference at the Sathya Sai School in Leicester on Sunday the 17th February 2008. The theme of the conference was 'Heart To Heart'. It was a unique event as this conference was held in the one and only Sathya Sai School in the UK and Europe for the first time, though the school has been open since 2001. It was Swami's will that this conference took place there as this year sees the consolidation of education processes in our Organisation worldwide. The lead up begins with holding National 'pre-conferences' in each country prior to the 'Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference' in Prashanti from 20th to 22nd July. We had over 85 people attend our day and the programme started with Vedam chanting and uplifting devotional songs.

The speakers included Prabodh Mistry (National Coordinator of the Sathya Sai School, Leicester), Rosemary Perry (National Chair), Mathan Arulvel (National Youth Coordinator) and Mukund Patel (former Region 4 Chair).

Prabodh presented the SSS Leicester development plan for the next 10 years. He went into great detail about the success of the school and the challenges it faces in the

coming years as it expands. Currently the school has 61 Children with a ratio of one teacher to nine children and in 5 years it expects to have 250 children with the ratio of one teacher to fifteen children which is a ratio well below similar private education institutions in this country. He urged kind well-wishers to support the day-to-day running of the school as well as the expansion of this school, by helping to provide necessary resources required and he also expressed gratitude for what had already been achieved. Rosemary talked about the National Conference that had taken place two weeks earlier. She mentioned that the conference was a change from the old style (which was primarily for office bearers). This time it was more of a homecoming Satsang, all coming together as one. She also mentioned that we are a very mature Organisation and our intentions are seen as good and are noticed as such by the public. Rosemary also touched upon the guest speakers we had at the National Conference, Dr and Mrs Meyer, who demonstrated with talks of their personal experiences, their total faith in the omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence of our Beloved Swami. The aspect of working within our resources was emphasised by Rosemary. She also briefly covered some key points from other speakers at the national Conference and the relevance of the conference theme.

Our conference later held separate Wing Workshops and looked at the activities for the year ahead. Each wing produced work plans for 2008 and these plans were presented to the conference.

Mathan shared experiences of his trip to St Petersburg, Russia, for a youth conference in March 2007; he mentioned that many of the young adults came from far off places - taking days travelling to get there with very little in terms of possessions. There was heightened humility and a sense of belonging. Mukund Patel was our Guest Speaker; he shared his experiences of his times as a young adult and how he came into Swami's fold. He mentioned that the essence of the organisation is to awaken the divinity inherent within us.

There was lot of humour in his talk together with a very clear message that 'the moment is now' and that we should take or seize every opportunity to serve our Lord. He expounded on this message by going through some of the rare and special opportunities he missed during his early years in the Organisation.

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

Ramesh Mistry (Regional Chair) recapped the achievements of 2007 and gave brief details of all the activities. He thanked everyone for their support during 2007 and shared the plans for 2008, which include four key areas:

- 1) Developing members to take on Regional as well as Centre/Group office bearers' positions.

- 2) An audit of service activities to gauge the need and to become aware of the need of the community around the meeting venues of each Centre/Group as per the call from various guest speakers at the National Conference.

- 3) Support the day-to-day running as well as the expansion of SS School, Leicester. This is an ideal opportunity, given to us by our beloved Swami, to serve on our own doorstep.

- 4) Development of Ladies' Wings within Centres and the setting up a Regional forum for this wing.

Then came four wing presentations by Centre Wing Co-ordinators who talked about their roles and responsibilities and the activities they are involved in. This was done to create awareness of the roles as well as to enthuse members to come forward and take on these roles in the future. It was reiterated by all the speakers that they enjoyed their roles and felt that Swami is always there to support and guide them. It has also helped them in their daily lives, as they are able to deal with any situation now with more confidence.

The conference finished with some inspiring devotional songs and Arathi.

### **Sai Centre – Birmingham**

This Centre has been going for at least 25 years with prominent souls having started it.

Perhaps known or unknown ...every Monday evening a team of devotees have fed the homeless without fail - be it rain or shine - for the past 11 years. All this has been due to the dedication and selfless service of the devotees at the Centre following Swami's injunction that, 'Hands that help are holier than lips that pray.'

