



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

EHE-GRT

Richard Austin Welsh Government

Rhona Evans Carmarthenshire

Mary Holmes Carmarthenshire



Ivatts' Report into EHE-GRT 2017

- Traveller Services reported year on year increase in GRT families opting for EHE
- Concerns- that families were using EHE as a means of avoiding school attendance and any legal penalties
- Concern that a majority of parents were judged to be ill equipped to deliver an education suited to their children's aptitude, abilities and any additional needs they may have



Small Scale research

- Questionnaire to 23 LAs
- Sent to Traveller Education Services and EHE Officers
- Returns from 20/23 Traveller Education Services and 16/23 EHE Officers
- 3,000 learners in these LAs were receipt of EHE
- Approximately 1,000 were in primary school with 2,000 in secondary school
- Estimates of GRT ranged between 16% and 35%



Reasons given for EHE

- Cultural erosion
- Relevance of Secondary school curriculum
- Fear of racist and other bullying
- Nomadic lifestyle was not seen as a significant factor for families



EHE Practice in responding LAs (1)

- 25% of responding LAs did not have a written policy on EHE.
- Most LAs provide families with initial and post registration advice,
- Only 2 gave practical help in the form of educational materials.
- All LAs write a report following monitoring/inspection visits and a majority share these reports with the TES and other departments/agencies on a need-to-know basis.
- More care appears to be taken in relation of pupils with special educational needs



EHE Practice in responding LAs (2)

- Over 62% of LAs reported that they do not always see the child during an initial and or monitoring/inspection visit and that in one case this is neither recorded nor reported to other agencies.
- There are also a number of these LAs within the survey who visit without seeing the child and who just record this information without passing it on to other agencies as a matter of routine.
- In the cases where the incident is reported, the data does not provide information on the process, agency reported to, and subsequent actions taken



EHE Practice in responding LAs (3)

- Variation in practice reported amongst responding LAs in relation to home visits
- Variation between initial notification child is EHE, initial visit and approval or rejection of provision being delivered
- This could take up to a term resulting in GRT learners receiving no formal education
- 56% of LAs who responded affirmed their officers had training in EHE
- 36% had attended training on GRT communities
- This research finding raises serious doubts about the quality of professional judgements being made by officers during initial and or monitoring/inspection visits to families from these backgrounds.



EHE Practice in responding LAs (4)

- 94%- Vast majority of Traveller Education Services responding (19/20) felt that learners were not receiving an appropriate education
- 72%- of Traveller Education Services felt that traveller children would be on ALN register if they were attending schools
- 50%- of Traveller Education Services reported that some learners had needs formally identified (statements- now EHCP)



Report Recommendations (1)

- Felt that parliamentary legislation was required for safeguarding of children and this should apply to all families currently being EHE and those who are considering in future
- National system of registration be implemented by each local education authority
- Assessment criteria; monitoring/inspection visits; and the time sequence related to these events
- Wishes of children are established and taken into account in the assessment process.
- Clear curriculum entitlement is defined which is broad and balanced.
- All children to be registered (irrespective of whether they have ever been registered with a school), and that all children registered under EHE are seen initially and in the teaching and learning situation on a regular basis defined in law and a standard format for post visit reports and their distribution
- All children registered under EHE are assessed on a regular basis in relation to expectations of educational progress.
- Timetable be established and defined in relation to the procedures incumbent on local authorities pursuant to assessment judgements of the provision being unsuitable.
- Parents and secondary aged children have the right of appeal at any decision by the appropriate authorities in regard to an application and continuance of elected home education.



Report Recommendations (2)

- The legislation should be supported by appropriate circulars and other guidance together with an initial and periodic national training programme.
- That local authorities be required to include within their Inspection Cycle, an assessment of the quality of the assessment and monitoring/inspection functions in relation to elective home education and to report on their findings.
- That the criteria for assessment and monitoring/inspection visits should be based on a modified version of the requirements for the inspection of independent schools under Section 162a.25
- The Department for Education and Skills should implement changes in order that the cycle of prejudice is broken down, racist bullying tackled and the educational needs and aspirations of Gypsy/Roma and Traveller communities are taken into account within maintained schools.
- That a review be commissioned by the DfES after five years of the implementation of the new legislation

BEST PRACTICE –engagement with parents

Parents

- have a vital role to play in raising the attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and many recognise that the fast pace of technical and economic change now requires skill sets beyond those traditionally valued
- are children's first educators and remain their key educators throughout their school career
- are the most important early influence on their children and the single most important factor in their later success and attainment at school.
- of most Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners are concerned about their children losing their cultural identity

Vital to develop partnerships between schools, Local Authorities and parents.

