



VANNAKAM | AYUBOWANG | WELCOME

MESSAGE FROM DILANEE

Welcome to our June 2026 Newsletter.

Our mission of empowering children through education continues every day across Sri Lanka, and it is inspiring to see the impact of this work on the lives of children, families, and communities. Sponsored children are achieving success in their O Levels and A Levels and progressing towards fulfilling their dreams and ambitions.

This year, more than 500 children are enrolled across our 31 preschools, while around 1,000 students benefit from our wider educational programmes. Over 300 children receive a nutritious meal each day, and our monitoring data continues to demonstrate the positive impact that good nutrition has on attendance, concentration, and academic performance.

Our community programmes are also creating opportunities for adults. Twenty-six women are currently attending sewing classes at our Hope Houses, gaining valuable skills that will help them establish their own businesses or secure employment within the local garment industry.

Through our Gift Catalogue, life-changing resources have been distributed to families and communities, including boats, sewing machines, sports equipment, craft packs, musical instruments, bicycles, and chickens. These gifts provide practical support, create opportunities for income generation, and help transform lives. For many sponsored children, the provision of a bicycle has made travelling to school and extra classes safer, easier, and more affordable.



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None of this would be possible without the generosity and commitment of our donors, supporters, volunteers, and friends. Thank you for your continued belief in our work and for helping us create opportunities for those who need them most.

Looking ahead, we are excited to welcome 31 volunteers to Sri Lanka in October 2026. During their visit, they will spend time in our preschools and link schools, bringing encouragement, learning opportunities, and cultural exchange that will positively impact thousands of children.

Among them will be 18 students and four teachers from Calthorpe Park School, who have been working hard to prepare for their visit. Through fundraising activities and the development of educational resources for their link schools, they are already making a meaningful contribution. The sports meet and variety show are always highlights of these visits and create lasting memories for everyone involved.

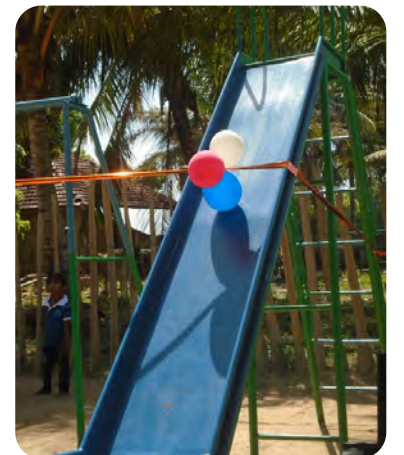
June also saw the successful completion of our annual residential teacher training programme in Batticaloa, bringing together all 70 of our preschool teachers from across Sri Lanka. Over four inspiring days, teachers participated in innovative workshops, shared best practice, and developed new skills to enhance learning in their classrooms. The enthusiasm and dedication shown throughout the event were truly remarkable, and our teachers returned home eager to apply and share what they had learned.

As you read this newsletter, I hope you will feel proud of everything that has been achieved so far in 2026. Together, we are creating brighter futures and helping children and communities reach their full potential.

Thank you for being part of the Ocean Stars journey.

Dilanee Bunter
Head of Operations
Ocean Stars Trust

Opening of the New Play Park at Nagar Preschool



One of the highlights of June was the opening of a brand-new play park at Nagar Preschool, generously funded by the students of Calthorpe Park School.

As part of our Child Development Programme, play is an essential element of early childhood education, helping children develop their physical, social, communication, and emotional skills in a fun and engaging way.

The new play park provides a safe and stimulating environment where children can build confidence, learn to cooperate with others, improve their coordination and balance, and develop important problem-solving skills through play.

The children and teachers were thrilled with their new outdoor space and expressed their sincere gratitude to the students and wider school community for making this project possible.

Following the opening ceremony, our team enjoyed spending time with the children, singing songs, dancing, and sharing lots of bubble fun, creating wonderful memories and celebrating the joy that this new facility will bring for many years to come.

