

Sir David Beckham's India Visit Spotlights Project-Based Learning Transforming Government Residential Schools Across Andhra Pradesh

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Former England football captain and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Sir David Beckham visited an MJPAPBCWREIS residential school for girls in Visakhapatnam today to see Project-Based Learning (PBL) in action. His visit is part of a wider Mantra4Change programme supported by Education Above All that is improving classrooms across Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, and Nagaland.



Sir David Beckham with students of MJPAPBCWREIS residential school in Visakhapatnam

Sir David's visit, confirmed in a social media update posted late on Wednesday night, brought national attention to a hands-on approach to schooling that places student projects, teamwork, and real-world problem-solving at the centre of learning.

Mantra4Change, in partnership with the MJP Society and supported by Education Above All (EAA), has redesigned teaching and learning in 107 residential schools across Andhra Pradesh, reaching roughly 18,000 students and building the capacity of 107 school leaders. The PBL programme has been integrated across English, Mathematics, and Science, turning traditional classrooms into active learning spaces where students learn by doing, collaborate on projects, and present

solutions to community problems.

On the ground in Visakhapatnam

During his visit, Sir David met with students and teachers at the school, observing how Project-Based Learning comes alive in everyday classrooms. He began by sitting in on a live PBL session before being guided by students to a small exhibition where children presented projects across English, Mathematics, and Science.

He also joined a group of students for a tree-planting activity, where children demonstrated how they scan and label saplings with digital IDs. In the school library, Sir David participated in a reading circle and spoke with children about their favourite books. The visit concluded outdoors, where students invited him to join a lively 'one-touch' football drill. School leaders shared how these varied activities reflect the PBL approach, boosting student confidence, encouraging collaboration, and helping children connect learning with real-life contexts.

In his Instagram post, **Sir David** said, *"Great day in India going back to school supporting Education Above All's project based learning initiatives so much fun."*

"It gives us great joy that Sir David Beckham chose to visit one of our MJP schools. It's a proud moment for all of us in the MJP society. His presence at our school in a place like Kothavalasa is a beautiful reminder that when we work with the right intent and dedication, extraordinary things can happen. Project-based Learning has energised our classrooms, and we

hope to keep nurturing this spirit of learning," said P. Madhavi Latha, Secretary, MJPAPBCWREIS.

Project-Based Learning shifts the focus from rote recall to applied understanding. It builds transferable skills, communication, critical thinking, creativity, while lifting measurable academic outcomes. The Mantra4Change-EAA partnership is an example of how targeted support, teacher development and curriculum redesign can scale classroom practices across states.

Santosh More, Co-Founder of Mantra4Change, said, *"Sir David Beckham's visit is an inspiration for all of us and a powerful signal that innovation in our government schools matters. Project-Based Learning is raising children's aspirations, and moments like this strengthen our resolve to work with governments and communities to make such learning the norm."*

The visit also adds fresh momentum to Shikshagraha, a people-powered national movement being co-built by Mantra4Change that is working to improve one million public schools across India. Sir David's presence and public endorsement of innovative classroom practices like Project-Based Learning strengthens the movement's core message: that communities, teachers, governments and civil society must come together to transform everyday schooling. The visibility generated by this visit helps amplify Shikshagraha's call for collective action and accelerates its efforts to ensure every child in a public school has access to meaningful, engaging and future-ready learning.

About Mantra4Change

Mantra4Change is a non-profit organisation transforming public schools in India through educational leadership. Our approach involves driving continuous school improvements by empowering education leaders, transforming schools to create an enriching learning experience, and inspiring civil society organisations across India to collectively work towards transformation in education.

We aim to drive sustainable, continuous school improvements across 150,000 schools by 2025.

