

OPEN-SOURCED BY THE ROBIN HOOD ARMY

The Bharat Learns AI Playbook



Blueprint for organisations to build **AI Learning Centres**
- a step towards nation-building in the age of AI

Copy it. Improve it. Build on it. No permission needed.

#BharatLearnsAI

Robin Hood Army · 2026 · Zero funds, as always

Bharat Learns AI, from First Principles

1. Over the past months, the Robin Hood Army has been experimenting: helping older children in the Robin Hood Academy learn schoolwork and English using free AI tools. The learning outcomes — and the speed of this — have been disproportionate to anything we have seen in more than a decade of teaching.
2. For 12 years now, the Robin Hood Army has earned something far more valuable than scale. **Trust.**

This has allowed us to serve millions of families with basic essentials, help thousands of children into school, and build deep relationships with needy communities across the breadth of India. The zero-funds, citizen-led model is now a Harvard case study.

3. Today, AI presents perhaps the greatest opportunity yet to help these same children — and eventually their communities — become more self-reliant.
4. On Independence Day 2026, the Robin Hood Army has launched 250 AI Learning Centres for the underserved children we teach across the country, in partnership with media houses, corporates and educational institutions.
5. Now, we are making the AI Learning Centre model open. We are sharing the playbook so that organisations with far greater resources and experience than ours can build hundreds—hopefully thousands—more AI Learning Centres across India.

Success is a centre the Robin Hood Army does not start

Everything that follows is yours. Copy it exactly, or treat it as a skeleton — add your own programs, your own age groups, your own languages and angles. The only thing we ask you to keep is the spirit: free for every citizen, safe for every child, and measured by active learning.

1. About the Robin Hood Army

The Robin Hood Army (RHA) is a zero-funds, volunteer-led movement founded in Delhi in 2014, when five friends started distributing surplus restaurant food to people living just minutes from their homes. Twelve years later, 288,000+ Robins across 406 cities in 13 countries have served 182 million meals, helped 12,401 children into school through the Robin Hood Academy, and adopted 197 villages under Mission Swades. Its zero-funds, citizen-led model is now a Harvard case study.

RHA is built to stay simple: decentralised, trust-led and driven by citizens. Local chapters operate like mini start-ups, years of working with communities have built deep grassroots trust, and every Robin lives by a simple philosophy: Citizens First. Mission Next. Robins Last. And no matter how far we get, we're always 1% done.

That same spirit shapes this playbook: start with what you have, let communities lead, and build something others can take forward.

2. Why AI Learning Centres

The AI revolution could be one of the greatest levellers of opportunity in our time — but only if everyone learns how to use it.

Today, the difference between a child in a privileged school in Delhi and one in a local school in a small town is often not ability or ambition. It is access: fluent spoken English, private coaching, individual attention, better information, and people who can help navigate what comes next. AI can bridge a meaningful part of that gap.

For the first time, a child with a smartphone can have a patient, personalised tutor in their own language — helping them practise English without embarrassment, understand a difficult maths problem, prepare for an exam, explore a career, or simply keep asking questions until something clicks.

The technology is increasingly accessible. Knowing how to use it isn't. Many of the children we work with have access to a smartphone through family, but primarily know it for reels, games and songs. An AI Learning Centre helps them discover that the same device can help them learn, create and build their future.

That is what an AI Learning Centre is designed to do. It is not a coding bootcamp or another school. It is a free learning space that gives children the access, confidence and guidance to use AI for three things that can change their trajectory: spoken English, better learning at school, and a clearer path to who they want to become.

The starting lines may be different. Access to learning shouldn't be what holds any Indian back.

3. Two Models, One Mission

The model comes in two forms – each ALC can teach 25+ children:

	Bharat AI Learning Centre ("Bharat ALC")	AI Learning Centre ("ALC")
What it is	The powered version: a dedicated aesthetic indoor set up, host-provided computers and mobile devices with Wi-Fi, a library, dedicated academic mentors for sustained learning	The simpler version: volunteers' own smartphones and hotspots in any free indoor room, run by 5–7 volunteers. Everything essential, nothing more. Running within a week.
Who runs it	An organisation with deep networks and resources — yours, perhaps.	Any group that follows the playbook.
What success looks like	Deeper learning: sustained improvement in English, schoolwork and pathways. Children and citizens becoming more self-reliant and AI literate in a fixed time period, multiple batches with ongoing programmes.	Wider access: citizens learning to use AI confidently and independently.

