

Improving education outcomes for pupils from the new Roma communities

Mark Penfold

Babington College, Leicester

February 2015



Acknowledgements

I have received help from a large number of people during the course of this project. I want to thank each of them and have tried to include their contributions and perspectives. There are so many that I cannot name them all, but the report would not be as full as it is without the support and cooperation of Pauline Anderson and Paul Johnson from Bradford Children's Services; Jane Murphy, Education Manchester City Council; Mark Sims, Ofsted; Graham Smith from The EAL Academy; Jenny Smith, Senior Consultant EMA/EAL EAL New Arrivals Team Sheffield City Council; and Lucie Fremlova, independent consultant on Roma issues.

Ensuring pupils from the new migrant Roma communities close the attainment gap with other groups is probably the biggest challenge currently facing UK educators. It is my hope that this report will help schools rise to this challenge successfully.

Introduction

This project aims to identify background information required to understand the education needs of pupils from the new migrant Roma communities and bring together best practice and practical strategies to help meet these needs. Additionally, it is an investigation into whether a distinctive approach is needed when working with pupils from the new migrant Roma communities from that already in place for the indigenous British Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) populations. It examines issues surrounding ascription. (Ascription, in the context of this research, means the way schools define and record the ethnic origins of their pupils in order to establish if some groups are subject to unintentional discrimination.) The focus on ascription is to determine if there is a correlation between high levels of ascription and better attendance and achievement.

This group was chosen for the study because they are known to be the lowest-achieving cohort nationally, according to RAISEonline. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the numbers of pupils in this group is vastly underestimated in official figures and they pose resource and engagement challenges which some schools find difficult to respond to successfully.

Research Methodology

A literature review was carried out. There have been few studies or documents focused purely on pupils from the new migrant Roma communities. Most of the literature concentrated on long-standing indigenous GRT communities with occasional references to the new migrant populations. Very little of the literature reviewed is more than five years old.

Schools with pupils from the new migrant Roma communities were asked to provide attendance and achievement data on pupils ascribed as Roma and pupils known to be Roma but not ascribed as such.

Parents and pupils from the new migrant Roma communities, teachers from the schools and consultants providing advice and support to schools were interviewed. Six major cities were visited between June 2014 and January 2015.

Results

Many barriers to engagement with pupils from the new migrant Roma communities were identified and a range of strategies and policies which practitioners have found effective in addressing them are set out in the report.

Arguments for separating the 'R' from GRT and providing a distinctive strategy to obtain better education outcomes were found, but it is clear that there are opposing views on this. Funding and resource issues may be more relevant.

Only a small number of schools were willing or able to provide the data asked for. The small sample suggests that attendance and achievement are better for pupils from the new Roma communities where there are high levels of ascription. The small size of the sample also suggests that many schools have a lot of work to do on ascription.

Conclusion

Pupils from the new migrant Roma communities are the lowest-achieving group nationally but some schools have much better

outcomes than the national data averages. Portable strategies with demonstrable impact from these schools are now gathered in one place. The project was hampered, in the same way that all work in this field has been, by the lack of comprehensive qualitative and quantitative data (discussed in full later), and the reluctance of schools to supply basic data. Essentially the number of pupils from new migrant Roma communities in UK schools is not known because many are not ascribed as Roma and therefore even RAISEonline and the national pupil database (NPD) cannot give an accurate picture. However, some schools have demonstrated that success with this group is possible and this document should be part of the process of promoting more general integration of the new Roma communities.

Context of the study

It is important to define clearly the subjects of this study. There have been large indigenous GRT populations in the United Kingdom for more than 500 years. In the ten years following the enlargement of the European Union there has been a movement of people from several of the new member countries to the UK. They hold passports which state their nationality as Slovak, Czech, Hungarian, Polish and Romanian, etc. However, many also consider their primary identity to be Roma. It is this latter group which is the focus of this study and they will be referred to throughout as ‘the new migrant Roma communities’.

So how large are these communities and how many attend school in the UK? Official bodies from the Department for Education (DfE) (in all its different recent names), Local Authorities, The National Strategies and the Home Office have struggled to see, let alone count, the new migrant Roma communities. One report stated:

‘There are a number of local authorities where the service providers are not aware of their Roma, although they have sizeable and well-established Roma communities.’

Fremlova, L. and Ureche, H. (2009:9)

In evidence to the House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee, (11 May 2011) the then-Minister, Grant Shapps, said:

‘though the UK government was sympathetic to the need to help integrate Roma ... the UK had “*relatively few Roma citizens*”’ (as reported in Euroma11 2013:3 York Workshops).

At the time expert estimates placed the number of ‘relatively few’ at between 200,000 and 1,000,000, with most agreeing that the true figure lay between 200,000 and 500,000. This uncertainty is reflected in schools. One primary school in the East Midlands agreed to be visited saying ‘It will be helpful for us, we have six Roma pupils.’ The visit found 37, and 23 are now ascribed. A different primary school in the same region said ‘We know we have some Roma pupils but we find it hard to identify who are Roma but not ascribed as such.’ Demographic experts suggest that 60–65% of the new migrant Roma populations may be aged 18 or younger (reference: see bibliography). That suggests that there are between 124,000 and 275,000 members of the new migrant Roma communities below 18 in the UK. Therefore, the number ascribed on the NPD of 19,030 (Dec 2014) must be regarded as having dubious validity. The issue of numbers is looked at further in the ascription section.

What are the differences between the indigenous GRT populations and the new migrant Roma communities?

UK GRT	New migrant Roma communities
Have been in the UK for 500 years.	Have mainly been in the UK for ten years or less.
Are familiar with using English and can communicate effectively by oral and aural means. Written communication may be more difficult.	Are unfamiliar with using English and face-to-face, phone or written contact in English is problematic.
Have access to a wide range of agencies who can support them.	Have no idea how to obtain their rights and have no champions.
Many still travel.	Have been settled (voluntarily or forcibly) for at least three generations.
Contributed to the society they live amongst on an equal footing during WW2.	Lost a very high percentage of their population in the Holocaust, partly due to the actions of the society they lived amongst, and this defines their attitudes

	towards the non-Roma population even to this day.
Are familiar with the UK education system and protocols.	Find the UK education system confusing and different from that in the country of origin.
Have been the subject of many reports and advice documents aimed at helping education practitioners meet their needs.	Have not been the subject of much help or advice for education practitioners. Indeed have been referred to as 'invisibilised communities' Gary Craig (2013).
Accept the term 'Gypsy' with pride.	Do not like being called 'Gypsy' (which is the word used on most official forms asking them to declare their identity) and prefer the word Roma.
Common Underlying Issues	
Both populations belong to the groups of people known as Romani and are recognised, regardless of their passport, as a people without a country. The two suffer from discrimination from the communities they live amongst, low levels of literacy and lack of qualifications. They have high levels of unemployment and poverty. They are reluctant to tell people from outside their community that they are Gypsy or Roma.	

What do UK professionals need to know about the new migrant Roma communities?

The first thing to grasp is that we are not talking about a homogeneous group but a large number of different groups collectively known as Roma. The stereotype of long dark hair, big earrings and flamboyant clothes from Bohemia pictured between a campfire and caravan is far removed from reality. Roma groups and communities are found all round the world. There are 200,000 Roma in the United States but most Americans would not know that. (reference: *I met Lucky People*, Yaran Matras)

In the UK education context the new migrant Roma communities come mainly from Eastern Europe, but attitudes, customs and language vary between the groups. Obviously there is a common history and underlying common culture and language but with a wide range of variations. Jane Murphy emphasised the importance of understanding the culture of the new migrant Roma communities:

'It was recognised that understanding the history of a culture is fundamental to understanding the culture itself. In many situations it is not possible for the individuals within the culture to articulate how

it impacts on their behaviour. This may be due to language barriers, limited schooling or due to the behaviour being so embedded that it is difficult and unnecessary. It is however, important for services working with different cultures to have some knowledge. This allows professionals to be more open minded and flexible in their approaches. It underlines the importance of adapting strategies in order that provision becomes more available. It recognises that individuals may access information or behave in ways that education professionals in schools find different.'

Murphy, J. (2013:13)

The importance here is in recognising the culture of the new migrant Roma communities and not confusing it with the equally valid and strong culture and history of the indigenous and long-standing GRT population of the UK.

The history and culture of the Roma

The Roma are a transnational people and they are Europe's both largest and most discriminated against ethnic minority group. They originate from the Northern Punjab in India which they left for unknown reasons between 500 CE and 1,000 CE. We do not know for certain as the Roma language has mainly been used orally. Very few written texts exist from before the mid-19th century and these used three different alphabets. Thus, most historical documents about the Roma were written by non-Roma.

Roma appear to have been persecuted wherever they went during the course of spreading across the near East and Europe over several centuries. In some areas they were treated as slaves, even being sent to the Americas as such. The last Roma slaves were not freed in Europe until 1868 after Queen Victoria had celebrated her silver jubilee.

During the Second World War a high percentage of the Roma population were murdered in the Holocaust/Porrajmos under Hitler's race laws; the estimates range between 500,000 (Milton) and 1,500,000 (Hancock)) and, after it, most were forcibly settled behind the Iron Curtain. Before this fell most Roma were employed. The financial fall out of the new Europe hit the Roma hardest. They felt the effects of well-documented discrimination in the fields of education, health, housing and employment. In many countries Roma have 80% unemployment and 75% do not attend any school after the age of 12. This allies low rates of literacy with

low levels of qualification and a high degree of poverty (precise figures are difficult to obtain as governments do not publish these figures, and data has to be guesstimated or extrapolated by organisations such as Equality and Amnesty International amongst others).

They see the world in terms of Roma and non-Roma and, due to the above historic experience, they do not trust non-Roma readily. When they come to the UK they believe that if they conceal their Roma ethnicity and adopt the identity of their passports they will not be discriminated against. The unintended consequence is that schools may not know they are Roma and not understand the 'baggage' they bring with them. The 'baggage' leads to a reluctance to engage, a reluctance to reveal their identity, low levels of literacy in any language and low levels of prior learning.

This is not intended as a potted history of Roma history and culture. I have given the bare minimum of information needed to start appreciating the barriers to learning of pupils from these communities. I have included a longer version in Appendix 4, as well as some suggested reading.

In schools this history generates behaviours that teachers may find unusual. One teaching assistant from a secondary school in the East Midlands said:

'We used to find large numbers of Roma pupils gathered in the toilets at lesson changeover. They also hung around in Roma only groups at lunchtime and people found this intimidating. Now we understand that there is a kind of checking in process going on. The older ones (from the age of 14 on) consider themselves as adults and are checking that the younger ones, who they see as their responsibility, are okay. In the countries they came from they feared being bullied by children who weren't Roma so they gather together for mutual protection. Now things have moved on and they just go straight to lessons and you see Roma pupils in groups containing children from other backgrounds during social time.'

Several times Roma pupils' behaviour in classrooms was described as 'kinaesthetic', 'fidgety' or 'restless'. Some schools perceived this as outside their sphere of influence while others felt it possible to address this. The principal of a large secondary school in the East Midlands said:

'We have very high expectations in terms of student behaviour at

our school and for some of our students who may not have attended schools in their home countries or have attended very different schools to ours, this is initially hard to adjust to. This applies particularly to our newly arrived Roma students. However, the vast majority very quickly rise to our expectations, attend well and make good and better progress.'

Many times it was said that Roma parents were hard to engage. Given the background information set out above, this is understandable but not insurmountable. A Roma support worker in the East Midlands explained: 'In their country the teachers do not like the Roma and think they are stupid. Parents don't go into school because they think it is no point. (sic)'

Ascription

In this section I will examine the difficulties schools face in knowing which of its pupils are from the new migrant Roma communities and why this is important.

It seems logical to conclude that before a school can improve outcomes for pupils from the new migrant Roma communities it needs to know how many it has on roll. It seems equally logical that the DfE needs to know how many there are in schools across the country. However, the literature review and the experience of this research project have both revealed the unsatisfactory nature of ascription on the NPD and the national census. The most thorough attempt yet to count the new Roma communities in the UK noted:

'However, the main difficulty in estimating the UK resident population of migrant Roma is the deficiency of adequate statistics of any kind whether quantitative or qualitative data.'

Brown et al. (2014:18)

They went on to list the various sources of data they had accessed, including the NPD. In December 2014 the NPD showed 19,000 pupils from the new migrant Roma communities, but the DfE acknowledged that this was likely to be a significant undercount.

An earlier report made a similar observation:

'One issue that was raised during the course of the project has been the accuracy of the ethnicity information contained

within the NPD. A concern raised by the steering group for this research was that there is an issue with how ethnicity is recorded’.

DfE-RR043 (2011:3)

Gary Craig observed:

‘There is therefore a pressing political and policy agenda to be carried through in the UK, starting from programmes of data collection and monitoring which makes the Roma ‘visible’ as a significant minority in the UK context,’

Craig, G. (2013:ii)

The University of Nottingham pointed out (United Kingdom FRANET National Focal Point Social Thematic Study (2012)):

‘As for the number of recently arrived Roma, NGOs such as the Roma Support Group, Equality and community organisations have been referring to a much higher number than the official figure. They have been lobbying in order for the British government to take into account the specific needs of these numerous and diverse communities.’

The most recent report on the subject noted:

‘There are currently serious gaps in knowledge in the UK in terms of identifying the location and levels of inclusion/exclusion experienced by Gypsies, Travellers and Roma, and they are often excluded from national data sets or the ethnic monitoring. It is also notable that self-ascription rates are often low, as community members fear being discriminated against’

Ryder, A. and Cemlyn, S. (2014:25)

Very recently a report published by Anglia Ruskin University recommended:

‘In order to promote the integration of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities in the UK, we recommend that the collection of such data be introduced as a matter of priority.’

Lane et al. (2014:47)

And finally Ofsted came to a similar conclusion when issuing a good practice report on Roma in December 2014:

‘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 ... it is not possible to analyse Roma pupils’ achievement, attendance and exclusions accurately, at local authority level or nationally.’

Ofsted 2014

I could refer to many similar comments regarding the collection of data on ethnicity in general or new Roma communities in particular. There are several implications for this research. Firstly, the number of pupils from the new migrant Roma communities in school is certainly significantly under-reported. Using the two most important attempts to count the new migrant Roma populations, the under-reporting of pupils from these communities in UK schools is at least 100,000 and may be higher, up to 275,000. Most groups working with new migrant Roma communities feel these figures are much closer to the real figure than the 19,000 recorded on the NPD.

Therefore the data derived from such an inaccurate starting point and used to drive improved education outcomes is going to be of questionable validity. These pupils are still in school and are therefore counted in other categories. This impacts on the categories they have slipped into, thus making the data and consequent analysis of other groups less valid. Schools which supplied data for this research overwhelmingly reported that pupils not ascribed as Roma but known to be Roma were usually ascribed as ‘Other White European’ or ‘White Other’. Roma are a non-white ethnic group so this is not in the spirit of several acts of parliament, ending with The Equalities Act 2010. Most importantly, as the true number is not known, the true need for resources is not known.

The negative consequences of poor ascription and data collection were best expressed thus:

‘In addition to complying with both the general and specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and particularly in relation to monitoring the impact of policies on different racial groups, including their impact on pupil attainment levels, the Department appreciates the vital importance of having sound data to be able to establish a realistic picture of numbers and needs. More accurate data will allow more informed policy initiatives and

professional discussion at all levels, especially in schools. Good quality data about these communities will also highlight the extent of need and better facilitate the targeting of resources to the most vulnerable children in need of narrowing the attainment gap. Such developments are an essential requirement to make sure well coordinated and effective strategies are in place at all levels to raise the attainment of children and young people from these communities.'

DCSF (2007:13)

It is necessary to acknowledge that part of the under-recording is due to reluctance on the part of new migrant Roma communities to ascribe as Roma in the country of origin ever since official data helped identify Roma families who were sent to Auschwitz. (The Roma community believes that) Roma pupils are discriminated against in the education sector in the country of origin. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, up to 75% of Roma pupils attend de facto segregated education in 'special schools' where they receive a reduced curriculum and leave with no qualifications (again national governments do not keep or publish such data, but the judgement in The European Court of Human Rights in the case of DH v The Czech Republic 2007 made this clear, as does the decision in 2015 by the same court to start non-compliance proceedings in the same case). They believe that if they ascribe in the UK under their passport as Czech etc. then the discrimination will not recommence.

At school level there are mixed views on the need for accurate ethnic ascription. An assistant vice principal of a large secondary school in the East Midlands said 'I don't mind if they don't tell me they are Roma so long as they are happy round my school.' There were three pupils ascribed as Roma in the school whereas interviews with the local Roma community indicated there were at least 39 Roma pupils attending the school. An EAL coordinator of another secondary school in the same city said 'Does it really matter if they say they are Roma or not so long as they are happy?' A teacher responsible for EAL in a large primary school in the East Midlands stated:

'The problem is the Roma won't tell you they are Roma and we can't go on passports because we would upset people from the white community of those countries.'

In contrast a local authority in the north of England does exactly that.

‘We looked at names, nationalities and home languages which gave us a much bigger number than looking at ethnic ascriptions alone. We know some of these will not be Roma but we now have a more realistic appreciation of numbers and can allocate the appropriate level of resources.’

A teaching assistant (TA) in a medium-sized secondary school in the East Midlands with 84 (11%) pupils of Eastern European heritage from five different countries of origin said:

‘We have 84 students ascribed as Roma and none who are Roma and unascribed. We have worked so hard over a long time to persuade them to ascribe freely. After a while we have gained a reputation in the community of being a Roma friendly school. The community wants their children to come here and know we expect them, not only to ascribe freely as Roma, but to say they are proud to do so. We do not see how anyone who is ashamed of, or wishes to hide, their identity can be said to be happy. We don’t believe a school should collude in this.’

