

# Overcoming barriers: ensuring that Roma children are fully engaged and achieving in education

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Her Majesty's Chief Inspector commissioned this report following a meeting with a group of Sheffield headteachers who identified a number of specific challenges in ensuring that Roma children attend regularly and do well at school.

The report summarises how three local authorities and 11 schools have been working to meet the needs of Roma children from Eastern Europe. It identifies key issues and barriers and provides case studies of good practice.

Headteachers reported that there had been no adverse effect on the achievement of other pupils already settled in their schools. However, they had found it difficult to access available funding for new pupils quickly enough. There was also a shortage of staff with the relevant expertise to provide effective support to Roma pupils.

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# Contents

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<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Background and context</b>	<b>7</b>
The national picture	7
<b>How local authorities and schools are overcoming barriers</b>	<b>8</b>
Meeting the needs of the increasing number of Roma pupils	8
Promoting Roma pupils' engagement with school	10
Improving behaviour of Roma pupils	12
Raising Roma pupils' attainment in tests and examinations	13
Overcoming the loss or reduction of specialist support staff in local authorities	13
The importance of specialist staff in schools	15
Funding and mobility	16
The importance of accurate reporting of the number of Roma pupils	18
<b>Case studies</b>	<b>19</b>
The following case studies identify successful strategies by local authorities and schools, independently or in partnership with others, that might be transferable to other contexts. They also describe some of the challenges faced by particular local authorities, schools and pupils from Roma backgrounds.	19
<b>Notes</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Further information</b>	<b>30</b>
Ofsted publications	30
Other publications	30
<b>Annex A: Providers visited</b>	<b>32</b>
Questionnaire responses	32
Other visits	32
Other organisations providing information	33
<b>Annex B: Ethnicity and first language codes</b>	<b>34</b>

## Introduction

Historically, Gypsy/Roma pupils have had the poorest outcomes of any ethnic group in England in terms of attainment, attendance and exclusions.<sup>1</sup> The number of Gypsy/Roma pupils in schools has been increasing over time and rose by 13.7% last year, from 16,735 in January 2013 to 19,030 in January 2014.<sup>2</sup>

Inspection evidence and local intelligence suggests that a relatively small number of schools in a few local authorities are experiencing a significant rise in the number of Roma pupils from Eastern Europe. As a consequence, these local authorities and schools are struggling to identify sufficient resources to meet these pupils' wide-ranging needs.

This survey aimed to get a more accurate assessment of:

- the barriers to educational engagement and attainment that Roma pupils experience
- the challenges faced by particular schools and local authorities in supporting a high number of Roma pupils who typically are new to speaking English
- the strategies employed successfully by local authorities and schools to support Roma pupils, independently or in partnership with others, that might be transferable to other contexts.

Her Majesty's Inspectors visited three local authorities (Derby, Manchester and Sheffield) and 11 schools with high numbers of pupils from Roma backgrounds in February and March 2014.<sup>3</sup> The report also draws on evidence from responses to a questionnaire of nine further schools, evidence from other school inspections and discussions with other agencies (see Annex A).

## Key findings

- The local authorities and schools in the sample all demonstrated a strong commitment to improving the engagement and achievement of pupils from Roma backgrounds. The most successful of these local authorities and schools worked

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<sup>1</sup> In national statistics, 'Gypsy/Roma' is regarded as one single ethnic group. The evidence from the visits for this report focuses on Roma pupils whose families have migrated from Eastern Europe. 'Roma' is a generic term that describes Romani Groups. 'Traveller of Irish Heritage' is a separate ethnic group.

<sup>2</sup> *Statistical first release: schools, pupils and their characteristics, January 2013*, Department for Education, June 2013; [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2013](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2013).

*Schools, pupils and their characteristics, January 2014*, Department for Education, June 2014; [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014).

<sup>3</sup> The Roma pupils in Derby and Sheffield are predominantly from Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Those in Manchester are predominantly from Romania and smaller in number.

in effective partnerships with other agencies and developed specific strategies, led by well-informed senior leaders, to meet the needs of this group of pupils.

- The schools visited were welcoming to new pupils, whatever their background, and integrated them as quickly as possible. However, approaches to initial assessment and induction, and arrangements to help Roma pupils make a smooth transition between primary and secondary phases, were variable in their effectiveness.
- Where newly arrived Roma pupils have had little prior experience of formal education, schools and local authorities reported that initially they had difficulty in engaging the pupils to adhere to school routines and meet expectations for good behaviour. Conversely, Roma pupils who were well integrated into school and did not have interruptions to their education made good progress in their learning. However, their attainment remained low due to exceptionally low starting points.
- School leaders reported that there had been no adverse effect on the achievement of other pupils already settled in their schools. However, they had experienced problems accessing available funding such as the pupil premium for new pupils quickly enough. This was a particular challenge when a large number of pupils joined or left during the school year.
- Although good practice exists, the schools and local authorities were struggling to find the necessary resources to fully meet Roma pupils' needs. In some instances, there was insufficient specialist advice or support available to schools.
- In the local authorities and schools visited, almost all Roma pupils arriving from Eastern Europe were new to speaking English. In some schools, there was a shortage of qualified teachers with the relevant expertise to support Roma pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL). In addition, although bilingual staff were often effective in supporting parents and pupils, not all were sufficiently qualified or fluent in English themselves.
- Senior officers at the local authorities told inspectors that it was difficult to accurately keep track of pupils from highly mobile families. This was particularly difficult at secondary level, where high dropout rates among Roma pupils were not uncommon.
- The Roma parents spoken to by inspectors consistently said that they were reluctant to state their children's ethnicity for fear of discrimination. This leads to under-reporting of Roma pupil numbers that, in turn, makes it difficult to target resources effectively.

## Recommendations

### Where appropriate, local authorities should:

- ensure that there is a dedicated and knowledgeable senior leader who can drive the local authority's strategies for improving outcomes for Roma pupils
- ensure that all key services work in partnership effectively so that outcomes for Roma pupils are improved
- develop sufficient expertise within a specialist support service to provide advice and training for schools
- review strategies for improving Roma pupils' attendance and attainment, and for keeping track of pupils from highly mobile families
- encourage schools to ensure that pupils receive an initial assessment and induction when they start school in England and ongoing specialist support to meet their needs.

### The Department for Education should:

- consider how the allocation of existing funding can more accurately reflect the changes in the number of eligible pupils on roll throughout the school year
- consider how the classification of pupil groups can encourage more accurate recording.

### Where appropriate, schools should:

- assign a knowledgeable, informed leader to improve the achievement of Roma pupils
- recruit qualified teachers with relevant expertise to provide high quality teaching and support for Roma pupils who are learning English as an additional language
- check that staff who support Roma pupils or teach English as an additional language are well trained and sufficiently fluent in English
- strengthen the links between partner primary/secondary schools so that Roma pupils remain engaged in education as they move from one key stage to the next.

