

Asim - Stories of welcome and exclusion

I think we landed at the airport, then we drove to Leicester, and it was the first time I had seen snow, because we came in the winter. It was the first time I had seen a lady wear a dress. It was just like being taken out of your comfort zone and everything that you know and then just plopped here. I do not think I liked it at first, when I first came, because I was 6, maybe just turned 7, so my world had been really turned upside down. It took me probably a couple of years [to adjust]. I did not speak English, so I think when I started school, I did not know what was going on. I remember I struggled for the first few years of school, purely because of the language. I remember sitting there and getting really frustrated. There was one girl that was kind of assigned to me. She could speak Punjabi and I could speak Punjabi and so she would try and help me a little bit. Some nice teachers did help me, but the majority did not. I just could not understand what they were saying, and I just sat there. And then the teacher would come around and I think some of them were probably scolding me because I did not know what to do or what the work entailed.