



AGENDA

SELECT COMMITTEE - STUDENT JOURNEY

Thursday, 16th June, 2011, at 10.00 am

Ask for: **Theresa
Grayell/Gaetano
Romagnuolo**

**Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone**

Telephone **(01622) 694277/(01622)
694292**

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting in the meeting room

Membership

Mr K Smith (Chairman), Mr M C Dance (Vice-Chairman), Mr A R Chell, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr P J Homewood, Mr R J Lees (Co-optee), Mr S Manion, Mr M J Northey Mrs C J Waters

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

- 10.00 - Interview with **Louise Simpson**, Acting Manager, Minority
10.45 am Communities Achievement Service, Kent County Council (1 - 2)
- 11.00 - Interview with **Andy Birkin**, Interim Head of Youth Offending
11.45 am Service, Kent County Council (3 - 4)

Background Reading for Members (5 - 52)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

At the end of the public session, Members of the Committee should remain in the meeting room for 20 minutes for summing up

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services
(01622) 694002

Wednesday, 8 June 2011

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THE STUDENT JOURNEY SELECT COMMITTEE

Hearing 3

Thursday 16th June 2011

Witness Guide for Members

Below are suggested themes and questions. They have been provided in advance to the witnesses to allow them to prepare for the types of issues that Members may be interested to explore. All Members are welcome to ask these questions or pose additional ones to the witnesses via the Committee Chairman.

Themes and Questions

Louise Simpson, Manager, Minority Communities Achievement Service (MCAS), Kent County Council

- Please provide a summary of the roles and responsibilities that your post involves.
- What services does the Minority Communities Achievement Service provide?
- What are the main issues with regard to the education of young people from gypsy and traveller communities (for example, with regard to access and attendance)?
- What is the dropout rate of these young people? Please discuss the issues of school exclusions and elective home education, and the causes for school abandonment.
- To what extent are gypsy Roma and traveller young people able to progress and complete their education courses in Kent?
- What collaborative initiatives and partnerships exist between Kent County Council, schools and other organisations to promote the educational engagement of gypsy and traveller young people?
- What are the main issues with regard to the employment of young people from gypsy and traveller communities?
- In your view, what initiatives and strategies can Kent County Council implement to support gypsy Roma and traveller children and young people with their education and employability?

- In your view, what more general initiatives and strategies should Kent County Council implement to enhance the employability of *all* young people in Kent?
- Please inform the Select Committee of any policy changes at national level that have relevance in this review and that can impact on the educational and employment opportunities and choices of young gypsies and travellers in Kent.
- Are there any other issues, with relevance to the review, which you would like to raise with the Committee?

THE STUDENT JOURNEY SELECT COMMITTEE

Hearing 3

Thursday 16th June 2011

Witness Guide for Members

Below are suggested themes and questions. They have been provided in advance to the witnesses to allow them to prepare for the types of issues that Members may be interested to explore. All Members are welcome to ask these questions or pose additional ones to the witnesses via the Committee Chairman.

Themes and Questions

Andy Birkin, Interim Head of Service, Youth Offending Service, Kent County Council

- Please provide an outline of the roles and responsibilities that your post involves, and please provide an overview of the services supplied by the Youth Offending Team.
- What is the proportion of young offenders in custodial and in community settings who are not actively engaged in education, training and employment in Kent?
- What are the main barriers to the engagement of teenagers with criminal records with education and employment?
- Please discuss the evidence of increasing exclusions of young offenders of statutory school age by academies, and the provision of reduced timetables.
- Is alternative curriculum provision for young offenders of statutory school age consistent across the County? Please explain the issue of “home education” and its consequences.
- In what ways does the Youth Offending Team support the rehabilitation of young ex-offenders through education and employment?
- Please discuss the effectiveness of current partnerships between the local authority, educators, local employers and other organisations in preparing young offenders for the world of work and in helping them secure employment.

- What else, if anything, can Kent County Council do to enhance the engagement of young offenders with education and employment?
- In your view, what initiatives and strategies should Kent County Council implement to enhance the employability of all young people in Kent?
- Are there any other issues, with relevance to the review, which you would like to raise with the Committee?

Improving Educational Outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils

What Works?

Contextual Influences and Constructive Conditions that may Influence Pupil Achievement

Anne Wilkin, Chris Derrington, Brian Foster,
Richard White and Kerry Martin



*Improving Educational Outcomes for
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils*

What Works?

*Contextual Influences and Constructive Conditions
that may Influence Pupil Achievement*

*Anne Wilkin, Chris Derrington, Brian Foster,
Richard White and Kerry Martin*

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

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Introduction

Between February and June 2009, case studies were undertaken in ten secondary schools, five primary schools and five alternative education provisions. The sample was selected from schools with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils on roll that completed and returned a national survey in the autumn term 2007. The main aim of the case studies was to explore in greater depth some of the strategies and approaches described by schools in the questionnaire returns. Researchers conducted face-to-face interviews with senior leaders and other key staff from schools and local authorities, and led focus group discussions with pupils, parents and teachers.

The data have been analysed thematically in order to draw out insights and examples of good practice from the case-study schools. The analytical model in Figure 1 illustrates a visual representation of the theme-mapping process undertaken by the research team. The model comprises three concentric circles representing:

- **Educational outcomes** (e.g. attainment, attendance, engagement, retention)
- **Constructive conditions** (which can all impact positively on the identified educational outcomes)
- **Contextual influences** (which may lie outside the immediate influence of the school and can either support or obstruct the raising of outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils).

The analysis of the case studies identified certain *constructive conditions* that may help to raise a range of *educational outcomes* for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils. Characteristics associated with the *particular context* of the school, however, may be supportive or obstructive in raising educational outcomes. (More detailed description of the analytical approach undertaken can be found in Appendix 1.)

It is hoped that the use of this structure will help practitioners to look beyond specific interventions and strategies and consider wider attitudinal influences that may permeate the ethos of a school and help to raise outcomes generally.

The following sections illustrate the constructive conditions present in the case-study schools. A discussion of the contextual influences and their impact on outcomes can be found in the concluding comments. Appendix 2 includes a series of audit tools that schools may find useful in identifying their own particular contextual influences and constructive conditions.

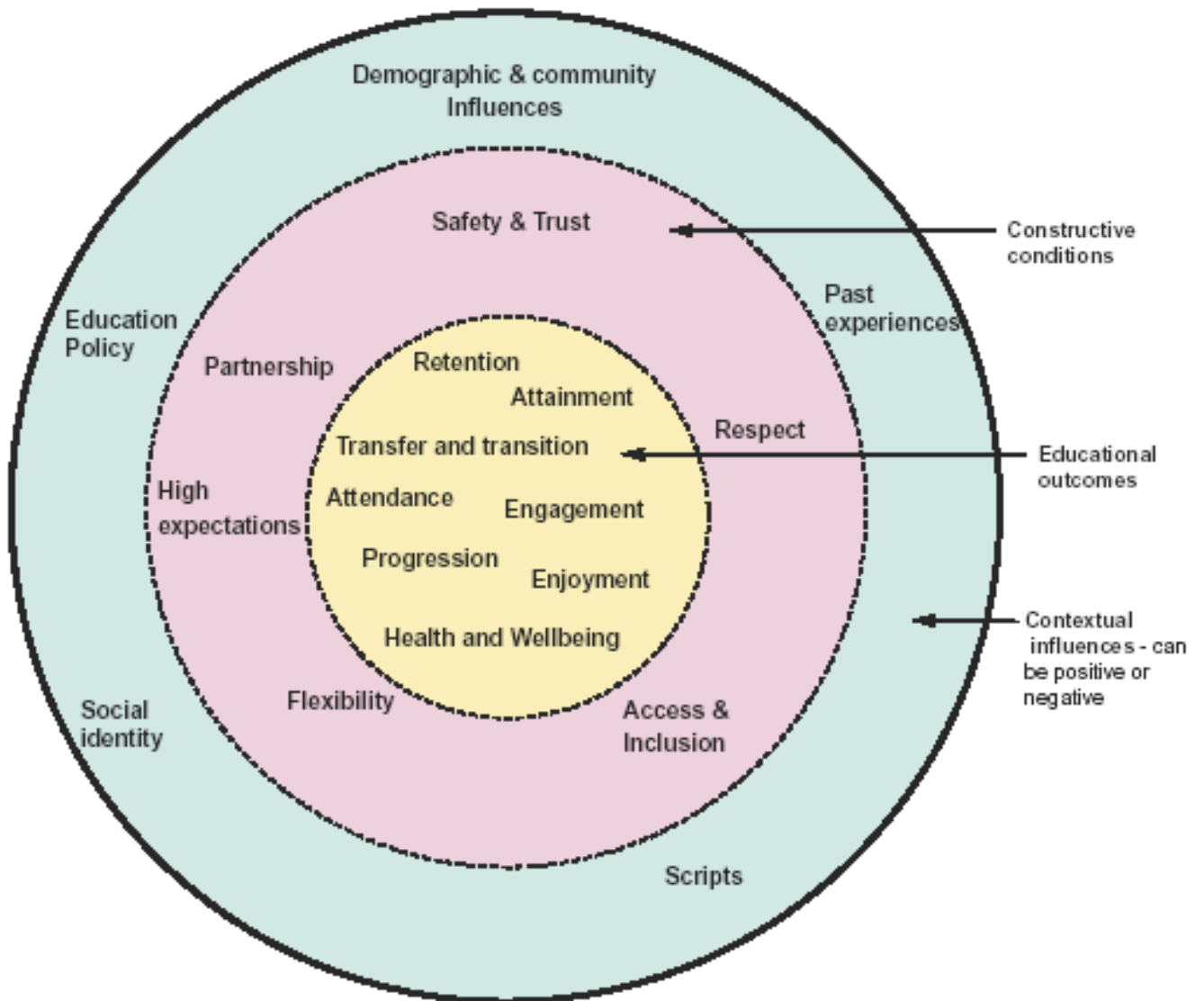


Figure 1 - The Analytical Model

Constructive conditions: Safety and Trust

'Our top priority is safety' (Parent)

