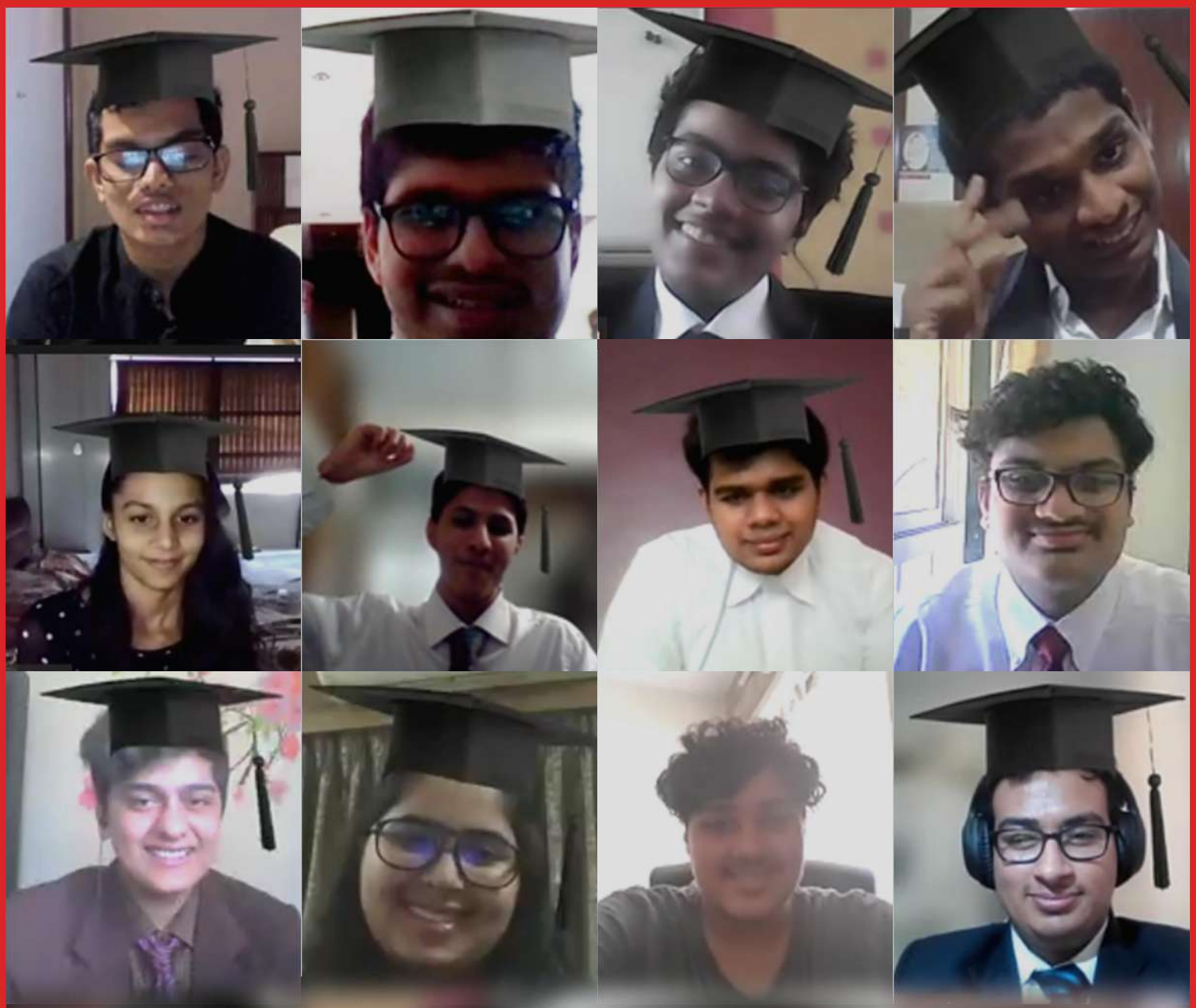


The Gateway Schools

THE GATEWAY SCHOOL OF MUMBAI

KESHAVLAL V. BODANI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020/2021

# MESSAGE FROM THE GATEWAY SCHOOL

Who had ever imagined that we would be schooling virtually all through this academic year! But here we are, sitting on the opposite sides of our device screens, from different parts of the world, sailing through the stormy waters of all the challenges that have been presented to us right from the beginning of this academic year, with resilience galore!

Year after year, every person who is a part of the Gateway family, has challenged themselves to do things differently to support our children better and to take our best teaching practices outside to the education community, and this year has been no exception! Gateway began the year by building the team's capacity to adapt to the world of online learning through multiple webinars, online workshops, self-paced courses, and collaborative planning sessions, with no near end to the pandemic within sight. Initially, the environment was filled with uncertainty and doubts about whether the information we had gathered would be enough, however, this transferred to curiosity, a lot of self-reflection, and even more collaboration.

