

SEED Sponsored Research

**Learning at a Distance
Supported by ICT for
Gypsies and Travellers:
Young Peoples' Views**

LEARNING AT A DISTANCE SUPPORTED BY ICT FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS: YOUNG PEOPLES' VIEWS

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SPONSORED RESEARCH PROGRAMME 2005

FINAL REPORT - FEBRUARY 2006



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The research was commissioned through Information, Analysis and Communication Division, which is responsible for providing analytical services within the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED). Their work is part of a multidisciplinary unit (consisting of researchers, economists and statistics staff) and the staff undertakes and funds economic analysis and social research in the fields of: school education; children, young people and social work; architecture; and tourism, culture and sport.

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This report was published on the Scottish Executive website in June 2006

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher is grateful to the children and young people from Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller communities for their time and reflections on the idea of ICT support for their learning. The researcher hopes that their views and aspirations have been properly represented in this research report. The research would not have been possible without the support of their family members, education staff, working in both school and out of school settings, and the site managers (both local authority and private site managers). Thanks to you too. Thanks also to Mary Hendry, Karen MacMaster, Caroline Maloney and Jean Oliver for their different kinds of support for this research.

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Gypsy/Traveller young person's educational aspirations (2005)

Primary boy: They think because we are Gypsies we don't want learn...

Researcher: Why do you want to learn?

Primary boy: Cause I want to know better than I know. And I want to prove to them that I do wanna learn, like I can.

Researcher: And is there anything that you want to do with the learning?

Primary boy: I wanna be better at maths and I wanna be better... you know about the computer and all that, so that's what I want to do.

Researcher: And what kind of work do you want to do?

Primary boy: Maths and I like doing a bit of language.

Researcher: No, in the grown up world, is there something you want to do?

Primary boy: Oh right, I just want to copy (paused for thought) I was going to copy me dad at first, a self employed tarmac, but there's other things I would like to do better than that like her dad does (another pupil in the group) like upvc¹, and I would like to do that cause I am better at that than I am tarmac...

¹ The pupils' reference to 'upvc' is to fitting new windows in houses.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Introduction

This report presents the findings of research with Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils relating to their experience of interactive communications technology (ICT) and its support for their learning in schools. The research explored its potential, particularly in relation to electronic connectivity, for supporting access to a school curriculum when travelling or attending an out of school setting. The Scottish Executive Education Department's (SEED) Sponsored Research Programme for 2005 supported this research carried out by Pauline Padfield between January and July 2005. It was conducted in anticipation of SEED's support for development of an e-learning community for Gypsy and Traveller pupils.

Gypsies and Travellers

The report clarified the terms 'Gypsies' and 'Travellers' as referring to historically, culturally and socially distinctive communities whose differences require to be treated with sensitivity by policy makers and practitioners².

Research Aims

The research has three main aims:

- to help policy, professional and public audiences to better understand the reasons why Gypsy and Traveller pupils' formal education is frequently experienced in places other than at a school
- to ensure that Gypsy and Traveller pupils' views and aspirations regarding formal education and ICT supported learning informs policy and professional decisions in developing ICT supported learning, and
- to ensure its effective delivery of access to a progressive and relevant curriculum for these groups of pupils.

Methodology

Grounded in an awareness of the complexity of Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller families' everyday lives, the logistics involved in gathering reliable evidence from this research were complex.

The semi-structure qualitative taped interviews, for example were conducted in a range of settings including schools, trailers (caravans) and community education settings, chosen by the **21** participant children and young people from these communities, whose ages ranged from eight years to fourteen years of age. The interviews varied in their composition from one-to-one with the researcher, pairs, and small groups of four children.

In addition, **24** adults facilitated and contributed to the research, which included Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller parents, secondary and primary teaching staff, education support staff, and site managers.

Methods

To assist pupils in their exploration of the topic two sets of prompts (of images as presented in Appendix 2 for the younger pupils, and of concepts for the older pupils, as italicised in theme 3 below and as presented in Appendix 1) were developed from the key findings of earlier

² The distinctions between Gypsy and Traveller communities are described more fully in the report. See also the Guidance, 'Inclusive Educational Approaches for Gypsies and Travellers within the context of interrupted learning' (2003), prepared for and delivered to all Scottish public schools; and the website <scottishtravellered.net>.

research into ICT supported learning initiatives (summarised in Appendix 4). A laptop computer was also used, together with an interview guide (See Appendix 3).

The research analysis identified the content of Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller children's and young peoples' responses to the common questions; noted the particular issues of concern each participant raised; and compared these responses and points across their interview transcripts. The analysis also drew upon research fieldnotes drafted during the face-to-face contact with participants, and a range of other kinds of data, for example relevant educational reports and academic literature. The main themes and findings emerging from this research are briefly outlined below and addressed in-depth in Chapters 3 to 7 of the report.

1. Ethical researching uncovers 'barriers to learning' for 'Gypsy' pupils: "Say someone called me Gypsy b... right, I always retaliate and call you an F and all that..."

Many Gypsies and Travellers have good reasons for being wary of official involvements in their everyday lives, particularly in relation to their children, therefore gaining and keeping participants' 'informed consent' required sensitivity and tact. Initial and ongoing contacts with participants quickly revealed the relevance of this approach.

Issues of discrimination associated with stereotypical notions of 'Gypsy' identity emerged as overarching themes for both Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils, which frequently impacted negatively on their access to education while travelling, or attending a school for a short period of time.

Analysis showed that all adult facilitators and most of the pupils *spontaneously* described instances of non-Travellers' negative discriminatory treatment of Travellers i.e. people from both communities. It emerged that many non-Travellers:

- are unaware of the social and cultural distinctions between Traveller communities
- frequently hold negative stereotype perceptions of 'Gypsies'
- apply their stereotype perceptions to all Travellers.

Showground Traveller and Gypsy/Traveller pupils all described instances of being called 'a dirty Gypo' at school, and some Gypsy/Traveller pupils described persistent racist and discriminatory treatment as contributory factors in their association with 'behavioural difficulties', exclusion from school and irregular or non-attendance at school.

All the pupils generally referred to themselves as 'Travellers', but drew careful attention to the *cultural distinctions between* Showground Traveller and Gypsy/Traveller people. Showground Traveller pupils identified themselves principally in terms of their families' business occupations as 'Showpeople', and distinguished themselves from 'Gypsies' or Gypsy/Traveller people. Gypsy/Traveller pupils frequently referred to themselves as 'Gypsies' and similarly distinguished themselves from Showground Traveller people.

Significantly, *all non-Traveller* adult participants referred to the pupils and their families as 'Travellers', and most, but not all, appeared to have only a blurred understanding of their different cultures and lifestyles, which entailed a literal understanding of the idea and role of 'travelling' in their lives. This lack of understanding was thought by some teachers to have a negative impact on some colleagues' approaches to Traveller pupils' educational needs.

Families' patterns of travelling

All participant pupils had experienced travelling; for a combination of occupational, family and cultural reasons. Travelling entailed taking their 'home' with them, that is a sufficient

number of trailers to accommodate a family's needs, and involved living on sites; either Gypsy/Traveller local authority sites or fairground sites.

Analysis of pupils' descriptions showed **a continuum of predictability in relation to travelling from relatively predictable to hurriedly made decisions to 'move on'**. Showground Traveller families' patterns of travelling emerged as more predictable relative to Gypsy/Traveller families' patterns of travelling.

However, evidence emerged of Gypsy/Traveller families modifying their patterns of travelling and of some Showground/Traveller pupils remaining with non-travelling family members while their parents travelled during the Showground season; families' decisions were described as taken to ensure that children did not miss schooling.

As the research progressed, children's and young peoples' enthusiastic imagining about how an e-learning community would work raised an ethical issue about the research itself. It is hoped that it would not raise false hopes among Gypsy and Traveller children and young people about the likelihood of an innovative and deliverable ICT supported response to addressing their learning and additional needs.

2. Schooling for our futures: “If me mam says you've got to have a good job like I'll get a job and I'll get a good job.”

Children and young people from both communities drew a distinction between 'learning' and going to school. School was perceived as a place that afforded opportunities for learning important basic skills. However, they also proudly considered that their families provided learning experience, which effectively achieved social and cultural bonding within the communities, and supported their entrance into relevant employment opportunities.

Showground Traveller pupils drew attention to:

- the complexity of the secondary curriculum
- an inevitable lack of progress in their learning, that is, at the same pace as their school-based peers with corresponding academic abilities.

Gypsy/Traveller pupils described their general reluctance to attend or complete secondary schooling for two main reasons:

- to avoid racist and discriminatory treatment
- because they perceived the secondary curriculum as largely irrelevant to Gypsy/Traveller pupils and their lifestyles.

Some Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils were clearly aware of their levels of performance as outlined in their pupil reports, some identified their 'base' schools' reading and mathematics texts by name, and some noted other schools' use of different reading and mathematics schemes. In their opinion such differences had negative effects on their capacity to progress in their learning, when travelling.

Degrees of 'interrupted learning'

Showground Traveller and Gypsy/Traveller pupils who travel, or are educated in out of school settings, are likely to have additional needs. These may comprise some or all of the following features:

- periods of interrupted learning (out of school)
- difficulties in 'fitting in' (by age) and keeping up (by stage) with learning and teaching in schools

- delayed learning (repeated assessment due to slow or non-transfer of pupil records from one school to another)
- lack of national and local authority testing.

Analysis of pupils' descriptions showed a **continuum of its negative impact on mobile Traveller pupils' formal learning from a lesser to a greater degree**, with Showground Traveller pupils apparently less likely to experience the negative effects of interrupted learning than Gypsy/Traveller pupils. Gypsy/Traveller pupils also appeared to be more likely to experience poorly supported education in out of school settings. In these situations, when a pupil is, "unable without the provision of additional support to benefit from school education provided" (as stated in the Additional Support for Learning – Code of Practice), professionals' capacity to deliver additional support is highly constrained.

3. Blended learning: *"Aye, I can find out things (on the Internet) and that, but I like better face to face."*

The children and young people welcomed the idea of ICT supported learning to overcome the negative effects of interrupted learning and to improve access to quality learning resources; particularly by those attending out of school settings. Importantly, pupils valued a regular, positive learning and teaching relationship with their teachers.

Pupils expressed concerns that ICT supported learning should include both face-to-face interaction and email or telephone contact. The latter forms of communication were imagined as a way of accessing learning and teaching support during travelling times.

'blended learning' delivered by a 'base' school

Pupils' concerns about having access to a teacher and more immediate feedback on their work implicitly pointed to a 'base' school or designated support teacher and issues of responsibility for delivering an ICT supported curriculum, based on a pupil's particular learning needs. Analysis of pupils' descriptions showed that **none had been through an assessment process that had provided them with an individual learning plan (IEP) or a pupil learning plan (PLP)**. However, ICT supported learning initiatives show that a progressive curriculum should be based on a pupil's particular learning needs, a point identified by the pupils themselves.

Pupils from both groups commented on the general difficulties of keeping control of paper-based learning materials, particularly in the limited storage space available in a trailer. The more ICT knowledgeable pupils:

- welcomed the idea of a personal USB memory stick to reduce the amount of paper-based materials carried around each day at school
- described using computers as less tiring than working with pen and paper
- commented on the confidence building benefits of a spell checker when preparing school assignments
- gave many examples of using their existing ICT skills and opportunities in ways that demonstrated their ability to transfer those skills to other areas of their lives.

The children and young people clearly grasped the capacity of ICT to transcend the interrelated challenges of time, place and pace of learning at school and the boundaries between local authorities. Most imagined that *connectivity* when travelling would help them maintain social contacts with teachers and friends at school. Some pupils described how *connectivity* had helped them achieve safer *sociability* with other Travellers; by communicating through email children had avoided travelling on local transport.

While most of the children and young people appeared to be *motivated* to complete paper-based work, albeit to relieve boredom in some settings, the provision of ICT supported learning opportunities were clearly likely to augment existing *flexible, interactive* and *collaborative* working with siblings, cousins and friends. Pupils from both communities welcomed the implications of *synchronicity*, that is, of being able to prepare school assignments at a time that fitted with their families' life styles.

4. Implications of ICT supported learning for local authorities and their staff: *"This laptop must have been dear eh?"*

Pupils themselves raised the key issue of the financial costs of ICT supported learning. During the first few individual interviews, pupils asked the following questions; what would it cost to set up? How much would the hardware and software cost? And, the data cards or line rental to achieve connectivity to the Internet, "wouldn't that be expensive?"

Older Showground Traveller and Gypsy/Traveller pupils considered it the government's responsibility to provide the same level of access to ICT for Traveller children as their peers at school. However, the younger children expressed concerns about the implications of costs for their parents. Gypsy/Traveller pupils commented on the high costs of electricity when travelling, while Showground Traveller pupils considered that the generators used to power the 'shows' and 'rides' would be able to cope with powering a laptop computer.