This exciting addition will help ensure that children at Nagar Preschool have even more opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive.

Chenkallady 2 Preschool Market Brings Learning to Life

The children, parents, and teachers of Chenkallady 2 Preschool recently came together to host a vibrant and successful community market, creating a wonderful opportunity for learning, creativity, and community engagement. The event featured an impressive selection of home-grown fruits and vegetables, homemade foods, and other handcrafted items, all prepared and presented with great pride by the preschool community. We were also pleased to welcome local government officials who attended

the event and showed their support for the children's achievements.

The preschool grounds were transformed into a colourful marketplace, with children dressed in traditional outfits that added to the festive atmosphere. Families, community members, and visitors enjoyed browsing the stalls and purchasing the goods on offer, creating a lively and joyful environment throughout the day.

While the market was a fun and enjoyable event, it also demonstrated the many ways in which our Child Development Programme (CDP) helps children learn through practical, real-life experiences. By taking part in the market, the children had opportunities to develop their numeracy skills through counting, measuring, and handling money. They strengthened their communication and listening skills as they interacted with customers and explained the products they were selling. Their literacy skills were also put into practice through the creation of signs, labels, and displays for the stalls.

Beyond these academic skills, the market helped to build confidence, teamwork, responsibility, and social skills. The children experienced the rewards of working together towards a shared goal while engaging positively with members of their community.



The market was buzzing with activity from beginning to end, and the excitement on the children's faces reflected the success of the day.

It was a wonderful example of how learning can extend beyond the classroom and become a meaningful, hands-on experience.

We extend our sincere thanks to the dedicated preschool teachers whose hard work and enthusiasm made the event possible, as well as to the parents, community members, and local officials who supported the market.

Together, they helped create a memorable day that not only celebrated the talents of the children but also reinforced the important role that community plays in a child's development.



The Power of Partnership: Creating Better Learning Spaces Together

At Ocean Stars Trust, we know that lasting change is only possible through partnership. Every classroom we improve, every play area we build and every opportunity we create for children is made possible because individuals, schools, churches, businesses and community organisations choose to work alongside us in empowering children through education in Sri Lanka.

In June 2026 we celebrated another wonderful example of that partnership at Shining Stars Preschool in Ampalanthurai, where a new outdoor canopy has transformed the children's learning environment.



The preschool had identified the need for a shaded outdoor space where children could learn, play and take part in activities protected from the intense tropical sun. Thanks to the generosity of the community at Acocks Green Methodist Church, that vision has now become a reality.

The new canopy provides a safe, comfortable outdoor learning area that will be used every day, extending the classroom beyond four walls and giving children greater opportunities for creative play, group learning and physical development throughout the year.

We are especially grateful to the congregation of Acocks Green Methodist Church, who have chosen to support Ocean Stars Trust for a second consecutive year. Their continued commitment is making a genuine and lasting difference to the lives of young children and their families.

This project is one of many made possible through the incredible network of partners who share our vision. We are proud to work alongside organisations including Fonthill Foundation, Fleet Methodist Church, Dogmersfield Primary School, Heatherside Infant School, Heatherside Junior School, Calthorpe Park School, XIX Studios, St John's Church, Hook, Our Lady the Queen of Heaven Church Frimley, Teach Sri Lanka, and many other schools, churches, businesses and community groups that continue to invest in the future of children across Sri Lanka.

Together, these partnerships are helping us provide safe learning environments, educational resources, play opportunities and child development programmes that give children the best possible start in life. To every organisation, volunteer, supporter and donor who walks alongside us on this journey—thank you. Your generosity is not simply funding projects; it is creating brighter futures and empowering the next generation through education.

Changing Lives Through the Ocean Stars Child Sponsorship Programme



For more than two decades, the Ocean Stars Child Sponsorship Programme has been transforming the lives of children and families across Sri Lanka. Our programme is about far more than financial support—it is about giving children the opportunity to reach their full potential through education, encouragement, and long-term care.

