

# JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

## *Annual Educational Heritage Tour 2026*

**An Educational Journey Through Sri Lanka's  
Cultural, Historical, Spiritual and Natural Heritage**

**13 - 16 August 2026**



*"Learning extends far beyond the classroom. Every journey opens a new chapter of discovery, understanding, and inspiration."*

# WELCOME ---

## A Journey to Remember

Education is not limited to books or classrooms. Some of life's most valuable lessons are learned through experience, exploration, and shared moments.

With this vision in mind, our Scholarship Programme proudly organized a four-day educational excursion for our students under the guidance and blessings of our Chief Incumbent Thero. This special journey was generously supported by our compassionate sponsors in Germany, whose kindness continues to create meaningful opportunities for the children in our programme.

Originally, our itinerary included Jaffna, Anuradhapura, and Polonnaruwa. However, after carefully monitoring weather forecasts and environmental conditions, we decided to revise our travel plan to ensure the safety and well-being of our students. Due to the intense heat and potential water shortages expected in the Northern Province, the programme was adjusted to include Kandy, Anuradhapura, and Polonnaruwa instead.

This thoughtful decision allowed the children to enjoy every moment of the journey comfortably while still experiencing Sri Lanka's remarkable cultural, historical, religious, and natural treasures.

Throughout four unforgettable days, approximately 90 students, together with teachers, parents, staff, monks,

travelled in two buses and one van, visiting some of the country's most treasured heritage sites. Along the way, the children explored ancient temples, climbed mountains, admired remarkable archaeological monuments, discovered unique ecosystems, and strengthened friendships that will remain with them for years to come.

More importantly, this journey encouraged curiosity, teamwork, respect for cultural heritage, environmental awareness, and a deeper appreciation of Sri Lanka's rich Buddhist traditions.

For many of our students, this was far more than a school trip—it was a life-changing experience filled with wonder, learning, and joyful memories.



# TRIP AT A GLANCE

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## Participants

Approximately 90 scholarship students together with teachers, parents, staff and monks.



## Transportation

Two buses and one van.



## Duration

Four days (13–16 August 2025)



## Destinations

Kandy • Anuradhapura • Polonnaruwa



## Educational Focus

- Buddhist Heritage
- Sri Lankan History
- Archaeology
- Nature & Environment
- Cultural Appreciation
- Teamwork & Leadership



## A Message to Our Sponsors

*"Every smile in these pages is made possible because of your generosity. Your support gives these children opportunities to discover their country, strengthen their values, and create memories that will remain with them throughout their lives. Thank you for believing in their future."*

## DAY ONE

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### *Sacred Heritage and Timeless Craftsmanship*

*"The first day of our journey was dedicated to discovering the spiritual and cultural treasures of Sri Lanka's central highlands. Every destination became a living classroom, allowing our students to experience history, architecture, religion, and traditional craftsmanship beyond the pages of their textbooks."*

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#### ***Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage***

- Our educational journey began with a visit to the world-famous Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage, one of Sri Lanka's most celebrated wildlife conservation centers. Established in 1975, the orphanage provides care, protection, and rehabilitation for orphaned, injured, and abandoned elephants while promoting awareness of wildlife conservation.
- Students were delighted to observe elephants of different ages being fed, cared for, and interacting naturally with one another. Watching these gentle giants up close gave them a memorable opportunity to appreciate the importance of protecting Sri Lanka's rich wildlife heritage.
- The visit inspired students to understand the significance of animal welfare, conservation efforts, and the responsibility of safeguarding endangered species for future generations. It was both an

educational and enjoyable experience that strengthened their appreciation for nature and biodiversity.

#### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ One of the world's largest elephant orphanages.
- ✓ Provides care and rehabilitation for orphaned and injured elephants.
- ✓ Promotes wildlife conservation and environmental awareness.
- ✓ Offers students a valuable learning experience about Sri Lanka's natural heritage.





## ***Gadaladeniya Raja Maha Viharaya***

- Our first educational visit was to the magnificent Gadaladeniya Raja Maha Viharaya, one of Sri Lanka's finest examples of medieval Buddhist architecture. Built during the 14th century by King Buwanekabahu IV, the temple beautifully combines Sinhalese and South Indian architectural influences.
- As the students walked through the peaceful temple grounds, they observed centuries-old stone structures, ancient Buddha statues, and impressive carvings that have stood the test of time. Listening to the history of the temple helped them understand how Buddhism, art, and architecture developed together throughout Sri Lanka's history.
- For many children, this was their first opportunity to closely experience a temple of such historical significance. Their curiosity was evident as they eagerly asked questions and carefully examined every detail around them.



### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ Built in the 14th century.
- ✓ A remarkable example of Sri Lankan medieval architecture.
- ✓ Demonstrates the harmony between religion, culture, and traditional craftsmanship.





### ***Lankatilaka Raja Maha Viharaya***

- Our journey continued to the breathtaking Lankatilaka Temple, gracefully situated on a rocky hill overlooking the surrounding countryside. The peaceful atmosphere, magnificent architecture, and panoramic scenery immediately captured the students' attention.
- Inside the temple, the children admired colorful murals, beautifully preserved sculptures, and ancient religious artwork while learning about the temple's unique history. Looking out across the lush green landscape from the temple grounds, many students paused to appreciate the natural beauty surrounding this sacred place.
- The visit encouraged them to recognize that Sri Lanka's temples are not only places of worship but also priceless centers of history, art, and cultural identity.



#### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ One of Sri Lanka's most important medieval temples.
- ✓ Famous for its paintings, sculptures, and architectural beauty.
- ✓ Offers spectacular views of the central highlands.



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### ***Embekke Devalaya***

- The afternoon brought the students to the world-renowned Embekke Devalaya, celebrated for possessing some of the finest traditional wooden carvings in Asia.
- Every wooden pillar, beam, and decorative panel displayed remarkable craftsmanship that has survived for centuries. Students carefully examined the detailed carvings of dancers, musicians, animals, birds, and floral patterns while learning about the extraordinary skills of ancient Sri Lankan craftsmen.
- Many students expressed amazement that such intricate masterpieces had been created entirely by hand without modern technology. The visit inspired them to appreciate the importance of preserving Sri Lanka's artistic heritage for future generations.

#### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ Home to some of Asia's finest traditional wooden carvings.
- ✓ A masterpiece of ancient Sri Lankan craftsmanship.
- ✓ Preserves centuries of artistic and cultural heritage.



## **A Lesson Beyond the Classroom** ---

- Throughout the first day, every destination became more than simply a place to visit. History was no longer something confined to books—it became something the students could see, touch, and truly experience.
- Their excitement, endless questions, and genuine curiosity transformed each temple and historical monument into an open classroom filled with discovery. Watching the children explore with such enthusiasm reminded us that meaningful education is created when knowledge is experienced rather than merely taught.

## **Day One Highlights** ---

- Visited three remarkable heritage sites.
- Explored medieval Buddhist architecture.
- Learned about traditional Sri Lankan wood craftsmanship.
- Strengthened friendships through shared experiences.
- Developed a deeper appreciation for Sri Lanka's cultural and religious heritage.

## DAY TWO

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### *Faith, Nature and Ancient Civilization*

*"As the sun rose over the hills of Kandy, a new day of discovery began. This day offered our students a rare opportunity to experience Sri Lanka's spiritual heart, explore breathtaking natural landscapes, and step into the remarkable world of one of Asia's oldest civilizations."*

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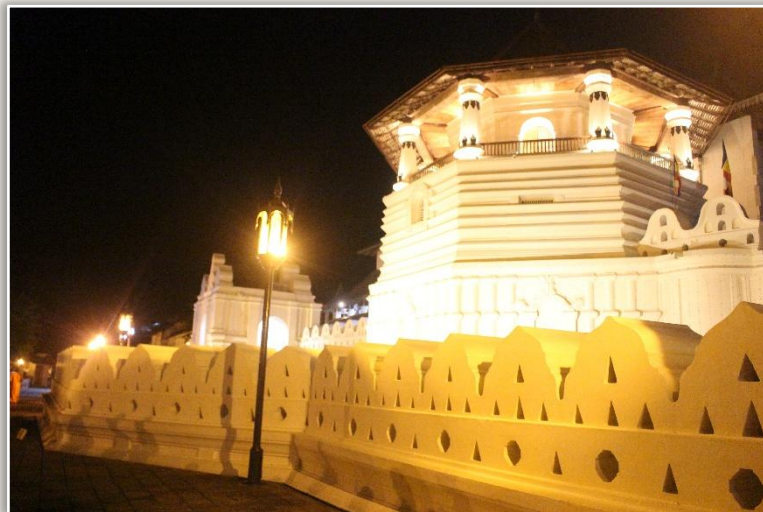
#### ***Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic (Sri Dalada Maligawa)***