For many Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents, the key concern for the moral, physical and emotional safety of their children lay at the centre of all discussions around education and schooling. These anxieties about safety may be 'scripted'¹ to some extent but the feelings associated with them are real to the individuals concerned and it is not always easy for teachers and other members of staff to fully appreciate this without having a clear insight into the experiences that these families face in wider society. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents place a significant amount of trust in schools to care for and protect their children. Whether or not this trust is won, seems to depend on a range of factors and almost always takes time but, once established, the notion of trust appears to be transmitted effectively within the community and can be long-lasting. Schools that had developed a reputation for being caring and understanding of Traveller culture maintained a loyal following of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families, sometimes over generations, despite the fact that it might not be the nearest school geographically. Conversely, the breakdown of trust between home and school can be quickly ignited and enduring in its impact. TESS are working collaboratively with schools to embed the principles of the successful relationships they have built up with families over time, thus building capacity in schools.

- Faith schools and single sex schools may be perceived as 'safer' places, particularly for parents who are anxious to protect their daughters from developing relationships with boys, but there was also an assumption that faith schools demanded higher expectations in terms of pupil behaviour, values and moral standards.
- Key individuals in schools seem to be instrumental in building trusting relationships with pupils and their parents. This does not necessarily mean having one designated member of staff, a more sustainable approach is to develop a number of key personnel who Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents can relate well to. In some schools, parents were given the mobile telephone numbers of key people. In others, home visits were made by school staff. For Roma pupils, having a member of staff who could speak their language and demonstrate good insight into their cultural experiences was comforting for the pupils and their parents. In schools that employed Gypsy, Roma and Traveller members of staff, parents and pupils demonstrated even greater levels of trust.
- Schools that place a strong emphasis on pastoral care address some of the security needs of the families. Peer support programmes, firm anti-bullying policies and clear and effective behaviour policies that are wrapped around by humanistic²/therapeutic approaches for pupils who have social and emotional needs are more responsive to individual needs and more likely to deal with the causes of difficult behaviour. Dedicated pastoral support staff can be highly effective in diagnosing and addressing the source of behavioural concerns.
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils often seek out one another's company outside the classroom, and 'stick together' even in schools with diverse populations. Evidence seems to suggest that these pupils simply prefer to socialise with other Travellers because of their shared experiences and background. This could be related to emotional/psychological comfort. Several of the pupils and their parents reported that they had no contact with non-Traveller classmates outside school. Some schools have

¹ The term 'script' refers here to common responses or phrases which may be consciously or unconsciously applied as form of (personal or cultural) defence or protection.

² The term 'humanistic' is used here to describe an approach which centres upon unconditional positive regard in order to promote self-respect, self-confidence and trust.

developed strategies to break down barriers and cement social relationships. One school, for example, set up a Boxercise club which attracted and brought together boys from different groupings (including Roma students).

Constructive conditions: Respect

‘Our beliefs and culture are strong and they understand that’ (Parent)

Respect is clearly a two-way process with schools expecting families and children to respect their values and rules, and communities needing their identities and beliefs to be recognised. Most of the schools were aware of this balance and were successful in communicating their expectations to families whilst being sufficiently flexible and inclusive to accommodate cultural differences.

- Vision and leadership were seen as key to creating a culture of mutual respect. A head of department observed: ‘The ethos of respect and tolerance has got to come from the top; if it doesn’t you might as well forget it.’ Designating a senior member of staff with responsibility for improving outcomes raises the status of the issues within the school and signals to the communities that their identity and needs are respected. School leaders had a key role in showing respect for the communities, by visiting sites and homes, shows and fairs. Some parents appreciated headteachers showing respect by attending funerals of community members and offering an open door to grieving relatives.
- Individual staff may have specific knowledge about, and interest in, these communities but schools recognised a need for training to develop a whole school approach. TESS and community organisations had important roles in delivering such training. It was suggested that the inclusion of a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller component in broader training might be more effective in reaching all staff and raising the issues more frequently.
- Some schools played down ethnic identity, preferring to see every child as an individual. Others celebrated cultures and developed cohesion within the school community. Older students acted as role models and mentors for younger community members. School staff noted the need to get the balance between acknowledging and celebrating their culture, while not making students stand out as being different. It was about being flexible and responsive to different needs and developing the most appropriate approach.
- One headteacher felt celebrating identity was ‘more about enriching the curriculum ... than isolating a certain section of the school community.’ Schools presented positive images to contrast with those in the press, and collected artefacts from families and community events to mount displays. Some used flexibility within the curriculum to respect community needs by offering appropriate and relevant education and training opportunities.
- Schools expected Gypsy, Roma and Traveller students to respect the school rules and staff. They felt parents were supportive where the rules were clearly explained and fairly applied. Often schools had a relatively simple set of rules, based on mutual respect and that were easily communicated. The direct, adult manner of some students could be misinterpreted as a lack of respect by staff: ‘These pupils are expected to be adults at a much earlier age so by 13 they like to be spoken to and dealt with as adults which causes problems because it is not always appropriate in a school setting.’ Several schools felt that the whole school behaviour expectations of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme (SEAL) - staff using solution-focused language, praise and encouragement and students developing the ability to deal with emotions in ways that are appropriate to the situation - had contributed to building respect and minimising tension. One school found its open-plan coffee area used by staff and students, contributed to an ethos of mutual respect.

Constructive conditions: Access and inclusion

'No matter what cultures are in the school, they're all classed the same. Just because they are in a caravan doesn't mean they are different. The school is so welcoming' (Parent).

The need to identify and overcome barriers to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils' access to school was identified as a key element in their successful engagement, retention and subsequent achievement. This entailed the provision of practical support to facilitate access.

- Partnership working, (especially between TESS and school), was seen to facilitate effective access for new arrivals, including assessment to ensure the appropriate class placing. Induction groups / programmes were regarded as invaluable for newly arrived pupils, especially Roma, as a means of providing comprehensive input, including essential language support and assistance in developing understanding of, and participation in, school practice and culture, especially in secondary schools.
- Practical assistance, including providing uniform, and school support for transport to collect and return pupils to a nearby site, was identified as being effective in facilitating pupils' access to school, as well as removing access barriers borne out of possible 'safety and trust' concerns. Interviewees also highlighted the impact of being proactive in supporting parents in the school admission and transfer process (through assisting them in completing application forms, for example).
- A school's support for distance learning could be a key element in maintaining school-family links whilst travelling, underpinning Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils' access to school and learning/curriculum on their return. Several school staff noted that returning pupils, or other families, would always be (re-) admitted even if there were no surplus places.

Alongside facilitating access, the need to counter challenges to the inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils in school was raised. It was seen as essential to make them feel part of the school and to communicate the message to families and the wider community that the young people and their cultures are welcome and respected.

- A central strand of a school's inclusive ethos or approach included finding the right balance between recognising and celebrating diversity, but not promoting or creating 'difference' within the school community. Interviewees spoke of the need to work with all pupils as individual young people within the school. This was especially apparent in those schools with a broader demographic composition. Examples included the considered use of culturally-specific resources and programmes, such as engaging in Gypsy Roma Traveller History month activities in conjunction with/woven into other elements of the curriculum.
- Whilst understanding particular pupils' desire to form and maintain friendship groups, some school staff identified the need to encourage greater mixing in class and also during break times. The focus of this was not to disperse or segregate groups of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils, but to foster feelings of a school identity as opposed to a collection of individual groups. After-school clubs providing leisure opportunities and homework support were seen to contribute to this integration, as well as including all pupils in the wider life / experience of the school. In the main, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils, however, were keen to assert their desire to maintain their separation from non-Travellers suggesting that this was because they preferred to be with their own peer/friendship group: '[It's] having someone who knows my stuff and what I'm going through, who understands me basically' (Y9 pupil).

