

# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

## GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ADVISORY BOARD

### AGENDA

**Wednesday, 22 July 2009, at 2.00 pm  
in the Darent Room, Sessions House,  
County Hall, Maidstone**

Ask for: **Geoff Mills/Andy Ballard**  
Telephone: **(01622) 694297/694297**

#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

1. Substitutes
2. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
3. Election of Vice Chairman
4. Minutes of Meeting - 13 February 2009 (Pages 1 - 2)
5. Community Cohesion (Pages 3 - 10)
6. Update: Progress on Improvement Access & Achievement for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children & Young People (Pages 11 - 16)
7. South East Plan: Consultation on Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Pitch Allocations 2006-2016 - Oral Report
8. Gypsy and Traveller sites in Kent 2009 - Oral Report

Peter Sass  
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership

**Monday, 13 July 2009**

*Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.*

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**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ADVISORY BOARD**

MINUTES of A meeting of the Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Board held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Friday, 13 February 2009.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen (Chairman), Mr A H T Bowles (Vice-Chairman), Mr M J Fittock, Mr M J Harrison, Mr S J G Koowaree and Mr F Wood-Brignall

ALSO PRESENT: Mr Pereira, Kent Fire and Rescue

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr W Forrester (Head of Gypsy & Traveller Unit), Mr G Mills (Democratic Services Manager (Executive))

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

**1. A DVD Presentation on Fire and Safety ("Friend and Enemy")**  
*(Item. 4)*

*(Mr John Pereira, Kent Fire and Rescue Services was present for this item together with Mr Joe Jones of the Canterbury Gypsy Support Group)*

(1) Mr Pereira said that the DVD demonstrated the close working and cooperation which the Fire Service was developing with the gypsy community in order to address Fire and Safety issues.

(2) During the course of discussion Mr Pereira said that there had been considerable interest in the work which the Kent Fire and Rescue Service was doing in collaboration with the gypsy community in order to address fire, health and safety issues. Leaflets and other forms of communication and education had been used in the past but since the introduction of the DVD it was believed this was the best way in which to communicate these important messages.

(3) Mr Pereira said that the DVD was being made available as widely as possible and that could be readily edited so its messages could be targeted at a wider audience ie those who use caravans for leisure purposes and the operators and residents of caravan leisure and holiday parks.

(4) The Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Board placed on record its thanks to Mr Pereira for attending the meeting and for his thought provoking presentation.

**2. Minutes of meeting - 5 December 2008**  
*(Item. 3)*

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2008 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

**3. South East Plan Partial Review On Gypsy And Traveller Pitch Allocation: Progress Report**

*(Item. 6 – report by Mr Oliver Mills, Managing Director Kent Adult Social Services)*

(1) This report updated the Board on what had happened since the consultation on the four different distribution options across all South East authorities, and the next stages of the process.

(2) The Regional Planning Committee at its meeting on 28 January 2009 had considered this matter in some detail and decided to recommend Option D to the Regional Assembly which would be meeting on 4 March 2009.

(3) During the course of discussion Members expressed some scepticism as to whether Option D would in fact provide and deliver all the outcomes were expected of it. It was also said that there was a question mark around whether Option D would be agreed by the Regional Assembly.

(4) Following further discussion the Board noted that following the meeting of the Regional Assembly it was expected there would be a consultation exercise undertaken lead by the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) on a single option and this would be undertaken from mid May through to mid July. Once that Committee had been completed it was expected the Examination in Public on the partial review would take place in the autumn of this year and that the incorporation of the relevant decisions on pitch allocations and other matters into the South East Plan was expected to be signed off by the Secretary of State in spring 2010.

**4. Rents on Public Sites Managed by KCC**

*(Item. 5 – report by Mr Oliver Mills, Managing Director Kent Adult Social Services)*

(1) This report detailed proposed increases in rents on KCC managed traveller sites from 1 April 2009. During the course of discussion Mr Fittock placed on record his congratulations to officers in achieving an appropriate rental level that was both cost effective and reasonable in terms of affordability.