In the absence of having a personal laptop, Gypsy/Traveller pupils in particular imagined accessing ICT supported learning at an on-site portacabin, in libraries, in community centres and at schools other than their 'base' schools.

Teachers and ICT support staff

Of particular concern for ensuring the sustainability of ICT supported learning is that **local authorities should allocate specific time and resources for teaching and ICT support staff to allow them to develop paper-based resources for access by pupils through the Internet.** In so doing, Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils who travel or who are educated in out of school settings would be able to access a primary or secondary curriculum, and prepare folios of work for examination purposes, should they choose to do so.

It is important to place these considerations within the context of local authorities' existing ICT infra-structures and their associated contracts with providers, which other research has shown to vary from one to another (Padfield and Jordan 2002). Such variations will clearly impact on how and where access to ICT supported learning can be delivered to pupils when travelling or attending out of school settings.

5. Motivation for justifying the costs of ICT: *"Cause I want to know better than I know. And I want to prove to them that I do wanna learn, like I can."*

The ICT literature has noted the motivating effects of computer support for learning (Passey *et al* 2004). Pupils' comments about the financial costs associated with obtaining and using a laptop computer were closely followed by comments about its aesthetic beauty. Both features led some pupils to comment that it would be highly unlikely that they could access such a highly desirable quality artifact.

However, evidence emerged of a number of Showground Traveller parents having recently purchased a laptop for their daughter or son on the understanding that the young person took responsibility for paying any insurance costs associated with travelling with a laptop. Showground Traveller pupils were motivated to make 'flyers' to advertise their families' 'rides' and 'shows'. Some Gypsy/Traveller pupils also provided evidence of parents having

purchased laptop and desktop computers, which were mainly used to keep track of a family's business needs. Some Showground Traveller pupils appeared to have a personal disposable income, largely earned from 'working with' their families during the fairground season. Some pupils talked about 'saving up' to buy a laptop.

Importantly, as evidence of their motivation for learning, pupils from both communities recognised their need for educational skills, particularly in relation to literacy's role in accessing information through a computer and the Internet. During a small group interview with primary and secondary aged Gypsy/Traveller boys, a boy expressed his wish to learn to read, and qualified his wish by saying "... but, (*a big sigh*) it is such hard work". Later, he privately spoke about the laptop used to help facilitate discussion to ask if the researcher knew that maps could be found through the Internet. He explained that using the desktop machine that they had at home, his brother could find "maps of everywhere ... even of London!" His motivation for learning to read was not in doubt, however it was the local authority's strict interpretation of 'presumption of mainstreaming' policies that had resulted in his receiving extremely poor additional support.

This boy's comments revealed an understanding about computers and the Internet as source of information about the wider world, of his interest in finding out information of relevance to him, and, of his willingness to share his knowledge with a relative stranger.

Conclusions

The report highlighted the following emergent key points:

- many Gypsy and Traveller pupils experience interrupted learning
- such difficulties inevitably give rise to additional needs, and
- the **vital importance** of using ICT supported learning to help schools and designated staff support Gypsy and Traveller pupils' access, based on a pupil's particular learning needs, to an appropriate, progressive and relevant curriculum when travelling or if attending out of school settings.

ICT supported learning would allow a pupil to access their particular 'my documents' folder through the Internet via a user name and password protected process. A 'base' school-teacher's role would be to place the pupil's work, based on their assessed need, for completion and feedback purposes in his/her 'my documents' folder through 'remote access' from a 'base' school. Additional support could be accessed through email and telephone contact.

Children and young people and parents from both Traveller communities, clearly valued schools and schooling, however, participants expressed a number of important qualifications.

Showground Traveller parents argued that children ought to attend school and attend the local schools as they travelled:

- to ensure the continuity of their children's education
- to take advantage of opportunities for mixing socially with different communities.

Attendance at school was perceived to be an important learning opportunity to help their children make informed choices about their futures. However, some parents considered that while their children enjoyed the social aspects of attending schools, their formal learning did not progress during these visits.

Gypsy/Traveller mothers also valued primary school-based learning and teaching. However, the issues of safety and fair treatment at school and the potential loss of Gypsy/Traveller cultures continue to be a source of concern for them.

Albeit to different degrees, children and young people from both communities considered that ICT supported learning with access to a relevant curriculum was a way forward for ensuring equality of opportunity for Traveller pupils.

Equality for children and young people and ‘value added’ life long learning for families

The sustainability of ICT supported learning would depend not only on the relevance and quality of its delivery, but also upon the usage of such a service. The children and young people’s views and aspirations for their futures, albeit in their own communities were sufficiently convincing to suggest that such a service would effectively enhance pupils educational opportunities, for them and their families. Thus such a provision would achieve equality and ‘valued added’ life long learning opportunities.

Key points for consideration

Supported nationally by the Scottish Executive, and delivered by local authority education departments, ICT supported learning would significantly enhance educational and social communications between schools and Gypsy and Traveller families, particularly when travelling across local authority boundaries.

- 1) Policy makers and professionals: an effective educational service should recognise Gypsy and Traveller families’ requirements of formal learning.
- 2) Evaluations of ICT initiatives have shown the importance of quality relationships between families, learners and teaching staff for achieving effective access to and progress in formal learning outcomes.
- 3) A number of Scottish local authorities have appointed designated support staff with a remit to promote and support Gypsy and Traveller families’ access to education, both in schools and in other settings, many of whom belong to a professional support network called the Traveller Education Network (TENET). The development and sustainability of ICT supported learning for Gypsy and Traveller pupils would be best achieved by building in collaborative working between school-based and designated staff.
- 4) Professional links between designated staff and school-based staff can ensure that Gypsy and Traveller pupils reluctant to attend school are not excluded from the motivating potential of ICT supported learning by helping them to negotiate flexible access to a relevant and progressive school-based curriculum.
- 5) Ensuring secure and reliable connectivity is a key issue that has implications for existing ICT provider contracts and security management systems, underpinned by initial and on-going ICT training and organised ICT support for families, and professionals working in school and out of school settings.
- 6) A ‘blended learning’ approach, that is, a combination of paper-based and computer-based learning supported by a combination of face-to-face, email and telephone communications, has been shown to be an effective way of ensuring engagement in learning.
- 7) Educational service providers must ensure that learning and teaching approaches are sensitive to likely mismatches between Gypsy and Traveller pupils’ chronological ages and learning stages

8) ICT has helped to remove the stigmatisation associated with many existing supportive schooling arrangements. ICT 'street cred' was evident among these pupils, some of whom had good knowledge of ICT skills and how to use the Internet. ICT supported learning engaged pupils' interest in formal learning as completed assignments 'looked good', which appeared to enhance self-esteem and pupils' self-confidence as learners.

9) In providing ICT supported access to a school-based curriculum from outside school, it is important to think creatively about how to measure performance. For example, traditional concerns regarding attendance should be replaced by measures of engagement in topic work and completion of assignments. However, ICT supported learning when travelling has been shown to enhance subsequent attendance at school.

10) Showground Traveller and Gypsy/Traveller young people described an interest in achieving formal outcomes appropriate to their occupational aspirations, however, delivery of accredited courses by schools and colleges does not easily fit with many families' desire to maintain their diverse family and cultural lifestyles.

11) ICT supported learning opportunities for pupils from Gypsy and Traveller communities could impact more widely in educative terms. Children and young people from both communities reported the active engagement of adult family members, particularly fathers, uncles and grandfathers, in using computers for business activities. Family members' involvement in training and supporting their children's learning could achieve 'value added' benefits by introducing them to wider life long learning opportunities.

Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of the context and purpose of research carried out between January and July 2005, with the aim of helping policy and professional audiences to better understand the reasons why Gypsy and Traveller pupils' formal education is frequently experienced in places other than at a local school.

ICT – its place in learning

Many class teachers have enthusiastically embraced the potential of interactive communications technology (ICT) in supporting learning and teaching. However, a colleague's cautionary 'over lunch' comment, "There has always been an 'e' in learning", reflects a wariness among educationalists of claims for ICT as beneficial to everyday learning in classrooms. Formal learning continues to be generally associated with pupils' attendance (time) at a school (place), where they are grouped together to learn (pace) about themselves, and about the world around them. Although all children and young people (from 5 to 16) in Scotland have an entitlement to a school education, which more recently includes a working knowledge and understanding of ICT, some are unable or unwilling to learn at school.

The impact of ICT upon schools and schooling is clearly an evolving process, where "Attitudes to ICT, were in the main positive although a significant proportion of teachers thought that the benefits to the classroom had been greatly exaggerated." (Condie, Simpson *et al.* 2002) (www.ltscotland.org.uk/ngflscotland/). These authors consider that the implementation of ICT initiatives in schools raises two concerns:

- a) "the debate regarding whether ICT is a subject in its own right or as a means of learning within other subjects and contexts ...
- b) the extent to which those pupils who do not have access to computers at home may be disadvantaged in comparison to those who do."

The research informing this report was carried out with an awareness of educators' legitimate concerns regarding use of ICT to support learning, and raised an additional set of concerns about the less than effective implementation of ICT initiatives for supporting Gypsy and Traveller pupils' access to a relevant and progressive curriculum (Padfield and Jordan 2003).

Online, e-learning and blended learning

The report distinguishes between three key terms to be found in the literature relating to developments in ICT supported learning: 'online learning', 'e-learning' and 'blended learning'. Online is distinguished from e-learning. Online simply means that a learner or teacher is connected to the Internet, whereas,

"e-learning is fundamentally about learning and not about technology... how, when and where to implement e-learning in conjunction with established practice has still not been fully explored..." (Joint Information Systems Committee, 2004: 7-9)."

The third term, 'blended learning', has emerged from early explorations of e-learning and can be used in a number of senses:

- a) in relation to using a combination of face-to-face, telephone and email communications to support a pupil's learning and teaching, and
- b) in relation to ICT's capacity to facilitate 'synchronous' and 'asynchronous' learning, a feature of e-learning that frames the learning in terms of 'how can we make the best use of resources?' rather than 'how do we get online learning to work with everything else?'

In practice, 'blended learning' should be delivered through paper-based learning materials and some face-to-face support provided by a 'base' school, and computer-based learning materials, supported by access to the Internet and email contact with a 'base' school teacher and ICT technical support staff.

Gypsies and Travellers – Educational Policy and Practice

Across the United Kingdom, a consistent theme in policy and professional discourses has focused on education authorities' ineffective delivery of educational services for, and a poor uptake of compulsory state schooling by school-aged children and young people from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds (OFSTED 1996; Jordan 2000; Jordan 2000; OFSTED 2003). However, the phenomenal development in Scottish education of ICT's capacity to transcend the challenges of time, place and pace of learning usually associated with attending and learning at school, offers exciting possibilities for serious development in ICT supported learning that will augment existing inclusive educational approaches for Gypsy and Traveller pupils (SEED 2003), but particularly for those whose travelling has resulted in significant interruptions to their learning.

Gypsies and Travellers

The terms 'Gypsies' and 'Travellers' require clarification. They refer to culturally distinctive social communities, whose differences have significance for policy makers and practitioners and the conduct of research in this area, for example "... the term Traveller suggests a homogenous group of people and immediately misinforms us" (O'Hanlan and Holmes 2004). Gypsies may refer to themselves as Gypsies, as Travellers or more simply as Travelling folk (Fraser 1992). In Scotland, the term Gypsy is distinctive from the term Roma, which is more commonly used in England and Wales and other European countries. Characterised by their heterogeneity, the cultural distinctions within and between Gypsy and Traveller groupings are highly contested among Travellers themselves.

The Scottish Executive carries out a yearly school census that gathers data about all pupils, including those from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds. The census forms distinguish between three categories of Gypsies and Travellers; **Gypsies/Travellers**, **Occupational Travellers** and **New Travellers**. People from the first category tend to draw upon long historical roots to a social and cultural presence within the UK, more recently defined in terms of minority ethnic status. Occupational Travellers³ largely define themselves in relation to their business activities and are commonly further differentiated in Scotland as Showground (as Fairground in England and Wales), Circus and Bargee Travellers. Jordan has noted that due to intermarriage, the social and cultural boundaries between these groupings are never clear-cut (EOC 2001). A third category, New Travellers, refers to communities that have appeared relatively recently on the social landscape, largely as a way of living that rejects the bureaucratic pressures of modernity.

