



**INDUS ACTION**

# **JOURNEYS OF INCLUSION**

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**PERSONAL STORIES FROM RTE SECTION  
12(1)(C): VOICES OF PARENTS AND SCHOOLS**

## **About Indus Action**

Indus Action (IA) is committed to bridging the gap between vulnerable citizens and the welfare benefits they are entitled to. In the first decade, we have enabled 10 lakh+ citizens, and by 2027, we aim to enable 1 crore+ vulnerable citizens with sustained access to legislated rights and welfare entitlements.

India faces the challenge of chronic poverty, with millions living just above the poverty line where 90% are employed in the informal economy. Unforeseen events like illness, unemployment, or natural disasters can easily push them back into poverty. With ~81 cr. Indians living on food security entitlements, there is an urgent need for a robust social safety net, such as insurance and pension schemes, which can reduce poverty and inequality while fostering inclusive growth. However, accessing these benefits is often fraught with difficulties such as multiple visits to government offices, and complex processes, which result in daily wage loss and ultimately lead to citizens not accessing these welfare schemes that they are entitled to.

Since 2013, Indus Action has worked on social welfare delivery across 16 states of India. We work with communities, governments, and civil society to achieve a less-than-3-step citizen journey to access entitlements and strengthen the country's social protection systems. We enable this through three core pillars: Technology, Process Redesign, and State Capacity Building. Since 2013, our work has supported over 10+ lakh citizens accessing welfare entitlements worth INR 1,375 crores.

## **Acknowledgements**

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We are deeply thankful to Ms. Veena Mohan, Principal of Pragya Public School (KG Nagar), Ms. Veena, Principal of MM School (Shivaji Nagar); Ms. Nancy Basilica, Principal and Ms. Christina from United International School (Kannuru) and Ms. Esther Samuel, Principal of Sandra Ricketts (Kothanur) for their generous facilitation and assistance in connecting us with parents and students. These schools stand as exemplary models of inclusive education, demonstrating a strong commitment to the spirit of the RTE 12.1.c provision by fostering diverse and equitable learning environments. Our deepest appreciation goes to all the parents and students who courageously shared their stories of hope and inclusion. Their experiences and perspectives form the heart of this report, and we are honoured to bring their voices forward.

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## **About this Report**

This report, titled "***Journeys of Inclusion: Personal Stories from RTE 12.1.c - Voices of Parents and Schools***", captures the experiences and reflections of parents who have availed of the Right to Education (RTE) Act's Section 12.1.c provision and schools who are involved in the implementation of the same. This provision mandates the reservation of 25% of seats in private unaided schools for children from economically weaker sections (EWS) and disadvantaged groups (DG). Through a collection of personal narratives, the **report sheds light on the lived realities, challenges, and successes of stakeholders navigating the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds into mainstream education.** The stories provide valuable insights into the impact of inclusive education on students, families, and school communities, offering recommendations to further strengthen the implementation of this landmark policy.

Schools play a pivotal role in the realization of the RTE Act's vision of inclusive and equitable education. As institutions of learning and growth, they are at the forefront of fostering equitable opportunities for all children, regardless of their socioeconomic background. Under Section 12.1.c, private unaided schools are entrusted with the responsibility of admitting and supporting children from marginalized communities. This requires a commitment to not only academic inclusion but also social and emotional integration. By creating an environment of acceptance, understanding, and collaboration, schools contribute significantly to breaking the cycle of educational disadvantage and nurturing a more inclusive society. The schools mention how students are learning to value diversity and form connections beyond social identity. The perspectives shared in this report **highlight examples of three schools and how they navigate these responsibilities, adapt to challenges, and create meaningful learning experiences for every child.**

### **Somesh\*: Empowered by Education**

Somesh's parents, Anantha and Lakshmi, hail from a modest background. His father works as a salesman, and his mother is a homemaker. With an average monthly income of INR 20,000, affording quality education in a private school was challenging for them. Additionally, as members of the Kuruba community, listed as Scheduled Tribe (ST), they belong to a socially disadvantaged and economically weaker section of society.

