



Derby City Council

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE BOARD 17 February 2015

ITEM 8

Report of the Strategic Director of Children and Young People

OfSTED thematic review in to overcoming barriers and ensuring that Roma children are fully engaged and achieving in education

SUMMARY

- 1.1 In February 2014, OfSTED undertook a thematic review of the strategies in schools and Local Authority (LA) areas around Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities. Two LA's were identified, namely Derby and Sheffield. Both were identified due to low education outcomes for GRT children and also due to having a rapidly growing GRT population. The thematic review was commissioned by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector following a meeting with a group of Sheffield headteachers who identified a number of specific challenges in ensuring that Roma children attend regularly and do well at school. Latterly, some schools in Manchester were also visited.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To ask School Forum to review the way in which English as an Additional Language support is provided in the city. This is a school forum issue since they have voted to use Dedicated Schools Grant for this purpose.
- 2.2 To review the recommendations for LAs and present a way forward to the CYP Board in the spring 2015.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 School Forum need to ensure that schools are receiving value for money from the resources which they are investing and also by examining best practice elsewhere.
- 3.2 OfSTED has made a series of recommendations which LAs should consider.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 In February 2014, OfSTED undertook a thematic review of the strategies in schools and Local Authority (LA) areas around Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities. Two LA's were identified, namely Derby and Sheffield. Both were identified due to low education outcomes for GRT children and also due to having a rapidly growing GRT population. The thematic review was commissioned Her Majesty's Chief Inspector following a meeting with a group of Sheffield headteachers who identified a number of specific challenges in ensuring that Roma children attend regularly and do well at school. Latterly, some schools in Manchester were also visited

This is part of a longer piece of research by OfSTED regarding GRT attainment, and early indications suggest that they will publish their findings in at least two phases, namely:

- a focus on the educational engagement, attainment and barriers faced by Roma children
- a focus on the educational engagement, attainment and barriers faced by Gypsy Traveler children.

The Roma survey aimed to get a more accurate assessment of:

- the barriers to educational engagement and attainment that Roma pupils experience
- the challenges faced by particular schools and local authorities in supporting a high number of Roma pupils who typically are new to speaking English
- the strategies employed successfully by local authorities and schools to support Roma pupils, independently or in partnership with others, that might be transferable to other contexts.

4.2 In Derby, Her majesty's Inspector (HMI) met with Officers and also headteachers of:

- Firs Estate Primary School
- Pear Tree Infant School
- Da Vinci School.

HMI did not meet with the Headteacher of Bemrose School. This is the school which hosts the language centre.

4.3 Key findings as extracted from the OfSTED report:

- i. The local authorities and schools in the sample all demonstrated a strong commitment to improving the engagement and achievement of pupils from Roma backgrounds. The most successful of these local authorities and schools worked in effective partnerships with other agencies and developed specific strategies, led by well-informed senior leaders, to meet the needs of this group of pupils.
- ii. The schools visited were welcoming to new pupils, whatever their background, and integrated them as quickly as possible. However, approaches to initial assessment and induction, and arrangements to help Roma pupils make a smooth transition between primary and secondary phases, were variable in their effectiveness.
- iii. Where newly arrived Roma pupils had little prior experience of formal education, schools and local authorities reported that initially they had difficulty in engaging the pupils to adhere to school routines and meet expectations for good behaviour. Conversely, Roma pupils who were well integrated into school and did not have interruptions to their education made good progress in their learning. However, their attainment remained low due to exceptionally low starting points.
- iv. School leaders reported that there had been no adverse effect on the achievement of other pupils already settled in their schools. However, they had experienced problems accessing available funding such as the pupil premium for new pupils quickly enough. This was a particular challenge when a large number of pupils joined or left during the school year.
- v. In the local authorities and schools visited, almost all Roma pupils arriving from Eastern Europe were new to speaking English. In some schools, there was a shortage of qualified teachers with the relevant expertise to support Roma pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL). In addition, although bilingual staff were often effective in supporting parents and pupils, not all were sufficiently qualified or fluent in English themselves.
- vi. Senior officers at the local authorities told inspectors that it was difficult to accurately keep track of pupils from highly mobile families. This was particularly difficult at secondary level, where high dropout rates among Roma pupils were not uncommon.
- vii. The Roma parents spoken to by inspectors consistently said that they were reluctant to state their children's ethnicity for fear of discrimination. This leads to under-reporting of Roma pupil numbers that, in turn, makes it difficult to target resources effectively.