In another primary school in the East Midlands the deputy head teacher said:

‘We want help in improving ascription. Ofsted told us that if we had ascribed our Roma pupils as Gypsy/Roma instead of ‘Other White European’ then our data would look more favourable. But one day the parents say they are willing to ascribe then change their minds.’

Other factors are at play. The secondary school with 84 Roma pupils and 100% ascription has since stated that three families have contacted the school to request withdrawing their children’s ascription as Roma. The reason given was a fearful response to the rise of UKIP and speeches by politicians.

One report, ‘The Inclusion of GRT Children and Young People’ (DCSF 2007), included 38 different reasons why correct ascription benefits the pupils, families and schools and they are listed in Appendix 2. These ‘What’s in it for me?’ statements are still valid today. Were all schools able to obtain correct and freely given ascription, then there would be a database from which a definitive and accurate count of the new migrant Roma communities for all agencies to use could be extrapolated. School

related data such as RAISEonline would become even more useful. The primary school quoted above cannot be the only school in the country where the achievement and attendance of 'Other White European' has been presented as a negative, when correct ascription would lead to a different interpretation. In addition, the fact that Roma will ascribe as Roma is indicative of the whole home–school relationship. One Roma parent from the East Midlands said, 'I am happy that the school wants my child to say "I am Roma and proud". This should happen in my country too.' Another said 'It is a good school because no one says bad things to my children because they are Roma.'

The ascription used on many admission forms is 'Gypsy/Roma' and many Roma will not check this box because of the word 'Gypsy'. The UK has a large long-standing population of people who are happy and proud to be called 'Gypsy'. However, the word has long been deemed offensive to some European Roma (see Hancock (2002:viii) *We are the Romani People*. University of Hertfordshire Press). An example of this was given by an EAL coordinator in a secondary school in the East Midlands who described helping a group of Year 11 pupils with a wide range of ethnicities complete a common form for transfer to tertiary education. Four Roma pupils checked the 'White British' ethnicity box on the online form because they would not countenance checking the 'Gypsy/Roma' box, even though they had ascribed as 'Roma' on the school's database where the words 'Gypsy' and 'Roma' had been separated. Schools in one local authority in the north of England have been advised by its Education Service for New Communities and Travellers to offer the choice to ascribe as Roma or Gypsy separately and ascription by members of the migrant Roma communities has increased by 224% in 24 months.

There has been a discussion at many levels about whether to make this advice more widespread and from January 2016 the use of a separate category of 'Roma' will be endorsed by the DfE.

What is indisputable is that some schools are more successful than others in persuading families from the new migrant Roma communities to ascribe freely as Roma. These schools also seem to have better Roma attendance and achievement.

How do schools with good ascription encourage parents to ascribe as Roma?

Barriers to ascription	Strategies
<p>Admission form – Many admission forms use the ascription ‘Gypsy/Roma’. Many Roma will not check the word ‘Gypsy’.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make ‘Gypsy’ and ‘Roma’ separate categories on separate parts of your form. There is no restriction on doing this.
<p>Admission interview</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, use a member of the Roma community during the original interview to offer reassurance.
<p>School ethos</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your school ethos is perceived by the community to be ‘Roma’-friendly then correct ascription will be easier. • If the school believes ascription is important then it is more likely to happen. • Where schools find a way to tell pupils and the community they should be proud to be ‘Roma’, not embarrassed, ascription improves.
<p>You know the pupil is ‘Roma’ but they are ascribed as ‘Other White European’.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a home visit with a Roma heritage worker. A new form has to be completed and signed. • However, you cannot overplay this and the Roma worker should take the lead in deciding when to stop pressing for a change in ascription. • Remember that the right to choose the ascription lies with the family and not the school. This means you cannot change ascriptions on your school system

Barriers to ascription	Strategies
	<p>just because you know the true ascription.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular engagement with parents may lead some parents to be prepared to change their ascription.
The school or the community cannot see 'What's in it for me?'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use pages from DCSF (2007:19–22) <i>The Inclusion of GRT Children and Young People</i> (included in Appendix 2). One authority has provided its schools with translations of some of these reasons in several languages. These are available to members of NATT+ via their website and from Bradford's Education Service for New Communities and Travellers website. (https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Schools/CMSPage.aspx?mid=170#Ascription)
Respect the need for confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roma may trust a school enough to ascribe as Roma, but in some cases they do not want others to know this. So be careful when inviting visitors from other agencies to meetings with parents from the new migrant Roma communities.

Attendance

In this section the context of low attendance of pupils from the new migrant Roma communities will be reviewed.

The figures for Roma attendance nationally are 86.1% in primary schools and 83.4% in secondary schools (Ofsted Dec 2014:7). These figures come with the standard health warning that the true numbers are under-reported and that the attendance of many Roma is hidden in other categories of ascription. Even with this caveat, the attendance figure for the new migrant Roma communities is lower than any other group.

There are many barriers to good attendance for pupils from the new migrant Roma communities. Firstly, official figures for attendance of Roma pupils in the countries of origin are not made available as data

disaggregated by ethnicity are not held by their governments, but it is widely accepted that they are even lower than in the UK. A senior education official in Eastern Slovakia reported that attendance for Roma pupils in primary school in Slovakia (in Slovakia, primary school refers to pupils aged 7–15) is 73% below the age of 12, then 75% do not attend at all after the age of 12 (Detva February 2011). She intimated that in her opinion this was because the Roma in general do not care about education and are not intellectually capable of following a full curriculum.

Unfortunately similar comments were made by head teachers and government officials during an eight-city visit to Slovakia and the Czech Republic. When I visited a ‘Special School’ in the Czech Republic, the attendance figure that day was 66%. When I asked why it was so low I was told ‘What do you expect? They are Gypsies’ (February 2013).

Roma groups accept the figures but explain poor attendance is due to resentment about the treatment of Roma in the education systems of several countries. This is supported by several judgements in favour of Roma groups in the European Court of Human Rights, the most famous being the case of *D.H. and Others v the Czech Republic* in 2007. The court finding that the disproportionate assignment of Roma children to special schools without an objective and reasonable justification amounted to unlawful indirect discrimination in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Court required the Czech Republic to adopt measures to end discrimination against Roma in the education system. This has yet to happen. As this has not yet happened, the European Commission launched infringement proceedings against the Czech Republic in September 2014.

One of the very few Roma to hold a degree from the Czech Republic told me that:

‘My studies were a waste of time because however good I am at a profession white people in the Czech Republic will not employ me because I am Roma. My people think it is not worth studying for qualifications because of this.’

A Roma graduate from De Montfort University in Leicester recounted experiences from her school in the Czech Republic:

‘If you did something wrong your punishment was to sit next to me. White kids would cry all day because they had to sit next to what they saw as a dirty gypsy.’

When the new migrant Roma communities arrive in the UK they have an opportunity to fix this issue. They tell people they are Slovak, Czech and Romanian etc., feeling that this will prevent people from knowing they are Roma. Then, in their eyes, discrimination will be averted. This was referred to as ‘playing white’ by Wilkin et al. (2011:64), who added:

‘in the case of European Roma pupils, this particular protective strategy may be related more to their experiences of racism in their home countries.

No one knows I’m a Gypsy. (Slovakian Roma girl, Year 11)

When I came here I never said I was Roma. I was always Polish in school ... (Roma support worker)’

ibid. P65

Therefore it is understandable that there is a culture in many Roma families of negative attitudes towards education and educators which is part of the ‘baggage’ they bring with them. This naturally leads to poor attendance. Why would one make efforts to attend an institution which seemingly serves no purpose for your community? A Roma family is unlikely to have anyone with a history of success in education who can support and encourage children to succeed in school and reinforce the connection between attendance and progress. This is not intended to give the impression that Roma communities do not value education. One recent report found several parents who expressed a desire to access good education free of discrimination as a reason for coming to the UK:

‘They all said the prospect of their children’s education and employment was one of the most powerful driving forces behind their decision to move to the UK’

Fremlova, L. (2011:41)

During the course of the interviews it became clear that those parents defined ‘good education’ as being free from discrimination and bullying. They did not, and could not, see it in terms of good teaching and learning because this was outside their experience. But the starting point was still there; they wanted a good education. They find it hard to understand the focus on good attendance in the UK. In the countries of

origin there are no direct sanctions for poor attendance so why should they understand why there are here? A UK pupil with 80% attendance is subject to a raft of interventions, whereas many Roma families would think of 80% as high.

This research found examples where schools understood the barriers to good attendance and had found a wide range of strategies to improve attendance. Obviously some are generic strategies and some are more Roma-specific.

Interventions to improve attendance which schools say work

Barriers to good attendance	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The baggage they bring with them. • Returning to the country of origin in term-time because tickets are cheaper. • Staying at home to interpret for parents. • Staying at home to look after younger siblings. • Attending medical or dental appointments during the day and not coming into school before or after. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain the trust of the community. Inform them in ways they can access. (One school has made a DVD explaining the UK education system, including all the procedures, protocols and consequences connected to attendance. They have put a sound track in Roma, Czech and Slovak for the benefit of parents who cannot read in any language. All the issues to the left are addressed in the DVD.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drifting back in late September, long after the start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One school noticed that this undermined one whole school strategy. Their migrant Roma assumed the attendance count started when

Barriers to good attendance	Strategies
of the new academic year.	<p>they returned and not from the first day of term. The school had a system of 'ready reckoners' to show pupils how one week's good attendance would raise their overall attendance and equally how a day's or two days' absence would have the reverse impact. The Roma would not use these because of resentment at starting with a two- or three-week deficit meaning they could never get to the target of 95%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school now phones each family, using a Roma worker, during June to remind them of the dates for the new terms and the importance of making travel arrangements to fit in with these. This has greatly reduced the amount of September absence. • Many schools reported issuing fines for term-time absence in the country of origin.
Not having the bus fare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One school buys monthly bus passes in bulk and resells them to pupils for £8 less than the normal price. Families had been buying day tickets, which are more expensive than a monthly pass. If there was no money in the house they could not buy a bus ticket. Now they still have the pass even when there is no money. • One school put bus tickets in its reward scheme.
Being disorganised/ dysfunctional as a family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone the evening before to remind that PE kit, uniform, etc. need to be made ready for the morning. • Use a Think Family worker or whatever terminology is used in your area for the Problem Families Programme. • Collect them by car (follow CP procedures).

Barriers to good attendance	Strategies
Pupils leave home on time but do not arrive on time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One school sends a TA and Roma liaison worker to bus stops used by the Roma pupils to notice who has not arrived. They then phone them using the Roma worker. (The phone is owned by the school and CP measures are followed in the keeping of numbers and its wider use.) • Pupils not arriving by 9 o'clock are phoned and told there is still time to set off for school. • One school found a family had no alarm clock so provided one. Then it was discovered nobody in the house could tell the time. So parents and children were given lessons in telling the time! The children attend better and more punctually now.
Safety fears	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary schools in a northern city use walking buses, where TAs collect pupils from several homes and walk to school together. • Schools arrange for pupils to travel together on the same bus. • Ask a member of staff who travels to work by bus to use the same bus as the students.
Communication difficulties. Some parents cannot read and write in any language so will ignore letters concerning attendance even if they are translated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One school records the essential points of certain letters in the home language and uses a system of QR codes to make it possible for the parent to hear the recording using their mobile phone. (How to do this is fully explained in Appendix 1.) • Several schools use a home language speaker to follow up standard attendance letters with a phone call to check that the letter has not only been received but also understood.

Barriers to good attendance	Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obviously, using an interpreter at attendance meetings ensures the families understand.
Some families understand the need to give an explanation for absence on the first day but don't like negotiating the school switchboard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One school allocates extension numbers families can phone directly without going through the switchboard. They can leave messages to explain absence on the voicemail. • Schools have made a short pro-forma which requires the parent to tick a relevant reason from a list to make reporting reasons for absence easier.
The Friday group syndrome. Several schools – primary and secondary – reported having groups of Roma pupils who were consistently absent on Fridays.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several schools reported presenting parents with the attendance printouts, showing the pattern and asking them to address it. • Two schools had created a fun activity for Friday last lesson for Roma pupils which they could only join if they had attended all week. This improved attendance for the group (20 female pupils from Years 7, 8 and 9) in one school by 8% from term 1 to term 2. Once regular patterns were established the group was discontinued. • The same school offered free football coaching from 15 minutes before school through registration to Roma boys, providing they had attended every day since the previous session.
General motivation	<p>Schools have found all sorts of Roma-friendly reward schemes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One offers an ice skating trip at the end of the year for above 95% attendance. • One EAL coordinator sends a postcard on Friday featuring works by famous Roma artists to the families of all Roma pupils with 100% attendance that week. Parents were very appreciative of

Barriers to good attendance	Strategies
	<p>this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some schools hold special celebration of attendance events for Roma families. A group of schools in a northern city held a similar event in the town hall with the Mayor to add extra sparkle.
Cultural differences	<p>Show cultural sensitivity, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a family member dies then close relatives are required to gather and spend 15 days mourning. Failure to do this would be regarded as a great source of shame. Families reported being fined heavily for returning to the country of origin to carry out this duty. However, a school also referred to a case where a family had requested permission for term-time absence to mourn a grandmother on several separate occasions. The person assisting in the completion of the form had overlooked this! This is a delicate matter but schools may wish to try to get it right both ways to build trust. One school noticed a big drop in Roma attendance on December 6th, as pupils stayed at home for an event as important in their culture as December 25th. In following years they agreed the pupils could come in at the end of lesson 1, giving time to celebrate with their families, then organise and hold a St Niklas event of their own after school, sharing the event with pupils from other backgrounds. This improved attendance on this day and helped with integration.

Engagement with Roma parents and the Roma community

The difficulties in engaging with parents from the new migrant Roma communities and how some schools have been successful in this are considered here.

It is well known that schools which are regarded as successful have invested heavily in engaging with parents. Schools which felt they were generally good at involving their parents as effective partners in the education of their children reported difficulties in achieving this to the same extent with their parents from the new migrant Roma communities. One school in the West Midlands reported that 'the parents just will not come into school'. A school in the East Midlands reported that:

'A Roma pupil has been excluded because the parents did not respond to our letters asking them to make an appointment to discuss an issue.'

Even a secondary school in the East Midlands whose data and reputation indicate they are successful with the new migrant Roma communities reported that:

'The parents change their phone numbers frequently and do not tell us and some move addresses without informing us. This used to make it hard to contact them positively or to discuss incidents.'

Lucie Fremlova noted:

'All of the parents said they found it difficult to monitor their children's attainment at school for two main reasons: they couldn't speak or read English well, and even when they had an interpreter, they found it difficult to understand the system.'

Fremlova, L. (2011:43)

It is worth pointing out here that lack of English is not the sole barrier. Many parents cannot read and write in the main language of the country of origin so translation is not the answer. Schools should also be aware that 'Google Translate' is totally ineffective at translating letters to the level required for the successful transfer of information of any length.

However, there are many examples of effective school/home engagement with the new migrant Roma communities. The best examples come from Murphy (2013) *What's Working for Roma in*

School: A Network Learning Book, The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education. It is cited several times but readers are advised to read the whole document in conjunction with this report.

‘Working with Roma heritage mentors a group of schools devised a questionnaire for parents which they completed with the Roma mentor. Staff and parents were both consulted on what they wanted to find out or comment on. The use of the Roma mentors was vital. ‘The mentor was important for translation but more importantly for ensuring that the meetings were effective. The Romani mentor knew if the ‘right person’ in the family was at home, could support parents to understand the purpose of the questions and could ensure that responses were useful to the school. This was possible because the Romani mentors have a good understanding of both environments and the expectations of both.’

ibid. P46

Overcoming the barriers to engaging with parents from the new migrant Roma communities

Barriers to parental engagement	Strategies
<p>Language</p> <p>Not just English. Some parents may not be literate in any language so all written communication may fail or be controlled by the pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure all standard letters are written in clear simple English which will be easier to translate. • Use a QR code system to provide an aural version of a letter in the home language (L1) (see Appendix 1 on how to do this). • Employ a member of the Roma community. Give them a mobile phone they can use for school business. The community can then phone them directly. This person can also distribute information to the community via Facebook. • Designate extension numbers parents may phone direct to leave voicemail messages in L1, bypassing the school switchboard.

Barriers to parental engagement	Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools in the north of England and the East Midlands reported holding ESOL classes for parents so that parents could have an opportunity to improve their English.
<p>Parents do not trust the school because of their experience in the country of origin.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ a member of the Roma community. Use them to offer reassurance to the community and to make the concerns of the community clear to the school. • Some schools reported using their Roma worker to help families make dental appointments or eye tests for families who did not know how to do this. Though done from humane reasons a side effect was increased trust. • Several schools reported that parents really appreciated positive contacts regarding improved attendance, good progress, etc.
<p>Coffee mornings/ social events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several schools reported holding coffee mornings so that parents could have a nice experience of being in school. The most effective had an agenda. One school had a guest speaker of interest to the community for each coffee morning. Guests came from a housing charity, the DWP explaining the changes involved with the introduction of the single universal benefit and even the police. Up to 60 parents were attending regularly. • One school reported holding a social event outside school so parents and teachers could mingle in a positive atmosphere.
<p>Parents' evenings are not attended by many</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out if the time was an issue. Parents may be at work or worried about childcare for younger siblings. (One school used older

Barriers to parental engagement	Strategies
Roma parents.	<p>Roma pupils to run a crèche at parents' evenings.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One school had translated a model report and presented this to a group of Roma parents who had the current report for their child in front of them as the model report was presented by the school's Roma worker. Parents could ask questions and access the report which was totally different from that of the country of origin. • A primary school in the north of England changed the timing of parents' evenings. They now start straight after the end of the day so the Roma parents can attend as they collect their children. This has improved Roma attendance at these events considerably.
Parents do not understand school systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One school had produced a PowerPoint which could be played as a DVD. This presented the UK education system and school procedures visually with a voice-over in Romanes and the main language of the country of origin. This school had taken the trouble to find out about systems in the countries of origin so they could explain aspects of the UK system which parents would find confusing. • Many schools used a worker who spoke the language used by the parents to explain systems round attendance and uniform etc.