Through word of mouth from his father's brother, the family learned about the Right to Education (RTE) 12(1)(c) provision, which reserves seats for children from disadvantaged backgrounds in private schools. Realizing this could be a life-changing opportunity for their son, they applied for admission under the policy rules. Somesh was successfully enrolled in a private school under RTE 12(1)(c). The family chose this school due to its reputation, English-medium instruction and proximity to their home. RTE 12(1)(c) allowed them to provide their son with education without the burden of hefty tuition fees. He was admitted to Class 1 and is now in Class 7.

Since joining the school, Somesh has received immense support from his teachers, who guide him in academics and project work. Initially, after the lockdown, he had lost interest in studies, but the school played a crucial role in reigniting his enthusiasm for learning. The structured environment and regular parent-teacher communication ensured his steady academic progress. Although he is not actively involved in extracurricular activities, he enjoys spending time with his classmates and fostering social



skills and friendships. Importantly, the school has ensured that students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) are treated equally, allowing seamless integration with students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Somesh's parents express immense gratitude for the opportunity RTE 12(1)(c) provides. They acknowledge that without this provision, enrolling their child in a private school would have been nearly impossible. They have also observed a significant improvement in their son's academic engagement and overall confidence.

Recognizing the benefits of RTE 12(1)(c), the family has encouraged their neighbours to explore this opportunity. Their efforts led another family in their community to successfully enrol their child under the same provision.

*\*All names of students and parents have been changed to protect identity.*

However, despite the positive impact, the family is now anxious about their son's education after Class 7. The school he currently attends offers education only up to Class 7, and they need to search for a new school for Class 8. Additionally, since the RTE 12(1)(c) provision is not available beyond Class 8, affording private school education for Class 9 and beyond remains a significant challenge.

They recently learned about the discontinuation of new RTE 12(1)(c) admissions under Rule 4 of 2019, which has added to their concerns. They strongly believe that reinstating the provision would help families like theirs access quality education without financial strain.

Somesh's mother shared her thoughts, stating, *"This policy helps poor families like ours. As a homemaker, I depend on my husband's income, and without RTE 12(1)(c), affording a good school would be impossible. We request policymakers to continue supporting families through such provisions."*

### **From Struggles to Success: Karthik's Family Finds Hope in RTE 12(1)(c)**

Karthik, a street vendor selling footwear, and his wife Sunita, a homemaker, have always dreamed of providing their children with the best education possible. With a modest monthly income of INR 15,000, enrolling their children in reputed private schools seemed unattainable. Their eldest son, studying in a private school, was not under the RTE 12(1)(c), which meant bearing significant educational expenses. However, when they learned about RTE 12(1)(c) through newspapers and friends, they saw a ray of hope. They successfully enrolled their second son in a private school as per this provision. This decision turned out to be life-changing for their child and their family.

Their child quickly adapted to the new learning environment. Teachers regularly updated the parents on his academic progress and provided personalized attention to ensure his success. He developed a newfound enthusiasm for studies, waking up at 4.00 AM to complete his homework and prepare for school.

Beyond academics, he actively participated in extracurricular activities, especially Kabaddi, a sport he loves and aspires to pursue seriously. The school's encouragement and the child's exposure to different socioeconomic backgrounds helped him integrate seamlessly with his peers. His friendships blossomed, with classmates visiting his home and inviting him to their celebrations.

The impact of RTE 12(1)(c) went beyond the child's academic and personal growth. Karthik and Sunita became advocates for this provision, guiding 3-4 other parents in their locality to apply for admissions through RTE. They strongly believe that education is the foundation of a brighter future and that every child deserves the opportunity to study in a quality institution, regardless of their financial background. While their experience has been largely positive, Karthik and Sunita recognize some challenges. They have noticed that many reputed private schools do not participate in the RTE 12(1)(c) initiative. They strongly advocate for making it mandatory for all private schools to implement the provision, ensuring that more children benefit.

Their message to policymakers is clear: *“Education and healthcare should be prioritized over other free schemes. We are willing to actively participate in citizen-driven efforts to ensure better educational opportunities for all children.”*

## **From Parents' Dreams to Children's Success: The RTE 12(1)(c) Journey**

In the bustling locality of Basavanagudi, Bengaluru South, a hardworking couple, Prithvi and Madhu, aspired to provide the best education possible for their children despite financial constraints. Prithvi, a vegetable vendor, and Madhu, a grocery shop owner, diligently worked to make ends meet, earning a modest monthly income of INR 25,000–30,000. Their dream was to ensure that their children received a quality education that could open doors to better opportunities.

