

# Early Help Volunteers



Volunteer Profile Booklet: Information for Parents, Carers, Children and Young People on Early Help Volunteers.



**Walsall Council**





## Why do we have Early Help Volunteers?

As part of our Early Help support in Walsall we have a number of volunteers to provide that 'extra bit of support' to you and your family. All of our volunteers are part of our wider Early Help Locality Teams, all are approved to work with children, young people and families and all receive regular training.

Our volunteers are local, know the Walsall area and each have their own specific skills, interests and backgrounds.

We have developed the volunteering service following feedback from families who felt that with that 'extra bit of support' their family could and would succeed in their ambitions and often stop them feeling alone or isolated.

Families told us, "We would ..."

- value hearing about other people's experiences, from people who have been through difficulties and have overcome these
- feel more at ease with volunteers who have given their time freely to support others
- like to get involved, supported by someone to help us shape the way in which Early Help services are delivered

## What support may a volunteer offer?

Volunteers can help in lots of different ways, including helping you/your family with:

- Children and young people's homework, learning, or accessing school
- Cooking, healthy eating and shopping
- Budgeting and finance skills
- Attend appointments or helping organise your families' schedule/s
- Introduce routines and boundaries in your home
- Accessing other support services, or work out what other services you want to get involved with in your local area
- Ideas to entertain your children, at home, in your local area or when you attend appointments
- Attending local groups
- Someone to visit you regularly, to talk to you and offer any support
- Help to get across your points of view, your thoughts and feelings at meetings and reviews

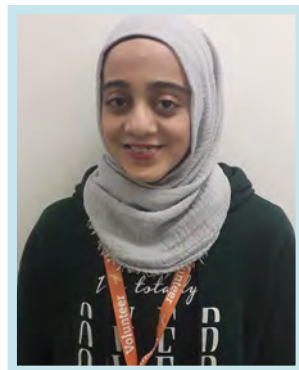
## Introducing our volunteers

We are proud to introduce you to our volunteers and to help you consider how they may support you and your family. Please see the volunteers Profiles below. If you would like to talk to someone about the volunteers, please speak to your Early Help Lead Professional/Social Worker, or contact [earlyhelpvolunteers@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelpvolunteers@walsall.gov.uk)

## Hi I'm Aasiyah – a bit about me:

I am currently in my final year of university studying Criminology and Social Care, I'm hoping to work within Early Help once I graduate and I'm very keen to support Children and Young People as they grow and develop. After reading some of the case studies at university, I realised that I would like to do whatever I can to ensure that other Children and Young People will not have to go through similar struggles.

Previously when volunteering with a charity, I supported in the planning and delivery of various community activities including setting up a mini library for local children to access story sessions and free books.



### Interests:

- I enjoy watching crime documentaries
- Socialising with friends
- I like trying new recipes

### Strengths:

- I am calm and an active listener
- I am committed
- I am motivated and am good at motivating others
- Trustworthy and serious about helping people
- I like to empower people to allow them to reach their goals

### How do I think I can help your family?

I can work with children and young people and take on a mentoring role to help them within their family dynamic. I am also happy to support parents in understanding their children and teenagers so that family life can be more enjoyable. I have supported families in the past where mental health has been a barrier.

### Information from Early Help:

Aasiyah is friendly and approachable and has experience working with families in the home and in a family centre. Aasiyah has some insight into adolescent to parent violence as she has spent time focussing on this in her studies and would like to support a variety of families however she can.

## Hi I'm Dorcas – a bit about me:

I am a mum to four children, two are grown up now and my younger children are 10 and 15 years old, I had my first child when I was very young. We have two pet rabbits Sam and Harry. I am a caring person by nature and my house is busy and has been full of kids over the years.

I moved to the Midlands after living in London for many years, I have accessed early intervention services in the past to support my son who has struggled in his teenage years and I know what it means going through some difficult times as a family, however, we are now in a much better place.

