



Salma's Story

Successful Early Years Apprenticeship Journey

Summary

Service Area: HOT Learning – Apprenticeships

Course: Early Years

Qualification: Level 2 and Level 3

Salma Noreen embarked on her Early Years Apprenticeship Journey almost four years ago. Her unique story has seen her grow in confidence and competence to become a qualified Early Years Practitioner, through the HOT Learning Apprenticeships programme.

The reason Salma chose an apprenticeship is because she wanted to become independent, prove to herself that she is capable, learn something new and to be part of the community. Halifax Opportunities Trust was a provider she had heard of through other projects of the Trust, so was confident in the delivery and support she would receive.

The start of a new career path

Salma began her Apprenticeship with Halifax Opportunities Trust, alongside work-based employment, at one of the Trust's Children's Centres. This initial role meant she worked closely with the community team for approximately 12 months; working with both parents and children, along with taking part in various baby group sessions, amongst other groups.

Initially this was a balancing act, as Salma was continuing her learning through the Apprenticeship programme in Early Years and also upskilling her English, Mathematics and I.T, to a higher level.

Progress and Success

As a result of her hard work and determination Salma's experience and work-based skills progressed. This, combined with training and support from her manager at the Children's Centre, meant she had all the necessary skills and guidance to complete the modules in her course.

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Apprenticeships provide candidates with a network of support, in Salma's case this support was extremely valuable as not only did she gain work-based learning, but she was able to build her confidence and develop relationships with her peers, too.

A tutor from the Apprenticeships team supported Salma's learning efforts by providing feedback on her coursework and conducting observations. In addition, there was regular communication between her employer and tutor to help her stay on track to achieve her qualification.

This experience enabled Salma to progress in her Apprenticeship and, with the support of her employers at the Children's Centre, including her course mentors, she gained the vital skills necessary for a successful career in early years.

Salma's workplace mentor commented:

"Salma began working at Little Gems Preschool in November 2021. In the past five months I have seen Salma's confidence grow from strength to strength."

"Salma is accountable for the progress, attainment and outcomes of ten key children; eight more than her previous provision. Salma approached this responsibility with a little apprehension but has shown she is more than capable of providing a balanced and flexible approach to activities and educational programmes for each of her children, by planning through their interests and areas of the EYFS."

Salma communicates well within the team and will share her ideas for group activities, in addition to confidently informing practitioners on the progress of their key children, as she has witnessed in the setting. Salma demonstrates good parent partnerships, creating bonds with the families that attend. She will speak with various families on a daily basis around their children's needs and feedback on how they are progressing."

Diane and the apprenticeship team have been especially supportive since Salma began her time at Little Gems. Karen, Salma's tutor, has provided her with some good in-depth training sessions to which Salma has found useful and used within her written work."

Planning for the future

Salma feels proud of her journey and has come a long way, when reflecting on where she started from. She has progressed onto her level three Apprenticeship with Halifax Opportunities Trust and the future is in her hands, opening up many doors and opportunities.

The Apprenticeship team adds: "Salma has worked incredibly hard on her functional skills and qualifications, which has been a positive journey for her. She is on a good career development path. We wish her all success as we know that she will flourish in her future endeavours as Salma's commitment and passion for what she does shines through."

"I never thought of having a job until I met the Halifax Opportunities Trust Team."

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