A note on ambition: this playbook is deliberately not prescriptive. RHA's 250 centres prove the floor — that this works with zero funds, borrowed rooms and volunteers' phones. The ceiling belongs to whoever picks this up next. If your organisation can add trained teachers, better devices, deeper curriculum or research rigour: please do. The best outcome of this document is a version of it, written by someone else, that makes ours obsolete.

4. The Program

4.1 Who it serves

Children aged 10+ from underserved communities — and, over time, the wider community. RHA starts with families already reached through food drives and the Robin Hood Academy. Any organisation with trust in a community already has a starting point. Growth happens through word of mouth: a mother tells another mother, a child brings a friend, a Showcase Day fills a lane. In these communities, the most trusted media is the neighbour.

4.2 Three age groups: Foundation, Growth, Advanced

	Foundation (10–13)	Growth (14–17)	Advanced (18–24)*
Mindset	Curiosity. AI is a friendly teacher who never tires of questions.	Ambition. Board exams, first real decisions, discovering what exists beyond the neighbourhood.	Urgency. Employability, first earnings, lifting the household.
English	Speaking without fear; reading aloud; a 10-sentence self-introduction.	Conversation and comprehension; a two-minute talk on a topic they love.	Professional English: interviews, phone calls, workplace vocabulary.
Schoolwork / skills	Homework club; reading and arithmetic repair; explain-it-again-slowly.	Board-exam preparation; concept repair; practice question banks.	Digital skills, certifications, CVs, applications.
Mentorship	“What jobs exist?” — discovery through stories and role models.	“How do I get there?” — the Dream Map: exact steps from today to the goal.	“Who will vouch for me?” — mentors in the target field.

***A candid caveat:** RHA has not yet taken on the Advanced group — our centres currently serve Foundation and Growth building on years of teaching these children. But Advanced is probably where the greatest nation-building leverage lies: a 19-year-old with fluent English, certification and a rehearsed interview can change a household's economics.

4.3 The three verticals in practice

Every activity below runs on free tools on an ordinary smartphone. The specific apps will change year to year — the method will not.

Vertical 1 — English: The language of doors. English is not culture, it is compounding interest: **it** unlocks better schools, better jobs, and the internet itself. The method is conversation, not grammar — children talk to a voice AI that listens patiently and corrects gently. Every child speaks in every session. The bridge technique is central: a child asks in Hindi, gets the answer in simple English, then explains it back in English. Ten minutes of speaking per child, per session, minimum.

Vertical 2 — Schoolwork: No child left behind in class — the patient, personalised tutor on call. AI as the infinitely patient tutor: photograph the problem, hear it explained three ways in your own language, then solve the next one alone — the volunteer checks understanding, not completion. For exam season, anchors generate practice papers and quiz banks from the child's actual syllabus. Free structured content (Khan Academy, DIKSHA and state-board resources) fills the gaps between sessions.

Vertical 3 — Mentorship: A map for every dream. Each cycle, every child builds a Dream Map: their goal, and beneath it the exact steps from today — researched with AI, verified by the anchor, made believable by a real volunteer from that profession visiting the centre. The AI gives the map; a real person makes it believable.

4.4 The session and the cycle

Two sessions a week, 90 minutes each, same days and times every week. Every session: 10 minutes of circle-up (attendance, energy, one child retells last session's best moment in English), then age-tuned blocks:

Block	Foundation (10–13)	Growth (14–17)
English (25–30 min)	Reading aloud with Read Along; voice-AI word games; show-and-tell in English. Play is the method.	Voice-AI conversation drills in fives; retell a story; describe your day. Fluency is the method.
Schoolwork (30 min)	Homework club: reading and arithmetic repair, explain-it-again-slowly, small wins celebrated loudly.	Board-exam engine: photo-a-problem tutoring, practice papers from the actual syllabus, concept repair in maths and science.

Block	Foundation (10–13)	Growth (14–17)
Dream (20 min)	Profession discovery: stories, guest Robins, “what jobs exist?” drawn as pictures.	Dream Map work: the exact path from today to the goal, checked by the anchor.
The feel	A game they don't want to end.	A coaching class they could never afford.

Mixed rooms work: brackets sit at separate tables sharing the same clock. The circle-up and close stay whole-room — a ten-year-old watching a senior deliver a two-minute talk in English is the best advertisement for staying.