Going through this has led me to want to help families and I decided to go back to studying as an adult so that I can support other families who are going through tough times and help them to make a difference.

I currently work with people with mild learning difficulties part time as a support worker.

I grew up in Uganda situated in the Eastern part of Africa and moved to this country in 2001 where I met my husband and had my younger children. I had a good childhood in Uganda, although my mum did get very ill, so I moved to live with other family members who had to take care of me. I had one other brother, who unfortunately has passed away, and a big stepfamily, as well as many cousins who live all over the world.

## Interests:

- I like travelling
- I like cleaning and keeping things organised and tidy
- I like cooking
- I like watching movies about real things that have happened

## Strengths:

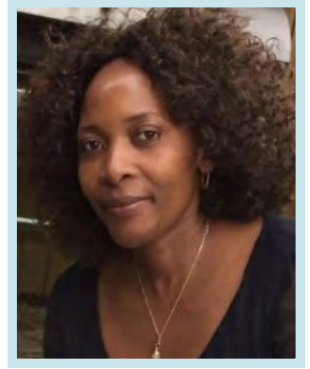
- I am hard working
- I am good at organising
- I am a good listener and empathetic
- I am very committed and want to achieve good outcomes with others

## How could I help you and your family?

I would like to work with young people, targeting those who are struggling with being a teenager today and struggling with anger and emotions, relationships or behaviour problems. I would like to work with parents & carers of these young people too and I feel I could support the whole family, my passion is to support families as early on as possible, the earlier the better.

## Information from Early Help:

Dorcas is a volunteer who is friendly and approachable, is very confident with lots of experience to share. She is extremely calm and clear in her communication and is a good listener, Dorcas is particularly interested in working with supporting young people, understanding adolescents.



## Hi I'm Isabella – a bit about me:

I am a mother to an 11-year-old girl and a 17-year-old boy. My son will be leaving sixth form this year and he is ready to start University and my daughter is in her first year of secondary school.

I have been living in the UK for over 3 years with my family after moving from Romania. It was a great challenge to integrate into the community and get access to key services, such as school and GP. I am keen to help and empower other families who may be in a similar situation, or who just need some support navigating the changes their pre-teen and teenage children are going through.



## Interests:

- I like learning new things and doing courses
- I like to help/support people
- I like cleaning and keeping things organised
- I like travelling
- I like shopping
- I like socialising with my friends

## Strengths:

- I am a good listener
- Friendly, dedicated and responsible
- I am empathic
- I am an open-minded person

## How can I help you and your family?

I have experience advocating for families and supporting parents with accessing GP services for their families, schools for their children and other local services. I am passionate about seeing the community develop in a way that suits the needs of all.

I am also able to support parents with introducing routines into their home life to help everything run smoothly.

## Information from Early Help:

Isabella is friendly and approachable, she is calm and will take time to listen to the needs of a family and offer advice and solutions if she feels that this is appropriate. Isabella is passionate about our community and wants to do her best to make sure that everyone has access to the services they need.

## Hi I'm Kate – a bit about me:

I live in Walsall with my parents , siblings (4 of us all together) and our pets, it is a busy house with lots of people coming & going which is nice.

I am currently studying early childhood, and I want to help children and families. I have always been interested in supporting people, especially children.

I have family members who are foster carers, and I can see how difficult it has been for some of the children they care for as well as those surrounding the foster children.

I have had to learn to become more adaptable and flexible with significant changes within my own family and would like to use this experience to help other children and young people who may be experiencing similar emotions and not know how to deal with these.

I have spent some time in schools helping children and facilitating child led activities.