The couple first learned about the Right to Education (RTE) Act 12(1)(c) through friends and media sources such as newspapers and television. Understanding that RTE 12(1)(c) provided access to private schools for children from economically weaker sections, they saw an opportunity to enroll their daughter into a reputed private school, an opportunity they would have otherwise struggled to afford.



Their daughter, now studying in Grade 7 in a private school, was admitted under RTE 12(1)(c).

Despite initial challenges during the admission process, the principal and school management extended support, ensuring a smooth transition for the child. The family expressed gratitude for the kindness of the teachers and administration, stating, *"We got communication from this school, and when we visited, we found that we could afford it. The teachers and management were very kind, and we are happy about our decision."*

Since joining the school, their daughter has experienced numerous positive changes. Though she initially struggled academically, the teachers provided extra support to help her improve her studies. The school also facilitated extracurricular opportunities, such as sports, which broadened her interests. Although she is not inclined towards school-based sports, she expressed interest in skating, an activity the parents were previously unaware of. This exposure to diverse activities has expanded her worldview and given her the confidence to explore new areas.

The integration into a school with students from various socioeconomic backgrounds has been smooth. The school has fostered an inclusive environment, ensuring that all children receive equal opportunities without discrimination. This supportive ecosystem has helped their daughter build friendships and develop a sense of belonging.

The success of their daughter's education under RTE 12(1)(c) inspired Prithvi and Madhu to spread awareness within their community. They encouraged two other families to apply for RTE admissions,

helping more children access quality education. Their story is a testament to how government initiatives, when implemented effectively, can uplift entire communities.

Despite the benefits, the family acknowledges some challenges. Initial admissions paperwork was cumbersome, but school officials provided assistance. They also incurred additional expenses of approximately INR 20,000 annually for textbooks, uniforms, and other necessities, which the parents managed with difficulty. However, they believe that such an investment in education is invaluable.

The recent government decision to discontinue RTE 12(1)(c) in favor of Rule 4 of 2019 has been a major concern for the family. They believe this decision limits opportunities for underprivileged children. Madhu passionately voiced her opinion: *"The government should continue supporting poor children by providing access to quality education. Instead of stopping this, they can regulate fees to make private schools more affordable for lower-income families."*



### **A Life-changing Opportunity**

Madhav and Hemlata reside in Padmanabha Nagar, Bengaluru South with their 2 children. Madhav is a farmer and Hemlata is a homemaker. They both believed in the power of education to transform lives. Despite their modest monthly income of INR 15,000-20,000, they were determined to provide the best possible education for their children. Through local leaders and community organizations, the family learned about the RTE Act 12(1)(c) provision. This initiative allows children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to receive free education in private schools. Understanding that this could be a life-changing opportunity, the parents decided to apply for their daughter's admission under this provision.

Their daughter secured admission in a reputed private school that was established in the 1980s with a vision to serve underprivileged children. The school, known for its academic excellence and co-curricular activities, provided the right environment for her holistic development. Before enrolling under RTE 12(1)(c), the family would not have been able to afford such an institution. Without this opportunity, they would have had to settle for a different school with fewer facilities and learning opportunities. Today, their daughter actively participates in academic programs, dance and yoga, even winning prizes in inter-school competitions. The parents have observed remarkable improvements in her confidence, social skills, and overall personality.



Despite the support provided under RTE 12(1)(c), the parents still bear some additional expenses, including INR 20,000 annually for textbooks, notebooks, uniforms and private transportation. However, they believe the investment is worthwhile, as the quality of education and exposure their child receives outweighs the financial burden. The biggest challenge the family faced was securing admission under RTE 12(1)(c). However, once their daughter was enrolled, the journey became smoother. The family was disheartened upon learning that the state government had stopped implementing RTE 12(1)(c) and enacted Rule 4 of 2019.

The parents strongly oppose this decision, believing that many underprivileged children will now be deprived of quality education. They had hoped to secure a similar opportunity for their younger child, but with the rule change, their dreams remain uncertain.