Teaching and learning

This section considers ways of improving achievement. Most schools, primary or secondary, said they based their work with pupils from the new migrant Roma communities on good EAL practice.

Compared to the vast majority of new arrivals, the Roma pupils often had less prior learning to activate and fewer literacy skills to transfer to their learning of English and their learning in the medium of English.

Two main approaches were found. Some schools had some kind of partial or whole withdrawal in the initial stages, others sought to integrate their Roma pupils into mainstream classes as quickly as possible. Schools with high ascription and better progress for their Roma pupils tended to opt for the latter approach. There was very little bilingual in-class support, possibly because of the difficulty in finding Roma heritage workers with good academic qualifications. Some schools had made curriculum adaptations for the benefit of their Roma pupils. Examples were found of planning using contextual sheets to determine the different needs of different groups within set lists and appropriate teaching strategies to meet these needs.

One secondary school had created a vertical performing arts group of Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 pupils, mostly Roma. This reflects the way Roma society works, with the older pupils acting as mentors and advisers to the younger ones. The group worked with a writer in residence to produce a play or a film written collaboratively by the writer and the students. The plays and film were performed publically. The teacher responsible emphasised that the process was more important than the outcome. The process gave ownership of the script and storyline to the pupils who worked hard to contribute in English to the project and made great efforts to learn their lines, thus developing communication and teamwork skills. Most of the pupils obtained Level 2 BTEC qualifications.

One pupil was particularly gifted at the playing of a range of musical instruments. He arrived in school at the start of Year 11 not having attended school anywhere for four years. He did not have sufficient experience of learning in English to access a GCSE music course, but did obtain two Level 2 qualifications in music through the old National Open College Network awards. He was able to contribute to the performances by playing music.

Jane Murphy reported on an approach adopted by a primary school which:

‘developed a very comprehensive flexible timetable. This incorporated key questions to support the decisions on how and where the child should be taught:

- Are they happy?
- Do they want to come to school?
- Is some time with siblings needed at first?
- Is flexibility over year group needed?
- Is everything being done to ensure access to school trips, including residential?
- Is everything being done to ensure access to clubs after school?

Teachers were then able to pick from a menu of support for the child and make changes to the location and style of learning across the day. For example, time in a new to English group, time for play, “mini teacher buddy” or working with the class teacher on a language development programme. This was found to be highly effective for Romani children as needs could be responded to accurately and quickly. All staff in school had a good understanding of the timetable and were able to contribute to decisions.’

Murphy, J. (2013:33)

Many schools, primary and secondary, reported success using phonics programmes. Sometimes pupils were withdrawn from mainstream lessons for phonic teaching; in one secondary school pupils had phonics tuition during registration from their form tutor. Pupils from the new migrant Roma communities appear to be the lowest-achieving group in the country, but some schools reported improvement. One EAL coordinator said: ‘a Roma girl left last year with 10 A*-C including English and Maths who intends to study law at university, and three Roma boys missed out on the same level of attainment by two raw marks each in English. Some of our current Year 10 Roma students are predicted to do better. Overall they are still the lowest-achieving group in our school but the gap is starting to close. Our Roma RAISEonline has been 1049 and 1045 [nationally 947 and 945] for the last two years’.. (This also shows the value of good ascription.) A senior teacher in a primary school in the north of England with ten pupils ascribed as Roma

and a further seven known to be Roma said: 'Tracking shows these pupils are still behind age-related expectations but the gap is closing.' She attributed this to intensive input from teaching assistants who targeted the Roma pupils for intensive language acquisition sessions. Another secondary school organised a nurture group in Years 7 and 8 which had a large Roma representation. The pupils were taught by two able teachers in a mix of primary and secondary approaches incorporating active learning strategies which appealed to the Roma pupils. Tracking showed that Roma progressed well in this context but the progress was not sustained to the same extent when they left this setting. The school knows this and is working on strategies to ensure better progress outside the nurture-style environment.

In the course of this research I came across two Roma pupils with good 'A' level grades who had never ascribed as Roma while at school. Some schools anticipate natural improvement in the future as more Roma pupils follow the national curriculum from the start in primary school, rather than arriving as older new arrivals. A three form entry primary school in the north of England had data showing its Roma pupils as having the highest rate of three levels of progress during KS2 in maths of all its groups.

One school reported taking a group containing many Roma pupils on a visit to a local university to raise aspirations. The same secondary school had established a 'Roma Reading Project'. Good Roma heritage readers from Years 9, 10 and 11 were trained in paired reading techniques. They then visited a primary school and met with Roma pupils and their parents. They explained how they had found being able to read vital in 'big school' and how much better the younger pupils could do if they read well in English. They were talking to parents, many of whom could not read and so would not naturally encourage reading in the home. They were talking to young children who probably lived in bookless houses. The event finished with groups of parents and young pupils reading together, led by the older pupils. At the end, each child received a book. They met again at two-week intervals to discuss and exchange the books on the strength of each other's recommendations. The same school has offered advice to families on how to prepare in advance for having a child at university.

Delivering good teaching and learning to pupils from the new migrant Roma communities

Barriers to teaching and learning	Strategies
Separate provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These pupils may require various interventions but in general they should be taught in mainstream classes according to their cognitive ability.
Insufficient attention paid to good EAL practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult the National Strategies Resources such as The New Arrivals Excellence Programme 2008. • Consult the many works produced by NALDIC. • Best EAL practice is good for all, not just EAL pupils, so pupils do not have to be withdrawn.
The pupil is not literate in L1 and is in KS1 or KS2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Supporting children learning English as an additional language: Guidance for practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage' DCSF 2007 is still a very useful document.
The pupil is not literate in L1 and is in KS3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The advice from the old National Strategies' Literacy and Learning in KS3 subjects still holds good. They can still be googled and appear in the Appendix. • Fast track literacy for 6 weeks. • Use an EAL Induction programme for 2 hours a week for 12 weeks. • Phonics programmes are valuable.
The pupil is not literate in L1 and is in KS4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a GCSE course such as Edexcel Skills For Life, ASDAN CoPE or Aims Awards. • Encourage reading in English by whatever means you can.

Barriers to teaching and learning	Strategies
What aspects of good EAL practice may be less effective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activating prior learning will not be possible where the student has not been exposed to regular learning of a national programme of study in the country of origin. • Planning could include pre- and post-teaching, which has been used successfully by one northern authority.
Other issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The previous experience of learning may have been very didactic. Pupils may not be used to group work and pair work or the idea that you should ask your teacher questions. The concept of independent learning will not mean much. One school tries to explain how to be classroom-ready during its induction programme. • Roma pupils may value some lessons more than others. PE is problematic for some Roma girls. • Lessons in the country of origin are usually 35-40 minutes long and some new arrivals struggle with one-hour lessons or 'doubles'. • The idea that work is marked to help show you the way to the next level is also a new concept
The Roma pupil will only sit with other Roma pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are the teacher and you are in charge, but handle this sensitively. Have two seating plans, one home where the students choose where to sit and one away where you match pupils to the most appropriate peers to work with. • Sometimes it is helpful for a new arrival to work with a pupil with the same first language who can show them the ropes. Equally it can be valuable to have a new arrival work with a good user of English.

Behaviour

This section looks at issues surrounding behaviour. There is no inherent reason why the behaviour of pupils from the new migrant Roma communities should be worse than that of any other group. This research did, however, come across several schools who felt there were more behaviour problems with pupils from the new migrant Roma communities in their schools than with other groups. In contrast, Ofsted (December 2014) cited a Case Study Secondary school with a large population of pupils from the new Roma communities with a lower rate of fixed-term exclusions for their Roma pupils than for other groups, and which has never used a permanent exclusion or managed move for a Roma pupil, while noting that other schools with similar profiles have significantly higher rates of exclusion for this group than other groups.

The EAL coordinator from the case study school stated that Roma pupils will behave and conform once they are clear on the rules and boundaries. His school takes great trouble to understand how its rules and procedures differ from those in the country of origin and explains them in that context to all new arrivals, including Roma, during the induction period. The pupils take a 'citizenship'-type test and have a badge to show they know the rules and consequences. The school ethos is to focus on 'behaviour for learning'. It spends time selling the value of education to the parents and explaining the rules and consequences and asking for their support in upholding them.

When questioned, some Roma pupils explained that they accepted sanctions and the ethos of what they saw as a 'strict school' because of the consistency. One student said 'everyone is treated the same which is fair'. In other words, the pupils believed they were treated without discrimination unlike in the country of origin. One consultant from a local authority in the north suggested that schools should make allowances for the pupils from the new migrant Roma communities. The EAL coordinator from the case study school disagreed:

'You are selling the Roma pupils short if you set lower standards for them and they will soon find you out and you will lose engagement and trust, not gain them'.

Some Roma pupils arrive with little recent experience of regular schooling and may take time to adjust, but it seems obvious that where schools make an effort to help them adapt there are fewer problems.

Jane Murphy cites an example of a primary school in the north of England which had:

‘adopted a pro-active approach. The aim was to support parents to buy uniforms and support children to wear it every day. They have also been using a flexible interim approach. The school has spare uniforms for the children to wear. This helps children to belong and other children to see them as belonging to the school. It also means the children are dressed appropriately for school activities and the weather’.

Murphy, J. (2013:49).

There are other examples in this work where schools adopt a consistent approach to get their pupils and parents to comply with practices which had originally been a low priority for these pupils and families.

There was also evidence to suggest that behaviour can be helped by the deployment of home/school liaison workers of Roma heritage trained to communicate both ways between the school and the families (see the section below on using members of the Roma community).

One cultural aspect is relevant. Many Roma males are considered adult at the age of 14 in their community and sometimes profess resentment at being treated like children. Schools which were successful at working with their new migrant Roma communities reported that their whole school ethos could accommodate this. There were opportunities for all groups to take on responsibility as they matured. One school in the north of England had had a Roma heritage head boy and a secondary school in the East Midlands had seen a Roma heritage pupil elected as deputy head boy through the pupil voice system.

Supporting pupils from the new migrant Roma communities to follow behaviour and conduct codes

Strategies for supporting good behaviour	Details and examples
Understand what they don't understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find out about the country of origin. If there was no uniform there they may naturally be lax about wearing it in the UK. Make all these

Strategies for supporting good behaviour	Details and examples
	<p>issues explicit instead of seeing non-compliance as defiance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a buddy system so that pupils who are used to the school systems can help explain them to new arrivals.
Be consistent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By consistent we mean all teachers applying rules and sanctions in the same way to all groups. • Do not be tempted to relax some rules for your Roma pupils. But it is advisable to provide certain kinds of support in following the rules.
Be understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new arrivals will have a tendency to talk in L1 when clarifying concepts. Do not apply sanctions just for using L1 but for talking when they know they shouldn't.
Have a clear approach on bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families report bullying of Roma in school in the country of origin as a main reason for leaving. They may be quick to claim their child is being bullied when there is a simple dispute. However, there is still a need to be clear and tough on bullying. • Parents will be unfamiliar with concepts such as peer mediation and restorative justice, and may misinterpret the use of such processes as weakness. • Remain sensitive to all aspects of these issues or Roma pupils may group together and use unacceptable coping strategies in the face of what they see as provocation.
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Roma pupils feel included in all aspects of school life and pupil voice.

Strategies for supporting good behaviour	Details and examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This research found one Roma heritage head boy and one Roma heritage deputy head boy. • Remember that inclusion allows for different approaches for different groups. It is about fitting the school round the pupil not fitting the pupils to the school.
Use workers from the new migrant Roma communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See below for positive examples.

Using members of the new Roma community in schools

Schools have for many years employed workers from the communities of their pupils and we will now examine how the use of members of the new migrant Roma communities can improve outcomes.

This research discovered Roma heritage workers in schools with a range of job titles such as Roma Translator, Roma Mentor, TA with a specialism in working with Roma heritage pupils, Community Ambassadors, home school liaison workers, Roma Parent Support Adviser and Roma Support Worker. Jane Murphy wrote of the experience of a network of schools in a large northern city:

‘Use of Romani mentors in school has been key to the success of The Network and enabled Romani pupils in Manchester schools to settle and participate quickly.’

Murphy, J. (2013:35)

She added:

‘Schools have repeatedly asserted that pupils who were hard to engage changed completely as soon as a Romani mentor came into the classroom.’

Ibid.

The principal of a large secondary school in the East Midlands said of the Roma Support Officer:

‘He is absolutely brilliant, he helps us achieve things no one else could.’

Lucie Fremlova recommended:

‘The benefits from employing Roma liaison staff or ‘mediators’ working with schools and Roma families should be promoted to schools and local authorities’

Fremlova, L. (2011:ii)

Jane Murphy wrote:

‘Schools have been able to benefit from the support of a Romani mentor in the following ways:

- Support for pupils to settle quickly
- Role models for children and parents to value the messages given by school and school staff
- Role models who promote the trust that everyone is working for the best interests of the children
- Support for pupils to engage and stay on task
- Support for pupils to understand the rules and routines/ expectations of school
- Support for staff to understand how the pupil is responding and what flexible approaches could be used
- Support for school and parents to communicate effectively and understand expectations
- Support for school staff to build better relationships and have more confidence when speaking to Romani parents. This has enabled staff to home visit and communicate simple messages over the phone
- Support for schools and other professionals to understand the Romani community and develop appropriate provision and effective resources’.

Murphy, J. (2013:37)

Some schools have employed non-Roma from the countries of origin because they speak the language of the passports of their pupils from

the new migrant Roma communities such as Czech, Romanian and Polish, etc. In some cases this has been perceived as very successful by the schools, whereas interviews with pupils and parents revealed a clash of perceptions. Lucie Fremlova reported:

‘a number of respondents said they had faced prejudice from their East European non-Roma ... teachers or teaching assistants’ [in UK schools]

Fremlova, L. (2011:21)

In one school in the south-east, a non-Roma Czech teaching assistant told me: ‘In England you need to understand that 25% of Roma pupils are special needs (sic)’. She had obtained textbooks from special schools in the Czech Republic for these students to work from. Whilst trying to remain objective, the suspicion is that some, though clearly not all, of the non-Roma workers employed because of their language skills to support schools carry attitudes – conscious or unconscious – that some migrant Roma have seen as reason to leave the country of origin.

Even where their attitudes are fair, some Roma parents will perceive that they are not because of the ‘baggage’ they have brought from the country of origin. I found an example of this in a large secondary school in the East Midlands. It had approximately 40 Roma heritage pupils from Eastern European countries, nearly all unascribed. It employed a white Slovak graduate who was described as ‘fantastic’ by her line manager. However, interviews with the parents revealed sentiments such as ‘she is only interested in making money out of us. She doesn’t care about us.’ Having seen both sides, I felt this was a harsh perception but what is important is that that is the perception of the community. There will inevitably be aspects of the two-way communication needed which will fail in such a context. One Roma home/school liaison worker in the same town told me: ‘The Roma (parents) will say to me what they don’t say to the white people,’ meaning that because he is Roma he is automatically more trusted by the community.

However it is not as simple as employ a Roma person and all is well. I found one example where a Roma heritage worker had been visiting families in the evening who could not come into school during the day through work commitments. He charged the families money for these services which he was paid by the school to deliver for free. It would be easy to see this as exploitation or cupidity. While it is clearly not an

acceptable practice, the post holder thought it quite natural. It appeared that this was his perception of claiming overtime.

Several considerations need to be taken into account when employing someone to work with the new Migrant Roma community. Jane Murphy cautioned:

‘It is important that, where community members are used, the audience does not view them as representatives. They are individuals with their own perspectives.’

Murphy, J. (2013:28)

They can rarely be perceived as a community representative as the new migrant Roma communities are not a homogeneous group, and how the post holder can reach out to all members of the community should be considered from the outset. They will clearly need training and induction into their role, which will require them to represent the school and its policies and procedures to the community as well as conveying concerns from the community to the school. The vocational aspect of working in schools will not be something that a lot of people from the new migrant Roma communities would automatically understand. One school in the East Midlands reported that they had had to persuade their worker to ‘finish off tasks’ before leaving. The person would walk out at 15:00 hours exactly, even if phone calls still needed to be made or information given to staff, simply because their contract stated they had to work until 15:00. This is not an example of greed or not caring. It is a reflection of not having adapted from one culture to a new one.

Employing Roma adults

In this table I will look at considerations when employing adults to promote positive outcomes for pupils from the new migrant Roma communities.

Considerations	Details and examples
What role is needed by your pupils and staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are different potential roles: Academic TA, Mentor, Interpreter, Home/school liaison worker and sometimes these roles are combined.• Be clear on your needs and frame the job description and person profile accordingly.

Considerations	Details and examples
How do you let the Roma community know about positions without compromising recruitment policies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most schools will be bound by guidelines from personnel policies which state where adverts are placed and which forms have to be completed. • One Local Authority in the East Midlands followed these guidelines, placing the adverts in the in-house bulletin, local papers and designated websites. In addition it placed copies of the adverts in newsagents, post offices and certain shop windows where members of the new migrant Roma communities have good opportunities to see them. • One school in the East Midlands persuaded one member of the Roma community to put the job advertisement link on Facebook pages which would be seen by the community. • This LA had considered translating the adverts into Czech and Romanian, but then decided that it wanted the post holder to have sufficient skills in English to understand the adverts.
What should be included in person specifications?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include requirements such as 'ability to communicate in Romanes' as highly desirable or an in-depth knowledge of Roma communities as 'Essential'.
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think how you will train the successful candidate. Don't assume they will automatically know what you expect. • How will you reconcile the conflict between keeping the trust of the community while following the requirements of child protection procedures etc.? • Think about the needs for the post holder to understand not only your school protocols, but also the requirements of the UK education system.
How will the post holder be line managed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are current performance management procedures appropriate?
If the worker is deployed across several schools,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One LA has given its Roma Support Officer a contract phone so he can be contacted by

Considerations	Details and examples
how will conflicts of interest be resolved?	schools even when he is not in the building. Parents can also contact the worker on his phone and use their home language.
What other pitfalls are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid seeing these workers as representatives of their community. They are there to provide an understanding of the community perspective to the school and vice versa. • Nepotism. The Roma place great store on extended family loyalties. Training needs and line management should include measures to guard against the dangers of this. • Qualifications. Very few Roma heritage candidates will hold good qualifications. Be flexible and avoid being dazzled by candidates who hold university degrees and speak the languages of the passports.
The Roma language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roma language, often referred to as Romani or Romanes, has only had an agreed written form for less than 150 years. It is traditionally an oral language. There have been some good works of literature produced in Romanes, but most families who speak it do not write it. Therefore avoid a requirement to read and write Romanes. • There is not one pure form of Romanes. It varies greatly from country to country and even from region to region. It will be difficult for a Roma heritage person from the west of the Czech Republic to converse in Romanes with a family from southern Romania. This needs to be accepted if employing one Roma heritage worker to support families and pupils from different Roma communities.

