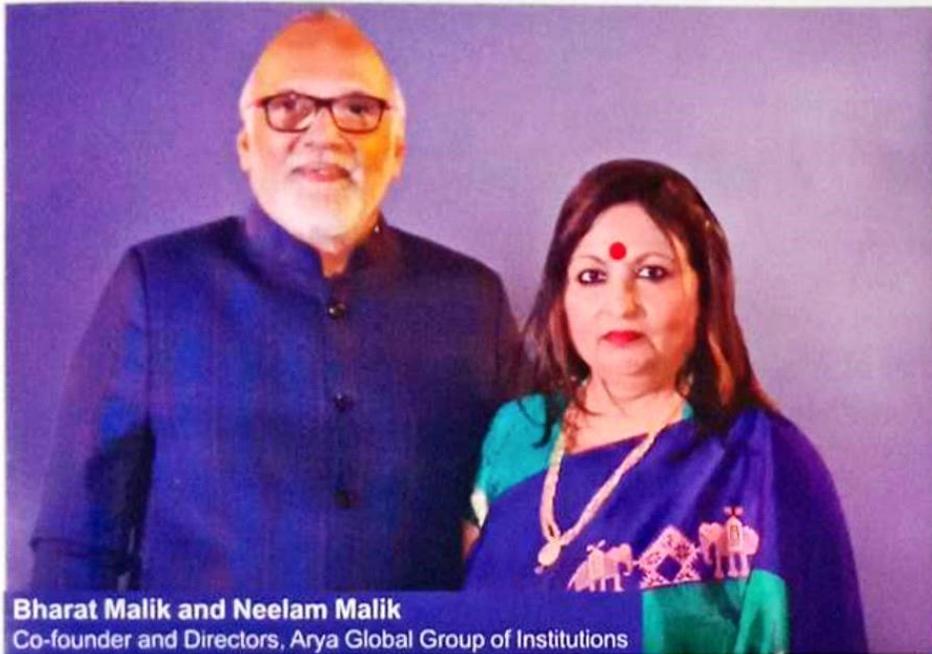


Covid-19 Frontline Education Warriors



Bharat Malik and Neelam Malik
Co-founder and Directors, Arya Global Group of Institutions

Promoted by the Education Today Foundation (ETF, estb. 2006) **Little Aryans Pre-K** is a network of six top-ranked preschools spread across Kalyan, Dombivali and Ambemath towns in suburban Mumbai. Founded by **Bharat Malik**, a nationally renowned edupreneur, ETF also runs two K-12 CBSE (Delhi) affiliated **Arya Gurukul Schools** in Kalyan and Ambemath, the K-10 Maharashtra state board affiliated **St. Mary's High School, Kalyan** (estb. 1989) and **AryaGlobal Research and Training Institute** for early childhood educators under the AryaGlobal banner. Four centres of Little Aryans Pre-K are ranked among Thane's Top 10 proprietary preschools in the latest EducationWorld India Preschool Rankings 2019-20 while the group's flagship St. Mary's High School, Kalyan is routinely ranked among the Top 3 Budget Private Schools (BPS) of India in the annual EducationWorld India School Rankings.

With a pedagogy inspired by the Chinmaya Vision Programme (CVP) rooted in the teachings and philosophy of Swami Chinmayananda, Little Aryans Pre-K believes in going beyond the books and focuses on the holistic development of the tiny tots. The preschool has also incorporated Reggio Emilia inspired methods into its pedagogical framework.

Keeping the tiny tots engaged during the Covid-19 lockdown

In the wake of the novel coronavirus pandemic outbreak and extended mass closure of educational institutions, the committed management and staff of Little Aryans

Pre-K — under the able guidance of Bharat Malik, founder-director, AryaGlobal Group of Institutions and **Neelam Malik**, director, Little Aryans Pre-K — swiftly deployed innovative online teaching-learning solutions to enable learning continuity of students. Some of the ways in which the seamless transition to virtual learning was achieved include:

- Little Aryans' team of dedicated teachers worked long hours to quickly create activity-based lesson plans that catered to a theme-based learning experience.
- To limit screen time for the tiny tots, each online class was limited to 40-50 minutes.
- The online learning curriculum includes simple and engaging activities such as making a self-portrait and a family tree to help increase children's self-awareness, physical activities such as yoga, dance and games to keep the children agile.
- Students also get a chance to hone and showcase their public speaking skills through short videos submitted through Flipgrid application.
- Distribution of a special kit containing Art and Craft materials, manipulatives such as pipe cleaners and pompoms to 820 students of all the Little Aryans centres. A surprise token of love by the school and a specially designed water bottle made the kids feel loved and special.

"Our children's smiles are precious to us. It was a small effort by us to bring a ray of joy into our children's lives. Although all our teachers and centre heads miss seeing their children at school, our online classes help keep the momentum of learning going. We are glad to receive a very positive

feedback for the sessions from our parents," says Bharat Malik. An alumnus of Bhavan's Institute of Management, Malik is a nationally respected BPS (Budget Private Schools) champion credited with spearheading the inception of PUSMA (Private Unaided School Management Association) — an association of over 70 private unaided schools countrywide. He is also a founder-member of National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA) and vice-president of the Federation of Unaided Private Schools Association of Maharashtra.

Deeply inspired by Swami Chinmayanandaji's philosophy and having served as an active member of the Chinmaya Mission, Bharat Malik introduced the Chinmaya Vision Programme in all the institutions established under the AryaGlobal banner.

"Remote learning brings with it several challenges and high points. At Little Aryans Pre-K, online learning comes with new experiences, continued development of crucial facets and tons of surprises for the tiny tots. We are clearly witnessing a time when we all have become learners including the teachers and the parents. Their role in the learning process cannot be undermined. It is this collaborative learning that has created wonders," says Neelam Malik. An English postgraduate and education graduate of Mumbai University, Neelam Malik started her teaching career as a teacher at St. John the Baptist High School (SJBHS), Thane soon after her graduation in 1980. In 1989, along with her husband, she co-promoted the MSSEB-affiliated St. Mary's High School, Kalyan. A decade-and-a-half later, in 2006, she co-promoted the K-12 CBSE-affiliated Arya Gurukul School, Kalyan and Ambemath and subsequently, the Little Aryans Pre-K network.

PARENTS' VOICES

"Thank you so much for introducing a new online school! It's very interesting, I want to thank and appreciate all the teachers at Little Aryans for having lots of patience, our school is the best school with the best teaching style and education. Thanks to Bharat Sir and Neelam Ma'am. You both are the best! May God always be with you." **Kalpna Pandey**, parent of Aastha Pandey, Senior KG, Little Aryans, Khadakpada.

"Big thanks to the Little Aryans team! It's great that you are taking care of our kids by providing spectacular activity kits right at our doorsteps which will definitely boost their interest in e-learning. Thanks for ensuring Happy Faces!" **Pallavi Nerurkar**, Parent of Yutika Nerurkar, Senior KG, Little Aryans, Dombivali.