

COUMBA

Background

Coumba is in her late twenties and was born in Italy. She is a single mother of three children. She has lived in the UK for five years and moved here to find work.

Languages

She speaks Italian and Wolof fluently and French very well. She also speaks Spanish and Portuguese. She is confident in reading and writing Italian and Wolof, can read and write in French but not in Spanish or Portuguese. She studied a very small amount of English at school but when she first came to the UK, she could not understand anything.

Digital technologies

She describes herself as a confident user of digital technologies particularly her smartphone. However, before she started learning English she couldn't learn online as she didn't understand anything.

Previous education and employment

She finished a vocational course in Italy and trained as a chef. She now works as a cleaner and looks after her children.

Access to ESOL

She studies in a mixed pre-Entry and Entry Level 1 class at a college and has been studying there for 6 months. An Italian friend recommended the college to her. She started the same course a year earlier but says she had to leave after a few weeks because she couldn't afford it. She didn't ask anyone for help or tell them why she left. Two days a week (four hours in total) is enough for her because she does not have enough time to do any more. Her difficulty is managing her time with work and childcare.

Engagement in ESOL provision

She is enjoying her learning and feels she has made good progress. She likes her class because the teacher only speaks in English and she thinks this helps her learn faster. She likes that people in the class speak lots of different languages. She also likes to have regular tests so she can get better and feel that she is improving. She spends a lot of time at home studying as well as watching English films and cooking videos on YouTube.

Outcomes and benefits


She was unhappy when she came to the UK as she is a friendly person who wants to talk to people and fit in. Her English is much better now, she can talk to her children's teachers, help her children with their homework and study online. She wants to go to university to make a better life for herself; she does not want to be working as a cleaner when she is 50.

Advice for others

It is important for people like her to learn English so they can integrate. However, there needs to be childcare and help with paying course fees.

Writing sample

• Your family and friends.



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1 GIRL I LOVE MY FAMILY.
MY BIG BOY IS 9 YEARS OLD
MY 2ND IS GIRL IS 6 YEARS OLD
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OLD

Level of writing sample
Entry level 1 ESOL (Consolidating Entry 1)