- The second day began long before sunrise. At 5.30 a.m., our students quietly entered the sacred Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic to participate in the morning *Thewawa* ceremony.
- For many children, this was their very first opportunity to witness this deeply spiritual ritual. As they carried flowers in their hands and joined hundreds of devotees in silent worship, the atmosphere was filled with peace, devotion, and gratitude. It was a moment that words alone could not fully describe.
- The Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic is the most revered Buddhist shrine in Sri Lanka and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Believed to enshrine the Sacred Tooth Relic of Lord Buddha, it has symbolized the country's spiritual heritage and unity for centuries.
- Watching the students bow respectfully before the shrine was one of the most touching moments of our

entire journey. Beyond history and architecture, they experienced the true meaning of faith, humility, and respect.

### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- ✓ Home of the Sacred Tooth Relic of Lord Buddha.
- ✓ One of the holiest places of worship for Buddhists around the world.



### ***Aluvihare Rock Temple***

- After breakfast, we travelled to the historic Aluvihare Rock Temple in Matale, a place of immense significance in Buddhist history.
- Here, students learned that more than 2,000 years ago, Buddhist monks preserved the teachings of Lord Buddha by writing the Tripitaka on palm leaves for the very first time. This remarkable achievement ensured that the Buddha's teachings would survive for future generations.
- Walking through the peaceful caves beneath the towering rock formations, the children listened with great interest to the stories of the monks who dedicated their lives to preserving the Dhamma.
- The visit encouraged students to appreciate the importance of education, dedication, and safeguarding knowledge for future generations.

#### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ Birthplace of the written Tripitaka.
- ✓ One of Sri Lanka's most significant Buddhist heritage sites.
- ✓ Demonstrates the importance of preserving knowledge.



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### ***Kandalama Reservoir***

- Leaving the sacred temples behind, the journey continued towards the magnificent Kandalama Reservoir.
- Although the region was experiencing unusually dry weather, the vast reservoir and surrounding landscape still offered an impressive example of Sri Lanka's ancient irrigation heritage and natural beauty.
- Students observed birds, water, forests, and distant mountains while discussing the importance of water conservation and environmental protection.
- The visit became a wonderful outdoor classroom where geography, ecology, and history came together in one unforgettable experience.

#### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ One of Sri Lanka's important irrigation reservoirs.
- ✓ Supports agriculture and biodiversity.
- ✓ Demonstrates the engineering achievements of ancient Sri Lanka.



## ***National Na Uyana & Rose Quartz Mountain***

- One of the most exciting moments of the entire tour was our visit to National Na Uyana, home to one of the largest natural Rose Quartz Mountains in Asia.
- The climb challenged the students physically, but not a single smile disappeared along the way. They encouraged one another, celebrated every milestone together, and proudly reached the highest point they could safely access.
- Standing on the mountain and looking across the surrounding forests, the children experienced a sense of achievement that could never be taught inside a classroom.
- This was the first time our Scholarship Programme had organized a visit to this extraordinary natural heritage site, making the experience even more special.

### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ Home to one of Asia's largest Rose Quartz Mountains.
- ✓ A nationally protected natural heritage site.
- ✓ Encourages environmental awareness and resilience.

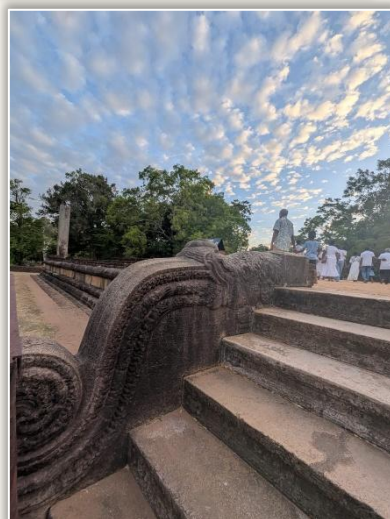
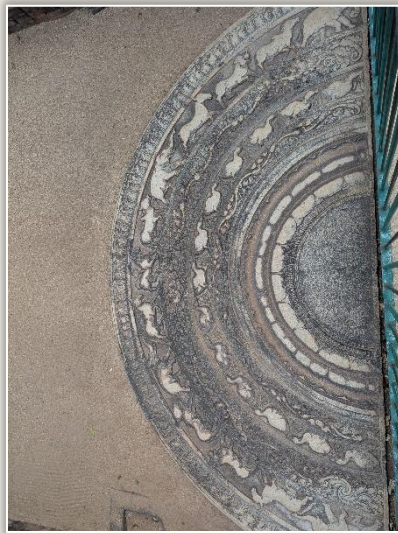


