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Curriculum

“By 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”
UN Sustainable Development Goal 4.7

Curriculum design

The curriculum is all of the experiences that are planned to ensure that young people develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need for learning, life and work. Children and young people from Traveller communities have the same entitlement as all other pupils to a coherent curriculum that reflects their rights and wellbeing needs, as well as their cultural and future employment needs. To achieve this, schools will need to engage with and involve a range of stakeholders and agencies, including Traveller parents, children and young people.

This aim sits well with the concept and process of [Learning for Sustainability](#), an approach to life and learning which enables learners, educators, schools and their wider communities to build a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society and supports learners to acquire the knowledge and skills to support human rights, global citizenship and cultural diversity (see [Annex A](#)).

The guidance document [Promoting Diversity and Equality – Developing Responsible Citizens for 21st Century Scotland](#) considers good practice examples across the four contexts of Curriculum for Excellence. It demonstrates how support is essential to remove barriers that might restrict young people’s access to the curriculum because of their circumstances and illustrates how to make provision for diverse groups including Travellers.

Practice Insight

A local authority Gypsy Traveller Education Group (GTEG) provides a bespoke educational provision for secondary school age young people living in, or travelling through, their area. The work began over a decade ago with a teacher from a local secondary school meeting Traveller pupils for 1.5 days a week. The approach was noted as an example of excellence at an HMIE inspection, and grant funding was sourced for a full time promoted post, after which it was mainlined in the council’s budget, and shared between two teachers. GTEG operates with youth workers out of community premises and pop-up sites across the local authority 2.5 days a week.

GTEG offers individual learning programmes covering literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing, and employability needs. The young people can access a wide range of subjects and awards, including SQA qualifications, to develop skills for learning, further education, life and work. Some young people also attend day release college courses. The GTEG team provide advice and support to education staff and professionals across all sectors to ensure that children and young people who attend school are also supported.

Learning pathways

Traveller families will benefit if they can see the value and relevance of the 3 -18 Scottish curriculum as well as the positive impact on their children's outcomes of continuity and progression in their education. Children and young people should also understand the value of what they are learning and its relevance to their lives, now and in the future. Learning pathways support the child or young person's journey through their education and the choices made within the pathway help to develop existing skills and knowledge. Schools should be flexible and support young Travellers to select courses and qualifications that will improve their outcomes and prospects for employment, and flex the curriculum for younger Travellers too. All Travellers should experience learning that:

- recognises and values prior experiences, particularly those skills which have been gained from their cultural and family based experiences
- provides access to a range of opportunities which will support their skills development needs
- supports the development of an appropriately challenging and achievable progressive learning pathway designed to meet their needs
- are appropriately challenging and enjoyable and well matched to their needs and interest
- includes opportunities for appropriate tracking and monitoring

"I have been taking travelling children to outdoor residential settings for a number of years and they have been great examples to the other children in terms of taking on the challenges with confidence; they often become the natural leaders of the group."

Primary School Teacher

Schools should set clear and high expectations for all Traveller pupils, which, used in conjunction with teacher judgement, should inform learning pathways. There will be a need for shared systems to show where Travellers have missed stages in learning due to interruptions.

Pathways should recognise cultural skills and strengths; it is not unusual for some Travellers to excel in some curricular areas while experiencing difficulties in others creating what might be called a 'jagged' profile of learning and achievement. Schools will need to use the flexibility of the curriculum to support Travellers to achieve to the best of their ability in all curricular areas¹⁹. This will mean supporting them to progress and reach their full potential, without imposing artificial limitations in curricular areas in which they excel. This is particularly important where Travellers may not make the transition to secondary school or the traditional route to further or higher education. Where gaps in learning are identified, Travellers' learning is known to accelerate quickly with appropriate short-term support.

¹⁹ See for example the Scottish Network for Able Pupils' 'Snapshot 11: [High Ability and the Travelling Community](#)'

Skills for Learning, Life and Work

Significant to learning pathways is the work of the [Developing the Young Workforce](#) (DYW) programme which is seeking to ensure all young people are developing employability skills as part of their learning from the early years onwards. A key aim is closer partnerships between schools, colleges and employers to ensure opportunities for learning are available to meet the needs of all young people, including Travellers, who can then leave school with the work-related skills, qualifications and experience that equip them for their next step, whatever that is.

Appropriate Senior Phase planning, together with involvement with families, will help sustain post-school participation in learning, training and work. The careers service in schools should use a blended approach that offers people the chance to tailor their support levels and ensure those most in need of in-depth help can access it easily. Career services within schools should facilitate links between schools, colleges and employers, including DYW Regional Groups, where required.

An important aspect of Developing the Young Workforce is starting careers advice and guidance earlier in schools. The [Careers Education Standard](#) aims to improve the careers support school pupils receive, introduce those services earlier in school and embed careers information and guidance within Curriculum for Excellence. All pupils, regardless of age and stage, will have the opportunity to learn about the world of work and possible career pathways. This can be particularly important for Travellers who do not progress to secondary school.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) recognise that Traveller children and young people may need enhanced careers support, in and after school. SDS aim to deliver careers information advice, guidance and employability support through a person-centred, coaching approach which recognises, and adapts to, individual needs. For example, careers guidance for Travellers may need to take into account family business opportunities for Travellers, and should also recognise that extra support might be needed for young people who want to pursue post-school pathways which are unfamiliar to the family or community. It is important that career information, advice and guidance is accessible for Traveller families and young people.