In April 2020, we dived right into schooling virtually, which was way beyond what a typical school day looked like, and learned as we went through new experiences. Never in our wildest dreams had we thought about optimal learning in this environment, especially conducting our hands-on classes that needed a physical space, on a virtual platform.

All in all, our journey through this year has been an experience that was filled with learning, growth, immense compassion, and the grit to keep going.

None of this would be possible without the commitment of our students, parents, the entire Gateway team, our founders, all our well-wishers, and for ensuring that every day came with new learning, resilience, and the flexibility to adapt to situations.

A ginormous thank you to everyone for constantly supporting and motivating us.

# WHY ARE WE HERE?

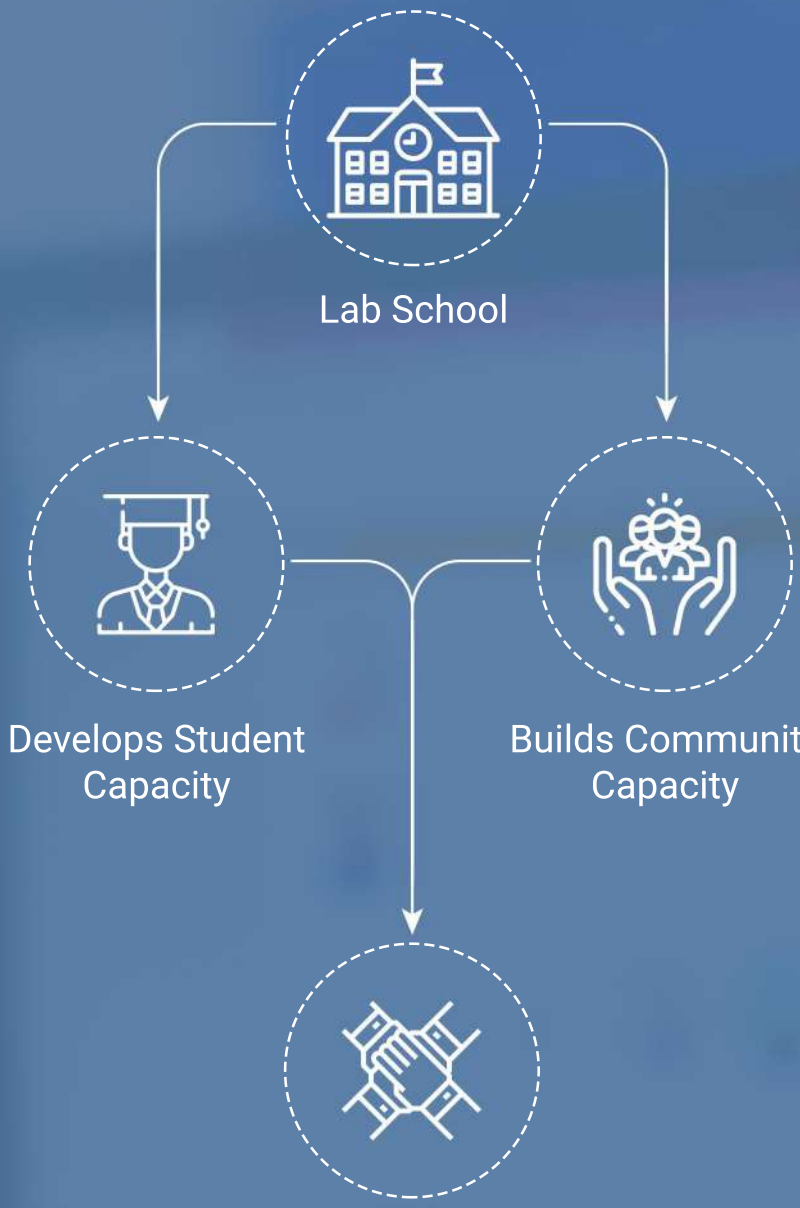
**7.8 million**
children with disabilities.

**40% of children**
with disabilities have no access to education.

**1 in every 2**
persons with disabilities cannot read.

# WHO WE ARE

**The Gateway School of Mumbai is a not-for-profit organisation, dedicated to empowering children with learning difficulties.**



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

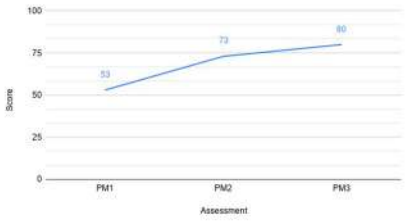
## The lockdown has been challenging for us all, but our students really rose to the occasion. Here are some of their stories.

### EVAN
*Reading*

Evan displayed steady growth in reading fluency throughout the year. He showed eagerness to read with a teacher which was a complete shift from his initial resistance to reading in the previous year.

He also volunteered to read the class agendas to his peers with confidence. At home, Evan builds connections to his learnings from class to what he is reading and talks about the new words that he comes across in the text.