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## *Arrival in the Sacred City of Anuradhapura*

- As evening approached, we arrived in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka's first ancient capital and one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities.
- Students explored several remarkable archaeological monuments, including **Thuparamaya, Jetavanaramaya, Abhayagiriya, Lankarama, Kuttam Pokuna (Twin Ponds), the Moonstone, and ancient Guard Stones.**
- Every monument revealed another chapter of Sri Lanka's remarkable civilization. The children listened attentively as they learned about ancient engineering, architecture, and the rich Buddhist heritage that shaped the nation's identity.
- For many students, this was the first time they had stood before structures built more than two thousand years ago. Their expressions of amazement reminded us how powerful learning becomes when history is experienced firsthand.





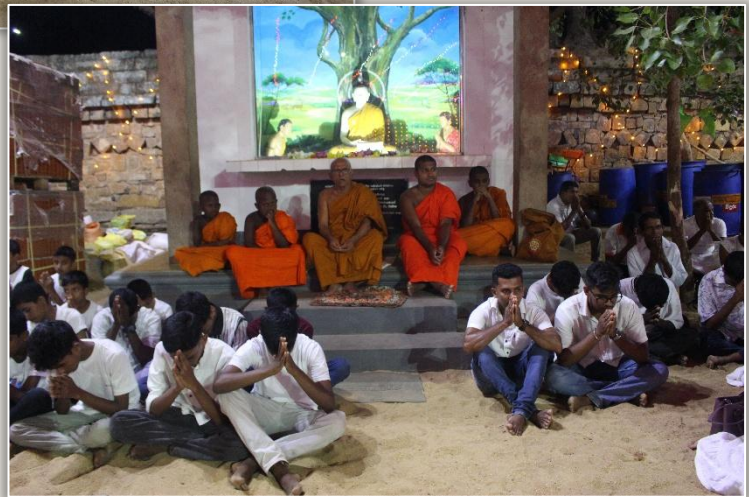
## 🌙 An Evening of Devotion

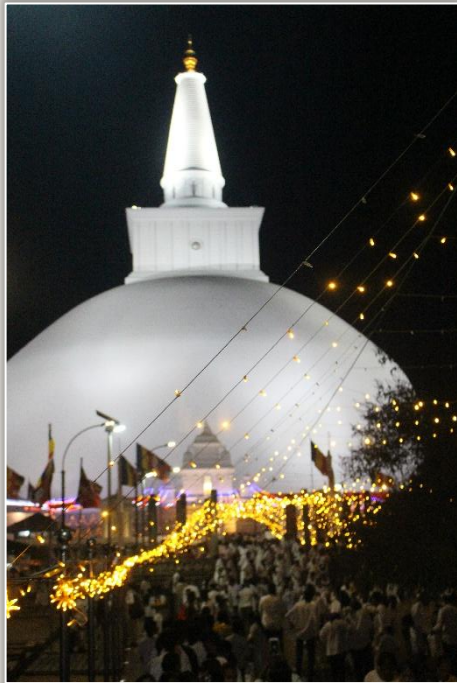
- As darkness gently settled over the sacred city, the atmosphere became even more peaceful.
- Together, we visited the **Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi**, the oldest historically documented tree in the world, grown from the sacred Bodhi Tree under which Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment.
- With flowers in their hands and hearts filled with gratitude, every child offered prayers beneath its ancient branches.
- The evening concluded with worship at the magnificent **Ruwanwelisaya**, where the brilliant white stupa shone beautifully beneath the night sky.
- For many students, this peaceful evening became the most memorable spiritual experience of the entire journey.





