



Finding My Place: A Journey of Education and Acceptance

I'm Lizzie, a 17-year-old Traveller girl with a passion for life and a story to share. Strap in because this ride has been quite the adventure!

Growing up on a private site, I faced challenges that many wouldn't understand unless they've walked a mile in my shoes. You see, leaving school at the tender age of 12 wasn't exactly what I envisioned for myself. But the truth is, I felt like an outsider in a system that failed to accommodate my unique background.

The discrimination was subtle yet persistent. Kids can be cruel, and when you're the odd one out, it's hard not to internalise that feeling of otherness. So, I made the tough decision to be homeschooled. It wasn't ideal, and I missed out on a lot of the traditional schooling experiences, but it was the best option at the time.

Yet, despite the lack of formal qualifications, I never lost sight of my dreams. Education was my ticket to a better future, and I was determined to grab hold of it with both hands. So, I took a leap of faith and enrolled in a college health and beauty course.

Let me tell you, walking through those college doors for the first time was equal parts terrifying and exhilarating. But as I settled into my studies and connected with my classmates, something remarkable happened. For the first time in a long while, I felt like I belonged. Sure, there were still moments of doubt and insecurity, but surrounded by a diverse group of students, I realised that I wasn't alone. We were all on our own journeys, each one unique and beautiful in its own way.

Completing level 1 of my course and gaining functional skills qualifications in maths and English were major milestones for me. They proved that with hard work and dedication, anything is possible, regardless of where you come from.

And now, as I embark on another year of college, I do so with renewed confidence and excitement. I've come a long way from the shy girl who felt out of place in a world that didn't understand her. Today, I stand tall, proud of who I am and all that I've accomplished.

So, to anyone out there who's ever felt like they didn't quite fit in, remember this: your journey is uniquely yours, and it's worth every twist and turn along the way. Embrace your differences, chase your dreams, and never let anyone dull your sparkle.

Until next time, keep shining bright! ... Lizzie X