




# the Traveller Movement

## MISSION AND CORE VALUES PRESENTATION

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities are minority ethnic groups that have contributed to British society for centuries. It is reported that there are over 300,000 GRT Travellers in the UK and they are well recognized as one of the most disadvantaged minority ethnic groups in areas of health, life expectancy, educational attainment, democratic representation and career opportunities.



@GypsyTravellerM



The Traveller Movement



The Traveller Movement

# Who We Are

OUR WORK AND BACKGROUND

---

The Traveller Movement (TM) is an award winning leading national charity committed to the fulfilment of human rights for ethnic minority Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) people.

We deliver work in a variety of areas including:  
Researching and reporting, lobbying policy makers, campaigning for change, providing access to justice, community development, advocacy services, economic inclusion.

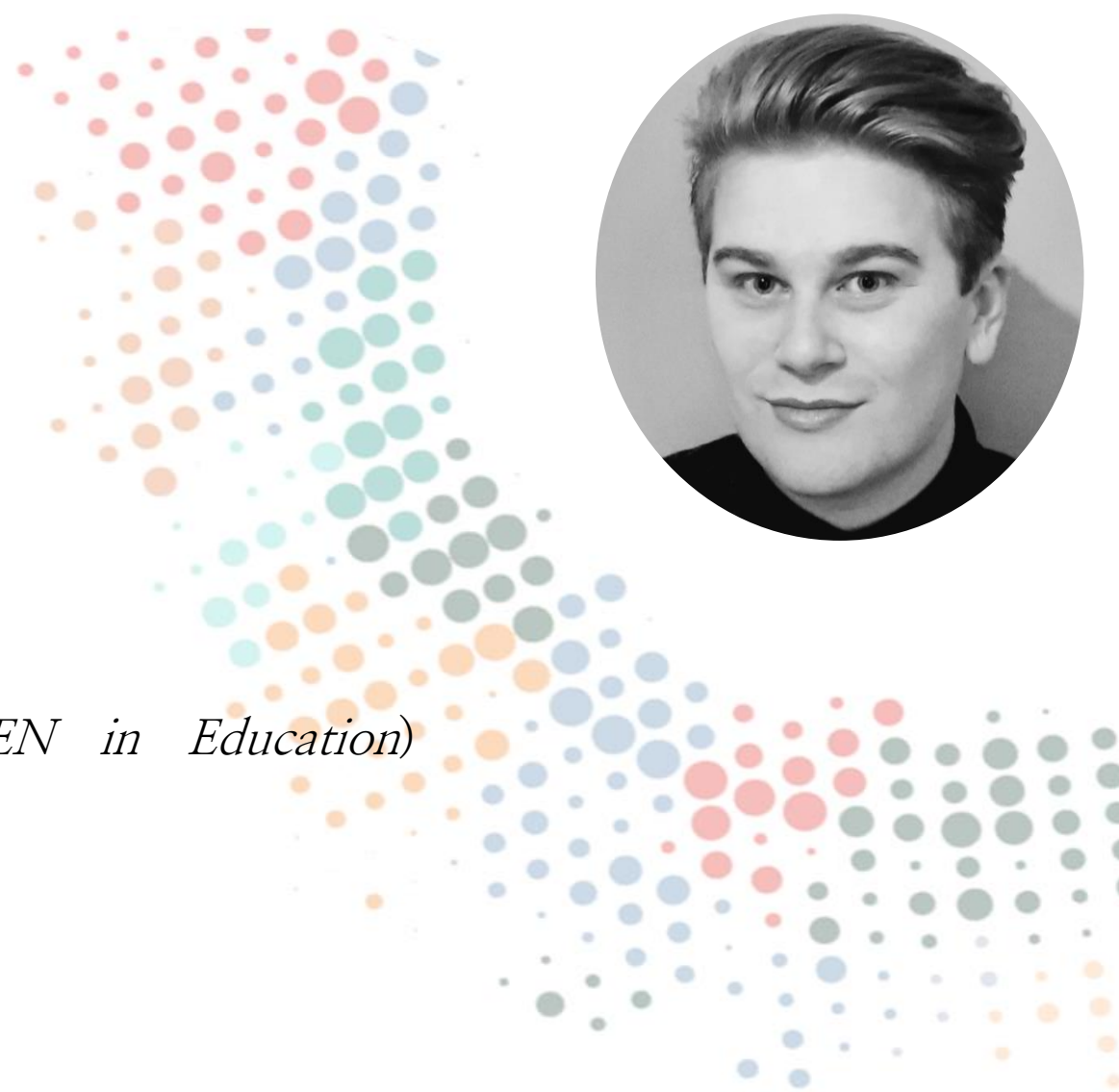


# Who Am I?

Declan O'Driscoll

EDUCATION POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS OFFICER

- 
- Lobbying Government for change
  - Creating reports (i.e. *GRT Children with SEN in Education*)
  - Conducting research and analysing data
  - Producing press briefings/ hosting events
  - Casework/ advocacy
- 
- Trustee of Fareham Academy Trust – *Chair of Finance, Audit and Risk*
- Core areas: Finance, Policies, Equalities and Attendance*



# Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children and Young People in Education

---

## Overview of Presentation

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities face systemic and institutional barriers in education in exclusion rates, attainment and experiences of discrimination. This impacts on their outcomes in health, wellbeing, employment, economic inclusion, financial security and involvement with the criminal justice system. This experience is echoed in the experiences of many BAME families in this country. Yet this government is seeking to weaponise ethnicity to fuel discord in their relentless culture wars. We cannot let this happen and must find ways to stand in solidarity.





# Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community Background

---

What are the realities of being GRT  
in the UK?

"Travellers experience a 6.6 times higher suicide rate when compared with non-Travellers, accounting for approximately 11% of all Traveller deaths"

"91% of Travellers report being discriminated against based on their ethnicity"

"Traveller life expectancy is 10-12 years less than the rest of the population"

"Travellers account for just 0.1% of the UK population, but account for 6 and 7% of UK male and female prisoners respectively"

"50% of Travellers die before their 39th Birthday"



# Discrimination in Education

What do we know is happening  
schools?

---

- Cases of discrimination and bullying occurred at every level of the education system, from pre-school to university.
- The most prevalent areas where respondents described discrimination were:
  - ❖ Bullying by other pupils (e.g. name calling: gypsy, pikey, tinker etc.)
  - ❖ Students (and parents) hiding ethnicity
  - ❖ The conduct of teachers
  - ❖ Perpetuating stereotypes (e.g. that all gypsies and travellers are criminals.)
  - ❖ Poor engagement with parents
  - ❖ Overlooking bullying and racism



**70%** 

.....

**said they had experienced  
discrimination of some  
form in education**

---

# Advocacy

EDUCATION ADVOCACY SUPPORT TEAM

---

The Traveller Movement offer support with any of the following issues:

- School exclusions
- Elective home education
- Special Educational Needs (EHCP)
- Racist bullying/ race discrimination
- Referral for legal advice

We also provide expert advice and support to educators, policymakers and schools. Please get in touch if you would like to discuss your concerns.



# Are Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities a 'Race?'

The short answer is Yes

Under the Equality Act 2010 the protected characteristic 'Race' is broken down into 3 sub-categories to include;

- Colour
- Nationality
- Ethnic and national origins (*This includes all Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people*)

A significant issue GRT people face is that it is not widely known that they are a protected group under UK law and the discrimination they face is unlawful. Under the law discrimination against GRT people and people of colour is the same thing







# Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

S.149 EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 established a single Public Sector Equality Duty<sup>2</sup> (PSED) on all public bodies, including schools.

The PSED has three main elements, which is to carry out their functions by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

