

The Education of Gypsy Traveller Learners

A survey of provision made by schools and local authorities to meet the needs of Gypsy Traveller learners



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Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales



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This document has been translated by Trosol (English to Welsh)

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1 Introduction

- 1 This document reports the findings from Estyn's survey of provision made by schools and local authorities to meet the needs of Gypsy Traveller learners.
- 2 The report also describes aspects of good practice across Wales.
- 3 In producing this report, HMI visited and considered evidence from 18 schools and 9 local education authorities (LEAs) including visits to Gypsy Traveller sites. The sample schools and LEAs visited reflect a balanced sample from:
 - across Wales;
 - rural and urban areas; and
 - different sizes of Gypsy Traveller communities.

2 Background

- 4 Romany Gypsies have been recognised in law as a racial group since 1988. Irish Gypsy Travellers, who have been travelling in England as a distinct social group since the 1800s, received legal recognition as a racial group in England and Wales in 2000. Both groups are offered protection by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.
- 5 A number of other groups included in the generic terms 'Gypsy and Gypsy Traveller' are defined by their ethnic, national or social origins rather than by their racial origins. These groups include:
 - English and Welsh Gypsies;
 - Scottish Gypsy Travellers;
 - Show people (Fairground people) and circus people;
 - Bargees (occupational boat dwellers); and
 - New (age) Gypsy Travellers.
- 6 Section 488 of the Education Act 1996 allows the National Assembly for Wales to make available specific grants to LEAs in Wales for the provision of education for the children of Gypsy Travellers and displaced persons. The Education of Gypsy Travellers and Displaced Persons Grant funds local education projects that seek to improve and broaden provision of education for children from the groups identified above. In 2005-2006, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) made £900,000 available under this grant. The European Social Fund (ESF) Equal Programme* has recently match-funded this grant, thereby doubling the amount available for LEAs.

* *Equal is a European Social Fund programme aimed at testing and encouraging new ways of promoting employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability and equal opportunities. This grant is initially only available for one year.*

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LEA	Pupil Numbers	Section 488 grant*
Wrexham (Including Denbighshire & Conwy)	85	£70,376
Swansea	130	£87,997
NPT	147	£77,943
Cardiff	474	£218,359
Pembrokeshire	202	£166,857
Carmarthenshire	33	£51,890
Torfaen (includes Blaenau Gwent)	121	£71,735
Merthyr	26	£18,465
Flintshire	129	£90,745
Gwynedd	33	£16,449
Vale	7	£4,814
Ceredigion	7	£4,814
Bridgend	21	£19,555
Totals	1415	£900,000

* Source Welsh Assembly Government

3 Context

7 In 2003, following a year-long study, the Welsh Assembly Government's Equality of Opportunity Committee (EOC) presented the final report of its review of service provision for Gypsies and Gypsy Travellers. The report contains a number of recommendations related to education.

8 Recommendation 34 relates specifically to the work of Estyn. It suggests:

“That the Assembly Government put the mechanisms in place to monitor how effectively LEAs are meeting their statutory duty to educate Gypsy and Gypsy Traveller children, for example by including consideration of the effectiveness of LEA provision in Estyn’s remit for inspections of schools and LEAs.”

9 The Assembly response to recommendation 34 was that:

“Estyn will be commissioned, as part of its remit, to undertake inspections of a sample of LEAs providing Gypsy Traveller education in order to find out whether they are meeting their duty to educate Gypsy/ Gypsy Traveller learners.”

4 Main findings

- Many LEAs provide support to schools through a Traveller Education Service. The quality of this support is mostly good and in some cases very good.
- Gypsy Traveller learners generally have poor attendance rates and very few Gypsy Traveller learners attend a secondary school.
- Most of the teaching of Gypsy Traveller learners is of good quality, particularly in primary schools.
- The Welsh Assembly Government allocates funds to LEAs and schools based on learner numbers and historical allocation, without sufficient emphasis on the needs of learners.
- The figures used to allocate funds to LEAs do not always accurately reflect the number of Gypsy Traveller learners within the LEA.
- Many Gypsy Traveller learners have low levels of basic skills and often few social skills.
- Many schools and LEAs do not have policies in place to address the specific needs of Gypsy Traveller learners.
- Very few schools have identified opportunities within the curriculum to promote the positive aspects of Gypsy Traveller culture.
- LEAs and schools generally lack awareness of good practice and strategies to support Gypsy Traveller learners.
- Few Gypsy Traveller learners complete homework.

