

## Yasmin Akhtar

## *'sheer grit and determination'*



Yasmin came to GOAL\_Saltley based at Adderley Children Centre in May 2012, after hearing about GOAL\_Saltley through outreach activities undertaken by the GOAL team. She initially came over to access the 'Reading Ladies' group which helps and supports women wishing to improve their basic English language.

With her constant thirst for knowledge, Yasmin went on to access I.T. sessions, learning about the basics of getting online. She had done a CLAIT course three years ago, where she learnt the basic about switching the computer on and off. She did not pursue further studies due to a male tutor. This is Yasmin's story.

◆ What did you want to learn when you came to GOAL\_Saltley?

I had forgotten everything I had learned over the years, so when I came over to GOAL\_Saltley I wanted to get back into learning. I am unable to do anything at home because I get distracted by other things, so it is good to come here because I get the help I need without the distractions.

◆ What has learning to use the computers helped you to achieve?

I wanted to learn English to be able to fill in forms. Learning computers has helped me to gain confidence.

I have heard disturbing stories about the dangers of children getting online. I was particularly concerned about the pop-ups that kept appearing on our computer at home.

Going through the Child Safety online module was very good. It showed us simple steps that we could take to block unwanted sites. It was simple to understand and now I can help to monitor our computer at home.

The staffs at the centre were fantastic. They worked with me. Whenever I got stuck and didn't understand due to my poor language skills, there was someone there to help. The I.T. sessions helped me to learn and undertake a broad range of tasks, which include:

- Undertaking literacy test to determine my literacy level.
- Playing games to improve my mouse and keyboard skills.
- Using the Internet to carry out research.
- Creating and using email.

I was always fascinated by how children were able to quickly logon to a computer and carry out certain tasks, for example loading YouTube. My children didn't have time or the patience to show me. I am now able to use YouTube to watch dramas which I was unable to do before. Although I don't get enough time to watch dramas but the fact that I am able to do so has been a great confidence booster for me personally.

◆ What are your future plans?

For years I have been using my skills in Mehndi and hair & beauty, delivering free sessions to family and friends at the various centres and at home. I would like to turn this into a small business.

My new found skills in computers will allow me to develop marketing leaflets, design business cards and allow me to do more research on the computer. I am currently accessing Reading Ladies group and I.T. classes at the GOAL\_Saltley centre.

I am also looking at turning my hobby into a business. I want to get more qualifications, specifically in English.