- Inclusion could also be supported by promoting the school's pastoral system and approach within these communities, (to reinforce safety and trust issues). In addition, interviewees associated high levels of pastoral and classroom support (underpinning a humanistic perspective on learning), with increased engagement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils. This stemmed from the flexibility offered to meet the individual needs of all pupils in the school.
- Broadening-out the reach of the school, through the provision of family learning opportunities, the use of ICT, adult literacy and numeracy classes, was seen to increase Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents' affinity/relationship with the school. Hence, widening the offer of school could act to counter many parents' negative experiences of school and education. The employment of community members in the school, acting as advocates for it, was seen as being particularly effective in this.

Constructive conditions: Flexibility

'There is a desire within the school to want to make things better for Traveller families and to want to meet them half way' (Traveller Project Coordinator)

Flexibility, in terms of the curriculum the school offers, as well as through its overall approach, was found to be important in a significant number of schools and was particularly welcomed by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils and their families.

- More flexible schools are responsive in their curriculum approach, sometimes incorporating a thematic approach to teaching and learning, as well as building on the interests, aspirations and particular needs of these pupils to offer personalised learning opportunities via different pathways. This also involved a constructive approach to mobility, including distance learning, for pupils who travel for parts of the year.
- Particularly valued by parents were secondary schools that offer a flexible, work-related curriculum, which was seen as more relevant to Traveller lifestyles and cultural expectations. Parents were also aware of the changing world in which their children are growing up and a work-related focus was seen as a way of increasing their employment prospects. For schools, accreditation through a range of vocationally-related qualifications was regarded as an important element in sustaining motivation and facilitating onward progression.
- Schools able to offer greater flexibility at an earlier age (for example, by allowing pupils to begin vocational courses in Year 9 rather than Year 10) appeal to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents who, traditionally, might have expected their children, particularly boys, to begin generating family income at this age and thus leave secondary school before the end of Key Stage 3. For schools, flexibility at an earlier age was perceived as a way of 'hooking' the pupils in and providing them with a focus, with the ultimate benefit of improving retention and achievement. Good relationships with local colleges and employers were considered to be an essential feature of a successful vocational curriculum.
- Several schools employed bilingual family support / link workers to develop and maintain relationships with families, which was said to demonstrate schools' respect for and understanding of their culture. In addition, schools demonstrated their flexibility through the innovative deployment of staff, such as home language-speaking IT technicians working outside their normal remit to help support new arrivals, and administrative staff helping parents with the completion of forms, or following up non-attendance. Staff in one school reported that the headteacher had never been heard to say 'No' to the employment of additional staff to support pupils' progress.
- Clear boundaries and expectations, balanced with a degree of flexibility which was based on understanding and open dialogue, were appreciated by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents. There were several examples of schools 'meeting parents half way' and adopting a problem-solving approach to behaviour and attendance issues. In a secondary school, a flexible attendance policy meant that time off to attend cultural or family events could be sanctioned where pupils' attendance was generally good.
- A more flexible approach to homework was appreciated by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils and their families. A number of schools were providing homework clubs at lunchtimes and, in a few cases, homework clubs were available on sites after school. In one school, although more traditional forms of homework were given in core subjects, other subjects gave project-based homework, involving the presentation of drafts

followed by feedback, before the submission of final drafts and presentations. This 'university-style' approach was reported to increase the engagement and motivation of pupils. Another school had completely reorganised the school day, taking away common break times and introducing longer teaching sessions (during which teachers gave their classes a 20 minute break to fit in with the learning activities). Then between 3pm and 5pm, the school ran study sessions and extra curricula activities for all pupils.

Constructive conditions: High expectations

'Because they [teachers] thought I wasn't able to make anything of myself, I believed it as well' (Traveller Teaching Assistant)

The importance of high expectations in raising aspirations and, ultimately, achievement is effectively demonstrated in the above quote from a Traveller working as a TA in a primary school. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils, like any pupil, are more likely to succeed if they feel that the school values them and is working to support them to reach their potential. At the same time, there is a need to work with their parents to help them appreciate the value of education and recognise how it can improve their children's future opportunities. Where parents feel that their children are unlikely to succeed, they are often less likely to remain in school. There were several examples in the schools of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents recognising that their traditional way of life was changing and that qualifications would be essential to enable Travellers 'to compete on an even footing'. Schools were working hard to capitalise on, and support, these aspirations.

- In several schools, performance data was being monitored in order to track the progress and achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils so that appropriate support could be accessed where needed. A number of the schools were involved in the National Strategies' Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Achievement Programme which supported achievement, as well as moving the issue higher up the agenda in school.
- Schools were using positive role models to help raise parents' and pupils' aspirations, for example, pupils who have successfully completed Key Stage 4 and gone on to take up college places. In one school, a Roma pupil, a talented musician, had come back to the school after studying music at college and was supporting in GCSE music lessons. In another school, a member of the TESS (and also the local community) was working effectively with parents to increase both their understanding of the UK education system and their awareness of its value for their children's futures. This, it was hoped, would result in pupils staying in school longer and thus being more likely to achieve.
- Where Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils had gone through from Foundation Stage to Year 6, there was found to be less divergence between schools' and parents' expectations. In most of the schools, transfer from primary to secondary school was expected, with more girls transferring than previously. Some primary schools operated transition programmes in collaboration with the TESS. For example, in one primary school, such a programme involved home visits, coffee mornings, meetings with secondary headteachers and a mini enterprise project. Another primary school ran meetings for all Year 5 parents to provide information and practical help (e.g. who to contact, how to complete forms). A secondary school had organised taxis to bring primary school pupils to the school for additional pre-transfer visits. More rigorous tracking and monitoring of Year 6 destinations data by the TESS was taking place, to ensure that Traveller pupils did not 'slip through the net' at the point of transfer. An effective strategy to try and improve transition post-16 was, again, the use of positive role models progressing onto further and higher education.
- Attendance in several of the schools was reported to be good and, in one or two cases, to be above the national average. In others, it was said to be improving, although from a low baseline. Improved attendance was seen to be a result of whole-school attendance policies supported by clear systems (e.g. first-day contact by attendance officers; monitoring of absence to identify patterns) and messages about the importance of good attendance for doing well in school. In one school, a dedicated Education Welfare Officer worked in collaboration with the school for two and a half days a week. The approach was non-punitive, focused on engaging the parents in

dialogue about the importance of regular attendance and not taking holidays in term time.

- Clearly stated expectations of behaviour, underpinned by a supportive and flexible pastoral support system, were appreciated by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents.

Constructive conditions: Partnerships

'It is holistic, it is not just an education problem, it's everything'

(Multi-agency team member)

Partnerships are seen as a vital way for schools to access and engage Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, to establish respect, build trust and ultimately change hearts and minds to value education. Partnerships are key drivers in educational engagement at the individual, parental, school and community level.

- Respecting Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils and treating them as mature individuals facilitated the effective collaboration between pupils and school staff. There were examples of schools building partnerships with pupils by encouraging pupil-led/originated initiatives (e.g. to promote a greater understanding of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller culture). For example, one primary school established strong links with a local university which hosted a pupil-led conference. Successful partnerships were built between pupils and staff with responsibility for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils/those with English as an Additional Language (EAL), and other support staff who worked closely with them (e.g. TAs, learning mentors). Offering flexibility, particularly in terms of the curriculum, work-placements and extracurricular activities helped schools to work collaboratively with pupils. Schools also developed partnerships with previous pupils who had successfully gone on to college, or into employment, as role models to others and used existing Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils as ambassadors.
- Schools were successful where they reached out to work in partnership with parents from these communities. Direct and informal methods of communication were effective (e.g. parents were given mobile phone numbers of staff). By being visible to parents and the wider community (e.g. through staff visits to sites or attendance at local community events), schools were able to demonstrate a willingness to work together. Similarly, by having an 'open door policy', staff were seen as accessible and approachable. Schools also established parent forums / consultation events (with interpreters where necessary). Schools developed partnerships with parents by being flexible and considerate to their requests and concerns (e.g. around issues such as school trips and sex and relationships education) and through the offer of family learning (e.g. access to basic skills, ESOL classes). Schools encouraged parents' involvement by recruiting members of the community as staff / governors. Equally, schools had expectations of parents to work with them (e.g. to attend induction sessions, develop individual behaviour plans, and encourage their child's attendance).
- Although it is important to have members of school staff with dedicated responsibility for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils, partnership working between school staff through the sharing of information and practice is vital to the successful integration of pupils from these communities into school. Effective staff partnerships work to develop capacity and ensure pupils do not develop an overreliance on key personnel. In-school partnerships are also critical to ensure the sustainability of effective working and maintenance of good relationships with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families. Equally, partnerships between schools, particularly secondary schools and their feeder primaries are essential for the successful transfer of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils. Ongoing liaison with primary schools (which have established relationships with families from these communities and experience of the young person) can be valuable and help with the retention of pupils.