Just recently, on the 7th of March, 15 devotees from Birmingham attended the Sathya Sai School in Leicester for the Regional Conference having already attended the National one. It turned out to be a very inspiring day for everyone present and at the same time it was felt that as Region 4, we need to support the School in as many ways as possible.

Therefore, Birmingham Centre in conjunction with Wolverhampton Centre have decided to hold joint events such as car boot sales, a fun

day with food stalls and bouncy castles; in order to raise funds for this auspicious school. With this, may our beloved Swami give us the strength to carry out such service activities always. (Written by Raju P. Gadhre, Birmingham Centre)

### **Ramesh Mistry, Chair Region 4**

## **Sai Spiritual Education Curriculum Development**

Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) is a values-based programme that incorporates non-traditional teaching techniques such as prayers, silent sitting, story telling, group singing and group activities to develop and promote the fundamental human values of Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-violence. The spiritual education, aimed at children between the ages of five to sixteen, enables and empowers students to blossom and bring out their own inherent divinity through daily spiritual practices. They also learn about - and from - nature, they learn the teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and they hear stories of remarkable men, women and saints who have changed the world. They develop an understanding and appreciation of 'unity in diversity' through the teachings of the world's five major religions.

A formal Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) syllabus, consisting of 11 manuals and a comprehensive teacher's manual was produced in the early 1990s by a group of very experienced and dedicated SSE teachers with contributions from many sources. The syllabus provides uniformity and continuity, a natural progression through the SSE classes and is an invaluable teaching tool and resource for the SSE teachers in the United Kingdom. In July 2004 a questionnaire was sent out to SSE teachers in the UK. Resulting from this a draft curriculum to assist, enhance and facilitate the delivery of the SSE syllabus has now been developed and is being piloted this year.

The purpose of SSE is to impart true education to children and bring about awareness within them as to the purpose of human life. It is a programme that offers a curriculum through which consciousness is expanded and conscience manifested as harmony of head (thought), hand (action) and heart (word). SSE aims to further engage the child in activities with full understanding of their nature and their consequence.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba reminds us, 'Being a human being is itself a great piece of good fortune; man is a spark of the divine; he must manifest in every activity of him, the

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

divine.' Thus, the purpose of human life is to know the divine within and discover the path of how we can realise this divinity in all activity. For each one of us there is a 'path of realisation' that we must journey across in order for us to realise the divine.

With these objectives in mind the SSE curriculum has been enhanced to encourage the children to use their natural curiosity to understand and discover answers to questions such as:

'Who am I?' 'Why am I here?' 'How did I get here?' 'What is my purpose?' and 'Where am I going?'

The journey takes the child from the viewpoint of dualism ('God and I are separate') to the realisation of non-dualism (understanding that 'God and I are one'). Along the journey the child learns the importance of prayer, spiritual practices such as ceiling on desires and meditation (silent sitting) etc. all of which bring them closer to God.

The curriculum provides teachers with clear objectives, life application, core values, sub values, learning intentions, success criteria and prayer for each lesson. The SSE teacher can use this framework, the syllabus, other suggested resources and their own creativity to develop a contemporary lesson for their students using the five teaching techniques of prayers, silent sitting, story telling, group singing and group activities.

In essence the curriculum is a planned and guided 'spiritual' journey for the student, which progresses through an eleven-year programme. If you would like to know more or would like to pilot this in your Group / Centre please speak to your Regional SSE coordinator.

**Lakshmi Puvanendran,**  
**National SSE Co-ordinator**

---

## **Sathya Sai School, Leicester.** **The Honeybees Return!**

Last July 2007, a Year 6 student of ours left the school. His parents had been transferred to London. After six months in around mid-February 2008, we received a phone call from his worried mother. She asked if her son could be allowed to come back as he wasn't happy at the new school and was talking about returning to Sathya Sai School. Upon meeting his parents they explained, "There is so much disruption in the class that little learning takes place, it is not a conducive environment and there is bad company". So this young man has now returned to his natural habitat – the 'Sai environment' of the school.