Source: Overcoming barriers: ensuring that Roma children are fully engaged and achieving in education, OfSTED, December 2014.

4.4 Recommendations from the OfSTED report:

i) Local authorities should:

- a) ensure that there is a dedicated and knowledgeable senior leader who can drive the local authority's strategies for improving outcomes for Roma pupils
- b) ensure that all key services work in partnership effectively so that outcomes for Roma pupils are improved
- c) develop sufficient expertise within a specialist support service to provide advice and training for schools
- d) review strategies for improving Roma pupils' attendance and attainment, and for keeping track of pupils from highly mobile families
- e) encourage schools to ensure that pupils receive an initial assessment and induction when they start school in England and ongoing specialist support to meet their needs.

ii) The Department for Education should:

- a) consider how the allocation of existing funding can more accurately reflect the changes in the number of eligible pupils on roll throughout the school year
- b) consider how the classification of pupil groups can encourage more accurate recording.

iii) Schools should:

- a) assign a knowledgeable, informed leader to improve the achievement of Roma pupils
- b) recruit qualified teachers with relevant expertise to provide high quality teaching and support for Roma pupils who are learning English as an additional language
- c) check that staff who support Roma pupils or teach English as an additional language are well trained and sufficiently fluent in English
- d) strengthen the links between partner primary/secondary schools so that Roma pupils remain engaged in education as they move from one key stage to the next.

4 Headlines of key Derby comments from the OfSTED report

5 Comment	Greater detail
<p>The number of Roma pupils in Derby increased from 199 in 2009 to 594 in January 2013. This represented 1.4% of the local authority's total pupil population of just over 40,000 pupils in 2013. Most families have settled in the Arboretum and Normanton wards. Some schools have seen substantial increases in Roma pupil numbers: one Derby primary school had four Roma pupils in 2010, rising to 99 in 2014, representing almost a third of all pupils on roll.</p>	<p>HMI has subsequently commented that there was an overwhelming degree of praise for the work of the primary schools from Roma parents and pupils spoken to and states that this was reflected in the report</p>
<p>At the time of the visits, Derby and Sheffield had a generic strategy for newly arrived pupils, rather than a specifically identified Roma strategy to meet the particular needs of this group. A reduction in resources and the loss of key specialist staff, both strategically and operationally, have led to reduced capacity.</p>	<p>Derby does have a new communities strategy, but does not have a specific Roma strategy. Derby has two support strategies for EAL New Arrival children/families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Support Strategy for EAL New Arrivals (primary school age) • Secondary Support Strategy for EAL New Arrivals (secondary school age).
<p>Derby supported new arrivals in secondary schools through a language centre based at a local high school. From there, pupils are enrolled in schools throughout the city. Sheffield and Manchester, in contrast, have sought to support pupils in the schools they attended when they first arrived. The Derby model could lead to pupils attending a school far away from where they live. Pupils faced additional upheaval when they settled in the school where the language centre was based and then moved again, away from friends they have made. Language centres were common in England up to the mid-1980s when, following a critical report by the Commission for Racial Equality into the practice in Calderdale local authority at the time, such centres were disbanded.</p>	<p>The CRE report (known as the Swann Report) was dealing with issues of segregation. In Derby, parents choose to send their children to the language centre (LA) for 6 weeks or so. They are not screened and directed there by an English language assessment. All LC students are assessed in the four key areas of the language development (listening, speaking, reading and writing) immediately after their arrival to the LC. Those LC students who perform above the threshold (QCA Level 1) at the baseline language assessment are then referred back to the Admissions Team and their school place application forms are processed following the mainstream procedures. Those who stay at the LC, after completing the induction programme, are enrolled in schools throughout the city. All 15 secondary schools and academies participate in the secondary strategy and equally share the responsibility to accommodate students from the LC. The key to this is that parents make an active choice to send their children to this provision and this is supported by funding from the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) which has been agreed by School Forum. However, notwithstanding this, we must take cognisance of the Swann Report and recommend that School Forum review the best methodology of language induction in to the city.</p>