5 Recommendations

10 LEAs and schools should:

- R1** find ways to improve attendance and increase the numbers of Gypsy Traveller children attending secondary schools;
- R2** ensure that they have policies that address the specific needs of Gypsy Traveller learners; and
- R3** ensure that the curriculum promotes the positive aspects of Gypsy Traveller culture.

11 The Welsh Assembly Government should:

- R4** should collaborate with local authorities to identify and put in place appropriate arrangements to enable staff, with responsibilities for Gypsy Traveller learners, to discuss common issues and share best practice; and
- R5** should ensure that data collected is accurate and consistent and consider ways in which funding can be allocated so that it places a greater emphasis on the needs of learners.

6 How well do learners achieve?

- 12 The factor that has the greatest effect on the progress that Gypsy Traveller learners make is their rate of attendance at school. Where rates of attendance are close to 90%, learners' progress is generally in line with that of the settled community. Generally, Gypsy Traveller children attend school less regularly than children in the settled community. As the number of sites for Gypsy Travellers has declined in recent years, Gypsy Travellers have tended to stay on a few larger maintained sites for longer periods. This has made it easier for children from these groups to get into the routine of attending school. In one authority, Gypsy Traveller learners' attendance rate has risen to over 85%, but there are areas where it is much lower. Learners generally attend well in areas where parents have come to trust their local schoolteachers and LEA officers. Some teachers and officers have been able to show Gypsy Travellers that they are trustworthy and have the best interests of the community at heart. These members of LEA and school staff are welcome on Gypsy Traveller sites. In other areas, however, there is a lack of mutual trust. School and LEA staff members are not welcome on the sites and they refuse to go there.
- 13 Although LEAs occasionally prosecute parents who fail to send their children to school, they rarely do so because it is ineffective. Gypsy Traveller parents may keep their other children away and other families may follow suit.
- 14 Gypsy Traveller learners rarely attend school after Year 6. Very few LEAs are having success in keeping Gypsy Traveller learners in secondary school. Of the learners who attend secondary school, some have attended primary school only intermittently and have very low levels of attainment. These learners are unable to cope with the work in most subjects. They generally attend lessons in groups of two or three with a specialist teacher. Their lessons are mainly concerned with basic skills of literacy and numeracy and with helping them to manage their behaviour. When they make sufficient progress in these areas, they start to attend some mainstream classes. Even so, few remain in school to the end of key stage 3 and only a very few continue into key stage 4 and sit GCSE examinations. LEAs do not generally have several years' records that show, for example, the percentage of Gypsy Traveller learners who achieve the various levels in National Curriculum tests and assessments nor do they have records that show attainment by gender.
- 15 For the many learners who choose not to attend secondary school, some LEAs are successfully finding suitable part-time certificated courses so that these learners remain in education, even if they are not in school. By following these courses, mainly in health and beauty or construction, the learners are gaining useful vocational skills and basic qualifications, and are broadening their career choices. In a very few LEAs, Gypsy Traveller learners in key stage 4 are either in school or following part-time courses such as these.
- 16 There is, however, still a significant percentage of Gypsy Traveller learners who have attended very little school. Generally, these learners, whatever their age, have very low levels of attainment. Typically, they have a limited vocabulary, speak unclearly, can read only very simple texts and can write only simple sentences. Some are unable to tell the time. These learners have very little knowledge or skills in subjects

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such as history or geography and few of the practical skills they might gain through work in physical education, design and technology, art or science. They have only the most basic skills in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). These learners are not well equipped for life in the wider society and do not have the choices of lifestyle and career that are open to learners from the settled community.

Good practice 1

Many Gypsy Traveller learners have low levels of basic skills and often limited social skills. One strategy designed to boost children's skills, both in their pre-school years and while they attend school, is to provide a play-bus that tours the Gypsy Traveller sites. Play leaders talk to the children, introduce them to books and, through play, teach them to interact with others, share, cooperate and compete fairly. The children learn skills that help them to make better progress in school and they also learn the sort of behaviour that schools will expect of them.

- 17 Overall, Gypsy Traveller learners find it very difficult to complete homework. Some schools report that most of the books that Gypsy Traveller learners take home do not come back to school. A few LEAs make provision for homework in after-school clubs on the school site or on the Gypsy Traveller site.

