



Education
Scotland
Foghlam Alba

Supporting Gypsy Travellers in Education



For Scotland's Learners, with Scotland's Educators

Resources to Support Gypsy Travellers in Education

Introduction

The mobile tradition and culture of the travelling community can present challenges for Gypsy/Travellers children and young people in terms of access to education. The cumulative effect of multiple transitions, cultural differences and discriminatory attitudes ([Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2015](#)) can contribute to barriers to learning for Gypsy Travellers children. The impact of such barriers can be exacerbated when parents have limited or negative educational experience themselves. A partnership approach between families, authorities and agencies is needed to overcome barriers to learning so that Traveller children's rights, entitlements and potential can be realised. Like all children and young people in Scotland, Gypsy/Travellers have rights to education under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This educational entitlement is supported by a raft of Scottish legislation and guidance (see Section 4).

The Travelling Community

- Travelling communities in Scotland are not a single group. There are many different groups. Each is defined by its own history, culture and lifestyle.
- While each group is made up of extensive family networks, these may have little or no connection with other Traveller groups.
- Central to each community is its right to self-identity, and to be recognised and respected by the society it lives in.
- **The different groups may have very different educational experiences and outcomes but what they do share is family lifestyles, which are essentially built around a mobile tradition.**
- Some Traveller groups, such as Scottish Gypsy/Travellers and European Roma, will be recognised in law as minority ethnic groups and are therefore afforded legal protection from discrimination on grounds of race under the Equality Act 2010.

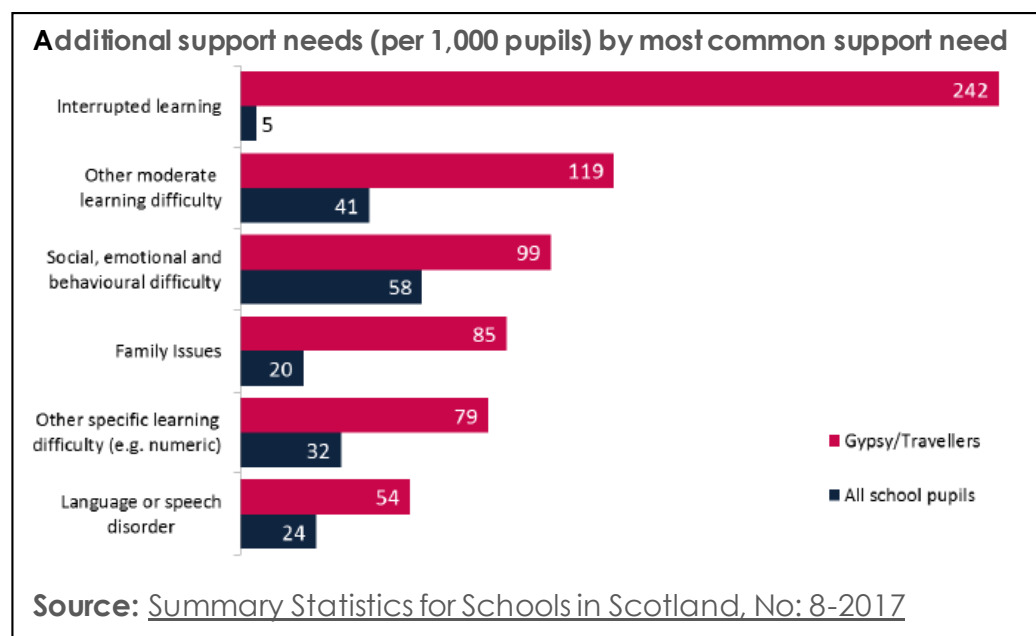
Gypsy Travellers and education

Evidence from the [Improving educational outcomes for children and young people from travelling](#) cultures report (Dec 2018) shows that as a group, Gypsy/Travellers' educational outcomes in terms of attainment and positive destinations are among the worst in Scottish education. A two year average from the 2014/15 and 2015/16 leavers' data, shows the difference between Gypsy Travellers and all school leavers (see table below).

