

Shiksha Mandal's
Bajaj College of Science, Wardha (Autonomous)

Internal Quality Assurance Cell

Institution Distinctiveness (2022-23)

Title of the practice: Facilitating Young Minds for Science Education

Since 2017, the college has been providing mentorship to Bajaj Science Education Center, which is situated in close proximity to the college. This center is dedicated to offering experiential learning opportunities in science and mathematics to approximately 500 school students from the Wardha district.

About Bajaj Science Education Center

Established in 2007, the Bajaj Science Education Center was created with the aim of fostering fundamental science education among students in the Wardha district. The center serves as a space for children to engage with science through exploration and playful learning. Its primary objective is to ignite curiosity within young minds and cultivate an enthusiastic approach to studying science. The center is dedicated to nurturing creativity and innovation through hands-on experimentation, an aspect often lacking in traditional school curricula. This is facilitated through five separate laboratories, each focused on a distinct branch of science.

The center plays a vital role in guiding approximately 500 students through concept-driven experiments and demonstrations that not only stimulate their inquisitiveness but also introduce them to the scientific method. The facility also conducts experiments aligned with students' school curricula. A culture of questioning, concept explanation, and project undertakings is encouraged, all of which contribute to effective learning. Students receive mentorship for participation in national-level competitive exams and other contests. The center operates with its own dedicated academic and administrative framework, led by Dr. Saikat Biswas from the Department of Zoology, who serves as the honorary director overseeing academic planning.

During the 2022-23 session, 545 students ranging from 6th to 10th grade were admitted based on merit through a regular entrance exam process. Beyond the enrolled students, over 300 students from the Wardha district were given the chance to participate in various exposure camps and workshops. Esteemed professionals from renowned institutes across the country were invited to lead offline and online sessions and workshops. The year also witnessed the organization of astronomy-related events, science exhibitions and activities. Faculty members from the college volunteered their expertise to mentor students for various esteemed competitive exams. This guidance led to student participation and success in numerous national-level competitions and exams, including NMTC, VVM, HBBVC, INJSO, and PRMO, resulting in significant achievements. During this session, the center has also published its first magazine "The Budding Thinkers" where the students and the mentors have contributed.

Role of Bajaj College of Science

The Bajaj College of Science serves as a hub for providing diverse scientific resources to the center. Starting from 2007, the faculty members from Bajaj College of Science have frequently visited the center to conduct informative sessions. The center's administration periodically seeks guidance from the college regarding infrastructure enhancement, and the faculty members have been engaged in establishing the laboratory facilities as well. The venue of the entrance exam for the next session of the center was Bajaj College of Science. In the exam more than 2000 students had participated. At present, the college is actively participating in fostering a wide range of initiatives within the center. In the session, the center has organized various programs in association with Bajaj College of Science.

At the moment, the honorary directorship of the center is held by faculty of the Zoology department. Along with him, the college's various faculty members take on the role of mentors for all five laboratories – Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, and Electronics. The faculty members are additionally contributing their voluntary efforts to prepare students for the International and National Olympiad program. The college's faculty also provide guidance to students for their projects. Likewise, students from the science center have the opportunity to engage with the college through activities such as video conferencing, museum visits, and laboratory tours. Along with this, in

collaboration with Jankidevi Gram Vikas Sanstha, faculties of the college have also provided academic support to 14 selected ZP schools (Aadarsh Shalas) of the district through the center for different training programmes.

For more information one can visit www.bjajsciencecenter.co.in.