In Scotland, Gypsy/Traveller people variously refer to themselves as a Traveller, or as a Gypsy/Traveller (singular), or as a Scottish Traveller. A slash included between the terms Gypsy and Traveller, i.e. Gypsies/Travellers⁴ (plural) reflects official attempts to be sensitive to these different forms of naming and to signal to official, professional and public bodies that people self-identifying as from these communities should be treated as if they were members of a minority ethnic group. The Scottish Parliament's 'Inquiry into Gypsy Travellers and Public Sector Policies' stated that 'All legislation and policies should be framed on the understanding that Gypsy Travellers are an ethnic group, until such time as a court decision is made on their recognition as a racial group under the Race Relations Act 1976' (2001: 2), a

³ As an illustration of the complexities around 'Traveller' identities, some groups of Travellers not associated with shows and fairgrounds, also refer to themselves as 'occupational Travellers'.

⁴ As a further example of the complexities around minority ethnic 'Traveller' identities 'Gypsies/Travellers' would include people self-identifying as Roma or as Irish Travellers.

view endorsed by the Scottish Executive in its Response to the Equal Opportunities Committee Report (2001: recommendation 2).

The Scottish Executive's Five National Priorities govern provision of education for Scottish pupils. In recognising schools' need to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils, the HMIe publication, 'Taking a closer look at: Inclusion and Equality - meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers', provides schools with a 'how good is your school' format specifically tailored to help schools evaluate their working towards the educational inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller pupils. The publication directs schools towards National Priority Three as having particular relevance for the educational inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller pupils. It notes that education authorities need to raise standards among Gypsy and Traveller and other pupils known to experience interrupted learning, that schools need to consider the appropriateness of teaching and learning environments and that in order to provide effective support, consider how issues of equality and fairness in accessing an appropriate curriculum impact on Gypsy and Traveller pupils and their capacity to achieve their full potential as citizens in a changing and multicultural society (HMIe 2005: 3; HMI 2002; HMIe 2002; HMIe 2004; HMIe 2005; HMIe 2005).

The vital importance of ICT supported learning at a distance for Gypsy and Traveller pupils

Common to people from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds is the notion of travelling as a way of life, and, partly due to their 'mobility', a general experience of marginalisation and discriminatory treatment by many 'settled' citizens across the UK (Jordan and Padfield 2003). Children from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds live in a range of locations. Some Gypsy/Traveller children, for example are 'housed', some are based on council sites, some may travel from one site to another, some may be 'housed' for part of the year or indeed spend some time camped by the roadside. Occupational Traveller children may live with a relative while their family is travelling, or may live in the family's trailer moving from one fairground or circus site to another. It is precisely the complexity of the range of their living arrangements, all of which may be experienced during the course of a year, that challenges local authorities' capacity to provide equality of educational opportunity for many Gypsy and Traveller pupils.

Interrupted learning

As in the rest of the UK, Gypsy and Traveller pupils in Scotland regularly attend primary school. Gypsy/Traveller pupils' relatively poorer levels of educational achievements are frequently explained in terms of the irregularity of their attendance at school, and because some choose not to go to school to avoid racist treatment, on the way to, while at and on the way home from school. Many choose school-based education, but go to great lengths to keep their identity as a Gypsy/Traveller private. Gypsy/Traveller families strike a balance between their responsibilities for ensuring that their children receive formal education and their understandable desires to keep their children safe. Many Gypsy/Traveller pupils do not attend secondary school. Little is actually known about how many Gypsy/Traveller pupils attend school or how well they achieve in formal terms as frequently families hide their minority ethnic status.

By contrast, secondary-aged Showground Traveller pupils are much more likely to attend school. Showground Traveller families traditionally spend the winter period in Glasgow where their children attend primary and secondary school, and it is to these 'base' schools that children and young people return at the end of each travelling season.

As a result of their families' mobility, many pupils from these different cultural backgrounds experience significant periods of interruptions to their formal learning (Dobson and Henthorne 1999). Such interrupted learning has generally been associated with marked underachievement and a subsequent reduction in life chances (Dobson, Henthorne et al.

2000). Gypsy and Traveller pupils' participation in state education frequently ends before their legal leaving date and with no formal qualifications.⁵

Responses to interrupted learning

Scottish Executive funded research into educational services for Gypsy and Traveller families has found that, with significant exceptions, the learning needs of these diverse pupil groupings are generally not clearly understood by policy makers, at national and local authority levels (Padfield and Jordan 2004). Despite a laptop's portability and multimedia capabilities for working in out of school settings, provision of laptop computers with connectivity and peripheral technologies has been limited to a few designated support for learning staff, colloquially known as Traveller teachers, mostly with basic NGfL training and poor on-going support (Padfield and Jordan, 2003). Other Scottish research has found little development of paper-based distance learning for Gypsy/Traveller pupils, travelling between Scottish local authorities (Padfield 2004; Padfield and Jordan 2004) and that the development of inclusive educational approaches to the curriculum for Gypsy/Traveller pupils attending schools is generally 'patchy' and ad hoc. Some school and designated staff have made good use of ICT within the boundaries of their particular local authority. Despite its capacity to transcend local authority boundaries and the interrelated challenges of time, place and pace of learning at school, local authorities' use of ICT to support learning at a distance (from school) for 'mobile' Gypsy/Traveller pupils is yet to be nationally developed in Scotland.

ICT supported learning initiatives

ICT support for Occupational Traveller children has demonstrated its potential for travelling children. During the 1990s, projects such as *TOPILLOT*, *FLEX* and *TRAPEZE* used ICT to develop open and distance education, provided by a 'base' school during travelling periods, for young people from Occupational Traveller backgrounds (Marks 2003). Supported by the European Federation for the Education of the Children of Occupational Travellers (EFECOT 1994), which no longer exists,⁶ SCET and Glasgow City Council were participants in these projects (Jordan 2000).

Drawing upon European approaches to supporting mobile children, a series of English based E-Learning and Mobility Projects, (E-LAMP), have demonstrated how pupils from highly mobile Circus families, have kept in contact with their 'base schools' and with the local authority's Traveller Education services (Marks 2004). Pupils have accessed resources through ICT, which effectively helped overcome the de-motivation usually accompanying paper-based learning on the road. In addition, pupils' good contact with their 'base' schools reduced their poor self-esteem and boosted their confidence to enrol at schools as they travelled. Further funding of these projects as a national system is not likely. However, the Traveller Education Services in 10 to 12 English education authorities are now operating ICT supported distance learning for a number of mobile pupils from different Traveller backgrounds.

Other projects, such as Notschool.net (Heppell 2000) - initiated through the NGfL programme and managed by Becta⁷ - and SchoolsOutGlasgow.net (supported by the Scottish Executive, Glasgow City Council and Learning and Teaching Scotland) trail blazed use of ICT to support a range of non-Traveller children with unmet learning needs resulting from their irregular or non-attendance at school. The salient features of SchoolsOutGlasgow.net's academically structured approach (www.schoolsoutglasgow.net), which reflect Glasgow's

⁵ Although not within the remit of this research, similar statements apply to children from New Traveller families who may be home educated and may attend schools.

⁶ More recently, some of the original participants in the EFECOT project have renewed European efforts to support Gypsy and Traveller education, which is reflected in the formation in 2005 of the European Network for Traveller Education (ENTE).

⁷ British Educational Communications and Technology Agency.

commitment to equality of opportunity, are its delivery of an ICT-based curriculum, its development of a learning centred community (loosely echoing the model of the mainstream school community), its support by a dedicated tutor/teacher staff working closely with individuals and groups through face-to-face and email contact and its promotion of interactive learning and mutual support (Jordan and Padfield 2004).

Before commencing the research underpinning this report a number of ICT supported learning initiatives, collaboratively developed between the New Educational Development Department, Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTScotland) and a few local authorities, already existed in Scotland. In addition to Notschool.net's Scottish development, SchoolsOutGlasgow.net, other Scottish ICT initiatives, for example the Virtual Schoolbag project, similarly made innovative and successful use of ICT to support a range of pupils with significant 'interrupted learning'. Significantly, many Scottish participant learners in these initiatives were able to overcome their poor self-esteem as learners, were motivated to re-engage with formal learning and successfully achieved positive educational experiences and outcomes (Passey and Rogers, et al. 2004: 77), (www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/sogrs.pdf). Importantly, the 'street cred' of ICT made a significant contribution towards the success of these out of school initiatives in developing non-stigmatising access to ICT supported learning.

The Scottish Schools Digital Network (SSDN) (www.ssdn.org.uk) also holds significant promise for improving access to the curriculum for Scottish pupils. The SSDN is currently engaged in developing an *Intranet* service for educators and learners in Scotland, which will offer a web-based solution to accessing communications and learning materials. Access will be available for authorised users, such as pupils, teachers and school support and administration staff, with a computer equipped with a web browser that can access the Internet. Piloting of this initiative will begin later in 2006.

While conducting this research presented in this report, Glasgow City Council's Interrupted Learners Support Services responded positively to requests made by the Education Liaison Officers of the Showmen's Guild (Scottish Section) that Glasgow City Council deliver a laptop supported educational service for Scottish Showground Traveller pupils. Based on the E-LAMP model, a pilot project was delivered for a small number of Showground Traveller pupils during the 2005 travelling period. A report on this most recent ICT supported learning project, 'Laptops for Travellers' (ivan@mtonline) outlines the key issues facing Occupational Traveller families and schools in providing school-aged children with access to a progressive curriculum when travelling.

The project's main aim was to ensure the delivery of the kind of education that will allow today's Traveller pupils to make choices in a changing world, which is summarised by an Occupational Traveller's comment that "education is about giving our children a choice" (Mykytyn 2005). The young people were provided with a laptop computer, an O2 data modem card, with a monthly download limit of 50Mb, a printer and a 128Mb USB memory stick. The laptop operating system included Microsoft Windows XP Service and appropriate drivers, which could be remotely accessed by supporting teachers and technicians.

Impact of ICT supported learning initiatives

The evaluations of ICT supported learning initiatives for out of school learners have revealed key points for guiding future uses of ICT supported learning:

- quality communications between learners and school and support staff are crucial to engaging or re-engaging learners with formal learning
- dialogue between teachers, parents and a young person about his/her *learning needs* is a necessary start to the process of providing an appropriate curriculum

- computer-based working combined with paper-based working motivates learners to engage with and complete learning tasks
- a blend of face-to-face, telephone and email communication helps to ensure progress in learning
- families and their children expressed aspirations for qualifications to help their children access employment
- ICT supported learning is effective in helping learners develop a proactive attitude towards life long learning.

Subsequent chapters highlight the relevance of these points for Gypsy and Traveller families. Meanwhile this chapter highlights three emergent key points:

- many Gypsy and Traveller pupils experience interrupted learning,
- such difficulties inevitably give rise to additional support needs, and
- the **vital importance** of using ICT supported learning to help schools and designated staff support Gypsy and Traveller pupils access, based on a pupil's particular learning needs, to an appropriate, progressive and relevant curriculum when travelling or if educated in out of school settings.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The chapter describes and discusses the methodological approaches used to research Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller children and young people's views and aspirations for ICT supported education.

Aims and objectives

The main aims of the qualitative research informing this report were to:

- gather the views and aspirations of Gypsy and Traveller school-aged children and young people, and their families, on ICT supported learning at a distance from school
- raise awareness at national and local authority level of the particular conditions that shape Gypsy and Traveller children and young people's access to the curriculum
- ensure that the research findings inform effective policy and developments in ICT supported learning for these particularly 'hard to reach' pupil populations.

Ethical researching and access to children and young people

This research with Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller children and young people conformed to established ethical guidance and practice (Alderson 1995). The sensitivity and respect to be accorded any research participants and their rights under the Data Protection Act 1998 was reflected in my having obtained Disclosure Scotland approval for researching with children and young people. The Moray House Ethics Committee also approved a copy of the research proposal and its procedures.

As a researcher known for working with Gypsies and Travellers, contacts within these communities largely drew on existing relationships with a range of relevant gatekeepers, *known and trusted* by Gypsy and Traveller families. Each family and young person received a clear verbal and written description of:

- the purpose of the research
- how it was to be conducted
- the kinds of questions that were going to be explored.

The gatekeepers facilitated initial contacts with the children, young people and in many cases their mothers. The contacts were always face-to-face, and took place in a range of different settings; schools, community centres, on sites in families' trailers and in site managers' offices.

A researcher's responsibility to prevent harmful outcomes for research participants, including the researcher and the gatekeepers involved in facilitating introductions with other participants, was highly salient in this research since many Gypsies and Travellers have good reasons for being wary of official involvement in their everyday lives (Hawes and Perez 1996). In this research gaining participants' 'informed consent' required sensitivity and tact, particularly as it involved working with their children; any person presenting with a set of questions and a tape recorder was highly likely to have been viewed by them as 'an official' person.