(2) Following discussion the Advisory Board agreed that the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services be advised that the Board endorses the recommendations set out in the report in regard to new rents to be introduced from 1 April 2009, and that licensees be advised of the increases within the required 28 days notice in advance of that date.

**By:** Amanda Honey, Managing Director, Communities  
Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Adult Social Services  
Rosalind Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families and Education

**To:** Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Board 21/07/09

**Subject:** Community Cohesion

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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**Summary:** This paper outlines the Community Cohesion agenda and its implications for KCC as a whole, including the Gypsy and Traveller Unit in particular. It also highlights current good practice and suggests future opportunities for collaborative work in this area.

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## 1. Purpose of Report

In June 2008 Kent County Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) by the Audit Commission criticised the lack of organisation and strategic vision for community cohesion. The review stated: 'the council does not have an overarching strategic approach to cohesion and this is resulting in a lack of co-ordination and some gaps, for example the lack of a county-wide approach to promoting the contribution of migrants and countering myths'. The review does not take into account the good work already being undertaken by Kent County Council, much of it taking place under the auspices of the Safer, Stronger Communities Group. This is evidenced in a number of the County's strategies including Vision for Kent and the Community Safety Framework as well as the strategy for later life. However, the current work around community cohesion seeks to make these connections more explicit by developing a framework for community cohesion and by collating the work currently undertaken around the County to aid community cohesion.

Several core strands of work have since been undertaken at a strategic level in relation to this agenda; however it remains important to proactively mainstream community cohesion and work collaboratively across the organisation.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has decided that Gypsies and Travellers will be included, in a single ethnic minority category, in the 2011 census. The data, when published, will enable correlation of that data with other census data, for the first time.

The Audit Commission and six other national regulators (which include Ofsted) are including performance within Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) on community cohesion and diversity, including in relation to Gypsies and Travellers within Comprehensive Area Assessment, which replaced the CPA process assessing individual local authorities, and began on 1 April 2009.

## 2. Background

The community cohesion agenda has been growing since Ted Cantle's report following the race riots in three northern towns in 2002. Since then numerous national guidance documents have been published including the CLG Cohesion Delivery Framework.

The report highlighted that cohesion is not just about integration, and not just about integrating newcomers, but has a broader remit with a commitment to social justice and tackling inequalities. Community Cohesion should not be viewed as a series of one off events but as something which should be considered as belonging both to the mainstream agenda and in relation to targeted initiatives.

Local Authorities have been advised to produce a strategy in relation to community cohesion and an action plan to ensure that the strategy leads to work within the authority to mainstream community cohesion.

## 2.1 Definition

The current definition of Community Cohesion within the CLG Cohesion Delivery Framework is:

Community Cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another.

It also set out a vision of an integrated and cohesive community, based on three foundations:

- People from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities
- People knowing their rights and responsibilities
- People trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly.

And three key ways of living together:

- A shared future vision and sense of belonging
- A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity
- Strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.

## 2.2 Communities and Local Government Cohesion (CLG) Framework report recommendations

Along with the advice to produce a Community Cohesion Strategy, the key recommendations for local government made by the Commission on Cohesion and Integration Delivery Framework were:

- Communities were mapped
- Tensions and opportunities identified
- BVPI performance on cohesion to be monitored
- Integration and cohesion should be mainstreamed into Sustainable Community Strategies, LSP management and wider service delivery
- Consideration was given to developing welcome packs
- Communications plan to be maintained

## 2.3. Statutory Duties

There are three National Indicator targets in relation to Community Cohesion. These are:

- The percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.
- The percentage of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
- The percentage of people who have meaningful interactions with people from different background

These NIs have not been selected as one of the 35 priority targets in the Kent Local Area Agreement 2; however GOSE have indicated that they may still look at these indicators even if they are not chosen.