At the end of the first half term we lost two of our students, as their parents had set up a business in Coventry and had to move there. We started the next half term, on the 18th February 2008 without them - but two days later we received a phone call from their parents saying, "Our children want to come back!" Upon dropping their children back at the School they said, "It's the LOVE in the Sathya Sai School that has brought our children back, they were not happy at all in their new setting."

We can only thank Swami for setting up His school here in England, as it provides a loving, safe, secure and happy environment for the students. So, our number of students is 62 and will rise by two more after Easter. To the parents, it is a school that provides comfort, solace, trust and learning (spiritual, moral and academic). To the staff, supporters and well-wishers of the school it shows that the promised 'Golden Age' is close at hand! Mother Teresa said: '*Good works are links that form a chain of love.*'

**Submitted by Dr Prabodh Mistry,**  
**UKCC Sathya Sai School Co-ordinator**

---

## **Sathya Sai Bookshop**

The bookshop has a regularly updated website.

Please visit it at:

**[www.srisathyasaibookcentre.org.uk](http://www.srisathyasaibookcentre.org.uk)**

DVDs are often being compiled and released along with new interesting books.

**Set of two Vedanarayan DVDs for sale at the Bookshop @ £ 10.00.**

---

## **The SSSSO UK Website**

is to be found on:

**[www.srisathyasai.org.uk](http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk)**

---

'Love and Light' © SSSSO (UK) 2008

**[ukccnews@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ukccnews@hotmail.co.uk)**

**All rights reserved**

'Love and Light' is the only nationwide monthly publication of the Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation (UK). You are free to pass it on in its entirety to any interested party. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the SSSSO UK National Chair.

---

**BISSE**

British Institute of Sathya Sai Education

Information on the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme can be found on:

**www.sathysaiehv.org.uk**

Love and Light SSSSO UK  
Significant Diary Dates 2008 please ask your  
Centre or Regional Chair for details

**National Conference 2008**  
*'Stepping Out into Action  
Walking Forward in Practice'*  
**Answers to the unanswered Questions in  
the 'Q & A' Session**  
*Dr and Mrs Meyer apologise that they have been  
unable to answer questions put directly to them owing  
to a heavy schedule of travel and meetings.*

'Love and Light' thanks the Central Co-ordinator, Ishver Patel, and Robert Alderman, BISSE, for answering the remaining questions along with the following UK Central Council Members:  
Sathya Sai Schools Co-ordinator: Prabodh Mistry  
National Spiritual Wing Co-ordinator: Raj Selvakumar  
National Youth Co-ordinator: Mathan Arulvel  
Chair R1: Raj Rajasingam  
Chair R2: Satesh Melwani

Month	Date	Event
March	16 <sup>th</sup>	Regional meetings
March	23 <sup>rd</sup>	SSLTP Module 6 Reading, Berks.
April	5 <sup>th</sup>	Joint Regions 4,5,7 & 8 National Multi-faith event Birmingham
April	19 <sup>th</sup>	National UK Pre-Conference for SSS World Education Conference
April	27 <sup>th</sup>	Additional UKCC meeting
May	23 <sup>rd</sup> - 26 <sup>th</sup>	SSLTP Outward Bound weekend in Hampshire
May	31 <sup>st</sup>	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
June	7 <sup>th</sup>	NWC Meetings
July	5 <sup>th</sup> or 6 <sup>th</sup>	(SSE) Regional Family Values Days
July	12 <sup>th</sup>	Additional UKCC meeting
August	22 <sup>nd</sup> - 24 <sup>th</sup>	National Retreat Stourbridge
September	6 <sup>th</sup>	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
September	13 <sup>th</sup>	NWC Meetings
October	11 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup>	UKCC Vision Weekend
October	18 <sup>th</sup>	National Spiritual Day
November	19 <sup>th</sup>	Ladies' Day
November	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday
December	6 <sup>th</sup>	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
December	13 <sup>th</sup>	NWC Meetings