The DYW [Work Placements Standard](#) are helpful in supporting young people in making their career choices by providing relevant, challenging, enjoyable and appropriate learning experience within the workplace; and the DYW [guidance on School/Employer Partnerships](#) provides information on how collaborative partnerships can help improve young people's understanding and readiness for employment. All the DYW Standards and guidance have a strong equality focus and may be very relevant in supporting Traveller young people.

It will be the responsibility of all partners to address the issue of equality. While this standard is expressed as a universal entitlement for young people to gain experience of work, it needs to be clear that not all young people enjoy the same advantages, nor face the same challenges. Their backgrounds and circumstances must never limit their potential and all partners will seek to develop practice which ensures improved outcomes for all young people. All stakeholders involved in any work placement should provide advice, guidance and opportunities that contribute to:

- eradicating discrimination; and
- promoting mutual respect and equality of opportunity across genders, social background, disabilities, ethnicities, sexual orientation and religions.

From Developing the Young Workforce Work Placements Standard September 2015

Vocational qualifications

Offering Senior Phase opportunities for accreditation across different forms of vocational learning can match the aspirations of Traveller communities and the young people themselves. Colleges have an important role to play here not least in supporting learners at risk of disengaging from learning,²⁰ or those who have already disengaged. Vocational qualifications such as Foundation Apprenticeships can help young people gain valuable, real-world work experience and access work-based learning while they're still at school. See also the 'Transitions' section for information on post-16 transitions, including Modern Apprenticeships.

"The first time he came home with something he had made himself was remarkable ... it's not something that his family would have known how to make."

Gypsy/Traveller mum of boy attending college course

Activity agreements

Activity Agreements and Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) may also help Traveller young people continue learning. Activity Agreements provide one-to-one Trusted Professional support and a tailored learning plan aimed at (re)engaging young people in learning and training beyond school with a view to ultimately progressing toward and into employment. A trusted professional can provide consistency required to build relationships both with the Traveller young person and their families, and if needed, could act as a local authority link for families to access wider employability support.

Practice Insight

Some secondary schools have done specific work to promote positive destinations for Roma young people. One school organised a careers event for parents and young people from BME groups, including Roma. The aim was to motivate and encourage these young people to widen their horizons by introducing them to the range of opportunities available to them and explain the support they could get. There were information stalls from employers, colleges and advice and guidance agencies, such as Skills Development Scotland, covering apprenticeships, college courses, work placements, and more. Interpreters were provided so that everyone could access fully all information.

²⁰ <http://www.collegedevelopmentnetwork.ac.uk/projects/curriculum-teaching-and-assessment/developing-the-young-workforce/>

Reflection

- How do you ensure Traveller young people and their families are well supported to engage with careers services?
- Have you ensured the right partnerships and support is in place to help Traveller young people participate in learning, training and work on leaving school?

Further information

- [The 15- 24 Learner Journey Review](#)
- [How the Activity Agreement approach can support flexibility and choice in the development of Curriculum for Excellence senior phase learning and pathways.](#)

Learning, teaching and assessment

Learning and engagement

Just like all children and young people, children and young people from travelling cultures are likely to demonstrate higher levels of engagement when they understand how their educational achievements can help develop knowledge and skills for future employment. As some children may come from families where there is no tradition of schooling, or where parents have had negative educational experiences, it will be important to emphasise how the curriculum is personalised to meet the individual needs of each learner. To sustain motivation, learning activities should be appropriately challenging and enjoyable and matched to the learner's interests.

Where Traveller children have periods of interruption it will be important that aspects of school life remain constant. Recognition of familiar elements such as school timetables and personal learning intentions will enable them to gain confidence quickly in returning to class learning.

Careful consideration of the range of learning activities and approaches will ensure that the curriculum builds on, and promotes, Traveller young people's learning strengths and their culture and lifestyle. The following features are identified as being motivational, inspiring and relevant to their learning needs:²¹

- **Cultural relevance** - Young people and their families need to understand the connections between their learning and its future value. Activities based around active and outdoor learning such as integrating problem-solving and the construction of natural and synthetic materials provide useful starting points for learning, as do entrepreneurial activities such as setting up small businesses, integrating numeracy, literacy and communication skills.
- **Leadership and ownership** - Opportunities to make use of planning and leadership skills learned from an early age within the Traveller community, including leading learning and taking an active role in the school community.

²¹ An investigation of family literacy programmes for Scottish Travelling communities and European families. STEP, 2015 <http://www.step.education.ed.ac.uk/research/>

Young people are also concerned that they have a 'voice' and that their views are listened to and acted on.

- **Flexibility** - Travelling communities need flexibility in both the content and processes of school education. Unpredictable travelling patterns will need additional levels of flexibility. Schools will need to consider how education can be delivered in terms of time, space, contexts, facilitators and forms of delivery.
- **Creativity** - Opportunities for creative learning in the arts and also in cross-curricular settings are felt to be motivational, perhaps also as Travellers are known to feel challenged by subject-specific boundaries. Creativity is known to arise when activities are presented in a permissive and game-like way.²² Research cites²³ four conditions for schools to pursue when planning creative learning activities:
 - giving pupils assignments that extend over a significant period of time and address central themes in subjects to foster investigative work;
 - teachers emphasising both process and product, and providing ample opportunity for research, experimentation and revision to foster inventiveness;
 - encouraging pupils to integrate production with perception and reflection to foster the ability to use models;
 - giving pupils opportunities to assess their performance and to get feedback on explicit criteria from peers and teachers to foster the capacity for self-assessment.
- **Accessible formats** – The use of several modes or methods (multimodal) should provide alternative and accessible ways of learning. Information and communication are more effective when they take a range of formats, including audio, visual, textual, material and virtual. Activities should offer choice and be appropriately challenging, matched to a range of higher order skills, needs and interests and not restricted by literacy levels.