## Background and context

1. The survey aimed to get a more accurate assessment of:
  - the barriers to educational engagement and attainment that Roma pupils experience
  - the challenges faced by schools and local authorities in supporting a high number of Roma pupils who typically are new to speaking English
  - successful strategies employed by local authorities and schools to support Roma pupils, independently or in partnership with others.<sup>4</sup>

## The national picture

2. Historically, Gypsy/Roma pupils have had the poorest outcomes of any pupil group in terms of attainment, attendance and exclusions.<sup>5</sup> They are the lowest-attaining ethnic group at the end of both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.
3. In 2013, only 13.8% of Gypsy/Roma pupils nationally gained five or more GCSE grades at A\* to C, including English and mathematics, compared with 60.6% of all pupils. In the same year, only 23% of all Gypsy/Roma pupils in England achieved Level 4 or above in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 compared with 75% of all pupils nationally.
4. Attendance rates are much lower for Gypsy/Roma pupils than for other pupils. In 2012/13, their attendance was only 86.1% at primary (compared with 95.2% for all pupils) and 83.4% at secondary school (compared with 94.2% for all pupils).<sup>6</sup> In addition, Gypsy/Roma pupils are three times more likely to be excluded from primary school and four times more likely from secondary school than any other pupil group.
5. Before 2004, there were few Eastern European Roma families in England and these were mainly Polish Roma. Since the incorporation of countries from Eastern Europe into the European Union (EU) in 2004, more Romanian, Czech and Slovak Roma families have settled in the United Kingdom.
6. Some local authorities in particular have experienced a large increase in their Roma population. This survey looked at the challenges faced by three of these local authorities. Derby and Sheffield were visited as part of the survey because

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<sup>4</sup> This report includes case studies of good practice seen. Further good practice studies will be published separately in 2015.

<sup>5</sup> The 1967 Plowden Report (*Children and their primary schools*, Central Advisory Council for Education (England), 1967; [www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/plowden](http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/plowden)) identified such concerns and led to the establishment of Gypsy/Roma and Traveller services.

<sup>6</sup> *Statistical first release: Pupil absence in schools in England: autumn 2012 and spring 2013*, Department for Education, October 2013; [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-autumn-2012-and-spring-2013](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-autumn-2012-and-spring-2013).

of the high number of Roma pupils who have recently arrived from Eastern Europe. Manchester was selected because recent attainment data indicated that Gypsy/Roma pupils were doing better at the end of Key Stage 2 compared with other Gypsy/Roma pupils nationally.

## **How local authorities and schools are overcoming barriers**

### **Meeting the needs of the increasing number of Roma pupils**

7. All three of the local authorities visited had seen a large increase in the numbers of Roma pupils from Eastern Europe in a reasonably short timeframe. Manchester's Roma population has settled mainly from Romania, with a substantive increase beginning in 2007. Derby and Sheffield have experienced a considerable increase in their predominantly Czech and Slovak Roma pupil population since 2009.
8. In all three local authorities, Roma families had generally settled in a small number of wards and schools. Although numbers were not high overall, a small minority of schools had relatively large proportions of Roma pupils, most of whom had significant English language and other needs.
9. Manchester local authority identified that there were 239 Gypsy/Roma pupils registered in its schools in 2013. However, the figure for Roma pupils in schools in 2014 was estimated by the local authority to be around 800, mostly in the Gorton and Moss Side districts, in a total school population of 80,030.
10. The number of Roma pupils in Manchester is much smaller than in Derby and Sheffield and has been built up over a longer period of time. The city has drawn on its experience of a long history of migration of different groups over the years. Manchester has also secured EU funding to establish partnerships with local universities and clusters of schools to develop a specific Roma strategy, coordinated by the local authority's specialist team.
11. The aim of the strategy was to promote the safety, well-being and achievement of Roma pupils through an early years outreach programme, a Roma mentor model and a schools learning network. Over 100 Roma children who had not been attending school during the previous three years were successfully enrolled as part of the strategy. Key workers visited homes and built up trust with families. Two groups were specifically targeted: teenage girls and children under five who were not in any form of early years or pre-school provision. To date, the early years work has had more success than the work with the older girls (see Case Study 2).
12. The number of Roma pupils in Derby increased from 199 in 2009 to 594 in January 2013 (the latest figures available from the local authority at the time of the fieldwork). This represented 1.4% of the local authority's total pupil population of just over 40,000 pupils in 2013. Most families have settled in the



Arboretum and Normanton wards. Some schools have seen substantial increases in Roma pupil numbers: one Derby primary school had four Roma pupils in 2010, rising to 99 in 2014, representing almost a third of all pupils on roll.

13. Of the three local authorities, the largest increase in Roma pupil numbers was seen in Sheffield. Five years ago, there were approximately 100 Roma pupils in its schools. The latest figures from the local authority indicate that there were around 2,100 Roma pupils, representing fewer than 3% of the city's total school population of 79,150.<sup>7</sup> Most are from Slovakia and have settled largely in the Burngreave ward. Few spoke any English when they arrived at school in England. By 2014, one Sheffield secondary school had 174 Roma pupils (21% of its roll) compared with 36 pupils (4%) in 2009.
14. The speed of the increase of the Eastern European Roma pupil population has challenged these three local authorities and the small number of schools attended by the pupils significantly. It has required them to rapidly develop strategies in order to integrate these pupils into education effectively and to deploy expertise (such as EAL or Roma coordinators) to support them.
15. At the time of the visits, Derby and Sheffield had a generic strategy for newly arrived pupils, rather than a specifically identified Roma strategy to meet the particular needs of this group. A reduction in resources and the loss of key specialist staff, both strategically and operationally, have led to reduced capacity.
16. The absence of specialist knowledge has led to different approaches to induction for new pupils in the local authorities visited and the specific schools in question. Derby supported new arrivals in secondary schools through a language centre based at a local high school. From there, pupils are enrolled in schools throughout the city. Sheffield and Manchester, in contrast, have sought to support pupils in the schools they attended when they first arrived.
17. The Derby model could lead to pupils attending a school far away from where they live. Pupils faced additional upheaval when they settled in the school where the language centre was based and then moved again, away from friends they have made. Language centres were common in England up to the mid-1980s when, following a critical report by the Commission for Racial Equality into the practice in Calderdale local authority at the time, such centres were disbanded.<sup>8</sup>
18. Manchester has developed a specific Roma Strategy (2011–14), which focused on providing sufficient school places and ensuring that all pupils attend school.

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<sup>7</sup> Figures as at February 2014.

<sup>8</sup> *Teaching English as a second language: Report of a formal investigation in Calderdale local education authority*, Commission for Racial Equality, 1985.

It also tackled the economic challenge of Roma migrants' restricted rights to employment. The authority was able to focus its resources on Roma families, for example by putting Roma mentors in pre-school settings.