Evan's Reading Progress (2020-21)




### KUSHALA
*Bakery*

Kushala started her own bakery business from home called 'Mood Munch'. She studied bakery as a part of her NIOS curriculum at Gateway through the year which enabled her to build on her passion for baking.

Kushala has been experimenting with healthy, delicious ingredients to form a large inventory of biscuit recipes and has been delivering her delicious treats pan Mumbai.

She has an active Instagram account where she shares her journey through 'Mood Munch' with her followers.

### ABHINAV KARTHIK
*Maths*

Abhinav started the year with a major fear and hatred for math. However we noticed an immense change in his attitude towards the subject over the year. Abhinav achieved almost all the goals that were set for him at the beginning of the year. He began the academic year with a score of 68% during his assessments and ended the year with a whopping 88%!

The biggest shift that we saw in Abhinav was with regard to his mindset. He truly believed that his brain grew if he tried and worked hard which was a complete shift from him being wary of making mistakes. Abhinav's words from the yearbook were, "This year, I learned that I can do all things like Math without fear. I'm not scared at all! My brain is growing and I have a growth mindset!"

### ROHAN DABHOIWALA
*Art*

We saw Rohan shine during this year of schooling virtually. He worked meticulously through his ICT classes to produce beautiful presentations and Canva cards.

His work in Art needs special attention. Rohan took his learning from the Art classes to create masterpieces after school. He was most often very engrossed and did not like to end class. He also resumed working on his art projects as soon as he was done with virtual schooling.

Rohan used to struggle to sustain attention for long periods of time, especially with tasks that involved sitting. However, the Visual Arts unit on the introduction to Indian artists through the work of S. H. Raza's Bindu series brought out Rohan's unwavering attention even while going over the tricky corners.

# WHERE ARE OUR GRADUATES?

## SURABHI D'SOUZA

I am currently pursuing my NIOS 11th and 12th at JML school. Last year, I started doing digital art which has really grabbed my attention nowadays. I am currently working on different logos for different businesses. Business and art have always been my area of interest. I also created a logo for my mom's business.

The first thing I feel that GSoM has taught me is organization. Organization is very crucial and is necessary for kids who also have disabilities but also kids who don't. It supports the building blocks of a kid's journey through their schooling and also as an adult. Having an organization structure in place at home and as a part of my lifestyle has helped me feel more accomplished which in turn motivated me.

Secondly, Gateway has also let every child experience leadership. Giving a child with disabilities an opportunity to experience leadership empowers them and exposes them to the power as well as the challenges a leader may face. I haven't experienced this in the other schools that I studied at.
Gateway has always been a huge family to me, as opposed to my experience of feeling excluded in the other schools. Gateway has always motivated me to do better.

The amount of kindness, love and respect that everyone has for each other is impeccable.

## VARUN NAREN

After I finished school, I have been working from home. I have been taking orders for my baking. I am doing my art work. I have done baking workshops for others and I am learning different things on the virtual platform. I am writing blogs, learning music, looking up youtube for new recipes, and have made new friends.

From Gateway, I learnt to be respectful to friends and teachers, and learned to communicate better. Gateway made me self confident, allowed me to explore new avenues, made me more computer savvy. It helped me grow holistically. It was a safe place for me to express my thoughts, feelings.

## DIVINIA HEMCHAND

I am currently doing my Second Year Bachelor of Arts at Sophia College in Mumbai. I have taken my main three subjects as Sociology, Economics and Education and my applied component subjects as Food and Nutrition. I am loving my current studies and I am doing well. I want to become a dietitian in the future. I have a keen interest from the time of my teenage years in diet, exercising and remaining fit and healthy. I therefore went ahead and created my very own professional public instagram account. Through this account I let my audience know that I am NOT a nutritionist/dietitian but the information that I provide to them is based on my prior knowledge and experiences that I have gained. I am currently surging in my number of audience, being a public and professional account which within a month has reached 114 total followers and growing at a gradual pace. I am reading various books, magazines on Nutrition. I also publish my very own guides on my Instagram account. Until now I've published nutrition guides on Thyroid and PCOS which is 'polycystic ovary syndrome'.

Gateway taught me life skills. They did not only teach me to excel in my studies but also to be an independent and confident and courageous person in life. They taught me to be motivated and never give up. I joined Gateway in 2014, when I returned from America. I was staying with my aunt and uncle in Washington who helped me gain confidence and be successful in life. I felt comfortable in Gateway as nobody was going to judge me for my weird accent that I had and moreover, they were going to help me tremendously, which they surely did. Gateway taught me resilience and flexibility.