“Travellers bring richness to our school. They are skilled story-tellers and are proud of their heritage.”

Primary School Teacher

Practice Insight

Although very willing to learn and gain qualifications 'diving in' to formal learning can be daunting for some young Gypsy/Travellers. To address this, the organisation Article 12 in Scotland developed a set of bespoke qualifications for young people – Article 12 Achievement Awards [ATTRAs]. These are delivered at their home site and designed to start young people on the road to achievement by developing their natural skills, introducing new skills, and recognising progress. The awards, which progress through 3 levels, include a combination of tasks which can be tailored to

²² Runco, M. [Creativity, Annual Review of Psychology Vol. 55: 657-687 \(Volume publication date February 2004\)](#)

²³ Lindstrom, L. [Creativity: What Is It? Can You Assess It? Can It Be Taught?](#), *International Journal of Art & Design Education* Volume 25, Issue 1, 21 Feb 2006

match the young person's interests and aspirations, and can be completed at the participant's pace. As young people progress through the ATTRA levels, receiving a certificate for each award, they grow in confidence and look forward to new challenges. The experience of these awards has supported some young people to return to school or to gain SQA qualifications delivered on site, such as the Core Skills Unit, Problem Solving, Level 4.

Reflection

- To what extent is our school an inclusive learning environment for children and young people from travelling cultures?
- How well does our curriculum planning meet the needs of children and young people from travelling cultures?
- Are there further opportunities for flexibility in the way we provide education which will benefit Travellers?

Digital Learning

If used appropriately and effectively, digital technology can enrich learning and teaching across all parts of the curriculum²⁴. In recognition of this, the Scottish Government has published a [Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy for Scotland](#). The strategy contains a number of national level actions and local level expectations centred around the following objectives:

- develop the skills and confidence of educators in the appropriate and effective use of digital technology to support learning and teaching
- improve access to digital technology for all learners
- ensure that digital technology is a central consideration in all areas of curriculum and assessment delivery
- empower leaders of change to drive innovation and investment in digital technology for learning and teaching

Taken as a whole, the actions and expectations outlined in the strategy will help to ensure that all learners in Scotland can experience an education enriched by digital technology.

Digital technology has numerous benefits for learners from travelling cultures and can support them in the following ways:

- Education can be delivered through digital devices and online platforms. [Research](#) shows that most Traveller families have access to digital devices, however, these devices are rarely used for educational purposes. Schools therefore have an opportunity to support families to use their existing digital devices to access educational content. Apps, websites and games can all support mobile learners in this way²⁵.

²⁴ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0048/00489224.pdf>

²⁵ See for example <http://www.step.education.ed.ac.uk/young-people/>

- Digital technology can provide a catalyst and a mechanism to work with parents to identify relevant learning plans for their children. Family support is seen as a key success factor in maintaining children and young people’s engagement in learning while travelling.
- Digital technology offers a way for learners to stay up to date and communicate with their teachers and school friends. Schools can utilise digital platforms such as websites, blogs and forums to keep mobile learners informed and engaged with the work of the school.
- Schools and learners can access a range of up to date digital tools and services through Glow, Scotland’s nationally available digital environment for learning. These tools and services are available free of charge and can be accessed from any internet enabled device. There is therefore significant potential for Glow to support Traveller learners who cannot attend school regularly.

“I looove technology! I would diiiiie without it!”

Traveller young person

Digital technology also offers opportunities to educators in understanding how best to support learners from Traveller communities. For example:

- Local authorities can form clusters and work with Traveller Education Network (TENET) colleagues to share materials on digital platforms that are known to be effective in engaging Traveller learners.
- Digital platforms such as forums, online TeachMeets and MOOCS (massive open online courses) can support a range of career long professional learning opportunities for classroom teachers and school leaders. These opportunities can focus on how best to support the education of learners from Traveller communities.

Reflection

- Are there further opportunities to use digital delivery of learning and teaching to reach Traveller pupils?
- Can technology support better communication and engagement with families?

Practice Insight

A programme implemented by secondary school in Wales targeted Occupational Traveller families and used digital technology to support continuity of learning during periods of travel. Pupils were provided with laptops with Wi-Fi access for periods of mobility. A staff member maintained email contact and ensured that completed work in all subjects was forwarded electronically, to agreed deadlines.

The programme allowed the students to maintain continuity in learning and contact with friends. This was invaluable in ensuring a smooth return after long periods of absence. On the whole, the strategy was considered a success. On account of the successful impact of the pilot on pupils' achievement and social skills, the school planned to make similar provisions for all other pupils from Occupational Traveller families in the future.

“This student is now about to start a further education course and can't envisage post-16 learning without having a laptop and internet access.”

FE Tutor

“Having the laptop has involved (the father) in supporting schoolwork for the first time ever!”

Mother of a young Traveller

Effective use of assessment

The National Improvement Framework for Scottish education has been introduced to help all children to achieve their full potential. It highlights the importance of gathering and sharing accurate information and, essential to this, are the new national standardised assessments which aim to support high quality teaching and learning. Evidence from the assessments will be shared openly with parents to enable them to engage more effectively in their child's learning. The consistency of approach across all local authorities in Scotland should be supportive of mobile pupils.

Assessment is integral to the planning of learning and teaching. Where young people have interrupted learning, it can be challenging for staff to ensure that their learning is assessed regularly. However, teachers and school leaders need to ensure that targets are reviewed when learners return from travel, and that they take quick action where progress slips.