### Interests:

- I like doing creative activities with my younger sister
- I like going out with my friends having fun but also enjoy time at home
- I like being busy and having things to do
- I enjoy finding new ways of helping others
- I like being productive and finding new passions
- When at home, I spend time relaxing by watching new TV shows or reading

### Strengths:

- I am a good listener
- I am motivated, organised, honest, resilient and passionate
- I am a very calm person even when under pressure and understand and practice professional boundaries

### How could I help you and your family?

I would like to work with and support families in Walsall, I have a specific interest, passion and experience with children and young people who have Special Educational Needs & Disabilities.

### Information from Early Help:

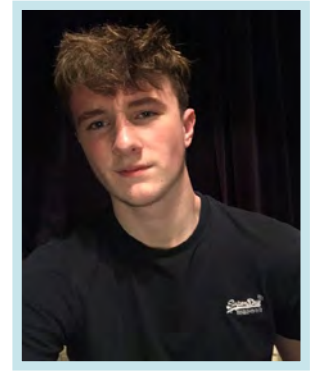
Katie is a volunteer who is friendly and approachable, she is keen to develop her skills and support others and she has some insight into the difficulties faced by young people in foster care. Katie is a positive role model for young people.

## Hi I'm Kieran- a bit about me:

I live at home with my mum, her boyfriend, my younger brother, and two dogs. Family is incredibly important to me, and they inspire me to be the best I can be. Fortunately, we get along really well as a family. I am really close to my mum, who brought me up alone as a single parent, and my Grandparents, who are a big influence on me.

I am studying psychology at university and going into my second year and would love to be a clinical psychologist after university so that I can help as many people as possible.

Currently, I am a research assistant at university helping lecturers on their next study.



## Interests:

- I really enjoy going out with friends and family
- I enjoy gaming in my spare time and enjoy playing all kinds of games
- I like reading all kinds of fiction and academic journals
- I like running and keeping healthy and am passionate about mental wellbeing, as well as physical wellbeing
- I am Interested in all areas of Psychology and psychological research

## Strengths:

- I am a good listener, and I would like to feel that people feel comfortable with me
- I'm good at Maths, English, and Science
- I'm a quick learner
- I like to challenge myself

## How could I help you and your family?

I would like to work and support families in all aspects of Early Help, I have a particular interest in supporting emotional wellbeing, including depression and anxiety.

I am keen to be useful, help people, and want to use what I am learning to support the improvement of other people's lives. I am Volunteering for other services that support people with emotional wellbeing, including self-harm and mental health and have worked with volunteering programs that help children with tutoring support.

## Information from Early Help:

Kieran is a volunteer who is friendly and approachable, he has a confident and calming nature. He is keen to develop theory into practice and could support with a range of interventions for Early Help support, whilst he develops more specific skills around working with children young people. Kieran is a good male role model would engage well with young men and fathers specifically.

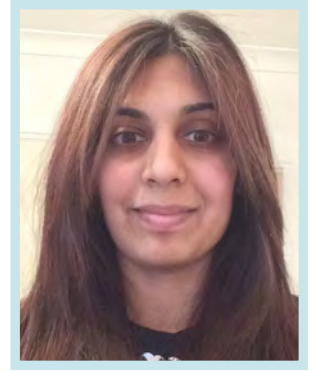


## Hi I'm Kiran – a bit about me:

I think it's important for children to be happy and feel safe, I am passionate about working with families to ensure that this is the case. I have worked with families who need emotional and practical support before and I like to empower individuals and families so that they are able to deal with difficulties when they arise.

I have experience of working with teenagers who are at risk of CSE (child Sexual Exploitation) and I like the idea of being a role model and a positive influence to steer young people in the right direction.

In the past I have volunteered in Early Years settings and have an understanding of the importance of routines, boundaries and learning through play.



## Interests:

- I enjoy baking
- I like to spend time with my family
- I like exploring new places to eat out

## Strengths:

- I am good at engaging children and young people
- I am motivated and like to motivate others
- I am organised
- I am adaptable
- I am professional and can remain calm in stressful situations

## How could I help you and your family?

I am interested in empowering families and offering emotional and practical support. I can advocate for parents and children and I'm happy to signpost to appropriate services and activities as I have knowledge of services around Walsall.