Good practice 2

Schools and LEAs adopt a range of strategies to help learners complete their homework, such as:

- supervised workplaces during lunch-hours or as part of the breakfast club;
- a homework club on the Gypsy Travellers' site; or
- staff on the bus who can help learners with homework when the bus visits the site.

All these strategies help a few Gypsy Traveller learners to keep up with their peers and maintain good progress in class.

- 18 There are very few examples of teaching and learning on-line. Few Gypsy Traveller families have suitable computers or internet access from their homes. One LEA has loaned a Gypsy Traveller learner a laptop with satellite internet access and a printer in order for the learner to maintain contact with the base school while she is away from the area. However, it is too early to evaluate this project.
- 19 A few LEAs have set up learning centres for Gypsy Traveller learners. In these centres, the learners use computers confidently and acquire a good range of ICT skills.

Good practice 3

In one LEA, the Traveller Education Service purchased a jumbo Transit van that was specially converted and adapted as a teaching base. Currently, a qualified teacher and a teaching assistant teach secondary-age learners on the bus on the Gypsy Travellers' site. About 20 learners take advantage of this provision at different times. Learners work in small groups following individually prepared programmes. Resources to support learning include laptop computers and educational software, as well as a range of videos, books and education programmes. In this way, Gypsy Traveller learners have access to ICT equipment, are able to develop IT skills and have supervised access to the Internet. The bus also enables staff and learners to access off-site learning by making visits to places of educational interest. Because much of the learning takes place on the Gypsy Traveller site, the staff members are able to encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning.

7 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

- 20 Most of the teaching of Gypsy Traveller learners is of good quality, particularly in primary schools. In the best examples, teachers carefully differentiate the work in order to address the needs of this wide range of learners.
- 21 When Gypsy Traveller children start school in a nursery or reception class, teachers assess them as they would any other child. They carry out the normal baseline assessments of learners and plan experiences for them that match their needs and aptitudes. The learners participate fully in class. When they work in groups, it is generally with learners of similar ability that include both Gypsy Traveller and settled community children.
- 22 In primary schools, almost all Gypsy Traveller learners learn in mainstream classes. If some learners have special needs, staff may decide to withdraw them from lessons for about an hour each week for special support to help in their area of difficulty. This small-group or one-to-one teaching is generally of good quality. The teachers who provide it plan the work in discussion with the classteacher so that it addresses the particular difficulties each learner is facing. This small-group teaching is usually more intensive in the first few weeks learners are in school.
- 23 Because of their lifestyle, many Gypsy Traveller learners often change school. Their parents are often unable to identify the last school that they attended, so their new school cannot obtain any records. In the past, many Gypsy Travellers owned a card, which they could take to a school and on which the headteacher would enter the name, address and contact details of the school. They would immediately hand the card back to the parents and it would remain their sole property. When used as intended, this card provided a full record of a child's schooling and enabled a new

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school to contact previous schools to ask for records. Unfortunately, this practice has largely fallen into disuse.

- 24 Most schools maintain good records of learners' progress and willingly send copies to a child's new school. If staff cannot find out which school a child has previously attended, teachers make a quick assessment of the child's ability in literacy and numeracy and place them in an appropriate class. Once the learner settles in school, teachers carry out standardised tests to assess the learner's reading age, spelling age and cognitive ability.
- 25 In LEAs where there are generally over 100 Gypsy Traveller learners, the LEA officer with responsibility for Gypsy Travellers is often the first person to know of the arrival of a new family. The officer may undertake a home visit to make an initial assessment and to deal with matters such as school uniform and transport arrangements. The officer is then able to help a school prepare for the new learner.
- 26 Most LEAs provide extra support for schools that Gypsy Traveller learners attend. This support may take the form of a part-time teacher or additional in-class support from a nursery nurse or learning support assistant. For the most part, these additional staff members work very effectively. Few of them are specifically trained to work with Gypsy Traveller learners, but a few LEAs have provided in-service training in Gypsy Traveller culture for teachers and learning support assistants. Many of these additional members of staff play a major part, alongside the class teacher, in planning the work for Gypsy Traveller learners and in assessing learners' progress. They monitor their work and intervene as much or as little as necessary. These extra adults in the classroom often have a marked beneficial effect on learners' work. As well as enriching the planning of work, they help learners understand the lesson, keep learners focused on the task in hand and help manage learners' behaviour. One LEA has concentrated this support on learners in Years 5 and 6. As a result, more learners have continued into secondary school instead of leaving school after Year 6.
- 27 Where assessments suggest it is necessary, Gypsy Traveller learners in secondary schools also have the support of a learning support assistant during some or all of their lessons. These learning support assistants are also generally effective in helping the learners keep up with the work of the class.
- 28 In some secondary schools, where there are only a few Gypsy Traveller learners, all of whom might have had very little primary school education, the task for a specialist teacher or support assistant can be very difficult. The learners in their small groups have few learning skills and often do not want to learn. The schools do not have the learning resources that these learners need and consequently they are unable to meet their needs.
- 29 Where secondary schools are unable to respond effectively to the learning needs of Gypsy Traveller learners, a minority of LEAs have established learning centres in primary schools for Gypsy Traveller learners of secondary school age. This is generally a more efficient and effective way of educating learners who are unable to cope in mainstream classes in secondary school.