Out-of-hours learning

This section looks at ways of encouraging pupils from the new Roma communities to attend extracurricular activities. Nearly all the schools and services consulted reported difficulties in persuading pupils from the new migrant Roma communities to attend extracurricular activities or clubs and participate in residential visits. Many reported this was

attributable as much to the reluctance of the parents as the pupils. Parents liked the idea of all the Roma pupils returning home together, either walking or on a bus, for safety reasons. They did not like the idea of one or two Roma children returning later, especially after dark. Some felt older secondary school pupils should return home to contribute to running the house. The use of Roma mentors was the most cited solution, particularly if the mentor was included in the trip or activity.

A primary head teacher in the north of England invited parents to visit the venues for some of the proposed trips with her. Convincing a few key parents was sufficient to spread reassurance round the community, and uptake on trips improved considerably.

A secondary school in the East Midlands reported making a lot of fruitless efforts to get Roma boys who professed an interest in football to join the school teams. Further investigation revealed that the Roma like to collaborate with friends and relatives. They were used to having a kick about with younger and older siblings, cousins and friends. The school formed an all-age Roma football team and made great efforts to find teams to play. Eventually, as the school made progress in engaging with its new migrant Roma community, several boys joined the full-age teams of the school, one scoring a hat trick including a winning goal, and from then on the all-age Roma team was discontinued having served its purpose.

Promoting involvement in extracurricular and out-of-hours activities

Barriers to participation	Strategies
Roma pupils do not participate, therefore consider these options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good rates of ascription and good monitoring of the participation of all groups in extracurricular activities will make you aware of this. • Offer reassurance through contact by a Roma mentor or invite parental participation. • The Roma mentor could remain until the end of extracurricular activities then travel home

Barriers to participation	Strategies
	on the same bus as the pupils.
Home finance makes participation difficult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some schools had systems to cover costs where poverty prevented participation.
Getting home late	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some schools arranged activities so they were held in clusters and ended at the same time, making it possible for pupils to attend different activities but share transport home. One school even had coaches returning from trips make a detour so that children could be dropped off in a certain area (full trips and visits and child protection procedures were followed) to foster participation.
Lack of awareness of benefits of extracurricular activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school which had made the DVD previously referred to had included the arrangements for extracurricular activities in the content.
Access to technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools are increasingly using online technology for setting homework. Many Roma families do not have access to computers. Some schools allow pupils to use their computers in twilight and lunchtime sessions. One school reported looking at the postcodes of their Roma families and finding the location of the nearest library which had free computer use.

Primary–Secondary transition

Nearly all pupils have to transfer from primary to secondary school and now we will consider the implications of this for pupils from the new

migrant Roma communities. In some areas there is concern about how well families from the new migrant Roma communities understand the process of finding a secondary school for their children during Year 6. Many did not follow the procedures and suddenly found themselves having to reapply through the whole admissions process in September, resulting in time spent out of school waiting for a place and getting a place in a school further away than they want and which is not the school of choice.

Three main factors lay behind this. Firstly, some schools did not understand what the parents did not understand. Parents did not always understand the system. Nobody picked up that pupils from one group were missing on the lists for the prospective Year 7. In Slovakia and the Czech Republic the term 'primary school' refers to the first school a child attends from the ages of 7–15. They know their child is at 'primary school' in the UK but do not understand that it ends at the age of 11, so letters talking about transfer, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2, etc. mean nothing, whatever language you communicate them in. Therefore, the parents did not understand and did not follow the advice in the letters and forms sent to them as part of the process by an LA admission team which has not got the understanding and expertise that some of their schools have.

The second factor is that recently many authorities have put the whole process online, creating another barrier. The new migrant Roma communities have high levels of poverty and some do not have computers. Even if they understand the process they cannot access it. One secondary school in the East Midlands has used its Roma Support Worker to communicate with families and lets them use the school computers to complete the online application, even if they are not the intended destination secondary school. The same worker has persuaded the admissions team to let him visit homes with the old paper forms and assist in the completion, again regardless of which secondary school is the intended destination.

Finally, there is another aspect to the allocation of school places in general. In common with many cultures, family is very important to the new migrant Roma communities and the strong expectation is that siblings will attend the same school. One example was found of a newly arrived family with five children of primary age allocated to four different schools, according to where there were places in different year groups.

The mother was expected to get the children to their different schools on time and collect them on time at the end of the day in spite of her lack of understanding of our systems, her limited English and the distances involved. Eventually the admissions department was persuaded to alter this arrangement, but the family needed support to navigate the system.

Admissions and transition

Issues	Strategies
Understand what the parents do not understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be careful with the use of terms like 'primary school'. • Have a means of explaining the whole UK education system and your local variations (such as the DVDs with sound tracks previously mentioned).
Technology and language barriers prevent access to the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance with completing the forms and following the process. • Provide computer access.
Culture and family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to be sympathetic to the desire to keep siblings together.
Primary schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check who has applied where and support families who have not engaged with the process.
Secondary schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your prospective Year 7 lists when they appear. Look to see if schools which have sent new migrant Roma pupils in the past have sent any this time, then check if any families need support with transition.

Working with other agencies

Examples of schools working with other agencies to improve outcomes for pupils from the new migrant Roma communities were found and will be examined here. Schools in one local authority in the East Midlands work in partnership with a police officer and a midwife who are members

of the new migrant Roma communities. They act as role models to raise aspirations, but also provide good links between education, the police and health. These professionals were able to provide valuable cultural and background information to the schools as well as disseminate accurately information to the community. In contrast, in another local authority, a teacher from a school with a history of successful engagement with its Roma community had delivered cultural awareness and communication training to 25 police officers following an incident.

Many schools nationally reported issues with poor hearing, dental pain and defective eyesight. Some of these issues were long-standing and had never been addressed. One secondary school mentioned arranging appointments for pupils at doctor's surgeries, dental practices and opticians and in some cases accompanying parents or carers to these appointments. The justification was given by a TA from the school who said, 'The child cannot learn if their teeth are hurting, they cannot see the board or hear the teacher clearly.'

Many schools reported working with social services closely on issues connected to poverty or dysfunctional families. As previously mentioned, one secondary school invited members of different agencies to their Roma parents' coffee mornings. These agencies included the DWP, Housing, Health and the police. The rationale explained by the teacher responsible was that 'the more problems the families had solved, the less barriers to good attendance at school. In particular, fixing health problems would prevent visits to the country of origin during term time'. A guide to multi-agency work on issues connected with the new migrant Roma communities is included in Appendix 3.

The advantages of multi-agency working

Issues	Details and examples
Barriers to education do not always lie inside school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toothache, poor eyesight and defective hearing hinder progress. • Addressing health issues can also lead to improved behaviour.
Poverty creates barriers to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with other agencies can help remove some barriers connected to

Issues	Details and examples
education	<p>poverty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think family workers can help get children into school in uniform and on time.
Schools can learn from other agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes someone from another agency has better communication and engagement with the new migrant Roma community and schools can benefit from this.
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some big funders will welcome sensible bids for work intended to improve outcomes for the new migrant Roma communities (Paul Hamlyn, EU structural funds, The Big Lottery Fund).
Role models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there are Roma heritage workers from other agencies they can act as role models.
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roma have usually had a difficult relationship with the police force in the country of origin. One school reported working with the police to set up a Roma language radio station and letting a student shadow a police officer during the summer holidays.

There is a document on multi-agency working in Appendix 3 which schools can share with other agencies to improve partnerships.

Data

This section should examine how data generates and supports the findings of this research.

Originally it was hoped this project would generate large amounts of data and show whether pupils ascribed freely as Roma achieved and attended better than pupils known to be Roma but ascribed differently. However, while a small number of people provided me with data, many would, or could, not. More than 200 primary schools and 50 secondary schools were asked to provide anonymously attendance and attainment data at KS2 or KS4. They were asked for data for pupils ascribed as Roma and for pupils known to be Roma but not ascribed as such. Relatively few provided a return and I am grateful to them. Where data was provided it was clear and showed that it was being used to measure and drive improved outcomes. The data provided invariably showed attendance and attainment higher than national figures. There are two possible conclusions. Either schools have good outcomes because they have good data, or schools with outcomes below national averages do not use data well or are reluctant to share their data.

The problems surrounding ascription have been addressed elsewhere but, almost certainly, contribute to the inability to obtain accurate data. If the Roma pupils are not ascribed as Roma they cannot be tracked as such. This is disappointing in an age where powerful tracking tools can drive school improvement. As already explained, one LA in the north of England realised this a few years ago and went beyond the ethnic ascriptions to search for its new migrant Roma pupils.

Frequently, schools with low levels of ascription did feel there were issues surrounding progress, attendance and behaviour for this group but the evidence used to justify these assertions was anecdotal.

One school provided a return for its large cohort of pupils freely ascribed as Roma, but could not provide a return for pupils known to be Roma but unascribed because it was certain there were none. If every school were in that position the true nature of the size of this group nationally could be established providing an evidence-base for guiding the allocation of appropriate resources.

Schools which did provide data showed attendance and progress above national norms. Interestingly, these schools had most of their Roma pupils ascribed, but still knew who was Roma but not ascribed and often tracked the two together. Where this happened there was usually little difference in terms of progress and attendance between those ascribed and those not ascribed. These schools were respecting the right to self-designation but would not collude with the families in hiding their identity.

Overall the data provided does suggest that there is better attendance for pupils ascribed as Roma than those known to be Roma but not

ascribed. Schools with high levels of ascription often have rates of progress higher than national norms for this group.

However, the size of the samples obtained has been so small that all that can be extracted is a plea for further research from someone able to obtain data more easily. It is highly likely that high ascription is symptomatic of a high level of trust and engagement and the activities associated with this may have more influence on the positive outcomes than the mere act of ascription.

However, the only fair conclusion to draw from the data sample is that many schools are unable or unwilling to supply the most basic of data about their pupils from the new Roma communities and that in itself is a disappointing finding. Schools which are able and willing to share data have better outcomes than the national averages currently show for Roma heritage pupils. The table below is provided so schools can compare their own performance.

National Data for Pupils Ascribed as GRT		
RAISEonline/Ofsted 2014		
(Please note this does not distinguish between UK-born traditional Gypsies and pupils from new Roma communities.)		
Aspect	Figure	
Attendance Primary	86.1%	
Attendance Secondary	83.4%	
RAISEonline Primary	APS All subjects	21.7
	APS Maths	22.3
	APS Writing	20.6
	APS Reading	22.2
	APS EPGS	20.6
	VA Maths	99.7
	VA Reading	99.5
	VA Writing	99.7
	Level 4 reading writing mathematics	29%
Raiseonline Secondary	945	

Data Supplied for this research

These are examples of data from individual schools with sizeable cohorts of pupils from the new Roma communities to show that some schools are managing to promote much better progress and attendance than others. These are for pupils ascribed as Roma and from the new migrant communities.

Aspect	Figure
Attendance one primary school 29 Roma pupils	91.3%
Attendance Secondary 84 pupils ascribed as Roma with long distances to travel	91.5%
One primary school with a large Roma cohort	39% 3 levels progress in mathematics at KS2
RAISEonline one secondary school 84 pupils ascribed as Roma	1049 (2013) 1045 (2014) 100% 5 A*-C 2013 100% 5 A*-G 2014 A pupil left recently with 10 A*-C including EM and four current pupils are predicted to follow.

In addition one local authority supplied the following case study of the data for one primary school and I include it here as an exemplar of what can be done.

CASE STUDY Primary school in the north of England

Impact of New to English Central and Eastern European Slovak Roma pupils on the work of a Three Form Entry Primary School.

CONTEXT

- We serve an inner-city area that is economically very deprived. About a third of pupils come from the lowest 1% of areas nationally in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. There are high levels of

unemployment and multi-occupancy housing. Very few of our parents have experienced higher education, some have no education.

- On entry pupils are well below the expected levels.
- Pupils entering school after the normal starting time have a level of attainment that is well below national expectations, especially in English skills.
- The majority of the children are of Pakistani heritage. Most Pakistani children have one parent who was not born in England and speaks little English.
- In the past 5 years there have been an increasingly large number of children from families of economic migrants from Eastern Europe. Most of these families are Slovakian Roma. Parents and children arrive with no English at all. These New to English pupils have never been to school and arrive in all year groups. We had 14 New to English pupils in Year 6 this year. They constitute 30% of the number on roll.
- 15 different nationalities are currently represented, with over 20 languages spoken.
- This area of the city attracts many EU migrant workers, who often move around as they find work and better housing, creating a churn of pupils in our school.
- Pupil mobility is exceptionally high. The average time spent at the school is less than three years. Last year 104 new pupils entered after the normal starting time and 80 left.
- 28% of our pupils will not be included in RAISE progress measures in 2014 because they arrived in KS2 and achieved NC Level 2, 3, 4 or 5 which is deemed to be insufficient evidence to ascertain progress. These pupils are New to English and the school is not credited in RAISEonline with the outstanding progress they make.

5-year turbulence trend: number of pupils ever in school since start of Reception EYFS to Y6					
	Number ever on roll in Y6	Final number end Y6	% Roma end Y6	% Pakistani end Y6	% other ethnic group
2014	219	91	27%	65%	8%

- We face particular issues with our Roma pupils around attendance, punctuality and mobility. About half of Roma children stay on our roll for less than one school year.
- A further impact upon the school, and especially its budget allocation, is the fact that children of economic migrant families do not immediately qualify for free school meals. This means that some of our most destitute children do not attract pupil premium funding. The school employs two full-time attendance officers from its budget, which has significantly improved attendance of Roma pupils.
- The two main cultural groups have extremely different value systems and there is potential for serious disturbances. The school has a key role in supporting and creating community cohesion.

ACHIEVEMENT EYFS

Pupils achieving GLD at end of EYFS by ethnicity 2014			
	School %	Cohort	National %
Pakistani	52	66	
Indian	100	2	
Bangladeshi	100	1	
Slovakian Roma	8	13	
Lithuanian	0	1	
Latvian	0	1	

Afghan	0	1	
Polish	0	1	
White and Pakistani	50	2	

- 63% of pupils who reached a good level of development at the end of EYFS had attended our Nursery. Each year about half of pupils enter Reception with no previous setting.

Year 1 phonics screening check 2014

Overall percentage of pupils attaining expected standard Note: includes 21 NTE Roma pupils who entered in Y1				
	Cohort	School	National	Difference
2014	92	63%	74%	-11%

Impact of mobile pupils on attainment

- The biggest factor affecting attainment of the expected standard was that the majority of pupils had no Nursery education, with 21 pupils starting within Year 1 who were New to English with no previous schooling. EAL does not affect attainment of the standard – but new arrivals do. Our most stable group of pupils who attended our Nursery attained highly – 80% of pupils.

KS1 Attainment

- Overall attainment in KS1 is low – Roma pupils pull down attainment dramatically. Roma numbers affect attainment levels overall and numbers are increasing.
- Roma have had no EYFS education, are New to English and ours is the first experience of school.

Increase in Roma cohort	
2013 % Roma in Year 2	2014 % Roma in Year 2
26%	36%

- When Roma pupils' scores are disaggregated, the attainment of different groups in school is similar to national figures.

KS1 school v national APS Pakistani pupils 2013				
	Reading	Writing	Maths	Overall
School Pakistani	15.3	14.8	15.1	15.0
National Pakistani	15.5	14.4	15.3	15.1
Difference	-0.2	+0.4	-0.2	-0.1

KS2 Progress

- Progress overall is good and has improved at a faster rate than nationally, particularly in reading.

KS2 % of pupils achieving expected progress (2+ levels progress)						
	2011 School	2012 School	2013 School	2014 School	2013 National	Improvement 2013-14
Reading	58	77	62	90	88	+28%
Writing	88	77	82	92	91	+10%
Maths	59	75	85	96	88	+11%

- Proportions of pupils exceeding expected progress are predicted to be close to national figures for the first time.

KS2 % of pupils exceeding expected progress (3 levels+)				
	School 2013	School 2014	School improvement 2013-14	National % exceeding expected progress 2013
Reading	10	20	+10	30
Writing	15	41	+26	30
Maths	13	36	+23	31

- Proportions of Roma pupils making expected progress are predicted to be significantly above Roma nationally as well as all pupils nationally in all subjects.

Two levels progress percentage KS2 Roma pupils Only 8 Roma pupils had a KS1 result, 16 Roma pupils joined school in KS2			
	2013 School Roma	2013 National Roma	2014 School Roma With KS1 result
Reading	67	68	100
Writing	100	73	100
Maths	50	69	100

Three + levels progress percentage KS2 Roma pupils	
	2014 School Roma
Reading	38 %
Writing	63 %
Maths	75 %

- Roma pupils who join school in KS2 make exceptional progress.