- TESS has longstanding experience of working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and established relationships with families. Often viewed as impartial and separate to the school, TESS has a mediating and brokering role between schools and these communities. Partnerships with the TESS were particularly important in initial access and induction of pupils, although collaborative working is required (e.g. joint home visits with school staff to support attendance, the development of the curriculum etc). TESS have a key role in the development of staff and engaging them in projects and strategies at an authority wide/national level, however, this specialist knowledge and practice must be embedded by the school in order to be truly effective.
- Collaboration with other agencies that have respect among Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities helps schools to build relationships and extend the support available to meet their wider needs. Schools recognised that pupils from these communities often require flexibility, for example with the curriculum, and looked to establish partnerships with local colleges and alternative providers to develop relevant courses (e.g. in construction) and out-of-school activities. Partnerships were also developed with employers and universities to raise aspirations. Some agency staff were based in schools (e.g. police), for others, the school was seen as the hub of partnership working and an enabler to the provision of coordinated holistic support. Schools also had a challenge role with their partners (for example contesting decisions made by local colleges regarding places for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils).

Concluding comments

The **educational outcomes** for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils that case-study schools were working hard to improve are essentially inter-dependent. For example, the link between attendance and attainment is widely acknowledged and progression into Further Education often depends on retention into Key Stage 4. In turn, retention may be determined by levels of enjoyment and engagement and so on. It is important therefore for schools to consider pupil progress holistically across all eight outcomes, to maintain a composite overview of academic and pastoral indicators, to identify support needs and target interventions.

Each school operates within its unique setting and context. This unique context might include variables that actually support the school in raising outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils (for example there may be a long and established history of admitting pupils from these communities) or it might present particular barriers (inter-racial tensions within the local community). Collectively, these are referred to as **contextual influences** and the research identified five common themes, each of which could be supportive or obstructive to the school's efforts in raising outcomes.

Because of this diversity, specific interventions and approaches may lead to quicker results in some schools than others which are operating under very different circumstances. However, conceptual analysis of the types of approaches and strategies described by case-study schools identified a pattern of themes. These are referred to as **constructive conditions**.

Six constructive conditions were perceived to impact positively on educational outcomes and these have been explored in turn. It is important to note that although the six conditions have been considered separately within this report, taken together, they can be said to characterise the inclusive ethos of a school and their effects are inevitably inter-woven. For example, a solid *partnership* between a school, parents and the TESS based on mutual *respect* was linked to *high expectations*. Parents who felt that school staff understood and showed *respect* for their culture placed their *trust* in the school to keep their children physically and morally *safe*. Where *safety and trust* is firmly established, it can further facilitate *access and inclusion*.

However, although a school might uphold *high expectations* of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils (in terms of attendance and attainment) it may show little evidence of *flexibility* in its approach to the curriculum or in supporting pupil access. Conversely, another school may demonstrate a great deal of *flexibility* in this respect, at the expense of maintaining *high expectations* of all its pupils. In both these examples, the set of conditions is out of balance.

Strengthening each of the constructive conditions through the implementation of national strategies and approaches such as SEAL, the Mid-term Arrivals Project and the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Achievement Programme to achieve greater balance, may help to mitigate the effects of obstructive contextual influences and ultimately improve educational outcomes. For example, the introduction of a more flexible and vocational curriculum had the effect of challenging previously fixed parental attitudes about the value of secondary school. This research suggests that each of the conditions is important and their cumulative effect is necessary for educational outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils to be improved. The key to improving outcomes therefore, may lie in achieving an appropriate balance between these constructive conditions.

Key points for good practice

Safety and trust:

- Feelings of safety and trust can be encouraged if school staff demonstrate understanding and awareness of the experiences of GRT communities in wider society.
- Trusting relationships between GRT communities and schools can stem from, or be enhanced by, building on the existing interactions that community members have with TESS professionals. Collaboration between school and TESS personnel can increase a school's ability to engender and nurture trusting relationship with community members.
- Schools advocating and demonstrating effectively defined and strict behaviour policies are often attractive to Traveller families.
- Key individuals in schools, whether formally designated or not, can act as accessible and approachable points of contact for Gypsy, Traveller and Roma families. It is important that such capacity is developed throughout the school.

Respect:

- Respect needs to be promoted as a two-way process - mutual respect between the school and Gypsy, Traveller and Roma families.
- Vision and leadership are central to creating a culture of mutual respect in the school, whereby cultural differences could be accepted and celebrated in the school's systems and values. Parents were seen as more likely to be respectful of school rules and policies that were clearly defined and fairly applied.
- Locating responsibility for raising the achievements of Gypsy Traveller and Roma students with a senior member of school staff can signal to families that they are valued and respected members of the school community.
- Knowledge of, and respect for, Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities could be enhanced in schools through building on training and development work by TESS and community organisations. Increased emphasis on different cultures and lifestyles at initial teacher training stage could also promote increased awareness and respect amongst school staff.

Access and inclusion:

- Access and inclusion can be supported via offering practical assistance, such as help with transport and uniform requirements. Accessibility can be increased when schools are proactive in assisting parents with the admission process.
- The active promotion of, and support for, distance learning opportunities can contribute to the maintenance of pupils' engagement in learning and relationships with the school when travelling. Re-admission and reintegration of pupils on their return can also be made easier if such links have been maintained.
- The integration of culturally-specific resources and programmes into wider curriculum areas could serve to support and communicate Gypsy, Traveller and Roma pupils' inclusion and belonging in the school.
- The promotion of a 'school identity' can be an effective way of encouraging all pupils to interact and integrate, breaking down social and cultural barriers.
- Schools can also be seen to be more accessible through the provision of additional services, resources and facilities, including for example, family learning opportunities. The employment of community members can be a key element in increasing a school's accessibility to Gypsy, Traveller and Roma pupils and their families.

Flexibility:

- Flexibility in the curriculum approach of a school can be effective in engaging Gypsy, Traveller and Roma pupils, responding to their needs and offering individual pathways, skills and opportunities that have direct relevance to their futures.
- Work-related curriculum opportunities are often particularly valued by pupils and families at secondary school level. The offer of accredited, vocationally orientated courses can furnish pupils with relevant learning experiences and provide schools with the means to sustain motivation and engagement, as well as facilitating onward progression. Offering such experiences at an earlier age may be particularly beneficial in encouraging, engaging and retaining pupils.
- A school's willingness and ability to negotiate and pursue a 'problem solving approach' to policies, such as behaviour, attendance and homework policies, based on dialogue with parents and understandings of cultures and lifestyles can be particularly valuable, often indicating a commitment to meeting families and pupils 'half way'.

High Expectations:

- Generating and sustaining high expectations and aspirations are key elements underpinning improvements in outcomes for Gypsy, Traveller and Roma pupils.
- Communication of such expectations (including attainment, attendance and behaviour) throughout the school and communities represents a key element of success. This could involve the promotion of joint 'scripts' (between schools and communities) that can be evidenced, supporting the message that, for example, 'Our Traveller pupils do well at this school'.
- The use of role models from within the communities can be effective in communicating and embedding high expectations and aspirations, evidencing the positive relationships between schools and members of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities, and so encouraging others.
- Performance data needs to be monitored in order to track the progress and achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils, to ensure that the most appropriate provision is made available (reinforcing the need for flexibility and relevance of curriculum content and delivery).

Partnerships:

- The development of partnerships at individual, parent, school and community level are crucial drivers in the access and engagement of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma pupils and communities.
- Effective collaboration between pupils and school staff can be facilitated through, for example, pupil-led initiatives to promote greater understandings of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma culture in the school.
- Maintaining and enhancing links with previous pupils who have left the school and progressed to higher or further education destinations can be an effective way of helping to support school-pupil partnership approaches.
- School-parent partnerships are important. Employing community members provides crucial links into, and for the communities, as well as fulfilling official roles in the school. Schools can be more successful in building a partnership approach with parents when they proactively reach out to the communities. This might include senior members of school staff visiting sites and attending various community events and occasions.
- Within the school, partnerships between staff are important so that the responsibility for supporting Gypsy, Traveller and Roma pupils is not seen to rest with a specific individual. Whilst certain key individuals can be essential in supporting these pupils, it is important that all staff take a joint ownership approach to meeting the needs of all pupils in the school.

- The development of strong and supportive partnerships between primary and secondary schools are essential in ensuring effective transfer. These partnerships need to be based on dialogue and communication between staff at the different schools. In this way, secondary schools can, for example, capitalise on the often good relationships developed between primary schools and community members.
- School partnerships with TESS are valuable, with TESS often able to broker partnerships between schools and communities, based on their long-standing relationships with Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities. In practice, this could involve joint home visits (involving school and TESS staff) and TESS's role in developing capacity and expertise within schools to effectively engage with Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities.

