Guidelines on Traveller Education
in Primary Schools

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NDP
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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Programme for
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AN ROINN
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AGUS EOLAÍOCHTA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
AND SCIENCE
INSPECTORATE
Evaluation Support & Research Unit

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Foreword

These guidelines on Traveller education for primary schools are a vital part of the Department of Education and Science's strategies on social inclusion, anti-poverty, promotion of equality, and the tackling of educational disadvantage. The policy of my Department is that Travellers should be fully integrated into our mainstream schools.

The Traveller community is widely acknowledged as one of the most marginalised groups in Irish society. Recent legislative changes, such as the Education Act, 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, and the Equal Status Act, 2000, reflect the reality that Ireland is an increasingly multi-cultural society. Education, along with accommodation, health and social welfare issues, has a key part to play in preparing our children for full and active citizenship.

Great strides in Traveller education have been made at primary level over many years, and more recently my Department has begun to respond in a very significant way at second level.

The overall resourcing of Traveller education by means of a National Education Officer, an expanding Visiting Teacher Service, the employment of resource teachers in primary schools, the allocation of teaching hours in second-level schools and the payment of enhanced capitation grants in both primary and second-level schools have made a major contribution to date. The role of the In-Career Development Unit of this Department has been significant in preparing teachers to contribute in a meaningful way to the education of Travellers.

Partnership has been very much in evidence in the development of education provision for Travellers. This is exemplified by the ongoing co-operation between the Inspectorate, the administrative staff in my Department, the National Education Officer, the Visiting Teacher Service and many Traveller organisations. The effective functioning of the Advisory Committee on Traveller Education, made up of all the partners in education, including Traveller organisations, school management and staff representatives, has played an important role in Traveller education and in the compiling of this booklet.

Many challenges in Traveller education still need to be overcome. However, I am convinced that the production of these guidelines is an important milestone in the overall work of Traveller education. They will help to disseminate good practice, assist schools in developing effective Traveller education programmes, and guide my Department in future policy in this regard.

I congratulate and thank all those who were involved in this work.

Dr. Michael Woods TD
Minister for Education and Science

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- Advisory Committee on Traveller Education

- Co-ordinating Committee for Traveller Education

- Parish of the Travelling People

- Pavee Point Traveller Centre

- Traveller Women's Forum

- Irish Traveller Movement

- Inspectorate and administrative staff of the Department of Education and Science.

Introduction

These guidelines replace the *Guidelines on the Education of Traveller Children in National Schools (1994)*, and their publication reflects the very significant development and considerable change that has taken place in Irish education and society in the intervening period. The primary purpose of the new guidelines is to provide practical guidance to teachers, schools, parents and management in implementing Department of Education and Science policy on Traveller education. This policy has as its central aim the meaningful participation and highest attainment of the Traveller child so that, in common with all the children of the nation, he or she may live a full life as a child and realise his or her full potential as a unique individual, proud of and affirmed in his or her identity as a Traveller and a citizen of Ireland.

The production of the guidelines was a lengthy, practical and rewarding process that involved continuous consultation with teachers, parents and managements and their representative organisations. Early drafts were piloted with the various interest groups, and revision and modification took place as a result. The final draft was presented to and approved by the Minister's Advisory Committee on Traveller Education.

Integration, an intercultural approach and age-appropriate placement are key Department policies in relation to Traveller education, and in this context the guidelines emphasise and provide guidance on

- a whole-school approach to Traveller education and learning support, with the emphasis on the central role and responsibility of the classroom teacher for the progress of all pupils in his or her class, including those receiving supplementary teaching;

- the role of the resource teacher for Travellers in supporting and consulting classroom teacher colleagues and in providing learning support, in an integrated setting, to those Traveller children with identified supplementary learning needs;

- the opportunities provided in all the subject areas of the curriculum to promote an intercultural approach in the classroom;

- appropriate approaches to the placement and support of the older child with little experience of formal schooling;

- the inclusion of an anti-racist, intercultural statement and strategy in the school plan.

