

The Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP) is based at Edinburgh University and funded by the Scottish Executive Education Department. Its remit is to support inclusive educational approaches for Gypsies and Travellers. This STEP newsletter is the first in an occasional series.

'STOP BULLYING NOW!

A guide for Gypsy and Traveller children'

This colourful, child-friendly, pocket-sized guide suggests ways for Gypsy and Traveller pupils and their families to respond to incidents of bullying. It was produced by teachers of Gypsy and Traveller children and the Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP), at the University of Edinburgh.

Bullying is when someone hurts a child by what they say or do to the child, and is different from normal everyday falling out among children. The leaflet recognises that bullying evokes distress and anger. It assures Gypsy and Traveller families of their right to be shown respect at school for their lifestyles, beliefs and customs. It recognises that racist bullying hurts the whole family and should be reported to the school.

Children have the right:

- to be educated
- to be treated in a fair and friendly way, going to and coming from school and at school
- to have their reports of bullying taken seriously by their school

Gypsy and Traveller pupils and families are encouraged to ask the school for its support

and to see its policy on bullying. It is a school's duty to provide this help. The leaflet provides the numbers of telephone helplines that parents and children can use for support.

Gypsies and Travellers in Scotland experience frequent racist harassment and bullying in and out of school. Many people in Scotland do not realise that the words they use to describe Gypsies and Travellers may be offensive or that they are racist. Children in school often repeat words that they have heard their parents or older children use and which reflect long standing racism and prejudice in their communities. Recent research in Scotland showed consistent unpleasant bullying of Gypsy and Traveller pupils in school, which is not always recognised by their teachers.

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STOP BULLYING NOW!

A guide for Gypsy and Traveller children

Leaflets can be obtained from:
Scottish Traveller Education Programme,
The University of Edinburgh,
Holyrood Road
EH8 8AQ

What does STEP do?

STEP aims to:

- improve the educational opportunities of Gypsies and Travellers in Scotland
- listen to and represent the views about education of Gypsy and Traveller children, young people and parents
- encourage the development of a wide, diverse and flexible range of educational opportunities for Gypsies and Travellers
- promote the development of inclusive practices both to support diversity in education and to address racism, harassment and bullying
- enable all those engaged in education to know and respect historical cultural traditions as well as contemporary cultural practices and living circumstances of Gypsies and Travellers
- support and promote inter-agency working which acknowledges the links between education, housing, health and other key social services

To achieve these aims, the staff of STEP will:

- provide information, advice and support to professionals engaged in enabling the education of Gypsies and Travellers
- monitor and review educational resources
- maintain a resource library
- carry out research and develop a research base for practice
- respond to Government and other reports
- highlight issues to do with the education of Gypsies and Travellers in proposed legislation and in policy documents
- develop and maintain links with colleagues in the rest of the UK and internationally
- communicate information through:
 - print and online material including leaflets, newsletters and a web site
 - hosting conferences
 - writing research reports and articles
 - speaking at conferences and in-service training
 - meeting with colleagues throughout Scotland

STEP Staff

Gwynedd Lloyd, Director of STEP began her teaching career with young people in trouble in and out of school. She has researched and written books and articles about different aspects of inclusion and exclusion from school, including disciplinary exclusion, supporting pupils with SEBD, young women in trouble, ADHD and also has published work with a specific focus on the educational inclusion and exclusion of Gypsies and Travellers in Scotland. You can contact her on 01316516445 or at Gwynedd.Lloyd@ed.ac.uk

Gillean McCluskey, Policy and Information Officer, before training as a teacher, worked in housing. She has worked with excluded and vulnerable young people in a range of settings, both in and out of schools. She is currently working towards a research degree on 'exclusion from school; young people's views'. You can contact her direct on Mondays and Thursdays at 0131 651 6428 or anytime on Gillean.McCluskey@education.ed.ac.uk

Pauline Padfield, Research Fellow, came to STEP at the end of the year 2000, after finishing doctoral research into the question 'why are more boys than girls excluded from school?' Her background prior to that was in sociology and history at The University of Edinburgh. Her research at STEP has examined the provision of laptop computers and other ICT peripherals for teachers and pupils working in out of school settings, which included provision for Gypsy/Traveller learners. Currently, with Betty Jordan, she is evaluating the SchoolsOutGlasgow.net project, and mapping the enrolment, attendance and attainment of Gypsy/Traveller learners in Scottish education.

If you would like to contact Pauline the best way is through email (pauline.padfield@ed.ac.uk) or by tel. 0131 651 6440 on Wednesdays and Thursdays each week.

Jen Ross, Administrator, has a background in literature, publishing and web design. She is in the office on Thursdays, and can be reached on 0131 651 6444, or at step@education.ed.ac.uk

What's on the Web for Young Gypsies and Travellers?

www.comelookatus.org

This website has been designed by young Scottish Gypsy Travellers. It is full of useful and fun information and very accessible.

www.Gypsy-Traveller/cyberpilots

This is a UK website for young people and also has a very positive and fun approach. It is full of games and information.

CRE Consultation

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) has been consulting about its new strategy for Gypsies and Travellers. This sets out its work in relation to Gypsies and Travellers over the next three years. The chair of the CRE said -

'The launch of this consultation is a major step forward for the CRE in trying to find out more about and act upon the appalling levels of discrimination faced by Gypsies and Travellers. For this group, Great Britain is still like the American Deep South for black people in the 1950s.