Teachers should ensure that they assess a wide range of sources and celebrate achievements, particularly in skills that are valued by the different Traveller communities, enabling parents to understand the value of the continued progression of their children's learning. There should be opportunities for dialogue with parents across the school year. Schools can demonstrate the processes used to share learning intentions and chart achievements. Visual methods such as charts and visual timetables will be particularly engaging for some Traveller families.

Practice Insight

An inner-city primary school is proactive in its efforts to celebrate the Showpeople community. The achievements of children from the community are recognised and commended, for example the skills for life and work which the children develop when they are travelling and supporting their community at fairgrounds.

Members of school staff are invited to attend the annual 'Showman's Guild lunch' and take with them 8 children who share their experiences of being at school and network with members of their wider community and family. This is seen as a very positive experience for all involved.

Reflection

- Does the school have effective assessment systems in place to identify the needs of the children and young people from travelling cultures?

Practice Insight

A primary school with a high population of Travellers living in the catchment hosts "House Coffee Mornings" several times a year. Parents, families and friends are invited to meet a section of P1-7s in an informal environment and hear about their attainment and achievement. All achievements are equally valued – from dance performances to citizenship activities. Staff are available to provide additional information. Where families do not attend, staff and other members of the school community will engage with learners to share their successes.

Further information

- [Education Scotland, Embedding Inclusion, equity and empowerment](#)
- [Education Scotland, Supporting Learners - legislation, policies, strategies and frameworks](#)
- [Education Scotland - Supporting learners – from early years to positive, sustained destinations](#)

Personalised support

The curriculum should respond to individual needs and support particular aptitudes and talents of all children and young people, including those from the Traveller community. Delivering the entitlement to personalised support will require individualised planning and possibly support to overcome barriers linked to a learning environment that is not, whether the family is mobile or not, easily described as "Traveller friendly". Following periods of interruption teachers will need to be continually responsive, often providing one-to-one support and teaching at the point of learning.

Supporting learning underpins the delivery of the curriculum for all children and young people and it is the responsibility of all practitioners and partners to deliver this universal entitlement within their own teaching environments. The level and

support required will vary from child to child, but all children and young people should;

- have frequent and regular opportunities to discuss their learning with a key adult who knows them well and can act as a mentor, helping them to set appropriate goals for the next stages in learning
- be involved as active participants with planning and reflecting on their own learning and development through assessment, evaluation and personal learning planning
- be able to identify and plan opportunities for their progress and achievement, in and outwith school
- receive support for barriers to learning they may experience

To improve educational outcomes, practitioners will need to consider carefully how they deliver these entitlements for Travellers. For example, a Traveller's key adult will need to understand the cultural background and the challenges this may pose as well as the particular benefits and opportunities it may provide.

Examples of practice are given in the following table:

Individual support entitlements	Examples of practice to support children and young people from travelling cultures
Review learning and plan for next steps	<p>To support interrupted learning, schools and class teachers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share tracking and learning information • provide a learning log/profile • provide curriculum work, which can be completed out with school • moderate and assess the curriculum work
Gain access to learning activities, which will meet individual needs	<p>Ensure that the curriculum is accessible for the children and young people from travelling cultures. This could take the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engaging with families to enquire about access to digital devices at home • maximising the use of digital media through the use of teaching and learning resources that connect home and school • maximising the use of freely accessible software – share information with the family e.g. text recognition software, learning apps, GLOW • identifying most appropriate methods for communication such as sending and receiving course work
Plan for opportunities for personal achievement	<p>Recognition of achievements/attainments gained within the travelling culture, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experiences gained within the family business • sporting activities – martial arts, dancing, boxing • cultural activities - musical, art, creative writing, storytelling
Prepare for changes and choices and be supported through changes and choices (including transitions)	<p>Provide timely support for transitions and course choices. Sensitive and well planned support may be required to support the child and family transition from P7 to S1 and beyond school.</p>
Schools working with partners	<p>Flexible and shared educational placements. For example, some Traveller children and young people are being supported with their learning by community learning officers and the catchment school is supporting them with SQA accreditation.</p>

Practice Insight

An inner city primary school celebrated the problem-solving and construction abilities of young Travellers when creating a set for the annual school performance. Several Traveller children took leadership roles in the design and construction of the set and one of the Traveller parents also offered support, providing a positive link with the community. The parents expressed their pride in their children's achievements and they felt that their contribution was meaningful and valued. The initiative also encouraged a large number of the young people's families to attend the school play performance further supporting community cohesion.

Additional Support for Learning

All children and young people need support to help them learn and develop but, where there is a particular barrier to learning, some children will need extra help to benefit fully from school education. For a variety of reasons, Traveller children may require additional support. National statistics show that, compared to all other ethnicities combined, Gypsy/Traveller children and young people are twice as likely to be recorded as having additional support needs. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, as amended, provides the legislative framework for providing support. It requires education authorities to identify, provide for and review the additional support needs of their pupils and, in line with the Getting it right for every child approach, requires that the support offered is individualised, appropriate, proportionate and timely.

To enable schools to deliver the additional support for learning that some Traveller children and young people may require, schools should develop flexible, targeted support²⁶ which could be at any point of their learning journey or, for some, throughout the journey, and which takes into account the Traveller's culture. 'Targeted' support is usually, but not exclusively, delivered by staff with additional training and expertise. In a primary school the support will be coordinated by the Senior Management Team and in a secondary school, by guidance/pastoral care/pupil support staff. In both settings those involved could be:

- EAL (English as an additional language) services
- Specialist pupil support teachers (support for learning)
- Community Link Workers

Targeted support for individual Travellers should ensure opportunities for more choices and more chances to achieve positive, sustained post-school destinations. Targeted support recognises the additional needs which requires highly personalised approaches to be considered and which meet the needs of the young person.