Educational Outcome	Leavers recorded as White Gypsy Travellers	All publicly funded secondary school leavers	Difference
In positive follow-up destinations	74.6 %	91.7 %	17.1 % less
Left school with no qualifications at SCQF level 3 or higher	23.9 %	2.1 %	21.6 % more
Left school with 1 or more qualifications at SCQF level 5	43.3 %	85.4 %	42.1 % less

Attainment however is only part of the educational picture for this group of learners. The report also goes on to show that:-

- many Gypsy Traveller children in school do not complete the broad general education (BGE) or progress to senior stage but are withdrawn at the end of primary school. Anecdotal evidence also indicates that there many Gypsy Traveller children do not attend school at all.
- Respectme, [report](#) that Gypsy Traveller children and young people are a particularly discriminated against and marginalised group and concerns about **bullying** are especially acute for secondary schools. Perceived risks about bullying and parents' own experiences of **discriminatory behaviour** be the cause of low levels of enrolment, poor attendance and early exits from formal education.
- **attendance is lower** and **exclusions higher** for gypsy traveller learners compared to all learners
- percentage of Gypsy Traveller learners who require **additional support** is higher than all other ethnicities combined and significantly higher than that for all learners (see chart below)



Key Policies and Guidance

Policy	Gypsy Traveller policy	Overview and actions
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Plan	Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy Travellers 2019-2021	Joint action plan by the Scottish Government and COSLA which includes actions for Education
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Guidance	<p>Improving educational outcomes for children and young people from travelling cultures (2018)</p> <p>Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1</p> <p>Children Missing from Education</p>	Guidance for promoting and managing school attendance
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Other Relevant Legislation	<p>Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014</p> <p>Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004</p> <p>Additional support for learning 2017 (Code of Practice)</p> <p>Equality Act 2010: Equality legislation</p> <p>Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)</p> <p>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989</p>	<p>Legislation for children's services provision</p> <p>Legislation for educational provision for any learner considered to have additional support needs.</p> <p>Statutory guidance.</p> <p>Policy supporting families to receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people.</p> <p>Treaty to uphold the rights of children</p>
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Resources

Educational information, resources and case studies

[Improving educational outcomes for children and young people from travelling cultures \(2018\)](#)

[STEP for Educators](#)

[STEP for Families](#)

[Learning journey: A celebration of Gypsy/Traveller communities in Scotland](#)

[Gypsy Traveller Education Group – South Lanarkshire Council](#)

[Inclusive practice in action - Working with the travelling Showmen community](#)

Guidance includes real life insights and case studies.

Information on engaging families and making learning relevant

Information and learning activities for parents and carers

A resource about the history, culture and lives of the gypsy traveller community.

Alternative education provision to engage Gypsy Travellers in South Lanarkshire Council.

How two schools are successfully working with the travelling Showmen community.

Rights and Equality

[Recognising and Realising Children's Rights](#)

[Article 12 in Scotland: Gypsy/Travellers](#)

Resources and professional learning to support practitioners

Resources and publications

Anti-Bullying

[Respect for All](#)

[Recording and monitoring of bullying incidents in Schools](#)

Guidance for a national approach to anti-bullying

Supplementary guidance for schools

Professional Learning, Reflection, and Support

Professional Learning	<p>TENET (Traveller Education Network)</p> <p>Embedding inclusion, equity and empowerment</p> <p>Inclusive Education</p> <p>Inclusion in Practice: The CIRCLE Framework (Secondary)</p> <p>Engaging Parents and Families</p>	<p>Professional learning and resources for educators.</p> <p>Education Scotland information</p> <p>Online learning resource on inclusive education</p> <p>Online learning resource to support inclusive classrooms</p> <p>A toolkit for practitioners</p>
Reflective Questions	<p>Leadership & Learning</p> <p>Data Intelligence</p>	<p>Annex D of Scottish Government Report</p> <p>Annex C of Scottish Government Report</p>
Supporting Agencies	<p>STEP (Scottish Traveller Education Programme)</p> <p>Enquire</p> <p>Pupil Inclusion Network Scotland (PINS)</p>	<p>Programme part funded by Scottish Government</p> <p>Advice on 'additional support for learning' for practitioners, parents and young people.</p> <p>Inclusion network and resources supporting practitioners who work with learners who are vulnerable or excluded</p>