



# Traveller Education Support Early Years

## Part of the Ethnic Minority & Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS)



The Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) work with schools to improve inclusion for pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman & Boater (GTRSB) children and those for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL). The service also includes comprehensive expertise in refugee education and a growing bilingual capacity.

### EMTAS Support

EMTAS support is delivered to schools through a combination of in-school support, home visits and phone or email assistance. Support is provided by Liaison Officers (L.Os), Advisory Teachers (ATs) and Bilingual Liaison Officers (BLOs).

### Why Do Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman, Boater (GTRSB) Families Need Support?

GTRSB communities are considered one of the most marginalised groups in society and consequently are likely to have poor educational experiences and poor learning outcomes. This impacts on future life chances and reduces opportunities for children and young people. Therefore, providing additional support in the early years of education can be crucial and can have the biggest impact on a child's future. Helping a child to make a good level of development and be ready to start school.



### The Importance of Ascription

It is important for Travelling families to be proud of their rich cultural heritage. However, due to the ongoing discrimination families can face, there may be many reasons why a family may not wish to identify as from a Travelling Community.

How easy is it for a family to ascribe when entering your setting? With parental consent it will be important to share this ethnicity data with West Sussex County Council and the receiving school when it comes to the transition into school.

## Partnership Working

Working in partnership with parents is central to the EYFS. Building a positive relationship with a family from their first visit is key:

- Find out about family, community & culture.
- Value parents/carers as primary educators.
- Help them understand how they can support learning at home.

Some GTRSB families may not have used an early years setting before. It will be essential to establish clear lines of communication, share the setting's values and build trust between home and setting. Important to identify the best forms of communication with a family, as they may have low literacy levels. Reading key documents and paperwork may be vital.

## Enabling Learning Environment

Practitioners create an inclusive learning environment. Practitioners should plan for there to be a wide range of resources that reflect the diversity of life in modern Britain. Including positive examples of Traveller life.

## Transition into School

The transition into Reception can be an anxious time for all families. However, it can be particularly concerning for Traveller families.

Practitioners can support by:

- offering to complete admission forms
- encouraging visits to schools
- reassuring family that key information is shared.
- encouraging families to ascribe as GTRSB with the new school, as this will be important for future attendance records.
- sharing TES contact details with the family and contacting TES.

If a child has additional needs, it may also be appropriate (with parental consent) to gain advice from the setting's Early Years Childcare Consultant and/or a Specialist Advisory Teacher for Early Years SEND Transition.

## Cultural Awareness Training for All Staff

The EYFS States; *Making sure that adults in the setting respect diversity supports children to develop their understanding of a diverse world.*

Although you may believe your setting is not currently supporting members of the Travelling community, it could be that a family have chosen not to identify, or a family may move into the area. Therefore, all practitioners developing their understanding of the culture will benefit all the children in your setting. It is important to represent and celebrate Traveller culture to allow all children to develop knowledge and appreciation of a diverse community.

### June is Gypsy, Roma, Traveller History Month

Practitioners may wish to raise awareness and celebrate GRT History Month in June. This can be on the setting's annual calendar of celebrations.

## Available Training – GTRSB Cultural Awareness

- Introductory training session seeks to raise awareness of GTRSB cultures.
- The training looks at how Traveller culture can impact on education and discusses effective strategies for improving inclusion of GTRSB children.

**Please contact TES for costs:**

### CONTACT THE TEAM

**Traveller Education Support (TES)**

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*Monitored Monday to Friday, term-time only.*