

# Newsletter

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## Computer Shiksha

Address: G 576, Florence Homes,  
Sushant Lok II, Sector 57,  
Gurgaon 122011, Haryana, India,

### Email:

swapnalekha.basak@computershiksha.org  
rakesh.suri@computershiksha.org



## First Step towards expansion



Inauguration of computer lessons at Guru Center at the DLF Phase I Gurudwara.

Computer Shiksha had started with 60 children on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at Nai Kiran School, Ardee City. After eight months on 9<sup>th</sup> January Computer Shiksha started lessons at a second site. 27 children in a supplementary school (Guru Learning Centre) run at the DLF Phase I Gurudwara in Gurgaon. These children live in the vicinity and their parents are mostly employed by those living in the houses there. They go to regular school and come to the supplementary school to get help with their homework and also learn some life skills which are taught by experienced teachers in the supplementary school. The teachers say that taking computer lessons are a great way to equalize this divide between those who have and those who don't.

Lessons at Nai Kiran School Ardee city continue with the same fervor. Currently there are 187 students registered in various Modules. Since these children come from migrant labor families, often they have to leave mid way because of their parents shifting base. Apart from

these 187 (currently studying) kids another 70 children have been partially trained but have had to leave the course mid way.

### About Guru Center

*Sharing what you are blessed with is a basic tenet of the Sikh way of life. This is practiced in many diverse ways ranging from tiny support systems to huge philanthropy.*

*With the intent of paying back to those people who serve us day and night( cooks, maids, drivers and guards) a few women got together to share what they had- time, love and academic prowess.*

*The new gurudwara at DLF Phase 1 generously offered the space in the langar hall and thus began the beautiful journey which is now called 'Guru Learning Center'. It began with a few children from the neighborhood getting help with their homework and difficulties at school.*

*Gradually the number increased. Now there are about 30 of them. With help in terms of time and money from family, friends and well wishers these children (class 3 to 6) are given an opportunity to experience learning in a nurturing environment.*

*Values, communication skills, self awareness and respect for everything they have forms the bedrock of the 2 hours they spend here from Monday to Thursday.*

*Self esteem is developed through language skills, role play, art and craft activities, outings and presentations. The latest addition to their enriching experience is Computer Education being provided by Computer Shiksha.*

- Raseel Arunkant

## Steady Progress

As mentioned earlier we have 187 students registered in different modules in Nai Kiran, Ardee City, Gurgaon and 27 children enrolled at the "Guru Learning Centre,

Gurudwara, DLF Phase I, Gurgaon". Now we have classes running six days a week from Saturday to Thursday. Lessons in Nai Kiran are done from Saturday to Tuesday. On Wednesday and Thursday classes are held at the Guru Learning Centre.

Nai Kiran School – Ardee City	
Module I	73
Module II	38
Module III	39
Module IV	29
Module V	08
Guru Learning Centre	
Module I	27

Kids in module V can confidently write a letter on a word processor and edit it to a reasonable level. For kids who had never seen a computer to typing a letter has been a long journey and they are glad they did it.

### Bridging the digital divide



Mrs Harbhajan Kaur – the most enthusiastic learner in Module 1.

Our mission when we wrote it first read “We will provide Computer Knowledge and Training with passion and commitment, to deliver Value in the form of Computer trained people, who use this skill for the betterment of their lives in every possible way”.

Till January we had facilitated learning of computers to a growing group of underprivileged children who constitute a large % of the population

which is on the other side of the digital divide. This January Mrs. Harbhajan Kaur joined Computer lessons and became the first senior citizen to become a student of Computer Shiksha. We sincerely hope that her enthusiasm leads the way for many others too. In fact we know of so many parents whose children are away and find it quite challenging to use cost effective methods of communication to stay in touch with their children. Please spread the word and we can do a special batch for senior citizens too.



Giani Ujagar Singh learning along with the children at the Guru Centre.

### We have a tagline now!



You would notice in the newsletter that we have a tag line now, Computer Shiksha – bridging the digital divide. For many months we have wanted to have a tag line which kind of summarized the entire intent of Computer Shiksha. It was a casual conversation in which someone asked one of us “What is the mandate that you have given yourself?” and it ‘one of us’ veru naturally responded – “we exist to bridge the digital divide” – and while the listener mulled over what it could mean we looked at one another and we knew we had got it –

bridging the digital divide – that’s what we have been attempting to do.

### Team continues to grow

Computer Shiksha has been able to grow with the efforts of a large number of people who have been generous with money as well as efforts. Our heart warms when we think of the enthusiasm with which people have reached out to contribute. We have been fortunate to have volunteers who are key to our success in this mission. The month of January saw the inclusion of two bankers to the Computer Shiksha team.

*Ramesh Bansal*



Mr. Bansal has had a 38 year long innings at the State Bank of Patiala from where he retired in 2006. He volunteered to manage a project site as long back as in October when we were scouting for new schools to partner with. He has amazed us with his keenness to join us in our mission. Computer Shiksha is blessed to have the patronage of people like Mr. Bansal.

*Seema Malhotra Verma*

Seema Verma has worked with ANZ Grindlays for 10 years before giving it



up to take care of the home and hearth. It is not surprising to know that these years apart from being a stay at home mother she has developed many interests like Astrology and Palmistry. We do not know if her stars led her to Computer Shiksha but we are glad that whichever way – they did. Computer Shiksha feels blessed to have her support. A great stickler for time it is not unusual to find her every where before time. She along with Mr. Ramesh Bansal is managing Computer Shiksha Operations at the Guru Learning Centre at the Gurudwara school in DLF Phase I Gurgaon.

### The Way Forward.....

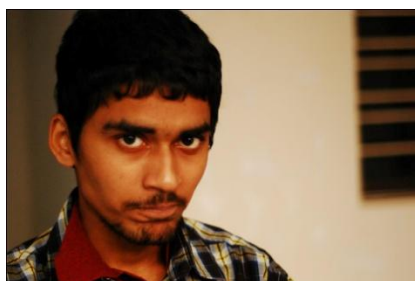
The coming few months are crucial for Computer Shiksha as success in the coming few months will decide our trajectory as an organization and our ability to bring opportunity to teach / help learn that can go far and wide.



Design of the logo for the Friends of Computer Shiksha programme by Arnab Chakraborty

A social initiative can be made sustainable if there is community involvement in the program. A strong community involvement ensures legitimacy, respectability and a certain brand value to the program. It also ensures a steady flow of funds, volunteers and other support to build and sustain an ecosystem to keep the initiative going at the same pace. With this in mind we have conceived of a program called ***“Friends of Computer Shiksha”***. In this we will drive a movement within Gurgaon (because our operations are currently based in Gurgaon) to engage as many people as possible in this mission towards complete computer literacy. We intend branding this program with a logo and running it for one month to register as many people as possible who can become our resource base (for funds, volunteers and other support).

The design for the program has been done by young Arnab.



Arnab Chakraborty is a student of English Literature, currently pursuing his Masters Degree at the Department of English, Jadavpur University. He lives with his family and pets in Salt Lake, Kolkata. His passion is (easy to guess) reading and cartooning. Thank You Arnab!

### A Peek into the Past



Children in Module 4 at Nai Kiran School, Ardee City, Gurgaon learning text processing.



Nai Kiran has had record admissions. Earlier they had to run after migrant children to get them to take admissions. Now this winter children had to sit outside 'cos enough table chairs weren't there!



Children in Module II can draw this bat on MS paint! We bet many of our computer savvy readers will also not be able to make this!



Children in Module I at the Guru Centre