



# Celebrate and participate

## Education guidance to support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people



This document was written by the **Welsh Government**. It is an easy read version of ‘**Celebrate and participate - education guidance to support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people**’.

# How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 33**.



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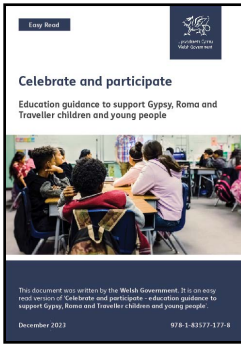
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# What this document is about



This guide shows how schools support **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people.



We want **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people to be able to do well in school.



**Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** people are groups of people who sometimes travel from place to place.



Some families choose to live in one place, in a house.



**Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** people are known as **ethnic minorities**. This means they make up a small part of the population in Wales.



**Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** people are all different. They each have their own histories, **culture** and lifestyles.



**Culture** is a group of people's shared beliefs and traditions. It is the things a group of people do, their history, their language and the way they live.



Reports have shown that **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** people are sometimes treated unfairly.



Sometimes **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** families take their children or young people out of schools. Because they think schools do not understand what is important to them.



We want to make sure schools treat **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people equally and fairly.



We want to make sure they do not face **bullying** or **racism**.



**Bullying** is when 1 person or a group of people treats someone else in a bad way.

Bullying can be things like:

- Saying nasty things
- Being ignored or left out
- Being hit, kicked or pushed
- Telling lies.



**Racism** is when someone is treated badly or unfairly because of their race or background.

# What children and young people told us



We asked **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people to tell us what is important to them.



This was to help us make this document.



When asked about school they gave different views.



Most liked school and enjoyed lessons.



Some had problems which made them want to leave school and learn at home.



We asked how they could be supported best.



A lot said they wanted:

- to be listened to
- and to be given more time to understand things that are new and sometimes difficult.

## Support services



Many local councils provide support services. These help schools understand the needs of **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people.



# Problems and solutions



In this section we will talk about some of the problems **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people have told us about.



We will talk about ways to deal with these problems.

## Additional Learning Needs



Some children and young people may have an **Additional Learning Need (ALN)**.



Children and young people with **ALN** need extra support to learn.



Parents said it is not always easy to tell if their child has **ALN**.



It is important for the school and family to talk to each other about any help a child or young person needs.



The Welsh Government has changed the way children and young people with **ALN** are supported in school.



Families may need support if their child has a check to find out if they have **ALN**. This is called an **ALN assessment**.



If the school or local authority thinks the child or young person has **ALN**, they must provide a learning plan for the child or young person.

# Going to a new school



Families often like their children to go to schools where there are other **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children.



Parents have the right to apply for a school place in any school. If places are available, schools must offer a place.



Children and young people should be registered at a school even if it is for a short time.



**Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** families can get help to ask for a school place.

# Help for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families



Most local councils offer a service that supports **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people. It is called the **Traveller Education Service (TES)**.



This service supports learners of all ages from nursery to over 16, and their families.



The **Traveller Education Service** has worked well with many families. They have supported **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people to return to school after leaving or going travelling.



The service can contact families directly to give support. They can help families ask for school places on time.



They can support **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people who go to school, and those who learn at home.

# Attendance at school



There are fewer **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people going to school than other groups.



Sometimes parents have had a bad experience of school. This can put them off sending their children to school.



Many **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** families believe in the importance of caring for family and working for the family business. They do this instead of attending school.



Also, some families may not agree with some of what is taught in schools. It may not be usual in their **culture** or faith.



Families also worry that their child or young person may be **bullied** or face **racism**.



These bad experiences can upset children and young people so they may want to leave school.



We have made a guide to help schools know what to do if a child or young person is not coming to school regularly. It is called the [All Wales \(school\) Attendance Framework](#).



There is also a law called the **Education Act 1996**. This law talks about making sure all children and young people get the education they need.

# Helping children and young people go to school



We need to find out what can help children and young people get back to school, if they:

- are not going to school enough,
- or are not going to school at all.

**We must think about:**



- The needs of the child or young person.



- The **culture** and **beliefs** of the family.

**Belief** is to trust or have faith in someone or something.



Schools should let **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people have time off if they are travelling with their family, and will be returning to school.



A law came out in 2010 called **The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations**. It says **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children can be registered at more than 1 school. This helps a child travelling with their family.



It can be helpful for the school and family to talk to the local **Traveller Education Service** for more information.



Some schools might be able to help the child or young person learn while they are away travelling.





Here is an example of good work being done in Wales.



A local council employed a **Gypsy Traveller Officer**. They gave school staff advice and training to better understand **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people.