The guidelines also include chapters dealing with Traveller culture, a brief summary of the legislation that most directly affects Travellers and their rights, a detailed chapter on educational profiling, assessment and reporting, and strategies on home-school links. The guidelines conclude with a comprehensive list of resources and useful contact addresses.

1   Travellers and education

1.1   Irish Travellers

Irish Travellers are a distinct minority group in Irish society, yet they are as fully Irish as the majority population. Like any nomadic group, tracing the history of Travellers and their origins is very difficult. Their history is largely unrecorded, but there is evidence that an indigenous nomadic group has existed in Ireland since the sixth century. The present Traveller population is small, numbering about 30,000 people and comprising less than 1% of the total population of this country. A further 1,500 Travellers live in Northern Ireland, and there are Irish Travellers living in Britain, Australia, and the United States.

For Travellers, belonging to a distinct social group means that they (a) have a common ancestry, (b) share fundamental cultural values and traditions, (c) have a language of their own, and (d) are seen by themselves and others as distinct and different.

Common ancestry
A person is born a Traveller, one cannot simply decide to become a Traveller! Generally, Travellers marry within the group, and to be described as a Traveller an individual must have at least one Traveller parent.

Cultural values and traditions
Nomadism has been described as a core value of Traveller culture. This does not necessarily imply the intention to keep travelling but rather as Michael McDonagh, a Navan Traveller, says, "nomadism entails a way of looking at the world, a different way of perceiving things, a different attitude to accommodation, to work and to life in general." Just as settled people remain settled people even when they travel, Travellers

remain Travellers even when they are not travelling. Maintaining family ties and linking with the extended family are central to the Traveller way of life, and their lives are organised around this. The Traveller's very identity requires "keeping in touch," and this in turn requires travel.

Traveller culture also includes a tradition of self-employment, occupational flexibility, and economic adaptation. A strong faith and distinctive customs around death and marriage are an important part of Traveller life. There has been an oral transmission of culture from generation to generation, and Travellers have also played a significant role as bearers of the wider culture. Travellers' story-telling, singing and music tradition are distinctive and worthy of note.

Language
Travellers have a language of their own. The academic name for the language is Shelta; Travellers call it Gammon or Cant. This language is known not only to Irish Travellers born here and in Britain but also by the descendants of Irish Travellers who emigrated to America before the Great Famine.

Distinct and different
Because of Travellers' common ancestry, cultural values, and other aspects of their life-style, Travellers are seen by themselves and others as distinct and different. Like Travellers and Gypsies all over the world, their relationship with settled society shows a pattern of discrimination and exclusion.

1.2   Traveller organisations
There has been a significant growth in the number of Traveller organisations over the past decade. Within these organisations there has been an important shift in emphasis from a welfare approach inspired by

charity to a rights-based approach inspired by a partnership process, in working to improve the life circumstances of Travellers. An ever-increasing number of Travellers are actively participating in local and national groups. In some instances the membership is made up solely of Travellers; in other groups Travellers and non-Travellers work together as equal partners. Information regarding the main Traveller organisations is given in Appendix 2 of these guidelines.

1.3   Traveller accommodation

In 1998 a survey of Traveller accommodation carried out by the Department of the Environment indicated that 24% of Travellers (approximately 1,000 families) were living in unserviced sites or by the side of the road. Unserviced sites lack basic requirements, such as regular refuse collection, running water, toilets, and access to electricity. For these 1,000 families, little has changed since an ESRI report in 1986 that concluded: "The circumstances of the Irish Travelling People are intolerable. No humane or decent society, once made aware of such circumstances, could permit them to persist."

In 1995 the report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community recommended that 3,100 units of Traveller-specific accommodation be provided by the year 2000. Traveller-specific accommodation includes serviced halting sites, group housing schemes, and transient sites. The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, places a statutory obligation on local authorities to meet the accommodation needs of Travellers. They are required to implement an accommodation programme that would include this range of accommodation as well as standard local authority housing for Travellers for whom this is their preferred option. The Act required each local authority to have its Traveller accommodation programme agreed by March 2000.