## Information from Early Help:

Kiran is friendly and approachable and has gained a lot of experience working with families open to Early Help. Kiran is happy to take a 'whole family approach' to empower Children, Young People and Parents to deal with situations. Kiran has a good knowledge of services available in Walsall.

## Hi, I'm Laura – a bit about me:

I am mum to two children a girl and a boy, my son who is 11 has additional needs, he is amazing. My son is diagnosed with microcephaly, autism and ADHD, all of these add up to a very busy boy who struggles to stop or sleep. I have a six-year-old girl too who is 6 going 16, she is a great support and great with her brother.

I am married and have been for some years, we have a good relationship. We have 2 tortoises one is named Theresa and the other one is named Bart and they are exactly the same ages as my children, and they are like their animal siblings.

I work in an office, whilst it is a good job, I do want new challenges longer term.

Several members of my family have the autism gene, including my brother, and we have a genetic condition that affects boys in my family.

Growing up I really took care of my brother and gave him a voice, which has given me real passion for supporting children and adults with special education needs.

I've been used to managing on my own without help from services, but have started to take help over the years and I've met lots of people who are experiencing similar things to me, and it's been a real help for me to have them to talk to.

I have also helped other people and friends in similar situations, talking to them about my experiences with health and education and sharing how I have become resilient and empowered, and secured good support for my son.

I am passionate about meeting new people and helping others.

### Interests:

- I'm a keen gardener with very green fingers
- I grow my own veggies and love cooking and feeding people
- I like travelling and visiting my friend who is polish and lives in Poland

### Strengths:

- Kind and passionate
- Adaptable to situations
- Good at engaging children and young people
- Good at remaining calm and relaxed
- Good listener

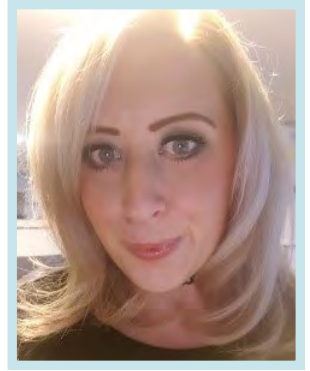
### How could I help you and your family?

I want to volunteer to support children, young people and families who have special education needs (SEN) or who have additional needs. I have creative skills to communicate with children with special educational needs.

### Information from Early Help:

Laura is a volunteer who is friendly and approachable, she is a chatty and confident person with her passion for supporting SEN needs and this shines through.

Laura is free on Wednesdays only.



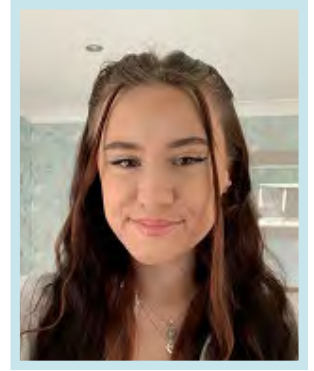
## Hi I'm Lidia – a bit about me:

I am 20 years old; I live with my parents and have a dog that is very old and troublesome.

I am currently studying after returning from America where I lived with my family for a few months for my dad's work- this was not a great experience for me and I am glad to be back.

I also work mornings at a food outlet.

I am keen to work with children and young people that maybe struggling with emotions, depression and anxiety. I have had support in the past to help manage anxiety myself and I did not find this useful so have overtime found ways to help myself recover and manage these feelings in my day to day life.



## Interests:

- Like walking and exercise
- Like cooking
- Like seeing friends
- Like watching movies
- Like to be very busy

## Strengths:

- I am a good communicator and work well with young people (as I'm closer to their age)
- I volunteer for nightline, which is a listening ear service for students so understand how difficult emotions can affect our lives as children and young people.
- I am organised and like being organised

## How could I help you and your family?

I could be a good support to children and young people aged around 10 to 13 years old who are struggling in any area of their life. I am a good mentor and listening ear for children and young people. I would be happy to support children and young people who are struggling with any aspects of their emotions, or behaviour, such as struggling at school, or working through the difficulties of being a teenager.