²⁶ See 'Meeting additional support needs' diagram under para. 31, [Chapter 3](#), of the Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice (Third edition)

Practice Insight

For some European Roma young people who are new arrivals in secondary schools, access to the curriculum can be a real challenge because they need to develop their skills in English and often also in literacy. One EAL Service has designed a pack to develop phonics skills in older learners, supporting them to develop their literacy skills in an age appropriate context. A range of resources allow them to study aspects of the mainstream curriculum while simultaneously developing their phonics and literacy skills.

In the senior phase, young people can be presented for SQA ESOL²⁷ qualifications from National 2 – Higher. This means there will be an appropriate level for all learners, from those who are new to English and literacy to those who need a qualification in English to access further or higher education. At senior phase, European Roma young people who are recent arrivals should have an individual pathway that includes appropriate ESOL qualifications and other areas of study that reflect their ability and aspirations. This requires flexibility and individual planning, involving the young person and their family.

“I get help with my reading and I am getting really good at it. Before I didn’t want to come to school because it was too hard but now it is easier.”

P5 Traveller

Reflection

- How effective are our approaches for Traveller children and young people to ensure that there is effective curriculum planning and opportunities for their entitlement to support?
- How do we know if support is having the desired impact of improving outcomes for children and young people from travelling cultures?

Further information

- [Supporting Children’s Learning Code of Practice](#)
- [Enquire - the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning](#)
- [Learning journey: A celebration of gypsy/traveller communities in Scotland](#)

Involving Traveller families in learning

Travelling families and their children’s learning

Some Traveller parents have traditionally viewed the education of children and young people as the responsibility of the extended family. In this case, many parents will have no experience of school education and can view schools as ‘threatening’ formal institutions. Some Travellers believe that the family can provide

²⁷ English for Speakers of Other Languages

adequate socialisation and education, which also supports their concerns over community cohesion and security.²⁸ However, it is a misconception that all parents undervalue learning.²⁹ There is evidence to suggest that many parents, particularly mothers, increasingly believe there is value in school educating their children.^{30 31}

What can schools do?

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 provides the legal framework to support and encourage parental involvement, to ensure that parents are supported to be:

- involved with their child's education and learning
- welcomed as an active participant in the life of the school, and
- encouraged to express their views on school education

The Act contains specific duties on both local authorities and headteachers to support parental involvement.

Some parents have traditionally resisted being involved in the life of the school or even expressing their views. This resistance can stem from forums, such as parent council meetings, appearing formal, intimidating and unfamiliar to their culture. It is therefore important that headteachers find ways to involve the entire parent community, not just the Parent Council, and in doing so consider both parental involvement (in the life and work of the school) and parental engagement (in their children's learning) as being equally important.

Learning together the National Action Plan on Parental Involvement, Parental Engagement, Family Learning and Learning at Home 2018-21, is important here. This joint Scottish Government/ Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) plan, which has benefited from detailed input by the National Parent Forum of Scotland, includes goals and actions which set a national vision while allowing for local and community innovation and flexibility. The plan includes actions to tackle inequality by supporting the positive involvement and engagement of specific groups, such as Gypsy/Traveller parents.

Practice Insight

A Gypsy/Traveller Interrupted Learning Officer worked in partnership with a nursery teacher and Additional Support teacher from a local pre-school centre to run a mums and children's group. While one member of staff worked with the children on 'school readiness' activities, the others worked with mums to develop approaches to supporting their children's learning. Together they worked on developing shared

²⁸ Ureche, H. and Franks, M., [This is Who We Are: A study of the views and identities of Roma, Gypsy and Traveller young people in England](#), The Children's Society, 2007

²⁹ Lloyd, G. and McCluskey, G. (2008). ['Education and Gypsies/Travellers: contradictions and significant silences'](#), International Journal of Inclusive Education, 12, 4, 331-345.

³⁰ Bhopal, K. (2011) ['This is a school, it's not a site': teachers' attitudes towards Gypsy and Traveller pupils in school in England, UK'](#), *British Educational Research Journal*, 37 (3): 465-483.

³¹ <http://scottishshowmensguild.org/elosite/Education.html>

reading, environmental print awareness and everyday literacy. The mums built confidence in supporting their children while also developing relationships with staff and learning about the nursery and school curriculum. A positive outcome was that two of the mums enrolled their children in nursery where previously there had been reluctance to engage in mainstream provision.

Practice Insight

A primary school's experience was that many Roma parents found it difficult to engage in the life of the school. Many wanted to be more involved but lacked confidence and understanding of how they could support their child, and many felt disempowered in having a say in the life of the school. To support parents, the school planned a programme of family learning to encourage them into school and, in an informal way, join in with their children's learning through a variety of sessions, clubs and activities.

The most successful part of this programme has been the "Cook Book Club". This has given children who are new learners of English practice in speaking and manipulating the English language, and has also given their parents the opportunity to learn English in a setting in which they feel comfortable. Views gathered by the school from children and parents show just how much they enjoy the club and the benefits it provides.