Appendix 1 - Analysis of the case-study data

The case-study data were analysed thematically in order to draw out insights and examples of good practice from the case-study schools and this process is represented in Figure 1 below. The model comprised three concentric circles:

- Educational outcomes
- Constructive conditions
- Contextual influences.

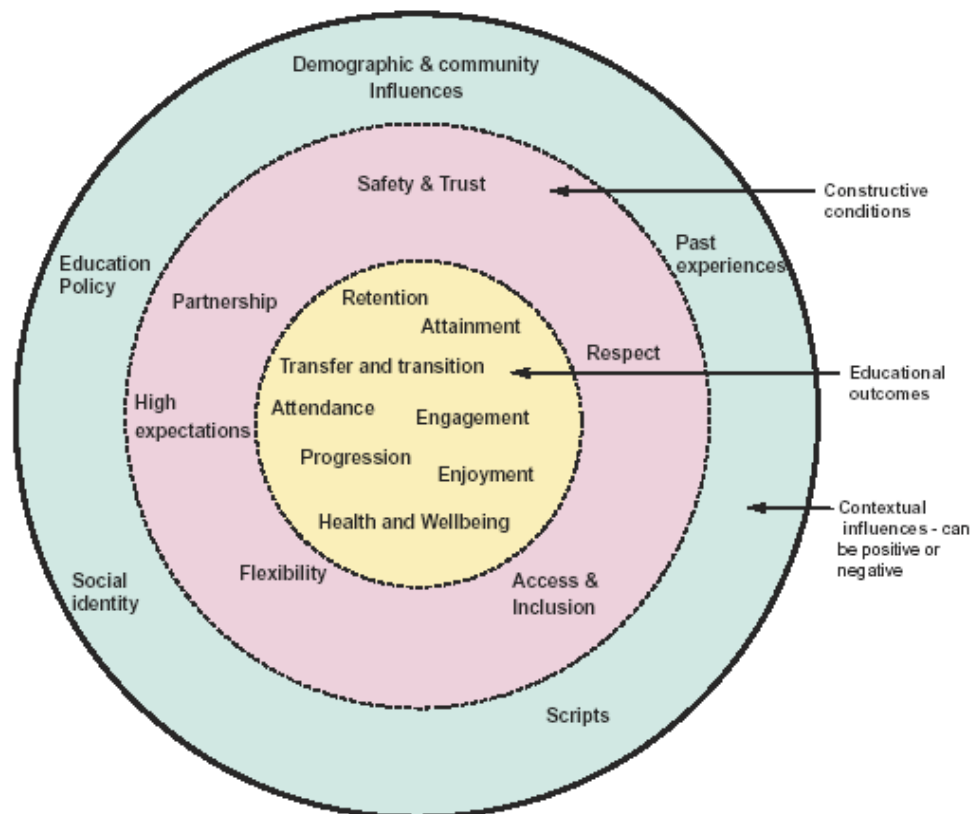


Figure 1 - The Analytical Model

1. Educational outcomes

The educational outcomes under examination and placed at the centre of the model are identified as:

- Transfer and transition
- Attainment
- Attendance
- Engagement
- Enjoyment
- Retention
- Progression (to FE, employment, training)
- Health and wellbeing.

Interviews and focus group discussions were designed to explore participants' experiences and perceptions around each of these outcomes.

2. Constructive conditions

Next, the case-study data were analysed *across* outcomes to identify broad concepts that were recurring. There were six themes or conditions that were most commonly alluded to. These were:

- Safety and trust
- Respect
- Access and inclusion
- Flexibility
- High expectations
- Partnership.

Theme-mapping analysis suggests that, potentially, these conditions all impact constructively on each of the identified educational outcomes. For example: high expectations can have a positive impact on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils': transition; attainment; attendance; engagement; enjoyment; retention; and progression into FE, employment, training.

These constructive conditions are placed in the second concentric circle of the model, surrounding the outcomes and are presented here as separate sections of the report.

3. Contextual influences

Finally, although aspects of these constructive conditions were identified across the case study schools, the context of each school was unique. Some schools had long and established relationships with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, some were single sex schools, others served a highly diverse catchment area. These contextual differences appear to be influential.

Second level theme-mapping identified the five *contextual influences* presented in the outer circle of the model. These external variables may lie outside the immediate influence of the school and can either support or obstruct the raising of outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils. Examples of how the contextual influences may impact in a supportive or obstructive way are illustrated below:

a. Demographic and community influences

The impact of community values and attitudes on educational outcomes.

For example:

| Supportive | Obstructive |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities may value secondary education highly • Loyalty towards the school may be communicated to other community members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatives/other community members may discourage Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils from attending or transferring to secondary school • Parents may be unwilling to consider their children taking part in extra-curricula activities or other enrichment activities such as school visits. |

b. Past experiences

The impact of prior experiences in shaping attitudes.

For example:

| Supportive | Obstructive |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Former Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils may have achieved highly in school, providing a good role modelMost / all Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils may have transferred to secondary school in the past and established a pattern | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Several Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils may have been excluded from the school, reinforcing stereotyped expectations on all sidesParents may have had unhappy and negative experiences of school themselves |

c. Scripts

The impact of common responses/phrases used consistently to justify actions.

For example:

| Supportive | Obstructive |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">'Travellers need exams these days - times have changed''I want them to have the education that I didn't have' | <ul style="list-style-type: none">'Our girls don't go to high school''Their parents won't allow them to go on trips' |

d. Education policy

The impact of wider policies and systems.

For example:

| Supportive | Obstructive |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">The school may be an all-girls' school and this may appeal to Traveller parentsThe school may be a faith school and this appeals to these parents | <ul style="list-style-type: none">A selective schooling system in the local area may deter Traveller parents at point of transferThe secondary curriculum may be perceived as irrelevant to the needs of these pupils |

e. Social identity

The impact of individual and group identities.

For example:

| Supportive | Obstructive |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school may serve a diverse population with many different community groups and pupils with a variety of needs. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils may be less likely to feel like 'outsiders.'• The Traveller community may be well established in the local area - there is community cohesion which impacts positively on peer and home-school relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Traveller community may be marginalised by the local community, perhaps segregated geographically and there is inter-community tension.• One Gypsy parent was not going to allow her daughter to transfer to a high school where there were no other Gypsy pupils |

Appendix 2 - Audit tools

The following audit tools have been designed to assist schools to consider the educational outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils that they are working to achieve, and to highlight the contextual influences and constructive conditions that may influence that achievement. It is hoped that this will assist in identifying which constructive conditions are already a strong feature of a school's current ethos and practice and which might benefit from further development in order to improve outcomes for this group of pupils.

Form A - Intended educational outcomes

| | |
|--|--|
| School | |
| Local authority | |
| Intended educational outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils | |
| | |
| Criteria for success | |
| | |
| Monitoring and evaluation arrangements | |
| | |

Form B - Contextual influences (may be positive or negative)

| | |
|--|--|
| School | |
| Local authority | |
| Demographic and community influences (<i>e.g. cohesion/tension within the community</i>) | |
| | |
| Past experiences (<i>e.g. history of positive/negative relationships with Travellers</i>) | |
| | |
| Scripts (<i>e.g. commonly used responses to justify actions such as 'Our girls don't go to high school'</i>) | |
| | |
| Education policy (<i>e.g. selective system, faith schools</i>) | |
| | |
| Social identity (<i>e.g. schools serving a diverse population where there may be less marginalisation of certain groups</i>) | |
| | |
| Other contextual influences | |
| | |

Form C - Constructive conditions: priorities for development

| School | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Local authority | | | | | |
| <p><i>Use the scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being a strong feature and 5 being a feature in need of some development) to indicate the extent to which the following are a feature of the school's current ethos / practice.</i></p> | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Safety and trust (e.g. a key member of staff, a strong emphasis on pastoral care) | | | | | |
| Respect (e.g. celebration of culture, whole-school behaviour expectations) | | | | | |
| Access and inclusion (e.g. practical assistance and proactive support for parents, induction groups) | | | | | |
| Flexibility (e.g. work-related curriculum, earlier access to vocational courses, flexible approach to homework) | | | | | |
| High expectations (e.g. using positive role models, monitoring performance data, clear expectations of behaviour) | | | | | |
| Partnership (e.g. with pupils, parents, other schools, TESS and other agencies) | | | | | |
| Additional constructive conditions | | | | | |

Background

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), in partnership with Brian Foster from the Inner London Traveller Education Consortium and Chris Derrington, an independent consultant, is conducting a three-year study on behalf of the DCSF, to investigate the improvement of educational outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils. The research, which is focused predominantly on Key Stages 2-4, involves four main components; a longitudinal analysis of national data, progress mapping in 200 schools, a review of the literature (which has been published and is accessible from: <http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-RR077.pdf>) and 20 case study visits. The final report will be published in 2010, together with details of the analytical techniques used. A summary of the findings from the case study phase is presented in this interim report.