Good practice 4

In some learning centres, the LEA provides teachers and support workers who are experienced in working with Gypsy Traveller learners. These staff members are able to offer an education effectively adapted for Gypsy Travellers. The centres are generally well resourced with books, equipment and computers with good-quality educational software. Typically, these centres build up materials that reflect the Gypsy Traveller culture, arrange outings for Gypsy Traveller learners and undertake projects such as painting a large mural, in which Gypsy Traveller learners can celebrate aspects of their own culture. These centres have proved very successful in keeping learners in education. Learners taste success and gain certification and qualifications. A few learners have continued into further education where they have gained NVQs in hairdressing. Others are studying bricklaying and business administration.

- 30 Schools are careful not to assume that Gypsy Traveller learners have special educational needs (SEN). If the SEN coordinator is involved with the learners early in their school life, it is because that teacher has expertise in administering tests and assessing learners' needs. Identification that a learner has special educational needs occurs in the usual way, most commonly by the learner's classteacher noticing that the learner is having particular difficulty with work and referring the matter to the SEN coordinator. Schools make SEN assessments and take steps themselves or, if necessary, with the help of the LEA or other agencies to address the learner's needs. They write individual education plans (IEPs) or behaviour plans (IBPs) when these would be helpful. The plans are generally of good quality, with specific and achievable targets, and teachers use them well to promote learners' progress. LEA officers are often involved in writing and monitoring these plans.
- 31 As Gypsy Travellers start to stay for longer periods on a smaller number of sites, it is becoming easier for LEAs to monitor when they are in their area. LEAs therefore know almost immediately whether learners are absent because they have stayed at home or because they have moved away from the area. Several LEAs have Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) to work specifically with Gypsy Traveller families, and others have applied for support under the ESF Equal programme to appoint other officers. Over many months, these officers build good relationships with the Gypsy Traveller families and they are welcome to visit the Gypsy Traveller sites. The work of these officers, through their regular visits, is helping to raise the level of learners' attendance.

8 How well do learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?

- 32 Gypsy Traveller children are entitled to follow every aspect of the curriculum. When teachers withdraw learners from mainstream classes for one-to-one or small-group tuition in literacy or numeracy, they try to make sure that learners do not suffer by missing the work of the rest of the class.

Good practice 5

A few primary schools adapt their curriculum, to make it more relevant to Gypsy Traveller children, particularly where there are many of them. For example, lessons would typically include:

- a study of trailers alongside other types of home;
- work on caravan painting;
- work based on the major Gypsy Travellers' fairs, such as that at Stow; and
- a particular emphasis on horses and dogs, as part of a wider study of animals.

- 33 Many Gypsy Traveller parents ask that their children should not attend sex education lessons and schools meet these wishes. Quite often, parents do not give their consent for their children to take part in educational visits and excursions.
- 34 In many schools, Gypsy Traveller learners travel home immediately at the end of the school day and do not take part in after-school activities. In a few schools, parents collect their children when the after-school club finishes or LEAs are able to make more flexible transport arrangements so that learners can attend.
- 35 Gypsy Traveller parents are generally happy for their children to follow a primary school curriculum, which they believe gives them a good grounding in English and mathematics. In contrast, many of them see little value in many of the subjects of the secondary curriculum and do not encourage their children to attend secondary school.
- 36 Parents have many concerns about secondary school. These include:
- a fear that their children will be bullied or abused on the grounds of their race and culture;
 - a fear that their children will be ridiculed for their weak literacy skills or lack of knowledge of some subjects;

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- a concern that their children will be corrupted by the attitudes towards sex and drugs that they believe are common amongst families of the settled community;
- a feeling that there are so many teachers that their children will not be able to build a relationship with any one of them; and
- a belief that secondary schools do nothing to prepare their children for their traditional roles of housewife or husband and worker within the Gypsy Traveller community.