## 3. Community Cohesion: the role of schools

### 3.1 What is the duty to promote community cohesion?

Since September 2007 schools have had a duty to promote community cohesion. By community cohesion the DCSF means:

‘working toward a society in which there is a **common vision** and a **sense of belonging by all communities**; a society in which **similar life opportunities** are available to all and a society in which **strong and positive relationships exist** and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community’<sup>1</sup>

From a school’s perspective the term “community” includes the school, the locality, the UK and the global communities. This presents an opportunity to engage the whole community, in developing a shared sense of belonging.

### 3.2 Community Cohesion in action in Kent schools

Schools have responded positively to this new duty and it has provided a catalyst for new activities including, for example:

- Engaging all members of their school community in various mapping activities in order to develop a shared sense of belonging. These identify common experiences whilst recognising diversity in cultural background and life experiences. (e.g identifying diversity in language backgrounds)
- Identifying any groups that may not be fully accessing or participating in the life of the school and taking appropriate action. (e.g monitoring of attendance at parental consultation evenings and identifying if the practice of the school excludes particularly groups)
- Identifying gaps in attainment for groups of children or individuals (e.g. monitoring of attainment outcomes for all children in Kent and taking action to address inequality)
- Advisory Service Kent led schools through the Knowing Me, Knowing You Project. This is an opportunity for schools with diverse and distinct communities to link through ICT (flash meeting, making the news, blogs), publish and share

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<sup>1</sup> (Alan Johnson: Secretary of State for Education and Skills, Speaking in Parliament on 2nd November 2006 as quoted in the DCSF Guidance: Duty to promote community cohesion, 2007)

information about their culture, customs and traditions. The project is supported by the South East Grid for Learning.

<http://www.segfl.org.uk/microsites2/kentknowing>  
<http://www.kented.org.uk/ngfl/knowningme/index.html>

- Schools have participated in the “Who Do We Think We Are? “Week from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> June, celebrating identity and diversity across the UK.

<http://www.whodowethinkweare.org.uk>

### 3.3 How is community cohesion inspected by Ofsted?

From September **2008 Ofsted** have reported on the **contribution made by schools to enhancing community cohesion**. Judgements are made from inadequate (4) through to outstanding (1) based around some key questions<sup>2</sup>:

- How effective is the school in identifying what needs to be done to promote community cohesion, in particular taking into account the needs of the communities it serves?
- What is the school doing to promote the engagement of all pupils in its own community, particularly of hard to reach groups such as those for whom English is an additional language or are from more socio-economically deprived groups, or in rural schools, those who live in isolated areas?
- How effective is the school in contributing to community cohesion within the community in which it is located?
- How effective is the school in contributing to the cohesiveness of the wider community through developing learners’ understanding of the UK community, for example by promoting common identity and values, the appreciation and valuing of diversity, the awareness of human rights, and the skills for participating in society.
- How effective is the school in contributing to the cohesiveness of the wider community through developing learners’ understanding of other communities both in Europe and globally?
- How does the school know whether its strategy is successful?

The judgement relating to community cohesion informs the overall inspection rating for the school.

### 3.4 How has Children, Families and Education supported schools in implementing the duty?

The Directorate has:

- Briefed head teachers in 2007 in preparation for the new duty.
- Produced guidance for Kent schools explaining the duty, Ofsted inspection framework and strategies to support the implementation of the community.
- Designed and developed training to schools and Local Children’s Service Partnerships on the new duties.

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from Inspecting maintained schools’ duty to promote community cohesion: guidance for inspectors (Ofsted September 2008)

- Provided training as part of the Kent Children's Trust development programme under a theme of 'Building bridges with the community' within a context of integrated working.
- Designed and delivered workshops to primary head teachers facilitating the sharing of effective practice and promoting an understanding of the duty in terms of the leadership of the school.

#### **4 Where we are now**

Several strands of work have been undertaken in relation to the community cohesion agenda at a strategic level across the county.