**Q.1. Can you suggest or advise how devotees/members can encourage everyone to make contributions to the Trust? Are there any plans to acquire a location for the Organisation?**

**Q.1. Part 1:**  
*Ishver Patel answers: Sathya Sai Baba has reminded us time and time again of the importance of practicing Ceiling on Desires (CoD) and utilising the resources for the betterment of others. This includes many projects that the UK is engaged in. I am also aware there are those individuals who are already practicing CoD and over the years have supported the work carried out through the Sri Sathya Sai UK Trust. Office bearers have a collective responsibility to bring this opportunity to the attention of individuals for them to grow through the act of sharing. Centre office bearers must make every effort to bring to the attention of members the good work being carried out by the UK Sai Organisation through the vehicle of the Sri Sathya Sai UK Trust.*

**Q.2. Part 2:**  
*Ishver continues: In relation to acquiring a location for the SSSSO UK and before any serious consideration is given towards the Organisation having a nationally recognised location, we need to define what will be the purpose of such a venue? Yes, it is something I have been thinking about recently and would want to consider the possibilities of with the UKCC members, at some stage. Bhagawan reminds us to make informed decisions and not ones purely based on what we fancy i.e. is this good for the country? Do we have the commitment from individuals to maintain the building and ensure that there is in place an infrastructure to sustain this? We already have a Sathya Sai Bookshop, which in my opinion needs to be developed*



Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

further, otherwise it has the potential of becoming an under utilised resource. Are the Regions, Centres and Groups proactively supporting the bookshop or do we, as individuals, still bulk buy our books, DVDs, CDs and other items whilst in Prashanti?

**Q.2. When reaching out to our community, it's not that we do not do this in many ways but we do not do it under the Sai Organisation banner, indeed, sometimes it would not be accepted as such. What does the panel feel is the way forward? I would be interested in Dr Meyer's approach.**

*Ishver Patel answers:* I appreciate that there are many members who are, individually, engaged in voluntary community programmes and I would not ask that they should stop.

The challenge for us, as an organisation, is how do we collectively contribute towards our respective societies/communities? For me the term 'collectively' does not imply that we should only go in groups - it is more about a co-ordinated approach that can send individuals, pairs or groups to assist within the immediate community. Of course I am referring to our Centres and Groups. We must recognise that we are a vital part of the community within which we conduct our Centre/Group activities. It is now time for us to look beyond the four walls of our Centres/Groups and understand what is happening within the immediate community. This requires each one of us to re-think our understanding of service in its traditional sense and more importantly redefine the purpose of a Centre or Group – in addition to GDS.

*Raj Selvakumar answers:* If my understanding of this question is right – Is the devotee asking whether it was necessary to do everything under Sai Organisation Banner as in some places, this may not be acceptable? If this is so my answer to this is: - The most important aspect in anything we do is our objective. If our objective needs to be completed with out this banner, I would most sincerely urge that we achieve this objective, whether in service, educational or spiritual activities with out the banner. A healthy human relationship is the step forward to performing even seemingly difficult things with much ease. This is the way forward. Swami needs no advertisement via raising the Organisation banner by devotees who are adamant that the banner needs to be in front as a condition to perform something good. Does the Sun and the Moon choose on whom they shine? Does the breeze caress us by choice? Does the fragrance of the flower

reach only a few? Let the love of the Lord reach out to this world through HIS devotees and then you will see the banner popping out on its own and needs no waving.

*Satesh Melwani answers:* We need the education on 'working in the community' to become more 'user friendly' and everyone (each and every person at Centre / Group level) needs to be educated on the need for protocol and the importance of working as a team.

*Ramesh Mistry answers:* The main emphasis on this subject was from Ishver and his main concern was lack of awareness of issues in the local communities surrounding venues of Centre/Group meetings. It's about the gathering of information and creating an awareness of need in the local area. Then with the resources available and keeping in line with local bylaws see if you are able to meet that need as a Centre or Group or by working in partnership with another local concern or organisation.

*Prabodh Mistry answers:* Not entirely clear about the question – but answering anyway!