37 LEAs would like many more Gypsy Traveller children to attend secondary schools.

Good practice 6

At one learning centre for secondary learners, the whole curriculum is based around the needs of the Gypsy Traveller learner. Learners with no previous education start with basic levels of literacy and numeracy and so the first objective is to improve reading skills. The centre provides as full a curriculum as possible to suit learners of different ages and abilities and takes account of learners' previous experiences. Learners also take part in a pilot scheme called the "Tripartite Award" that aims to teach basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. The teaching approach is through a modular form. The modules include:

- Driving
- Citizenship
- Food Hygiene
- Wales, Europe and the World
- Leisure
- Health and Safety
- What do you think?
- Sport

Learners who attend this centre achieve excellent results in both academic and social attainment and talk positively about their future aspirations

38 In contrast to this good practice, most secondary schools do little to encourage Gypsy Traveller learners to stay in school. Many mainstream teachers have low expectations of Gypsy Traveller learners, believing they will not study anything that does not relate directly to the future that they see for themselves. Because there are usually only very small numbers of Gypsy Traveller learners in secondary schools, departments generally do little to adapt their curriculum for them in any way. Very few of the schools we visited have identified opportunities within the curriculum to promote the positive aspects of Gypsy Traveller culture.

- 39 LEAs that are part of the Children's University* are better able to prepare out-of-school activities for learners and to certificate learners' achievements. Several LEAs have been successful in finding activities in which Gypsy Traveller learners are keen to take part. Other groups of Gypsy Traveller learners have spent weekends away with youth workers, working under the Youth Access scheme.

Good practice 7

In one LEA, the Traveller education service has reading books in Welsh and English, and displays that reflect the culture of the Gypsy Travellers. The success of early reading books produced by the Traveller education service has been enhanced by a story written and told by two Gypsy Traveller students and illustrated by a Gypsy Traveller artist. The LEA loans these books to primary schools that Gypsy Travellers attend. The Traveller education service has an extensive variety of material that they use to raise awareness of Gypsy Traveller culture – artefacts, photographs, books and audio-visual aids. These are used effectively in an exhibition called "Celebrating Success".

In another LEA, following a project initiative, the Council's Museums Service purchased a traditional Romany bow-top wagon, which has become part of a travelling Gypsy exhibition. The exhibition tours schools and Gypsy sites in the County. In addition, funding provided by the Museum for innovative projects and social inclusion enabled learners to participate in a "Wagon Trip". Learners experienced life in a horse-drawn wagon, including cooking, sleeping, travelling and entertainment around the campfire.

9 How effective are leadership and strategic management?

- 40 LEAs comply with the Education Act 1996 that requires them to make education available for all school-age children in their area, appropriate to their age, abilities and aptitudes. They also respond appropriately to the requirements of the Race Relations Act 1996. They generally have an inclusive approach to education, which includes Gypsy Travellers. However, many LEAs do not have a clear strategy for meeting the specific needs of Gypsy Traveller learners.
- 41 Many LEAs provide support to Gypsy Travellers through a Traveller Education Service. The quality of this support is mostly good and in some cases very good. In the best practice, LEAs continually seek to improve, and evaluate every year, the progress they are making in implementing the recommendations of the report of the Welsh Assembly Government's Equal Opportunity Committee – "Review of Service

* *The Children's University promotes activities that develop the whole child and awards credits for participation in learning rather than traditional educational models of rewarding achievement against pre-determined standards*

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Provision for Gypsies and Travellers". These LEAs also review progress against the seven key questions in Estyn's Common Inspection Framework. However, some LEAs do not have a strategy that sets out how they are going to meet the needs of Gypsy Traveller learners and how they are going to improve their school attendance and raise their level of attainment.

Good practice 8

One LEA has a strategy in which members of staff in secondary and primary schools support learners in doing their homework. On two nights a week, there is a homework club on the Gypsy Traveller site. This provision is central to raising the achievement of the Gypsy Traveller learners and is partly financed by the ESF Equal programme. The LEA aims to expand this provision and provide nursery provision at the site for parents who come to help children with homework. This will provide employment for members of the Gypsy Traveller community. This is an innovative project that will actively involve members of the Gypsy Traveller community and offer employment and training opportunities.