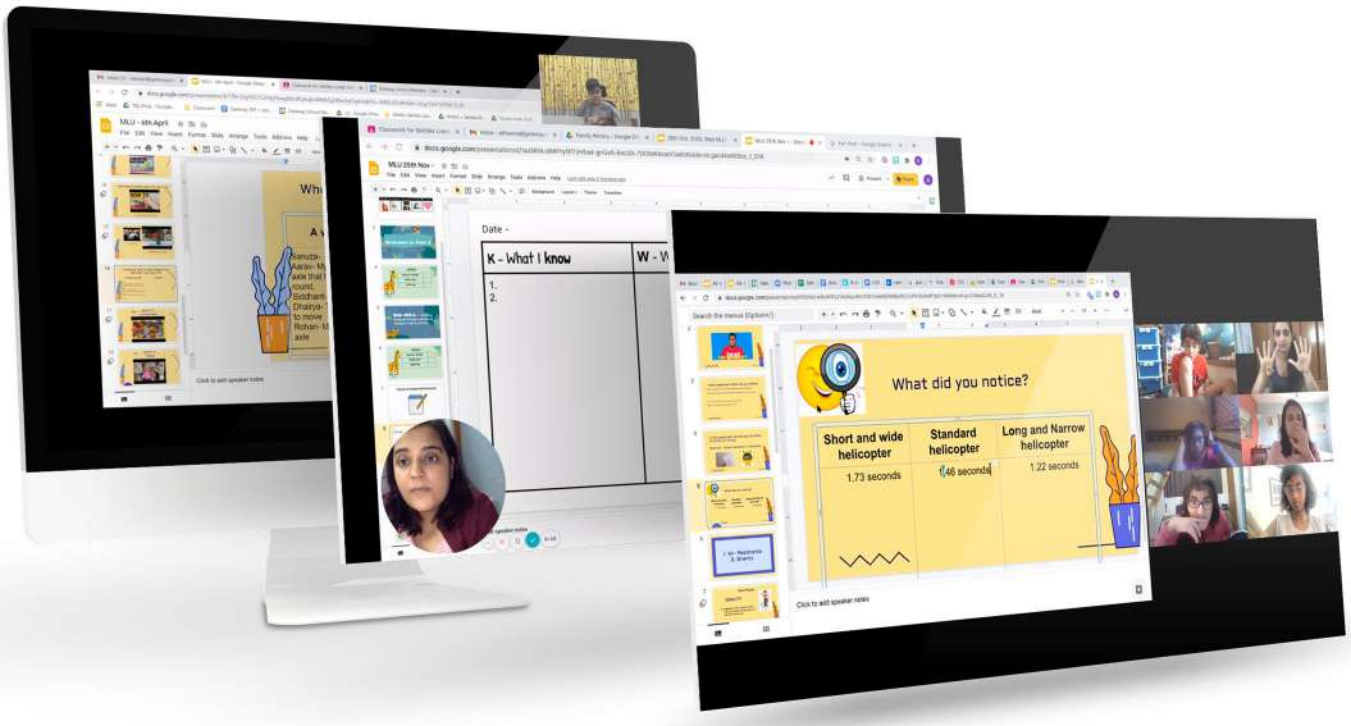
# STUDENT IMPACT

## MLU PRESENTATIONS AND PROJECTS

Our biggest achievement in the lockdown was rolling out the multi-disciplinary units (MLUs). Multidisciplinary units are based on applicable Enduring Understandings such as "We rely on our plant kingdom and should protect it" and "Democracy supports equal opportunities among citizens" and interweaves the interdisciplinary knowledge and skills. Students learn about real-world topics and issues from different perspectives, and thus enhance their critical thinking and problem solving skills.

During the 2020-21 year, students engaged enthusiastically with units such as Family History | Human rights | The Art of Communication | Food and Nutrition with the involvement of parents and visiting speakers in their learning.

Students concluded each unit with products, projects and presentations made to authentic audiences.



# STUDENT IMPACT

## LANGUAGE ARTS WEEK

Our Language Arts week celebrated friendships as the central theme. Our students, teachers, and guests celebrated literature through read-alouds, storytelling, Pechakucha, book reviews, poem recitals, cooking, art, music, drama, readers theatre, debates, and scavenger hunts!

## GRANDSTAND HIGH SCHOOL SHOWCASE

The Grandstand and Drama team together worked with children from middle and high school to prepare for our very first virtual showcase. The children used this space as a platform to share their perspective on the COVID-19 pandemic through various mediums like monologues, inspired and original songs, dance and debate. They also used this opportunity to reach out to the frontline workers in the community like journalists, policemen, BMC officials, teachers and essential workers and interview them to understand their lives through this pandemic. They highlighted the fact that even through these tough times, our community as a whole has managed to see the positives and silver lining, and managed to not only survive, but even thrive!

# STUDENT IMPACT

## READING BUDDY PROGRAMME

We launched the online Reading Buddy Initiative - a brainchild of our founder, Indira Bodani, in October 2020. 11th graders from Jamnabai Narsee International School paired up as reading partners with our students from Lower School and Middle School. The reading buddies enjoyed some interactive story read-alouds as part of this program. Some of the JNIS students got really innovative in designing their sessions - a clear winner was playing 'book based pictionary'! Our Gateway kids were so excited to have an older student as a friend and mentor in these socially distant times.

