

Support for Traveller pupils - Roads to Explore

GRT History Month an Opportunity to Consider Raising Aspirations?

GRT History Month provides schools with the opportunity to focus on raising aspirations for Traveller Children. Unfortunately, the 2022 GCSE Headlines tell us that White Gypsy and Roma pupils had the lowest score of all ethnic groups. Only 14.4% of Traveller of Irish Heritage achieved a Grade 5 in maths and English and only 8.5% of Gypsy/Roma [Gov UK GCSE Results 2022 by Ethnicity](#). Maybe this could be the perfect time for your school to focus on raising aspirations and finding out about your Traveller children's hopes and dreams for their future?

The Office for National Statistics captured information from the 2021 census data in the report Gypsies' and Travellers' Lived Experiences, education and employment, England and Wales 2022. One of the participants who was interviewed expressed:

"...Give us a chance on different things, give us a chance at being doctor, give us a chance of being a nurse. There's people out there that want to be nurses, like not all of us want to do scrap or block paving or roofing or things."

Male, aged 50 to 60 years, roadside

Roads to Explore

The Traveller Education Support team (part of EMTAS) have the privilege of working with Traveller pupils and their families. Therefore, we are often able to listen to their hopes for the future. Our experience tells us that the children we work with do want to be successful and often have clear plans for their future adult lives.

In 2021 we began to put together some simple sessions that could support children to focus on their future. We came up with a group of activities called Roads to Explore.

The Roads to Explore sessions give students an opportunity to focus on their current school experience, the people who are role models and supportive to them. Also, it gives them a chance to think about how school relates to their future world of work and to consider researching the kinds of skills and experience they will need to acquire to get to where they want to go.

The TES team have trialled the sessions with small groups of children including a group at Shipley Primary School and pupils at Steyning Grammar School and Downlands Community School. From the sessions we have run so far, we have seen real benefits to allowing the children time to focus on what they would like to do in the future. Through the work the children expressed interests that school staff had not previously been aware of. This enabled staff to support the child moving forward.



The sessions also gave the children an opportunity to share their expertise on their culture. One Year 10 child began to teach the school staff member Romany because of the sessions and wanted to plan a display and an assembly. A Year 8 child shared that he did really want to stay in school and hoped that one day he would be able to go to college. We were able to help him to look at the types of courses that could be available and the entry requirements.

The younger children were very focused on how they could help and work within their existing family businesses. They were keen to develop skills that would help to grow these businesses and future proof them. At Shipley Primary we held a tea party with the parents after the last session. The children shared with their mums their own booklet that they had produced. The mum's expressed that they appreciated the opportunity to sit with their children and hear about their aspirations. All the parents who attended thought the sessions had been worthwhile for their child and thought that the opportunity for Traveller children to focus on their future was valuable.

If you are interested in learning more about **Roads to Explore** please contact Clare Painting, Advisory Teacher clare.painting@westsussex.gov.uk



Resources and Further Reading

[Gypsy, Traveller, Showman, Boaters' Pledge For Schools](#)

[Social Mobility Commission Quarterly Commentary: December 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[IFS Deaton Review - Education Inequalities](#)

[Gypsies, Roma and Travellers: The Ethnic Minorities Most Excluded from UK Education](#)

[ONS Gypsies' and Travellers' Lived Experiences, Education and Employment, England and Wales 2022](#)

[Twinkl GRT History Month Resources](#)

[ONS Gypsies' and Travellers' Lived Experiences Census 2022](#)

[Gov UK GCSE Results 2022 by Ethnicity.](#)

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