- 42 Long-term sickness adversely affects the quality of service provided. In two of the LEAs visited, coordinators were on long-term sickness absence. In one LEA, the service was able to move a well-qualified officer into the position temporarily, to maintain the quality of its service. The majority of LEAs do not have officers with expertise in this field and would find it difficult or impossible to replace a coordinator who is absent for a long time. This is one of the problems related to small services in LEAs and could be resolved by greater collaboration between LEAs in order to achieve better economies of scale.
- 43 Most schools do not have a named co-ordinator for Gypsy Traveller learners and the SENCO is usually the link person between the school and the LEA.
- 44 Data collected by one LEA over recent years shows that about 35% of Gypsy Traveller learners have been on the SEN register, and that about 3% of pupils have a statement of SEN. Finding that Gypsy traveller learners are over represented as having moderate learning difficulties, this LEA has produced guidelines to support good practice for Gypsy Traveller learners with SEN.
- 45 Most schools tend to see the leadership and management provision for Gypsy Traveller learners as being the responsibility of the LEA. They expect the LEA to deal with any issues that arise related to these learners. In the best practice, schools recognise that they themselves should meet the needs of Gypsy Traveller learners as far as possible. However, many schools do not have policies that address the specific needs of Gypsy Traveller learners.
- 46 Schools generally take the view that "Gypsy Traveller learners are treated the same as all learners". This is an inappropriate approach to equal opportunities as it fails to take account of the specific needs of the Gypsy Traveller learners.

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- 47 In the best practice, school procedures are in line with “Learning for all – Standards for Racial Equality in Schools” and there are learner-tracking systems to ensure that progress can be monitored. In addition, Heads of Departments in secondary schools are aware of the specific needs of Gypsy Travellers and make provision for them within their schemes of work.
- 48 Nearly all schools send data to the LEA about the achievement and progress of all learners including Gypsy Traveller learners. However, most schools and LEAs do not monitor how well Gypsy Traveller learners achieve or whether, over the years, their performance has improved or deteriorated. Without this information, neither schools nor LEAs can know the size of the task facing them or monitor the effectiveness of their work.
- 49 A minority of schools monitor the progress of Gypsy Traveller learners. In the best practice, teachers meet regularly to discuss Gypsy Traveller learners’ academic achievement, attendance, confidence, and social skills.
- 50 Most LEAs are not able to provide details on cost-effectiveness or value for money provided by Gypsy Traveller support staff. In the best practice, the Traveller Education Service monitors the effectiveness of officers, specialist teachers and learning support assistants and provides training for them.

Good practice 9

In one LEA, the Gypsy Traveller co-ordinator leads day and evening training courses for teachers and learning support assistants. She also trains officers and teachers in neighbouring LEAs. She is a member of the National Association of Gypsy Travellers and makes presentations to groups across Wales. In this LEA, learning support assistants are trained using the expertise of existing staff. Staff from the Learning Centre work alongside learning support assistants in schools, some of whom have been recruited from the Traveller community. These learning support assistants act as good role models for their community and the learners in the school.

- 51 The overall quality of support provided by LEAs’ Traveller Education service is good. Where support is very good, it makes a significant contribution to improving access to education and raising the achievement of Gypsy Traveller learners. Some LEAs work hard to build up relationships with the travelling community, and their work has encouraged Gypsy Travellers to become more involved in their children’s schools.
- 52 In the best practice, LEAs have trained members of the Gypsy Traveller community to work with Gypsy Traveller children in schools and nurseries. They work effectively, act as positive role models for the rest of the community and for learners in the school, and provide a strong link between the school and the community.
- 53 Not all Gypsy Traveller learners require the same level of support. Some require a greater amount of support than others depending particularly on the level of their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, a Gypsy Traveller learner in Year 6 who

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has had good levels of attendance throughout primary school would generally need less support than a learner whose attendance has been poor. However, the Welsh Assembly Government allocates funds to LEAs and schools based on learner numbers and historical allocation, without sufficient emphasis on the needs of learners. Even so, this results in LEAs with similar numbers of Gypsy Traveller learners receiving very different levels of funding.

- 54 Most schools do not understand the basis for the allocation of resources to their school. LEAs base their support on learner numbers and on the numbers of Gypsy Traveller learners with special educational needs. However, this data is not always accurate and this leads to inequalities in allocation of resources.