19. Schools in Sheffield experiencing a large increase in Roma pupil numbers have responded well to the local authority's Newly Arrived Pupils Pilot, where pupils go straight into school. Sheffield has persuaded the large majority of its secondary schools to sign up to take Roma students through fair access arrangements. The local authority hosted half-termly Roma workshops for school leaders and brokers support between schools. However, funding is insufficient to meet demand.

One of the secondary schools in Sheffield inducted new arrivals in all year groups in a system called 'New Start'. Under the supervision of qualified teachers, and working with a Roma-speaking teaching assistant, pupils were inducted into school life. They were assessed and then taught phonics and English language. This was effective in settling students and getting them used to the curriculum. Pupils also attended mainstream lessons early on in a well-structured way. However, this was expensive for the school to run and, if the pupils arrive just after the annual school census, this placed short-term strain on the school's budget.

### **Promoting Roma pupils' engagement with school**

20. The schools visited were typically welcoming in their approach to new pupils. They recognised the importance of gaining families' trust and often went out of their way in order to build up good relationships with families. They were committed to ensuring that pupils settled as quickly as possible and were able to integrate into school life.
21. Some of the schools had improved attendance by employing specific strategies with recently arrived Roma children. For example, in one secondary school, attendance for Roma pupils up to February 2014 was 85.5%. While this was still below the national average, it is well up on the school's Roma pupil attendance figure of 70% in 2010.
22. In one school visited, key staff members built up good relationships with Roma families. Developing families' trust was vital in securing their engagement. The school's home-school links worker and a Roma support worker run coffee mornings to build up relationships with the Roma community. Leaders spent time listening to parents and regular meetings ensured that the families were clear about and supported the school's expectations (see [Case Study 1](#)).
23. Two schools visited – one primary and one secondary – employed their own attendance worker specifically for Roma families. One was a Roma speaker and the other worked with a Roma interpreter. These posts, funded by the schools, appeared to have had a considerable impact on raising attendance. The dedicated role of the attendance workers meant they could follow up absence

immediately, conduct home visits and, if necessary, bring the children into school themselves.

24. As relationships and trust are built up, the attendance workers were able to challenge parents who kept their children from school. The work was time-consuming but paid dividends in engaging families in education. They also supported parents to overcome other barriers that prevent them from sending their children to school regularly, such as lack of dinner money, uniform or stable housing.
25. According to the local authority officers and schools spoken to, many Roma pupils were coming to school without any previous experience of early years provision or the equivalent of Key Stage 1. Officers said it was a challenge to persuade families to send their children to early years and pre-school provision. One headteacher said, 'It was not regarded [by parents] as proper education until children joined the junior school.'
26. Manchester local authority sought to tackle this issue through an outreach campaign targeted specifically at Roma families and involving young Roma mentors as volunteers. This led to the setting-up of two pre-school initiatives: 'Stay and Play' and 'Family Learning'.
27. Manchester's targeted approach to early years engagement emphasised the need for all children to be 'school ready'. Previously, no Roma family had attended more than one pre-school session but 'Stay and Play' and 'Family Learning' had some 20 regular attendees, with numbers rising. Rather than wait for families to arrive, the International New Arrivals, Travellers and Supplementary Schools (INATSS) team went to them. They raised parents' awareness of schools' expectations, developed their understanding of how to access services and, crucially, enhanced their knowledge of English (see Case Study 2).
28. Transition from primary to secondary school has been a longstanding concern, even with the settled UK Roma population, and was a major challenge identified by the schools and local authorities. The schools visited that had effective transition arrangements, for example sharing or liaising closely with key family workers, were more successful in retaining pupils at transition.
29. All three local authorities visited reported their concerns about tracking Roma pupils, particularly girls who did not continue into Key Stage 4 or did not attend school regularly. Of the three local authorities, Manchester had already begun to address this with some success, persuading a small number of teenage girls to attend residential trips focusing on future careers and employing two young Roma women as mentors to act as role models.
30. According to many Roma pupils and parents spoken to, the primary schools in the sample were largely free of racism and school staff engaged well with Roma families. However, pupils and parents reported that they did not always have

such positive experiences of secondary education. Some families cited negative experiences at school as a major reason for their children's poor attendance.

31. In Derby, a local church was hosting after-school provision for up to 550 Roma children and young people following concerns about the number of Roma pupils on the streets after school. Pupils were fed and given activities based on their curriculum subjects. Parents had to enrol formally and a daily attendance register was taken. Volunteers were drawn from the church, the multi-faith centre based at Derby University, local Roma volunteers and community organisations. The result was that these Roma pupils were engaged in purposeful educational activities after school.
32. However, despite its success, this project had no funding from the local authority or elsewhere, other than a small Co-operative grant. Not all schools visited in Derby were sufficiently aware of it. One headteacher had 'never heard of it'. Another was aware of it but did not know if any of the school's pupils attended or what they did there. Although volunteers were setting work for pupils on a range of curriculum subjects, there were no links with local schools about content and no training offered by schools for the volunteers providing the activities. A project worker described the links with schools as 'tenuous'. This was a lost opportunity.

### **Improving behaviour of Roma pupils**

33. The schools and local authorities reported to inspectors that many Roma pupils initially had difficulty in adhering to school routines and meeting expectations for good behaviour, especially where the pupils had little prior experience of formal education.
34. Some of the schools visited had been successful in reducing exclusion rates with their Roma populations. For example, in the two Derby primary schools visited, the behaviour of Roma pupils was no longer a continuing concern and one of the schools had worked successfully with the local community police on behaviour. These schools reported a low rate of behavioural issues and racism and their exclusion rates were well below the national average. In one primary school where a third of the population was of Roma background, just four out of 26 sanctions issued for misbehaviour in 2012/13 were given to Roma pupils. Between September 2013 and February 2014, none of the 10 sanctions had been issued to Roma pupils.
35. Community police officers spoken to in Derby said that, in one of the primary schools, they found an 'open door' with the headteacher when they wanted to work with pupils. They were invited into school after a number of playground fights involving Roma pupils. They introduced a game to teach all the children the rights and wrongs of behaviour. A Roma-speaking interpreter was available who knew local families well and parents were invited to attend. The police also approached a local secondary school but, at the time of the survey, had not

had any success. In the experience of the police, engaging with secondary schools was harder.

