

Opening doors of hope for Dyslexic children

Not all students are blessed with the same kind of abilities. Every child is different and has a varied approach towards learning. With the support and encouragement of his parents and teachers, a child can achieve even beyond his capabilities. To bring about a revolution in society, the management of St. Andrews School, Bowenpally recently inaugurated 'Akira', a full-fledged learning centre for children with Dyslexia, in the school campus. Akira evaluates the individual needs of each student throughout the academic year

and instils in them the skills required for integration into mainstream schooling. Various skill building activities using multi-sensory methods have been designed for students, as a part of their curriculum to nurture their strengths and abilities. Akira, set up in association with the Madras Dyslexia Association (MDA), has trained professionals and educators from MDA.

"All the therapies at Akira are practised through playful activities catering to the interests of students. These therapies address the shortcomings in a child and develop their fine motor abilities, concentration, attention and sensory integration," said Dipa Priya, therapist at Akira.



The remedial programme is offered for a minimum of one year to two years at the most, depending on the individual needs of a child and the intensity of remediation required.

Children between 6-10 years can enrol for the programme. The school caps enrolment to 30 students a year with only five students per class to give maximum attention to each child.

"I love Akira. I like climbing the ladders and playing on the swing here," said nine-year-old Aaradhya, who has been a part of Akira for five months now. Aaradhya, who once looked for excuses to skip school is now often the first one to reach.

"Akira has been a boon to my son and my family. It has done wonders for his self-confi-

dence. Apart from reading and writing a lot more and being able to solve math problems, he is also able to express himself better," said Sheetal Kanchivotla, Aaradhya's mother.

Emphasising on the importance of spreading awareness on learning disorders like Dyslexia, the director of Akira, Alana Emanuel said, "Education is a service. In line with that, society needs schools like Akira for children with certain special needs. We want to raise awareness about Dyslexia and help parents deal with it effectively. Our motive is to break the stigma and help a child raise above his disabilities." Akira also has colourful classrooms which makes learning fun for the children. — Ankita Rath