## Information from Early Help:

Lidia is a volunteer who is friendly and approachable, she is a good communicator; she is calm and relaxed and is a great role model for young people. Lidia works hard and shows commitment to lots of areas of her life, she is really keen to understand and build her confidence more in how to help children and young people with the difficulties they may be facing in life. Lidia is good at committing to things long term, and organising her schedules so she can keep busy and active.

## Hi I'm Louise – a bit about me:

I am a mother of two grown up daughters who are 25 and 23. Both daughters have recently left home so I have to get used to a fairly empty house again with just my husband and labrador retriever puppy for company.

Friends and family have always been really important to me, they live all over the country so now we've come out of lockdown I'm spending a lot of time travelling around to see them all again.

I think to be a parent of teenagers can be hard and I had some support from a parenting helpline to help me cope with my own teenagers. I found this was a real lifesaver at times.

I worked as a solicitor for many years. This was an interesting and challenging job, but over time, I felt that I really wanted to do something more useful and more involved with people. Just over a year ago, I decided to leave law to volunteer in supporting roles and particularly to work with children.

I feel I have a lot of energy and time left to give and am keen to spend this time and energy working with and supporting children, young people and families.



### Interests:

- I like exercise classes like 'clubbercise' and pilates, I enjoy walking, socialising, and reading.

### Strengths:

- People often come to share their problems with me, I am good at listening and helping people.
- I am told I have a calm and reassuring manner.
- I feel I am good in a crisis and good at solving problems and encouraging people.

### How could I help you and your family?

I can support children and young people, including young carers who are struggling with their emotions, friends, bullying or with their schooling, including reading and writing as an extra out of school support. I am able to be an advocate on behalf of you and your family during meetings with others, such as family support workers etc.

I can also work and support your Early Help support worker, entertaining your children whilst you talk.

### Information from Early Help:

Louise is a volunteer who is friendly, helpful and very approachable person. She is really keen to develop her skills with direct work with children, she is particularly keen to support children who might be struggling with education or friendship groups and bullying. Louise has a significant amount of time to dedicate to this role, for which we thank her for.

## Hi I'm Lydia – a bit about me:

I am a single mom to two boys and I am originally from Kenya coming to live in this country as an adult. One of my boys is still at home and is 10 years old. We have recently had our first pet rabbit, which we are enjoying having around as an addition to the family.

I worked as a care assistant for over 10 years where I was able to support elderly individuals with dementia. I now work as a foster carer, which I have been doing for 5 years caring for children and young people up-to 18 years of age.

As a foster carer I look to support children and young people in lots of different ways, offering a safe home environment and supporting them with guidance, care, and their education.

I grew up in a big family so being around and caring for children is part of who I am. My passion is to help children and young people, I understand children and young people well, however continually attend training to further my understanding and to ensure I can enhance my understanding and support that I give.



## Interests:

- I like walking and spending time outdoors such as nature walk and day trip to the seaside with my son and the children I work with.
- I like socialising with my friends.
- I like to cook and entertain my friends.
- I like to read and solve sudoku.

## Strengths:

- I communicate well and I am a good listener.
- I am patient, positive, and non-judgemental and a good empathiser
- I am calm especially when under pressure and when dealing with challenging situations.
- I work well with others and always open to feedback.

## How can I help you are your family?

I can support you with your day-to-day activities that will enable you all to, fully enjoy family life. I can specifically support with social elements of family life and support in engagement with services available, encouraging all family members to be actively involved in your local community.

I would welcome working with all parents, carers, children and young people with any needs that I can support with. I have a good understanding around the impact of trauma, having developed my skills in this area as a foster carer.