Is this because one is not confident about the Sai message or is it just convenient to not mention the Organisation? You must understand what the Organisation stands for and be proud to communicate it, not only using words but through actions. Your action and motive will be questioned when you take on self-less acts. In such an instant it is easier and better to control the ego by saying you are acting on your belief with humility and/or as part of the activities of the Organisation, rather than to go into details.

**Q.3. To carry Swami's message to the World, is it necessary to work through an organisation? Can one not do this on one's own?**

*Raj Selvakumar answers:* What is the meaning of Organisation? As you may be already aware - that Organisation comprise of two words, namely **ORGANISE + ATION**. **Organise** is to do things in a systematic, focused and cohesive manner and **Ation** stands for Action that is necessary to complete that process. The whole world/cosmos is a bundle of organised activities between the various planets and their inter-related forces working in such harmony; one may wonder who put this together. The result is a magnificent and powerful cosmic mechanism that creates whether patterns, sun and the moon, sea and wind, the sky and the stars etc. Hence united we stand strong and divided we stand weak. Also it is easy to be on your own and do your things where there is no necessity or the

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

correct climate for individual development. But when many get together, there is a healthy or gentle or subtle "clash" in personalities, their attitudes, cultures etc and this creates the necessity to develop so as to embrace all alike with intent to bring harmony. The Organisation creates that beautiful spiritual arena for us to exercise qualities such as tact, forbearance, patience, and tolerance, gradually moving in to the areas of the five values of human life. In fact the main reason Swami began HIS spiritual revelations with the Bhajan (congregational singing) – "Manasa Bhajare" with HIS devotees was to promote devotional singing **together**, a subtle message that we need to work together and not on our own. The other reason is that when several voices speak the same message, everyone stops to listen but usually ignore it if one person stands up with the same message and even screams at the top of his/her voice: "Love all and serve all!" Possibly you may be considered one who may need medical attention. The Organisation also has all the resources, human and otherwise, to take Swami's message in to the world.

**Satesh Melwani answers:** We can work on our own but consistency and reliability will not be present. For the Organisation to have credibility and earn the respect, we all need to be working from the same roadmap, singing from the same song sheet. The need for the Organisation is vital to reach our goal, just as the banks to a river are vital to guide the river to the ocean. We must now be seen as leaders of the principles and values we preach.

**Ramesh Mistry answers:** It is not necessary to be part of the Organisation to promote Swami's message. But there is a limit to what one can do on their own and there are activities which need to be carried out in groups with more resources and abilities and it will benefit the community at large and will also promote Swami's teachings of 'Human values'. We are all together in this journey of life and our aim is to help each other in reaching our goal i.e. achieve self-realisation. We can achieve more working through the organisation in spreading Swami's message, then as an individual.

**Prabodh Mistry answers:** Both routes are important and one may choose either or both. The Organisation should be seen as a vehicle that helps to interpret Swami's message into action and it provides the possibility of learning with fellow devotees.

**Mathan Arulvel answers:** I don't think it's necessary to work through an organisation to

carry Swami's message. Even as members of this Organisation the greatest way we can carry Swami's message to the world is our daily thoughts, words and deeds in our life in the world, whether it's at work, study or family. No organisations are involved in this process.

However, when a group of people collectively focus on a greater good and work together in co-operation, their actions are made more powerful and the vibrations of their focused goodness reach further. Also learning to work with others is a transformational journey too for individuals. We all have individual strengths and weaknesses, but together we are able to share our good qualities and learn to overcome our weak points through the help of others.

**Q.4. Earlier this week there was an article in 'The Independent' re a Muslim student who is going to be hanged because he started a debate on women's rights (in support of). 'The Independent' is in support of raising enough international pressure to get the government in Afghanistan to change their ruling. Can we encourage people at the Centre to sign such petitions?**

**Raj Selvakumar answers:** No! Ours is a spiritual organisation and thus we members of any Centre must refrain from getting carried away with such activities. On your private capacity as a citizen of this country if you want to express your support by signing such a letter that is your personal decision. But this cannot be brought in to the Centres where devotees gather for spiritual development. Well – if all members are concerned about this – the best and the least they can do is to pray for those concerned asking for divine intervention.

