

Best Practices(18-19)

1) TITLE OF THE PRACTICE:

Value Education Classes for Students

Objectives of the Practice:

The students of today face a life of pressure, stress and cut-throat competition. Many of them feel alienated from their parents and fellow beings, as they are under the constant strain of having to achieve, perform and get ahead of their peer group, from a very early age. The objective of conducting Value Education classes every week at St. Bede's is to provide the students an outlet to discuss problems and issues with their appointed staff-mentors.

Context:

The idea behind this practice is to provide students with an empathetic space for release of their anxieties as well as to feel that they have a safe haven to discuss a range of socio-cultural trends and influences on their lives. The subjects discussed range from generation gap, family and peer pressure, academic difficulties, relationship issues, career options, social evils such as drug abuse and alcoholism, the impact of social media, crimes against women, techniques of stress management and physical and mental fitness.

The Practice:

Students are divided into groups of approximately 20 and each group is allotted a Mentor from amongst the staff members. These groups meet once a week in a designated classroom and in a period fixed in the weekly timetable of the college. Attendance is mandatory for all students. The Mentors interact with their wards during this time, taking up topics suggested by the students in the previous week's Value Education session.

Evidence of Success:

The students look forward to their weekly Value Education sessions. Their enthusiasm is evident in the lively discussions that take place with their mentors. Some of the students also seek out their mentors individually for personal advice.

Problems and Resources Required:

Value Education classes would be more effective if each mentor had access to a smart classroom through which short films or talks could be shown. Students would be more pro-active in their participation if such a resource was made available.

2) TITLE OF THE PRACTICE:

National Cadet Corps (NCC)

Objectives of the Practice:

The NCC Unit of St. Bede's College was introduced into the college curriculum in 2016. In keeping with the aims of the NCC at the national level, the objectives of NSS activities at St. Bede's are dedicated to developing character, comradeship, discipline, a secular outlook, the spirit of adventure and ideals of selfless service amongst young citizens. Further, it aims at creating a pool of organized, trained and motivated youth with leadership qualities in all walks of life, who will serve the nation regardless of which career they choose.

Context:

National Cadet Corps is a Tri-Services Organization, comprising the Army, Navy and Air Force, engaged in grooming the youth of the country into disciplined and patriotic citizens. The NCC unit of St. Bede's comprises over 20 cadets who participate in camps and expeditions conducted by the parent body all over India. The Cadets are also given basic military training in small arms and parades, which motivates them to consider careers in the Indian armed forces.

The Practice:

St. Bede's College are presently running a Naval unit of the NCC and the interested students have to qualify to join it through a general knowledge test followed by an interview organized by NCC Naval unit, Bilaspur. The classes and activities of our cadets are conducted by an instructor appointed by the NCC Group Headquarters in Chandigarh. Students join this unit of the NSS on a purely voluntary basis.

Evidence of Success:

The success of this endeavour is evidenced in the personality development of our cadets into tough and self-reliant personalities, as their participation in camps and programmes across the country bring them out their protected comfort zones. More students are showing enthusiasm in becoming part of the college NCC Unit.

Problems and Resources Required:

Student-cadets have to spend a lot of time away from the campus for participating in NCC activities outside the state of Himachal Pradesh. They miss a lot of their academic schedule on account of travel to and from Shimla, which needs to be compensated for in other ways.

Institutional Distinctiveness

The vision of St. Bede's College is "to produce well-integrated individuals who are an asset to contemporary society". Keeping this breadth of view in mind, one of chief priority areas of College activity is its performance in the area of Community Outreach.

The scope and thrust of the above programme encompasses an array of socially pro-active initiatives. These range from AIDS awareness, Environmental Conservation, Disaster Management training, National Social Service activities and Community Outreach practices.

The Red Ribbon Club of the College spearheads the task of spreading consciousness of the lethal nature of the AIDS virus and what can be done to control its proliferation in society. This is done through poster competitions, street plays, declamations and talks by invited doctors.

Students also participate actively in the work of the Environment Cell and Disaster Management Society, involving themselves in programmes such as Tree Plantation, Blood Donation, Fire and Earthquake safety drills, competitions promoting the use of eco-friendly materials and the dangers of the use of plastic and the problems of waste management.

The National Social Service (NSS) Unit of the College is a vibrant community service society. Many of the community outreach initiatives are organized under the umbrella of the NSS, from the annual Tree Plantation activity, Blood Donation Camp and the week-long Camp encompassing cleanliness drives, instilling the benefits of Yoga, hands-on First Aid training, visiting patients at the Cancer Hospital Shimla, and conducting drug awareness campaigns.

The spirit of community service is also extended to the less and under-privileged sections of our society by the Community Outreach Cell of the College, through regular visits to neighbouring schools, orphanages and old age homes in the town and by volunteering at remote areas like Spiti in Kinnaur.

The Women's Cell of the College plays its part in this socially pro-active vision by facilitating talks and workshops by lawyers and activists on subjects such as dowry prevention, female foeticide, and films on themes such as equality, gender-related crimes and women's rights.

All these groups/clubs and their distinctive thrust represent and complement the vision of the college to shape young individuals who are not only academically sound but also committed to the welfare of the society they are an integral part of.