The children who join our sponsorship programme are identified by local government agencies as coming from families most in need of support. By working alongside these organisations, we ensure that assistance reaches those who will benefit most, providing vulnerable children with opportunities that might otherwise be beyond their reach.

Child sponsorship is proven to make a lasting difference. Research has shown that children who are sponsored are significantly more likely to complete their education, continue on to higher education, and secure meaningful employment. At Ocean Stars, we have witnessed these outcomes first-hand.



Many of the children who joined our sponsorship programme when it began in 2005 are now successful adults, building brighter futures for themselves and their families. Today, former sponsored children have become entrepreneurs, doctors, nurses, accountants, teachers, pharmacists, digital and media professionals, and skilled workers in many other fields. Their achievements demonstrate the life-changing impact that long-term support, combined with determination and opportunity, can have.

Our sponsorship programme is built on strong relationships. Every sponsored child is regularly visited and monitored by our dedicated Sri Lankan team to ensure they are safe, attending school, and receiving the support they need. Families are also welcomed to our Ocean Stars office, where children can enjoy our child-friendly room—a safe, welcoming space where they can relax, play, read, and simply enjoy being children away from the challenges of daily life.

Practical support also plays an important role. Thanks to generous donations, many sponsored children have received bicycles, helping them travel safely to school, reducing long journeys on foot, and giving them greater independence in their everyday lives.



One of the highlights of this year has been celebrating six of our sponsored students who successfully passed their GCSE-equivalent examinations and are now progressing to Advanced Level studies. Each of these students shared the same heartfelt message: without the additional support provided through Ocean Stars, they do not believe they would have achieved such outstanding results. We congratulate them on this wonderful achievement and wish them every success as they continue their educational journey.

Behind every successful sponsorship is an incredible team. We would like to express our sincere thanks to Jo Barton, who has faithfully served as our Sponsorship Manager since 2005. Jo has worked tirelessly to manage our sponsorship programme, maintain strong relationships with sponsors, and ensure children receive the support they need. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to Danushika, our Sponsorship Manager in Sri Lanka, whose dedication to visiting families, monitoring children's progress, and providing ongoing care is invaluable to the success of the programme.

Most importantly, we thank every one of our sponsors, past and present. Your kindness has helped transform not only the lives of individual children but also the futures of entire families and communities. Your support has opened doors to education, opportunity, confidence, and hope.

Could you be our next sponsor? **For just a small monthly commitment, you can help transform the life of a child and give them the opportunity to build a brighter future.**

To find out more about sponsoring a child through Ocean Stars, please visit:
<https://oceanstars.org.uk/what-we-do/sponsor-a-child-sri-lanka>

Our Gift Catalogue That Changes Lives

Looking for a meaningful gift that makes a real difference? The Ocean Stars Gift Catalogue offers the opportunity to give a unique gift for a birthday, Christmas, anniversary, or any special occasion, while transforming the lives of children, families, and communities in Sri Lanka.



Our catalogue features a wide range of gifts to suit every budget. Whether you choose a small gift or a larger donation, every purchase helps bring hope, opportunity, and lasting change to those who need it most.

Some of our most life-changing gifts provide families with the opportunity to become financially independent. Gifts such as fishing boats and sewing machines enable recipients to earn a sustainable income and provide for their families with dignity. For many fishermen, receiving a boat is truly life-changing. Selected through local government organisations, these individuals often spend years sharing boats with others and dividing the income from each day's catch. Owning their own boat gives them the freedom to work independently, increase their earnings, and build a more secure future for their families.



This year alone, thanks to your incredible generosity, Ocean Stars has been able to donate both fishing boats and sewing machines, helping families take their first steps towards financial independence.