4.5 The 12 Week cycle

The year runs in three cycles of 12 weeks. Weeks 1–2 are onboarding: ground rules, first conversations with AI, baseline milestones recorded. Weeks 3–10 are the core rhythm above. Week 11 is project week. Week 12 is Showcase Day: parents, the host, and neighbours are invited; every child demonstrates one thing — a self-introduction in English, a solved problem taught back, or their Dream Map. Showcase Day is deliberately public: it retains children, converts sceptical parents, recruits volunteers, and gives the host a reason to stay a host.

4.6 Parents as partners

A child spends three hours a week at the centre and the rest of their life at home. The centres that hold their children will be the ones that onboarded the parents, not just the kids. Parent onboarding is therefore an important formal step, not a courtesy:

- **Week-zero orientation** — before the first session, parents attend a 45-minute orientation at the centre: what AI is (shown, not lectured — a Robin demos a child asking a question), what their child will do each week, the safety charter in plain language, and both consent forms. A parent who has watched the tool work stops fearing it.
- **The parents' group** — every centre runs a parents' WhatsApp group — session photos, milestone moments, next Showcase Day. In these communities WhatsApp is where family pride lives; a mother forwarding her daughter's English recording to relatives is retention, motivation and word-of-mouth in a single tap.
- **The home practice kit** — for parents who want to actively help at home, Robins teach three take-home prompts on the family phone — most start with Meta AI inside WhatsApp, because the parents already have WhatsApp. Example: “Meri beti Class 6 mein hai. Usse roz 5 English words sikhao, aasaan Hindi mein samjhao.” The parent

becomes the child's practice partner between sessions, with the same rule as the centre: together, never alone.

- **Monthly parent hour** — once a month, the last 30 minutes of a session are open house: parents sit in, children demonstrate, anchors answer questions. Showcase Day every 12 weeks is the big version.
- **Parent Robins** — the most engaged parents are invited to become centre volunteers — greeting, attendance, discipline, food. A centre partly staffed by its own parents is a centre the community will never let pause.

4.7 What a child leaves with

At the end of every 12-week cycle, each child walks out with:

- **Their voice** — a recorded English milestone — their self-introduction, two-minute talk or mock interview, recorded on a volunteer's device with consent. Proof they can hear.
- **Their map** — a Dream Map in their own handwriting — the exact path from today to their goal: subjects, exams, colleges, scholarships. Proof the dream has steps.
- **Their project** — a project under one of the mission themes, presented in public on Showcase Day. Proof they can build and stand up and say so.
- **Their edge** — the skill of asking — how to question a machine, check its answer, and catch it lying. The one skill that compounds for the rest of their life.
- **Their claim** — the quiet, enormous knowledge that the most powerful learning tool on earth answers to them too.

At the end of a year: three cycles of measurable distance travelled.

4.8 The tools — phased, easiest first

The starting point must be stated honestly: these children know a phone as a YouTube machine, not a teacher. So the toolset starts near zero and grows only as a centre earns it. RHA's phases (adapt freely — tools will change with the advent of AI, the principle won't):

Tools	Why these, why now
Meta AI inside WhatsApp + Google Read Along + Google Gemini	The AI lives inside the one app every family already knows, speaks Indian languages, works by voice; Read Along carries early readers; Gemini does the session's real work — photo-a-problem tutoring.
ChatGPT Voice	A second voice tutor — more speaking time per child, and the seed of healthy scepticism: different AIs answer differently.
Khan Academy / DIKSHA	Structured, syllabus-aligned practice between sessions.
Advanced Tools (NotebookLM)	Project work and Showcase Day artifacts, once the basics are second nature.

5. Child & AI Safety

Anyone can pin rules to a wall. What earns trust — from parents, partners and journalists — is showing you have thought about what can actually go wrong. Each issue below states the real risk, the default rule RHA uses, and the options a centre can grow into. Print the one-page charter version and pin it to every centre's wall.

The issue	Why it is a real risk	The rule — and the options
Child accounts	Most AI platforms require users to be 13+ (18 in some cases) and build data profiles of account holders. A child's account is a data trail nobody controls.	Default: no child accounts, ever — sessions run on the volunteer's logged-in device and chats are cleared after class. For school-going children the rule is absolute. Families who want home practice use the parent's account, under the take-home rules above.

