

## Sri Lankan Tales ~ Day 1



**E**ight enthusiastic Grade 5 student travellers from Primary School along with their teacher escort Ms. Elvin, are visiting Sri Lanka from 18<sup>th</sup> December, for a period of six days. They arrived at Colombo late at night on the 18<sup>th</sup> accompanied by Ms Pracheta Jaitley, the Programme Director from Explorers. After a well-deserved sleep at the hotel, the students left for Pinnawala early in the morning to visit the Elephant Orphanage. The picturesque drive from Negombo to Pinnawala kept the students engaged. They were pleasantly surprised to see coconut groves, paddy fields and even mango laden trees. At Pinnawala the students watched the bathing ritual of the fostered elephants and interacted with them. They explored the beautiful elephant park and learned about how the elephants are rescued and rehabilitated there. From there they proceeded to visit the Golden Temple - Dambulla Caves. A World Heritage Site, this is a sacred pilgrimage site for the last 22 centuries. The students were amazed to know that the cave monastery, with its five sanctuaries, is the largest, best preserved cave-temple. Their tour guide, Mr. Douglas kept the students engaged with stories from mythology and answered all the curious questions with enthusiasm. The next destination for the students was the Sigiriya Rock Fortress. This place has been recognized as the UNESCO world heritage site and was the largest and most sophisticated single construction project ever undertaken in ancient Sri Lanka. It was an exciting first day in the beautiful country.