On-going negotiations of 'informed consent' with the young people and their families involved taking time to establish rapport and assure that each young person understood:

- that what he/she said was private (in the sense that I would not discuss what they had said with their teachers or others)
- that he/she could withdraw from the research at any point
- the meaning of 'confidentiality'
- that the writing up and dissemination of the research findings would be organised under general headings with relevant quotes and places duly anonymised.

As an indicator of ‘good research practice’, each participant was offered a consent form for signing.

Research design

The logistics involved in gathering reliable evidence from this research were grounded in an awareness of the complexity of Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller families’ everyday lives. The research limited its focus to children and young people from Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller backgrounds to ensure that, within the constraints of the research funding, access could be achieved with pupils from these complex backgrounds.⁸

The gatekeepers arranged initial contacts with participants, selected through a process of ‘purposive’ or ‘snowball’ sampling (Robson 2002: 265 - 260). Selection of pupils was justified mainly in terms of each pupil having experienced significant interrupted learning. A breadth of possible views and experience was achieved by selecting a balance of families from Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller backgrounds, by primary and secondary ages, and by gender. Importantly, the majority of the children and young people had had a wide experience of schools; across Scotland, England, and Ireland.

Thus, aware of a need to be flexible in the research design, initial contacts were made with ‘gatekeepers’ based in three Scottish local authorities. The latter were chosen on the grounds of geography and as being places where both Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller families were known to visit over the course of a travelling season. However, the process of making contact with Gypsy/Traveller families and their children in one local authority proved to be highly complicated. As suggested in the proposal, on the day arranged for interviews in one of the three local authorities all the Gypsy/Traveller families had ‘moved on’. Subsequently, additional sets of contacts with Gypsy/Traveller families were set up in a fourth local authority.

Ultimately, a total sample of **45** persons made significant contributions to the research. These comprised of:

- **21 pupils** - 14 boys and 7 girls (2 girls did not turn up for interview and one other girl approached me informally at a school) with the result that 19 pupils (8 secondary and 11 primary pupils) were interviewed in 4 one-to-one interviews and the rest in small groups of two or three
- **24 adults** - 11 Gypsy/Traveller adults; 3 Showground Traveller adults; 7 teaching staff (2 secondary, 4 primary and an educational support staff); and 3 site managers (2 local authority and 1 private site manager).

The small numbers of persons involved in this research inevitably raised ethical questions in relation to the presentation of evidence; how their stories are told could seriously jeopardise attempts to preserve their anonymity. Therefore, all descriptive references to names of people and places are strictly limited in order to preserve anonymity. The research has ensured that each child and young person’s voice is represented in this report.

Methods

The main methods involved in gathering qualitative data involved using two sets of discussant prompts^{9 10} (described below) prepared to help the children and young people reflect on and

⁸ At the time of writing, a research report by STEP (2006), currently not publicly available, includes research with New Traveller families. The research report outlines the impact of the National Guidance, ‘Inclusive Educational Approaches for Gypsies and Travellers within the context of interrupted learning’. Edinburgh, STEP/LTScotland (2003).

⁹ See Appendix 1 Young People’s Prompts.

¹⁰ See Appendix 2 Younger Children’s Images.

compare their experience of learning in schools and in out of school settings, a laptop computer and an interview guide¹¹. Qualitative semi-structured taped interviews with pupils, which varied in their composition from one-to-one with the researcher, pairs and small groups of four children, were conducted in settings appropriate to the feelings of the pupils whose ages ranged from eight to fourteen years of age.

The development of the prompts drew upon the findings of the ICT initiatives described in Chapter One. These all aimed to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive educational approaches to formal learning by delivering ICT supported learning to learners being educated in a range of out of school settings. These have shown that educators' uses of ICT have allowed for a more *flexible* (overcoming the limitations of age and stage approaches), *interactive* and *collaborative* (overcoming the *de-motivating* effects on learners of significant gaps in time between submitting work and receiving feedback) learning experience. Certainly, these features have helped *motivate* and *re-motivate* learners, who, for a range of reasons, are highly unlikely to benefit from school-based learning, and particularly those whose 'learning time' does not correspond with 'school time', to engage with formal learning and its potential for life long learning.

- a) The first set of prompts was specifically prepared for the secondary-age pupils and comprised of concepts that summarise the challenges and benefits of ICT supported learning. These were: *connectivity*, *motivation*, *interactive*, *collaborative*, *synchronicity*, and *flexibility*.
During the interview process secondary pupils suggested adding two more words: *sociability* (benefits of different kinds of sociability), and *costs* (challenge to parents and local authorities).
- b) The second set of prompts comprised a set of images that were thought to be more suitable for younger children. Downloaded from the Internet, the images represented: a caravan set in a field, a laptop, coloured pencils and paperclips and children using a mobile telephone. These images enabled the primary children to explore the issues embedded in the summary concepts.
- c) As a way of making the interview a meaningful hands-on experience for the children and young people, the summary concepts and images were accessed through a laptop computer, a process that provided the children and young people with an opportunity to demonstrate their ICT knowledge and skills. This process also allowed the researcher to gauge the veracity of their claims in relation to their knowledge and use of ICT.
- d) The interview guide was used to ensure the production of a robust set of accounts that systematically explored pupils':
 - feelings about traditional paper-based learning
 - experience of paper-based learning when travelling
 - knowledge, skills and experience of ICT
 - views and aspirations as to how ICT supported learning might improve on the quality and coherence of their current access to the curriculum.

Other relevant issues, such as the security of using on-line services and families' preferences as to where they would like to access such provision (e.g. schools, community centres, libraries etc.) were addressed. Finally, the interview discussions focused on children's views and concerns about how an e-learning community for teachers and their Gypsy and Traveller pupils might work in practice, particularly for pupils that travel or are educated in out of school settings.

¹¹ See Appendix 3 Interview Guide.

Analysis

The research analysis identified the content of Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller children's and young peoples' responses to the common questions; noted the particular issues of concern each participant raised; and compared these responses and points across the interview transcripts. The analysis also drew upon research fieldnotes made during the research and a range of other kinds of data, for example relevant educational reports and academic literature.

The research findings are organised and presented under general themes and emergent issues relating to delivery of ICT supported learning, rather than by Traveller grouping. Where appropriate the distinctions between the groupings are noted.

CHAPTER THREE

EDUCATION

TRAVELLER PUPILS' PERCEPTIONS OF

Introduction

This chapter begins the report's presentation of data gathered from January to July 2005 with children and young people from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds, about their experiences of schools, schooling and ICT supported learning. The chapter briefly describes the children and young people, the significance of 'family' in their day-to-day lives, its impact upon their perceptions of learning, and their experience of schools and schooling. The chapter introduces pupils' perceptions of flexibility in relation to ICT supported learning and concludes that Gypsy and Traveller pupils would welcome and benefit from ICT supported learning as a way of overcoming the gaps in their learning resulting from travelling and learning in out of school settings.

Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils

The Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller young people had lived in a range of accommodation; houses, trailers and chalets. All had experience travelling for a combination of family, cultural and occupational reasons, which had entailed their families taking their 'home' with them, that is a number of trailers sufficient to accommodate a family's needs. Some of the Gypsy/Traveller children reported that their families had decided to live in a house because of the expense of travelling and the difficulties experienced in finding suitable stopping places.

'Gypsy identity' – its impact on access to education

Analysis revealed an overarching theme of 'Gypsy identity' as having an impact on both Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils' access to education while travelling, or while attending a school for a short period of time. The pupils generally referred to themselves as 'Travellers', but drew careful attention to the cultural *distinctions between* Showground Travellers and Gypsy/Travellers. Gypsy/Traveller pupils frequently referred to themselves as 'Gypsies'. Significantly, *all non-Traveller* adult participants' referred to the pupils and their families as 'Travellers', and most appeared to have only a blurred understanding of their different cultures and lifestyles.

Racism and class

All adult facilitators and most of the pupils *spontaneously* described instances of non-Travellers negative discriminatory treatment of Travellers i.e., from both communities. A basic explanation suggested that many non-Travellers hold negative stereotype perceptions of 'Gypsies' and are unaware of the social and cultural distinctions between the different Traveller communities. Subsequently, these perceptions were thought to shape non-Travellers' interactions with persons from any Traveller group. For example, Showground Traveller and Gypsy/Traveller pupils all described instances of being called 'a dirty Gypo'.

While non-Travellers' negative treatment of Gypsy/Traveller pupils was mainly described in terms of racism, a Showground Traveller introduced a class explanation for the negative treatment of Showground Traveller pupils.

Showground Traveller boy: *We're not poor class, like a lot of people tend to think that we're poor people and we can't afford things. But we do and we're middle class and we're no different from anybody else.*

Gypsy/Traveller children explained non-Travellers' negative treatment of them in terms of racism. Many offered this view as a general explanation for why Gypsy/Traveller pupils irregularly attend school, and in some cases, not at all.

Travelling patterns

Showground Traveller families' patterns of movement are relatively more predictable than those of Gypsy/Traveller families. Showground Traveller pupils have an added bonus that they return to a 'base' school at the end of each travelling season. While some of the Gypsy/Traveller pupils in this research did talk about their 'real' school, by contrast, some of the Gypsy/Traveller children reported incidents that, for reasons of safety, had led their families to quickly 'move on' from a local authority site. In these cases, the school or the designated learning support teacher is highly unlikely to know the family's next destination and is thus unable to send an updated record of a pupil's learning to the next school he/she attends.

Gypsy/Traveller pupils frequently experience delays in accessing the curriculum due to the time it takes for class teachers to assess his/her learning needs before he/she can be located within appropriate class groupings or receive learning support, should it be needed.

Professionals' attempts to develop and use hand-held records have been relatively successful with Showground Traveller families, but unsuccessful with Gypsy/Traveller families. Although families frequently 'move on' without notice to the schools, other families are reported by designated support staff to keep good contact with them or the school that their child usually attends (Padfield and Jordan, 2004).

This evidence gathered with the Gypsy and Traveller children and young people in 2005, therefore is not new. However its reportage highlights the key challenges facing educational policy makers and professionals seeking to provide equality of access to the curriculum for Traveller pupils,

- the persistence of racist and discriminatory treatment
- differing patterns of travelling, and
- lack of quick access to up-to-date pupil records.

Families, lifestyles and schooling

All the children and young people made frequent references to their families. In addition to having a strong personal attachment to their families, pupils' comments revealed the social and cultural significance of each family as located within a highly networked system of extended family groupings and associated friendships.

This point is important in that news of ICT supported learning would travel very quickly from one family to another and thus that delivery of such a service must be carried out according to clearly defined criteria that are seen to be fair to the families concerned.

Children and young people's views about their families emerged in discussions about a range of issues relating to school attendance, and their perceptions of fairness and punishment at school and its impact on their families. The following quote from a group discussion between a group of Gypsy/Traveller pupils illustrates this point.

Primary boy 1: Yeah I know, I think they expect too much of the children in the school because like they don't...

Secondary boy: Right, like say when someone does something really bad to the teacher, the whole class would get the punishment exercise and then they will say you have to have about fifty lines done in the next ten minutes. Shush, [to brother] say you were gonna have like something like you were going to have your gym and someone do it very bad [unclear] what our teachers

does, he writes on top of the board and [both talking] and you've got to do it, the whole class...

Primary boy 1: And its not very fair for the other children, because...

Secondary boy: Because ... and probably they were in a lot of trouble getting their things, you know having a rush, getting to gym, ... putting it in their washing machine [both talking] and they take long to wash on it sometimes.

Primary boy 2: And iron it! ... iron [interrupted]

Secondary boy: ... and then not to do gym ... for someone else's behaviour!

The above dialogue clearly demonstrated both boys' considerable thoughtfulness in linking the work done at home as integral to the gym class, and their perceptions of how 'unfair treatment' in class has considerable knock on social effects; from one child, to the rest of the class, and by extension, out of the classroom and into their homes.

Analysis of this and other discourses revealed a strongly gendered division of labour within Gypsy/Traveller families. All of the girls wanted to be "normal like my mam", which included having a family of their own. However, an acceptance of their mothers' views about the role of paid work in their future lives also emerged.

Gypsy/Traveller Girl: If me mam says you've got to have a good job like I'll get a job and I'll get a good job.

Showground Traveller young people became very *animated* when talking about the Showground life and all described examples of their *active engagement* in supporting their family's particular ride or stall in the showground. The Showground Traveller pupils appeared to derive a strong sense of pride from belonging to a highly skilled business community, which they considered delivers a service particularly to the smaller towns and communities they visit each year. Learning about the 'shows' and how Showmen 'do business' was also described as a source of self-esteem, and how they bonded with other family members.

These and many other examples indicated that development of an ICT supported curriculum should be sensitive to the cultural mores within each group; one size will not 'fit all'.