## **Education: A Powerful Equaliser**

Nazia, a 33-year-old mother from Shivaji Nagar, Bengaluru North, is determined to provide the best possible future for her family. While she works as a salesperson and her husband takes on carpentry work on a piece-rate basis, their monthly income ranges between INR 20,000 to 25,000. As members of the Muslim Minority community categorized under OBC, they have always valued education as a means to uplift their circumstances.

Nazia's 13-year-old daughter was enrolled in a private school through the Right to Education (RTE) 12.1.c provision. The decision was driven by the school's strong reputation, its minority-led management, and its commitment to supporting underprivileged students through charitable initiatives. The school's focus on quality education and student safety further cemented their choice.

The private school provided a superior learning environment, equipped with better infrastructure and educational resources than nearby government schools. The English-medium instruction broadened the child's learning opportunities and prepared her for a more competitive academic future. To ensure that students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) could keep pace with their peers, the school offered additional coaching and extra classes, bridging any academic gaps. Importantly, the school's management has maintained confidentiality regarding RTE admissions, preventing discrimination and fostering a sense of belonging among all students.



The impact of this opportunity has been profound. Nazia's daughter, who initially struggled with English, has made significant strides in fluency, boosting her overall academic confidence. The school's inclusive approach has enabled her to integrate seamlessly into the student community, overcoming socio-economic barriers.

Nazia is deeply grateful for the opportunity under RTE 12(1)(c); she emphasizes the need for continued support from policymakers to ensure that such opportunities remain available. She passionately advocates for the initiative, encouraging other families to leverage RTE benefits for their children's education. Through her daughter's journey, Nazia has witnessed firsthand how education can be a powerful equalizer, transforming lives and paving the way for a brighter future. Her story is a testament to the success of RTE 12(1)(c) in providing quality education and fostering social integration.

### **Sandra Rickets School: A Beacon for Children's Brighter Futures**

Pushkar and Shradha, residents of K Narayanapura in Bengaluru Urban, are parents striving to provide quality education for their three daughters. Pushkar runs a local salon, while Shradha manages the household. With a monthly income of INR 10,000-15,000, enrolling their children in a reputable private school was financially challenging. However, through the guidance of a local leader, they learned about the RTE 12(1)(c) and successfully secured admission for their middle daughter in an English-medium private school from Class 1. She is now in the 8th standard, having benefited from this opportunity throughout her primary and middle school years.

Prior to RTE 12(1)(c) admission, Pushkar and Shradha had limited schooling options. Their eldest daughter attended an aided school, while their youngest was enrolled in a government institution. The RTE 12(1)(c) provided their middle child with an invaluable opportunity to receive quality education in an English-medium private school, an aspiration that would have otherwise remained out of reach.



This opportunity significantly impacted their daughter's academic

growth. The school offered additional coaching, enabling her to excel without the need for private tuition, an expense the family could not afford. Furthermore, the school actively encouraged participation in extracurricular activities, allowing their daughter to showcase her talent by performing in the annual day dance program.

Education under the RTE 12(1)(c) did more than enhance their daughter's academic journey; it also fostered confidence, discipline, and overall development. Pushkar and Shradha observed remarkable improvements in her communication skills, academic performance, and ability to engage with peers from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. She adapted seamlessly to the school environment, earning praise from her teachers for both her diligence and achievements.

Despite the numerous benefits, the family faced challenges. A primary concern was the limitation of RTE benefits up to the 8th standard. As their daughter neared this threshold, they grew increasingly worried about affording her continued education in the same institution. However, the school administration demonstrated its commitment to supporting students by actively seeking donors and well-wishers to provide financial assistance for RTE beneficiaries beyond the mandated grade level.

Recognizing the transformative impact of RTE, Pushkar and Shradha became vocal advocates of the RTE 12(1)(c) within their community. They encouraged other parents to explore this opportunity, emphasizing how it alleviated their financial burden while significantly improving their daughter's educational prospects. Their testimony inspired several families to enrol their children under RTE 12(1)(c), fostering greater awareness and empowerment within the neighbourhood.

While deeply grateful for the RTE 12(1)(c) initiative, Pushkar and Shradha firmly believe that access to free education should extend beyond the 8th standard. They urge policymakers to consider expanding the provisions under RTE 12(1)(c) to cover education up to the 12th standard, ensuring uninterrupted learning for underprivileged students. Such an extension would provide long-term benefits, equipping children with the necessary skills and qualifications for a brighter future.

