

Aug 2018 Back to school – advice and support

Going back to school can be a stressful time for parents; the cost of school uniforms, trying to find appropriate school transport or simply getting the resources your child needs to get the best out of their education can be difficult. While school should be a great time of learning, development and discovery, we know that not all children have their needs met.

The same is true for GRT children. Often, we hear that they don't feel like their culture is respected in schools, or is considered to be a risk factor. Sometimes, they feel that they don't quite fit in, or that they are treated differently.

Quite often, GRT kids' needs can be overlooked. It's so important to speak to someone if you are concerned that your child's needs are not being met. It's better to get it sorted sooner rather than later.

Our job is to advise and support families with any issues they might be facing in schools or education. We can be contacted by mobile 0794 953 3342, or by emailing education@travellermovement.org.uk.

If your child is not returning to school, but is still of compulsory school age then perhaps you are considering Elective home education. This is the term used by the Department for Education (DfE) to describe parents' decisions to provide education for their children at home instead of sending them to school. If you would like more information regarding elective [home education](#) we would be more than happy to speak to you. Again, you can call or email using the details above.

Know your rights

GRT kids are over-represented in school exclusions statistics. This is unacceptable. [Research](#) by the Children's Commissioner in 2012 revealed 100% of appeals against permanent exclusions of GRT children were successful, highlighting that many exclusions of GRT children are in fact illegal. Exclusions should only ever be used as a last resort, and not in the first instance. Find further information on school exclusions [here](#)

It's important to know your rights. Our education fact sheets will tell you what you need to know

- Information regarding types of schools can be found [here](#)
- Information on school admissions can be found [here](#)
- Information on school applications can be found [here](#)
- Information regarding Special Educational Needs (SEN) can be found [here](#)
- Information regarding Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) can be found [here](#)

Contact us

If you are concerned, or just have a question about your child's education, then please feel free to get in touch. The Traveller Movement provides advocacy and support to Gypsy and Traveller parents. We also provide training to schools in order to ensure a better environment for GRT children whilst in education.

Where we cannot assist, and where further legal input is required, we can refer you to a solicitor.

If you need further advice on school attendance, school applications, school exclusions, Special Educational Needs (SEN), or Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP), please contact the Traveller Movement Education

Team on education@travellermovement.org.uk or call the mobile 0794 953 3342

New partnerships and training opportunities

We've recently partnered with several organisations to support GRT young people.

Kidscape

Bullying is such an issue for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller kids. So many of our calls to the education project relate to unaddressed racial bullying. While some schools take this issue seriously the vast majority struggle to address both elements – the racism and the act of bullying itself. We've recently partnered with Kidscape, the anti-bullying charity who run the [ZAP programme](#).

ZAP is a free one day workshop for children and young people aged 9-16 who have experienced bullying and their parents or carers. The workshops are free and encourage the development of assertiveness skills and raises young people's confidence. Please contact us if you would like a referral.

The Prince's Trust

In addition GRT young people are over-represented in NEET figures. The 2011 [census](#) showed that just over half of Gypsy or Irish Travellers, who were 16 and over, were economically inactive. We've recently partnered with the [Prince's Trust](#) to get more GRT young people back into education or training. If you are a young person aged 16-30 and would like help getting a job, get in touch with either Prince's Trust or the Traveller Movement and we'll make a referral.

In the autumn, The Traveller Movement will be developing courses for young women to improve their employability skills, so get in touch if you'd like to participate. Please contact Christina if you are interested in attending a course: partnerships@travellermovement.org.uk