1.4   Traveller health

Research indicates that Travellers are particularly disadvantaged compared with the general population with regard to their health status.

- Travellers' life expectancy is still at levels experienced by the settled population in the 1940s.
- Travellers have more than double the average rate of stillbirths.
- Infant mortality rates are three times higher than the national rate.
- Traveller men live, on average, ten years less than settled men.
- Traveller women live, on average, twelve years less than settled women.

The Travellers' Health Status Study (1987)

1.5   Education

Travellers are relative newcomers to the formal education system, despite the fact that they are an integral part of Irish society with a distinct history and culture to celebrate. Education policy in relation to the education of Traveller children has developed considerably over the last thirty-five years. The perception of Travellers as deprived, disadvantaged and in need of assimilation into a dominant culture is recognised as inappropriate. The policy of the Department of Education and Science emphasises that Traveller culture and traditions must be acknowledged and reflected in the educational system.

1.6   Stages in policy development for Traveller education

Report of the Commission on Itinerancy, 1963
This report stated that only 114 Traveller children of school-going age were attending school regularly.

Committee Report: Educational Facilities for the Children of Itinerants, 1970

This report informed educational provision for Travellers for the following fifteen to twenty years. It recommended that special educational provision be made for Traveller children at primary level. Five special schools were established, and mainstream schools were encouraged to set up special classes. Junior Training Centres were established to cater for children over twelve years of age and were funded by the Department of Education. During this period Traveller pre-schools were set up by voluntary agencies and grant-aided by the Department.

Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers, 1980

The first visiting teacher was appointed in Galway in 1980 as a pilot project to encourage greater participation by Traveller children in school.

Survey by Primary School Inspectorate of Traveller Participation in Education, 1988

This survey indicated that the number of Traveller children attending primary school had increased to 4,200, with approximately 30% of Traveller children being taught in segregated Traveller-only classes.

National Education Officer for Travellers, 1992

This post was established to develop, promote and facilitate the education of Traveller children nationally and to advise the Department of Education and Science on particular needs in this area.

Report of the Special Education Review Committee, 1993

This report stated that *"schools should adopt an inclusive, intercultural approach to curriculum development so as to ensure that their School Plan, class programme and teaching materials reflect a positive attitude towards the special customs, traditions and lifestyle of minority groups, including the children of Travellers."*

Intercultural Education - Irish Perspectives, 1994
This was Ireland's first international conference on the theme of intercultural education. It was one of many intercultural projects supported by the European Commission in which Ireland participated.

The Education of Traveller Children in National Schools: Guidelines, 1994
These guidelines, providing information to schools on Traveller education, were distributed to all primary schools.

White Paper: Charting our Education Future, 1995
This policy document acknowledged Travellers as a community whose culture has deep historical roots within Irish society and which has a right to participate fully in the educational system and to have its traditions respected.

Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community, 1995
In 1993 the Government established a task force to report and to make recommendations on a wide range of issues affecting Travellers, including accommodation, health, education, employment, culture, and anti-discrimination.

The Co-ordinating Committee for Traveller Education, 1997
This committee includes representatives from all sections of the Department of Education and Science and co-ordinates the continuing development of educational provision for Travellers.

The Advisory Committee on Traveller Education, 1998
This committee comprises representatives of the Department of Education and Science and the other partners in education, including Traveller representatives. It advises the Minister on the provision of education services to members of the Traveller community.

1.7 Current educational provision

The Department of Education and Science at present supports the provision of the following:

Resource allocation (September 2001)	Numbers
Traveller pre-schools	51
Resource teachers for Travellers	476
Special schools for Travellers	3
Junior Education Centres	6
Second-level schools in receipt of extra teaching hours	130
Senior Training Centres	28
Visiting Teacher Service	40
National Education Officer for Travellers	1

An enhanced capitation grant is paid in respect of Travellers in both primary and second-level schools. In addition, grant-aided school transport is provided where necessary.