## **A Foundation for Learning**

In Geddalahalli, Harish and Sushree, parents of two children, sought access to quality education despite financial constraints. Belonging to a Scheduled Tribe, their limited income made it difficult to enroll their children in private schools. However, the Right to Education (RTE) 12(1)(c) provided an opportunity for their daughter to study in a private school, ensuring she did not miss out on essential learning.

Harish, an auto-rickshaw driver with a rented vehicle, and Sushree, a homemaker, struggled to enroll their daughter in a school during her early years. *“Actually, we didn’t get admission for her in any of the schools during class 1 and lost one year. Next year, one of our cousin brothers informed us about RTE 12(1)(c), and then we submitted applications and got admission. This school is a low-budget school referred to by him,”* Harish shared.



Their daughter, now studying in 7th grade in a private school under the RTE 12(1)(c), has made significant progress. The parents beam with pride as they see her learning English, a skill they believe will open new doors for her. They also recognize that the opportunity given to their daughter has ensured she did not lose another academic year.

The impact of RTE 12(1)(c) has extended beyond just academics. Despite the school lacking a playground and extracurricular facilities, the couple appreciates that their child is being given equal opportunities, regardless of her socioeconomic background. They acknowledge that while the school has limitations compared to other private institutions, it has still provided their daughter a solid foundation for learning.

Their younger son, now in 1st grade, is enrolled in an aided school, not under the RTE 12(1)(c). Observing the stark differences in learning opportunities, they remain grateful that their daughter could benefit from the government initiative. However, with the state implementing Rule 4 of 2019, which restricts the implementation of RTE 12(1)(c), limiting options to the parents.

*“We were told by the school that RTE is only up to the 8th standard. We are thinking about how the education can be continued with minimum expenses. Also, we need a good school,”* they express with concern. Their hope is that policymakers will reconsider Rule 4, allowing parents to choose better schools for their children, ensuring that quality education remains accessible to all.

Despite the challenges, Harish and Sushree have actively encouraged other parents in their locality to explore RTE 12(1)(c). *“Yes, we recommended it to other parents. But we told them to take admissions in schools with better infrastructure,”* they advise.

## Overcoming Constraints, Helping Children Succeed

Mukesh and Gitanjali, a hardworking parents from the Scheduled Tribe (ST) community, reside in Horamavu, KR Puram, Bengaluru Urban. With limited financial resources and a monthly income of around ₹15,000. Mukesh is a driver and they had always aspired to provide the best possible education for their children. However, financial constraints made it challenging to enroll their children in private schools, which they believed could offer better learning opportunities.

The parents first heard about the RTE 12(1)(c) through their friends. Understanding that it was designed to support underprivileged children by providing free education in private schools, they saw it as a beacon of hope. They applied for the same and successfully secured admission for their son in a reputed private school under RTE 12(1)(c). *"Children from our neighborhood go to the same school. We applied for the same school and got admission. Now, our children can go together."*



Before enrolling in the private school, their son was attending a local government school. The shift to a private institution under RTE 12(1)(c) brought significant positive changes in his academic journey. Despite facing initial challenges in navigating the application process, the family persevered. Their son, now studying in the 7th grade, has shown remarkable progress in both academics and extracurricular activities.

The school has provided a well-rounded education, integrating him into a diverse socio-economic environment. He actively participates in sports and has developed increased confidence and discipline. According to Mukesh and Gitanjali, he is now more interested in his studies and exhibits improved behavior compared to other children in their neighborhood who could not avail of this opportunity. *"He is showing confidence and interest in studies. He is more disciplined compared to other children in our neighborhood."*

While the family is immensely grateful for the benefits of the RTE 12(1)(c), they also face challenges. A major concern is the lack of RTE provision beyond the 8th grade, which forces families like theirs to find alternative educational institutions. Although the school is trying to secure donors to support students beyond the RTE provision, the uncertainty remains a source of anxiety for them.

Despite the hurdles, Mukesh and Gitanjali remain firm advocates of the RTE 12(1)(c). They have encouraged other parents in their community to take advantage of the program. They strongly believe

that extending the opportunity up to the 10th standard would help children complete their secondary education in the same institution, avoiding disruptions in their academic journey.