Traveller parents can also find supporting their children's learning challenging due to lack of confidence, subject knowledge, poor literacy or English language skills. Schools should be proactive in supporting family involvement and take appropriate practical steps to adapt and respond to the individual needs of parents. For example:

- Schools can provide opportunities for Traveller parents to meet teachers on a one-to-one basis to share information about classwork and help them to support their child in home learning – this will also establish relationships and build trust.
- Parents can be invited to contribute to planning the curriculum in ways that engage and motivate the parents. This is often best done by shaping opportunities around the priorities and interests of the parents rather than via an overly formal or structured input. This may involve "peer discussions" and the opportunity for parents to share information or artifacts that represent their Traveller culture. Parents will feel that their culture is valued and that their child is respected in the class.
- Schools should develop strong partnerships with community, third sector and any other stakeholder groups who may already be delivering support to parents through other programmes such as family learning, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and adult learning.
- Parents should be reassured that previous knowledge and skills learned within the community will be valued and used as a foundation for the child's future learning.
- Schools should be mindful that school-home communication may be best done through a phone call or a chat at the school gate as parents may be unable to read written communication. For those unable to understand

Section 4. Annexes

- [Annex A](#). The policy and legislative context
- [Annex B](#). Additional sources of information, advice and support on specific matters relating to Travellers
- [Annex C](#). Data and intelligence key to improving Traveller outcomes
- [Annex D](#). Reflection
- [Annex E](#). Transitions data for White Gypsy/Traveller pupils in publicly funded primary and secondary schools in Scotland

Annex A. The policy and legislative context

Many national policies and frameworks contribute to the Scottish Government's vision for inclusion and support. A number of these are summarised here, alongside relevant legislation and the wider equality context.

The **Education (Scotland) Act 1980** requires that education authorities must provide adequate and efficient school education within their area.³⁶ The **Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. (Scotland) Act 2000** places education authorities under a duty to secure that the education provided by them is directed towards the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential.³⁷ In this way the Act incorporates in Scots law the right to education under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The **Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004** (as amended) introduced the broad and inclusive term 'additional support needs', that applies to children or young people who, for whatever reason, require additional support, long or short term³⁸, in order to help them make the most of their school education and to be included fully in their learning.

The legislation provides the statutory framework for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people who face a barrier, or barriers, to learning. It aims to ensure that all children and young people are provided with the necessary support to help them work towards achieving their full potential. It also promotes collaborative working among all those supporting children and young people and sets out the rights of children, young people and parents within the system. Further information on the functions and duties of education authorities can be found in the statutory guidance to the Act, [The Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice](#).

The provisions relating to transitions, as set out in the Code of Practice and the Additional Support for Learning (Changes in School Education) (Scotland)

³⁶ [Section 1 of the Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#)

³⁷ [Section 2 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2000](#)

³⁸ [Section 1 of the Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#),

Child and the aspirations of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the National Improvement Framework.

[**Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1: Attendance in Scottish Schools**](#) sets out national policy around attendance and absence [due for review late 2018]. In addition to the classification of attendance and absence, this guidance seeks to explore and address wider issues around the promotion and management of good attendance and the prevention and reduction of absence. The guidance recognises that school communities are diverse, and that Traveller children may require authorised absence to travel as part of their tradition, family connections or work commitments.

[**Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: A Positive Approach to Preventing and Managing School Exclusions**](#) has a fundamental role to play in helping realise the Scottish Government's vision for all children and young people by supporting those who are at risk of becoming disengaged or excluded from education. It recognises that children and young people need to be included, engaged and involved in their education in order to achieve equity and attainment for all. The guidance was revised in 2017.

[**Respect for All - The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People**](#) outlines the Scottish Government approach to all types of bullying – including prejudice-based bullying. The National Approach was refreshed in 2017 in recognition of the changing policy and legislative landscape, including the increased emphasis on the responsibility of those working with children and young people to support those with a protected characteristic.

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy, published in December 2014. It sets out the Scottish Government's plans to implement the recommendations from the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce to reduce youth unemployment. The [**third annual progress report**](#) on the implementation of the recommendations, published in January 2018, includes information on progress in equalities.

The Career Education Standard (3-18) was published in September in 2015. The policy is for an all age careers service in Scotland which is delivered locally and co-ordinated nationally. It sets out the entitlements and expectations every young person in Scotland should expect to receive in terms of careers information advice and guidance. Skills Development Scotland are the national agency responsible for the delivery of career information, advice and guidance and they work with regional partners to shape and provide the services that people need in their local area.

[**Opportunities for All**](#) sets out Scottish Government's explicit commitment to 16-19 year olds not already in education, training or employment, of an offer of an appropriate place in learning or training, to develop the skills they need to get a job. It builds on the post-school transition planning and offer process already in place for young people moving on from school. Delivered in partnership by Local Authorities, with national and local Third Sector partners, the aim is to identify and re-engage young people who are not participating in learning, training or employment in order to support them to plan for their move, beyond school and subsequent learning and

training opportunities up until their 20th birthday. **Activity Agreements** are core element of this policy.

Learning for Sustainability is an approach to life and learning which enables learners, educators, schools and their wider communities to build a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society. It incorporates three main aspects: sustainable development education, global citizenship and outdoor learning. In March 2013 Scottish Ministers accepted all thirty-one recommendations of the Learning for Sustainability (LfS) report. The report called for every school and centre to develop a coherent, whole school approach that impacts on their establishment's culture, curriculum and campus and connects them fully to their wider communities. The 2013 Report was followed in 2016 by the [Vision 2030+ Report](#) which contains a set of recommendations intended to help realise the vision of every learner receiving their entitlement to LfS, every practitioner demonstrating LfS in their practice and every establishment having a whole school and community approach to LfS. Education Scotland have developed a [Learning for Sustainability \(LfS\) self-evaluation and improvement framework](#) which is closely aligned with [How Good Is Our School 4](#).