##### Community Cohesion Steering Group:

A Kent County Council community cohesion steering group has been set up, with representatives from each directorate. Terms of reference for the group were taken to COG on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. It is hoped that the group will be a valuable asset in mainstreaming community cohesion across the Council and in championing it across Directorates. The Steering Group is chaired by Debra Exall, Head of Strategic Policy.

##### GOSE and Kent Districts:

We have secured funding from GOSE for KCC and six Districts to hire a consultant for a period of time to create either a single strategy or framework, or individual linked strategies or frameworks.

##### Community Cohesion Database

Following some preliminary research to assess general knowledge and take up of the Community Cohesion agenda across the organisation, a questionnaire was sent out to all directorates to gather information on projects or services KCC were currently running related to community cohesion, so that this could then be transferred into a database.

This database is now complete and catalogues 88 examples from across the organisation, including all directorates. Work is now being undertaken to enable the database to be placed on Knet where it will be accessible internally to all KCC staff (in the first instance), therefore aiding mainstreaming. It will be updated on a regular basis, and used to inform future Community Cohesion work.

#### **4.1 Examples of good practice across KCC**

Local Children's Service Partnerships and schools have promoted community cohesion through a range of strategies.

##### Shepway 1 Local Children's Service Partnership

Practitioners were reporting numbers of EU Roma children missing education and also a lack of engagement with EU Roma families at parents evenings, school events etc. As a result schools put strategies in place to promote participation by identifying non-threatening opportunities for families to become involved in their children's education. Teaching Assistants have been employed to support learning and home school

communication. Bespoke coffee mornings for parents were held where interpreters were available enabling discussions regarding education issues.

Cross-agency practitioners have identified activities to promote community cohesion in particular engaging the Roma. The partnership has recently employed a Roma Bilingual Teaching Assistant to support schools with families in Folkestone. A further planned development is to have a practitioner with specific responsibility to consult with the Roma community on a variety of issues.

In a number of schools parental involvement has increased and language classes have been requested to support participation. A multi-agency forum exists to review and address needs of this group. A multi-agency approach has resulted in a reduction in the number of Roma children and young people missing education.

### Community Cohesion at Sittingbourne Community College

Sittingbourne Community College became aware of the need to be proactive in engaging the Gypsy Roma and Traveller community as a result of tension in the college. Using Family Liaison Officers the school reached out to the community and as a result employed a young Gypsy Traveller man to work as a mentor for the students. The role expanded to involve pastoral work with families, running a youth club and then into mentoring for all Y9 pupils. The school welcomes links with the community, offering college facilities for adult classes run by the community in partnership with Canterbury College. This approach has resulted in an increase in the ethnic declaration of Gypsy Roma and Traveller students increased the confidence of the community who support the school knowing that any issues will be dealt with fairly and with understanding.

### Partnership work in engaging Traveller adult learners through Information Technology in Dartford

Minority Communities Achievement Service co-ordinated a project involving schools, Adult Education, school Family Liaison Officers, North West Kent College of Further Education and the Extended Schools Development Manager. The project arose from discussions with Traveller parents and grandparents and focused on the following goals:

- Enabling Traveller parents to help their children with school work
- Improving Traveller parents reading and self-esteem
- Breaking down barriers to Traveller parents access school events
- Improving Traveller parents opportunities to participate in community events
- Develop IT skills to enable access to work

Through the provision of a mobile crèche families with young children were enabled to access IT and literacy classes delivered by an Adult Education tutor (in schools and in Libraries). The group met for a whole year and all participants received accreditation certificates for their learning. Two Traveller parents joined the library, a number were supported in producing Curriculum Vitae and a Traveller Student progressed to further study. This was an outreach project with a view to developing self-esteem and confidence.

### Children and Young People's Survey 2008

In 2008 Children, Families and Education commissioned National Foundation for Educational Research to survey children and young people on their experiences of living in

Kent. The results were analysed by ethnicity. 81% of Gypsy Roma and Traveller children who responded to the survey at primary school level indicated that they felt safe in the area in which they lived.

### Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month

June 2008 was the first ever National Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month. Its aim was to explain the history and culture of the Traveller communities, challenge myths, breakdown barriers and celebrate the richness that Gypsy Roma Travellers have to contribute to everyday life.

- Kent Library and Archives placed permanent collections of Traveller books under the banner of 'Romany Roots' at Edenbridge, New Ash Green, Swanley, Cranbrook and Stanhope. As a result of the month, two further libraries requested permanent collections - Marden and Sittingbourne where collections are now in place.
- Family Liaison Officers from the Minority Communities Achievement Service supported libraries in developing their practice. Displays of photographs were exhibited at Swanley, New Ash Green and Cranbrook with a storytelling session held at Rustall. Awareness training sessions were delivered to over 40 staff.
- As a legacy of the month other library events working with the Gypsy Roma Traveller community have taken place- Edenbridge had a Travellers Art Exhibition between July and August 2008. New Ash Green, in partnership with Kent Adult Education Service, held computer taster sessions for the local Traveller community

### Kent Adult Social Services

Following on from the Awareness Training for Libraries and Adult Education Staff, similar training is taking place in June and July 2009 for staff within Kent Adult Social Services

In 2007, as part of the South Eastern Regional Assembly consultation process, two stakeholder meetings were hosted by KCC, and managed by the Gypsy and Traveller Unit in KASS. These brought together people from Gypsy and Traveller communities in Kent, borough and County Councillors, and those from other stakeholder organisations, including parish councils, Kent Council for the Protection of Rural England. These were very productive meetings.

In 2008, Kent and Medway were the only authority areas in the SE Region to host three public meetings, across the County, which discussed future pitch needs for each area. These were also productive and constructive discussions.

### Youth Clubs run by members of the Gypsy and Traveller Communities

Supported by the Youth Service, youth clubs in Sittingbourne and Canterbury have been running for some time. A number of members of the communities have been trained in youth work, and the youth clubs also now cater for other young people in those areas.

### Work with other bodies

A whole range of day to day involvement and specific events continue. Some are initiated by KCC, others by District and Borough Councils, some by Kent Police and others by local or national Gypsy or Traveller organisations. All of these provide the relationships and the goodwill which promotes community cohesion in the area.

A number of District and Borough Councils are promoting some examples of excellent practice on this subject.

## **5. Future Opportunities/Recommendations**

We recommend that the Board:

- a) support the ongoing work on community cohesion
- b) support the development of through further initiatives
- c) identify any further opportunities for promoting community cohesion
- d) receive an update report in twelve months

### **Officer details:**

Bill Forrester, Head of Gypsy and Traveller Unit

Jenny Robson, Head of Minority Communities Achievement Service, CFE

Mary Blanche, Senior Policy Manager, Communities

**By:** Managing Director (Children, Families and Education)

**To:** Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Board – July 2009

**Subject:** Update: Progress on improvement access and achievement for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people

**Classification:** Unrestricted – for information

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**Summary:** This report updates members on progress to improve access to education and achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people. It includes data from the Pupil Level Annual School Census, attendance returns and monitoring of key stage outcomes. The report gives some illustrative examples of strategies to promote access and achievement.

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## Improving access and achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children

### 1. Background

(1) In September 2008 the Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Board received a report on the implementation of the National Strategies: Gypsy Roma and Traveller Achievement Programme in Kent LA. At this meeting members requested a progress report on access and achievement during the 2008/9 academic year.

(2) The Department for Children, Schools and Families and Ofsted have expressed concern at the achievement gaps that exist between children of different ethnic groups and the need to narrow the gap in attainment between different ethnic groups including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.

The DCSF in 'Higher Standards, Better Schools for All – More Choices for Parents and Pupils (2005) stated:

*'There is a way to go before every child, regardless of their ethnicity, has an equal chance of reaching their potential. We will, therefore, build on Aiming High to ensure that every school receives advice and support to meet the aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic parents and pupils. We also recognise the severe underperformance in Gypsy and Traveller communities, and will introduce a targeted programme to address this issue.'*

(3) As a result the DCSF introduced the National Strategies (Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Achievement Programme) and guidance for schools and Local Authorities (*The Inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children and Young People (2008)* and *Attendance Advice: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children (2008)*). KCC Children, Families and Education have led on the implementation of the programme and guidance.