## **Pragya Public School: Fostering Inclusivity and Academic Growth**

Pragya Public School, located at 110/1 Bull Temple Road, KG Nagar, Bengaluru, has been a pioneer in implementing the Right to Education (RTE) Act 12(1)(c) since 2012. Over the years, the school has witnessed the transformative impact of the policy, fostering inclusivity, academic growth and social integration among students.

Before 2019, the school admitted around 6-8 students per year under the RTE 12(1)(c) provision through a fair lottery system. However, post-2019, due to regulatory changes, no new admissions under this 12(1)(c) have been made. Despite this, the school remains committed to supporting its students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c), ensuring they receive quality education and holistic development.

Currently, the school has three students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) (two boys and one girl). The school used to enroll students from various socio-economic backgrounds, including Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and families with an annual income below ₹3.5 lakh. The school has successfully retained all its students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) until they graduate after 7th standard, with no dropouts.

The students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) at Pragya Public School have shown remarkable improvement in academics and social skills. Their ability to adapt to a structured learning environment, engage with peers and develop confidence has been noteworthy. Additionally, students enrolled under regular process have also benefited, learning to value diversity and form connections beyond social identity. Parents of students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) express immense satisfaction, especially witnessing their children confidently wearing school uniforms and communicating in English. Regular interactions during parent meetings help keep them informed and engaged in their child's progress.



While the school lacks dedicated sports and dance instructors, students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) have actively participated in dance competitions and hobby classes. Their enthusiasm and talent are recognized and encouraged during school events, providing them with opportunities to showcase their skills.



One of the biggest challenges the school faces is delayed government reimbursements. From 2019 to 2022, no funds were received, adding financial strain. Additionally, the cumbersome documentation process for students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) and corruption in the system create hurdles. The school management, however, continues to navigate these challenges with perseverance.

Parents of students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) often struggle to support their children academically, face confusion regarding future schooling after 8th standard, and encounter difficulties in processing scholarships. Pragya Public School has taken proactive measures to assist them:

1. **Extra classes for academically weaker students**, ensuring students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) receive additional support.
2. **Guidance for post-8th standard admissions**, helping parents secure seats in other schools.
3. **Assistance in scholarship applications**, with the principal personally aiding parents in paperwork and follow-ups.

Many students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) who graduated from Pragya Public School continued their education in aided or government schools, performing well in 9th and 10th-grade board exams. The strong foundation laid during their formative years has enabled them to excel academically and pursue further education with confidence. Despite systemic challenges, Pragya Public School remains steadfast in its commitment to the principles of RTE 12(1)(c). The school believes that education should be accessible to all, and the positive changes witnessed in students reaffirm their dedication to this cause. By nurturing young minds and supporting them beyond just academics, Pragya Public School stands as a testament to the power of inclusive education.

*"Despite challenges, Pragya Public School remains committed to RTE 12(1)(c) fostering inclusivity and academic growth for underprivileged students,"* says Ms. Veena Mohan, Principal.

## **MM School, Shivaji Nagar's Commitment to Inclusive Education**

Since 2012, MM School, located on Chikka Bazar Road, Shivaji Nagar, has been committed to implementing the Right to Education (RTE) Act 12.1.c. Under the leadership of Principal Veena Nesom, the school has played a pivotal role in providing free and quality education to underprivileged students. Despite facing financial and administrative challenges, the school has witnessed the transformative power of inclusive education, leaving a lasting impact on students, their families, and the community.

MM School admitted its first batch of students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) in the academic year 2012-13. However, after 2016, the institution faced a major setback when government reimbursements stopped. Despite this, the school remained committed to its mission, ensuring that students who had already enrolled continued to receive quality education and support. The school also faced additional hurdles as a minority



institution, including renewal and approval challenges under RTE 12.1.c. Yet, with resilience and dedication, the management navigated these difficulties, focusing on student welfare above all.

Over the years, students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) at MM School have flourished academically and socially. The school ensured equal opportunities for all students by offering:

- **Counseling and mentorship** to guide students through personal and academic challenges.
- **Financial aid for books and uniforms**, ensuring that no student felt left behind.
- **Extra tuition and additional learning materials** to support those struggling academically.
- **Encouragement to participate in extracurricular activities**, such as dance and sports during school events.

