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New Straits Times

5 March 2018

Helping pupils find their way in life

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By [Dr Vishalache Balakrishnan](#) - March 5, 2018 @ 9:34am

IN the Indian tradition, dharma means the way, law or duty. Thus, a person's svadharma (sva means own and dharma means way, law, duty) is one's role and responsibility in his life journey.

For children who attend school for the first time, many are unsure of what their *svadharma* is.

They go to school with feelings of excitement, anxiety and hope.

They are eager to know what their roles are in the world and how they are going to fulfil it.

They will be in a formal environment compared with their preschool years where play and learn were the focus.

In a formal setting, they need time to adapt to the new environment, new friends and new rules.

It is essential that teachers provide a conducive environment for the transition to take place.

In many countries, the best and most qualified educators teach the young who attend formal school for the first time.

This is crucial because the educators of young learners need to understand the development of each child in their class.

Educators must be prepared to make a shift every time they meet a new batch of students.

There is no one way of teaching and educating that fits all students.

How can educators understand the *svadharma* in their young learners?

This can be done through several approaches. The educators must first obtain the trust of their students.

The process of building trust enables students to open up.

But, the educators need to understand that when students trust and respect them, they should not misuse that trust and respect.

Instead, there should be mutual respect between educators and students.

When such a relationship is built, educators can impart knowledge, skills and values in a democratic environment.

This is also a crucial time for educators to identify and rectify problems in young learners, such as learning disabilities.

The educators can resolve them if they have the capabilities, but if it is not, it is their responsibility to reach out for help.

Schools are places for students to develop their *svadharma* and it has to be in our educators' head, heart and action to educate the young.

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