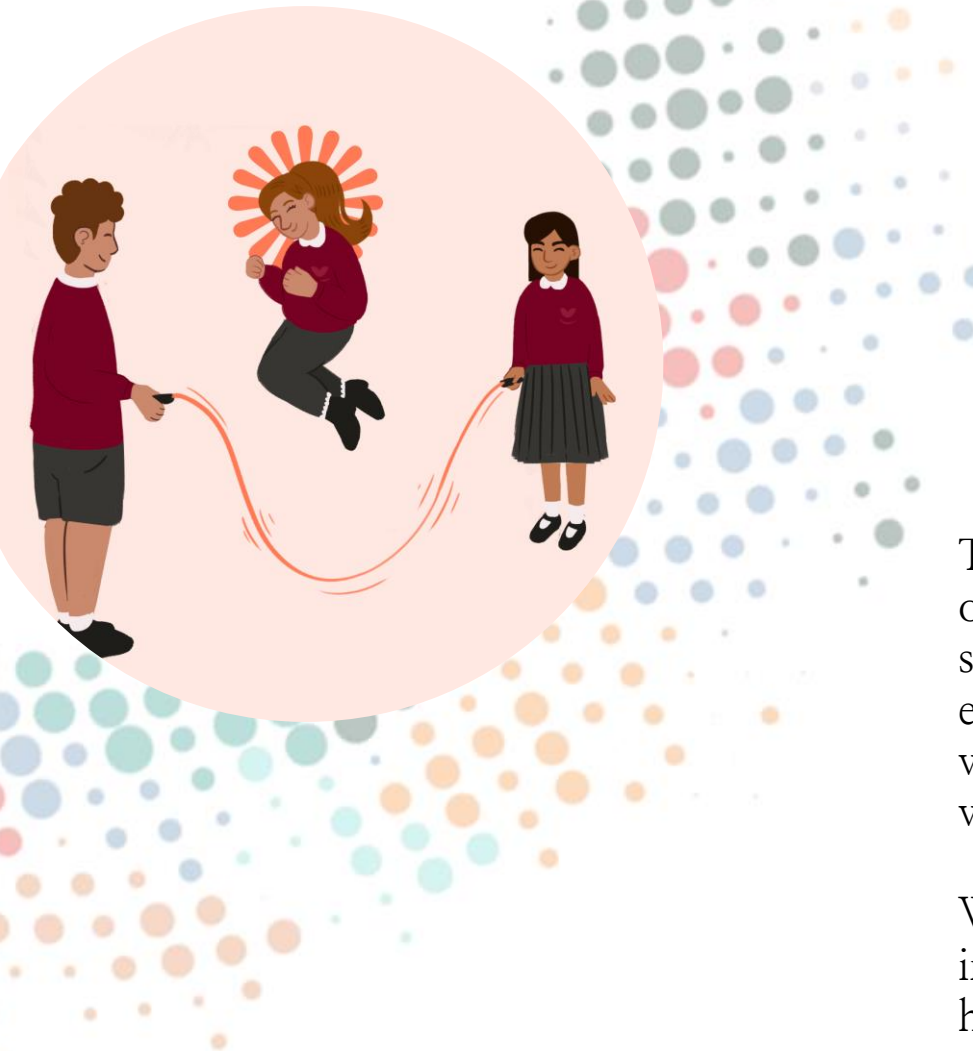
# Issues with the PSED

## VISION AND PROJECTED OUTPUT

---

- Government do not monitor or test schools' performance in relation to their equality duties
- Severe issue around racist incidents and bullying reporting – we need this to understand what is happening in our schools so we can fix the problem
- The equality is vague – It does not go into detail
- GDPR and data capture are not accurate and schools are often apprehensive to obtain and use data for fear of complaints/ legal action – also children and parents are afraid to list themselves as GRT for fear of bullying/ discrimination





# Education Information & Support Website

---

This website is designed to assist GRT families navigate all areas of education in a way that is accessible, approachable and specific. Making families aware of their legal rights and entitlements, helping build individual and community capacity, as well as build confidence and digital inclusion is at the heart of what this website aims to achieve.

We want GRT families to feel empowered to challenge the injustices they face in educational settings and have a voice on how educational providers operate.

The education we receive guides our future opportunities and it is unreservedly right that GRT families receive the same good level of education as everyone else.

This website builds upon our existing Education Advice and Advocacy Support Unit. Our desire is for GRT families to have an accepting and understanding space to seek information and



# Education Information & Support

- [Education Information for GRT](#)
- [Support for GRT Families](#)
- [News](#)
- [Support GRT Children in Education](#)
- [About Us](#)

# Welcome to the Traveller Movement's Education Information & Support Website

Supporting Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Families in the UK to Navigate Education







# Our Advice For Schools

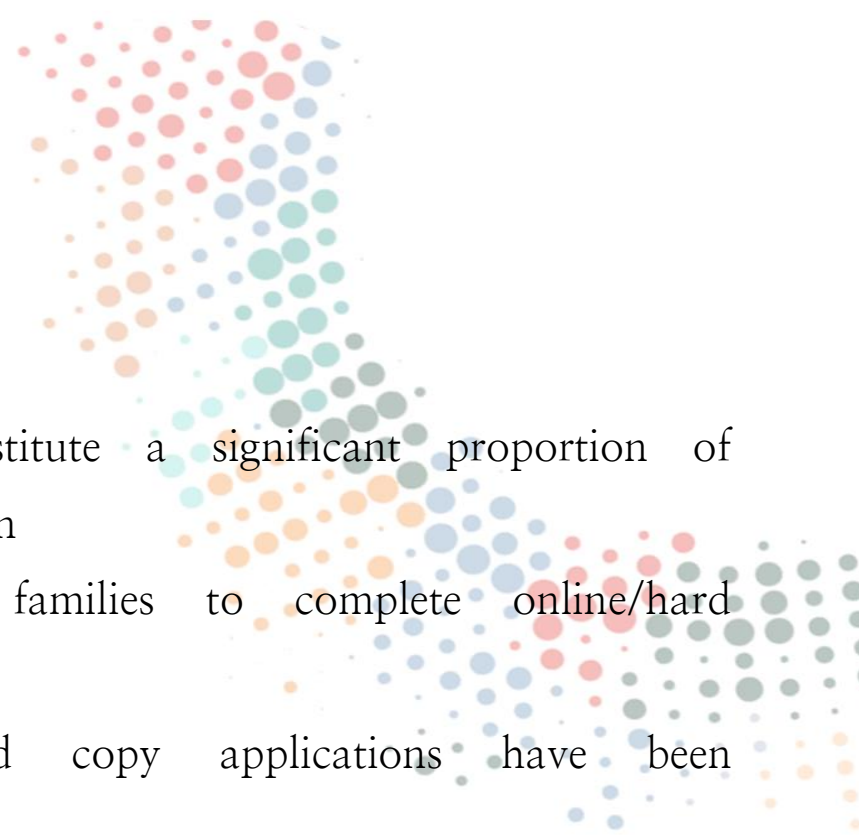
GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE FOR IMPROVING  
OUTCOMES FOR GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER  
CHILDREN IN EDUCATION