Many of the gifts in our catalogue also directly support the children in our Child Development Programme and preschools. School packs provide essential learning resources, while craft packs, games packs, and musical instrument packs enrich children's education through creativity, play, and self-expression. Chickens provide families with a source of nutritious food and an opportunity to generate additional income through the sale of eggs, creating benefits that continue long after the gift has been received.

Every gift in our catalogue represents far more than the item itself. It is an investment in someone's future, offering hope, opportunity, and the chance to build a better life.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported Ocean Stars through our Gift Catalogue. Your generosity is making a lasting difference, helping children learn, families thrive, and communities grow stronger.

Why not choose a gift with a difference this year? Whether you are celebrating a birthday, marking a special occasion, or simply want to support our work, your gift can help transform a life.

To browse our Gift Catalogue and find the perfect life-changing gift, please visit:

<https://oceanstars.org.uk/shop/>

Together, we can continue bringing hope, opportunity, and lasting change to the people who need it most.



Investing in Excellence: Ocean Stars' Annual Teacher Training Inspires 70 Preschool Teachers

From 26–29 June, the Sarvodaya Centre in Batticaloa was once again transformed into a vibrant hub of learning, creativity, collaboration, and inspiration as Ocean Stars hosted its much-anticipated annual teacher training programme.

This year's event brought together 70 preschool teachers, supported by 15 expert workshop presenters, alongside 17 children and 12 family members and drivers, creating a wonderful atmosphere of learning, friendship, and shared purpose.



Over four intensive and inspiring days, every key area of Ocean Stars' flagship Child Development Programme was explored through engaging, practical workshops designed to equip teachers with new skills, fresh ideas, and innovative approaches for the classroom. We pride ourselves on sourcing highly respected workshop leaders who are specialists in their fields. Rather than simply delivering lectures, each presenter led interactive, hands-on sessions that encouraged teachers to participate, experiment, create, and collaborate.



The result was a programme that not only strengthened professional knowledge but also left every teacher returning to their preschool with a wealth of practical activities and renewed confidence to deliver every aspect of our Child Development Programme.

One comment was echoed repeatedly by our workshop leaders throughout the four days—they were deeply impressed by the enthusiasm, commitment, and passion shown by our preschool teachers. Despite beginning each day with morning tea at **5.30 am** and continuing with a packed schedule until **8.00 pm**, their energy never waned. They embraced every activity with positivity, curiosity, and determination, making the most of every learning opportunity available to them.

Behind the scenes, an event of this scale requires an enormous amount of planning and coordination. Our heartfelt thanks go to the dedicated Ocean Stars Lanka team, who spend much of the year preparing every detail to ensure the training runs smoothly. Bringing teachers together from every corner of Sri Lanka is a major logistical undertaking, and their hard work, commitment, and attention to detail made the event another outstanding success.



We are equally grateful to the wonderful staff at the Sarvodaya Centre, Batticaloa, whose warm hospitality, attentive service, comfortable accommodation, and delicious meals kept everyone well cared for and energised throughout the programme.

Most importantly, this exceptional training simply would not be possible without the continued generosity of Fonthill UK, who have faithfully funded this annual event for the past ten years. Their long-term commitment to investing in professional development has transformed the quality of teaching across our network of preschools.

Thanks to their support, our teachers remain at the forefront of innovative teaching methods, current early years pedagogy, and child-centred learning, ensuring that thousands of young children benefit from the very best start in life.

As the programme drew to a close at 3.00 pm on Monday, 29 June, there was a genuine sense of sadness as teachers said their goodbyes. After four unforgettable days of learning, laughter, creativity, and friendship, everyone departed with full hearts, lasting memories, and a renewed sense of purpose. They returned home inspired, motivated, and equipped with countless new ideas that will enrich the lives and learning of the children in their care for many years to come.

This annual training continues to be one of the highlights of the Ocean Stars calendar, demonstrating our unwavering commitment to investing in teachers because, by empowering educators, we transform the futures of the children they inspire every day.



