

FATMA

Background

Fatma and her family are refugees from Syria. She got married at 14 and had her first child when she was 15. She came to the UK with her husband and two children. Fatma had her third child in 2017 and is expecting a fourth. One of her children has a learning difficulty.

Languages

Her first language is Arabic which she can read and write fairly well. Fatma did not learn English before coming to the UK.

Digital technologies

Fatma uses a smartphone but cannot use a computer with a keyboard. She uses her phone for translation, watching videos and talking to her family abroad.

Previous education and employment

She attended primary school in Syria and has no work experience.

Access to ESOL

On arrival, the family were supported by the Refugee Council, an interpreter and a local refugee charity. She was encouraged to join a community ESOL class which she attended once a week for several months until she gave birth to her third child. During this time, she learnt some basic English phrases and the alphabet. After having her baby, she was not able to attend ESOL provision as there was no childcare available. A year later, she felt very frustrated so the regional VPRS ESOL co-ordinator arranged for a volunteer ESOL teacher to visit her once a week and for two volunteer befrienders to visit each week for informal conversation practice.

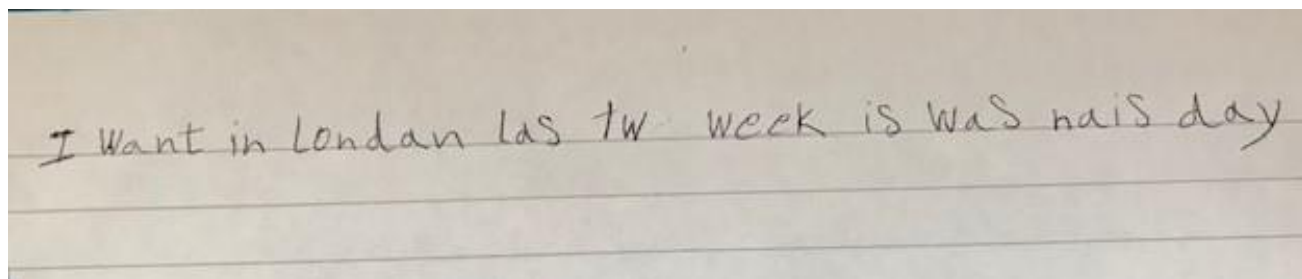
Engagement in ESOL provision

She enjoyed learning English in a class with other learners and liked the structure of lessons. She is very keen to make progress, particularly with writing which is her weakest skill. At present, however, it is impossible for her to attend any formal ESOL provision due to the lack of childcare.

Outcomes and benefits

Fatma's English has improved a great deal, particularly speaking and listening. She has gained confidence and can now speak to her daughter's teachers and send text messages to her volunteer supporters. She is practising for the driving theory test, wants to learn to drive and to continue improving her English.

Writing sample



(I went in London last two weeks it was nice day.
= I went to London two weeks ago. It was a nice day.)

Level of writing sample
New learner (Emerging Entry 1)