## 2. Pupil Level Annual Schools Census

(1) Ethnicity of children attending schools is collected as part of the Schools' Census.

Table 1: Schools Census Data

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Gypsy Roma	540	887	1040
Irish Travellers	86	82	85
White Eastern European	978	1257	1529

The data shows a year on year increase in the number of children and their families declaring their ethnic background to schools, including those from EU Accession States. Families declare their ethnic heritage across all the groups set out in Table 1. In March 2009 the DCSF wrote to all Directors of Children's Services proposing schools should present 3 ethnic categories to families: Gypsy, Roma and Travellers with a view that this approach would promote a higher level of declaration. Kent LA will need to consult with schools and community members. There is no mandatory timescale for the implementation of the changes and they will not imply any change in the way data is held at Local Authority or National level.

(2) Actions taken to improve data include:

- Providing training to school administrators (who are often the first point of contact with families) to enable accurate ethnic declaration in schools.
- Reviewing data to identify schools with high numbers of children for whom the ethnic declaration is 'refused' or 'not known' and offering support to address this issue.

## Access and Attainment

### 3. Children Missing Education – Data

(1) As part of the KCC Children Missing Education Protocol, MCAS receives referrals for Children Missing Education from vulnerable minority ethnic groups (mainly Gypsy Roma and Traveller children). MCAS Family Liaison Officers work with the families and other agencies to secure access to education within the shortest timescales and to prevent the case going to In Year Fair Access Panels within each locality. Table 2 shows the number of children referred to MCAS in the period October 2008 to March 2009 and their status on the case load monitoring system 30 days after the referral.

Table 2: Referrals to MCAS for Children Missing Education (October 2008 to March 2009)

<b>All Referrals</b>	<b>Day 30 Status</b>
School Place Taken Up	57
School Place Accepted	22
School Place Refused	11
School Place No Offer	20
Moved Out of Area	9
Reported Missing	11
Other ( including not yet reached the 30 day status, or where we are still trying to resolve the case)	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>

Monitoring of this caseload shows that approximately 40% of children access education within 30 days of referral. After 30 days the Family Liaison Officer works with families and other agencies to seek a resolution to the case and overcome barriers that exist to accessing education. Family Liaison Officers also track children who have moved out of the area or are reported missing.

## (2) Attainment – data

Monitoring of attainment shows the gap in attainment between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and all Kent children at end of Key Stage 2 and 4. As a result of targeted action and interventions monitoring identifies an upward trend in Key Stage 2.

Table 3: Attainment at Key Stage 2

Ethnic Group	% of children achieving Level 4+ in English and Maths	
	2007	2008
Gypsy Roma	18.3	29.5
Irish Travellers	33.3	0
White Eastern European	Not available	33
All Kent pupils	66.8	69

Table 4: Attainment at Key Stage 4 (5 A to C at GCSE)

Ethnic Group	% of young people achieving 5 A* to C at GCSE including English and Maths	
	2007	2008
Gypsy Roma	0	8.6
Irish Travellers	0	No students in this cohort
White Eastern European	36.4	43.8
All Kent pupils	48.2	49.7

Table 5: Attainment at Key Stage 4 (5 A to G at GCSE)

Ethnic Group	% of young people achieving 5 A* to G at GCSE including English and Maths	
	2007	2008
Gypsy Roma	41.2	11.4
Irish Travellers	100	No students in this cohort
White Eastern European	78.2	45.8
All Kent Pupils	90.8	92.9

## (3) Attendance - Data

Following improvements in data quality with the Schools' Census (Ethnic background) monitoring of attendance by ethnic group commenced in the Summer Term 2008. This shows the gap in attendance and how that widens at secondary school.

