

Education Support to Roma, gypsy and travelling families

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Sheffield City Council has provided a range of education support to Gypsy, Roma and Travelling (GRT) children and families in recent years, with additional focus on Roma pupils since the arrival of Roma families, mainly from Slovakia, over recent years.

Strategic Planning and Professional Development for Staff

- New Arrival and Roma Steering Group – comprises representatives from a range of SCC services such as Inclusion and Learning, Social Care, MAST, Safeguarding, NHS/Sheffield Children's Hospital, Youth and Community Teams who meet regularly to exchange information, monitor progress and address emerging challenges and issues regarding Roma children and young people's engagement with school
- New Arrivals and Roma Workshops – held twice a year, open to all services and schools which have links with the Roma community
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) Steering Group – comprises representatives from primary and secondary schools, University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University, Teaching Schools Alliance (TSAs), New Arrivals and EAL Team, Inclusion and Learning Service focuses on improving the quality of teaching and learning for pupils who speak English as an additional language
- EAL Annual Conference - organised in partnership between the Local Authority and Sheffield Hallam University. Aims to improve teaching, learning and progress for all pupils who speak English as an additional language
- New Arrivals and EAL Team – centrally based team which provides training, advice and support to schools which have pupils who speak EAL, both those newly arrived and those with more advanced language skills

School Support

- Many schools with cohorts of gypsy, Roma, traveller (GRT) pupils have developed translation and liaison services which have improved communication and support to families
- Teacher and school networks across Sheffield are in place and meet regularly, led and supported by the NA/EAL Team
- Traveller Support teacher, EMTAS – works with traveller children, on designated traveller sites at Lodge Moor and Halfway
- Strategic overstaffing of Roma Teaching Assistants project, funded by the LA in 2014-16 provided for the recruitment and training of young people from minority ethnic heritage including Roma on placements in schools. This has led to a significant increase of Roma TAs in schools who are engaged in a range of family liaison and learning support activities
- Early Years Team/Community Early Years' Practitioners have a focus on improving access to 2 and 3 year old Funded Early Learning (FEL) places. Awareness sessions through Parent and Toddler Groups are impacting on the take up of places. However, numbers are still low and further work to encourage take up is underway

- Roma children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) – there is a high number of Roma pupils with hearing impairment. The Hearing Impairment Service, in partnership with the Sheffield Children’s Hospital supports over a hundred Roma children with hearing impairment to access their education more effectively. One example of this is the unit which has been set up at Owlter Brook Primary School, jointly organised and funded by the school and SCC where twenty five pupils with medium to profound hearing impairment are taught daily by a specialist teacher
- Schools, LA specialist services and Sheffield Children’s Hospital continue to work in partnership to address other SEND issues which affect GRT families

Sheffield Community Investment Deal

- This is a targeted project aimed at the neighbourhoods with the most acute impacts on the provision of local services linked to recent migration. The neighbourhoods included in this project are in NE and East Sheffield; Fir Vale, Firth Park, Pitsmoor, Page Hall, Grimsthorpe, Darnall and Tinsley.
- Focus will be on community, schools and health issues and the workers will have one of these specialisms as a focus.
- Two of the Community Development workers are based in local schools in Page Hall and Tinsley

Community Support for Families

- A wide range of adult learning opportunities including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes are available across Sheffield including in Page Hall and Fir Vale
- The Adult Learning Working Group meets regularly to plan a comprehensive offer of courses including functional literacy and mathematics
- Sheffield College Connect project for young people continues to be well supported
- Schools and MAST continue to work in partnership to support families in the Roma community
- Active Burngreave has funded twenty projects so far to improve sport and activity opportunities in the area
- Big Brother Burngreave has been very successful in developing relationships between young people, particularly the young men, through their mentoring programmes
- The Page Hall Partners’ meetings provide regular opportunities for services and organisations to share information and address issues arising