Comment	Greater detail
<p>In Derby, a local church was hosting after-school provision for up to 550 Roma children and young people following concerns about the number of Roma pupils on the streets after school. Pupils were fed and given activities based on their curriculum subjects. Parents had to enrol formally and a daily attendance register was taken. Volunteers were drawn from the church, the multi-faith centre based at Derby University, local Roma volunteers and community organisations. The result was that these Roma pupils were engaged in purposeful educational activities after school.</p> <p>However, despite its success, this project had no funding from the local authority or elsewhere, other than a small Co-operative grant. Not all schools visited in Derby were sufficiently aware of it. One headteacher had 'never heard of it'. Another was aware of it but did not know if any of the school's pupils attended or what they did there. Although volunteers were setting work for pupils on a range of curriculum subjects, there were no links with local schools about content and no training offered by schools for the volunteers providing the activities. A project worker described the links with schools as 'tenuous'. This was a lost opportunity.</p>	<p>During the intervening period between the review and the publication of the report, this group is now partially co-located within a school which has a large number of Roma children on roll.</p>
<p>Community police officers spoken to in Derby said that, in one of the primary schools, they found an 'open door' with the headteacher when they wanted to work with pupils. They were invited into school after a number of playground fights involving Roma pupils. They introduced a game to teach all the children the rights and wrongs of behaviour. A Roma-speaking interpreter (from NCAT – DCC) was available who knew local families well and parents were invited to attend. The police also approached a local secondary school but, at the time of the survey, had not had any success. In the experience of the police, engaging with secondary schools was harder.</p>	<p>HMI has subsequently stated that in their experience, Police report that engaging with secondary schools was hard and that this was consistent with conversations held with officers and school leaders in Derby as well as in other local authorities, headteachers, parents and pupils, and is not specific to any one school in Derby.</p>

<p>In the three local authorities visited, the attainment gap between Gypsy/Roma pupils and all other pupils was wider at Key Stage 4 than the national attainment gap. Not one Gypsy/Roma pupil gained five good GCSE grades including English and mathematics in Derby, Manchester or Sheffield in 2012 or 2013. Even in those schools where Roma pupils were making rapid progress, the attainment gap remained wide, especially for pupils who arrive late into the English school system</p> <p>In Derby, none of the 46 Gypsy/Roma pupils in Year 6 achieved Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013.</p>	<p>HMI has since confirmed that some some local authorities and schools are compared unfairly in national data precisely because their communities are very different. The purpose of the visit to Manchester was very different to that of Sheffield and Derby in that it was a “good practice visit” as opposed to the visits to Derby and Sheffield which were to explore issues identified. The focus of the survey was on Roma pupils regardless of their country of origin. The review highlighted that the challenges faced by schools and local authorities were predominantly, but not exclusively, faced by Roma pupils from the Czech Republic and Slovakia and that generally, but again not exclusively, Roma pupils from other from Eastern Europe countries were doing better. Derby has Roma children from Bosnia, Kosovo, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania. The ease with which those smaller populations can be subsumed within the wider Slovak Roma groupings provides a perception that stereotypically only associate Roma in the city with one single Central European country.</p>
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OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Olu Idowu, Head of Legal Services Alison Parkin Iain Peel, Service Director, Learning and Inclusion
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IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 Funding to support ROMA children in schools is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant. The majority of the funding available to schools will come through the English as an Additional Language factor within the Schools Funding Formula, this forms part of schools delegated budgets.

The Language Centre budget of £76,000 is funded through a re pooling of schools delegated budgets.

Legal

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 imposes a public sector duty on the Council, as a local authority, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions so as to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.
- 2.2 So far as school attendance by GRT children is concerned, the report goes some way towards demonstrating the Council's commitment towards meeting that duty.

Personnel

- 3.1 N/A

IT

- 4.1 N/A

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 N/A

Health and Safety

- 6.1 N/A

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 N/A

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 N/A

Risk Management

9.1 N/A

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

10.1 Achieving their learning potential.
Good quality services that meet local needs