The issue	Why it is a real risk	The rule — and the options
Personal data in prompts	Children naturally tell a friendly voice their name, school and address. Prompts can become training data or leak.	Default: no personal details in any prompt — no full names, addresses, phone numbers, school names, photos. Taught as a game (“trick the AI: give it a fake name”), enforced by pre-written prompt cards and the volunteer beside the phone.
Inappropriate content	Filters fail sometimes; a wrong output in front of a 10-year-old is a real event, not a hypothetical.	Default: age-appropriate modes and content filters on every device, reviewed each cycle; an adult within arm's reach of every screen. If something slips through: screen down, log it, tell the centre lead, inform the parent the same day. Hiding an incident is the only firing offence.
AI is confidently wrong	A child who absorbs a hallucinated fact for an exam is worse off than one who never asked.	Default: anchors verify schoolwork and career facts before a child writes them down. Turn the risk into curriculum: “catch the AI” is a weekly exercise — the child who spots the mistake wins. Critical thinking is the product.
Dependence / AI does the homework	The tool that explains can also just answer — and a child who submits AI homework learns nothing.	Default: the AI explains, then the child solves the next problem alone, on paper, with the volunteer checking understanding — not completion. Paper-first blocks keep the pencil in the loop.
Safeguarding (adults + children)	Any program that puts adults and children in a room owes parents an answer to the hardest question.	Default: two-adult rule — no volunteer is ever alone with a child. Written parental consent for participation and, separately, for photographs. No image posted without both. And never capture suffering.

6. Running a Centre

6.1 The team

Role	What they own
Centre Lead (1)	The space, the schedule, the host relationship, weekly reporting, and the WhatsApp group. The single point of accountability.
Academic Anchor (1–2)	The learning itself: session plans, milestone tracking, verifying AI answers, adapting to each child's school syllabus. A teacher, tutor, graduate or retired professional. The scarce role — recruit it first.
Volunteers (1 per 5 children)	Sit beside the children. Run the conversation drills, keep the homework block moving, know every child's name and story. No teaching qualification needed — the playbook and prompt cards carry them.
Tech Volunteer (1)	Devices, hotspots, tool settings, chat clearing, and the safety charter's technical half.

6.2 Opening in 30 days

Week	What gets done
Week 1 — Space	Plan for one room, twice a week, two hours, free: schools after hours, office meeting rooms, community halls, housing-society clubhouses.
Week 2 — Team	Recruit through existing community networks and one public post for the anchor role. Lock the roster: lead, anchor, volunteers at 1:5, tech volunteer. Everyone reads this playbook.
Week 3 — Children	Enroll where trust already lives — for RHA, the food drive; for your organisation, wherever your community already knows you. Home visits for hesitant parents. Collect consent forms. Cap the first batch of the first centre at 25.
Week 4 — Dry run + open	One full 90-minute session with volunteers only — test devices, hotspots, seating, prompt cards. Fix what broke. Open the doors.

6.3 Week to week

The operating system is WhatsApp: one group for the centre's volunteers, and a weekly report to whatever network you belong to — children attended, sessions run, milestones hit, one photo, one story. RHA publishes city leaderboards exactly as it does for meal counts; culture and competition carry the rest. Reporting is not bureaucracy — the numbers become the scoreboard, and the stories become the storytelling.

6.4 How volunteers facilitate: the guide on the side

Volunteers do not lecture — the AI explains, the child works, the volunteer sits beside. Three habits: ask before answering (“what did the AI say? do you agree?”); insist every child speaks every session; catch children being capable — confidence is the actual product. Prompt cards make every volunteer effective from day one.

Prompt Card	Prompt (read aloud or type, with the child)
English F-1 (Foundation)	“You are a friendly English teacher for a 10-year-old learning English in India. Speak slowly and simply. Have a conversation with me about my favourite food. Gently correct my mistakes and make me repeat the corrected sentence.”
English G-3 (Growth)	“Interview me in simple English for a job at a mobile phone shop. Ask one question at a time. After each answer, correct my English and ask me to say it again properly.”
Schoolwork S-2	“Here is a problem from my Class 8 maths homework: [type/photo]. Explain step by step in simple Hindi, then explain the same thing again in simple English. Then give me one similar problem to try alone.”
Schoolwork S-5	“Make a 10-question quiz on [chapter] from the Class 10 [state board] syllabus, one question at a time. Tell me what I got wrong and why.”
Dream D-1	“I am in Class 9 in India and I want to become a doctor. Show me every step from today to my goal: subjects, exams, colleges, years, costs, and every scholarship that can pay for it. Explain in simple Hindi and English.”
Dream D-4 (Growth)	“A real doctor is visiting our centre next week. Help me prepare five smart questions to ask her about becoming a doctor — in simple English, and help me practise saying them aloud.”