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-11/moving-forward-gypsy-traveller-education.pdf>

[Moving forward together: Raising Gypsy, Roma and Traveller educational achievement - Friends, Families and Travellers \(gypsy-traveller.org\)](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org)

Engagement- what are the challenges (1)?

- Establishing relationships –Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families may have experienced racism in their everyday lives, being the target for media generated mistrust and prejudice, which has the effect of generating fear and anxiety about identifying themselves and expressing their concerns;
- Schools and Local Authorities understanding and appreciation of the different learning styles within the Gypsy, Roma or Traveller home environment.

Engagement- what are the challenges (2)?

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents:-

- may not be as secure in their knowledge of their educational responsibilities if they decide to home educate.
- may have had little experience of formal schooling or they may themselves have had negative experiences.
- may have had a negative experience of the education system due to the low expectations, racial prejudice and stereotyping that underpin these experiences.

The Gypsy Roma and Traveller home learning environment (1)

- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents provide a learning environment that is constant and provides continuity for their children as they transfer from one setting or one school to another.
- The site, home and community are very significant learning environments in the lives of these children.
- The learning styles within the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are unique to them.
- In one way, the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller homebased learning can be seen as an extended work experience, equipping the young person with the necessary skills and values for entry into the adult community

The Gypsy Roma and Traveller home learning environment (2)

In traditional Gypsy, Roma and Traveller homes:

- children learn through participation rather than by decontextualised verbal explanation;
- learning entails temporal and spatial freedom, not always possible at school;
- learning takes place on an intergenerational basis, in contrast to the fixed peer group experience encountered in schools;
- learning tends to be collaborative, rather than competitive, and does not involve testing;
- learning allows children opportunities to work autonomously and to acquire status from an early age;
- learning carries an expectation that young people make an economic contribution to the family life;
- learning is designed to encourage engagement in adult work activities;
- learning has a clear connection to everyday life, as distinct from being a step towards a qualification that may or may not relate to future work;
- learning enhances the sense of community identity and family membership.

Specific identities

Welsh Government 2008 guidance states that Gypsies and Travellers are generally represented by three main groups, with specific identities within this:

- **Gypsy Travellers;**
- **Occupational Travellers;**
- **New Age Travellers**
- The term Gypsy Traveller includes Irish Travellers, Scottish Gypsies/Travellers, English Gypsies and Romany and Welsh Gypsies. Romany Gypsies have been recognised in law since 1988 and Irish Travellers have had legal recognition as an ethnic group since 2000.
- Occupational Travellers include those who belong to the traditional Show and Fairground communities, the Circus communities, and Bargees and other waterway family businesses.
- New Age Travellers are described as a UK group which emerged in the 1960s. Some have dropped the use of 'Age', whilst others prefer to be known simply as Travellers.
- <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-11/moving-forward-gypsy-traveller-education.pdf>
- More detailed information on specific identities can be found in DCFS guidance 2010: link below
- <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/resources/assets/attachment/full/0/234809.pdf>



News report <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-sussex-57643707>

- **As a teenager, John Castle lived a double life. He had love and loyalty for his family of travelling show people. But at school, in the face of prejudice and discrimination, he felt compelled to hide his roots. Now an NHS doctor, he believes his upbringing prepared him for the pressures of the pandemic.**
- As a young child, he was often on the road and out of school, helping his family run burger vans and rides at fairs across the south coast of England.
- Twenty years later, early exposure to this hustle and bustle proved to be invaluable conditioning for life on the Covid frontline at a busy Brighton hospital.
- "When I am on the A&E shop floor it feels like I was almost trained to be there," he said. "The multiple noises, the sensory overload, I don't think anything of it."
- "That's what I've always known and I thrive in it."
- Today, the 28-year-old University of Oxford graduate proudly identifies as both a doctor and a member of the showman community - a centuries-old culture of travelling fairground operators.