## Information from Early Help:

Lydia is a volunteer who is friendly and approachable, she is well organised and very committed to helping children, young people and families. Lydia can give quite a bit of time to families in term time and could support other professionals. Lydia will need some notice to support a family due to working round studying and her other job as a foster carer but she is keen to support and help where possible.

## **Hi I'm Mazeda – a bit about me:**

I have a kind nature and I love to empower people and make a difference in the lives of children and families who need a helping hand. I am passionate about seeing people improve and grow.

I have experience working in Early Years, Mental Health Carer support and Domestic Abuse advocacy. These roles have helped me to gain an understanding of the barriers that some families face and motivate me to work closely with Children, Young People and Parents so that they are able to live happy lives.

In addition to English, I can speak Bengali, Hindi and Urdu and I am able to communicate effectively with families who speak these languages.

### **Interests:**

- I like learning new things and doing courses
- Bike riding
- Going to the park
- Meeting new people
- Spending time with my family

### **Strengths:**

- I am a good communicator
- I am an active listener
- Non-Judgemental
- I am observant

### **How can I help you and your family?**

I can advocate for parents and children, particularly if bullying is a problem as I have tackled this as a parent. I can help parents who are struggling to understand their teenagers. With my experience in Early Years, I am happy to offer support and advice around effective play and routines and dealing with a new born.

### **Information from Early Help:**

Mazeda is friendly and approachable and has experience working with families from different backgrounds. Mazeda has a non-judgemental approach when working with families and is interested in helping parents who may be having difficulties engaging with their teenagers.

## Hi I am Michelle – a bit about me

I am a single mom and have one son, who is now all grown up. I have always done the parenting on my own, with limited family support. My son has Autism and Dyspraxia, and my main priority has been supporting him to meet his goals and be happy.

My days can be challenging, and I still need to be around to ensure he gets to work on time and is prepared for his day. I have to be organised for both of us, which means a lot of forward planning.

It has been tough over the years, especially to get him the support he has needed, he was only diagnosed with his Autism when he reached adulthood at 18. I have accessed many services over the years for my son, and had some real difficult experiences, especially when we started this journey 30 years ago.

These experiences have led me to go into working in education and looking at special education needs support for children nowadays. I have been a teaching assistant for many years and have completed some studying around disabilities and inclusion.

### Interests:

- I am a really busy and active person who likes to be on the go.
- I am a Guides and Brownie volunteer
- I like walking, photography and open water swimming.

### Strengths:

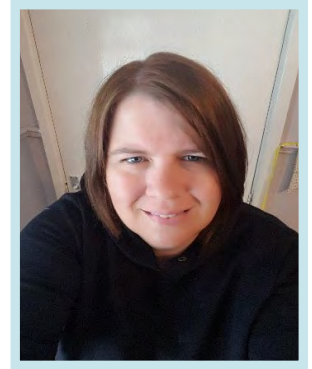
- People often say to me it does not matter what life has thrown at me, I just get on with it, and I think I can help other families to think about finding some ways to cope with the challenges they may be facing to build resilience.
- I am an organised person.
- I communicate well with children, young people and adults
- I am calm and a good listener.
- I am a confident person and keen for new challenges.

### How could I help you and your family?

I am specifically interested in supporting families, children and young people who are maybe in a similar position that I have been in the past, with supporting their children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities.

### Information from Early Help:

Michelle is a volunteer who is confident, approachable and easy to talk to and clearly is a good listener. She presents a strength and calm that is appealing and welcoming to the people around her. Michelle is able to develop and use her many skills. She is particularly interested in using her SEN skills, and supporting the whole family who maybe struggling with managing and understanding disabilities.



## Hi I'm Sam – a bit about me:

I am a mother to four children, 3 of whom live with me and my fiancé, 1 cat and 2 fish. I also have a granddaughter who lives with her mom, my eldest daughter lives close by. I class my home as a mad house, but also a fun house.