Access to the curriculum and interrupted learning

The evaluation of the SchoolsOutGlasgow.net approach found that as a guide to practice, a 'needs led' approach to ICT supported learning was a significant factor in successfully helping learners with interrupted learning to engage positively with the curriculum.

Due to travelling or as a result of choosing not to go to school, all the children and young people had experienced interrupted learning, had additional support for learning needs, and a few had particular 'learning difficulties'.

Of the 21 pupils, 9 were positive about attending school, 3 were very ambivalent about attending school and 9 were flexible about where they attended for learning and teaching, for example some described friends' experience of an alternative centre in very positive terms. One secondary Gypsy/Traveller boy, while not being prepared to go to school due to his experience of racist bullying, clearly felt that the best place to be educated was at school. Generally pupils were positive about their experience of primary schools and more critical of their secondary school experience.

Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils reported having access to a range of support for learning including additional support for learning, flexible and part-time curricular arrangements in schools and access to support in out of school settings. However, in one particular setting, the experience of secondary-aged Gypsy/Traveller pupils was negatively described by an education support worker as, “Not getting the full spectrum of the subjects, but what they’re getting is better than what they’ve got [*without it*] which is nothing.”

While no Gypsy/Traveller pupil reported having a paper-based pack prepared for him or her prior to their leaving, none of the young people reported having received any systematic attention to their support for learning needs when travelling. One Showground Traveller pupil reported that,

Showground Traveller boy: Yes they give you materials like a jotter and stuff and work to take with you to write on and the work so you don’t miss out so much.

Researcher: Mhm, and what do you do with it when you’ve written on it? Do you send it back?

Showground Traveller boy: No, you wait until you’ve both come back to the school and you hand it in and they’ll check it over.

Many of the children were clearly knowledgeable about their own learning, information they had gleaned from their pupil reports. For example, the following quote emerged during the interview with two primary Gypsy/Traveller girls.

Gypsy/Traveller girl 1: ... They write a for good and b for like okay. And things like e’s not all, e’s like low, b, c, and you’ll get higher at your grades. And if you’re failing like they say on the letter to your mam that you are failing. So we’ve got to keep more practising and everything.

Researcher: Yes. And so your mums wouldn’t want that to be the case?

Gypsy/Traveller girl 1: No

Researcher: They want you to practise?

Gypsy/Traveller girl 2: Yeah they want us to keep going through it.

Many of the young people commented that regular school attendance was necessary for them to make progress in their learning.

Pupils’ descriptions of schoolteachers’ preparation of materials in anticipation of a known period of travelling appeared to be ad hoc. Carried out in primary and secondary schools, earlier research found that ‘mobile’ Traveller pupils receive relatively poorer support for learning than their peers at school (Jordan 2001).

School (place) and learning (process)

All the children and young people drew a distinction between school as a place where bad things sometimes happened, and learning as a process that could be achieved without necessarily going to school, and as available in a range of other places. While teachers were acknowledged to be important for formal learning skills, family members and other contacts known to their families were also described as making significant and relevant contributions to their learning.

Gypsy/Traveller and Showground pupils differed in their views about secondary education. Gypsy/Traveller boys, once they had reached S2 or S3, generally reported that they did not want or feel that they needed to attend secondary school. All the boys reported that their fathers and uncles acted as their 'teachers' in helping them learn the skills needed for employment.

Showground Traveller pupils also linked learning at school with the learning acquired through working on the family show or stalls. One pupil thought that school, "helps me learn... When you're a Showman you have tae have an education... Cause you wouldn't know how to work the ride if you never had education. There's lots of things to do with school and in your ride... mathematics and boxwork, joinery, all these things, all DIY things... English and science and this stuff."

Researcher: *'Cause you wouldn't be able to be a Showman without it?*

Showground Traveller boy 3: *Well you wouldn't be a very good [emphasis on word] Showman without it.*

Showground secondary boys, for example particularly looked to their fathers and uncles for teaching them significant skills while travelling with the Shows.

These findings are not new, but in policy terms they are newly significant in the light of recent policy perspectives on the impact of parental involvement, particularly the significance of fathers' interest in supporting children's education.

Limits of flexibility

Showground Traveller pupils recognised both the links between irregular attendance and poor academic achievement, and the difficulties schools faced in supporting pupils when travelling. Some had a clear understanding that the secondary curriculum was far less flexible in accommodating the 'drop in' approach that had worked well for children during their primary education.

A Showground Traveller boy, for example described his secondary school as his "base school" and then volunteered the following comment.

Showground Traveller boy: *See when you are in primary you can join other schools. Unlike secondary schools you can't join just like that. And that's why...*

Researcher: *Mhm, why can't you join just like that do you think?*

Showground Traveller boy: *It's cause of the system and the way it works. It wouldn't, like you have to go into the systems and that like for computers or they wouldn't know who you are on the register. So and it [dropping into a secondary school] would be a bit of a complication.*

The concept of flexibility had little meaning for most pupils although pupils from Showground Traveller backgrounds described examples of alternative curricular that their families had organised for their children during the summer months.

Showground Traveller Boy: *Ma da's got me into welding and that spray paint and I was doing that when I was away, I was like doing the odd jobs and that.*

Researcher: So does your dad teach you or do you go on a course or something?

Showground Traveller Boy: No, like my dad showed me the basic stuff and that and how to use a spray paint gun and that but ... like we get a paper it's called the *World's Fair* [The Showmen's Guild's official newspaper] so there was a course in that down at Brighton or something, down like down the country in England and it's for fourteen years and upwards, and it was spray paint, ... And that's a twelve weeks course and you are down there and it shows you how to spray paint pictures and all that.

As already described in earlier chapters, Gypsy/Traveller pupils' examples of alternative learning opportunities were gendered in their orientation, with boys referring to learning a trade with their dads and uncles and girls referring to and strongly identifying with their mothers and care of the family. Importantly, this did not exclude 'having a good paid job'.

In this research, some Showground pupils reported staying with grandparents or aunts while their families travelled, as a way of preventing them from falling behind their peers at school through interruptions to their schooling.

Showground Traveller boy: I am staying to have to get a better education... to keep, keep myself at school and keep myself learned. I'm ... S1 but I should be in S2. I was kept back a year.

Researcher: Ah, why were you kept back?

Showground Traveller boy: Because I was not like at school a lot, as much as other pupils cause I was travelling a lot more than what I do now... It wasn't because I wasn't brainy or that.

The positive impact of the now defunct EFECOT initiative in supporting Showground pupils was evident in the academic achievements of some Showground Traveller pupils. At one school, some Showground Traveller girls had been the 'dux' of the school and gone on to higher education. Secondary schools were also reported to provide additional support for learning for Showground Traveller pupils when at school.

Different schools – different rules

The Gypsy/Traveller children in one group had all travelled in different directions; south to England and west as far as Ireland. The children raised two key issues; first that schools don't place them in classes according to their age/stage; and second, they find themselves breaking school's organisational rules, for example around mealtimes.

Gypsy/Traveller Boy 1: [All talking] ... I feel I don't make progress because I am getting put down a class and...

Gypsy/Traveller Boy 2: The place that I was at, [name], every time we had to go to school we had to go from quarter to nine to three o'clock so it was longer plus I was going down a class and I didn't like it.

In all three cases the children reported how the schools they attended while travelling had placed them in a lower class than the one that they had come from, that they were taught the

same topic many times over, and that schools approached the same topic from different perspectives, which was confusing.

Gypsy/Traveller Boy 1: In [Scottish place name] I was in Heinemann five and when I came back here I am on Heinemann four again.

Researcher: Right so if you move from school to school it all gets interrupted?

Gypsy/Traveller Boy 1: I went to a school once and then ... and I went to another school and ... it was a totally different thing altogether, maths was totally different and I didn't get it because I had finished you know things in this school. So if you had set this whole work...

Gypsy/Traveller Girl: You know how I am in primary six here well if I went away to England to [name of] school they would put me in primary five

Gypsy/Traveller Boy 2: Same with me that's what they do.

Gypsy/Traveller Girl: And I don't like going to down classes.

It emerged in discussion that one particular school always placed both boys in a lower class, which suggested that this was a common practice in relation to visiting Gypsy/Traveller pupils.

Social conditions of school learning & teaching

The Gypsy/Traveller children gave examples of racist name-calling, which suggested that in such situations the atmosphere at school was not conducive to learning. For example, in one group interview, an older boy's tone of voice suggested his *deep weariness* in relation to attending school, a point picked up by another boy in the same group.

Boy 1: No it's waking up in the morning, that's the feeling ... my stomach thinking 'we've got a whole day of school' ... It's just, just being surrounded [said with emphasis] by people. It's just...

Boy 2: We don't like being surrounded by all the school.

Boy 1: ... people.

Boy 2: Yeah cause they've got friends... They've got more [pause] they've got someone tae pick on. If I ... [laughs], if me and ma cousins and like all the Travelling boys were at school, we would really [unclear words].

Boy 1: We're the odd ones out.

Boy 2: Yes that's what we are. That's one thing that [unclear words], trying to think what's in their heads, thinking what they're thinking. And if sad unpredictable people thinking what they are away to do.

Researcher: So it's very nerve wracking?

Boy 3: *Yes [pause] they throw stuff at ye, and I try tae think, like 'are you going tae throw something at me?' And looking at like ... 44 people in your class.*

Cross referencing these children's accounts with the reflections of local authority staff responsible for their support showed that these pupils had clearly experienced a four month period of significant interrupted learning.

A critical mass - makes a difference?

By contrast, one interview group, who attended a school with a significant population of Gypsy/Traveller pupils, did not raise the issue of racism. However, when the researcher raised the question of their relationships with non-Gypsy children, a Gypsy/Traveller boy pointed out that that was not the purpose of the discussion.

Researcher: *... you haven't talked about problems with children who are not Gypsies... you seem to have been quite happy...*

Boy 1: *No! I didn't know you were on about Gypsy racism?*

Researcher: *No I am not on about Gypsy racism but it came out in other interviews.*

Boy 2: *They do call us Gypsy b's and I should say because... Gypsy bastards. [All talking - offering specific examples].*

Researcher: *What about the other way, do you call names back?*

Boy 3: *We do but ...*

While each child gave an account of his/her experience of racist name-calling, their apparently stronger capacity to cope with racist comments appeared to be derived from their sense of belonging and being supported by sufficient numbers of siblings, cousins and friends from their shared cultural background.

None of the above children set themselves up as victims. They clearly had a capacity to be self-critical, and critical of some Gypsy/Traveller people. They discussed a recent TV programme about Robert Kilroy Silk's week spent with a Traveller family, which involved his staying in a trailer on their land. The children remarked upon the untidy state of the Traveller's land. They went on to describe Travellers' concerns about those Travellers who don't keep their possessions or campsites tidy, "we call them scruffs. And I am not being horrible but that's what we call them. But if they are untidy ...".

CHAPTER 4 TRAVELLER PUPILS' ICT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Introduction

This chapter presents data to show how an exploration of the themes of motivation, and connectivity in relation to ICT supported learning revealed evidence to suggest that all the pupils had some level of knowledge about and skills in using desktop and laptop computers, software, printers, the Internet and email, and mobile phones. Pupils' 'own words' illustrate their current levels of engagement with and knowledge of the curriculum to suggest that they make good use of their current lack of access to ICT supported learning opportunities.

Literacy and motivation to learn

The pedagogical challenges facing teachers' attempts to meet the educational needs of mobile Gypsy and Traveller pupils derive largely from gaps in their formal learning skills ranging from some interrupted learning to no formal learning at all. However, all but two of the 21 pupils involved in the research were able to read, for example the older pupils clearly read and engaged with the meanings of the prompts, while the majority of the younger pupils were able to read instructions appearing on the laptop's screen as we located the prepared images.

Pupils from both communities recognised the significance of having basic educational skills to allow them to engage with the curriculum, particularly in relation to literacy's role in accessing information through a computer and the Internet.

During a small group interview with Gypsy/Traveller boys, some primary and some secondary aged, a boy expressed his wish to learn to read, and qualified his wish by saying "... but, (*a big sigh*) it is such hard work". Later, he privately spoke about the laptop used to help facilitate discussion to ask if the researcher knew that maps could be found through the Internet. He explained that using the desktop machine that they had at home, his brother could find "maps of everywhere ... even of London!" His motivation for learning to read was not in doubt. However, the local authority's strict interpretation of 'presumption of mainstreaming' policies had resulted in his receiving very poor additional support.

This boy's comments revealed an understanding about computers and the Internet as source of information about the wider world, of his interest in finding out information of relevance to him, and, of his willingness to share his knowledge with a relative stranger (the laptop had not been connected to the Internet).

A number of teachers described Showground Traveller pupils as being impressively resilient in their approaches to learning in the sense that when faced with difficulties in accessing learning, generally pupils from these backgrounds "don't give up".