---

# What Did We Find?

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE FOR IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR GYPSY,  
ROMA AND TRAVELLER CHILDREN IN EDUCATION

- School admissions, transfers and requests for school transport constitute a significant proportion of TMs casework each year, indicating high levels of digital exclusion
- Overworked local authorities often lack the resources to assist families to complete online/hard copy applications
- Schools often refuse to engage with families until online/hard copy applications have been submitted
- Parents often lack the confidence to engage proactively with schools, often due to their own negative school experiences
- Discrimination affects the vast majority of families that we assist
- School exclusions are often given as a first rather than a last resort, and are frequently given to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Most schools lack the resources to support children with SEN
- Academy schools only respond to the threat of legal action
- Funding for school uniforms, lack of funding for school uniforms causes many families distress





# GRT Case Studies


*'People will never forget how you made them*  
Maya Angelou



## Case Study 1 – School Exclusion


- A Traveller girl, aged 5 with severe diagnosed ADHD was excluded in her second week of reception.
- The exclusion followed persistent disruption in class with the 5-year-old girl unable to remain in her seat and carry out instructions fully without distraction.
- At no stage did the school carry out assessments for further SEND, make reasonable adjustments for her ADHD diagnosis, or consider attempting to gain an EHCP for the child.





## Case Study 2 – SEND & EHCP

- A mother contacted us about her 14-year-old son falling behind at school. The mother had highlighted concerns about her son's ability and challenges to the school on many occasions, but the school did not take her seriously. He also presented with wider social issues for which he had been bullied by other pupils.
- To resolve the above issues the school placed the boy on a part-time timetable, where he finished before lunch. No extra help or lessons were provided to assist the boy in improving his education.
- Upon approaching the school to consider an EHCP, they stated that it is too complicated and will not be provided. The school cited that the lack of progress was due the mother not assisting her 14-year-old son with homework, even though the mother is illiterate, with the school being aware.



## Case Study 3 – Racist Bullying

- A mother contacted us regarding a situation where her daughter's teacher had asked to see her outside class before religion class. He had said to her that they were going to talk about Travellers, and asked if that was alright?
- During the class, the teacher asked the pupils what they think or know about Travellers. This question was asked without context and the answers from the other children were all negative stereotypes.
- The teacher didn't challenge any of the stereotypes, instead put on Channel 4's *'My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding'* for the rest of the class.
- Since this class, the girl has been repeatedly bullied by her classmates. The content of the bullying is based on stereotypes perpetuated by the show.



# Our Best Practices Findings

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE FOR IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER CHILDREN IN EDUCATION

- These schools make extra effort in building relationships and welcoming the parents of the GRT pupils
- These schools are aware of topics that GRT parents might be sensitive about and willing to discuss those with them
- These schools accommodate parents with low literacy skills
- $\frac{3}{4}$  of these schools have had GRT TA's or Interns who act as a link between the school and the families
- These schools include Gypsy, Roma and Traveller history and culture in their curricula
- These schools tackle bullying proactively, and GRT children are not disproportionately targeted than any other children in these schools.



# THANK YOU

Please contact us if you have any questions

Declan O'Driscoll

[education@travellermovement.org.uk](mailto:education@travellermovement.org.uk)

07949 533 342

Phone Number

020 7607 2002

Website

[travellermovement.org.uk](http://travellermovement.org.uk)

Email Address

[info@travellermovement.org.uk](mailto:info@travellermovement.org.uk)