**Satesh Melwani answers:** Petitions are a great way to encourage people to stand and be counted, but they must believe in the cause. The need to work on our own house, build a dependable base from which people can be supported is of the utmost importance. I do feel that most people in the organisation would run to help another 'Sai member' in trouble, but the question to be asked is: Do they know who their own neighbours are?

**Ramesh Mistry answers:** Petitions for any good cause can be signed by any individual but cannot be promoted as an Organisation (Centre/Group) stand on a particular issue. The Organisation name cannot be connected with any petitions.

**Prabodh Mistry answers:** No. The Centres must not become places for lobbying for such single issues, which often tend to be political

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

in nature. This must be avoided; otherwise the key purpose for which Centres exist (i.e. for self and spiritual development) will be gradually diluted. You may even begin to attract people who are not interested in spiritual development and that would be a folly.

*Mathan Arulvel answers:* I think this was well answered by Prabodh and agree that we shouldn't really get into political issues at an organisational level.

**Q.5. Do you have a date yet for the "Interfaith Walk"? Bala mentioned this?**

*Raj Selvakumar answers:* No! We haven't got a date yet. But what the National Spiritual Wing CC has done is to include an interfaith activity in this year's spiritual programme. We aim to urge the Regions / Centres / Groups to join hands to make this into an annual interfaith walk with Bala guiding us on the finer points of achieving this. Already some Centres/Groups are doing this annually, but we will urge Centres to join hands to make this a bigger event.

**Q.6. How does the Advaita idea, that we are all God, differ from the humanist or secular approach that there is nothing beyond man himself?**

*Raj Selvakumar answers:* It is one and the same. Same chocolate ...but different wrapper! This is explained by Swami's repeated declaration that - all are God. But we are not aware of this fact, whilst HE is! Can we see electricity? You may say no, but we can see it via electric bulbs giving us light, warming the air via heaters, allowing us to cook food via electric cookers etc. That electricity is the subtle power factor in all those instances. Similarly God lives as consciousness in man. The peak point of spiritual awareness is to tear the mask of illusion and realise this truth - then man and consciousness becomes one. He becomes aware of the past, present and future. He realises that he has control over matter and the various cosmic powers available at his service - well man becomes God!

**Q.7. What can the organisation do to achieve representation that reflects the community at large? What channels can Centres use once local needs are identified? (I.e. Guidelines re: forming local associations/co-operative activities etc)**

*Raj Rajasingam answers:* Maybe we can liaise with the local Council and Councillors on various community enhancement projects that our Borough may already be engaged in? This way, we will be helping to meet objectives that the Council themselves have

identified and at the same time will help build our relationship with the local community. Although they may be reluctant to pass over various projects, once we've built a track record with them, I'm sure they will be happy for us to take the lead on various projects that they don't have the resources to do themselves.

*Satesh Melwani answers:* Representation to reflect the community at large can be achieved by inviting those community leads/ contacts to National Days and the annual NC. Most Centre / Groups have already achieved an open communication channel with the local councillors / community groups, therefore just keeping them informed of Regional / Centre & Group level projects and celebration days will make the relationship concrete. Also Centres and Groups need to be holding more community-based projects, now more than ever. We need to tap into the needs of the local communities.

*Ramesh Mistry answers:* Part one: Centre/Group to create awareness amongst local community the universality of the Organisation and its activities for the benefit of this community. Also making sure that Centre/Group activities and meetings are welcome to all and that it reflects 'Sai Oriented Centres' guidelines.