I had my first baby when I was only 18, this came with extra challenges as my daughter also has additional needs, ADHD and Autism, plus I was a single parent at this time.

I have had little support from professionals over the years regarding my daughter, but have always had the support of my family. I have worked very hard to help get my family to where we are now.

I am currently working in a private nursery and have done so for 19 years, I have really enjoyed this job but am keen to find new challenges.



## Interests:

- I love exploring the outdoors with my family, we love camping and just being together, our movie nights are really fun (with popcorn of course).
- I like to keep busy and enjoy socialising with friends but it is difficult to find opportunities for this sometimes.

## Strengths:

- I have managed parenting a child with additional needs while being a single parent, I understand some of the challenges that this can cause for parents/carers.
- I have a good understanding of ADHD and Autism based on my own experiences, although I know this is often different for every child, young person and family.
- I am a good listener and I am good at listening to my own children, this has helped me understand them better. I have found by working with them and giving them choices over the years this has built a more positive relationship.
- I am organised, and have discovered that organisation is key when you have a large family, in order to keep your sanity.
- I am good at helping children and young people with anxiety and understanding their emotions including younger children, through my experience of working with early years within my nursery setting as my son suffers anxiety.
- I worked in a youth club many years ago and really enjoyed this and interacting with the young people.

## How can I help you and your family?

I am here to offer support in any way that I can. I want you as a family to know you are not on your own, lots of people are around to help. I want to focus my support to parents/carers, children and young people with any needs. I want to help, as no one should have to manage like I did by struggling alone.

## Information from Early Help:

Sam is a volunteer who is friendly, open, calm and a caring person, who has shown resilience in the face of adversity. She is easy to talk to, and is a good listener and communicator; Sam could volunteer around any area of Early Help Service while she develops her interests & goals long term.

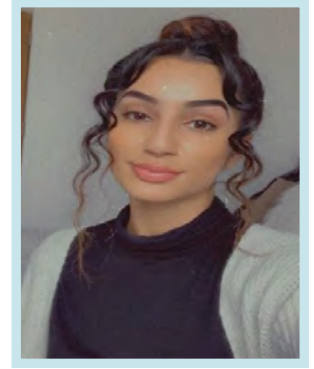


## Hi I'm Zulaikhah – a bit about me:

I live with my parents at home, I have a younger brother and sister, we have a busy home, but we do all get on well. I have many cousins and come from big family, I am used to being around children and teenagers and I am very family orientated.

I have been a bit unsure of what I have wanted to do in my life, at times I got into trouble at school as I made some poor choices with peer groups. At this time, my parents had separated for a time and looking back, I think I really struggled with that.

I managed to get back into learning however when I was about 15 and since then I have enjoyed learning and have a passion for learning. I am currently studying.



### Interests:

- Keeping fit and going to the gym
- Socialising with friends
- Reading
- Supporting people

### Strengths:

- I'm a good listener and people seek me out to talk to them about their problems
- I'm committed and motivated person
- I'm positive and remain calm
- I am good at empowering individuals
- I am dedicated, determined, trustworthy and respectful

### How can I help you and your family?

I would like to work with a mixture of ages of children and young people and also work close with you as a family. As I have a passion for working with people, I want to use my knowledge and experience to make a difference.

### Information from Early Help:

Zulaikhah is a volunteer who has a lovely calming and relaxing nature. Zulaikhah is a committed person and works hard in lots of areas of her life. She is keen to take 'the whole family' approach. Zulaikhah could help in being a positive role model for young people.

For more information please speak to your Early Help Lead Professional/Social Worker or contact:  
**[earlyhelpvolunteers@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelpvolunteers@walsall.gov.uk)**

You can also access our website for further information on this link: **[Volunteering- Make a difference \(walsall.gov.uk\)](https://www.walsall.gov.uk/volunteering)**





