

Frequently Asked Questions

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1. General:

(1) What is Chinmaya Mission's mission?

“Chinmaya Mission's mission is to provide to individuals from any background the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become positive contributors to society.”

Chinmaya Mission's “Motto is to give maximum happiness to maximum people for maximum time.”

For more info on parent organization visit <http://www.chinmayamission.com/>

(2) What is CMSJ, BV, YK, CERT, Swaranjali?

- **CMSJ** – Chinmaya Mission San Jose
- **BV** – Bala Vihar
- **YK** – Yuva Kendra (BV for youth)
- **CERT**- Chinmaya Emergency Response Team
- **Swaranjali** – CMSJ's bhajan choir group

(3) What are the activities supported by CMSJ?

- Lectures for adults by resident acharya Br. Prabhodji
- Hindu cultural classes from KG through Grade 12 in three bay area locations.
- Indian vernacular language classes
- Bhagavat Gita Chanting and chanting competition.
- Vedic Chanting
- Bhajan choir group
- Study groups
- Pooja's and festivals
- Summer/Thanksgiving camps
- Year end cultural program by BV/YK students
- OM Run
- Community services: Sandwich and sleeping bag programs for homeless.
- Yoga classes

(4) Tell me something about BV/YK?

CMSJ BV/YK is a program to teach Hindu Culture from KG through 12th Grade in a structured manner. The curriculum covers major aspects of the religion - starting from simple Prayers, stories from Puranas, Ramayana, Srimad Bhagavatam and Mahabharata for the elementary levels and ending with Srimad Bhagavad Gita for grades 10-12. Various methods such as art-work, story telling and enacting, solving puzzles, independent thinking with discussion on relevant topics in Vedanta are used. Language classes are also provided to compliment this learning Process.

CMSJ offers these classes in three Bay area locations – San Jose, Fremont and San Ramon. For detailed information on curriculum, school locations and class timings check under Bala Vihar section in <http://www.chinmaya-sanjose.org>

(5) Who teaches BV/YK classes?

BV/YK classes are taught by well trained volunteer teachers who have love for Hindu culture as well as imparting this knowledge to our children.

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2. BV eligibility:

CMSJ BV/YK program is only for students from KG through 12th grade. Currently we do not have classes for kids younger than 5 years old. You MUST register your child to the same grade level as he/she is attending in regular school irrespective of their prior knowledge about the subject matter. No exceptions allowed.

(1) Why don't you allow children younger than five years even though they know some slokas, can identify various Gods and showing keen interest in Hindu culture?

Kids younger than five are not yet ready to sit in class room for 1 full hour listen and follow the teacher's instructions. We suggest you continue to provide the environment for the child at home to have interest and register when they start attending KG.

(2) My child is in 5th grade. He/she has never attended a BV class. Can I start him/her in 4th grade?

No. BV/YK is a continuous education program on Hindu culture and its values. You MUST register at the same grade level as he/she is in regular school.

(3) We recently moved from another place and missed few months. Can my child still register BV/YK?

Yes. BV/YK is a continuous education program on Hindu culture and its values. Students benefit irrespective of when they start BV/YK.

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3. Parent's role:

(1) Are parents allowed to attend BV/YK classes?

No. Only assigned class teacher(s) and helpers are allowed in the class room. A new parent may check the class during the first two weeks of the school year after getting prior permission from Principal.

(2) What is expected of parents?

- Register on time.
- Ensure the students are in class on time.
- Pick them after the class. Outside the classroom it is your responsibility to take care of the child.
- Discuss the materials taught in the class with your child(ren).
- Follow the various rules in and around the school (parking lot etc.)
- Respond to emails from class teachers as and when necessary.
- Be familiar with CERT requirements.
- If your child is starting late, help them to catch up on topics they missed.

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4. BV/YK Registration Process:

BV/YK registration is done by filling out the online only registration form. The link for this online only registration is at the top of home page. It is also accessible through the Registration sub section under “Bala Vihar” located on left side of home page.

Follow the link and fill out this registration form. On completion of all necessary information, you can see the total fee at the end of the form before you submit the form to complete the registration.

No onsite computer facilities are available for registration. Printout copies are NOT accepted.

The main emphasis of Chinmaya Mission is to educate on Hindu culture. Languages compliment that learning. No language only registration is allowed. The student must be registered and attend BV classes before they are allowed to take language classes.

On submission of the online form you will receive a confirmation email to the email ID entered in the form. Hence it is important that you give an email ID you normally use and enter the email ID without any error. If you do not see this email within 30 mts., check your spam/bulk folder. Keep a copy of this confirmation email for tax purposes.

The assigned class room information is located under “Student information” in the confirmation email. On BV/YK day drop/pick the child in/from the specified room.

Even if you want to send a check for the fee, the online form need to be filled and the confirmation number included in the check.

Sept 30th is deadline for registering without late fees.