2 Policy framework for Traveller education

2.1 Education Act, 1998

The Education Act, 1998 was signed into law on 23 December 1998. The Act sets out "to make provision in the interests of the common good for the education of every person in the State, … to ensure that the education system is accountable to students, their parents and the State... [and that the education system] respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society...".

This landmark legislation gives, for the first time in the history of the State, statutory rights to parents in relation to their children's school and schooling and legally obliges schools to provide for a diversity of needs, values, and traditions.

In addition to the preamble (quoted above), sections of the Act particularly relevant to the education of Travellers include the following:

Education Act, part 1: Preliminary and general
- Objects of the Act: "to promote equality of access to and participation in education ..." (section 6(c)) and "to promote the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice ..." (section 6(e)).
- Functions of the Minister: "to ensure that ... there is made available to each person resident in the State, including a person with a disability or who has other special educational needs, support services and a level and quality of education appropriate to meeting the needs and abilities of that person" (section 7(a)).

Education Act, part 2: Functions of a school
- "to ensure that the educational needs of all students, including those with a disability or other special educational needs, are identified and provided for" (section 9(a)).
- "to ensure that parents of a student ... have access in the prescribed manner to records kept by that school relating to the progress of that student in his or her education" (section 9(g)).
- "to establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school" (section 9(m)). Section 15(d) requires that this and other policies be published.

Education Act, part 3: The Inspectorate
- Section 13 deals with the functions of the Inspectorate. Several of the sub-sections require that the inspector "reports to," "advises," "consults" or works "in collaboration with" parents and parents' associations on a variety of matters.

Education Act, part 4: Boards of management
- Functions of a board: "...in carrying out its functions the board shall ... have regard to the principles and requirements of a democratic society and have respect and promote respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society" (section 14(e)).
- The school plan: "the school plan shall state the objectives of the school relating to equality of access to and participation in the school and the measures which the school proposes to take to achieve those objectives including equality of access to and participation in the school by students with disabilities or who have other special educational needs" (section 21(2)). Section 21(4) requires that the board make arrangements for the circulation of the school plan to parents and other named parties.

Education Act, part 5: The principal and teachers

• The principal and teachers shall "regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents" (section(22)(2)(b)) and "collectively promote co-operation between the school and the community which it serves" (section 22(2)(c)).

Education Act, part 6: Miscellaneous

• Appeals to the Secretary-General: "Where a board or a person acting on behalf of the board (a) permanently excludes a student from a school, or (b) suspends a student from attendance ... or (c) refuses to enrol a student in a school, ...the parent may, ...following the conclusion of any appeal procedures in accordance with *section 28*,… appeal that decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science..." (section 28(1)).

• Educational disadvantage: "...means the impediments to education arising from social or economic disadvantage which prevent students deriving appropriate benefit from education in schools" (section 32(9)).

2.2   Education (Welfare) Act, 2000

This Act replaces the School Attendance Acts, 1926 to 1967. The underlying principle of the Act is the development of an integrated, partnership approach to policy in the areas of disadvantage, non-attendance, and early school-leaving.

The role of the Garda Síochána in enforcing the 1926 Act is replaced by a single nationwide authority called the National Educational Welfare Board. This board will appoint educational welfare officers to implement the new legislation.

Under the terms of the Act, the school-leaving age is raised to sixteen or

the completion of three years' second-level education, whichever is later. Part 1, section 1 (3) of the Act states: "This Act shall, in so far as it is not in operation, come into operation 2 years after the date of its passing." This means that all the provisions of the Act will be in force not later than 5 July 2002.

2.3   Employment Equality Act, 1998 and Equal Status Act, 2000

The Equality Authority is an independent body set up under the Employment Equality Act, 1998. It was established on 18th October 1999. The Equality Authority replaced the Employment Equality Agency, and has a greatly expanded role and functions. The Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000 outlaw discrimination in employment, vocational training, advertising, collective agreements, the provision of goods and services and other opportunities to which the public generally have access on nine distinct grounds:

- gender
- marital status
- family status
- age
- disability
- race
- sexual orientation
- religious belief
- membership of the Traveller community.

Discrimination is described in the Act as the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated on any of the above grounds.