Progress of 22 NTE pupils who joined school within KS2		
	NTE Two levels progress	NTE Three levels progress
Reading	96	79
Writing	96	92
Maths	100	83

- RAISEonline coverage of KS2 is very low – 69% coverage for expected progress in 2013 – statistically RAISEonline does not give a full picture of the achievement of our pupils.

KS2 Attainment

- Overall attainment in KS2 is low. It is depressed by the large percentage of Roma pupils.
- Pakistani pupils achieving Level 4+ is similar to Pakistani pupils nationally.

% Level 4 + 2014		
	2014 School Pakistani	2013 National Pakistani
Reading	78	82
Writing	78	81
Maths	77	82

- The APS gap between pupil-premium and non-pupil-premium pupils was smaller than national figures in 2013 in all subjects.

2013 KS2 APS difference pupil-premium/non-pupil-premium

	Reading	Writing	Maths
School APS difference pupil-premium/non-pupil-premium	-1.7	-1.9	-2.1
National APS difference pupil-premium/non-pupil-premium	-2.5	-2.3	-2.3

- 26 Roma pupils Year 6 2014 on average less than three years in school. Most of these Roma pupils arrived in the country within KS2. These pupils make up one third of the cohort. **This is now the main barrier to achieving the Government's Combined Level 4+ floor standard.**
- Targets and predictions are constantly changing as pupils enter and leave the academy on a weekly basis. In Year 6 2014 we admitted 14 new pupils and 8 pupils left.

Teaching

- Teachers focus on language, particularly pupil talk, which is a feature of good teaching throughout school and the high level of pupil teacher dialogue underpins the outstanding teaching. The 'Talk for Writing' strategy is being effectively used to provide a consistent approach with high expectations of what can be achieved.
- A sophisticated data analysis system is needed to track progress for different groups of pupils on an ongoing basis. Progress is discussed in half-termly pupil progress meetings and rapid and targeted intervention planned where progress is less than expected.
- New to English interventions in all year groups ensure rapid progress for the large numbers who join school. These pupils make outstanding progress. This is a strength of the school.
- Other vulnerable groups such as SEN and those pupils receiving pupil premium are targeted for catch-up interventions.

- Issues of high mobility and large numbers of New To English pupils coming and going throughout years 5 and 6 are addressed by targeting year 6 for specialist New To English teaching.
- TA support in the classroom and during interventions focuses on the teaching of core skills.

Inclusion of Roma Children

- Pupils' behaviour both in class and around school is consistently good and often outstanding.
- Strong support for our most vulnerable pupils is speedy and effective from our large Inclusion Team and Nurture Provision. Pupils who access this support show excellent improvement in behaviour, attitudes to learning and confidence. We have had zero exclusions for several years.
- There is a strong inclusion ethos that promotes equal opportunities and respect for each other. This is evident across the curriculum and in the many celebratory events such as international days, special assemblies, performances and community events.
- Rapid improvement in attendance over the last four years. This is due to school implementing a positive and rigorous strategy throughout school and the engaging curriculum – pupils have a real love of learning.

Percentage school overall attendance					
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
89.6	91.3	94.2	94.7	94.9	95.3

The school has an increasing number of Roma children, who often enter with poor attendance. The school targets this group of children quickly and continues to improve attendance year on year. Attendance for this group of vulnerable pupils is significantly better than the national average – 10 times less for persistent absence.

Roma Pupils			
% of sessions missed due to overall absence		% Persistent absence	
School 2013	National 2013	School 2013	National 2013
7.8	13.9	2.8	28.0

Attendance of our largest group, Pakistani, is significantly better than national data with 15 times less for persistent absence. Overall absence and persistent absence is lower than national figures for all groups – SEN, FSM, EAL, Roma.

A large number of pupils enter the academy on a weekly basis, including many new arrivals to the country that are New to English. Many of these children have diverse and significant needs, and staff have ensured that these needs are met through classroom support and a wide range of interventions.

Early language support is a priority and enables pupils to access and engage with learning in the classroom quickly.

Breakfast Club is free and well attended, with some parents also staying for free breakfast.

Leadership and management

The senior leadership team has built a positive culture of high expectations leading to improved teaching quality, attendance, building relationships and working with the community.

Staffing changes such as the appointment of people who can speak the home languages of our families enable leaders, pastoral staff and class-based staff to communicate well with more difficult to reach families.

Two specialist sports coaches, an artist, a dance teacher and a technomusician have resulted in sports trophies, enhancement of the school environment and contribute to our pupils' well-being. These activities contribute towards great enthusiasm for school shown by the vast majority of pupils.

Links with the local community such as the local football team are strong and result in many community events, as well as contributing to a vibrant community spirit both within school and outside its walls. An example of this is the yearly International Parade organised with community leaders including the Lord Mayor which involves up to 2,000 local children and their families walking through the local streets. In June 2014 the National Literacy Trust are supporting the parade, giving every child a free reading book.

School linking work in Years 3 and 5 gives pupils opportunities to interact meaningfully with White British children. Pupils spend time in the other's school which promotes mutual respect and understanding. Our Litter Squad pick litter in the local streets, to the delight of local householders and promoting community cohesion.

The head teacher has a role in the LA with regard to Language for Learning initiatives and the council's New Arrivals Strategy Group. Teachers provide support for other Bradford schools in the strategies which the school has embedded, such as for writing (Talk for Writing), reading comprehension (Think to Read) and our vocabulary programme (It's Only Words).

Aids/Barriers to effectiveness

Aids to future improvement include the support of the local community and parents who value education and support school initiatives to the best of their ability to improve outcomes for their children. In particular, parents are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of reading often. Parents always support good discipline in school.

The main barrier to further improvement in attainment outside the control of the academy is high mobility and high numbers of New to English pupils coming and going each term.

There is no barrier to good progress for our children that the school and its stakeholders do not have the capacity and determination to overcome.

Comments from the researcher

This school has accurate and valid data on all its groups. It uses it well. It also reflects a pattern which emerged during the research. Where schools are faced with rapidly growing pressures from the arrival of pupils from the new migrant Roma communities they either develop robust and successful strategies (as in this case) or they attribute lack of progress to lack of information and support. The school has been able to draw on its base of sound EAL practice and experience of working with other vulnerable groups. The high level of ascription of new migrant Roma pupils means it has the opportunity to compare the performance of this cohort with national figures for this group and with other groups in the school and neighbouring schools. The high level of ascription reflects both the fact that the school places great importance on obtaining accurate ascription and also the support and guidance available from the local authority to help it do so. The data enables the school to identify significant barriers to engagement and progress for new migrant Roma pupils but these are not regarded as excuses for low attainment because the study finishes by stating that all barriers will be overcome and the many strategies and interventions used are mentioned throughout. The most impressive aspect of this case study is the clear evidence of consistent and rapid improvement in outcomes. As these pupils move through the system the base for good KS4 attainment has been laid. The problems associated with pupil mobility might be partially addressed by liaising with other agencies who may be able to support families to find continuity of housing. There are good software packages available for tracking pupil progress which would answer the need identified by the school.

This research found comments similar to the one given in the study:

‘RAISEonline coverage of KS2 is very low – 69% coverage for expected progress in 2013 – statistically RAISEonline does not give a full picture of the achievement of our pupils.’

A visit to the RAISEonline library will find the following documents which explain this statement. Firstly *Progress Measure Guide KS1-KS2 2014* which contains the following:

1. ‘Most pupils who don’t have key stage 1 results are excluded from the progress measures since we are not able to determine how much progress they have made. However, pupils with no key stage 1

attainment who achieved level W, 1 or 6 at the end of key stage 2 will be included.'

Then the document *Guide to KS2-KS4 progress measures 2013* which states:

'Pupils attaining level 5 or level 6 at KS2 are expected to achieve at least a grade B at GCSE. Therefore all pupils achieving an A*-B are deemed to have made the expected progress, whether or not their prior attainment is known.'

The extension to this is grade U at KS4 and W or 1 at KS2 and is included for these pupils as less than expected progress.

Two main frustrations attached to this were expressed by interviewees at all levels from TAs to senior LA figures. They had strong concerns at the current threshold for recognising progress for these students who carry no KS1 or KS2 data.

Firstly, it is sometimes more difficult to generate good progress and attainment from pupils who carry no data as they may have arrived directly from a non-English-speaking country with low levels of prior learning. Pupils from the new migrant Roma communities often have multiple barriers to progress and where a school has been successful with these students the lack of previous data should not prevent recognition of the school's impact and the threshold for expected progress should be realistic. Schools, understandably, believe that levels 2, 3, 4 or 5 or grades E, D or C can represent very good progress for pupils joining from overseas with no prior experience of learning in English and that it is unfair to insist on level 6 or grade B.

The other frustration is on behalf of the pupil. Once their progress is not included, it is as if their progress is less important and that is not something that a truly inclusive school can accept.

Many people with good EAL experience felt it would be helpful to devise a nationally recognised form of benchmarking for new pupils joining a school at any stage with no KS1 or KS2 data. This would obviously apply to other groups as well as pupils from the new migrant Roma communities, but might help allay fears sometimes expressed that new migrant Roma pupils damage a school's league table status. Meanwhile schools are advised to assist Ofsted teams and other interested parties in making accurate judgements of RAISEonline data by producing a biopic of each student without KS1 or KS2 data who has attained levels 3, 4 or 5 or grades D, C, B to emphasise the even better story behind the bare RAISEonline report.

Is a separate strategy needed to improve outcomes for the new migrant Roma communities or does the existing GRT umbrella suffice?

Finally, this section examines whether ‘taking the “R” away from GRT’, as one EAL coordinator put it, would be helpful in meeting the needs of the new migrant Roma communities. Both the literature review and meeting practitioners in different local authorities reveal opposing views.

On one hand the European Union has called on all member states to formulate a ‘National Roma Integration Strategy’ as part of the decade of Roma inclusion. Initially the current UK government agreed to develop such a strategy. From early in this process it received criticism from academics and many other people and organisations working in the field (for example, The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups, The Roma Support Group, The Gypsy Council, Equality and many others). The major complaint was that existing interventions and support for the long-standing UK-born populations of Gypsies and Irish Travellers were being passed off as a new strategy and sufficient for the new migrant Roma communities. Gary Craig summed this criticism up thus:

‘a strategy aimed at the integration of the long-standing UK Gypsy and Traveller population cannot and should not be conflated with a strategy aimed at the integration of the Roma population because of the very significant historical, cultural and demographic differences between the two.’

Craig, G. (2013:ii)

At the other end of the spectrum, the current government has stated in evidence given to the House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee (11 May 2011) by the then-Minister Grant Shapps:

‘though the UK government was sympathetic to the need to help integrate Roma in the UK, a National Roma Integration Strategy was not relevant for the UK because a separate strategy might impose unhelpful targets and be a burdensome reporting requirement for a country like the UK.’

Craig, G. (ibid.)

The current government sees the issue in the context of its Decentralisation and Localism Act 2012 stating:

‘Decentralisation will allow different communities to do different things in different ways to meet their different needs. This will certainly increase variety in service provision’.

UK Gov (2012:)

Ian Naysmith, the government official responsible for the Department for Communities and Local Government, told the National Roma Network Meeting on 10 September 2013:

‘a national strategy was not needed and ... the Localism agenda meant that local authorities were responsible for integration within their own areas.’

Within the field of education this research found conflicting views from people with a good understanding of Roma integration. One former senior HMI who has great experience across Europe and the UK of Roma issues opposed the idea of a separate strategy, saying ‘It is not mainstreaming to have a separate strategy.’

The EAL coordinator from an East Midlands secondary school said:

‘Of course you need a separate strategy. Pupils from the new Roma communities present with different barriers to access and engagement than other groups, including the long-standing UK GRT populations. Therefore different interventions and strategies are required to get what you want for all groups, which is to become the best they can possibly be. We intervene differently for many groups such as our Somali heritage students and White British, so why not a separate strategy for the distinct needs of the new Roma communities? Mainstreaming can still embrace a separate strategy.’

In two towns in the north of England, teachers suggested that a separate strategy would antagonise the White British community and in an East Midlands primary school a head teacher said, in reference to separate inputs for pupils from the new migrant Roma communities, ‘We have to be very careful not to upset our (predominantly) Muslim parents.’

Concern was expressed by two heads of long-standing GRT services that using existing GRT resources to accommodate the needs of the new migrant Roma communities would have two negative impacts. Firstly, already inadequate resources would be stretched even more thinly at a time of fiscal restraint. Secondly the existing GRT populations

would become resentful of the new migrant Roma communities, perceiving that resources and support were being diverted from GRT populations to them.

These conflicting views are sincerely held by people who care and understand the issues. Is it possible to reconcile the two stances?

The statistics suggest that the starting point for the debate is the need for an accurate picture of numbers. In August 2013, The Irish Traveller Movement in Britain reported:

‘In December last year, the first ever census figures for the population of Gypsies and Irish Travellers in England and Wales were released. In all 54,895 Gypsies and Irish Travellers in England and 2,785 in Wales were counted.’

The report went on to explain the reasons for undercounting and concluded that the real figures were between 150,000 and 300,000. Salford University reported: ‘We estimate that as of 2012 there are at least 197,705 migrant Roma living in the UK’ (Brown et al. 2014:7). (At the time the NPD showed 11,000 pupils who might be from the new communities.) Salford went on to add

‘When combined together the population of migrant Roma and indigenous Gypsies and Travellers would equate to around 400,000–500,000 “Roma”, as defined by the Council of Europe, living in the UK.’

Ibid.

but at the same time cautioned:

‘Based on the responses from key informants this is considered a conservative estimate of the population. It is likely that this population will continue to increase.’

Ibid.

It is logical to conclude that, if the official figures drastically undercount the size of the new migrant Roma communities and the existing GRT communities, current resource allocation must be inadequate for both. Therefore, it may be more beneficial to ensure sufficient resources are allocated to all three parts of GRT to promote better outcomes. The fact remains that austerity has led to the cutting of GRT teams round the country at a time of increasing need.

Gary Craig noted that even though the official estimate for the size of the new migrant Roma communities is certainly significantly undercounted it still:

‘puts the size of the Roma community on a par with much longer-established minorities such as the Chinese (approximately 230,000) and Bangladeshi (approximately 290,000) origin populations within the UK, for which significant resource streams have been allocated by government under various integration strategies.’

Craig, G. (2013:4)

The pupil premium is supposed to be the factor which counters the impact of diminishing resources, but many schools have noted that they have pupils from existing GRT populations and the new migrant Roma communities who live in households with very low incomes but who do not qualify for free school meals and therefore do not generate pupil-premium funds for the school. This is highlighted in a recent report which wrote:

‘The Pupil Premium is based on the number of pupils who are or have been eligible for free school meals (FSM). 43.2% of all pupils registered as either Gypsy, Roma or of Irish Traveller background are currently eligible for FSM; this figure rises to 45.3% in secondary schools and 57.5% in Special Schools. It should be noted though that not all Gypsy Romani and Traveller pupils are receiving FSM although they remain very vulnerable in the education system with needs not being addressed or supported because of the limitations of the Pupil Premium. Some low-income Gypsy and Traveller families have difficulties navigating the welfare system and their children are not assigned as FSM. This situation may have impacted more seriously on Romani migrant pupils. To qualify for the extra cash for schools, parents must be in receipt of benefits, including child tax credits. But many Roma migrants who have arrived from countries in Central Eastern Europe are not entitled to benefits because they have not been in permanent employment or work as casual labour. A teacher at a community college with a large number of Romani pupils, who was interviewed for the report, elaborates on this “... a large number of the Roma families don’t (bring a pupil premium into the school) simply because a lot of them are on zero hours contracts ... and

they're exploited ... they will get Working Tax Credit but they don't qualify for free school meals. If they don't qualify for free school meals there is no Pupil Premium. So out of our 81 Eastern European Roma, 48 qualify for pupil premium, 33 don't, but those 33 are no more wealthy or better off than the other families".'

Ryder, A. and Cemlyn, S. (2014:55)

It seems logical to conclude that the emphasis should be on obtaining the resource level needed for all GRT and new migrant Roma communities and making the pupil premium more effective before deciding if distinctive strategies and approaches are needed. A prerequisite for this is an accurate picture of the numbers, which is where this research started!

Key messages

One purpose of this document is to bring together as much useful information as possible about successful engagement with the new migrant Roma heritage communities in one place. The focus of this project has been to collate strategies and interventions with proven impact. It is not apt for such a work to issue a long list of recommendations, nor do I want to repeat myself, but it is worth summing up the key messages and adding two suggestions encountered during the fieldwork. In this context, successful schools:

- 1) know ascription matters
- 2) understand the culture and history of the new migrant Roma communities
- 3) do whatever it takes and go the extra mile
- 4) share. Good networks were often not far from good outcomes
- 5) understood that true inclusion is not treating everyone the same but treating them to the same opportunities
- 6) use members of the community well to help engagement with the community
- 7) understand what the community does not understand then explain it in a way which is accessible
- 8) may have one key worker for this group, but success is ultimately attributable to the culture and ethos of all the adults in the school
- 9) find the barriers to engagement and remove them

- 10) believe that promoting positive education outcomes for this group is difficult but not impossible
- 11) promote Roma engagement with EYF provision
- 12) collect and use data on this group well.

In addition the attention of national agencies is drawn to these suggestions.

- Many workers encountered across the country feel that GRT pupils should automatically qualify for the pupil premium (perhaps for a term of three years). This would incentivise ascription and provide resources to meet the needs of one of the most vulnerable groups.
- Many different highly knowledgeable and respected researchers over the course of the last seven years have called for an overhaul of the system for collecting data on ethnicity in schools, in order to produce data which is both valid and useful. This is a reform which seems overdue.
- In many areas workers on the ground feel that admissions policies unintentionally discriminate against pupils from the new migrant Roma communities who seem unable to navigate fair access. More emphasis needs to be placed on enabling siblings to be kept together in the same school.
- A national system for benchmarking new arrivals with no KS1 or KS2 data should be established to enable schools to receive credit for progress made by these pupils.
- Quoting Heather Ureche, Lucie Fremlova also suggested that a European Education Passport for all pupils in EU countries would be useful. A simple record with information on attendance, literacy in first language and general aptitude recorded on a simple 1–5 scale should be feasible with modern technology. When pupils moved countries, the receiving school would be assisted if it could easily access the education passport. It would also assist with locating mobile families returning to the country of origin without informing their UK school.