## VIRTUAL SPORTS DAY

We were determined not to let the pandemic get in the way of our beloved Sports day.... and so took it online! The event included novel and fun activities based on domestic tasks and everyday items in the home environment. Although it was virtual, the enthusiasm from students, their parents as well as the team members could be felt through the screen! Our students, team members and parents made sure to contribute to their houses with explosive spirit! There was no house cup this year, but individual points from this event will be carried forward to next year's event.

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

Gateway's vision of an inclusive society, where each person has what they need in order to be successful, is only possible in partnership with the larger community. Gateway partners with parents, families, professionals and organisations to further our vision.

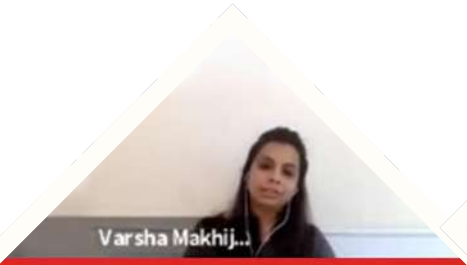
# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## PARENT PARTNERSHIP

At Gateway, parents and families work together with our team towards the common goal of serving our students.

**GTPS: The Global Tipping Point Summit**, a summit that focused on creating a change in the educational system, collaborated with Gateway's parents and therapists for their parent-school partnership. Gateway presented on "It takes a village to raise a differently-abled child." Our Co-Principal Varsha Makhija, shared the journey of special needs parents from the lens of a therapist and experienced professional. Anahita Patel, a parent of one of our students, and Manda Nambiar, one of our Social Emotional therapists described the trials and tribulations that Anahita faced as she built her support system, and the learnings that benefited her along the way.

**Academic (reader & writer)**
Our parents were readers and writers for the NIOS students this year. We can't thank them enough for wholeheartedly jumping in to support during these trying times. We are also very grateful for their observations about the kinds of support students needed which helped us plan further.

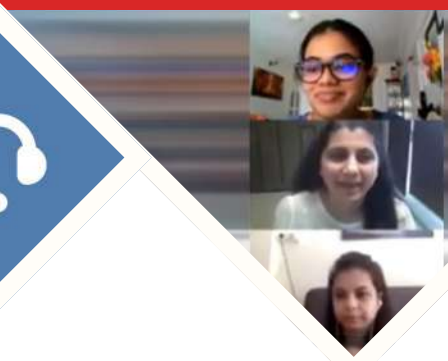



The journey from denial to acceptance

THANK YOU

GTPS: The Global Tipping Point Summit

Parent-School Partnership
"It takes a village to raise a differently-abled child"



Parents supporting us in classes

**Gateway mental health helpline:** At Gateway, we understand the impact the pandemic may have had on our emotional and mental health. We introduced a new initiative - The Gateway Mental Health Helpline. This team consisted of a parent who is a counselor and our SE team members. Our intention was to provide our community support, and a non-judgemental space where they can openly and honestly share their thoughts, fears, and anxiety by speaking to a mental health professional.

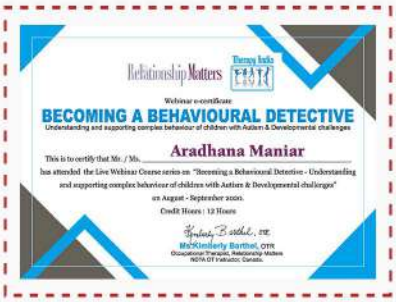
**ADL & therapies**
Since everything was virtual, the parents were an active part of the therapies. Parents shared observations and inputs that helped with goal setting, contextualizing the goals, and generalizing what the students were learning in therapy to their day-to-day life. Given this parent-school partnership, we've seen our students make tremendous progress in the foundational areas this year even with school being virtual!

> Dear Teachers,
> This mail is to tell you how much I appreciate and love the way you have dealt with the topic of communication. It has been carefully thought out and broken down so amazingly. The last 2 synchronous classes were excellent and words can't express how necessary they are for Rehaan. I love the innovative games and the teachers showing examples of ineffective communication. The kids related to it in many ways and found it hilarious to see their teachers bungling which in turn captured their attention. Please do a lot more of these. Thank you very much. Keep up the good work.
>
> Kind Regards,
> Anahita

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## IN-HOUSE CAPACITY BUILDING

Our team members did not let the pandemic disrupt their pursuit of knowledge. 23 team members enrolled in virtual workshops, webinars and MOOCs. 45 team members (79%) participated in school Outreach and R&D activities including mentoring and coaching external professionals; conducting workshops; and driving innovation as part of in-house task forces and the R&D team.



## BOOK CLUB

Our book club community continues to grow. This year we completed six books. We had between 40 and 70 people sign up for each book, with over 50% of sign-ups from external professionals.

