



# schoolrise

F O U N D A T I O N

*NINA RELUNIA*

I chose to volunteer at Sunshine National school due to the great experience my friend had when she volunteered. I arrived at Kathmandu International Airport a little scared of what was to come but also excited to experience a different culture first hand. I was picked up by my host family and they made me feel welcome instantly. During my two weeks there I lived with the Dhakal family and I had a comfortable room above the school. Neeru and Punja treated me like family and provided everything that I needed. The meals I had there were some of the best Nepalese food I've ever had and to this day I still can't find anything that comes close.

On my first day I was introduced to the children and while it was overwhelming to see them all staring back at you, their smiling faces made my heart melt. For the two weeks I was there I taught all the levels. While this was at times challenging, especially since I can't speak Nepalese, it was one of the most rewarding experiences for me. To have the kids be excited just to see you then when they participated and enjoyed the class that you have taught, I felt like I was making a difference. We sang nursery rhymes with the smaller kids, we talked about the differences in the Australian culture and the Nepalese culture with the 10 year olds, we even did a little zumba, we talked about the future and what they wanted to achieve with the teenagers. The kids were amazing and so affectionate and enthusiastic. They just wanted to learn everything about you and your country.

During my time there I was able to meet another fellow volunteer – Wiebren. We only spent a week together but we got along very well and would often hang out after school sometimes grabbing a coffee in the square. From that short time spent together at Sunshine we have kept in touch and are still good friends. The friends you make from this experience can sometimes be lifelong ones.

I was so sad to leave the school and the kids. There were tears spilled on my last day – all on my part as the kids only asked me “why are you sad Nina maam?” Their smiling faces will always stay with me. I hope in a small way I have made a difference in their lives because they have made a difference in mine.