Extreme levels of public hostility exist in relation to Gypsies and Travellers – fuelled in part by irresponsible media reporting of the kind that would be met with outrage if it was targeted at any other ethnic group. We know that the levels of discrimination they face cut across all indices of deprivation and discrimination. This applies to availability and quality of accommodation, educational attainment, health status, employment profile and contact with the criminal justice system.'

STEP welcomes this strategy while encouraging the CRE to look in more detail at how it can be delivered within the Scottish education system. The consultation can be found at:

http://www.cre.gov.uk/media/nr_arch/2003/nr031027.html

Educating Occupational Traveller Children in Glasgow

90% of the Occupational Traveller Community has their winter base in Glasgow. These are families who work in Shows and Fairgrounds although many have diversified into hot food outlets and amusement arcades.

The children are lively and articulate and respond well to any support offered either directly in school from the Occupational Traveller Support Service or initiatives like the Supported Study Scheme. This helps pupils catch up on direct teaching and update assessments.

Earlier this year a lap-top trial for distance learning was piloted with two S3/S4 Occupational Traveller pupils. Plans are being made to investigate the feasibility of extending this city wide.

Sally Brown, Glasgow Council

What is TENET?

TENET (Traveller Education Network) is an informal forum where teachers and managers from the various Traveller Education services in Scotland can meet to discuss issues...and keep one another sane! We exchange news, show new resources including IT (such as Kar2ouche), catch up on the movements or likely movements of pupils we have worked with and respond collectively to SEED consultation documents etc. Although STEP is the heart (and some would say the brains) of the Network, we meet in other parts of Scotland as well, approximately once a term. The meetings are prepared and chaired by whoever is the host, and good lunch arrangements generally come into it! Without TENET, Traveller teachers would feel very isolated indeed and wheels would constantly be being reinvented all over Scotland. Traveller children are the ultimate beneficiaries, because thanks to the Network their teachers feel supported, well-informed...and relatively sane!

David Watson, Fife Council

Being a Traveller by Lavarne

I like being a Traveller, because I can have two lives. I mean, like I can live in a house and live in a trailer too. I like going to primary school but I would not like to go to high school because some people does not like us Travellers, not all, I mean just some. Sometimes I go out working with my Daddy doing trees. And when I'm not I help my Mammy clean up. We go away in the trailer to England and Scotland and when we go away we stay in bits of ground. I go in the trailer to Appleby fair and I like going there because there is lots of things to do there. What we do is go away in the trailer in the summer and come back in the winter to our house.

My Mammy is a Christian and we once went to London to a mission. What they do there is sing to God. I am not a Christian, me and my cousin just walked about. Both my parents are Travellers.

Lavarne was a pupil supported by a Traveller education support service.

Schools Update

New attendance regulations. The Scottish Executive's new circular on 'School Attendance and Absence C5/03 has some guidance in the 'addendum' issued in September 2003 which affects how schools record attendance for children of Traveller families. This advice is useful because it recognizes the distinctive patterns of many Traveller families. It states that when pupils from Traveller families are on the roll of a school and their travelling is 'sanctioned' by the school this should be marked in the register as 'authorised absence'. It also states clearly that for 'lessons outside school premises', eg by Traveller Support teachers children should be marked 'present'. The relevant sections are reproduced below.

EXTRACT:
Alternative/Off-site Provision as Part of a Learning Programme

7. Pupils attending alternative/off-site provision as part of a learning programme (not necessarily in relation to indiscipline) should be marked either present or absent within that provision, and information transferred to the school. This means that schools should liaise with alternative providers to ensure that attendance is recorded and monitored for the entirety of each pupil's learning programme, as it is for pupils whose learning programme is entirely within the formal school curriculum. This will involve periodic collection of attendance data from alternative providers to update schools' own records for these pupils.

8. This form of recording will ensure greater accuracy than if schools simply categorised pupil attendance at alternative provision as authorised absence.

Off-site Provision for Children of Travelling Families

9. In keeping with paragraph 5 of Circular 5/03, the category of attendance should further include off-site provision for children of travelling families, provided they are on the roll of the school. Participation in lessons outside school premises should therefore be classified as attendance, and the children marked present.

Authorised Absence in Relation to Children of Travelling Families

10. Circular No 5/03 included sanctioned extended absence in relation to the children of travelling families within the categories of both authorised absence (paragraph 10) and extended leave with parental consent (paragraph 11). This addendum rectifies this situation.

Sanctioned extended absence in relation to children of travelling families should be included in the category of authorised absence. The inclusion of such sanctioned extended absence in the category of extended leave with parental consent should be disregarded.

Inclusive Educational Approaches for Gypsies and Travellers

'**Inclusive Educational Approaches for Gypsies and Travellers** within the context of interrupted learning'. This Guidance for local authorities and schools was published in 2003 by STEP and Learning and Teaching Scotland. It was written within the context of the social inclusion agenda – 'a Scotland where every child matters, where every child regardless of their family background, has the best possible start in life'. It offers advice on issues of interrupted learning, on the background to the need for action, and how to improve practice in this important area.

National Conference

March 19th Including Gypsies and Travellers in Education

10 am Moray House School of Education

There is no cost for attendance as the Conference is funded by SEED

Further information from:

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or email: step@education.ed.ac.uk

or online at: www.education.ed.ac.uk/STEP