Self-evaluation Matrix

Schools where outcomes are higher than national averages have a profile which fits the right-hand boxes. If your self-evaluation does not consistently feature the right-hand column, refer back to the earlier

sections to seek strategies which will move your practice in that direction.

Issues not yet grasped	Room for improvement	World class
The school waits for the Local Authority or DfE to tell them what to do.	The school has read some of the relevant documentation and trialled some suggestions.	The school has been proactive in understanding the key issues and has sought out examples of successful practice. This has been used to shape policies and procedures which fit its own context. There has been collaboration with LA teams.
There are explanations for inaction such as 'They won't tell you they are Roma', 'We don't get any resources', 'We want to introduce certain initiatives but our White British parents wouldn't like it'.	The principle of equal treatment does not stop the school using specific interventions for this group.	The school will do whatever it takes (within reason) to improve outcomes for this group as it does for all its groups.
No allowances are made during the admissions process for the needs of this group.	An interpreter, but not necessarily from the Roma community, is used during the admissions process.	The school has made an effort to understand issues surrounding the admissions process for this group and is able to support the family fully through it. The admission interview is seen as an opportunity to convey information as well as obtain it, and as the start of the process of engagement.
New migrant Roma pupils are not identified.	New migrant Roma pupils are identified but not necessarily ascribed as Roma.	Nearly all pupils from the new migrant Roma communities are freely ascribed.

Issues not yet grasped	Room for improvement	World class
No specific tracking or monitoring of attendance and achievement takes place for these pupils.	Attendance and achievement are monitored, but specific measures to improve outcomes are having insufficient impact.	Attendance and achievement are monitored and specific measures have been implemented which have brought about demonstrable improvement.
Attendance and achievement for this group is not known. National norms are not known.	Attendance and achievement data for this group exists but is incomplete or conflated with Other White European.	Attendance and achievement for this group is demonstrably above national norms.
The school is not in a position to explain clearly who its most vulnerable pupils are.	'What would Ofsted say?' is the main driver for initiatives with this group.	Most of the new migrant Roma pupils are ascribed, strategies with demonstrable impact have been deployed and can also be shown to have impacted positively on other groups.
Staff are unaware of cultural and historical issues which impede engagement of these communities. Inappropriate 'coping strategies' have been adopted by some members of the communities.	There is some awareness of the cultural and background barriers to progress but it is not consistently understood by all adults nor is it used to inform planning.	Cultural competence is used to help parents and pupils engage with the school appropriately and informs lesson planning.
The school has not yet developed its cultural competence to be able to identify specific literacy issues facing pupils from this group.	Pupils from this group are identified for interventions such as phonics and catch-up literacy.	Literacy is specifically promoted to the whole community. ESOL classes are available for parents.
Parents from this group do not attend parents' evenings.	Some parents attend but do not really understand the report grades, comments nor	A significant proportion of parents from this group attend parents' evenings and are able

Issues not yet grasped	Room for improvement	World class
	much of the process.	to understand the report and comments.
This group does not participate in extracurricular activities or trips and visits.	Some effort is made to encourage participation from this group.	Pupils from the new migrant Roma communities participate in extracurricular activities in the same way as other pupils.
Sanctions fall disproportionately on pupils from the new migrant Roma communities, but this is not known through weakness in data.	Sanctions are known to impact disproportionately on this group.	Behaviour of this group is of the same high standard as all other groups (possibly because the school has invested in explaining its standards and supporting vulnerable groups to rise to them).
Communication is by standard procedures.	Letters may be translated into languages such as Czech, but this fails to help parents who cannot read in any language.	The school has a range of strategies and techniques for communicating key messages, regardless of literacy and language issues, to all groups including the new migrant Roma communities.

References

P4 Fremlova, L. and Ureche, H. (2009:9) *New Roma Communities in England*. European Dialogue.

P5 Population data extrapolated from OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL FOR ROMA COMMUNITY AFFAIRS. Czech Republic 2009:13 'Health and The Roma Community'.

P6 Craig, G. (2013) *United Kingdom – The Roma: A Study of National Policies*. York Workshops.

P6 Ofsted (2014) 'Overcoming barriers: Ensuring that Roma children are fully engaged and achieving in education'.

P6 Murphy, J. (2013:13) *What's Working for Roma in School: A Network Learning Book*. The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust.

P9 Brown et al. (2014:18) *Migrant Roma in the United Kingdom*. Salford University.

P9 DfE-RR043 (2011:3) 'Improving the outcomes for GRT pupils: final report'.

P10 Craig, G. (2013:ii) *United Kingdom – The Roma: A Study of National Policies*. York Workshops.

P10 United Kingdom FRANET National Focal Point Social Thematic Study (2012:8 and 9) 'The situation of Roma 2012'. Human Rights Law Centre, University of Nottingham.

P10 Ryder, A. and Cemlyn, S. (2014:25) *Civil Society Monitoring on the Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy in The United Kingdom*. Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation, Budapest.

P10 Lane, P., Spencer, S. and Jones, A. (2014:47) *Gypsy, Traveller and Roma: Experts by Experience*. Anglian Ruskin University.

P11 Ofsted (December 2014:18) 'Overcoming barriers: ensuring Roma children are fully engaged and achieving in education'.

P11 DCSF (2007:13) 'The Inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children and Young People'.

P16 Ofsted (December 2014:7) 'Overcoming barriers: ensuring that Roma children are fully engaged and achieving in education'.

P18 Wilkin et al. (2011:64) 'Improving the outcomes for GRT pupils: final report'. DfE-RR043.

P18 Fremlova, L. (2011:41) *From Segregation to Inclusion*. Equality.

P24 Fremlova, L. (2011:43) *From Segregation to Inclusion*. Equality.

P25 Murphy, J. (2013:46) *What's Working for Roma in School: A Network Learning Book*. The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust.

P29 Murphy, J. (2013:33) *What's Working for Roma in School: A Network Learning Book*. The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust.

P33 Ofsted (December 2014) 'Overcoming barriers: Ensuring Roma pupils are fully engaged and achieving in education'.

P34 Murphy, J. (2013:49) *What's Working for Roma in School: A Network Learning Book*. The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust.

P36 Murphy, J. (2013:35) *What's Working for Roma in School: A Network Learning Book*. The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust.

P37 Fremlova, L. (2011:ii) *From Segregation to Inclusion*. Equality.

P37 Murphy, J. (2013:37) *What's Working for Roma in School: A Network Learning Book*. The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust.

P38 Fremlova, L. (2011:21) *From Segregation to Inclusion*. Equality.

P39 Murphy, J. (2013:28) *What's Working for Roma in School: A Network Learning Book*. The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust.

P62 RAISEonline library

<https://www.raiseonline.org/documentlibrary/ViewDocumentLibrary.aspx>

Click on 'How Ofsted and DfE analyse your data' then select:

Progress measure Guide KS1-KS2 2014

and

Guide to KS2-KS4 progress measures 2013

P63 Craig, G. (2013:ii) Euroma11. York Workshops.

P64 UK Gov (2012:10) 'The Decentralisation and Localism Bill: An Essential Guide'.

P65 The Irish Traveller Movement (2013:1) 'Gypsy and Traveller Population in England and the 2011 Census'

P65 Brown et al. (2014:7) 'Migrant Roma in the United Kingdom'. Salford University.

P66 Ryder, A. and Cemlyn, S. (2014:55) *Civil Society Monitoring on the Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy in The United Kingdom*. Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation, Budapest.

Appendix 1: How to use QR codes to support communication with parents.

- Sometimes if you translate a letter the parents cannot read it as they are not literate in L1.
- If you have a letter translated how do you quality-assure the translation? Google Translate is not up to it.
- If the parents can hear a recording in their first language they may have more chance of understanding.
- Give the letter or document to the person who speaks the relevant language.
- Get them to simplify it.
- Record them speaking the main points in the relevant language, usually as an MP3 file.
- Upload this recording, preferably to your website.
- This is easier than translation and more inclusive as you just give the same letter to everyone.
- Decide what you want to link your QR code to.
- This must be something on the internet.
- If it doesn't exist already you need to create it and upload it to a place on the internet.
- If it's already on the web, go to www.QRSTUFF.com
- Select website URL from the menu.
- Enter the website address.
- Select 'Use our qrs.ly URL shortener' (this makes the QR code have bigger pixels and is easier to scan).
- Save the code with a logical file name.
- You should now be able to insert the QR code you have just created into a document, just like if you were inserting a photo, logo or any other image.
- When the letter goes out in English put the QR codes for the relevant languages on the bottom.

How to scan QR Codes:

- Download a free QR Code Reader application on your mobile device (iPhone, iPad or smartphone).

- Open the application.
- Hold your device over or point it at the QR code you want to read.
- Your mobile device should open up the destination on the internet where the QR code points to.

Appendix 2: Benefits of Self-Declared Ascription for Pupils, Parents and Schools and Local Authorities

Reproduced from 'The Inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children and Young People', DfE 2011.

Pupils: Why should I – What's in it for me?

- It is good to be proud of who you are.
- It is a human right for the world to respect you for who you really are.
- There is nothing to be ashamed of in being a Gypsy, Roma or Traveller.
- Bullies will never be challenged and exposed for what they are by the silence of fear.
- It is good that others are able to learn about, and to meet and know, people of different backgrounds – it is what brings human beings together to live in peace and harmony. It is the essential building block of community cohesion.
- Your parents and sisters and brothers, and your community, need to be presented to the world through your proud and honest representation and advocacy.
- You have a right to education and it is not conditional on you hiding your ethnic identity.
- Your happy and successful learning will often need you to draw on and share your life experiences within your family and community. You will not be able to do that if you are fearful about the school knowing who you really are.
- When you achieve success at school and receive applause in assembly you will be unable to earn the praise and respect for the ethnicity and cultural status of yourself, your family and your community.
- Childhood should be full of happiness and it is short enough without the burden of having to keep a closely guarded secret and living in the fear of 'exposure'.

- In order to have real friends in school, relationships have to deepen and for this to happen and for them to be truly rewarding, they have to be based on honesty and truth.
- Your teachers will not be able to help you as much as they would if they do not know about your ethnicity and cultural background.

Parents: Why should we – What are the benefits for our children and our community?

- Most parents across the world want their children to grow up to be proud of their family and its heritage.
- There is nothing to be ashamed of in being Gypsy, Roma or Traveller.
- It is a human right for the world to respect you for who you really are.
- It is important to children's psychological, social and personal development to be proud of their family and its cultural heritage.
- Most parents across the world want their children to have the freedom to be happy and confident in their self-knowledge and to be able to share freely, and to be treated with respect for who they really are.
- Racists will never be challenged and exposed for what they are by the silence of fear.
- Most parents want their children to have happy lives in which they learn to relate to, and respect, others with different and diverse backgrounds so that they may live together in peace and harmony. This important process is promoted and experienced at school but it requires everyone to have the confidence to be open and honest.
- Parents who tell their children to deny their ethnicity place an unfair burden on their children and a disadvantage that is not suffered by other children.
- Your children have a right to education and it is not conditional on them hiding their ethnicity or cultural identity.
- Your children's happy and successful learning will often need them to draw on and share their life experiences within your family and

community. They will not be able to do that if they are fearful about the school knowing who they really are.

- Your children will also be unable to bring home examples of completed work that they and you should be proud of because it portrays a treasured truth about your culture and way of life. This will deny them the happiness that most children experience during their school years.
- When you are invited to the school assembly to celebrate your children's successful achievements for which they may receive applause, you will be unable to claim the praise and respect for your family's and community's ethnicity and cultural status. Yet another opportunity will be lost to flag your children's and family's positive contribution to the life and work of the school.
- Childhood should be full of happiness and it is short enough without the burden of having to keep a closely guarded secret and living in the fear of 'exposure'.
- If your children go to school in fear of disclosing their ethnic identity they will find it hard to make friends and may feel socially isolated and lonely. This experience should not be part of a happy childhood at school and is seldom part of successful learning.
- Your children's teachers will not be able to help them as much as they would if they knew about their ethnicity and cultural background.
- If your children need additional teaching support, this may not be possible unless the school is fully aware of the ethnicity of the children.
- Most parents across the world want their children to be treated equally and fairly when at school. A hidden identity is a serious threat to enjoying a fulfilled life at school.

Schools and Local Authorities: Why should we be concerned to get pupil background identity right?

- Teachers know that, for children to experience happy and successful learning, they need to be self-confident in their personal and family

identity, and that this is inextricably linked to their self-esteem as learners.

- Schools cannot satisfactorily foster a close relationship with parents and the community unless it is cognisant of the social, cultural and racial dimensions of the whole school community.
- Schools and local authorities cannot satisfactorily comply with their duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, unless they are aware of the ethnicity and cultural diversity of their school population.
- Funding streams and targeted support are frequently linked to particular groups of pupils who may feature as a priority in terms of educational funding programmes. Local authorities and schools that are not aware of the full range of pupils' backgrounds are ill placed to bid for and receive such additional funding. More accurate ascription will attract increases in funding.
- Knowing the backgrounds of pupils is an essential first step for helping individual pupils with their learning, including those with special educational needs.
- In order for the curriculum to be personalised and inclusive, the diversity of pupil's backgrounds needs to be known.
- In order for school improvement officers and SIPs to support schools to raise achievement they need to be fully aware of the diversity of pupils' backgrounds.
- Ethnically disaggregated data is important as part of school self-evaluation requirements.
- Local authorities need to be fully aware of their BME populations, including Gypsy/Roma and Travellers of Irish heritage in order to set appropriate targets for pupil achievement.
- Ethnically disaggregated data is important as it has a strong influence on the priorities and orientation of Ofsted inspections of schools.
- Schools and local authorities want pupils to achieve to their full potential and it is recognised that pupils who are fearful and who have to deny their identity in the school setting are destined to

underachieve compared with pupils who do not suffer this unfair and needless disadvantage.

Appendix 3: Multi-agency working

The following document is included because schools may find it useful to share with partner agencies. [It was written by Babington Community College, Leicester in partnership with Lucie Fremlova who carried out considerable research between 2008 and 2012 for various government agencies and NGOs.]

Preface: Why is there a need for another document about the newly arrived Roma communities from Eastern Europe?

There has been a lot of change in recent years. Our knowledge has improved and the relevant legislation has changed. There has also been the opportunity for some agencies and practitioners to develop and improve their practice and a new work provides the opportunity to share this.

Unfortunately, one thing has not altered. There is no accurate picture of the size of the newly arrived Roma communities in the UK. In 2009, Heather Ureche and Lucie Fremlova reported that 'There are a number of local authorities where the service providers are not aware of their Roma, although they have sizeable and well-established Roma communities. Consequently, there was little or no provision in place in these local authority areas.' Because these communities had become established without being known as Roma communities they referred to them as 'Hidden Communities'. They explained the difficulty in assessing the number, and therefore, the resource needs of Roma communities in England thus; 'Please note that all statistical answers are subject to significant under-reporting. The self-ascription of ethnicity as Gypsy Roma is sporadic in part due to admissions procedures but also due to individual choice' (Fremlova, L. and Ureche, H. (2009:9) *New Roma Communities in England*. Published by European Dialogue and sponsored by the DCSF).

Another report made a similar point: 'the main difficulty of estimating the UK resident population of migrant Roma is the deficiency of adequate statistics of any kind whether quantitative or qualitative' (Brown et al. (2014:18) *Migrant Roma in the United Kingdom*. University of Salford, Manchester).

These two expert reports tell us that we do not know how many newly arrived Roma from Eastern Europe are settled in the UK. Most people who work with these communities suggest that the real figure is probably almost double the estimate of 200,000 given in the University of Salford survey. Those working in this field will know that there is a great reluctance on the part of newly arrived Roma to ascribe as Roma. The numbers, whatever they are, continue to grow. This is because both the push and pull factors which have led to the movement of large numbers of Roma are still in place.

Unfortunately, another change has made the need for a new work more important. Having started a new life in the UK as 'hidden communities' the Roma are now elevated to the status of legitimate scapegoats. In November 2013 the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Nicholas Clegg, speaking on LBC Radio's regular 'Call Clegg' slot, said: 'There is a real dilemma ... when you get communities coming into a part of our country and they behave in a way that people find quite difficult to accept, and they behave in a way that people find sometimes intimidating, sometimes offensive I think it's quite right that we should say ... if you are going to come and live here and you are bringing up a family here you've got to be sensitive to the way that life is lived in this country.' In the same week, David Blunkett, former Home Office minister and current MP for Sheffield's Page Hall district, said on Radio Sheffield: 'We have got to change the behaviour and the culture of the incoming community, the Roma community, because there's going to be an explosion otherwise. We all know that.' Nigel Farage then claimed that Britain was about to face a 'Romanian crime wave epidemic'. The law of unintended consequences then joined in and what these politicians intended as a contribution to improving a situation led to an anti-Roma firestorm in the UK press with front page headlines such as "'intimidating" and "offensive" Roma migrants must be sensitive to British way of life' (Daily Telegraph 11/11/2013). This has made life more difficult for the Roma communities who did not appreciate having the spotlight shone on them in this fashion.