Showground Traveller Boy: Motivation? I know what that means... To make yourself to do things. You need like to build up yourself for things and get your, get yourself motivated for summat.

Researcher: And do you find that difficult for your school work?

Showground Traveller Boy: Nope not at all. Yeah, I've got plenty of motivation.

The above examples were two of many that reflected the young people's generally very positive attitudes towards learning, including cases where pupils had additional and particular educational needs.

Pupils' knowledge of computers, hardware and educational software

The research found that the majority of Showground and Gypsy/Traveller pupils were familiar with computers and had had opportunities for accessing the Internet at school.

Pupils' capacities for manipulating the laptop, for example when opening up the prompt materials or moving the words around the onscreen file suggested that 5 pupils (4 Showground Traveller and 1 Gypsy/Traveller) had good knowledge of computers and ICT skills in relation to being able to open and close a file, copy/cut text and paste, type with one finger and drag and drop images. These skills were learned in school and at home; "I just kind of messed about with it and you learn. But my uncle and my cousin showed me as well. And then it was me that showed my dad."

All the children and young people expressed a general enjoyment in using a computer and some specifically pointed out that they preferred preparing formal assignments on a computer because they felt their work was neater and that writing was less tiring on the hands than working with a pen. Most pupils were aware of the spell checker and commented on its usefulness in supporting their preparation of written work at school, and for other purposes (see below).

Pupils from both groups commented on the general difficulties of keeping control of paper-based learning materials and frequently provided examples of other practical benefits of using a computer. Primary children drew attention to the image of a trailer to point out that a laptop would 'fit' easily into their family's obviously limited storage space. Secondary children felt that it helped them keep their work organised, and pupils also enjoyed having a USB memory stick as it meant that they had less to carry in their school bags.

Showground Traveller girl ; Like instead of having like so many drawers and bits of paper that you can just lose, it's always on there ain't it. So you're not going to lose it unless you delete it. ... Because you haven't got as many bits of paper. You probably won't even have any more like unless you printed it out.

Researcher: So that would be helpful to you even if you don't travel?

Showground Traveller girl : I think it would work. Because it's always that thing, you're trying to find your English jotter and trying to find your maths jotter.

Researcher: Mhm, and you have to carry it as well don't you. Do you have to carry a heavy bag to school? Yeah.

Showground Traveller girl: Cause we don't have lockers.

Gypsy/Traveller children also commented on the portability of laptops and their use among Gypsy/Traveller families.

Gypsy/Traveller girl: More Travellers have got laptops because it's easier to, like travelling, like a big computer in the corner, like you could use the corner for something else, they take up more room. That's why we just have a laptop.

Only a few pupils were aware of specific educational software packages for supporting learning and their independent use of laptop software was mainly limited to games. One Gypsy/Traveller boy was clearly knowledgeable about using software to safeguard his files, for example he knew about the purpose of firewalls and named antivirus software.

Emailing and attachments

The topic of emailing emerged around questioning about travelling. Of the 21 pupils involved in this research, 9 travelled during the school year, 7 sometimes travelled, usually during school holidays. While 6 Gypsy/Traveller pupils were currently housed, with 1 waiting for a house, for the reasons outlined in Chapter One Gypsy/Traveller families may well feel the need to 'move on'.

All the pupils had heard of email and some referred to their use of MSN, however, none had ever been in email contact with a 'base' school when travelling. Some pupils reported that their school did not allow pupils to use email at school as some had adopted this policy response to bullying and nasty message sending between pupils.

Few pupils understood the concept of 'attachments' and all were keen to know what it meant. The interview provided an ICT learning opportunity as time was taken to explain what an 'attachment' was and its potential relevance for ICT supported learning at a distance from a 'base' school.

Connectivity and the Internet

The majority of pupils had had limited access to the Internet at school, a number of Gypsy/Traveller pupils had access to the Internet in an alternative educational setting, and, while a couple of Showground Traveller families and one Gypsy/Traveller family had connectivity at home, the majority of pupils did not.

Clear evidence emerged of pupils' knowledge of the Internet, and the economic, social and educational usefulness of search engines. In a small group interview conversation all the children rushed to respond to the researcher's question about Google.

Researcher: So what sort of things do you use the Internet for? Do you know about Google? Yeah.

Gypsy/Traveller boy: Yes, it's where you can buy things and sell things and look up things and all that.

Gypsy/Traveller Girl: Like Ebay...

Gypsy/Traveller boy: Even if you just want to look at something for a project at the school...

Gypsy/Traveller Girl: ...for homework.

Other Gypsy/Traveller children described fathers and uncles using the Internet to find old school friends, "Cause my uncle [name] does that, me aunt [name's] husband, he use to type in a date, then he would type in a school, then he used to look for me dad's old school mates."

The image prompts were again useful in that they helped primary children articulate their imagined use of ICT supported provision.

Gypsy/Traveller Girl: Say I went to a different school I would to like be able to go into the computers [others talking] say my friend [name] was here right and it was her time to go the ICT room, I would like to be able to ... like me and her communicate... like talk to each other from a different place...

Some of the teachers had facilitated the local authority's earlier less than successful attempts to support Showground Traveller pupils with laptop computers while they were travelling. Teachers suggested that this situation had partly been due to connectivity difficulties, but that in some cases pupils were described as 'not motivated to learn'. Connectivity emerged as a significant key to ensuring pupils enthusiasm for and regular engagement in their schoolwork while 'on the road'.

The significance of communication among families and with schools also emerged around mobile telephone use; a majority of pupils drew attention to their mobile phones, for example each had had their own personal mobile phones bought for them by their families primarily for keeping contact with families and friends, through texting and telephone calls.

Making tickets and flyers

Pupils' examples of how they used their ICT skills reflected that they frequently shared them with family members and put them to good practical use in relation to the family's occupational needs. One young person for example, described how she had used the family's desktop to help her father make tickets for their show.

Researcher: And you helped him do that?

Showground Traveller Girl: Yes I showed him how to do it.

Researcher: So although you're not travelling the computer's been helpful to your father in his work?

Showground Traveller Girl: Yes.

A Showground Traveller boy's discussion about his new laptop further illustrated pupils' entrepreneurial approaches to using a laptop in ways that benefited a family's business.

Showground Traveller boy: The first day I got mine I went over to my aunties and my uncle put on a Microsoft picture it and he put all that on and I made a leaflet of like all of our rides and that, all about us, all like it's like that way and it folds like that and it's got the photo and that on it and it tells you a wee bit of writing and that on the three pages and photos and that.

The boy's account clearly demonstrated his ICT skills and the educational value of having access to a laptop with connectivity, which in this case had allowed him to download the images integral to his advertising flyer.

A few families from both communities were reported to have invested in a computer and a printer for home use; some Gypsy/Traveller families living in houses had bought a desktop computer with access to the Internet, and other families living in trailers or chalets were reported to have laptop computers.

The majority of Gypsy/Traveller pupils' main, but relatively limited access to computer technologies, was at school or in alternative educational settings. While two or three of the younger Gypsy/Traveller pupils were not too clear about computer technologies, the majority had a clear understanding of ICT's capabilities in relation to accessing and transporting data. While a number of Showground Traveller pupils reported owning their own personal laptop computer, no Gypsy/Traveller pupils reported owning a laptop.

Importantly, pupils from *both backgrounds* frequently reported being supported in their use of

computers at home by their fathers or uncles. Some Gypsy/Traveller pupils reported that their dads used a laptop to keep track of business information. Some Gypsy/Traveller pupils reported being allowed as a special treat to play a game on the parent's laptop.

Laptops - no substitute for attending school?

Showground/Traveller pupils in regular attendance at school in the winter term described 'catching up' in relation to the curriculum at the end of a season of travelling as relatively easy.

Showground Traveller Boy: It's not as difficult as what other people think. A lot of people would find it like difficult to catch up, although it's not as difficult. Usually when I go back to the school they're not always on the different things. Like I can catch up then on a lot, cause I learned from my mum and dad and my granddad will teach me stuff when I'm away... They are not teaching me bad habits as like just teaching me the things that I need to know, things I need to grow up with.

However, as noted earlier, a number of Showground Traveller pupils reported that they had been put back a year 'to catch up' and some families had decided to leave their children in the care of relatives during the school week.

A grandfather's comment that, "The children should be in school" reflected Showground families' general usage of a 'base' school in the winter months, for primary and secondary pupils. Over the summer months, many families relied on paper-based support provided by their base school. Some families were also reported as trying to enrol their children in schools as they travelled, however, some Showground Traveller parents consider that, "they're enjoying their experience, but there's no progress in their learning".

After a lot of discussion among one group of Gypsy/Traveller pupils about what they did and did not enjoy about school, the following quote summarised how many Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils felt about the notion of having access to ICT supported education when travelling.

Gypsy/Traveller Boy: I hate coming to school, I say it all the time but I do. But say I ... went away somewhere and I was bored or something and I am saying like 'I wish I went to school now' and all that, I wish I did have that laptop, that way you could download homework and that would give me something to do and that way I am still like going to school through the internet.

All the Gypsy/Traveller pupils made their feelings clear about attending schools where they had generally felt frightened or had been subject to name-calling or physical hurt; they did not want to go to such schools. Some stated a preference for being taught in out of school settings.

Introduction

This chapter presents Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils' understandings of the concepts *collaborative*, *interactive* and *synchronicity* as they relate to ICT supported learning and teaching. Based on their descriptions of where, when and how they learn when travelling, which emerged from discussions about the above concepts, the chapter provides evidence to suggest that Gypsy and Traveller pupils would benefit from a 'blended learning' approach to ICT supported learning and teaching when at a distance from their 'base' schools.

Thematic connections in learning and teaching

As earlier chapters have shown, connectivity clearly emerges as a key component of effective ICT supported learning, not least because it allows for a pupil to stay in touch, wherever he/she is located, with a 'base' school teacher.

Researcher: ... if you are moving around a lot, what happens to your learning?

Gypsy/Traveller Boy: You have like lost it, you don't lose it but you forget.

Pupils' understandings of the meanings and links between the concepts of collaboration, interactive and synchronicity in relation to ICT supported learning frequently emerged spontaneously from a pupil's exploration of one concept, which they then linked to others by tracing their implications for everyday learning 'on the road'.

Collaborative working

A few pupils reported periods of boredom when travelling, particularly in small towns and rural areas in the north of Scotland. At these times, "there would only be a couple of us ... or there'd be nothing to do, so we would just sit and do the school work."

Another Showground Traveller boy linked the notion of motivation for learning to collaborative learning. He has found that his motivation was strengthened by his participation in small working groups, variously comprised of siblings, cousins and friends, when at their winter base *and* in their trailers while travelling.

Showground Traveller Boy: In the winter station ... we would go home and he would be like that oh I'm stuck on this and I could pick it up and like what's happening here? that goes there and that goes there but sometimes ... he had may be done it or was doing it that day ... and help me with it and that. Well most of the work would be the same all throughout Glasgow for the schools based on what they do. He might have work that I know what to do and I might have work that he knows what to do. So instead of like here [at school] you would ask the teacher like if I was stuck I would put my hand up and the teacher would come and ask me but likes of there [at home or when travelling] at least you have got somebody to ask if somebody else is there with you.

Few Traveller children and young people emerged as learning in isolation. Their usual ways of working thus raise a crucial issue for providers of ICT supported learning as 'Laptops for Travellers' found that when pupils worked side-by-side with their laptops the signal reception was likely to fail.

Some Gypsy/Traveller pupils' discussions about their positive experience of an ICT supported learning project revealed the potential for collaborative working between pupils who may be located in different areas.

Gypsy/Traveller Boy: *I am just going back to the chat room point. When I was in [name of project] I went to a chat room and I thought 'I know someone who has got a computer' and it was my cousin. So I went to the chat room and typed in [name] and then it comes up like with his computer and I thought yeah ... I am talking to him! ... And he was telling me what he was doing like playing with his dogs and all that*

Showground Traveller pupils' discussions revealed the role of collaborative working between parents and interested teachers to ensure that children were supplied with paper-based learning materials for the travelling season.

Secondary Boy: *What they... obviously they [parents] would go to my teacher and say 'ok I'm going to be travelling on this day and I won't be back till this day' and my mum would say 'can I get work like to do right over the summer'. What the head teacher would do is go into all the classrooms that I was doing and get like piles of work like maybe a text book for one subject and jotters and different things and that and do it... and just keep doing it over the summer and then when I was going like the summer time I would probably take it back and they would mark it all and ... I had maybe caught [up] or maybe not with other pupils.*

However, schools' support for their pupils' teaching and feedback needs on completed assignments to date has been very limited.