***Sri Maha Bodiya***





*Ruwanweliseya*

## ☀ Day Two Highlights

- Participated in the sacred Morning Thewawa Ceremony.
- Worshipped at Sri Dalada Maligawa.
- Explored Aluvihare Rock Temple.
- Experienced the beauty of Kandalama Reservoir.
- Climbed the Rose Quartz Mountain.
- Discovered the ancient city of Anuradhapura.
- Worshipped at Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi and Ruwanwelisaya.

## DAY THREE

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### *Walking Through the Birthplace of Sri Lankan Buddhism*

*"The third day of our journey was dedicated to one of the most sacred regions in Sri Lanka. Every step reminded our students that they were walking through places where history, faith, and civilization have flourished for over two thousand years."*

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### *🌀 Mihintale – The Cradle of Buddhism in Sri Lanka*

- Our third day began before sunrise as everyone eagerly prepared for one of the most meaningful visits of the entire excursion—Mihintale, the birthplace of Buddhism in Sri Lanka.
- As the students climbed the ancient stone steps together, they encouraged one another with smiles and determination. Although the climb required effort, every child reached the summit with great enthusiasm, excited to discover the sacred places they had only read about in their school textbooks.
- Throughout the visit, students explored Mihindu Guhawa (Mihindu Cave), Ambasthala Dagoba, Aradhana Gala, Seela Chethiya, and several other important monuments while learning about the historic meeting between Arahata Mahinda Thero and King

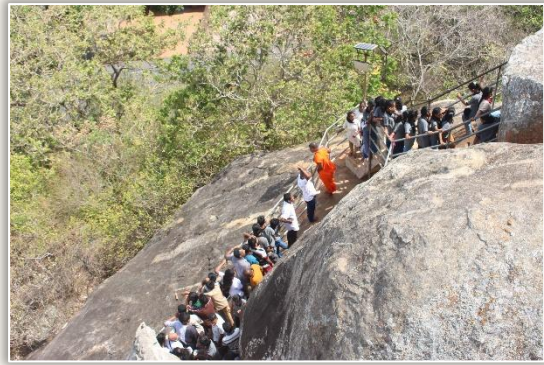
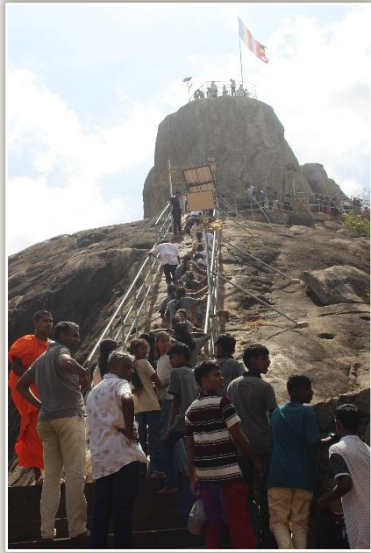
Devanampiyatissa, a moment that changed the course of Sri Lankan history forever.

- Standing high above the surrounding plains, many students paused quietly to admire the breathtaking scenery. It was a powerful reminder that learning becomes unforgettable when history is experienced in the very place where it happened.

### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ The birthplace of Buddhism in Sri Lanka.
- ✓ Site of the historic meeting between Arahat Mahinda Thero and King Devanampiyatissa.
- ✓ One of Sri Lanka's most sacred pilgrimage destinations.





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### ***Somawathiya Chaithya***

- Our journey then continued to the peaceful Somawathiya Chaithya, one of Sri Lanka's most revered Buddhist pilgrimage sites.
- Surrounded by forests and nature, the temple offered a calm and spiritual atmosphere unlike anywhere else we had visited.
- Together, the students offered flowers, observed religious practices, and spent quiet moments in prayer and reflection. The peaceful surroundings encouraged them to appreciate not only the beauty of nature but also the importance of compassion, mindfulness, and gratitude.
- For many children, this visit became a deeply personal spiritual experience that they will remember for years to come.

#### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ One of Sri Lanka's sixteen sacred Solosmasthanas.
- ✓ Believed to enshrine a sacred relic of Lord Buddha.
- ✓ A place of peace, meditation, and devotion.



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## 🌙 An Evening of Fellowship

- After a rewarding day filled with learning and spiritual experiences, the group travelled to our accommodation in Polonnaruwa.
- As the sun set, students gathered together to enjoy dinner prepared with great care by the organizing team. Laughter, conversations, and shared memories filled the evening as everyone reflected on another wonderful day of discovery.
- These simple moments of togetherness strengthened friendships, built confidence, and reminded us that education is also about kindness, cooperation, and caring for one another.