## **Raising Roma pupils' attainment in tests and examinations**

36. In the three local authorities visited, the attainment gap between Gypsy/Roma pupils and all other pupils was wider at Key Stage 4 than the national attainment gap. Not one Gypsy/Roma pupil gained five good GCSE grades including English and mathematics in Derby, Manchester or Sheffield in 2012 or 2013. Even in those schools where Roma pupils were making rapid progress, the attainment gap remained wide, especially for pupils who arrive late into the English school system.
37. In one secondary school visited, Gypsy/Roma students' progress was outstanding, particularly from their exceptionally low starting points when they joined, but their attainment was still low compared with the national average for all pupils. However, some Roma pupils were in top sets, especially in mathematics. The college's robust tracking of pupils' progress was backed up by accurate monitoring of different groups of pupils. This could lead to short- and medium-term support for individuals, but the emphasis was on making sure that teaching was good or better. The monitoring of students into the sixth form allowed for longer-term evaluation of the impact of the college's strategies (see Case Study 1).
38. In Derby, none of the 46 Gypsy/Roma pupils in Year 6 achieved Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013. In Sheffield, very few of the 30 Gypsy/Roma pupils achieved Level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2.
39. In Manchester, however, seven of the 21 Gypsy/Roma pupils in Year 6 in 2013 gained Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics. This exceeded the national figure for Gypsy/Roma pupils attaining this threshold, although it was still well below the figures for all pupils nationally.
40. Her Majesty's Inspectors found no evidence that the arrival of Roma pupils in these authorities has had an adverse effect on the attainment of other pupil groups. However, many headteachers expressed concerns about the potential adverse impact on their school's inspection judgement for achievement. Ofsted will ensure that inspectors take into account the issues arising from any increase of new arrivals when inspecting schools and local authorities.

## **Overcoming the loss or reduction of specialist support staff in local authorities**

41. Grants to support minority ethnic pupils (including Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils) that had previously been ring-fenced were mainstreamed in 2010. This led to some local authorities disbanding and cutting specialist support services.

One survey conducted found that 70% of local authorities had deleted posts and services by 2011.<sup>9</sup>

42. Derby and Sheffield no longer have specialist services for Ethnic Minority Achievement and Traveller Education. In 2009, Derby had nine specialist EAL teachers (6.5 full-time equivalents), funded by the Ethnic Minority Achievement grant. It also had access to a joint Traveller Education Service, consisting of a team leader, three advisory teachers, a dedicated education welfare officer, three teaching assistants and a home-school liaison officer. By 2014, none of these specialist posts remained. Derby no longer has contact with the continuing Derbyshire Traveller Education Service or Derbyshire's Gypsy Liaison Group.
43. In its place, Derby introduced a reduced integrated traded service, the New Communities Achievement Team (NCAT). NCAT focused its priorities on employing bilingual assistants and teaching assistants to support families, help pupils to settle in school and provide an interpreting service. There were, however, no specialist teachers for Gypsy/Roma and Travellers or for EAL and no specialist advisory service. The result is that schools in Derby no longer have sufficient capacity to fully meet the increasing demands of supporting new Roma arrivals.
44. In two of the three local authorities visited, support services became generalist and had lost the capacity to provide services for particular groups, such as Roma pupils. The trust and confidence built up within hard-to-reach communities had been lost after years of specialist services being in place.
 

‘The knowledge base has been removed overnight by closing down specialist services. When we used to have a Traveller Service, there was a central key person in the area to draw on for good practice; now we only see families in a crisis. There is no developmental role, not a lot of proactive work. You don't get Gypsy/Roma Traveller history month any more. Secondary schools tend to only reach out in an emergency. When the school phones it is: “Help!” Usually the call follows a breakdown between the family and the school.’ (Roma support group worker)
45. The absence of a lead specialist in one of the local authorities visited had led to a lack of networking and training for Roma and/or EAL coordinators in schools. A coordinator in one of the primary schools visited, who was not a qualified teacher, had not heard of any of the national professional associations for Gypsy/Roma and Travellers or English as an additional language and was also unaware of recent national research and guidance.

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<sup>9</sup> *National ethnic minority achievement grant survey*, National Union of Teachers (NUT)/National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDC), February 2011; [www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/eal-news-summary/010311](http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/eal-news-summary/010311).

46. An absence of specialist posts and services also resulted in a lack of quality assurance of schools' provision for English as an additional language and/or Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils. Where quality assurance did take place, it was often by non-specialists. The lack of key officers in the local authority with a brief for specific groups has led to the monitoring of outcomes for Roma pupils and other minority ethnic groups resting with individual schools. Yet, in schools visited where the coordinator was not a senior leader or a teacher, she or he was rarely involved in monitoring or other quality assurance activities.
47. One of the schools visited accessed the support of a local authority ethnic minority support service and a virtual school for Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils, led by a virtual headteacher. The virtual headteacher tracked and analysed the achievement, attendance and behaviour of all the authority's Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils. The authority provided weekly reading sessions and pastoral support. It also supported these pupils by transporting them to school to improve attendance (see [Case Study 3](#)).

### **The importance of specialist staff in schools**

48. Although specialist teacher posts have been cut in all three local authorities, the schools visited have continued to have access to bilingual teaching assistants. These were highly effective when deployed to work with parents or children new to English when they speak the same first language as them. They were also crucial in developing closer links between home and school. They were less effective, however, where they had not been sufficiently trained or were not fully fluent in English and yet may be teaching or supporting children learning English as an additional language.
49. The schools visited in the three local authorities who had recruited specialist qualified teachers with a proven track record of good or outstanding teaching ensured that new arrivals and other pupils learning English as an additional language received high quality induction and support. Pupils were also enabled to make at least good progress in developing their English language. These specialist teachers were able to raise the profile of Roma pupils in the school and provide training and support for mainstream teachers.
50. Coordinators for Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils and/or those learning English as an additional language in schools visited in Derby and Sheffield were not always sufficiently trained and experienced for their role. In addition, they were not always senior enough to influence school policy. On other occasions, the coordinator was a senior leader but was not a specialist.
51. Inspectors found cases where the prime responsibility for the new arrivals' induction programme was with an untrained teaching assistant. For example, in one school the support assistant was not fluent in English and did not speak the same language as the pupils. The provision relied heavily on repetitive, undemanding worksheets. The work set did not take account of pupils' different

abilities, their needs or their varied experiences of education in their country of origin. For example, some pupils were already literate in their first language but received the same work as those peers who struggled to read or write. In another case, the teaching assistant did not see the difference between a pupil who had special educational needs and one who was learning English as an additional language.

52. At all three of the schools visited in Manchester, the EAL coordinators were well-trained specialists and members of the senior leadership team. These specialists were able to lead training, influence policy and develop effective teaching strategies. They were also well placed to check how well other teachers were meeting learners' needs in mainstream classes and often evaluated the impact of induction and intervention.
53. In one school visited, its well-qualified EAL coordinator provided training, both locally and nationally. Effective senior leadership, including a very engaged and knowledgeable Chair of Governors, promoted a culture of high expectations, no excuses and individual responsibility (see [Case Study 1](#)).
54. The absence of specialists in some of the schools sampled also led to a lack of knowledge on the part of mainstream staff into Roma families' experiences and needs, such as their negative experiences in their own country and difficulties in accessing public services in England. This could lead to mistrust and a breakdown in relationships between schools and Roma families.

'Only a trusted few such as a support service, advocacy group or key worker will be taken into [Roma families'] confidence. This trust can take years to develop.' (Roma support worker)

55. All the schools and local authorities visited reported that they had struggled to recruit Roma-speaking staff who could build bridges, linguistically and culturally, between home and school. The arrival of families from Czech and Slovak Roma-speaking communities had been very recent. Few Roma speakers had been educated in the UK or had sufficient educational experience and fluency in English to take up posts as bilingual teaching assistants or interpreters. Applicants need qualifications and, as the attainment data indicate, few Roma pupils are going on to achieve the necessary grades at GCSE.