Improvements in this area have begun as in the last travelling season (2005) Glasgow City Council's 'Laptops for Travellers' project has delivered connectivity between the designated teacher, and access to a limited curriculum (English and Maths) to a few Showground Traveller children. Importantly, collaborative development working between the designated teacher, technically knowledgeable professional support staff and schools has delivered online software that corresponds with the curriculum materials being used by Showground Traveller's peers at school.

Interactive learning

The report earlier referred to 'blended learning' as a communicative process that combines opportunities for different kinds of interactions between teachers and peers; face-to-face, email and telephone communications. Pupils from both backgrounds liked the idea of 'interactive' learning, which they understood as having two meanings; being able to respond to what the software asked of them, and as being able to communicate with their teachers by email about their work. As one boy said, "I couldn't do it by myself all the time".

Others also preferred interactions with their teacher to be face-to-face, "Aye, I can find out things (*on the Internet*) and that, but I like better face to face."

Importantly, ICT supported learning has been shown to benefit from the key element that ensures traditionally delivered effective learning and teaching experiences, a regular, positive learning and teaching relationship between learners and their teachers; a view supported by these pupils' comments.

The idea of accessing their own work folder through a username and password was not new for Showground Traveller pupils who were keen to demonstrate how they currently used this mode of access to their personal pupil folders.

Synchronicity and learning

Pupils' initial explorations of the term synchronicity in relation to ICT supported learning interpreted its meaning in negative ways. Pupils thought that ICT supported learning would provide teachers at school with an opportunity for imposing the timed demands of a traditional learning and teaching day. Pupils considered such an exercise of power to be wholly inappropriate for their life styles while on the road.

Showground Traveller boy: For people [teachers] to keep giving me work and work and work and just like all the time I'm working, work and work. Cause I've got all my daily things to do. Like working on the, on the rides and helping out and doing my bit.

Researcher: ...Doing your bit towards the family?

Showground Traveller boy: Yeah.

Others discussed the issue of synchronicity in relation to connectivity, to raise their concerns that a teacher would achieve some kind of control as in a school setting, about when they did their schoolwork. This possibility was perceived as a backward step as it would limit what was currently a valued issue of personal choice. Frequently, Showground children made positive comments about their life styles; "I enjoy the way my life is."

Another pupil, positive about the idea of using technology to support his learning, was also clear that he would want to retain some control about the amount of work he might be sent as, "Cause I've got my daily things to do... like working on the rides and helping out and doing my bit. I'd like... my own choice, not what they (*school*) think for me."

Gypsy/Traveller pupils raised different issues in relation to 'synchronicity'; a need for learning materials to be individually tailored, clearly presented, and that training be provided for pupils in how to use the technology.

Researcher: One of the things about this [using ICT] is that your lessons could be posted...

Gypsy/Traveller Boy: ... to you by email.

Researcher: ... I could send it to you on a Friday and say 'right I will be connecting up again next Friday, just make sure all this work is done'. So you can do it whenever you like, but you would have to do it [emphasised], because it would have to be there on the next Friday. But the choice would be yours about when [emphasised] you did it. What do you think of that? Would you be ... motivated to get it done?

Gypsy/Traveller Boy: Yeah [paused to think] the only thing is I would have to have instructions on it. ... Yeah, clearly you know written out and the way I can understand, not too fancy words and that.

Explorations of the term 'synchronicity' with secondary pupils, for example, led to discussions about the meaning of the term 'asynchronous' and its implications in relation to online learning.

Showground Traveller pupils linked their understandings of flexibility, as doing things part-time, of having extra support at school to the concept of asynchronous learning. Pupils were enthusiastic about the idea of working in ‘asynchronous’ time, which was thought would help them achieve a better ‘fit’ between learning and their everyday lives during the travelling season.

Gypsy/Traveller Boy: And if we were supplied with work, you know what you were saying like maybe in the future, we could like learn some things in the school that we use to be in... I feel like if we moved from the school we were in you could send us the same work and we could do it of night time.

Pupils also welcomed the idea of being able to work at their own pace and of being able to go back to a topic that they found too difficult.

ICT supported learning and equality of opportunity

Currently, research has shown that mobile Gypsy/Traveller pupils are highly unlikely to have an Individual Education Plan. Gypsy/Traveller pupils rarely receive any paper-based support and certainly no ICT supported learning from schools. Some families successfully enrol their children at schools as they travel, however some of the Gypsy/Traveller pupils in this research had not been to school for four months.

Researcher: And when you were travelling were you ever, what kind of materials did you receive? Just to, to learn with?

Boy 1: No we went to school.

Researcher: You always went to school.

Boy 1: Yeah.

Boy 2: Mostly yeah, mostly.

Boy 3: But we were off school for four months or something cause that's when we were at [name of place]. And they wouldnae, at [name of place] they wouldn't, the teacher...

Boy 2: They wouldn't enrol us.

Boy 3: ...said there's no point us applying if there's nae a minibus ken' tae get tae school.

Researcher: Mhm...

Boy 2: They wouldn't supply us, they wouldn't enrol us cause we're Travellers.

Researcher: You mean they didn't give you any papers or books?

All the children simultaneously replied “No”. The accuracy of these children’s reports, for example that a school *did* refuse to enrol them, and on the grounds of a *lack of transport*, may be issues of interpretation, however, they are issues that must concern local authorities who are serious about providing all children with access to the curriculum.

This eloquent exchange draws attention to the strong need for local authority education departments to provide ICT supported learning as a means of ensuring equality of educational opportunity. Not least for Gypsy/Traveller pupils who cannot or will not attend school, but also for others who for the broad range of reasons recognised in the Additional Support for Learning's Code of Practice have additional learning needs.

CHAPTER 6

TRAVELLER PUPILS' PERCEPTIONS OF ISSUES ARISING FROM ICT SUPPORTED LEARNING

Introduction

This chapter outlines and discusses pupils' perceptions of the challenges that might arise in delivering a user friendly ICT supported learning service for Gypsy and Traveller pupils when travelling, or being educated in out of school settings. The chapter also makes links between pupils' concerns and professionals' and policy makers' concerns to deliver an educationally effective, value for money ICT supported learning service, across a diversity of contexts.

Mainstream access – setting the standards of equity

Computers with access to the Internet emerged as taken-for-granted aspects of mainstream schooling by all the Traveller children. However, the idea that Traveller pupils might be provided with access to ICT supported learning when travelling emerged as a novel idea to most Gypsy/Traveller pupils.

Researcher:

... so if you had a way of connecting into the school, like with a laptop and your learning was sent to you by email ... what would you think of that, do you think you would be able to do, do you think you would be interested in that?

Gypsy/Traveller Boy:

Yeah, but when we are away, like where there is no school about... [paused for thought] Yes, I would be interested in it, but what I am thinking of is how?

While a few of the older Showground Traveller pupils considered it the government's responsibility to provide for travelling children to ensure that they had the same level of access to ICT as children at school, the younger children expressed concerns about the implications of any costs for their parents.

Costs - development and sustainability of ICT supported learning

The issue of who would pay for the costs of developing and sustaining an ICT supported learning service emerged during the first few individual interviews. Pupils asked the following questions; what would it cost to set up? How much would the hardware and software cost? And, the data cards or line rental to achieve connectivity to the Internet, wouldn't that be expensive?

Most of the Gypsy/Traveller children commented on the beauty of the laptop that was used, which usually was closely followed by a further comment about the expense of buying it. A primary girl commented that, "This laptop must have been dear eh?" A boy's discussion included a number of questions about costs of software that might be needed. He also wanted to know about the life of the battery and how often the laptop had to be re-charged.

Both Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils explored the laptop's need for electricity, "... cause like some places you are out in the middle of fields and that and we have all got big generators super silent. But it's like getting the Internet connected off everywhere I go so it would be quite hard." It was suggested that the generators used on fairground sites could cope with delivering electricity as long as parents had enough money to buy the petrol to put in the generator. However, the cost of electricity cards for use in trailers parked on local authority sites was considered to be prohibitively expensive for some Gypsy/Traveller families.

Showground Traveller pupils appeared more pragmatic about the implications of costs for their families than the Gypsy/Traveller pupils. A few of the former imagined that ICT

hardware could be delivered through a collaborative approach between their families and the government.

Showground Traveller Boy: *Well if it's gonna help them [children] then likes not just the school but likes if the government were gonna fit in all the software and that to be put in the laptop, mind you all the schools has got that anyway, so likes the wireless technology and that from wherever it comes from and I could do all the stuff I need [on a laptop] till I get my computer up to the internet. Likes of that... not the council, the government should pay but most of the Show people ... I think there was twenty five of us all got laptops like all my pals and that.*

Secondary-aged Showground Traveller pupils appeared to have some disposable income, earned when working on the 'rides'. For example, one boy had been saving for a year for a laptop.

Showground Traveller boy: *And I just wanted a laptop for the last year and a half and like I took my own money ... for insurance and that on it ... and my dad bought me it.*

The cost for insuring the laptop for a year was quoted as £250.

Discussions about costs also led pupils to reflect on related issues arising from engaging with computer-based provision. For example, pupils:

- reviewed their conceptual understandings of the links between a laptop or desktop and the significance of needing either a wireless card or “a dial up thing done through the telephone” in order to get connected to the Internet
- raised the issue of training needs for themselves and their parents, for example, in how to connect up to the Internet, use email and access files and other software
- commented on a laptop’s potential for creating stress within families who lived in trailers and who had small siblings who might damage the laptop.¹²

Gypsy/Traveller children suggested other more suitable places for accessing their school work, for example that a laptop be made available at the onsite portacabin, or that arrangements be made with a local library or community centre. Pupils also thought that more laptops should be made available for borrowing from schools.

Safety awareness in using the Internet and emails

The issue of parental contributions to provision fed into other questions about safety and security in relation to accessing a networked ICT service.

The issue of pupil safety in relation to using the Internet and email was the first raised by two primary Gypsy/Traveller girls. Speaking together they described their school’s attempt to raise awareness among parents about problems associated with using chat rooms, “We had letters out like in *(both speak at once – unclear)* on the Internet”

Gypsy/Traveller Girl: *And there’s letters out, [from the school] not to write like your names on the computer and on email, like not to send an email out.*

¹² E-LAMP project staff reported that only one laptop was damaged during the travelling year; a teacher had placed a laptop on the ground with other materials ready for loading into her car, but she had forgotten it to pick it up and had reversed her car over it.

Despite this knowledge, the pupil's vulnerability was demonstrated by her next request, "Can you show me how to go onto the chat rooms?"

A range of issues relating to safety and security in relation to the Internet were also discussed in another small group interview.

Gypsy/Traveller Boy: *You know if you did get supplied with a computer from the council and all that would you be allowed to email your friends as well?*

Researcher: *They would have to provide you with a secure system and so you would be safe in it...*

Gypsy/Traveller Girl: *From anything happening to you? Like viruses or anything...*

Researcher: *... they would have to make sure people can't contact you inappropriately.*

Gypsy/Traveller Boy: *That's one thing ... see if somebody like, I am using this word again, but paedophile did contact you through your computer, I wouldn't go and meet them like they say, I wouldn't do that, I wouldn't be allowed anyway, would you [refers to the girl in the group]?*

It is important to note that Glasgow's recent experience, with Showground Traveller pupils' use of laptops with connectivity, has shown no apparent misuse of the security measures put in place to ensure both pupils safety on the Internet and the security of the Glasgow Schools Network.

Criteria for inclusion

In the likelihood of limited local authority resources being made available for an ICT supported service it is inevitable that clear criteria must be established to ensure that the service is delivered effectively, to children with a motivation to learn, that the curriculum on offer is tailored to a child's individual learning needs and that the family are properly supported in helping their child or children access the service.

Lessons can be learned from Glasgow's 'SchoolsOutGlasgow.net' project and its 'Laptops for Travellers' project. These projects highlight the importance of an 'assessment is for learning' approach to service delivery, which requires that a child's ICT supported curriculum is based upon their particular learning needs. Local authorities will need to recognise the time and material cost implications for:

- 'base' school and designated staff in developing an IEP for each child, which will ensure continuity of learning and teaching
- development of curriculum materials by 'base' school, designated support and ICT staff to create online access to the paper-based curriculum materials used by their 'base' schools.

It should be technically possible for resources to be delivered in such a way that more than one child in a family could benefit from the same hardware and connectivity arrangements, whether this involves the delivery of a laptop with connectivity, or through a password protected web browser.

New forms of learning and sociability

As outlined in earlier chapters, pupils did not perceive ICT supported learning to be a replacement for school-based learning. Indeed, Gypsy/Traveller pupils recognised that their decisions regarding non-attendance at secondary schools limited their occupational aspirations.