## Day Three Highlights

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- Explored Mihintale – the birthplace of Buddhism.
  - Climbed ancient stone stairways together.
  - Learned about the arrival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka.
  - Worshipped at Somawathiya Chaithya.
  - Strengthened friendship and teamwork.
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## DAY FOUR

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### *Exploring the Great Kingdom of Polonnaruwa*

*"Our final day brought together everything the students had learned throughout the journey. History, archaeology, engineering, religion, and nature blended into one unforgettable experience before we returned home with hearts full of gratitude and inspiration."*

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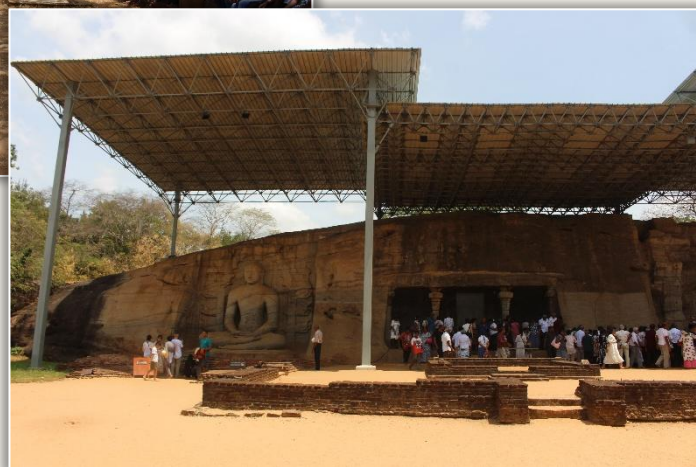
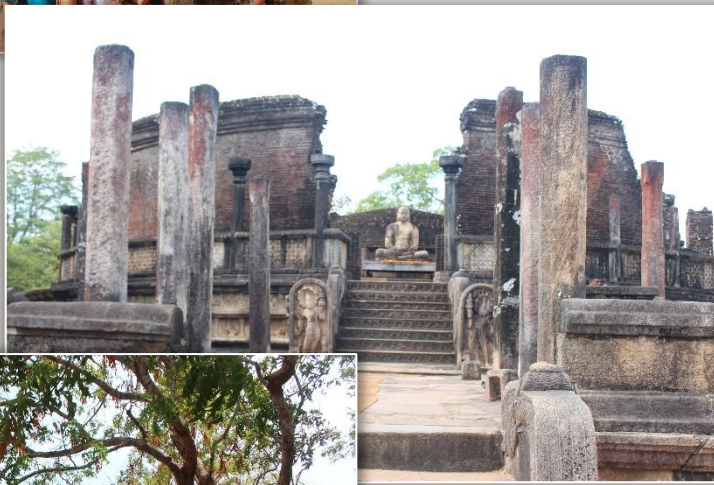
#### ***Ancient City of Polonnaruwa***

- Our final day began with great excitement as we explored the magnificent **Ancient City of Polonnaruwa**, another UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Sri Lanka's greatest medieval capitals.
- Accompanied by an officer from the **Department of Archaeology**, students gained a deeper understanding of the remarkable achievements of King Parakramabahu the Great and the advanced civilization that flourished nearly one thousand years ago.
- Throughout the morning, we visited many iconic landmarks, including **Potgul Viharaya, the Statue of King Parakramabahu, Parakrama Samudraya, the Royal Palace, the Council Chamber, Alahana Pirivena, Rankoth Vehera, and the world-famous Gal Viharaya.**
- Listening to expert explanations while standing before these extraordinary monuments transformed the ancient city into an open-air museum where every stone had a story to tell.

### **Why This Place Matters**

- ✓ UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- ✓ One of Asia's greatest medieval capitals.
- ✓ Home to some of Sri Lanka's finest stone sculptures and engineering achievements.





## *A Joyful Afternoon by the Lake*

- After several days of exploration under the warm August sun, the children were delighted by a special surprise.
- The group spent a relaxing afternoon enjoying water activities at a Minneriya reservoir. Laughter echoed across the water as students played, swam, and cooled off together after days filled with learning and exploration.
- For many children, this was one of the happiest moments of the entire journey. Watching them laugh freely, encourage one another, and simply enjoy being children reminded us that joy is an essential part of learning.
- These precious memories will undoubtedly remain in their hearts for many years.



