



Aspire. Achieve. Be the Change



The Akanksha Foundation is a non-profit organization with a mission to provide children from low-income communities with a high-quality education, enabling them to maximize their potential and transform their lives. Akanksha works primarily in the field of education, addressing formal education by initiating school reform through its School Project. Currently, Akanksha reaches out to the 8000 children and 2000 alumni through its 21 schools in Mumbai and Pune.

**Position:** Lead - Learning Specialist/ Special Educator

**Function/Team:** Learning Support/ SEN

**Location:** Pune

**Compensation:** Based on skill sets, experience and sector standards

**Overview of the Team:** Overview of the Team: The Learning Support / Special education team is uniquely positioned to implement Akanksha's vision that aims at the holistic development of each

child. The team strongly believes in operating as a part of one large ecosystem where it partners and collaborates with other stakeholders. At Akanksha we teach using a self-designed curriculum based on the principles of authenticity, inquiry and skill-development. It trains teachers and school leaders to develop strong instructional practices. The team works to identify and bridge achievement gaps through systematic data-driven inquiry. The team also supports schools in identifying and executing goals that develop conceptual knowledge along with the skills required for achieving full potential in children. The team aspires to assist and support students to become independent learners who rely on their strengths and abilities by appreciating, accepting and respecting individual differences.

**What your role will entail:**

**A. Learning support team Management**

- a. Set system and structure for the department and ensure its aligned to the vision and mission.
- b. Work with the team to develop goals in line with the school's overall vision and plan.
- c. Resource planning and budgeting.

- d. Support and professional development
  - i. Coach, mentor and train team of special educator/learning support teachers.
  - ii. Hold joint meetings between school and learning support / specialist to build capability – trainings across both cities as required.
  - iii. Lead the team meetings once every week to address all issues.
  - iv. Set department goals and oversee individual goals.
  - v. Create a training module in the field of cognitive science - learning, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), inclusion and differentiation.
- e. Develop a department SEN process which we'll be followed at network level.
- f. Guiding the team in the development of the individual learning profiles or IEPs and the development of differentiated instructional strategies for teachers as per the need.
- g. Plan spaces where special educators can collaborate with other teams like counsellors, social workers, teachers and IS.
- h. Help the special educators to plan PD for schools and parents.
- i. Ensure data is updated and available for audits.
- j. Creating spaces for the city teams (Mumbai - Pune) to share best practices.
- k. Supporting special educators to build home support plans, understanding and supporting educational objectives, learning expectations and behavioral standards for parents having children with special/ different needs.

## **B. Support School Team**

- a. Building Awareness
  - i. Educating School Leaders, and teachers on Learning Needs through central and school based professional development sessions
  - ii. Educating various stakeholders on strategies to include children with disabilities in all aspects of education
- b. Develop strong systems and internal processes at schools for maintaining records.
- c. Work with School Leaders/Learning support to develop their ability to handle school-level issues independently
- d. Take responsibility for one large school by getting more actively involved, figuring out how to create a more sustainable system especially when schools grow in size.
- e. Developing a resourcing plan for various stages of school development with government liaison support.
- f. Support government liaison for School Admin management and PD
- g. Develop empowerment plans for schools and ensure effective execution in schools.
- h. Conduct empowerment sessions in a school.

- i. Build capacity of the special educators to run empowerment sessions.
- j. Guiding school team toward formal assessment with outside agencies.
- k. Guiding schools with students' transitional plan.
- l. Constructing protocols to support the school team regarding the implementation and execution of the IEPs.

### **C. Network Research**

- a. Identify reasons for learning gaps
- b. Identify strategies and initiate in-school processes to reduce learning gaps / difficulties (across grades and in adolescents)
- c. To identify and initiate systems and processes to prevent learning gaps from setting in, in the younger grades
- d. Develop a variety of systems that cater to and balance the unique needs in each school

### **D. Central team support & collaboration**

- a. Create systems and spaces for special educators to collaborate with other stakeholders.
- b. Build awareness and plan sessions for the central team regarding inclusion, UDL, different learning needs and differentiation.
- c. Updating the central team with the government documents with regards to children with disabilities.
- d. Planning and collaboration between the 2 city special educators team.
- e. Coordinating with the outside stakeholders and agencies.

## **What You need for the Position**

### **Education:**

- Master's/Bachelor's degree in Special Education - RCI No.

### **Experience:**

- Minimum 5 years of experience of working with children.
- Experience in diagnosing and assessing learning disorders
- Some prior experience of working with the learning problems of children with special needs like autism, ADHD, mentally challenged etc.
- Experience in conducting workshops related to the area of expertise

### **Knowledge/Skills:**

- Thorough knowledge of the stages of child development.

- Sensitivity in understanding children
- Knowledge of best practices and trends in special education
- Working knowledge of educational technology applications
- Ability to collaborate with different stakeholders
- Excellent Communication skills
- Good facilitation skills
- Organizational and Planning skills with an ability to prioritize and balance work
- Adaptability to different school and community cultures
- Understanding of children's diverse learning needs
- Documentation skills
- Ability to multitask and handle pressure
- Leadership and people management skills