### **Funding and mobility**

56. As noted earlier, new pupils arriving at a school mid-year may be eligible for pupil premium funding. Although the school has to react to immediate financial needs when such pupils arrive, the payment does not follow the pupil fast enough. Set-up costs to provide additional support for pupils learning English as an additional language, including additional classes and support staff, are significant. The school has to meet these needs from its own budget.



57. High pupil mobility was an issue for all three local authorities and the schools visited. In one Derby primary school, where a third of pupils were of Roma origin, mobility (inward and outward) among Roma pupils was 43% compared with 3% for all other pupils. Other schools reported similarly, including pupils leaving and returning sometimes within the same academic year. School leaders and local authority officers told inspectors that pupil mobility is often caused by frequent re-housing, so it is possible that in these schools pupils join and leave within the same year without the school receiving any funding for them at all.

‘When communities move, the money does not move with them.’ (Senior local authority officer)

58. The schools and local authorities visited consistently reported that a high proportion of Roma pupils were not eligible for pupil premium funding, despite the financial hardships families were experiencing. In the three Manchester schools visited, less than a fifth of the 50 Roma pupils on roll were eligible for the pupil premium. In one Sheffield school, only a third of the 118 Roma pupils were eligible. This affected families in terms of ensuring their children attended school. For example, one parent said she did not want to send her children to school if she could not meet the cost of a school lunch, uniform or trips. Schools often felt obliged to meet these costs, despite not being funded to do so. Some of the schools visited, however, worked with families to help them help themselves. Although these interventions were more intensive initially, they paid off, helping families to engage with education and reducing pressure on the school budget.
59. In one school visited, staff supported a new family of Roma pupils who were not eligible for the pupil premium and did not bring money or food for lunch when they first started school. Staff took the children home to get their lunch and waited with them while the parent went out to buy food. The following week, staff took the parent shopping to advise them on finding cheap and healthy options for packed lunches for a few pounds a week. Eventually, the children started bringing enough food for their lunches. Throughout, the school was clear about its expectations but was willing to go the extra mile to ensure success (see [Case Study 2b](#)).
60. All three local authorities reported difficulty in accessing other funds and grants on behalf of Roma families, such as the government’s Troubled Family Funding, because of their immigration status. Manchester had been able to access the Migration Impact Funding to set up its Roma strategy and recruit a specialist team before funding from this source stopped in 2010. Having already established a team, it was then in a better position to go on to secure additional funding. In Derby and Sheffield, where Roma migration has occurred more recently, the Migration Impact Funding was no longer available.

61. Each of the local authorities visited struggled to access funding quickly enough at times of a large increase in migration. One consequence of this was parents' difficulties in attending classes for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) or their ineligibility for funding, even when such classes existed. As a result, they were less able to engage with the education system or help their children with their learning.

### **The importance of accurate reporting of the number of Roma pupils**

62. Nationally, although Roma is included within the terminology Gypsy/Roma and Traveller, no national action plan exists specifically for this group. People from Roma backgrounds are not consistently treated as distinct from UK Gypsies and Travellers. The Department for Education's annual school census relies, to a great extent, on self-ascription by Roma parents, leading to possible under-reporting and inaccuracy. Research in 2013 found an inadequate understanding of the size of the UK's Roma population and a lack of awareness of what challenges Roma residents face.<sup>10</sup>
63. Senior leaders in all three local authorities suggested that the figures for Roma pupils in their schools were underestimated. For reporting, schools have to use the code that parents select, whether it is accurate or not. School leaders said that, when parents register their children's ethnicity, families are reluctant to register them as 'Gypsy Roma' for fear of discrimination, based on their previous experience in their country of origin. The pairing of the word 'Roma' with 'Gypsy' is also unhelpful as parents, including some of those who spoke to inspectors, feel the latter word does not apply to them. Consequently, an unknown number of Roma families in Sheffield, Derby and Manchester were likely to be registered as 'White Other' or 'White European', 'Unclassified' or 'Unknown' (see Annex B). In one Sheffield primary school, for example, 37 pupils were described as 'White Other' but the school was aware from various sources that at least 20 of them were from a Roma background.
64. Since Gypsy/Roma is a single ethnic code, it is not possible to analyse Roma pupils' achievement, attendance and exclusions accurately, at local authority level or nationally. Furthermore, the Roma category is broad, including within it diverse groups such as Czech, Slovak and Romanian Roma. The lack of robust disaggregated data can also mean that some local authorities and schools are compared, unfairly, with those that have more settled communities where English is spoken either as the first language or fluently as an additional language.

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<sup>10</sup> P Brown, L Scullion, P Martin, *Migrant Roma in the United Kingdom. Population size and experiences of local authorities and partners. Final report.* University of Salford, Manchester. 2013; [www.salford.ac.uk/sustainable-housing-and-urban-studies-unit/projects/migrant-roma-in-the-united-kingdom-population-size-and-experiences-of-local-authorities-and-partners](http://www.salford.ac.uk/sustainable-housing-and-urban-studies-unit/projects/migrant-roma-in-the-united-kingdom-population-size-and-experiences-of-local-authorities-and-partners).

65. The schools visited that did not break down the attainment of their Gypsy/Roma pupils by sub-group, country of origin or language could not identify reliably which sub-groups were most likely to underachieve and so could not develop specific strategies for them. One Manchester primary school, however, was successful in breaking down its data in more detail and was able to target its support more directly.

## Case studies

The following case studies identify successful strategies by local authorities and schools, independently or in partnership with others, that might be transferable to other contexts. They also describe some of the challenges faced by particular local authorities, schools and pupils from Roma backgrounds.

### Case study 1: Babington Community College, Leicester

#### Raising aspirations and retaining pupils at Key Stage 4

Babington Community College is an 11 to 16 comprehensive school on the outskirts of Leicester, judged outstanding by Ofsted in March 2013. It has a growing cohort of Czech and Slovak Roma students. In 2013, 10.7% of its pupils were identified as Roma or Gypsy compared with 3.9% in 2011. Of the 17 Roma pupils entered for GCSE in 2013, only six had been in the school since the start of Key Stage 3.

The college is a leader in the local authority for Gypsy/Roma and Traveller students and has co-authored a good practice guide, 'Engaging with new Eastern European Roma communities' (2014).<sup>11</sup> Its well-qualified EAL coordinator provides training, both locally and nationally.

Effective senior leadership, including a very engaged and knowledgeable Chair of Governors, promotes a culture of high expectations, no excuses and individual responsibility. The 'Proud to be Babington' motto reflects students' pride in the school and in themselves as learners. The emphasis is on high quality teaching – not interventions. Roma pupils are seen as the responsibility of all staff and all staff are trained accordingly.