(1) What are the things one should be aware of before submitting the form to complete the registration?

Once you submit the registration form any change involves manual intervention of a volunteer. We very strongly recommend you to think all your choices before registering.

- Ensure all the information including the email ID is entered correctly.
- Select the BV/YK grade level to be same as the grade in regular school.
- Language only registration is not allowed.
- Ensure you have selected the right payment option.
- Once submitted you will not be able to add/delete/change info in the form.
- Set your email server options to allow emails from Chinmaya Mission.

(2) What is the difference between a member and sponsor?

Membership and sponsorship are two methods of supporting CMSJ BV/YK and other activities. During the registration process an option is provided to select either membership or sponsorship. Sponsors will get two copies of Mananam book per year.

(3) I do not have any child(ren) attending BV/YK. How can I become a member or sponsor?

Fill out the non BV/YK registration form.

(4) I have registered last year. Do I need to register this year also?

Yes. The registration is annual.

(5) The fall season is going to end. Can I still register for BV classes?

Yes.

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5. Classroom selection:

The registration and class room assignment process is completely automated. The class rooms are assigned based on the number of class rooms available for a particular session, facilities available within a class room, anticipated number of students in that grade level, the need for balancing the strength of all classes in a particular grade level, etc. So we do NOT allow any choice in the selection of class rooms for any reasons including the following.

- Car pooling with another family.
- Kids wanting to be with their friends.
- Twins
- Familiar with a particular teacher
- Children attending different sessions (San Jose)

In San Jose center, currently our resources do not allow us to have all the 13 grades and other classes to be conducted at the same time.

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6. Fees:

There is a nominal annual fee associated with BV/YK classes. All other classes are free. Once you fill out the registration form with all required details and options, the total fee will be shown at the end of the form before you submit the form to complete the registration process.

The school year is from early Sept to late May. If you start classes in winter session (January) there will be a payment in January at the time of registration for current year and another for the next school year starting in Sept.

There is no prorating in the event of joining late.

For BV/YK registration, CMSJ accepts only check or credit card.

(1) I do not want to give out my credit card details. How can I register?

Select the “check” option and send a check to

Attn: BV Registration
Sandeepany, 1050 Park Ave., San Jose, CA 95126.

In the check include the confirmation number from the confirmation email.

(2) I selected check option. But I would like to pay by plastic card. How can I do that?

Once you submit the registration form any change involves manual intervention by a volunteer. We strongly recommend you to think all your options before submitting the registration form. If you want to change, send your request to the email id at the end of FAQ.

(3) Can a fee paid in a different Chinmaya center be transferred to CMSJ?

No. All Chinmaya Mission centers are independent centers.

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7. Cancellation and refunds:

CMSJ's policy is to provide refunds only in extraordinarily extenuating circumstances approved by CMSJ Principal Uma Jayarajasingam. Any approved refunds may take 4 to 6 weeks.

Once you submit the registration form any change involves manual intervention by a volunteer. We strongly recommend you to think all your options before submitting the registration form.

(1) I want to cancel language classes. How can I get the refund?

The fee depends on the total number of class units taken by all the siblings in the family. There is a sibling discount included in the fee structure. Depending on this there may or may not be an amount to be refunded. Send your request to the email ID at the end of the FAQ. It will take 4 to 6 weeks to process the request.

(2) We are moving to India (or to another Chinmaya Mission center). Can we get partial refund of the fee?

No. The fee is not refundable or transferrable.

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8. Registration problem(s):

(1) CMSJ website is down and I am unable to register. Can I fill out a paper form?

No. There is no paper form for registration. All registrations MUST be completed online.

- Try to login at a different time or try using a different computer.
- Log on to our web site www.chinmaya-sanjose.org and follow the registration link located at the top of home page. Do not use old links stored in your computer or links got through Google searches.

(2) I always get a “File not found” error. How can I register?

Usually you get this error message if you try to access the registration page through the following link found through online search.

<https://horse.he.net/~cmsj/balavihar/2004/bvregistration.html>

As the link says this is a 2004 link. Log on to our web site www.chinmaya-sanjose.org and follow the registration link located at the top to the registration form

(3) I registered yesterday and have not got the confirmation email. Can u send me the confirmation email?

The confirmation email is sent to the email ID provided in the registration form. Please check this email ID. Also check your spam/bulk folder.

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9. Changes after registration:

Once you submit the registration form any change involves manual intervention by a volunteer. We strongly recommend you to think all your options before submitting the registration form so as to avoid any subsequent changes. For any change send your request to the email ID at the end of FAQ. Include the confirmation email number. There may be additional fee depending on the nature of the change requested.

(1) Can we move from one center to another?

All three centers – San Jose, Fremont and San Ramon come under one CMSJ management. You can move between them.

Please note the teachers and class timings will be different. To make the change send an email to the coordinator (contact person) of the center where you would like to move and current teacher informing about the change you would like to make.

