



Case Study – ICOS Women, Mum’s Club Newcastle Polish School

The name used in this case study has been changed to protect the individual’s privacy and confidentiality.

Maria is a Polish mother living in the UK within a multicultural family where English is the primary language spoken at home. Every Saturday, she brings her children to the Polish language school. Due to the long distance between her home and the school, returning home during lessons is impractical. Previously, this time was unproductive and isolating for her.

The introduction of parent workshops running alongside the children’s classes has significantly changed Maria’s experience of Saturdays at the school.

Maria faced several challenges common to many migrant parents:

- Limited opportunities to speak her native language in daily life
- Feelings of isolation while waiting during children’s lessons
- Reduced self-confidence in her own practical and creative abilities
- Lack of exposure to traditional, hands-on skills she could pass to her children
- Difficulty finding meaningful, confidence-building activities for herself as a parent

Additionally, Maria observed a broader issue of increasing reliance on buying ready-made items rather than creating things by hand, which she felt reduced appreciation and learning opportunities for children.

During the children’s Saturday classes, craft workshops led by Gosia were introduced for parents. These sessions provided:

- A structured, guided environment for creative activities
- All necessary materials prepared in advance
- Step-by-step instructions that made even complex projects achievable
- A welcoming space for Polish-speaking parents to connect and talk
- An opportunity to learn practical, transferable skills

Maria reports a noticeable increase in her self-confidence. Completing craft projects that initially seemed difficult has helped her believe in her own abilities. The supportive guidance during sessions made her feel capable and proud of what she created. She now feels more confident attempting creative activities at home with her children.

Living in a multicultural household where English dominates, Maria values the opportunity to speak Polish with other mothers. This strengthens her connection to her native language and culture, which she feels is important for both herself and her children.

The workshops created a natural space for mothers to talk, exchange parenting experiences, and build friendships. What was once idle waiting time has become meaningful social interaction and peer support.

Maria has been able to transfer the skills learned in the workshops into her home life. She now engages her children in creating things rather than buying them. She believes this teaches: creativity, patience, appreciation for handmade items and the value of effort and learning.



Her children are curious and excited about what she makes each week. Her oldest daughter has even expressed a desire to join the workshops, showing how the impact extends beyond Maria herself.

Maria highlights an important observation: many traditional practical skills are slowly disappearing. The workshops revive these abilities and remind parents of the value of making things by hand.

For Maria, the workshops have transformed an inconvenient waiting period into a time for personal growth and source of confidence and pride. She found place for community connection where she can speak Polish language.

Supporting parents alongside children's education can significantly enhance the overall value of community schooling initiatives.

Maria expresses deep gratitude for the workshops, recognising that they benefit both her and her children in more ways than she initially expected.