Part two: When local needs are identified evaluate resources and capability of the Centre/Group to meet that need. If it means working with local group or organisation to meet this need then do so keeping in mind our Organisation ethos and values. If in doubt contact Regional/National service coordinator

**Q.8. How can we help to make changes in the Centre, we face a lot of resistance already, within the Centre itself? What if people don't want to change the status quo?**

*Raj Rajasingam answers:* It is important to identify the needs of individual centres. As Regional Chairs, our job is not to enforce change. If members are resistant to change, rather than impose it on them, we must find out why they are resistant to this and attempt to address their concerns. The Active Members of the Centre are the Centre itself - without them the Centre cannot exist. They are more capable than us at implementing change within the Centre, they know best - our job is just to guide and support them through this process, being careful not to appear patronising. By having an advisory team within the Centre, it could allow members who may not feel comfortable voicing their opinions aloud, to go through the advisory team, who could then bring up the

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

concern with the Centre Committee on behalf of the member. The advisory team would only be another path for the members to approach the Committee.

**Satesh Melwani answers:** Change comes over time, but it must be started and 'educating' the Centre / Group Chairs is a must. However, we need to maintain our 'Integrity' as a UK Organisation and hold fast to whatever is decided. We must not be swayed by what's happening elsewhere. We now must be taking care of the UK as our home.

**Ramesh Mistry answers:** First and foremost all the Centre/Group office bearers must follow two key areas in the 'Nine-Point Code of Conduct' i.e. speaking softly and not to indulge in talking ill of others in their absence in any discussion. Any changes must be explained by saying why the need for this change. Invite responses and let there be open discussion. If need be, invite Regional OBs to come and explain the reason for change. It is also beneficial to invite Speaker from national body to come and address members to clarify any points, as that person will be able to explain change from different perspective.

**Q.9. What help would the SS Schools like from the Youth Wing?**

**Prabodh Mistry answers:** I would like the Youth Wing to adopt the SSS Leicester as a project for three years and undertake specific tasks that will allow the school managers to concentrate on the things they do best – teaching pupils and managing the school. The Youth wing help will complement their efforts in expanding the school base and to take in more pupils. The more pupils we have - the more self-sustaining the school will become.

I would like all the youth to think much more about the SS Schools, which form an important part of demonstrating that Sathya Sai EHV is highly inclusive, consistent and an ideal tool when delivering education for character development. If you think more about the schools, take interest in Sathya Sai Education matters then your speech and actions will be much more focussed on the things that the youth can provide best. If possible, the youth should also try and become governors of schools where they live, to learn about the management side of education. In years to come this will be valuable in taking Sathya Sai Education to greater heights in this country.

The SSS Leicester is about 7 years old and needs a lot of help from the youth, as it goes through a critical expansion phase. This will mean taking the message of the school to the

wider local and Sai community, helping to prepare PR materials, newsletters, web site and provide practical help or resources that will help the head teacher and managers of the school save money. If you live far away from the school, then another way is to provide a small but regular (standing order) donation that may be acquired by increased practice of Ceiling on Desires, based on Swami's message. This way the giver (youth spiritual aspirant) and the receiver (the school) form a beneficial and virtuous cycle.

The school have just prepared a development plan and will be embarking on a big investment project. The youth with communication and project management skills will be very welcome to join. If you have a specific expertise or talent and would like to know how it may be used for the SS School please contact the SSS Co-ordinator, Dr Prabodh Mistry.

**Q.10. If we do not hold a separate National SSEHV whole day or 1/2 day, how can we invite outsiders and promote the Human Values in the wider community?**

**Robert Alderman answers:** Last September, a National Sathya Sai Education Day was held jointly between SSE and SSEHV/SS Schools in accordance with a Recommendation from the internationalRegional Education Conference in February. Whilst the Day was generally well received, it did lead to the conclusion that the development of SSE and SSEHV in the UK were better served by separate events and so we will now revert to National Days for each of SSE and SSEHV. In particular, BISSE will ensure that the National SSEHV Days continue to be suitable for educationalists and the general public.

"Education must instill the fundamental human values. Education must promote ethical behaviour. It must foster self-control. This is the essential function of Education."

Sathya Sai Baba

"A wise person is one who looks into himself and finds out his own mistakes and faults, but the one who finds faults in others, he can neither know himself what he really is, nor what his faults are."

Sathya Sai Baba

"Keep your faith in the Lord unblemished: you can then safely move about in the world."

Sathya Sai Baba