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## **Our Journey Home**

- As the afternoon came to an end, we began our return journey.
  - After sharing one final meal together, everyone reflected on the unforgettable experiences of the past four days.
  - Although the buses were quieter than when we had first departed, they were now filled with something far more valuable—new knowledge, unforgettable friendships, spiritual inspiration, and memories that will last a lifetime.
  - At approximately 2.00 a.m., we safely arrived back at our temple, bringing our remarkable educational journey to a successful conclusion.
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## **Day Four Highlights**

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- Explored the UNESCO World Heritage City of Polonnaruwa.
- Learned from professional archaeologists.
- Visited Sri Lanka's greatest medieval monuments.
- Enjoyed recreational water activities.
- Returned home with unforgettable memories.

## The Lasting Impact of This Journey

*"The greatest achievement of this journey was not the number of places we visited, but the number of young minds we inspired."*

For four unforgettable days, our students stepped beyond the walls of the classroom and entered a world where history, culture, nature, and spirituality became living lessons.

Every temple they visited, every mountain they climbed, every ancient monument they explored, and every prayer they offered became an opportunity to learn—not only about Sri Lanka's rich heritage but also about themselves.

Throughout the journey, the students demonstrated remarkable curiosity, respect, kindness, and resilience. They encouraged one another while climbing mountains, patiently listened to historical explanations, showed great respect at sacred religious sites, and developed a deeper appreciation for the environment and cultural heritage surrounding them. More importantly, they learned valuable life lessons that cannot be taught through textbooks alone.

## **What Our Students Gained**

### **A Deeper Understanding of History**

Visiting ancient kingdoms, temples, and archaeological sites transformed classroom lessons into real-life experiences. Students discovered that history is not merely something to study—it is something to experience and protect.

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### **Stronger Spiritual Values**

Participating in religious observances at Sri Dalada Maligawa, Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi, Ruwanwelisaya, Somawathiya, and many other sacred sites encouraged mindfulness, gratitude, respect, and compassion.

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### **Environmental Awareness**

Experiencing the beauty of Kandalama Reservoir, National Na Uyana, and Sri Lanka's diverse natural landscapes helped students understand the importance of protecting nature for future generations.

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### **Friendship and Teamwork**

Travelling, learning, eating, and exploring together strengthened friendships, encouraged cooperation, and built confidence among the children.

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### **Confidence and Independence**

Many students experienced long-distance travel, mountain climbing, and visits to national heritage sites for the very first time. These experiences encouraged them to become more confident, responsible, and independent.

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### **A Journey That Will Last a Lifetime**

Although this educational excursion lasted only four days, the knowledge, inspiration, friendships, and values gained during this journey will remain with our students for many years to come.

Education is not measured only by examinations. Sometimes, the most meaningful lessons are discovered while walking through ancient cities, climbing mountains together, sharing simple meals, and witnessing the beauty of one's own country.

This journey was not simply about visiting places.

It was about discovering possibilities.

### *With Heartfelt Gratitude*

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*"Every smile you see in these pages began with your kindness."*

This unforgettable educational journey became possible because of the extraordinary generosity, compassion, and continued encouragement of our sponsors in Germany.

Your support is much more than financial assistance.

It creates opportunities.

It builds confidence.

It opens doors to knowledge.

It inspires hope.

Because of your kindness, nearly eighty children were given the opportunity to experience Sri Lanka's remarkable history, Buddhist heritage, natural beauty, and cultural treasures in ways that no classroom alone could ever provide.

Many of these students visited these sacred places for the very first time in their lives. The memories they created, the friendships they strengthened, and the lessons they learned will remain with them forever.

On behalf of every student, every parent, every teacher, and every member of our Scholarship Programme, we extend our deepest gratitude for believing in these children and investing in their future.

Your generosity continues to change lives.

Together, we are nurturing not only educated children but also compassionate, responsible, and confident young people who will one day contribute positively to society.

Thank you for walking this journey with us.

We sincerely hope you can see, through these pages and photographs, the happiness your kindness has brought into the lives of our children.

May your generosity continue to inspire many more young hearts for years to come.





***"Every journey plant a seed of knowledge. Every child carries it into the future."***