

## Teach in Chembakolli 2012 Background info

### Where is Vidyodaya School?

Vidyodaya is located in Gudalur town in the Nilgiri Hills of southern India. Gudalur is in northwest Tamil Nadu state, near to Kerala and Karnataka. It is an hour's journey from Chembakolli village, which is situated on the edge of the remote Mudumalai Tiger Reserve.



### What kind of school is it?

Vidyodaya is a primary school. It means 'awakening of knowledge' and was set up in 1995 to ensure Adivasi or tribal children, from the surrounding area, receive a good quality education.

[www.vidyodaya.org](http://www.vidyodaya.org)

### How is the curriculum organised?

There are eight standards for children aged between five and 14. Assessment at the end of each year determines whether children continue to the next standard. Once standard eight is achieved, they attend a government secondary school in Gudalur.



### Which subjects are taught?

Children are taught in the medium of Tamil and English and study subjects like maths, science, and geography as well as Adivasi singing, dancing and a range of craft activities such as embroidery.

An outreach programme works with other schools in the area and coordinates more than 70 village libraries, most of which are managed by children in their homes.

Since August 2011, ACCORD has been running a residential centre around 12 km from Gudalur for children who have dropped out of government schools. This is a 'bridge' school to get children back into school.

### Which age-group and subjects will I be expected to teach?

You will teach a range of subjects to children aged between 5 and 14.

You will also coordinate children's contributions to the Chembakolli blog, as well as sharing your experiences on the website.

### What is the school week like?

The school week runs from Monday to Friday (with some Saturday morning classes). Each day begins with a 9am assembly, followed by morning lessons and afternoon crafts, which finish at 4pm.



### Who is ACCORD?

ACCORD was set up in 1985 to support Adivasi communities in the Gudalur valley to take control of their lives. Vidyodaya School forms part of its education programme.

[www.adivasi.net](http://www.adivasi.net)

### How will ACCORD and ActionAid UK support you?

We will cover return travel from your home in the UK to Gudalur, visa, insurance and vaccination costs, plus accommodation and a local allowance.

ActionAid will arrange for you to come into the office for a full briefing on Chembakolli and how the [Chembakolli Live blog](#) works. On your return, you will be invited to a de-briefing session.

You will also have the opportunity to talk to returned volunteer teachers who have spent a year living and working in the community.



### Accommodation

A basic apartment in Gudalur town is a stone's-throw away from the school and Adivasi hospital. It has electricity (although this occasionally cuts off), hot water and mountain views on all sides!

### Food

There are cooking facilities in the apartment plus the option to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner with school and hospital staff. Gudalur has a number plenty of tea and coffee shops and a thriving market. There'll be plenty of opportunities to eat home-cooked food!



### Local allowance

You will receive a basic living allowance of £100 (approx Rs8,000) per month. This is expected to cover the day-to-day costs of food and local travel expenses.

### How will teaching at Vidyodaya enhance your life?!

This is a fantastic opportunity to live with the community and interact with indigenous people on a daily basis.

The community has a number of volunteers and medical students from across India and the UK and living and working there. This is a wonderful opportunity to understand the lives of the Adivasi people in the Nilgiri hills.

Vidyodaya School's fresh approaches to learning and teaching are sure to rekindle your love of education and offer whole new perspectives on life.