Key staff members had built up good relationships with Roma families. Developing families' trust was vital in securing their engagement. The college's home-school-links worker and a Roma support worker run coffee mornings to build up relationships with the Roma community. Leaders spend time listening to parents and regular meetings ensure that the families are clear about and support Babington's expectations.

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<sup>11</sup> *Engaging with new Eastern European Roma communities*, 2014; [www.babington.leicester.sch.uk/](http://www.babington.leicester.sch.uk/)

The college's robust tracking of all groups of pupils is backed up by accurate monitoring of their performance. This may lead to short- and medium-term support for individuals, but the emphasis is on making sure that teaching is good or better. The monitoring of students into the sixth form allows for longer-term evaluation of the impact of the college's strategies.

Gypsy/Roma students' progress is outstanding from their exceptionally low starting points when they join the school, but their attainment is low compared with the national average for all pupils. However, some Roma pupils are in top sets, especially in mathematics.

All teachers are aware of the Roma students in their classes. The college has researched their students' Roma community backgrounds to understand their challenges and have modified the curriculum to reflect Roma history and culture. A performing arts project, for example, stemmed from this research. The college provides additional on-site and off-site courses, including a BTEC in performing arts. The college celebrates Gypsy/Roma Traveller month and involves families in musical events. Students arriving who are new to English are paired, wherever possible, with a student who speaks the same Roma language and dialect. Roma students spoken to said that they enjoy the college, are ambitious and see it as a pathway to a career.

Football and craft clubs are used to provide incentives to promote punctuality and attendance. Leaders monitor the impact of such initiatives very closely. The attendance at school of Gypsy/Roma students was 91.5% compared with the national figure for Gypsy/Roma pupils of 83.5% in 2013. The school has a zero tolerance approach to holidays booked in term-time. No Gypsy/Roma pupils were permanently excluded in 2012/13 and the percentage of fixed-term exclusions was 3.45%, almost half the rate for all pupils in the school (6.65%) and well below the national (35.98%) for all Gypsy/ Roma pupils.

The pupil premium is used to raise Roma students' aspirations through a 'Dare to dream' programme. Twice a year, the school holds an economic role models and skills show that colleges and employers attend. Students have the opportunity to enrol on programmes ranging from horse riding, vehicle maintenance, cake decorating, song writing to football, and there are college taster days. Roma students are shown how to get to and from college. Key Stage 4 completion rates are very high for Roma pupils and the college tracks post-16 leavers closely, most of whom go on to Leicester College.

## Case study 2a: Manchester local authority<sup>12</sup>

### Developing and implementing a school strategy for newly arrived Roma pupils

Roma families from Romania have been settling, mainly in the Gorton ward in Manchester, since Romania's accession to the European Union (EU) in 2007. Since then, requests from schools for support with Roma pupils have increased significantly. In response, the local authority coordinated a multi-agency strategy, led by the International New Arrivals, Travellers and Supplementary Schools Team (INATSS), to deploy effective support to schools and establish a network between schools and the statutory and non-statutory sectors. The aim was to improve the safety, wellbeing and achievement of Roma pupils. Three main approaches were taken forward:

- an early years outreach programme
- a Roma mentor model
- a schools learning network.

Funding was made available jointly from the local authority and voluntary agencies and the authority bid successfully for EU funding. This was taken forward as part of a larger EU project, also involving The Netherlands and Spain. It aimed to improve the attendance of Roma pupils in education, improve professionals' knowledge and confidence and develop common approaches.

A key objective of the strategy is that all children under 16 must attend school. Officers successfully enrolled over 100 Roma children who had not been attending school during the previous three years. Key workers visited homes and built up trust with families. Two groups were specifically targeted: teenage girls and pupils under five who were not in any form of early years or pre-school provision. To date, the early years work has had more success than the work with the older girls.

A specific Manchester Roma Girls approach was developed because so few of the Roma pupils registered in Year 11 were girls. This supported 28 Roma girls aged 11 to 18 to attend residential visits, encouraging them to raise their aspirations and achievement.

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<sup>12</sup> The strategies described in case studies 2a, 2b and 2c were developed and implemented between 2007 and 2013. Since 2013, the work has been taken forward by schools and early years providers in the relevant localities. The local authority continues to promote the engagement of Roma children and their families in education and to share good practice with its partners.

To encourage Roma parents' engagement with early years provision, an assertive outreach programme was developed to encourage an earlier start to education for their children.

To continue to engage Roma young people, the local authority commissioned young people from voluntary sector organisations to act as intermediaries with families and to support initiatives to engage families in pre-school activities. They have acted as interpreters and become role models. The authority has also encouraged and supported Roma young people to continue with their studies to achieve higher qualifications.

The aims of the schools learning network established in the Roma strategy were to:

- raise awareness in schools
- pilot new approaches
- support families and communities
- share and continue participants' learning.

The network comprised six primary schools, although it also worked closely with secondary schools. It drew on six key factors, which it termed 'constructive conditions', shown to influence the achievement of Roma pupils: safety and trust, respect, access and inclusion, flexibility, high expectations, and partnerships.<sup>13</sup> Full details have been published in a report that provides a valuable resource for schools in similar circumstances.<sup>14</sup>

The network drew on a wide range of sources, including research on the educational benefits of promoting first language development. Training of staff was specific to Roma pupils, based on life history, families and customs relevant to school life. Families received professional support to access school through specialist staff, including outreach support workers and bilingual staff. Lessons were informed by the principles of cohesion rather than segregation. One of the secondary schools used to isolate Roma pupils in a separate language unit but, through engaging with the network, discontinued this practice.

Implementation of the strategy over five years led to a higher level of engagement of the Roma population in education. Families were attending pre-school settings that prepared their children for school. The community was still relatively new and so attainment was low, but progress measures

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<sup>13</sup> *Improving educational outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils: what works?*, Department for Education, 2009; [www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-educational-outcomes-for-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-pupils-what-works](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-educational-outcomes-for-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-pupils-what-works).

<sup>14</sup> Jane Murphy, in partnership with six Manchester schools, *What's working for Roma in school: a Network Learning Book*, 2013; <http://whatsworking.eu/guidance>.

indicated that the achievement gap was beginning to close at Key Stage 2. Attendance had been improving and there was a small increase in the number of girls staying on at secondary school.

## **Case Study 2b: Schools in the Manchester Schools Learning Network**

Inspectors visited three schools within the Manchester Schools Learning Network (described above) to identify common features of good practice. Although the percentages of Gypsy/Roma pupils at each school were small (between 1.8% and 3% of the pupil population), all the schools were fully committed to the network, undertaking self-assessment, writing an action plan and attending network meetings. This paid dividends in improved the attainment and attendance of their Roma pupils. Although attainment was still very low for Gypsy/Roma pupils in comparison to other pupils nationally, their rate of progress in these schools was above that for Gypsy/Roma pupils nationally. Similarly, the attendance of their Gypsy/Roma pupils in 2012/13 was higher than for Gypsy/Roma pupils nationally.

