

A TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE: PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS VISIT DURGABAI DESHMUKH REHABILITATION CENTRE FOR THE HANDICAPPED



As part of their experiential learning programme, the Psychology students of Grades XI and XII embarked on a deeply enriching field visit to the **Durgabai Deshmukh Vocational Training and Rehabilitation Centre for the Handicapped** on 21 July 2026, providing them with an invaluable opportunity to witness the principles of inclusive education, rehabilitation, and compassionate caregiving in action.

The Centre, home to nearly 200 specially abled learners ranging in age from five to forty-nine years, stands as a remarkable institution dedicated to empowering individuals with diverse

physical, intellectual, and developmental challenges. Through a carefully designed curriculum that integrates academic instruction with vocational training, the Centre nurtures every learner according to their individual abilities, aptitude, and cognitive potential, enabling them to lead lives of dignity, confidence, and self-reliance.



During the visit, the students were guided through the various departments of the institution by the dedicated faculty members, whose commitment and extraordinary patience left a lasting impression on everyone present. They gained first-hand insight into the Centre's holistic approach towards rehabilitation, where learners receive training in a wide spectrum of life and employability skills, including tailoring, computer applications, business skills, printing and binding, social etiquette, and other vocational competencies, alongside age-appropriate academic learning. The visit underscored the Centre's steadfast belief that every individual, irrespective of ability, deserves access to meaningful education and opportunities for personal growth.

The most memorable aspect of the visit, interaction between the students and the What began as a guided educational tour moments of genuine human connection. participated in games, music, dance, recreational activities with the learners, warmth, innocence, and unconditional every interaction. Carrying thoughtful shared tokens of love and encouragement immense joy and gratitude.



however, was the heartfelt residents of the Centre. soon blossomed into Our students enthusiastically conversations, and experiencing first-hand the affection that characterised gifts for the residents, they that were received with



One of the most poignant moments of the day unfolded when one of our students celebrating her birthday was greeted with a heartfelt rendition of the **"Happy Birthday" song in sign language**. For many of our students, it was the first time they had ever witnessed a birthday being celebrated in such a beautiful and expressive manner. The silent yet eloquent performance transcended spoken language, leaving everyone deeply touched

and reinforcing the profound truth that kindness and affection know no barriers.



Another unforgettable experience was the session in which the hearing- and speech-impaired learners introduced our students to the fundamentals of **sign language**. The role reversal was both inspiring and humbling, as the young visitors became eager learners under the guidance of the very individuals they had come to understand. This unique interaction broadened their perspective on communication and strengthened their appreciation of the resilience, confidence, and abilities of persons with disabilities.

The students also visited the **vocational sales outlet** set up by the Centre, where small eateries were displayed for sale. As a gesture of encouragement and appreciation for the remarkable efforts of these talented individuals, our students enthusiastically made small purchases from the store. The experience not only instilled an understanding of the importance of vocational empowerment but also reinforced the significance of supporting inclusive initiatives that promote dignity through meaningful work.



Equally inspiring was the dedication exhibited by the special educators, therapists, and support staff, whose tireless efforts have transformed the Centre into a nurturing environment where every learner is encouraged to discover and develop their unique potential. Their compassion, professionalism, and tireless commitment served as a living example of the profound impact that empathy and perseverance can have in shaping lives.



The visit proved to be far more than an academic excursion. It became a powerful lesson in empathy, inclusion, resilience, and the celebration of human potential. Deeply moved by the experience, many of our students expressed their desire to return to the Centre as volunteers, hoping to spend meaningful time with the learners through interactive sessions, cultural activities, recreational engagements, and companionship.

More than a field visit, the experience was a journey of the heart—one that challenged perceptions, celebrated abilities over disabilities, and reaffirmed the transformative power of compassion. For the budding psychologists and counsellors of our school, it offered an authentic understanding of human resilience, inclusive education, and the invaluable role of empathy in building a just and caring society. The memories forged and the lessons learnt will undoubtedly remain etched in their minds, inspiring them to become not only better professionals but also more compassionate human beings.