The impact of these efforts is evident in the seamless integration of students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) with the rest of the student body. The school fostered an environment where all students learned together, erasing any distinctions based on economic backgrounds. Many RTE alumni remain connected through an active alumni WhatsApp group, demonstrating the strong bonds built during their schooling years.

Parents of students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) have expressed deep gratitude for the education and care their children received at MM School. Many students who graduated have continued their studies

successfully, some even securing admission to prestigious institutions. One notable example is a former RTE student who cleared the entrance test for St. Joseph's College on the first attempt. Several alumni return to the school to express their appreciation to their teachers, a testament to the nurturing environment provided by MM School.

Despite the school's best efforts, parents faced concerns such as financial difficulties, securing admission in other schools post-7th standard, and the inability to support their children's studies at home. In response, MM School's teachers stepped up, offering additional classes to academically weaker students. The school management, along with the supporting trust, extended assistance by providing references and financial sponsorships for higher education.

The journey of MM School in implementing RTE 12.1.c is a powerful example of resilience, dedication, and the true essence of inclusive education. Despite financial and policy-related hurdles, the school's unwavering commitment to its students has led to life-changing opportunities for many children. The success of RTE at MM School is a testament to how quality education, coupled with a nurturing environment, can break barriers and pave the way for a brighter future.

*"Education is a powerful tool that can transform lives. At MM School, we have witnessed how the RTE Act has given children from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to dream big and achieve their goals. Our commitment to inclusive education remains steadfast, and we take pride in seeing our students grow into confident, capable individuals."* – Veena Nesom, Principal.

### **Sandra Ricketts High School, Kothanur: Providing Equal Opportunities for Learning**

Sandra Ricketts School, located in Kothanur Post, Bengaluru, has been a beacon of hope for underprivileged children through the effective implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, Section 12.1.c. Since 2014, the school has embraced the policy, ensuring that children from marginalized backgrounds have access to quality education. Sandra Ricketts School, under the leadership of Headmistress Esther Samuel, has consistently provided admission to students under RTE 12(1)(c) from 2014 to 2019. The school initially admitted six students each year under this provision. However, due to the introduction of Rule 4 in 2019, no further admissions have taken place under this quota.

The school follows an internal selection process to admit students under RTE 12(1)(c). Over the years, it has provided quality education to students from diverse backgrounds, including Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), orphans, and children from economically weaker sections. In the academic year 2024-25, the school continues to nurture six students under RTE 12(1)(c) (four boys and two girls). The policy has positively influenced the school environment, fostering diversity, inclusivity and peer learning. Students enrolled under the regular process have developed a culture of sharing and assisting their peers coming from varied socio-economic backgrounds in academic and extracurricular activities.



Despite financial constraints, the school ensures that students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) receive additional support, including:

- Counseling and mentorship
- Extra tuition on request
- Special attention to classwork and homework

Apart from delayed reimbursements, the school has not received additional support from the government. In some years, reimbursements were not made, prompting the school to mobilize funds through well-wishers and charitable contributions. The primary challenge faced by the school is the timely availability of new state syllabus textbooks which need to be distributed to the students. RTE parents find it difficult to buy it from outside vendors.

During parent meetings, families of students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) have expressed satisfaction with their children's academic progress. They have actively participated in extracurricular activities such

as dance, essay writing, and spelling bee competitions, often winning prizes. Their discipline and interest in learning have significantly improved since their admission.

The school has addressed key grievances of RTE parents, such as:

1. Providing additional academic support to students struggling with homework.
2. Organizing motivation sessions to enhance students' interest in studies.
3. Raising funds to enable students enrolled under RTE 12(1)(c) to participate in inter-school competitions.

Sandra Rickets School stands as a model institution demonstrating the successful implementation of RTE 12.1.c. Despite challenges, the school's commitment to inclusivity and quality education has transformed the lives of many underprivileged children. If given continuous support, such initiatives can serve as an inspiration for other institutions to foster equitable education opportunities for all.

*"At Sandra Rickets School, we believe that every child deserves an equal opportunity to learn and grow. The implementation of RTE 12.1.c has been a transformative experience for our students, teachers, and community. We have witnessed firsthand how education can change lives and bring hope to families. We remain committed to providing a nurturing and inclusive environment where every student, regardless of their background, can thrive and achieve their dreams."* – Esther Samuel, Headmistress