Table 6: Attendance Primary - % Absence of total possible attendance

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Summer Term 2008</b>	<b>Autumn Term 2008</b>
Gypsy Roma	15.2	14.9
Irish Travellers	19.7	5.9
All Kent pupils	5.1	5.4

Table 6: Attendance Secondary - % Absence of total possible attendance

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Summer Term 2008</b>	<b>Autumn Term 2008</b>
Gypsy Roma	23.9	18.2
Irish Travellers	8.7	20.3
All Kent pupils	8.5	6.9

In order to improve attendance MCAS and the Attendance and Behaviour Service are working together to:

- Implement the DCSF guidance *Attendance Advice: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children (2008)*. In June 2009 all Education Welfare Officers will receive training on the guidance to enable them to effectively support schools in improving attendance of Gypsy Roma and Traveller children.
- Gain a greater understanding of the reasons for absence from school (for example, accommodation, travelling away from the area).

#### **4. Examples of effective Strategies**

(1) **Exemplar 1: Unauthorised Encampments.** Family Liaison Officers have worked with mobile families living within Unauthorised Encampments in the Swale area since September 2008. As a result of the site being tolerated Family Liaison Officers were able to work with the families to identify appropriate school places or alternative curriculum provision. The team has worked with up to 8 families on a weekly basis, where some children have not accessed formal education for some years. Strategies have included working with a home tutor to support children in accessing a Pupil Referral Unit, identifying school places through In Year Fair Access Arrangements, supporting families with admission and induction to school and working through the Children's Centres to encourage access to early years and health provision. More work is needed to establish the attendance of children.

(2) **Exemplar 2: Children Missing Education Protocol** has enabled Roma children newly arrived to the UK to access education. In Gravesham Local Children's Service Partnership the Roma have been identified as a vulnerable group in terms of access to education and other statutory services. As a result Education Welfare Officers and Family Liaison Officers work together to identify Children Missing Education and ensure that they are placed in school. The Minority Communities Achievement Service has been proactive in raising awareness of the needs of the Roma through training to Children's Centres, schools, Health Visitors and School Nurses. KCC Youth and Community and the Baptist Church provide a Roma Youth Club which enables outreach to young people and a gateway to support from Connexions and other agencies. Schools in Gravesham have been developing their practice to respond to the needs of this group in terms of induction and teaching and learning strategies.

(3) **Exemplar 3: Local Children's Service Partnerships** receive targeted and ring fenced funding through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant to enable them to narrow the gap in attainment for minority ethnic groups. Shepway 1 Local Children's Service Partnership identified Roma as a significant vulnerable group where there were concerns

in terms of access and achievement. As a result specialist staff have provided networking opportunities for schools to share effective practice and a suite of Continuous Professional Development opportunities focused on raising achievement of new arrivals. A group of schools have developed a bespoke induction package for new arrivals and this is being shared across all schools in the locality.

(4) **Exemplar 4: KCC Anti Bullying Strategy** has provided opportunities to engage schools in addressing racist bullying. A number of schools had contacted the Minority Communities Achievement Service as a result of their awareness of racist incidents relating to Gypsy Roma and Traveller children. As a result schools were offered a new training package focused on addressing bullying perpetrated on the basis of race, religion and culture. Evaluations from training delivered have evidenced a positive impact in that school staff has felt more confident in understanding and addressing racist bullying. Recording of racist incidents has improved in Local Children's Service Partnerships where the training has been a focus.

## **5. Recommendations**

Members are asked to:-

- (a) Note the progress made in addressing concerns relating to access and achievement of Gypsy Roma and Traveller children.
- (b) Receive a further report on the Kent LA pilot of the National Strategies Gypsy Roma and Traveller Achievement Programme in September 2009.

### **Officer details:**

Joanna Wainwright, Director of Commissioning (Specialist Services)  
Jenny Robson, Head of Service, Minority Communities Achievement Service  
Ext. 4509

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