6.5 Common problems, standard fixes

- **Attendance drops** — re-anchor to the community relationship; call parents personally; make Showcase Day loud. Attendance follows belonging, not curriculum.
- **Too few devices** — rotate stations — one table on voice AI, one on paper homework, one on Dream Maps. Five children per phone is a design choice, not a compromise: turn-taking is speaking practice.
- **Anchor unavailable** — keep a backup anchor roster of two; a missed session is announced, never silent.
- **Sceptical parents** — home visit plus a Showcase invitation. A parent who watches their child interview an AI in English stops being sceptical.
- **AI gives a wrong answer** — celebrate it. “The AI got this wrong — who caught it?” is the best lesson of the week.

6.6 The centre standard

A centre is running this model when all ten of these are true. The list is the product — short enough to forward, complete enough to copy:

1. A free, safe indoor space, secured in writing, twice a week.
2. One academic anchor, and one volunteer per five children.
3. At least one smartphone per five children, with connectivity.
4. The three verticals taught every week: English, schoolwork, mentorship.
5. The 90-minute session structure and the 12-week cycle.
6. The safety charter on the wall and in practice.
7. Parental consent forms on file.
8. Weekly reporting into a shared group.
9. A Showcase Day every cycle.
10. Free for every child. If you can run it with zero funds, do — it builds a kind of ownership money can't. If your organisation has resources, spend them on the children, never on charging them.

7. The Hard Questions (and honest answers)

Every parent, partner and journalist will ask some version of these.

They will ask	The answer
Is AI safe for children?	At a centre a child never touches AI alone: volunteer's device, adult within arm's reach, no child accounts, no personal data, chats cleared, filters on, and a posted charter. Children are taught that AI can be wrong — catching its mistakes is part of the curriculum.
Why AI? These kids need basics.	They are getting the basics — English and schoolwork are two of the three verticals. AI is not the subject; it is the first infinitely patient, free tutor these children have ever had. The newest tool, teaching the oldest things.
How is this different from an edtech scheme?	There is no product, no fees and no accounts. There is a playbook anyone can copy and adults who show up. The model is measured by learning milestones and centre survival, not downloads.
What happens to a child's data?	Nothing, because none is collected. No child accounts, no personal details in prompts, no photos without written parental consent.
Will AI replace the teachers?	The scarcest thing in every underserved classroom is patient, individual attention. AI supplies the patience; the academic anchor supplies the judgment; volunteers supply the care. Nothing human is replaced — it is multiplied.
Can this really run with zero funds?	RHA has run everything this way for twelve years — 182 million meals, 12,401 school admissions, zero rupees. The centres run on borrowed rooms, volunteers' phones and free tools. But zero funds is RHA's discipline, not a requirement of the model: if your organisation has resources, spend them on depth.

8. Measuring what matters

- **Learning** — the share of children hitting cycle milestones. If children aren't learning, nothing else counts.
- **Retention** — children still attending at week 12; centres alive at 6 and 12 months.
- **People** — academic anchors recruited and retained; parents showing up.
- **Integrity** — zero rupees charged to any family, zero safety incidents, honest reporting. Non-negotiable, and therefore measured.

And the number this playbook exists for:

Centres we did not start. Versions of this model, built by others, better than ours.

Now it's yours

This playbook is open. There is no license to sign, no permission to seek, no credit required. Copy it exactly, or take the skeleton and rebuild it: add age groups we haven't reached, languages we haven't translated, subjects we haven't dared. If you are a school network, run it at ten times our quality. If you are a corporate, your meeting rooms are centres and your employees are volunteers. If you are five friends with four phones — that is exactly how the Robin Hood Army started.

If you build one, tell us — not for credit, but so centres can learn from each other: what worked, what broke, what you fixed. The ambition is simple: take the power of AI to every child and community that could be transformed by it. This playbook is only a starting point.

Hope this is a small step towards a nation of builders 🇮🇳.

Citizens First. Mission Next. Robins Last. | 1% done.