## INTERNS AT GATEWAY

This year we had 39 interns join us from various organisations such as TISS, Teach for India, Hashu Advani and SNDT. Each of the interns brought a new perspective with them that helped us learn and grow in our practice. Having interns come in is an enriching experience both for the Interns and the school. We were also able to make some hires for next year from this years batch of interns. Read what one intern had to say about working at Gateway.

> Dear teachers,
> Hope you are doing well. This mail is to express my gratitude for allowing me to intern with Gateway. It's been an enriching experience and I can't tell how much I loved being a part of your classrooms. I wish I was a student in your classes. The warmth, acceptance, meaningful pedagogical approaches, creativity, fun, and impactful integration of ICT, all together makes the effect long-lasting. Please continue setting such examples for us to learn from. The experience synced very well with what I have been learning in my classrooms. Thank you!
>
> Warm Regards,
> Anjali

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## WEBINAR

When the Covid pandemic forced the world to shut down overnight, it was left for us as educators to adapt, innovate and transform learning as we knew it. With the attempt to share knowledge and experiences, we conducted webinars where we had expert panelists join in from across the globe. We hosted 4 webinars on topics ranging from nutrition, Arts, virtual learning, and staying mentally and physically healthy during the pandemic. Thank you to our panelists for generously sharing their expertise, and thank you to participants for your overwhelming response. We'll continue to host these webinars in the coming year.

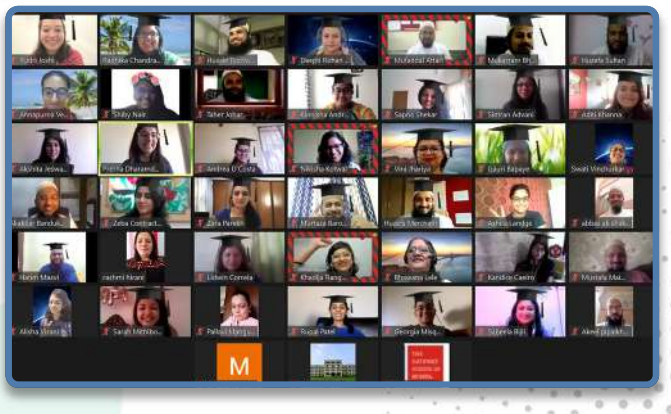
# COMMUNITY IMPACT

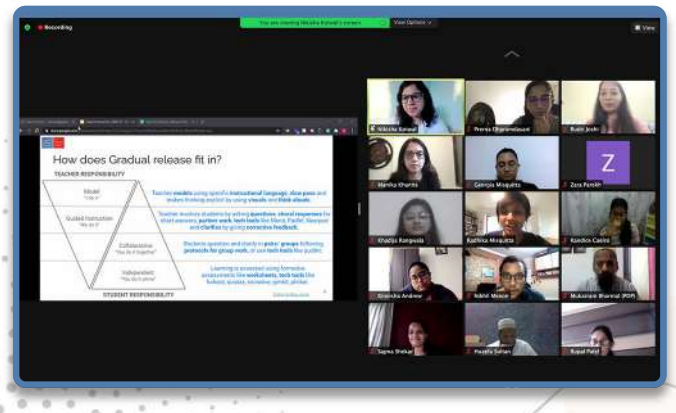
## GATEWAY PDP

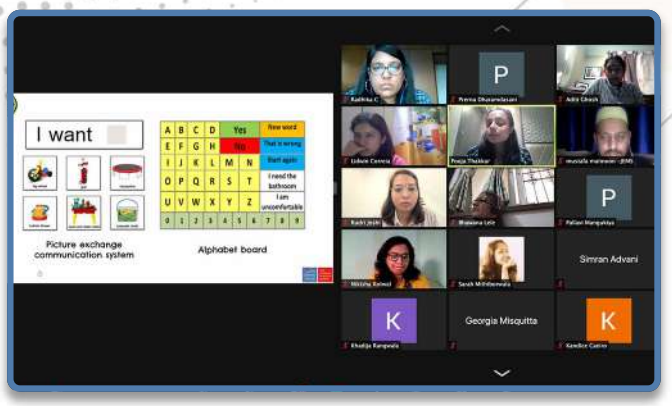
This year, Gateway's PDP went virtual. The professional development programme (PDP) is our initiative to build a community of educators who share our vision of an inclusive society that ensures programmes for students with special needs meet both standards of excellence and standards of equity.
We had 52 professionals from 18 different organizations and schools across Mumbai, India, and internationally too participating in this endeavour; all of which were conducted and facilitated by members of the Gateway team! Here's what some of our participants had to say about the PDP.