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The Student Journey Select Committee

Written evidence submitted by the Youth Offending Service (YOS), Kent County Council

Support/Preparation Initiatives

- **Pre-Apprenticeship provision** – provide tasters, work readiness to enable young people with criminal records (YPs) to make informed choices (proved valuable to Vulnerable Apprenticeship Scheme known as VAS).
- **Other support and preparation including:** to prepare young offenders for study and help improve their literacy and numeracy. These are crucial requirements for the majority of young offenders but something that education training and employment (ETE) providers have difficulty in providing, as it requires more intensive delivery and is therefore more costly.
- **Financial incentives** to keep YPs on board, particularly in the current climate. The VAS demonstrates how providing a 'wage' has proved to be very successful in incentivising YPs.

Issues

- **YOS needs to be included** or have a voice in the ETE post-statutory county planning provision process.
- There is a need for **vulnerable learners to receive more intensive support** to enable them to start and remain on their learning programme. This support can include taking them to interviews, help with preparing for their course and with their homework. This support needs to be in place at the start of the programme. The effectiveness of offering this support can be seen in the VAS.
- **Provision throughout the County is patchy** in some areas such as Ashford, Canterbury, Sittingbourne and Shepway. The provision also doesn't have appeal to some of our YPs e.g. classroom based
- **Programmes need to meet the requirements of local employers** and YPs need to have more career information, advice and guidance (IAG) to understand these requirements.

- More emphasis needs to be placed on supplying a menu of programme options that **provide roll on roll off programmes** with flexibility in gaining accreditation. This would help reduce the issues encountered in YOS in finding ETE placements for YPs during key transition stages e.g. leaving custodial estate.
- There are **difficulties across agencies in trying to capture a true picture** of the number of YPs on open orders who are not in education, employment and training (NEET), as there are differences between agencies in how YPs held in remand, custody and serving an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) order, are recorded e.g. ISS recorded as EET but effectively they are NEET.

Other Issues

- **No Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)** and limited funding support for YPs on low incomes. Many of our YPs come from disadvantaged families, and although may be entitled to some support it is often complicated to access.
- **Travel to provision.** With some providers there is a minimum amount offered which will not cover travel for YPs who live in more rural areas.
- **Providers are paid by outcome** and therefore are less likely to take on YPs with more complex issues. We often have YPs who are refused mainstream provision.
- **Disclosure of offences and concerns around risk**– This is an issue with providers that YOS is addressing with the College Agreement and are now working towards setting up protocols with the Kent Association of Training Organisations (KATO).
- **Behaviour issues** – Our YPs often have poor social skills, and present with behavioural problems. These can increase difficulties when applying and starting ETE provision, resulting in refusal, lack of engagement and attendance, and increasing drop out from programmes.

Kent YOS Activities and Provision

Programmes, projects or good practice that are having a demonstrable impact upon reducing NEETs

The first two are countywide projects and are aimed at young people on high-end orders:

- **Integrated Resettlement Project** - employs 2 key project workers. Their role is to work with the young person on release from custody. They can take them to interviews; help them with sorting out benefits and accommodation etc. They also have funding for resources, which can be used to buy equipment for college, work or training. They can also fund short training courses.
- **The New Skills New Lives Project** – co-ordinates and supports the KCC Vulnerable Learners Apprenticeship scheme, which has 20 places for YPs with local employers. At present 16 YPs are in employment, and it is hoped the project will place another 4 YPs in the next month. The Project office also has a remit to support YPs who are serving high-end orders, which includes those leaving custody. This includes providing work placements, employer mentor support and help to improve their literacy & numeracy skills.

Other projects include:

- **Kent YOS Literacy & Numeracy Project** – This project uses the Rapid English & Exam on Demand software. Both packages have been purchased by Kent YOS for their effectiveness in increasing literacy & numeracy skills of offenders throughout the County. The Rapid English programme was introduced in the County by Kent YOS with the aim to target high-end young offenders with literacy and numeracy issues. The project is still in its infancy but there is evidence to show that the small number of YPs that have used these programmes have shown improvement in their communication and literacy skills, and have positively re-engaged with mainstream provision with increased confidence. Rapid English has now been taken up by a number of schools, Pupil Referral Units and training providers. The Exams on Demand software allows YPs to take literacy & numeracy tests in a much more flexible way that suits them. To date over 26 YPs have taken advantage of this package and 4 YPs have gained accreditation, with a further 6 YPs waiting to sit tests.

- **Engaging statutory aged offenders who are refusers.** Often these YPs are in danger of becoming long-term NEETs, and are at higher risk of re-offending. They require a lot of support, and this intense work doesn't provide quick results. There is a need for better collaboration between schools and agencies to tackle this issue.
- **Sparse ETE provision** that starts between October-December and February-March, and limited ETE provision offered during the summer. These create difficulties in offering places for YP leaving custody and those on the ISS programme (for YPs on high-end orders).
- **A County Rapid English Forum** has been established to support countywide provision and delivery of the Rapid English initiative. It is focused on standardising systems, reporting and the sharing of resources across all agencies. This aim is evaluate the provision and delivery across the county to ensure more YPs are able to access this programme. This is particularly important for YPs finishing their orders with YOS.
- **College Protocols** – Kent & Medway YOS and Connexions, along with KAFEC have agreed Countywide College protocols and associated documentation. These will ensure that there is a standard approach across all colleges in the way applications from young offenders (at present on intensive orders, subject to a custodial or remand conditions) are processed. It will also establish college champions within each college, who will act as first point of contact for all YOS-related issues, as well as support the identification of needs and provision for the YP and their family. There will be a process of communication to update and inform YOS of attendance and ensure that YP are supported into appropriate progression pathways.
- **KATO Protocols** – Meetings are taking place to begin to establish similar protocols based on the Kent Association of FE Corporations (KAFEC) model with Kent's local training providers.

Programmes, projects that that will have a demonstrable impact upon reducing NEET young offenders

Previous Provision

- **Target Yr 11 work in collaboration with Connexions and Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP)** – This was delivered in June 09 and offered PAYP activities to groups of young offenders across the County within college and Youth Service venues. The focus was on engaging vulnerable YPs. There was some success; this was mainly in smaller groups offering sports leader qualifications. It was felt that YPs were better served in attending mainstream provision, and colleges were asked to provide summer taster days for Yr 11s. Colleges did respond and this provision is now offered by some colleges at Easter and summer term holidays.
- **Offender Learning and Skill Service (OLASS) funded courses-** These consisted of 2 courses aimed at high-end offenders. The first course was a Construction Course which ran in February and March 2009 for all YPs across the County. It was delivered by the Skills Centre in Sittingbourne and subcontracted elements to Concept Training. It successfully gained over 15 YPs on high-end orders (included 10 YPs with custodial orders), including the first YP who was released from custody at Cookham Wood to attend over the 6 days (released on temporary licence). From the 15 YPs who attended the taster day, 11 remained on the programme and gained full accreditation in Abrasive Wheels, First Aid, H&S awareness and the Construction Skills Certification Skills (CSCS) card. The success of this course led to making joint European Social Fund bids with the crime reduction charity NACRO and Kent Safe Schools. The latter have been delivering construction courses across Kent that have been very popular with YOS clients. The programme has now ended.

The second course offered to YPs in the Thames Valley area (including Swale) was the Motor Vehicle course run by Catch 22 during the summer of 2009. Of the 8 YPs who attended, 6 gained full accreditation and 1 gained evidence towards the Level 1 Motor Vehicle Repair Certification.

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New Skills New Lives (Young Offenders) – Project Briefing

Kent Youth Offending Service, October 2010

1. Background:

Despite systems and structures to address employment and training for vulnerable and excluded groups, many high risk and repeat young offenders aged 16-18, continue to fall outside of opportunities and become locked in a cycle of offending and imprisonment.

The Kent Youth Offending Service in collaboration with the SE LSC employed a Project Officer, in July 2009, to pilot approaches to ensuring high tariff Offenders have improved access to targeted training, opportunities to experience the world of work and develop independent living skills.

The project built upon the principles of New Skills New Lives (NSNL) project launched by the Kent Probation Service for adult offenders in the Community and serving Custodial sentences.

A key aspect of the Project is an aspiration that young offenders' progress to paid employment, reduce re-offending behaviours; achieve a relevant vocational qualification and Basic and Life Skills qualifications where appropriate.

A multi-agency New Skills New Lives Steering Group was formed and chaired by Angela Slaven (Director, Communities KCC) to bring together key partners to support the project aims.

A Service Based on Need:

It is generally acknowledged that people with poor literacy, numeracy and language skills tend to be on lower incomes or unemployed and more prone to ill health and social exclusion. Many offenders will have had negative experiences of education/school and may have little or no experience of work.