Race Equality work - [The Race Equality Framework for Scotland](#) sets out the Scottish Government's approach, over a fifteen year period from 2016 to 2030, to promoting race equality and tackling racism and inequality. It sets out how the barriers that prevent people from minority ethnic communities from realising their potential will be addressed. In relation to Gypsy/Travellers specifically, in spring/summer 2017 Scottish Government officials engaged directly with members of the Gypsy/Traveller community by visiting a number of sites in parts of Scotland. The [Race Equality Action Plan](#), published at the end of 2017, includes specific Scottish Government-led activities for Gypsy/Travellers. A Gypsy/Traveller Strategic Programme of Work will follow which will bring together all the relevant Scottish Government policies aimed at improving outcomes for the community.

Annex B. Additional sources of information, advice and support on specific matters relating to Travellers

	Information on local Traveller communities and cultural awareness	Information on a tailored approach to enrolment	Advice on unauthorised absence	Advice on permission/application for Home Education	Advice on CME (Children missing from education)	Information on SEEMIS codes etc.
Sources of Guidance	<p>Local Authority Gypsy/Traveller Policy and Strategy</p> <p>STEP (Scottish Traveller Education Programme) including: information; research; and TENET (Traveller Education Network) contacts</p> <p>Local demographic data</p> <p>Community Planning Partnership (CPP)</p>	<p>Local Authority Enrolment Policy</p> <p>Local Authority Gypsy/Traveller Policy</p> <p>STEP</p>	<p>Local Authority attendance guidance</p> <p>Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1 (IEI1 – attendance)</p>	<p>Scottish Government Home Education guidance 2007</p>	<p>Scottish Government CME guidance</p>	<p>Local MIS guidance</p> <p>Scotexed Guidance</p> <p>IEI1</p> <p>Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 (IEI2 - exclusions)</p>
Sources of advice, information and support in local authority	<p>Local Education Inclusion/ ASN (Additional Support Needs) Officer</p> <p>QIO (Quality Improvement Officer)</p>	<p>Local Authority School Team</p>	<p>Local Education Inclusion/ ASN Officer</p> <p>QIO</p>	<p>Local Home Education Officer/</p> <p>Local Education Inclusion/ ASN Officer</p>	<p>Local CME Coordinator in consultation with Local Education Inclusion/ASN Officer/QIO</p>	<p>Local MIS SEEMiSTeam</p>

Annex C. Data and intelligence key to improving Traveller outcomes

Data/ intelligence relating to:	Reflective questions and how the data/ intelligence might be used
Attendance	<p>How does attendance of Traveller children when they are in school compare to non-Travellers?</p> <p>If children attend other schools whilst travelling, do you have arrangements for sharing information with those other schools?</p>
Exclusions and behaviour	<p>What does data/ intelligence tell you about the behaviour of Traveller pupils?</p> <p>Do you understand the reasons behind any negative behaviour and have they been considered in developing plans and strategies to support behaviour?</p>
Record of racist incidents/bullying	<p>Do you capture information about race or other relevant characteristics in your incident reporting?</p> <p>Are Travellers more likely to experience a racist incident, and if so, do you understand why?</p> <p>Are your school's ethos and values clear that racism will not be tolerated?</p> <p>Could your anti-bullying policy do more to prevent incidents?</p>
Feedback from pupils and parents (including on engagement, enjoyment, and health and wellbeing)	<p>What does this tell you about how well you are meeting the needs of traveller children/young people and their family?</p> <p>Do you need to do more to seek and enable good feedback?</p>

<p>Parental engagement</p>	<p>What levels of parental engagement do you have with Traveller families compared to others?</p> <p>How effectively are parental engagement approaches adapted to meet the particular needs of Traveller families?</p>
<p>Evidence of considering Traveller children's cultural background</p>	<p>Do you provide relevant and meaningful learning activities which reflect the cultural background of Traveller children?</p> <p>Do you promote personal development and encourage pupils' self-esteem, cultural identity, aspirations and career choice?</p> <p>Are you taking into account culture differences and inter-personal relationships to develop appropriate, and sometimes flexible, learning opportunities to suit individual learning styles?</p>
<p>Transitions data</p>	<p>What does transitions data tell you about the effectiveness of transitions arrangements for Traveller children?</p> <p>Do you have effective practices for promptly accessing information about children's prior learning (when they either enrol or return to your school) which is then used to develop an appropriate plan for learning?</p> <p>Do you consider whether a personalised transition plan would be of benefit for Traveller children?</p>
<p>Additional support for learning</p>	<p>Do you fully understand the types of additional support needs your Travellers have, or may have?</p> <p>How well does the school meet their additional support needs?</p> <p>What assessments have been undertaken, and what has been the outcome?</p>
<p>Performance data used to track progress and achievement</p>	<p>What does this tell you about progress of Travellers in your school? What do you recognise as 'achievements' and do these reflect achievements relevant to different Traveller cultures?</p> <p>Are targets set for Travellers who experience interrupted learning or other barriers to learning sufficiently stretching?</p> <p>Do you understand what expectations Traveller children have for themselves, and what expectations Traveller parents have for their children?</p>

<p>Attainment and positive destinations</p>	<p>How does data for Travellers compare to data for peers?</p> <p>Do you understand the reasons behind these differences?</p> <p>Do you set stretching targets for Travellers to drive improvements in learning provision?</p>
<p>Evidence of good practice</p>	<p>Do you look for evidence of good practice, in and out of school, and share it with practitioners?</p> <p>Do staff share their experience and learning with colleagues?</p>
<p>The local Traveller community/ies</p>	<p>Do you know whether Travellers live in your school community?</p> <p>What local information will help you better understand your local Traveller community's education needs?</p>

Annex D. Reflection

This Annex lists the reflective questions in Sections 2 and 3 of this guidance. It may be a useful in helping consider the Traveller perspective against the reflective questions set out in [HGIOS4](#).