These schools were already culturally diverse, with a welcoming ethos and well-established reputations for admitting pupils facing additional challenges. The headteachers and senior leaders led by example. The schools were mainly free of racist incidents and discrimination, according to the pupils and parents that inspectors spoke to.

In all three schools, the specialist EAL coordinator was well qualified for the role and held a senior position in the leadership team. Schools allocated sufficient resources to appoint high quality English teachers to teach and support EAL. These specialists led training for the whole school, including for non-teaching staff.

The schools had established good links with parents through deploying interpreters, including young bilingual Roma mentors. Staff were appointed for a specific role: either outreach work, liaison with parents or attendance. Among the strategies was the 'walking bus'. Staff in high-visibility jackets met children near their homes, picking up the children on the 'bus' at a given time and moving on to the next location. This ensured that pupils were escorted to school safely and parents could drop off their children nearer their homes.

The curriculum reflected pupils' heritage through music and art projects that raised other pupils' awareness of Roma culture. Pupils' home language was celebrated, not only as a feature of diversity but as a tool to support their learning of English. One of the schools used rewards and high-profile celebrations at locations such as Manchester City Hall to raise pupils' self-esteem.

Support was provided for pupils who were not eligible for the pupil premium and did not bring money or food for lunch. In one strategy parents were taken shopping to help them find cheap and healthy options for packed lunches for a few pounds a week. A family of Roma children had started in a Manchester school. They were not entitled to free school meals and were therefore not eligible for pupil premium funding.

On the first day, the children arrived with no food and no money. The school provided a meal and asked the parents for payment. This pattern continued for the second and third day, with no payment received by the school. On the third day, staff took the children home. The parent said there was no food in the house so staff waited at home with the children while the parent bought food. The children were taken back to school where they ate their meals.

On the fourth day, the pattern was repeated and the children were taken home. On the fifth day, the children arrived with an empty lunchbox. Again a home visit was made.

In the second week, the lunchbox contained some food but not enough for three children. This time the staff went with the parent to a budget supermarket and advised them on cheap, healthy food. The pattern continued for a few more days, but eventually the children started to bring enough food. The school continues to monitor the situation carefully.

Throughout, the school was clear about its expectations but was willing to go the extra mile to ensure success.

### **Case Study 2c: Early years – an assertive outreach approach**

Manchester's targeted approach to early years engagement emphasised the need for all children to be 'school ready'. Previously, no Roma family had attended more than one pre-school session, but 'Stay and Play' and 'Family Learning' had some 20 regular attendees, with numbers rising. Rather than wait for families to arrive, the INATSS team went to them. They raised parents' awareness of schools' expectations, developed their understanding of how to access services and, crucially, enhanced their knowledge of English. They also taught the skills needed for purposeful employment. This was particularly useful as many Roma adults are not involved in meaningful paid work because of language barriers and lack of skills and they cannot access housing benefit or a council tax rebate without sustainable employment.

The team also developed pre-school provision aimed specifically at Roma families to give them confidence, although it was open to other families. The team encouraged the development of young male and female Roma mentors who could work with parents and become role models. Recruiting



them on both these outreach projects has been a marked success and has increased the number of Roma young people wanting to join the school workforce as teaching assistants and mentors.

### **Case Study 3: Parkside Community Primary School, Kent**

#### **An effective partnership**

This school is a small but growing 3–11 community primary school on the outskirts of Canterbury in an area of high deprivation. The school was judged to be good in its last Ofsted inspection in June 2013. The proportion of Roma pupils on roll was 10.3% in 2013.

The key ingredients of the school's success are strong commitment from the headteacher and governing body, a welcoming ethos and consistently effective communication with parents. Expectations for pupils' achievement are high and monitoring is rigorous. Detailed tracking information is used incisively to pre-empt barriers and to tackle them when they arise. Pupil progress meetings take place every six weeks. Roma pupils are treated no differently from other pupils in this process.

The school accesses the support of a local authority ethnic minority support service and a virtual school for Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils, led by a virtual headteacher. The virtual headteacher tracks and analyses the achievement, attendance and behaviour of all the authority's Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils. The authority provides weekly reading sessions and pastoral support. It has also supported these pupils by transporting them to school to improve attendance.

The virtual school provides training for schools about Gypsy/Roma, Traveller pupils and EAL learners. They are seen as a whole-school matter for which all staff take responsibility. The aim is for the school to be a Gypsy/Roma champion and a model for other schools.

The close partnership between the senior leaders for pupil achievement and community links and the authority's outreach worker has fostered effective communication and trusting relationships with Gypsy/Roma families. Communications are designed to reach families – for example, the school newsletter is pictorial and parents receive texts rather than formal letters. Information is sent more than once to ensure that they do not forget events. The outreach worker makes home visits and feeds back information to the school.

Parents report that the school respects their culture yet does not treat their children as 'different'. Roma pupils say they feel welcomed and

valued. The curriculum is genuinely adapted to reflect the community's language, culture and values; this is not tokenistic. For example, a topic on homes included caravans alongside dwellings. The school reflects the tradition of oral story-telling but also places a strong emphasis on teaching reading. Pupils have been trained as 'language ambassadors', including Roma speakers.

The impact of this support and commitment is reflected in outcomes for these pupils. In 2013, the attainment of Gypsy/Roma pupils at Key Stage 2 was well above that of Gypsy/Roma pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics and in line with that for all pupils in the school and nationally. All Gypsy/Roma pupils made at least expected progress from their starting points at the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6. At Key Stage 1, Gypsy/Roma pupils' attainment was below the national average but above that of other pupils in the school. Their progress based on value-added measures was above the national mean, especially in writing.

The attendance of Gypsy/Roma pupils (91.5%) in 2012/13 was higher than that of Gypsy/Roma pupils nationally (86.1%) and persistent absence was lower (16.7%) compared with Gypsy/Roma pupils nationally (28%). To promote better attendance of Gypsy/Roma pupils on school trips, their parents have been invited as well and this has improved their participation.

#### **Case study 4: Using resources efficiently in Salford**

In 2010, Salford local authority merged the ethnic minority and Traveller education teams, significantly reducing staffing and funding. Only one Traveller education teacher remained in post at this time, leaving a shortfall in expertise for Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils. There has also been the added pressure of a large increase in the ethnic minority population in Salford by 187% over the last 10 years.

The new head of the combined service came, initially, from a modern foreign languages and Gypsy/Roma and Traveller background. To overcome the challenges, she made sure that she and the remaining staff were sufficiently trained and skilled to meet the needs of Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils as well as learners of English as an additional language. Although the funding was reduced, teachers and level 3 teaching assistants were appointed through a restructure. The service has prioritised the building up of the leadership capacity of EAL coordinators through support and training.

The service moved to an annual buy-back arrangement. The maintained schools had to agree annually whether or not to buy back the service. A majority decision was needed for the service to continue. So far, the schools have bought in to the service. Academies are not supported as

they do not buy in the service, although there are plans to offer a traded service to academy schools in the near future.