Kent is the second most deprived County Council area in the South East Region and the levels of deprivation vary considerably between Districts in the County. Almost 50% of the YOS County workload emanates from just 2 of the YOS Teams; those based in Sittingbourne and Ramsgate (Swale, Canterbury, Thanet & Dover).

Kent has 147,000 10-17 years olds. YOS anticipates:

- Being notified of between 3,300-3,800 children and young people coming to the attention of Kent Police
- Having approximately 900-1000 on caseload at any one time
- Of those, between 30-40 of them to be in custody.

(Kent Youth Justice Plan 2008/09)

2. Main Aim:

To develop a project, that through sustainable partnership provides a comprehensive package of support to young offenders to gain employment, access training and education opportunities and consequently stop (re) offending.

3. Funding:

Project commenced July 2009:

Financial Year 2009/10 – Project funded by Kent YOS and SE LSC (50K).

Financial Year 2010/11 – Project funded by Kent YOS, 'roll-over' from SE LSC initial funding and Kent YOS Integrated Resettlement Support (IRS) budget and Youth Justice Board 'Keeping Young People Engaged' Project (KYPE).

4. Partners & Working Relationships:

- **NSNL Working Group** – A multi agency Working Group was established to assist the aims and objectives of NSNL's and implement the NSNL Action Plan. The Working Group includes staff from Kent and Medway YOS, KCC Education/Youth & Community & Key Training, Kent Probation, West Kent College NSNL, Jobcentreplus, KAFEC Director, Nacro Director (Kent), Kent and Medway Connexions, Kent YOS ISS Manager, Kent Libraries and HMP Cookham Wood.
- **Kent & Medway FE Colleges** – A pilot project is due to commence where every Kent and Medway College have an identified 'Offender Learning Champion'. The pilot aims to ensure that Young Offenders have access to appropriate progression pathways to mainstream or other educational opportunities, to simplify the communication pathways between agencies and raise awareness of referral systems and the role each agency plays in successful outcomes.
- **Jobcentreplus** (JCP) – Young Offender pilot in place enabling young offenders to initiate benefit claim prior to release from custody and assist access to National Insurance numbers enabling access to bank accounts and financial support. Kent & Medway initiative.
- **Work placements** – Initial partnership with Medway Educational Partnership (MEBP) and Kent Vocational Training Placements (KVTP) to provide work placements for suitable young offenders. MEBP partnership continues and currently negotiating a potential contract with Kent Connexions.
- **NSNL Adult/YOS Projects** – Shared 'brand', aim and objectives. Joint working and launch/marketing event. Aim to share the NSNL Learning Bus.

- **KCC Vulnerable Learners Apprenticeship Pilot** (VLAP)– NSNL Project Officer attends VLAP Steering Group as ‘Offender Champion’ alongside partners including the South East Apprenticeship Company (SEAC), Kent Association of Training Organisations (KATO) and other ‘Champions’ from Catch 22, the Teenage Pregnancy Team and Kent Supported Employment.
- **Integrated Resettlement Team (IRS)** – NSNL officer meets weekly with YOS IRS workers to profile young people leaving custody and identify NSNL intervention. Sharing resources to support young people leaving custody.
- **Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS)** – Attends team meetings to advise about NSNL and other ETE options and generate referrals.
- **HMP Cookham Wood** – NSNL agenda has initiated a quarterly HMP Cookham Resettlement Practise Forum. Members include staff from Resettlement and Education at Cookham Wood, ETE staff from both Kent and Medway YOS’, Connexions and IRS workers from both Kent and Medway YOS and ETE staff from East Sussex, London and Surrey YOS’. The aim is to improve communication between partner agencies and those working with young people housed at Cookham. The Forum has enabled improved sharing of information and best practise and an opportunity for updates on local and national policy and initiatives.
- **YOS Team & YOS Education Staff** – Integrating NSNL/IRS into existing YOS structure and practise.

5. Project Model:

New Skills New Lives Key Elements:

- **Work experience placements** – The opportunity for suitable young offenders to experience unpaid work placements.
- **Skills for Life** – Includes:
 - Rapid English** - Rapid English is not an accredited literacy programme but aims to improve the confidence and ability of its learners so they will go on to accredited learning programmes.
- **Exams on Demand** - provides a stepping stone for young people to progress to a higher level. It gives them the opportunity to take the national test for Literacy & Numeracy from Entry Level 3 to Level 2.
- **NSNL Project Officer** – Provides targeted ETE support, advice and guidance to young people leaving custody, subject to ISS and Intensive Orders. Identified ‘Offender Champion’ lead for KCC Vulnerable Learners Apprenticeship Pilot and works with key partners to reduce the barriers to ETE for Young Offenders.

6. Data & Outcomes:

Integrated Resettlement Support (IRS) Mid Point Report July 2010:

The report compared two cohorts of young people who had left custody: Cohort A, who were all supported by IRS (which includes NSNL's) and cohort B, a similar cohort who left custody at the same time the previous year and were not supported by IRS/NSNL's.

'Statistically significant differences between the two cohorts emerge when considering the longer term outcomes for the young people with respect to ETE. The data for August 2010, i.e. some months following release, showed that 36% of the young people in Cohort B were not in any form of education, training or employment, compared to 21% of Cohort A'.

'In August 2010, 25.7% of the young people in Cohort B were in ETE, compared to 45% in Cohort A'.

Referrals:

- 45 (includes 11 on Rapid English pilot)
- 23 DTO
- 9 DTO/ISS
- 5 ISS
- 8 Supervision Orders (high asset)

NSNL work placements:

18 Referrals since 26/11/10 – choices mainly Construction/Motor Vehicle

7 placed – 1 active and 1 due to commence in 2 weeks 1 awaiting interview.

KCC Apprenticeship Pilot:

25 referrals - 4 applications pending and 10 due to attend 2nd information session.
20 young offenders will commence apprenticeship scheme by end March 2011.

*** Update – May 2011.**

16 young offenders are employed under the scheme in a variety of apprenticeships including customer service, construction and hairdressing; with another 4 to be placed within the next month. Over 50 young offenders applied for the available 20 places. Many of those placed have few or no qualifications but have proved that they can succeed with the appropriate support.

7. Current & Future Developments:

- **Libraries** – Partnership proposal with regards to Kent Approach to Literacy & Reading. Following presentation to Library Managers we are exploring opportunities for joint working which could include Library induction for young people leaving custody, library Champions within YOT's, sharing library resources and training for library staff.
- **NSNL Thanet Works** – awaiting confirmation of SLA to NSNL Thanet Works to work with unemployed 16-24 year olds in Thanet. Kent YOS NSNL's has already met with the Thanet Project Co-ordinator to plan joint working and referral mechanisms.
- **Teenage Fathers** – Joint project proposal with Kent Teenage Father co-ordinator to work with NEET young fathers known to the Youth Offending Service.
- **Remploy** – Potential project with Remploy to work with 25 young offenders with identified LDD needs.

8. Case Study: See Annex A.

Annex A

Kent YOS – New Skills New Lives & Integrated Resettlement Support Case Study:

Background:

On 21st April 2009 Joe* was found guilty of Aggravated Burglary at trial. He was aged 15 years (aged 14 at time of the offence) and his first conviction. Joe was sentenced to 3 years custody and was released in March 2010 having also spent time on remand and supervised bail whilst waiting for trial.

Joe offended with an Adult, on a Saturday evening whilst under the influence of alcohol and cannabis. The victims were an elderly couple in their 80's and they were threatened with a knife during the burglary. From the outset Joe expressed remorse towards to victim however; although he admitted burglary he denied use of a knife.

Prior to conviction, Joe's attendance at education had been erratic – with a pattern of poor attendance, exclusions, low attainment and referrals to several alternative curriculum provisions. He was sentenced towards the end of Year 10 school year and released at the end of Year 11.

Joe lived at home with his mum and three younger siblings. He has never known his father and there was an absence of positive male role models in his life. His mum was, however, very supportive of Joe and devastated at his conviction.

Whilst in custody Joe engaged well in the Education programme and attended group works and 1:1 sessions on substance misuse. He was diagnosed by an Educational Psychologist as having dyslexia. Whilst in custody Joe achieved certificates in literacy,

numeracy, Art and gained NOCN brickwork level 1. He had also achieved 'enhanced' status and was moved to the resettlement wing in the last month of his sentence.

New Skills New Lives & Integrated Resettlement Support:

Joe was referred to New Skills New Lives (NSNL) whilst in custody as he had expressed an interest in gaining work experience upon release. As he was being released at the end of Year 11 engagement in statutory education was limited as his Year 11 peers were soon to leave on GCSE study leave.

Joe said he would like to gain work experience in a garage as he was being supported with an application to College to study motor mechanics. A work placement was obtained at a garage in Strood, Kent and although Joe lived a ½ hour train journey away he has attended the placement weekly, unpaid and received positive feedback from garage staff.