> *It was a very good experience. I learnt a lot of things that help me make my classes more inclusive for all students. Positive conversations from coaches and facilitators was very supportive and helpful.*
>
> - Mukarram Shabbir Bharmal

> *It has ignite the spark of teaching within me , I have started loving this profession just because of the PDP sessions and the content I have learnt in that sessions . Truly amazing and wonderful learning journey I had. The journey is finished but the learning will go on.*
>
> - Huzefa Sultan



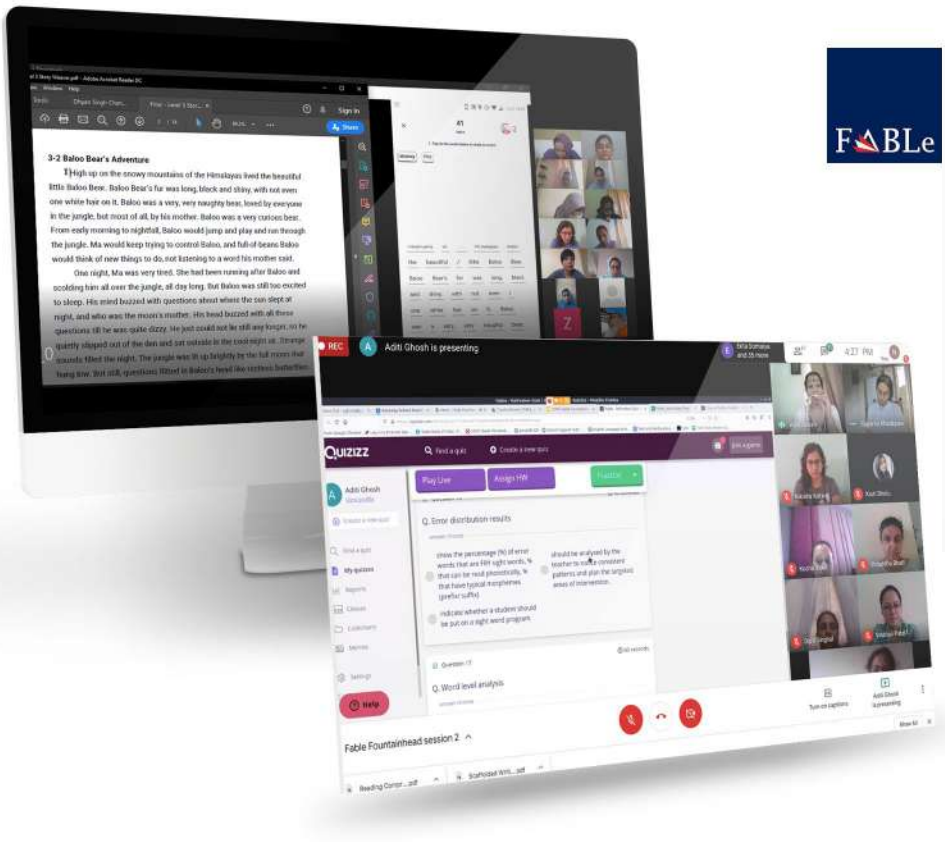




# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Gateway continues to invest in research and development to support our students and the community at large.



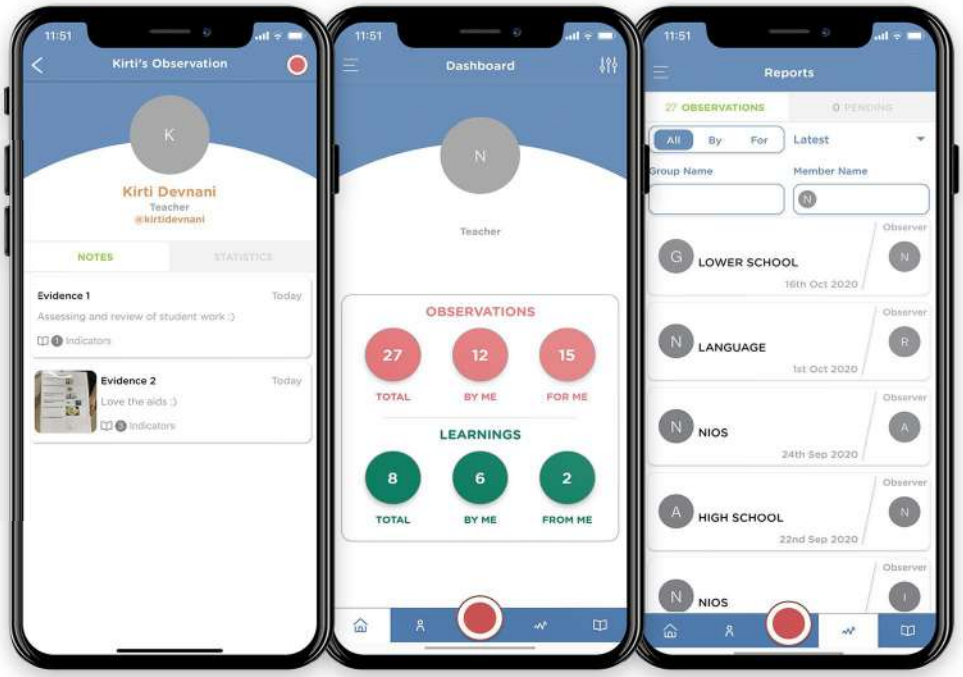

**FABLe**
(Fluency Assessment for Benchmarking in Literacy Education) app to assess and support students build foundational literacy skills is now being used in schools. This year we were able to conduct virtual assessments with schools and also train teachers remotely. In the next year FABLe will continue to grow to all primary grades, and to other Indian languages. Our work with FABLe is being published.