Countdown to Sri Lanka: Ocean Stars Team 2026 Prepares for an Unforgettable Journey

Excitement is continuing to build as preparations gather pace for the Ocean Stars October 2026 volunteer trip to Sri Lanka.

Leading this year's team are 18 students and 4 teachers from Calthorpe Park School, who have been working tirelessly since being selected to take part in what promises to be a life-changing experience. Months of preparation have already taken place, including student and parent meetings, team planning sessions, fundraising events, and the development of engaging activities to share with students at their link secondary schools in Sri Lanka.

The commitment shown by the students has been truly inspiring. Alongside preparing themselves for the cultural experience ahead, they have already raised an incredible £20,000 to support the work of Ocean Stars. Their enthusiasm, compassion, and dedication demonstrate a genuine desire to make a lasting difference to the lives of children, young people, and families in Sri Lanka.

During their visit, the Calthorpe Park School team will spend time with students and staff at their link secondary schools, strengthening friendships that have developed over many years through Ocean Stars. Through shared activities, cultural exchanges, and time spent learning together, these partnerships continue to broaden horizons and foster mutual understanding between young people from different parts of the world.

Alongside the school partnership visits, the wider Ocean Stars volunteer programme will have an extraordinary reach. It is estimated that more than 5,000 children, family members, and teachers will be impacted by this year's visit through activities delivered in schools and preschools, community engagement, teacher support, and the strengthening of long-term partnerships. The positive effects of these visits extend far beyond the time our volunteers spend in Sri Lanka, leaving a lasting legacy within the communities we serve.

We are immensely grateful to Team 2026, their teachers, and their parents for their unwavering support of Ocean Stars. Their phenomenal fundraising efforts will help us continue to provide high-quality early years education and life-changing opportunities for the children attending the 31 preschools supported by Ocean Stars across Sri Lanka.

Joining the school team will be 10 additional volunteers, who have also been meeting regularly in preparation for the trip. Through workshops, planning meetings, and fundraising activities, they have been equipping themselves for what will be a busy and rewarding visit to many of our partner preschools.

This year's preschool theme is "The Selfish Crocodile," and our volunteers have enthusiastically embraced the challenge of bringing the story to life. Suitcases are gradually filling with crocodile-themed books, puppets, costumes, games, and craft materials, along with a wide variety of exciting resources that will entertain, engage, and inspire the children throughout their visits.

Every Ocean Stars trip is about so much more than travelling overseas. It is about building friendships, sharing cultures, supporting teachers, encouraging children, and creating memories that last a lifetime. Our volunteers return home with a deeper understanding of the resilience and warmth of the Sri Lankan communities they visit, while the communities themselves benefit from new learning experiences, strengthened international partnerships, and the knowledge that people across the world care deeply about their future.

Shining Stars Preschool Celebrates New Outdoor Learning Canopy

Shining Stars Preschool in Ampalanthurai recently celebrated the opening of its new outdoor learning canopy, providing children with a safe and comfortable space to learn, play, and explore throughout the year.

The preschool identified the need for a covered outdoor area to protect children from the heat while creating an environment where outdoor learning could become a regular part of the early years programme. Thanks to the generous support of Acocks Green Methodist Church, this vision has now become a reality. Through their dedicated fundraising efforts and continued partnership with Ocean Stars Trust, the new canopy has been completed and officially opened.

The opening ceremony was a joyful community celebration, attended by children, parents, teachers, and local supporters. Parents expressed their sincere appreciation for the continued investment in the preschool, highlighting the positive difference Ocean Stars continues to make in providing high-quality early years education for their children.

The new canopy will enhance daily learning experiences and provide a welcoming space where children can learn, play, and thrive in a safe outdoor environment.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone at Acocks Green Methodist Church and to all who helped make this project possible. Together, we are creating brighter futures for children—one preschool at a time.



Founder and Trustees of Ocean Stars Trust UK



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