The sparks caused by the remarks from left, centre and right of the political spectrum took longer to fade away than usual because they were followed by a series of 'Roma steal white babies' stories across Europe. These stories were proved false but not before they had further disfigured the growing Roma stereotype, leading to a respected lecturer in politics from the University of Brighton, Dr Aidan McGarry, to write: 'The recent cases have revealed the dominant negative stereotypes of Romani communities and suggest that Romaphobia is still an acceptable form of racism.(November 13 2013.) Guardian columnist Gary Younge was moved to proclaim 'Slandering Britain's Roma isn't courageous. It's racist'. He went on to say: 'There is nothing courageous about slandering a group of impoverished, marginalised people. They're too poor to sue and too isolated to effectively resist. There can be no comeback because they have no power, so where's the courage? But there is everything racist about denigrating a group of people as though their shared ethnicity means shared values and implying collective responsibility for the actions of individuals in their community.'

However voices like this were blown away by the wind of tabloid fever and the comfort of finding legitimate scapegoats during hard times.

There are recent documented cases of Roma children being taken into care shortly after their arrival in the UK. The children were severely undernourished as a result of the poverty they had lived in in the country of origin. UK social workers interpreted this as neglect and placed the children into foster care with foster parents who could not speak the language of the children or provide continuity of culture. The social workers did not have the necessary knowledge to be able to discharge their duty to take the cultural background of their clients into account before unreasonably removing the children from their parents. Roma children perform much worse than any other ethnic group at GCSE in UK schools and many live in overcrowded houses, paying an extortionate rent because they cannot read the contract they sign and they do not know their rights and so cannot ask for them.

All of these factors justify the need for an up-to-date guide for workers in many agencies (and politicians!) so that those working with newly arrived Roma communities, in whatever capacity, can have the accurate knowledge they need to identify Roma communities and their needs and examples of good practice which help meet these needs.

Appendix 4: What is the history and culture of the Roma?



The Roma are a people residing in many countries. They are officially recognised as such by the United Nations. DNA and analysis of the Roma language indicates that the people we refer to as Roma originate from the Northern Punjab in India. It has been believed that

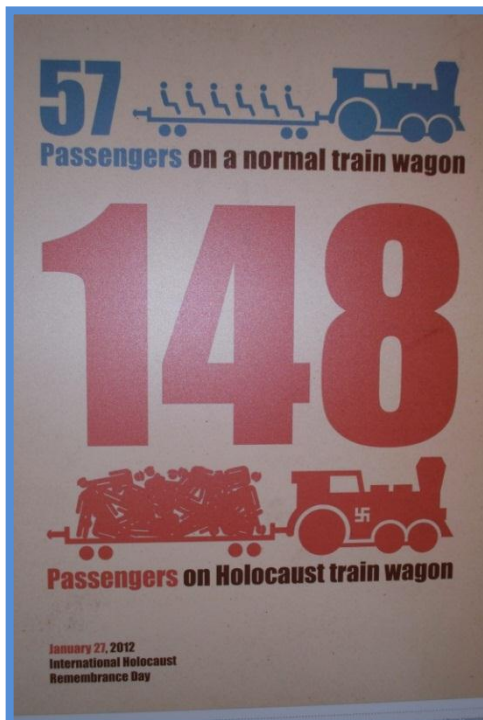
there was a mass exodus, for an unknown reason, between AD 500 and AD 1000. As with many aspects of Roma culture and history, we do not know for certain. The language has only had an artificial written form for less than 150 years; therefore, there is little historical documentation produced by Roma people prior to this and what there is uses three different alphabets. Their history and movements can be tracked by the writings of other people. From these it is possible to tell that the Roma migrated slowly westwards, arriving in Europe during the 11th century and in Britain in the 16th century. Many of the documents which record the arrival of the Roma into a new area or country do not speak positively about them. It is possibly a normal human reaction to fear newcomers from outside and to misinterpret behaviour which differs from your own.

There are records of Roma being enslaved and treated badly in many parts of the near east and Europe for several hundred years. The fact that they were slaves meant that they were regarded as inferior and that it was acceptable to mistreat them. In some countries laws legalising the slavery of Romani peoples were only abolished in the mid-19th century. Indeed, Romani slaves were sent to the Americas shortly after their discovery. In England, in the 16th century, Roma could be killed with no recourse to the law. The use of the Roma



language(s) was made illegal in several countries. Roma were perceived to be aloof and distant, but which comes first? Reluctance to integrate which leads to poor treatment, or the poor treatment which leads to reluctance to integrate.

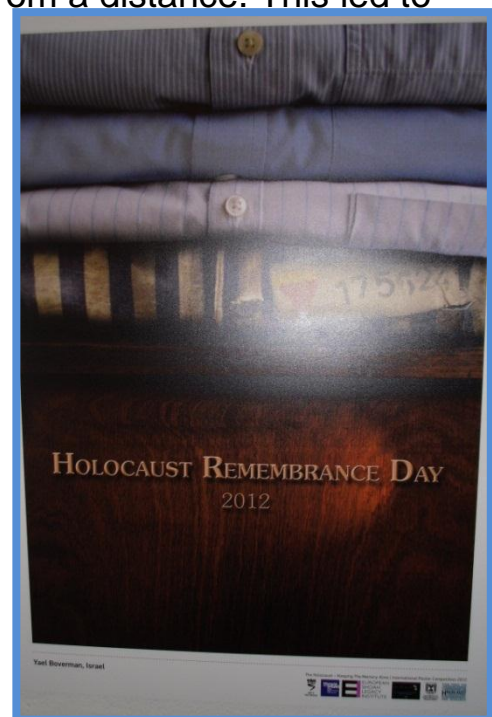
The typical stereotype of Gypsies travelling in caravans does not stand up. Some Roma have been sedentary for centuries and others have



been nomadic. Those who were itinerant travelled in large extended family groups by horse and cart which served as a caravan. Within the group would be people with different skills or products they could sell: knife sharpeners, wood workers, white washers, spoon makers, cobblers, etc. Most had a love of music and dance. Groups moved from place to place, returning to the same place periodically once the knives would need resharpenering or more wooden objects were needed. Belonging to an itinerant group which translocated continually from static community to static community was

in itself a recipe for not integrating. Keeping to their traditional ways the Roma kept pace with modern technology from a distance. This led to them being regarded as backward and then 'stupid'. Being itinerant meant that accessing schooling, once it became available, was not an option. Those who were sedentary – and many were – tended to set up communities of one or more extended families outside large towns where they could generate enough work to avoid the need to travel, but offering a similar range of services. Being outside the town was not a recipe for integration.

Roma prefer to be self-employed and offer services rather than be waged employees. The reluctance to work for someone else on regular hours



and contracts has led many people to perceive them as work-shy. However, it is an important part of your honour as a Roma male to provide for your family.

World War II was catastrophic for the Roma. Stalin's Russian empire banned the itinerant lifestyle and started compulsory settlement with serious punishments for non-compliance. Hitler's race purity laws identified Roma as sub-human and sent a higher proportion of the Roma community to the death camps than the Jewish population.

Following the war many people were prosecuted for various war crimes but no one has ever been convicted of war crimes against the Roma population. Jewish victims were, quite rightly, granted prima facie recognition as victims of racial persecution which was a prerequisite for seeking compensation. This status was not accorded to the Roma until many years after the end of the war and by then the time allowed for submitting claims had elapsed. This further reinforced Roma perception that if you are Roma you are destined to receive unequal treatment.

The next catastrophe for the Roma was the fall of the Berlin Wall. Prior to this they had access to work in the old Eastern bloc countries. Now the economic and financial fallout from this event hit the Roma population hardest. They went from full employment to mass unemployment as their lack of education and innate discrimination from the majority populations proved great handicaps in seeking work in a fast-changing and more technological landscape. Behind the Iron Curtain, a small group of educated Roma professionals had appeared but ironically the rush to democracy ended this green shoot. A vicious circle then set in. No job meant low income. Low income made paying for schoolbooks harder. Low income thus led to poor education. This was exacerbated by low levels of literacy and no experience of successful schooling from parents and grandparents. Poor education led to no qualifications at the very moment that Western society was basing its economy on a highly qualified workforce. The Roma became more unemployable and now became open scapegoats.

Because they are poor they live in poor housing conditions and many people assume that this is a result of active choices. This is then used as a pretext to do nothing to improve the situation. Given an active choice and genuine support to adopt a different economic lifestyle most Roma would accept with alacrity, whilst wishing to keep their culture.

This is just a very brief summary of the history of Roma. The purpose of recounting this is not to provide an encyclopaedic knowledge of Roma culture and history but to give an understanding of why many find them a community which is hard to engage. Those interested in learning more are not spoilt for choice and are advised to consult the bibliography at the end of this work.

What is the context of working with Roma in the UK?

So what possible problems could there be in today's multicultural, diverse Britain with a whole gamut of Race Relations legislation, in working successfully with just another newly arrived community? There are only two problems really, us and them.

Having been treated so badly by so many for so long, many Roma prefer to keep themselves to themselves and regard anyone who is non-Roma with intense caution. Roma are suspicious of establishing new contacts and may misinterpret kindly gestures or offers of help as ruses to exploit them and thus appear ungrateful. Unsurprisingly, they are often not disappointed in their expectations. The indigenous population in the UK has never been at ease with its own Gypsy citizens. In 1530 the expulsion of Gypsies from the kingdom was ordered, followed in 1554 by the issue of a royal edict allowing Gypsies to be killed on sight. We may call them Gypsy and UK Gypsies are proud to be called Gypsy, but they are from the same origins as other Roma groups and are recognised by the UN as part of the Romani people. How can anyone blame them for having the expectation that they will be mistreated?

Unfortunately, we don't need to go back into history to find examples of anti-Roma behaviours bordering on the hysterical. During the autumn of 2013 several events, referred to earlier, demonstrated that anti-Roma sentiment is prevalent in the UK. Actions by several governments in Europe – notably France, Greece, Hungary and Poland – seemed to be used by UK tabloids as confirming the validity of their anti-Roma stance. Reactions to news events such as these very quickly run through the Roma community and reinforce existing attitudes. It confirms, in the mind of many Roma, that they are right not to trust anyone from outside their own community.

The governments of Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic have refused to comply with rulings from the European Court of Human Rights ordering them to alter policies and laws which were found to be discriminatory towards Roma, even since they acceded to full membership of the European Union. In these countries people who hold government positions or work in public agencies believe the views that they express towards Roma are not racist, just factual. Even France, with Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité, has taken action against Roma migrants which appears to contravene European Union law.

This backdrop means that the worker on the ground, be they from Housing, Education, the police, Health, etc. is unlikely to know for certain that they are working with Roma because most Roma will not tell you they are Roma. They believe if they simply say they are from Slovakia or the Czech Republic then you will not discriminate against them. When someone from a UK agency makes contact with a Roma family with the intention of helping, they may interpret the lack of welcome as having something to hide. Many adults in the Roma community are barely literate in their first language. Attempts to communicate in writing may well fail because the letter, even if translated well – and Google Translate does not convert well from English to Czech – may be ignored. Then the health worker will say something like ‘We’ve sent them appointment letters but they don’t turn up’. The landlord will say ‘I sent several letters about the rent arrears and they took no notice’.

Cultural differences may lead to errors of judgement. In many countries the Roma district is essentially a ghetto; Lunik ix near Kosice, for example, where large numbers of Roma live together, isolated from other communities, in squalor. When they come to the UK we may regard their living conditions as overcrowded, but they think they are living in improved surroundings. In Lunik ix the children leave their overcrowded and unsanitary flats to play outside. Nobody is in danger and no nuisance is caused because it is a segregated settlement. The same behaviour in Yorkshire has social services taking children into care because they are ‘neglected’ and neighbours up in arms at perceived anti-social behaviour. The fact that they are used to living in areas where most people are Roma means that in the UK they seek to live in areas where there are already many Roma.

Some agencies may decide they need to communicate in home languages and advertise posts for people who speak Czech or Slovak,

believing that to be the first language. They are then impressed by the number of highly qualified applicants and select one. What has happened is that the advert in English has been seen and understood by Czech or Slovak non-Roma nationals, probably educated to university standard, who can speak Czech, Slovak, Polish, etc. but not Romanes. However, in many cases these Czech or Slovak nationals carry the attitudes towards the Roma community that the Roma have left the country of origin to escape. Radio 4 aired a programme about the Roma community (on 20 December 2013 at 20:00). In the programme a Czech national was interviewed talking in a very disparaging way about the Roma families she was paid supposedly to help. Another example is a secondary school in the south of England with 100 Roma pupils. They employed two Czech and one Slovak support workers. These workers advised the school that most Roma were SEN, segregated the Roma pupils from mainstream classes and provided them with textbooks from special schools in the country of origin. This applied to Roma pupils who had been in mainstream primary classes and had made progress as well as pupils arriving directly from the country of origin. The school accepted this advice as they felt their employees were experts. The net result was that a lot of resources were being devoted to a strategy which, though failing, was perceived to be successful.

Health workers may not realise that certain subjects, which many people find difficult to talk about, are almost totally taboo for Roma, and Roma women will not be comfortable talking about many issues with a male worker.

It seems to be common practice for agencies across the UK to amalgamate the categories, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, into one collective ascription, GRT. This may make certain processes easier to manage such as data collection and presentation. However, although these three groups may share common characteristics, there are enough differences in the needs and attitudes of the three groups to require specific approaches to meeting their needs and to treat them as distinct categories.

Too often, teams who have worked successfully with British and Irish Gypsy and Traveller families have been asked to take on additional work with newly arrived Roma communities with no additional training, time or resources. With current financial restrictions, many teams are diminishing or disappearing and do not have the capacity to take on

more. I have met teachers who think it is not worth putting effort into meeting the needs of newly arrived Roma because 'they will be off in their caravans soon', when they have been forcibly settled for more than 70 years in some cases or never been truly itinerant at all. Their mistake has been to confuse partial knowledge of British Gypsies with our new communities. Therefore, it would seem sensible to think about the possibility of addressing the needs of new Roma communities separately from, and in addition to, the current provision for Gypsies and Travellers.

Actions:

- Ensure everyone in your team/agency knows about Roma culture and history and is capable of identifying specific cultural differences when making judgements or decisions about Roma families/children.
- Ensure everyone in your team/agency understands the differences between the needs of new Roma communities and British and Irish Gypsies and Travellers.
- Vet the attitudes of White Eastern European interpreters before using them.
- Where possible, use people of Roma heritage to act as interpreters and community ambassadors.
- Offer reassurance to Roma that their identity is acknowledged, accepted and respected.
- Think about methods of communication when working with Roma which do not rely on letters (see the section on communication).

Why do many Roma refuse to ascribe as Roma?

Many people believe that it does not matter if Roma migrants do not ascribe as Roma. After all, they have a Czech, Slovak or some other passport, so you can ascribe them as Czech or Slovak. As the Roma are a people without a country it can seem pragmatic to ascribe them according to their passport. I have heard a teacher say, 'It doesn't matter if they tell us if they are Roma or not so long as they are happy in school.' It does actually matter for several reasons. Firstly, how can anyone who is ashamed, embarrassed or feels awkward about

acknowledging their true identity be said to be happy? If they are not ascribed as Roma then they will be ascribed as 'Other White European'. Since Roma are a non-white group, that is bad enough. Many agencies work on a basis of trust and trust does not exist in a context where one party is ashamed to identify themselves accurately. More importantly, it is just rude not to take care about someone's true identity or to acquiesce at someone being embarrassed about their identity.

On a more basic level, how can you match resources to need if you do not know the extent of that need? To address the needs of the newly arrived Roma communities it is essential to know how many there are and where they are. At the moment it is recognised that the official figures for Roma populations in the UK are much lower than the true figures. It is also recognised that these groups have particular needs over and above the generic needs of any new migrant group. However, because the true figures are not known, the correct level of resources has not always been allocated.

I fail to see how any authority or agency can integrate new Roma migrant groups unless they have accurate information about numbers. So, correct and accurate ascription is important. I accept that for some agencies it is more important than others. Friends in housing tell me that the fact that Roma clients do not ascribe as Roma does not prevent them from fully meeting the needs of their families because they still know they are working with Roma and understand the issues. But in education, social services, health and policing it is important not only to know which clients are Roma, but to have won enough trust for the families to identify willingly as Roma.

So how do you encourage Roma to ascribe as Roma?

- On official forms you may use with clients, separate the word 'Roma' away from the classification 'Gypsy, Roma, Traveller' or the 'R' from GRT. Many Roma do not like the term 'Gypsy' for many reasons and there is documentary evidence of this going back to 1832 (Hancock, I. (2002:viii) *We are The Romani People*. University of Hertfordshire Press). The ascriptions GT or Gypsy Traveller can remain on the form, but not in a position where it can cause confusion with the term 'Roma.'
- Offer support when filling in the form. If possible give reassurance that there will be no repercussions if the ascription 'Roma' is used. A

person of Roma heritage is the best choice as an intermediary in helping complete the form.

- Train personnel who frequently hold interviews at which such forms are completed. The way the interview is conducted will have an impact on the likelihood of the correct ascription and relevant information being obtained.
- If someone refuses to ascribe as Roma you must still accept that that is their right. Do not over-insist, but make a note to return to them at a later date to see if they are more ready to ascribe after more contact with you or your organisation. Usually a new form has to be completed if there is a positive subsequent change of mind. It is not acceptable for you to ascribe them as Roma against their wishes just because you know they are Roma.
- Once an individual or an organisation becomes trusted by the Roma community, word spreads and it becomes easier to encourage people to ascribe.
- In Leicester, the police supported the Roma community to provide a Roma-language radio show which was used as a forum to distribute public service information in Roma as well as playing music.

Health

A Mental Health Advocacy Project run by The Roma Support Group found that the Roma community had poor physical health, such as cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, hepatitis B, cardiovascular and respiratory ailments, multiple sclerosis. Their study showed life expectancy for migrant Roma in the UK as being approx. 5–6 years lower than amongst other socially disadvantaged and ethnic minority populations in the UK. They collected statistical data which indicated poor mental health, such as depression, amongst a high number of service users accessing their Health Project.