Showground Traveller Boy: Because what I want to do like, welding and engineering, you need some standard grades and that, so likes when I leave school next year what I want to go into I have got to have like so many standard grades.

Most pupils from both communities valued school as a place to make friends and gain the skills and qualifications they needed for adult life.

The sociability with peers at schools was frequently contrasted with the boredom sometimes experienced when staying on a site or when attending alternative settings. The idea of having access to ICT supported learning was exciting precisely because the technology could help them keep contact with the 'settled' pupils and teachers they liked; and even to avoid some of the children from their own communities that they did not like.

These insights all have significance for policy makers and practitioners as they illustrate that the delivery of a 'one size fits all' service, for example provision of a laptop with connectivity capabilities and associated peripheral technologies would not address the different contexts in which Traveller children may find themselves. Or indeed, that all Traveller children 'will always need' such a service.

CHAPTER 7 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS – IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES, STAFF AND FAMILIES

Introduction

This research has explicitly focused on two of the sponsored research programmes themes: ‘researching with children’ and ‘working with young people’. Its thematically linked focus will provide ‘added value’ to the Scottish Executive Education Department’s knowledge base about the learning needs of Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils within the present construct of school-based education and the content of the school curriculum (SEED 2003). It is hoped that the dialogue achieved with the children and young people from these communities about the realities of their everyday lives is reflected in this report. Their views and aspirations should inform local authorities’ developments in ICT supported learning, thus helping to:

- ensure the provision is user friendly
- enhance equality of educational opportunity,
- provide access to additional support, should it be needed.

Ultimately, the research hopes to contribute towards development of a cost effective, culturally sensitive ICT supported learning experience for Gypsy and Traveller pupils who travel, or who are educated in out of school settings.

‘Gypsy’ identity – bullying and discriminatory treatment

A large majority of professionals, officials and the general public in Scotland have only a blurred understanding of Gypsies’ and Travellers’ different cultures and lifestyles, with most appearing to have a literal understanding of the idea and role of ‘travelling’ in their lives. Such a lack of understanding contributes to Gypsy and Traveller children and young people’s experience of racist treatment by some non-Traveller people, when accessing school-based learning (Lloyd, Stead et al. 1999b; Lloyd and Stead 2001). It also highlights the continuing relevance of the Equal Opportunities Committee's 37 recommendations.

Gypsy/Traveller pupils continue to experience bullying and discriminatory treatment associated with being identified as a ‘Gypsy’, an identity that is frequently applied, although to a lesser degree, to Showground Traveller pupils when at school. This finding highlights a key reason for Gypsy/Traveller pupils’ experience of interrupted learning, particularly secondary-aged pupils, and the many examples of pupils ‘missing’ from education (Executive 2005).

Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils in this research had all experienced periods of travelling, for a range of occupational, family and cultural reasons. Travelling, which emerges as a significant, albeit differently patterned feature of their life styles, also contributes towards an interrupted learning experience among children and young people from these socially and culturally distinctive communities. Partly for these reasons, some of the children and young people from these communities do not achieve their academic potential (HMIe 2006).

Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils being educated away from their ‘base’ school, or in the case of Gypsy/Traveller pupils their ‘real’ school, require some additional help with their learning, which brings their educational needs within the broader framework for providing for children and young people as set out in the The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, and its Code of Practice. (www.ltscotland.org.uk/inclusiveeducation/additionalsupportforlearning/codeofpractice.asp).

ICT supported learning

Research has shown that educators' uses of ICT with reliable *connectivity* have allowed for a more *flexible* (in overcoming the limitations of conventional age and stage approaches), *interactive* and *collaborative* (in overcoming *the de-motivating* effects on learners of significant gaps in time between submitting work and receiving feedback) learning experience for pupils, who, for a range of reasons, are highly unlikely to benefit from school-based learning, and particularly those whose preferred 'learning time' does not have *synchronicity* with 'school time'. Certainly, these features have helped *motivate* and *re-motivate* learners to engage with formal learning and its potential for life long learning (Passey, Rogers *et al.* 2004).

Showground Traveller and Gypsy/Traveller pupils could see the benefit of ICT supported learning for receiving and delivering completed assignments to 'base' school staff. In addition to the added bonus of receiving prompt feedback, pupils also welcomed the idea of keeping in better contact with staff and friends at school. New forms of *sociability* achieved via the Internet were already in evidence among some of the pupils in this research.

The children and young people expressed concerns that ICT supported learning arrangements would include a regular, positive learning and teaching relationship with a 'base' school teacher. Importantly, they did not have the conceptual language for referring to 'pupil learning plans' or 'individual learning plans' associated with 'assessment is for learning' approaches to meeting individual learning needs (www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess/). However, pupils clearly identified their needs for a progressive, coherent and effective learning experience, which implicitly pointed to a planned learning approach, for example, an individual learning plan as advocated by the SchoolsOutGlasgow.net project (Jordan and Padfield 2004).

Children and young people expressed their preferences for a 'blended learning' ICT experience, one based on his or her particular learning needs. This approach should comprise paper-based learning materials and face-to-face support provided by a 'base' school, and, computer-based learning materials, supported by secure and safety proofed access to the Internet. Further encouragement and support should be enabled through email and telephone communications with a 'base' school teacher and ICT technical support staff. Certainly, the E-LAMP and 'Laptops for Travellers' projects have shown the benefits of such communications, for pupils' self-confidence as learners and in maintaining their sense of belonging to their 'base' school.

Such additions would effectively augment the significant 'good practice' provided by designated staff, currently available in some, but not all Scottish local authorities (Padfield 2005). The role and remit of designated teaching and support staff is to support Gypsy and Traveller families and schools in accessing education their children and young people.

Existing support for Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils

Showground and Gypsy/Traveller pupils' discussions revealed the limits of existing support and their awareness of the negative impact of travelling on their education, particularly their secondary education.

Showground Traveller pupils' educational progress appeared to rely heavily on their parents' interest in ensuring that paper based materials were prepared in readiness for the travelling season, and by ensuring that marking and feedback was achieved by dropping off work done on the road into their 'base' schools when returning to their winter base for short periods during the travelling season.

Gypsy/Traveller children and young people described learning with their parents and other family members, but recognised that what their parents could teach them did not lead to

qualifications. In this regard they thought that schools should organise distance learning, which contrary to popular belief is not readily available in Scottish schools (Padfield 2005). While Gypsy/Traveller pupils had little expectation that local authorities would be agreeable to providing ICT supported learning, with national support, for example, by the Scottish Schools Digital Network, such provision would extend schools' existing inclusive approaches as outlined in the national Guidance (SEED 2003), and really begin to address the inclusion and equality issues Gypsy/Traveller and Showground Traveller pupils continue to experience (HMIE 2005).

Showground and Gypsy/Traveller pupils frequently made references to 'learning with' their family members. They described many examples of sharing learning skills (including ICT skills) and information with brothers, sisters, cousins, and, not least their fathers and uncles. The policy and professional significance of this latter point is that ICT supported learning for children and young people from these communities could impact more widely in educative terms. Such parental involvement, particularly of fathers, which is recognised to benefit children's formal learning achievements (Russell and Granville 2005), delivery of ICT supported learning opportunities for children could lead to a greater engagement in formal learning by their adult family members. The potential for 'added value' of fathers' and uncles' engagement in the development of ICT supported educational opportunities, would be of particular long term benefit, to their communities by ensuring their cultural appropriateness, and to society.

'awareness raising' for the future

The report has not drawn upon the many examples of informal learning opportunities afforded by other agencies, for example, Save the Children. Frequently, these agencies and local authorities work through media and drama opportunities that use ICT based technologies. For example, a group of Gypsy/Traveller children recently made a DVD of their lives, called, 'We Are the Gypsy Kids', their presentation of themselves and their hopes for their future is highly positive. An artist Iain Piercey and musician Ricky Traynor, both from Project Ability, led the project with support from Universal Connections and the recently closed Gypsy Traveller Community Development Project. Similarly, Showground Traveller pupils have made video recordings of their day-to-day lives on the Showground, for example Dex Stirling's videos were transmitted on BBC's 'Different Worlds' series late in 2005.

Showground Travellers talked with enthusiasm about the newly emerging city centre fairgrounds, as well as the remaining traditional fairs, while many Gypsy/Traveller families were reported to attend other fairs and religious conventions. The research considered that promotional visits by educationalists to such events could be used to inform families about the curriculum and how it is taught in schools. Using examples of paper-based basic literacy and numeracy materials, and opportunities to engage with ICT supported examples of subjects taught in secondary schools, such events could engage Gypsy and Traveller families' interest in and knowledge of formal education.

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collaboration

interactive

synchronicity

motivation

connectivity

Costs

sociability

flexibility

APPENDIX 2 EXAMPLES OF IMAGES USED WITH YOUNGER PUPILS
a)



b)





APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW GUIDE

LEARNING AT A DISTANCE SUPPORTED BY ICT FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS: YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS SCOTTISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SPONSORED RESEARCH PROGRAMME 2004

DR PAULINE PADFIELD – JANUARY - JULY 2005 - INTERVIEW GUIDE

Learning supported by using 'information and communications technology' - ICT

Issues involved in learning: place – pace – time of learning --- when not travelling?

Biographical details: age/gender/travels/siblings/base school/how many schools attended/pupil record

Knowledge of ICT:

Have you ever heard of e-learning?

What do you think e-learning means?

How is that different from online learning?

Do you know how to use a computer? Email? Internet? `Printers? Scanners?

Where did you learn the skills to use a computer? Email? Internet? `Printers? Scanners?

Who taught you to use them?

What was good about using them?

What kinds of technologies have you used?

- ❖ Desktop & laptop computers
- ❖ Software
- ❖ Interactive whiteboards
- ❖ Digital cameras
- ❖ Mobile phones
- ❖ Wireless tools – datacards
- ❖ Email – discussion boards – chat rooms - & video conferencing
- ❖ Virtual learning environments

What combinations of 'tools' have you used in your learning?

- ❖ Books & paper & pens?
- ❖ Paper based & using a computer?
- ❖ Combining paper based and online learning?
- ❖ Entirely online learning?
- ❖ Do you use any of these technologies to do your work/learning?

Travelling:

- ❖ Are you offered use of any of these technologies at school or while travelling?
- ❖ Do you go to get access to a computer or the Internet while travelling?
- ❖ Where do you access a computer or the Internet while travelling?

Schoolwork: Do you have a set of work prepared for you personally or is your work a 'package' that everyone receives? What helps you to do your work? Are you able to get teaching help and feedback when you are travelling? Who does that for you? Do you send your work back to school for feedback? How long does it take to receive it feedback from school? What happens then – do you get more work?

Family: Does anyone in your family know how to use a computer? Email? Internet? `Printers? Scanners?

Do you and your family agree with the school a timetable of learning (what your learn and when and how to present it) before you go travelling?

Are you just given a 'pack' or do you discuss its contents?

Are your family able to help you with your schoolwork when travelling?

How do you or your school keep a record of what you have done?

APPENDIX 4
SCOTLAND

ICT SUPPORTED LEARNING INITIATIVES - UK &

1990s **TOPILOT, FLEX and TRAPEZE**
European Federation for the Education of the Children of Occupational Travellers (EFECOT 1994), SCET and Glasgow City Council
Open and distance education
Provided by a 'base' school during travelling periods
For young people from Occupational Traveller backgrounds

2005 - European Network for Traveller Education (ENTE)
Renewal of disbanded EFECOT &
European support for Gypsy and Traveller education,

2000 -2006 **E-Lamp Projects**
Original support by Nuffield and latterly the DfES
Email contact and computer-based learning to augment paper-based learning
Collaboratively developed by TESS and 'base' school
For young people from Circus and Showground Traveller, and Gypsy/Traveller backgrounds
100 pupils <k.marks@sheffield.ac.uk>

1999s **Notschool**
Developed by Stephen Hepple at ULTRALAB (GCC)
Choosing learning when, what and where supported by ICT
For young people not benefiting from traditional school based learning
1700 through programme. <www.notschool.net/> New The Cademy

2002 -2003 **SchoolsOutGlasgow**
Supported by SEED, developed by GCC Education Services Department & NGfL Scotland & LT Scotland.
Academically informed blend of paper-based & computer based learning supported by email & Internet access
For young people with 'interrupted learning' not benefiting from school based learning
20 + in first year <www.schoolsoutglasgow.net>

2005 - 2006 **Laptops for Travellers**
Supported by GCC Education Services Department & developed by Interrupted Learners Services
ICT supported learning (mix of SOG & E-Lamp approaches) providing a blend of paper-based and computer-based learning & access to beginnings of a school curriculum
For travelling Showground Travellers (including a 'settled' Gypsy/Traveller)
12 approximately

Future Projects - e-learning for Gypsy and Traveller pupils?