

The Orchid School, Pune
LSA - Learning Support Assistant
2023- 2024



Date: 13th July 2023

Circular No. TOS/FRO/CIR/FS/23-24/09

The Orchid School has always taken great pride in being an inclusive school and has taken multiple initiatives to promote the growth and learning of all the students with their varying potential and needs. One such initiative is the LSA or the Learning Support Assistant.

The LSAs are parents of a student from TOS who are allocated to students whose struggles hinder their academic growth and potential. They assist these students in a classroom setting and support them in various ways based on their difficulties.

Students with learning difficulties (diagnosed) and severe academic gaps will benefit with a LSA as a one - on - one support will help them with their struggles.

Volunteers for LSA will have an orientation session during which they will be explained their role and responsibilities thoroughly. Meetings will be conducted with the Counsellor and Special Educator to address concerns and strategies to be used with the students as and when required.

Parent Volunteers as LSA

Parent involvement as a Learning Support Assistant is purely **on a volunteering basis**. However, since it is a matter of student-engagement, a structure will be followed. The volunteers will be informed about their dates and time well in advance. The LSA for a student will be decided upon the **volunteer's availability and student's requirement**.

Parents will need to come in **minimum twice a week**, with **consistency for one term**. Parent commitment for the same is important. Parent will engage with **only one allotted student** at a time. Only certain students from Class I to VIII will be allotted an LSA. **Parents will not be allotted as LSA to a student in their own child's class.**

Role and Responsibility of a Learning Support Assistant

The LSA's assistance will always be in the presence of the student's teacher. The LSA's task is to aid the child in the process executed by the teacher. Following are descriptors and instructions on how the LSA is required to function in the process of assisting the student in the mainstream classroom:

1. Assist the student by helping in focusing and completing task allotted by the teacher
2. Help the student organise the table and work. This can be done using verbal (single words, simple sentences) or non-verbal prompts (like tapping on the table or book, making eye contact, gestures) and by breaking down instructions given by the teacher.

3. Encourage/prompt the student to do the work in case she/he is struggling with content level. LSA can reach out to the teacher if they need clarity about the task so as to help the student
4. Ensure that there are minimal things on the desk by asking the child to clear the space and only keeping the necessary books on the table. This is so that the child does not get distracted.
5. Speak to student in a soft and low tone
6. Be patient and respectful towards the student
7. Repeat instructions in the preferred language and then in English

It is important to note that LSAs are not teachers, Counsellors or Special Educators, therefore they do not teach, offer any therapy, remediation or any other form of support beyond the classroom.

Guidelines for the LSA Program

1. While participation in this program is on a volunteering basis, LSAs are expected to adhere to the schedules and thereby respect the commitment they have made, as it has to do with the everyday functioning of the student.
2. LSAs are expected to maintain a supportive and non-judgmental approach with the student. All interaction with the student must be in accordance with this approach.
3. All LSAs must maintain strict confidentiality with respect to any communication with the student, any information about the student that they might have access to, or any other data that might be part of the LSA program.
4. LSAs are required to not initiate or indulge in any conversations about the students, with their parents, any other students or adults. If parents of the students have queries, the LSA is to guide them to the concerned Class Teacher or the Wellness Team.
5. If any LSA has any observations or concerns about the student, the class or teacher during the process of assisting, she/he must refrain from addressing it then and there. In such situations the LSA is expected to share these observations/concerns with the Wellness Team later.
6. The LSA is expected to support their allocated student in the task assigned, and otherwise must not be a part of any other conversations or interactions. It is essential for the LSA to be as inconspicuous to the larger class as far as possible to allow the teaching-learning process to take place smoothly.
7. TOS follows strict policies related to student safety, part of which is the Zero Tolerance with regards to Abuse and No Touch Policy. We request all LSAs to adhere to the same and seek clarity in times of confusion from the teacher or the Wellness Team.

Thank you. TOS Wellness Team


Kavita Bedekar

Special Educator


Atreyi Saha

Vice Principal


Sangeeta Kapoor

Principal