The service tends not to work with advanced bilingual learners, since schools usually want support with new arrivals who are beginners in English. Support for them is offered in short-term blocks of 12 weeks to avoid schools becoming dependent on outreach support. However, the recent increases in numbers means that there can be short waiting lists for direct support but schools still receive advice and training at the earliest opportunity.

Given the loss of previous Traveller Education staff, it was important for the staff who remained to build up trust, reach out to the local community and identify new Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils. Continuity of staffing is important, since frequent staff changes mean having to build up relationships again. Early years professionals are on-site so all families are engaged in early years provision before their children start school. The service has also undertaken youth engagement work at secondary level.

The merged team has seen the advantages of joint working across English as an additional language and Gypsy/Roma and Traveller education and the transferability of some of the skills and knowledge. The team began to promote the mainstreaming of pupils for whom English is an additional language and ceased to support a language hub in a local school – research showed that pupils acquire English more rapidly and integrate more quickly when placed with pupils whose first language is English.

The head of the service is a key driver in the local authority in ensuring that Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils are high on the authority's agenda.

### **Case study 5: One young Roma man's story**

Stefan and his family came to the UK via France in 2001 as asylum seekers from Romania, where they had faced persecution for being Roma.<sup>15</sup> He was aged about seven. Initially, the family was held in a detention centre at Heathrow. After six months, they came to Openshaw in Manchester, where Stefan went to a primary school until about the age of nine, when the family returned to Romania.

'Primary was very good – very supportive. There were regular meetings about my bad behaviour – fighting and name-calling – but they kept me engaged. I stood out at the school, which was mainly White British. I made friends out of my age group with younger ones – one White British

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<sup>15</sup> His name has been changed to protect his identity.

friend was supportive. I was one of the first Roma settlers. I got called 'Paki' by adults and children on the street. I reacted and got into fights.'

When the family returned to the UK a couple of years later, Stefan's secondary school experience was 'totally different'. Other than lateness, there were no behavioural problems. He was a prefect, got reward stickers and acted as a mediator. It was educationally, however, much more challenging. Teachers were supportive but he faced problems from other students.

'There was name-calling, racism, bullying. Five White British guys set upon me in the gangway. It was reported; a meeting was set up and the police were involved. The school could have done more. There were no exclusions; no punishments. It happened to other Roma pupils as well. I didn't do as well as I could have done at secondary but I got enough grades to go to college.'

Stefan's experience of college was much more positive.

'No brawls or fights. There was maturity. There were disciplinary procedures which were followed if any one stepped out of line. There were exclusions which paid off. I succeeded at college.'

He still lives with his family, which has recently been relocated to another part of the city. The neighbours – almost all White British – are 'very good,' according to Stefan. He is now at university in Manchester in the first year of a business studies degree. He wants to start his own business in housing after graduating.

## Notes

Between January and April 2014, three of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector visited three local authorities and 11 schools from particular wards with high numbers of recently arrived Roma pupils. Available intelligence suggested two of the three local authorities (Sheffield and Derby) were struggling to meet the challenges of supporting this particular group; data indicated that the third authority (Manchester) was having some success.

In each local authority, inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and officers, headteachers and coordinators for English as an additional language and/or coordinators for Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils. Inspectors spoke to young people and parents from Gypsy/Roma or Traveller backgrounds, visited local community activities and spoke to representatives from voluntary agencies working with Roma families and children.

In the 11 schools visited, inspectors met the headteacher, senior leaders, governors, coordinators for English as an additional language and/or coordinators for Gypsy/Roma and Traveller pupils and other staff. They spoke to parents and pupils

and observed lessons and support. They also spoke to representatives from the local authority and external support services, when possible.

In addition, nine schools from the three local authorities participated in a telephone survey. Inspectors also spoke by telephone to representatives from one university, two Gypsy/Roma and Traveller support groups and two Gypsy/Roma and Traveller professional associations.

The terms Gypsy/Roma and Traveller are taken from the DfE's list of ethnicity codes (Annex B). These terms are used throughout the report, although other terms exist, such as Romani. Roma is used in this report to describe families of Roma background who have migrated from countries in Eastern Europe, including the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia. 'Traveller of Irish Heritage' is a separate ethnic group.

National statistics on achievement and attendance are broken down by Gypsy/Roma and Traveller.

## Further information

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## Annex A: Providers visited

School / Setting	Local authority
Babington Community College	Leicester
Chapel Street Primary School	Manchester
Da Vinci High School	Derby
Divine Mercy Primary School	Manchester
Firs Estate Primary School	Derby
Heald Place Primary School	Manchester
Hinde House Secondary School	Sheffield
Parkside Primary School	Kent
Pear Tree Infant School	Derby
Salford Traveller and Ethnic Minority Achievement Service	Salford
Whiteways Primary School	Sheffield
Wincobank Infant School	Sheffield

### Questionnaire responses

Nine schools out of 18 telephoned from Derby, Manchester and Sheffield responded to a questionnaire by the deadline requested.

School	Local authority
Abraham Moss Community School	Manchester
Arboretum Primary School	Derby
Briscoe Lane Academy	Manchester
Fir Vale Academy	Sheffield
Hardwick Primary School	Derby
Phillimore Community Primary School	Sheffield
Sheffield Park Academy	Sheffield
Tinsley Nursery and Infant School	Sheffield
Tinsley Junior School	Sheffield

### Other visits

A group of headteachers in Sheffield

A group of post-16 Roma young people in further education (Manchester)

A Roma family in Manchester



Co-ordinators of English as an additional language in secondary schools (Manchester)

Family Learning (Manchester)

Local authority officers in Derby, Manchester and Sheffield

Parents' groups (Sheffield)

Pear Tree Roma Community Project (Derby): parents, volunteers and young people

Stay and Play (Manchester)

The University of Salford

Three Roma mentors (Manchester)

### **Other organisations providing information**

The following organisations provided information during the course of the survey:

Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers (ACERT)

Derby community police officers

Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group

Gypsy Roma Support Group, London

Manchester University

National Association of Travellers and Other Professionals (NATT +)

## Annex B: Ethnicity and first language codes

The codes used in schools are an agreed sub-set of the codes used by the DfE.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Code</b>
Bangladeshi	ABAN
Indian	AIND
Mirpuri Pakistani	AMPK
Other Pakistani	AOPK
Any other Asian Background	AOTH
African	BAFR
Black Caribbean	BCRB
Any other Black Background	BOTH
Chinese	CHNE
Any other Mixed Background	MOTH
Mixed White and Asian	MWAS
Mixed White and Black African	MWBA
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	MWBC
Information not obtained	NOBT
Any other Ethnic Group	OOTH
Refused	REFU
Traveller – Irish Heritage	WIRT
White British	WBRI
White Irish	WIRI
Any other White Background	WOTH
Roma/Roma Gypsy	WROM