Kent YOS Integrated Resettlement Team (IRS) worked alongside NSNL's to provide the additional 'wrap-around' support required to ensure Joe's smooth transition from custody to community. Both IRS and NSNL's staff met with Joe prior to his release to begin the planning process and to develop a supportive relationship. This involved allocation of a named IRS worker who referred Joe to a weekly ASDAN accredited Moto-cross project to develop his interest and confidence in working with motor bikes and cars. In addition, IRS also provided a male sessional worker to support and mentor Joe, providing a positive male role model and linking him into an IRS funded membership at a local gym. This provides a positive activity and increased healthier lifestyle.

In addition, Joe continues weekly appointments with his YOS Social Worker and is complying with all elements of his licence. Sessions involve work on enhancing his consequential thinking skills, attitudes to offending and substance misuse.

More recently, Joe has participated in a custody and resettlement DVD project (referred by IRS) and was interviewed for his views on his experiences in prison and on release. The feedback from the project was that Joe was "absolutely brilliant and a really lovely young man".

Future Plans:

Joe has been accepted on a full-time College course to study motor mechanics which starts in September 2010. IRS staff supported Joe on enrolment day and IRS funds have financed resources required for his College course. However, his preferred career route would be to qualify as a mechanic via an apprenticeship training scheme. He likes the idea of working (earning) and learning which has been inspired by his work experience.

NSNL have been working with colleagues within KCC to pursue apprenticeship opportunities for Young Offenders and plans are afoot for 20 funded places to be allocated.

If Joe's good progress continues he has been advised that he would be considered for a place on the scheme and the garage have provisionally agreed to provide the full-time work placement required, to ensure he completes the NVQ element of the apprenticeship scheme.

In addition, Kent YOS aim to support Joe with gaining Level 1 / 2 Adult literacy and numeracy qualifications via the 'Exams on Demand' basic skills provision, that is due to be available within Kent YOS from June 2010. This will ensure that Joe is equipped to cope with the academic elements of either a College or apprenticeship training route.

Financial Food for Thought.....

The cost of detaining a young person in a Young Offender Institute is £60,000 per annum.

The cost of paying a KCC apprentice is £5,460 per annum. The training element is free.

* Name changed to protect confidentiality.

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Supporting vulnerable young people into Apprenticeships Project

Kent County Council is undertaking a project to support vulnerable young people into Apprenticeships with employers from across the public and private sector. The project aims to uncover why employers are reluctant to employ these young people and what the longer term benefits for the young people, the employers and their communities are. The project will support young parents, young offenders, care leavers and young people with disabilities or mental health problems into Apprenticeships.

In order to achieve this, KCC is offering to cover the costs of the Apprentice salary, £105 per week for up to a year. The young people themselves will be employed by either KCC or the employer themselves on an Apprenticeship contract. For all employers, KCC will undertake the payroll function for each young person. Through this project we are actively promoting Apprenticeships for 16-18 year olds although opportunities will be provided for young people who have been unable to undertake an Apprenticeship before, up to the age of 25.

Apprentices learn through a combination of on and off the job training and acquire the practical skills, knowledge and understanding in the workplace. Theoretical underpinning knowledge will be provided off the job and will be delivered by either a training provider or college. The young people will be with employers in the workplace for a minimum of 4 days per week.

Apprentices work towards a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 2, Key Skills /Functional Skills and in most cases a Technical Certificate (a qualification designed to provide underpinning knowledge in the vocational area). Young people can also undertake an Advanced Apprenticeship during which they work towards a NVQ at Level 3, Key Skills/ Functional Skills and a Technical Certificate. An Apprenticeship qualification is usually gained within 9 to 15 months. In some cases, where the young person takes more than 12 months to complete their qualification, employers will need to cover the additional salary costs.

Apprenticeships provide employers with the opportunity to ensure that the training will meet the overall skills need within their organisation, encourages diversity within the workforce and provide employment opportunities for young people from their local community. An Apprenticeship provides employers with the opportunity to trial a young person for a year whilst upskilling them and facilitating the personal development of other staff within their organisation.

Support will be provided for employers and for young people from partners involved in the project. Each young person will have extensive support from key workers and project champions from within KCC and partner agencies, full details of whom will be given to employers. Young people and employers will also have support from the appointed Training Provider who will deliver the Apprenticeship framework. Regular reviews will take place between the Apprentice, the employing manager and Training Provider to ensure that the Apprentice is progressing.

This project will provide young people and employers in Kent with a unique opportunity to work together to maximize potential and productivity.

Further information on Apprenticeships is available at - <http://www.Apprenticeships.org.uk>

For further information on this project, please contact Lucy-Ann Bett on lucyann.bett@kent.gov.uk or 07920526559

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What's the project all about?

Kent County Council is undertaking a project to support vulnerable young people into Apprenticeships, with employers across the county from both the public and private sector. The project is aimed at those who will struggle most to access education, training or employment. There are 80 places on offer, 20 of which will be within the authority itself.

The project also aims to uncover why employers are reluctant to employ these young people and what the longer term benefits for the young people, the employers and their local communities are.

Young people eligible for this scheme will predominantly be aged between 16 and 18; however placements will be offered to those with learning difficulties up the age of 24. Apprentices will earn a set wage of £105 per week whilst gaining valuable skills and experience to help them climb the career ladder also have the confidence to apply for jobs in the future.

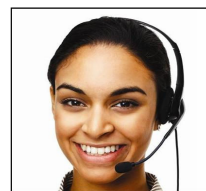
As an incentive KCC have offered to cover the cost of the apprentice's salary for one year and in order to reduce the time spent on administration and paperwork by employers, KCC will undertake the payroll function and provide an adaptable apprenticeship contract. KCC will continue to support employers to ensure the apprentice is progressing well.

Apprentices work towards a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 2, Key Skills/Functional Skills and a Technical Certificate (a qualification designed to provide underpinning knowledge in the vocational area).

This project provides employers with the opportunity to trial a young person for a year, ensuring the training meets the overall skills needs of their organisation, assist the young person in obtaining valuable skills and experience and provides employment for young people from the local community.

Who will the project help?

- Young Parents
- Young Offenders
- Care Leavers
- Young people with physical or learning disabilities
- Young people with mental health problems



Vulnerable Learner Project Key Facts:

- 80 Apprenticeship places
 - 60 with Public & Private employers
 - 20 with KCC
- Apprenticeships in a variety of skills areas
- Apprenticeships located all over the county linked to economic growth areas
- Apprentice salary funded by KCC for 1 year
- Support from training providers for apprentices and employers
- Project started in September 2010 to be completed at the end of March 2012
- Project will highlight cost savings of supporting these young people into Apprenticeships
- Young people gaining valuable skills and experience
- Simple recruitment process for apprentice and employer

Support from Mike Hill – KCC Cabinet Member for Community Services

"This scheme will give a real taste of being in the workplace and we are determined to make a difference to the lives of these young people who are finding it particularly difficult to get a job. We want to make sure everyone has the opportunity to succeed and to help those who are especially vulnerable." October 2010

**A GREAT
START!!!**



Kandice's Story

Kandice is the first young person to start an Apprenticeship through this project, working at Howlett's Wild Animal Park. She has a young son and has wanted to work with animals from an early age but due to circumstances she had been unable to secure employment. She was recommended to apply for an Apprenticeship by Kent County Councils Young Parents' Team.

Now working as an apprentice zoo keeper at Howlett's, she feels the project has really changed her life. "I was bored, did nothing everyday and hardly had any money. I lost all confidence in myself and didn't think I would do anything with my life.

Doing an Apprenticeship is the best thing that's ever happened to me, because it has made all my dreams come true! I can go home to my son knowing I have done something with my life, something to make everyone proud of me".

Kandice has the support of her manager at Howlett's but also a key worker from the Young Parents Team, who can assist with any specific needs or issues she may have during her Apprenticeship. Her placement will last for one year but she hopes to secure a position on a permanent basis having experienced being a zoo keeper first hand during her Apprenticeship.



10 Benefits of employing a vulnerable young person:

1. **Apprentice's salary paid for one year**
2. **KCC undertaking payroll function for all employers, easing the burden of administration and paperwork**
3. **Support from both KCC and a dedicated training provider for the duration**
4. **The apprentice's training will ensure they meet the skills need of your organisation**
5. **Diversify your workforce**
6. **Opportunity to trial a young person for a year whilst upskilling them**
7. **Facilitating the personal development of existing staff.**
8. **Regular reviews between the apprentice, training provider and employer to ensure the apprentice is progressing well.**
9. **Supporting young people from within the local community**
10. **Training a future member of staff!**

Who do I contact to find out more information?

If you know of a young person who could benefit from this project or you're an employer who would like to offer an opportunity to a young person, please contact:

Lucy-Ann Bett – Project Manager, Supporting Independence Programme, KCC



01622 696939



07920 526559



LucyAnn Bett

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