

Case Study 2: Health check-ups to safeguard learning

Theme: External factors impacting on education (e.g. nutrition or health).

Teacher: Mr Chakrakodi.

Context: Public school located in a very deprived area of East Delhi.

Problem statement: Mr Chakrakodi knew that many of his students had no access to healthcare and that they lived in environments that were unhygienic. This resulted in sick students either attending school and spreading disease, or being consistently absent.

The change: The change designed to overcome this problem involved a triple-pronged health scheme. By brokering relationships with local medical professionals, Mr Chakrakodi ensured free medical check-ups for students every two months and a free eyesight testing service. Finally, Mr Chakrakodi found a sponsor to provide healthy lunches specifically to younger students, who need vitamins for healthy growth. The value of this change is that students are not only provided with healthcare and eye tests, but that they are taught how to live more healthily.

Why this is interesting: It takes a preventative approach to reducing student absence, which is so damaging for learning.

Potential implementation challenges: In order to be successful at scale, doctors and nurses would need to be incentivised to provide healthcare in schools.

Impact so far (according to teacher): Mr Chakrakodi reports that student attendance has improved, concentration has increased markedly and there has been buy-in from parents, who have engaged with the school in appreciation for the health services provided. One of the bi-monthly check-ups successfully diagnosed a student with a serious liver infection, which, as a result, was treated in time. Mr Chakrakodi has now expanded the free eye care service into the community.