**Click here** to access our most recent journal article. Thank you to our founders for their continued support, and to our partner organizations for believing in us.

**Gateway Coaching App:**

We began the virtual roll-out of our teacher coaching app with much success. The app allows us to document best practices across the school and to share constructive feedback with team members.

We will continue to develop and grow the app over the next couple of years.



# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

Gateway is being recognised for the work we are doing!

February 2021 saw us being recognised as a **Great Place to Work** for the second time in a row.

Thank you to our community for making this a joyous place to come to, every day.

We continue to be recognised as an **Ashoka Changemaker** school since 2016.

Radhika Chandrasekaran and Rudri Joshi jointly presented a session on virtual learning strategies for younger learners at the World Early Years Summit.

Radhika Misquitta was a panelist at the IFIP TC3 Zanzibar Declaration where she shared about Gateway's work with FABLe.

She was also a guest speaker at the UNESCO & Cardinal Paul Poupard Foundation International Symposium where she shared about Gateway's journey navigating online learning and teaching.

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## PARTNERING FOR CHANGE!

### TISS

This year we partnered with TISS on a project supported by Cognizant Foundation to build awareness and resources towards inclusive education. As part of the project we are developing an online Inclusive Education Resource Centre that will have open-source resources available to the community at large. We are co-developing curriculum for two Masters level courses on Inclusive and special education that will be offered at TISS and other Universities. Finally, we are adapting an observation scale that can be used as a tool for teachers to reflect on their inclusive teaching practices.

# THANK YOU!

Aaranyak Ghosh
Advait Sethna
Amit Aher
Anjali Piramal
Anjana Vaswani
Arpit Jasuja
Asavari Sharma
Ashwin Chandrasekaran
Attalim (Husain Muslimbhai and team)
Bacquer Shirazi
BN Makhija
Bob Cunningham
Bobby Deol
Carla Ruth Dennis
Carrie Strauch
Chef Neha Chawla
Chirag Doshi
Darshana Patwa
Devaunshi Mehta
Divya Bandi
Dr. Meena Narayanan
Ekta Raheja
Elina Meswani
Fountainhead School
(Suparna Khadepaw and team)
Fran Reinstein
Gunjan Dedhia
Harsh Piramal
Hasanat High School
Haseena Jethmalani
Jayshree Rao
Jenifer Midilli
John Gloster
Jossie O'Neill
Karan Johar
Karishma Boolani
Kelly Dorfman
Kings Impex Pvt. Ltd.
( Uttam H Tulsiani, Managing Director )
Kiran Venkataraman
Lakshmi Nair
Lindsey Biel
M/s Deepak Builders Pvt. Ltd.
M/S N M International Mumbai
(Farhan Mohamed Yusuf Millwala)
M/S Netplace Technologies Pvt. Ltd. (Milan Doshi )
Mahesh Jethmalani
Manish Nai
Mariam Munir
Meher Abadian
Mr. Mahesh Jethmalani
Mr. Manish Alagh
Mr. Ramakrishnan Seshan
Mr. Sanjay Kanungo (KK Charitable Trust )
Ms. Akshaya Ranjan Mishra
Ms. Indru Kundanmal
Ms. Neera Nundy
Ms. Niti Sanjeev Patel (Penny Patel)
Ms. Sapna Tulsiani
Naman & Venugopal Adep
Namrata Marwaha
Nandini Singh
Natasha Sharma
Nicholas Mohite
Nidhi Chopra
Nina Kilachand
Oriental Aromatics Ltd
Orrin Devinsky
Pinky Shah
Poornima Aggarwal and Maseeh Khan
Rea Malhotra Mukhtyar and Shahena Zaveri
Reshma Piramal
Salecha Electronics Inc ( Dinesh Salecha , Md)
- Mr. Shailesh Bohra
Sam Parekh
Samir Ali Sayed
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( Mr. Sant Sanganeria , Managing Trustee )
Seth Hirachand Nemchand Smarak Trust
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Sharon Herzfeld
Smita Jatia
Stuti Sinha
Swetha Chincholkar
Tanaz Mohammed
Tania Deol
Tejal Mathur
Tonya Pulanco
Udayachal School (Binaifer Chhoga and team)
Vivek Shah

The Gateway Schools

THE GATEWAY SCHOOL OF MUMBAI

KESHAVLAL V. BODANI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

+91-22-25563613, +91-22-25563614, +919137458892

info@gatewayschoolmumbai.org

Sion-Trombay Road,
Next to Deonar Bus Depot,
Diagonally opposite TISS,
Govandi (E), Mumbai – 400088

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