Some of the obstacles given by migrant Roma included long waiting periods for appointments, inadequate quality of services and language barriers, which were referred to as the most serious problems associated with accessing healthcare in England and Scotland. The lack of provision of culturally sensitive services was seen as another barrier

to community members accessing services. Tobi, Sheridan and Lais (2010) found this applied particularly to the Roma. 'Culturally specific norms and taboos about such subjects as sexual health, homosexuality, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, disability and mental health mean that it is often difficult to discuss these issues openly in front of other community or family members. It can also be inappropriate for women to discuss certain sexual health issues with male health staff. This can lead to these issues being hidden and not addressed. The same study by Tobi, Sheridan and Lais (2010) produced the following testimonies from migrant Roma healthcare users in London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham on their experiences of accessing healthcare. The main points raised included difficulties in accessing local services such as GPs, mental health services, a lack of materials and information to assist the Roma communities in understanding and a lack of awareness on the part of medical staff of the Roma culture and the taboo nature of topics such as learning disabilities and mental health.

'When I go to see GP I never have an interpreter. This is a big problem for us.'

'We do not understand the system and find it difficult to communicate. When we receive letters we do not understand what they mean'.

'Perhaps authorities could create an information package for Roma and other migrants about the services available to them, how they work and how to access them. It would be good if the information was written in simple language and translated into Romanian so people can understand it.'

'Roma adults need education about mental health and disabilities. It cannot be done overnight and authorities must realise that health and especially mental health, learning and other disabilities are taboo subjects amongst Roma. Authorities should be aware that those subjects are very sensitive and if they want to change things they should provide culturally appropriate support for Roma with mental health problems, learning difficulties and other disabilities and for their families. There should be support centres open for Roma with staff aware of the Roma culture.'

In the UK, Hepatitis B is found in very high levels within the Romanian Roma community. Many families only discover they have the infection through routine medical screening after arriving in the UK. Within the migrant Roma community there is a poor understanding of all types of Hepatitis. When first told that they have the disease, patients are often very confused.

Some health professionals in the UK have noted that some extended family groups may present a higher than expected incidence of certain complaints.

Severe hearing loss or totally non-hearing cases are disproportionately high amongst Slovak and some Czech Roma. Across all the national groups the number of Roma suffering from epilepsy is higher than within their national mainstream.

A school in Leicester found a high incidence of dental problems amongst its Roma pupils. Severe toothache was a significant cause of absence. The Roma pupils also showed a higher than usual fear of dentistry. The school persuaded a dentist to take some families of its pupils onto the practice register. Never having been to a dentist is not uncommon.

On a positive note, while migrant Roma report being confused by the system in the UK, they are very positive about the health workers they encounter.

The vast majority of Roma of migrant origin who participated in the 2009 mapping survey reported they were generally happy with healthcare in England, mainly because they had not been subjected to discriminatory treatment on the grounds of their ethnicity. This has been supported by statements made by Roma from Glasgow, Scotland.

Some Roma noted they had been declined healthcare provision in their countries of origin, which, according to them, had never happened to them in England. However, being confused by the health system in the UK can lead to a sudden return to the country of origin to obtain treatment and this leads to term-time absence for children.

How to address medical issues:

- Providing interpreters for individual appointments is time-consuming and expensive. Try block-booking appointments for migrant Roma so the interpreter can cover many families in one session. Deter families from taking children out of school to interpret.

- A Walk-In Centre can arrange blocks of time for an interpreter to be available on a regular basis.
- A resource, such as that mentioned in the school attendance section, could be made to explain the UK system.
- Training for health staff who come into frequent contact with migrant Roma on cultural issues would be beneficial.
- Train Roma heritage workers to encourage their community to enrol at surgeries and to be screened for hepatitis etc.
- Provide access to a female doctor/worker where possible for female patients.

Communication

Many agencies have to communicate with the newly arrived Roma communities. We communicate to give information or obtain information and it is all too easy to take this process for granted. Communication usually takes the form of letters, phone calls, face-to-face interviews in your agency or face-to-face meetings at the homes of the families. If a service provider has not obtained vital information it tends to wait until the information arrives before delivering the service. If the information has been requested in a way the client cannot access or respond to then the process breaks down. Let us look at each method in turn.

Written communication:

Many Roma adults cannot read well in their first language and struggle to read at all in English. They either ignore letters they do not understand or find someone in the community who can translate for them. The helper may be well intentioned but not capable of understanding a complicated letter. Even worse, this can leave them open to exploitation. Cases are known where Roma families have been charged £25 to have a form filled in and it has still been completed badly.

Some interpreters/translators offer their services on the grounds they speak the language, but they have not been trained in aspects of being an interpreter/translator such as respecting confidentiality, not taking sides, etc. Some people turn to online translators. Czech and Slovak are

amongst the hardest languages to learn because of their grammar and word order and no online translator comes close to moving between them and English with any clarity.

The linguistic part of translation is hard to organise, but sometimes the cultural aspect is even more confusing. In Czech schools compulsory attendance starts at the age of 7 and the pupil would attend the same school until the age of 15. Therefore there are no key stages, primary/secondary transition, etc. When schools write letters using these terms, even if the words are translated, the concept means nothing.

Professional translation is expensive and things go on hold during the wait for the translation to be done, so that is another reason not to translate. Here are some examples where standard communication methods failed.

A Roma family in the East Midlands was charged £340 for treatment at the local hospital which should have been free. Language issues led to the mistake which was eventually rectified. Essentially the family had answered yes to a question they did not understand when they should have answered no, and had then signed a form they did not understand. Time – and, therefore, money – were wasted issuing the charge then unpicking it.

Appointments with consultants have been missed because letters had not been understood.

A Roma family in the East Midlands was investigated for money laundering. They had not understood initial letters asking them to clarify certain transactions and so the process went much further than it needed to before they were cleared.

How to improve communication:

- Where written communication will not work, then oral/aural techniques can be tried. Some schools have produced a DVD which presents the UK education system visually and aurally. A separate DVD explains a particular school's own policies and systems. The same DVD can have a sound track available in several languages so people who cannot read can look at the key visuals and listen to the sound in their first language. Parents are given a copy on admission. Any organisation could make such a resource.

- Something similar can be done with blanket letters. Record someone speaking the essential points in a language. A QR code is created for each different language and printed on the letter. The parents can then pass their smartphone over the relevant QR code and listen to the key points in L1. Again, this is not hard to do. This is explained in Appendix 1.
- Workers from any agency could have brief clips on their phone saying: 'Please do not be alarmed but I am ...' to play when a door is answered by someone who seems reluctant to engage.
- One school in Leicester arranges for training for members of the community who are willing to act as interpreters.
- Switchboard systems ('Thank you for calling ... For ... press 1, ...,' etc.) can put off callers with low levels of English and who do not know how to navigate systems. A designated extension phone number which bypasses the switchboard with a voicemail service enables migrant Roma to leave messages which an interpreter can pick up at designated intervals.
- Try and think about cultural requirements. Roma women would wish to communicate with female medical staff about female medical issues, so try to arrange appointments with female workers.
- Here are two links for advice on this area.

Health and Social Care:

<http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/carerslives/aboutcaring/Pages/Jargonbuster.aspx>

Specialist housing language:

<http://www.jrht.org.uk/help-and-resources/jargon-buster>

Housing

Many newly arrived Roma have lived in very poor housing conditions in the country of origin. Therefore, they often view what we might consider to be poor housing conditions as a big improvement on what they have left. Family, including extended family, is very important culturally for migrant Roma. Being poor they can only afford cheap housing.

This kind of accommodation is not usually spacious, and yet has to receive eight or ten members of an extended family. In Roma culture this is not perceived as overcrowding but as normal.

What we refer to as the lounge would serve as a lounge in the day and sleeping area at night.

Obviously, having a large number of people living in a relatively small house has an impact on the possibility of quiet study for homework or space to read. It makes it hard for several children to get ready for school in the morning and therefore, directly impacts on education. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many migrant Roma have no tenancy agreement, making them vulnerable to eviction and excessive rents. Having low levels of literacy means they sign unfair agreements without appreciating the consequences. New changes to benefits will reduce the capacity of migrant Roma to mitigate the impact of paying exorbitant rents through housing benefit.

The 2009 mapping survey found that as a result of poverty many Roma families live in sub-standard accommodation, often shared with other families. Some are destitute which makes it harder to improve their environment. Severe overcrowding often leads to poor health and low school attendance. 63% of migrant Roma were living in extended families. Overcrowding is a very serious issue, especially in poorer households of Romanian and some eastern Slovak Roma. The average number of people living in a household was six. However, if broken down by nationalities, on average ten people lived in Romanian and



Luník IX Slovakia February 2012. -20°. Water, gas and electricity switched off in blocks of flats with many missing windows, obliging residents to collect water daily from a bowser.

Bulgarian Roma households, as opposed to the Czech, Slovak, Polish and Hungarian Roma homes, which have an average of four people per household.

Romanian Roma were particularly vulnerable: one respondent said there were 27 people sharing accommodation in the same house; other Romanian Roma respondents reported 17, 16, 14 and 13 people per household respectively. Another consequence is that certain agencies, applying UK norms and lacking the knowledge needed to take into account the background of Roma clients, will make decisions which, though understandable, are incorrect.

Actions

One authority has taken the following action:

LeicesterLet home finder scheme

- The LeicesterLet home finder scheme provides people on a low income with the opportunity to move into a home of their choice and to avoid homelessness AND a stay in temporary accommodation.
- By providing the advice, support and financial help required, the Council has increased the housing options available to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- Managed by the Council's Housing Options Prevention Team, the home finder scheme is very flexible. It can be used, for example, to prevent private tenants from becoming homeless by helping them to find alternative accommodation when their existing tenancy is coming to an end.
- The scheme also offers great benefits to landlords or letting agents. Leicester City Council will provide the deposit and rent in advance to a landlord or letting agent in order to obtain accommodation for a client in the private rented sector.
- Before a property can be let under the home finder scheme, the Council will carry out a series of checks to ensure that it is affordable, safe and fit for habitation.

- An officer from the Housing Options Prevention Team will inspect the property to check that it is in a reasonable condition. If there is a gas supply, they will request a valid gas safety certificate.
- Under the LeicesterLet home finder scheme, letting agreements will normally be assured shorthold tenancies of at least 12 months.
- Although not everyone helped under the home finder scheme is living on a low income, applicants will only be considered for the scheme if the Housing Options Prevention Team is satisfied that they are capable of paying their rent regularly and in full.
- If the tenant is entitled to housing benefit, all of the housing benefit they receive will be paid directly to the landlord unless the landlord says that they are unwilling to accept direct payments.
- If they are eligible for public assistance, homeless/threatened with homelessness, or need support to prevent homelessness they then could access STAR Private Sector Team or P3 for Floating Support, which means they could have a worker to support them with housing-related issues, on a one-to-one basis for up to 6 months.

This kind of action supports the work of other agencies. For example, schools will benefit if families are not moving around frequently, necessitating a move of school. Some families struggle to budget, so having the landlord paid directly helps too.

For more information on the scheme, contact:
 Housing Options
 Phoenix House
 1 King Street
 Leicester, LE1 6RN (public access via Welford Place)
 Tel: 0116 454 1008

Policing

Some of our new Roma communities do not have good memories of police forces in the country of origin and unfortunately they are likely to treat police with suspicion and even fear in the UK. Peterborough Constabulary has an officer of Czech Roma heritage and he is a good source of advice for the community and police forces alike.

Spinney Hill Police station in Leicester has put a lot of work into engaging with the Roma community in Leicester. In Leicester, the feeling is that the Roma community are not involved more than any other community in serious crime. The focus seems to be around perceived anti-social behaviour and infractions of laws connected to the keeping of motor vehicles out of ignorance. The anti-social behaviour is mainly gathering in groups on street corners, which is what would happen in the country of origin without causing offence as their community would be isolated. There is ignorance of the requirement to take a UK driving test and the need to change your insurance after a certain period of time in the UK. If a Roma family makes a complaint to the police, they can sometimes have an unrealistic expectation of the outcome. For example, they may complain about a fight in school and not understand that the police would want the school to be given an opportunity first to resolve the situation.

Suggested actions:

- Have brief videos on police officers phones in Czech or Slovak saying something along the lines of: 'Do not be alarmed by my uniform. I am making routine inquiries.'
- Provide training to police officers about cultural and background information on Roma communities. (Include matters such as when it would be appropriate to use a female interpreter rather than a male.)
- Invite police officers to cultural/social events.
- Allocate an officer to be available, wherever possible, to this community.
- Contact Peterborough to seek advice from their Roma officer. He is a founding member of GRTPA (The Gypsy Roma Traveller Police Association) which seeks to foster good relationships between UK police forces and GRT communities.
- Leicestershire Police provided support to the Roma community in Leicester to run a Roma-language radio programme for 2 hours a week, which was appreciated by the community.
- If there are sub-committees for community engagement, seek some Roma representation.

Appendix 4: Miscellaneous

Roma communities

I have been referring to the Roma community, but in reality the Roma is not one homogeneous group but a series of different communities collectively classed as Roma. From the west of the Czech Republic to the most isolated rural parts of Romania is a long way, with many Roma families. Some Roma families would cross the street to avoid certain other Roma families. Even those claiming to speak Romanes will speak widely differing dialects. Therefore, in the UK you do not just have to seek a Roma interpreter, but one who can communicate with the particular version of Romanes required. Using the success of one family to inspire another family might not be welcome!

Many, but not all, Roma marry young. For many young women, early motherhood effectively means an end to education and career prospects. In the country of origin the age of consent may be lower than in the UK. One school addresses this with specialist careers advice directed at Roma girls. The head teacher of the school, who knows all about combining motherhood and a career, spoke at one of the school's coffee mornings with a group of Roma mothers about this. She was careful not to imply that being a young mother was wrong, but concentrated on how to combine continuing with education and motherhood. Roma girls were taken on a tour of the local university to raise aspirations.

Roma are often demonised as having a higher tendency to criminality (see Nigel Farage, 23 April 2013). It is unsurprising if a suppressed and discriminated against people living in poverty and despised by people around them turn to petty crime to survive. However, many Roma are very hurt by the stereotype and are proud of what they perceive as their own particular dignified struggle against adversity. It is no longer acceptable to have preconceptions about someone purely based on knowing what their ethnic origin is. The vast majority of Roma I know, in the UK and in Eastern Europe, are law-abiding and very respectful. They may expect to be treated badly but prefer to avoid engaging in dialogue about this. In the UK they may inadvertently break the law through ignorance and then struggle with the concept that ignorance is no excuse in the eyes of the law. For example, they may not know that they

can only rely on car insurance provided by a company in Slovakia for a limited time in this country.

Again, the Roma community is often accused of anti-social behaviour (see Clegg and Blunkett, November 2013). Gathering together on street corners is cultural and not frowned upon in the country of origin where most Roma live in closed communities and there is no one else to offend. The behaviour which proved so antagonistic in Yorkshire had been addressed very simply in Leicester by using a community ambassador to explain to the community that there was a problem with this behaviour here. (See BBC East Midlands Today, 18 December 2013, presented by Jeremy Ball.)

Multi-agency working

Roma families can be known to several agencies but often those agencies do not share information. In Leicester, one school has been particularly successful at engaging with the Roma community. Part of the success has been down to the fact that the school invites other agencies (housing, health, police, DWP) into school to meet parents and families and make use of the trust the community has in the school to help the community access other services. The school benefits because poor health, overcrowding and lack of money/resources are barriers to education which the school cannot completely address alone. The school's home/school Roma liaison officer attends these meetings and this can save translation costs for the other agencies. Half-termly coffee mornings have become a sort of one-stop shop for the community.

The school gained all sorts of benefits and so did the other agencies, who were able to engage with the Roma community more easily and meet their needs. The police, having attended a meeting at the school, provided facilities for a Roma-language radio programme once a week which in turn helped the police to form good relations with the community. One pupil has now set his heart on becoming a policeman in the UK and has time to apply himself to obtaining the necessary qualifications. The school was able to raise queries about housing agreements for some families and so it goes on.

Compare this with a case which made national headlines of a Roma family where children were taken into care because well-intentioned

social workers had not had the opportunity to take cultural differences into account. Just prior to this I had toured Slovakia and the Czech Republic to present best practice in working with Roma communities with a colleague from the education department of the same authority. My colleague had had no opportunity to share her knowledge across her authority.

It does not have to be a school which takes the lead, but I feel passionately that education is the key player in addressing all issues with the Roma community in the long term.

Appendix 5: Further reading

If you wish to find out more about Roma history and culture:

We are the Romani People by Ian Hancock, published 2002.

I met Lucky People by Yaron Matras, published Jan 2014.

For DfE documentation on new migrant Roma communities in education:

‘The Inclusion of GRT Children and Young People’. DfE 2008.

‘Improving the outcomes for GRT pupils: final report’. Research Report DfE-RR043 DfE, 2011, Anne Wilkin, Chris Derrington, Richard White, Kerry Martin, Brian Foster, Kay Kinder and Simon Rutt. (Note: This focuses mainly on indigenous GRT but does refer to new migrant Roma communities.)

‘Overcoming barriers: Ensuring that Roma children are fully engaged and achieving in education’. Ofsted, December 2014.

Documentation from UK LAs:

What’s Working for Roma in School: A Network Learning Book by Jane Murphy in partnership with 6 Manchester schools. The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust, 2013. (Focuses on the new migrant Roma communities)

Other Relevant Reports:

Andrew Ryder and Sarah Cemlyn (2014) *Civil Society Monitoring on the Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy in the United Kingdom, 2012-13*. Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation.

Philip Brown, Lisa Scullion and Philip Martin (2014) *Migrant Roma in the United Kingdom: population size and experiences of local authorities and partners*. University of Salford, Manchester.

Lucie Fremlova and Heather Ureche (2009) *Mapping Survey of Roma in England*. European Dialogue.

Lucie Fremlova and Heather Ureche (2009) *New Roma Communities in England*. European Dialogue.

Lucie Fremlova (2011) *From Segregation to Inclusion*. Roma Education Fund/Equality.