A further source of reflective material is Education Scotland's [Recognising and Realising Children's Rights](#), a professional learning resource to promote self-evaluation and improvement planning. Additional reflective material can be found in the children's rights based [Common Core](#) of values and practices that has been designed by and for children working with Scottish practitioners. It can be used for personal and/or organisational self-evaluation.

Section 2. Leadership and Management – Reflective questions

- How effective are our processes for involving local families from mobile cultures in the ongoing review of our vision, aims and values, school policies and approaches to communicating with parents?
- Do we consider the needs of children from travelling cultures in our approach to pupil participation and learner voice? Do we provide purposeful, participatory opportunities in all arenas of school life? Do we use participatory approaches to encourage relations that are equitable?
- How effective are the links with other agencies and people (e.g. social work services, local health board, Family Learning Professionals, CLD (Community Learning and Development), Traveller Education Network (TENET)) in engaging and addressing the needs of Traveller communities, including families where children are not at school?
- How well do we seek out and respond positively to potential partnerships which will lead to better outcomes for the children and young people we work with?
- How effectively are incidents relating to racial discrimination acted upon to ensure lessons are learnt and prevent future occurrences?
- Are staff up to date with processes for travelling communities and are our systems regularly reviewed?

- How effective is our communication with families around expectations?
- What range of data and information do we use to understand the social, economic and cultural context of the mobile cultures within our local community?
- How reliable is our evidence of impact on the learning of the pupils?
- How effective are our planning, recording and information transfer processes for children from mobile communities?

- How well do all staff understand their role and responsibility in supporting Travellers' wellbeing?
- To what extent do we critically engage with research, policy sources and developments in learning and teaching for mobile cultures?

- How effectively do we use our resources to meet the learning needs of children from travelling cultures and ensure equity?
- How reliable is our evidence of impact on the learning of the pupils?
- Do we need to adjust our learning to meet Travellers' needs, and if so, how?

Section 3. Learning Provision– Reflective questions

- To what extent is our school an inclusive learning environment for children and young people from travelling cultures?
- How well does our curriculum planning meet the needs of children and young people from travelling cultures?
- Are there further opportunities for flexibility in the way we provide education which will benefit Travellers?
- Are there further opportunities to use digital delivery of learning and teaching to reach Traveller pupils?
- Can technology support better communication and engagement with families?
- Does the school have effective assessment systems in place to identify the needs of the children and young people from travelling cultures?
- How effective are our approaches for Traveller children and young people to ensure that there is effective curriculum planning and opportunities for their entitlement to support?
- How do we know if support is having the desired impact of improving outcomes for children and young people from travelling cultures?
- In what ways is the family support we provide encouraging young people to learn?
- How are we ensuring that our provision is responsive to the needs of Traveller families?
- To what extent do our processes for involving children and families and other agencies ensure effective transitions for Traveller learners?
- To what extent does our curriculum provide opportunities for support and induction into the next stage of learning?

Annex E. Transitions data for White Gypsy/Traveller pupils in publicly funded primary and secondary schools in Scotland

Source for all data <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus>

Table 1: Size of White Gypsy/Traveller cohort in P7 and S1

	P7	S1	% difference
2016 to 2017	112	73	-35%
2015 to 2016	101	51	-50%
2014 to 2015	88	50	-43%
2013 to 2014	103	58	-44%
2012 to 2013	85	42	-50%

Notes:

P7 figure is number of G/T pupils in census in one year (eg 2016)

S1 figure is number of G/T pupils in census in following year (eg 2017)

Table 2: Numbers of White Gypsy/Traveller recorded in school census from 2012 to 2017

Year	Stage	S3	S4	S5	S6
2017		53	52	25	13
2016		58	44	29	7
2015		48	50	*	*
2014		54	41	22	10
2013		42	36	17	7
2012		36	35	16	19

Notes:

* Fewer than five pupils

Table 3: Size of Gypsy/Traveller Pupil cohorts of through secondary school

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
Class of 2011		27	28	29	13	5
Class of 2012	34	31	30	27	21	9
Class of 2013	38	35	33	30	16	7
Class of 2014	28	27	33	35	17	10
Class of 2015	30	40	36	36	22	*
Class of 2016	42	40	42	41	*	7
Class of 2017	55	60	54	50	29	13
Class of 2018	42	45	48	44	25	
Class of 2019	58	61	58	52		
Class of 2020	50	56	53			
Class of 2021	51	50				

Notes:

* Fewer than 5 pupils

The class of 2011 are defined here as those who would have been in S6 in the school year 2010/11

Table 4: Change in Cohort Size

	S3-S5 Number of pupils in S5 as a % of pupils in S3		S3-S6 Number of pupils in S6 as a % of pupils in S3	
	All Pupils	Gypsy/ Travellers	All Pupils	Gypsy/ Travellers
Class of 2011	82%	46%	56%	18%
Class of 2012	83%	70%	58%	30%
Class of 2013	85%	48%	60%	21%
Class of 2014	86%	52%	62%	30%
Class of 2015	87%	61%	63%	*
Class of 2016	88%	*	63%	17%
Class of 2017	87%	54%	62%	24%
Class of 2018	87%	52%		

Notes:

* Fewer than 5 pupils

The class of 2011 are defined here as those who would have been in S6 in the school year 2010/11



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