They did a lot of work to support families of **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people.



This improved the attendance of local **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people in schools.



The council officer said meeting with the parents often was the thing that helped most.

## Bullying and racism



Sometimes **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people experience **bullying** or **racism** in school.



They are treated badly or unfairly by other people, or other children.



**Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people are more likely to have these bad experiences.



If this happens every school should stop it from happening again.



We are updating our guide for schools about how to deal with **bullying**.



This will include advice for schools on dealing with **racist bullying**.



Schools must make sure **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children are treated equally and fairly at all times.

## Communication with families and communities



It is important for schools to build good relationships with their local **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** communities.

It may be hard for schools to communicate with families because:



- Some parents may not be able to read very well.



- Some families may not have the internet or email.



- Some families do not speak much English or Welsh because they use their own language, like Roma.



Families may need support on where their child or young person can go to learn English or Welsh.

# Celebrating cultures



It is important that all children and young people learn about different **cultures** in schools.



When children and young people learn more about one another it can reduce **bullying**.

Schools can help teach and celebrate **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultures** by:



- Being involved in an event held every year called **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month**.



- Asking families to come and talk to children and young people in schools about their history and **culture**.

## What children learn in school



The **curriculum** is the name given to the subjects children learn in school.



Our **curriculum** helps schools to work in more ways with local families and communities.



This is important if there are things that families are not used to talking about with others, including school.



Relationships and Sexuality Education is an important part of the **curriculum** in all schools.



It is important that schools help parents and families understand what is being taught, and why.



We are making a separate guide to support schools with teaching this subject.



Schools should be aware of the needs of all the children and young people.



Children and young people should get support to learn in a way that is right for them.

## Trusted adult in school



Many **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people said it is important for them to have someone at school who understands their **culture**.



Some schools have the **Traveller Education Service** or a teacher children and young people can go to if they need to talk.

## Being online



Some families do not have computers or the internet for children and young people to do school work.





We have made online services available for all schools across Wales.



We have spent a lot of money to buy equipment for schools.

### **An example of good work done in Wales:**



A school in North Wales gave some children school work on paper. This is because they preferred to learn this way, or were travelling.



But they also supported families to use computers.

# Learning from home



Sometimes **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** families prefer to teach their own children at home.

We call this **home education**.



We have made a guide about **home education**.

It is a good idea for families to work with:



- the school
- the **Traveller Education Service**
- other services.



This can help parents and families do **home education** well.

## Excluded from school



**Excluded** from school means a child is not allowed to go to school.



We know that **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children are **excluded** more than other children.



We will be making a new guide about **exclusion** to help schools, children and young people.

## Help with school costs



Families can find it hard to pay for the costs of going to school. There is help available.



There is a grant called the **School Essentials Grant**.



This can help families pay for uniform, PE kit, and other things needed to learn.



Families can apply if they do not have much money. And their child is in:

- Primary school from Reception to Year 6.
- Secondary school from Year 7 to Year 11.



Families can make 1 claim a year for each child.



The organisation called **Children in Wales** has made guides for schools about the costs of things.

The online guide talks about how schools can help families afford things needed for learning.

# School uniforms



We have made a guide about school uniforms.



It says uniforms should be kept simple to keep costs down.



You should be able to buy uniform at different shops.



It also says schools should have a way for parents to get second hand uniforms.

# Moving from primary to secondary school



Schools can help children and young people prepare for going to high school. They can:



- Talk to parents about different options for their child or young person and what subjects they can choose to learn.



- Give the child and family the chance to visit the secondary school before they start.



- Give families and children and young people the information they need.

# Choices after secondary school



All children and young people should have information about their options for learning after age 16.



For example, they may want to study full-time or part-time.



They may want to stay in school and sit A-levels, go to college, train for a job or become an apprentice.



Some children and young people may want to think about going to university when they are 18.



Schools and colleges need to make sure information about support is easily available.

This will help **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** children and young people make good choices.

**Schools, colleges and a local Traveller Education Service can support children and young people by:**



- Helping with applications.



- Arranging visits to a new college before they start.



- Support with training.



- Supporting home educated learners get into courses at college.



# Hard words

## Belief

Belief is to trust or have faith in someone or something.

## Bullying

Bullying is when 1 person or a group of people treats someone else in a bad way. Bullying can be things like:

- Saying nasty things
- Being ignored or left out
- Being hit, kicked or pushed
- Telling lies.

## Culture

Culture is a group of people's shared beliefs and traditions. It is the things a group of people do, their history, their language, and the way they live.

## Curriculum

The curriculum is the name given to the subjects children learn in school.

## Racism

This is when someone is treated badly or unfairly because of their race or background.