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10. Tax deductions:

Part of the fee is tax deductible. You should consult your tax consultant for specific details. CMSJ non profit ID is 77-0315648

The contribution statement is usually sent out in Jan/Feb. If you do not have any other contribution other than BV registration then you can also use the confirmation email sent out immediately after the registration until you receive the separate contribution statement.

There will be only one consolidated statement per family.

(1) Whom to contact for any corrections?

[Pushpa Sreeharsha](#) OR
[Meena Kapadia](#)

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11. Class requirements, attendance and Holidays:

(1) Are there text books and where can we get these books?

Yes. These books are available in the book store usually kept outside the class rooms on the day of BV/YK. They are also available in the book store in Sandeepany.

(2) Are there any declared holidays during the school year? Is there BV classes during winter break?

The BV/YK classes are held in sync with regular public school system. There are no classes during Thanksgiving and President's day weekend as well as during Christmas/New Year Holidays. On rare occasion the classes maybe cancelled if there is no access to the facilities.

(3) Is there any attendance rule?

The attendance is based on honor system. It is expected the students attend all the classes and be in time for the class.

(4) What is assembly and what is done during that time?

Fremont and San Ramon have common assembly time for the entire school. Parents are requested to attend this assembly session. All students (and parents) sing aarati song, take Chinmaya pledge. Students and parents are informed of upcoming events and other Mission related news items.

In San Jose center there is no common assembly. The song and pledges are done in class rooms.

(5) We are late in joining BV/YK. How can the kids catch up on what they have missed?

Even though the subject matter is repeated in the class, parents are strongly advised to review the class material with their child(ren). Use the commute time in car to listen to the stotrams and slokas taught in the class. You can purchase a CD containing all the slokas taught in the class.

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12. Language classes:

Language classes are provided as a complement to culture classes. To register and attend a language class the student must first register for culture classes. Language only registration is NOT provided.

Different set of languages are offered in different Bay area centers. Check <http://www.chinmaya-sanjose.org/new/balavihar.shtml> for the languages offered in these centers. The languages offered in the center you have selected (in the registration form) are listed as a pull down menu. Select your choice of language from this pull down menu.

- No prior knowledge of the language is needed to attend these classes.
- Language co-ordinators will evaluate new students for their class level.
- It is preferable to start from the beginning of school year. If you are starting late, check with the language teacher and help the student to come upto speed to the level expected by the teacher.

(1) What Hindi level should I choose in the registration form?

If you are a returning student then you should be aware of the level you were in before. For New students select based on the grade level. Teachers will evaluate and may change the level.

(2) What is the procedure for moving from one language class to another?

Talk to both language co-ordinators before making the move.

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13. Gita chanting classes:

Both adults and kids can attend Gita chanting classes. In San Jose center there are many chanting classes to accommodate the students attending different sessions. There are classes to accommodate new as well as returning students. To attend the Gita chanting classes check the Gita chanting button in the registration form, even if class timings are not announced at the registration time.

For Gita chanting class timings check <http://www.chinmaya-sanjose.org/new/bvloesch.shtml>.

(1) Do I need to attend these classes to participate in the annual gita chanting competition?

You can participate in CMSJ's Gita chanting competition even if you are not attending the Gita chanting classes.

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14. Swaranjali classes:

Swaranjali is CMSJ's bhajan singing choir group. They perform during CMSJ's various pooja's and festivals. These classes are offered in all the three centers. They are taught by teachers proficient in carnatic music and bhajans.

(1) Is there a fee for Swaranjali classes?

There is no separate fee for registered BV/YK students. Just select the Swaranjali button in the registration form. If you are not a BV/YK student fillout the Chinmaya Non Bala Vihar Membership form and contact the Swaranjali teacher in the selected center.

(2) Who is the contact person for Swaranjali?

San Jose: [Prema Sriram](#)

Fremont: [Natana Valiveti](#)

San Ramon: [Shailaja Dixit](#).

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15. Vedic math classes:

Vedic (cognitive) math classes are currently offered only in San Ramon center.

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16. Vedic chanting classes:

Vedic chanting classes are currently offered only in San Jose center.

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17. Yoga classes:

Yoga classes are conducted in San Jose and San Ramon centers (whenever Bala Vihar is in session). These classes are based on the policy of 'take what you need and donate what you can'. There is a suggestion of \$10/class.

For class timings check <http://www.chinmaya-sanjose.org/new/bvlocsch.shtml>

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18. Volunteering:

All work in CMSJ is done on a volunteer basis. Chinmaya Mission welcomes persons who are interested in volunteering for various sevas like teaching, tiffin seva, emergency response team, poojas and festivals. To join our volunteer team contact our principal [Uma Jayarajasingam](#).

For any unanswered questions related to BV/YK registration please contact

San Jose: [Ravi Ranganathan](#)

Fremont: [Lakshmy Prakash](#)

San Ramon: [Meena Kapadia](#)

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