2.4   Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995)

The recommendations of this report have been endorsed by all the major political parties in the State and inform Government policy. The recommendations have also been written into the programme for Government and national agreements.

Section F of the report deals with education and training under the heading "General Principles and Broad Objectives for Traveller Education". It states:

> "The Task Force believes that the following fundamental principles and broad objectives should underlie and be applied in the development and provision of education services at all levels (pre-school, primary, second level, third level and adult) to Travellers:
>
> – Equality of opportunity must exist so as to ensure that Travellers shall have access to all forms of education.
>
> – The principle of anti-discrimination should inform all education provision.
>
> – Acknowledgement of, and respect for, cultural diversity and multi-ethnicity should inform all education provision.
>
> – The principle of affirmative action should be applied to Travellers in education.
>
> – Rule 10 of the Rules for National Schools, which states that "no child may be refused admission to a national school on account of the social position of its parents, nor may any pupil be kept apart from the other pupils on the grounds of social distinction," should be applied to all schools, at primary and secondary levels.
>
> – There should be full parental involvement in decision making and in the development of education provision for their children and the principle of integration should be applied."
>
> Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995)

3   Traveller education provision

3.1   Introduction

The Department of Education and Science provides dedicated support for Traveller children at pre-school, primary and second level. This support includes resource teachers for Travellers, the Visiting Teacher Service, the National Education Officer, enhanced capitation grants, and the provision of transport.

3.2   The resource teacher for Travellers, learning support, and Traveller children

The class teacher has the primary responsibility for the educational development of all children in his or her class, including Traveller children. The central role of the resource teacher for Travellers (RTT) is to support and optimise teaching and learning opportunities for Traveller children and to provide learning support to those Traveller children with identified supplementary learning needs. It is very important to note that an essential element of successful learning-support intervention is a very high level of consultation and co-operation between the RTT and the class teacher, The Department of Education and Science Learning-Support Guidelines (2000) provide an excellent framework for the planning and provision of supplementary teaching.

The main principles in the guidelines are:

- *a whole-school approach to learning support:* The class teacher is recognised as having "the primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his or her class(es) including those selected for supplementary teaching".
- *a collaborative and consultative approach:* This will involve the class teacher, the learning-support teacher, the resource teacher for

Travellers, parents, the principal, and pupils themselves. Other professionals, for example speech and language therapists and psychologists, may also provide valuable expertise. Such a partnership approach is recommended in the assessment, programme planning and implementation, record-keeping and programme review stages of learning-support provision.

- *the prevention of failure and the provision of intensive early intervention:* With regard to the prevention of failure, intensive programmes aimed at children from junior infants to second class are advised. With regard to early intervention, programmes for children from senior infants to second class are recommended.

Considerable emphasis is placed on the central importance of appropriate classroom-based intervention. The provision of supplementary teaching by the learning-support teacher to pupils in their own classroom should always be seriously considered as an alternative to the withdrawal of pupils from their classroom. Traveller pupils, like any others, have their right of access to the full curriculum. Therefore, they should not miss out on the same curricular area each time they receive supplementary teaching.

The Learning-Support Guidelines (pages 95–101) provide suggested formats for the compiling of individual profile and learning programmes and for weekly planning and progress records. However, teachers may choose to use alternatives that suit their own particular needs.

Some Traveller children may continue to need supplementary teaching support throughout their primary school years. The provision of learning support for them, as for any other child, needs to be reviewed and monitored regularly by the resource teacher for Travellers or learning-support teacher, in consultation with the class teacher, principal, parents and school inspector. The fact that a Traveller child is attending a school where a resource teacher for Travellers is working does not preclude the Traveller child from receiving the services of the learning-support teacher

who is working in the same school.

Parents, through their unique knowledge of their own child, have much to contribute to their child's learning programmes. International research has demonstrated the positive influence that the involvement and participation of parents can have on children's learning and general progress in school. This influence has been shown to be powerful and lasting. Such collaboration and sharing of information with Traveller parents is strongly advised.

Application for a resource teacher for Travellers (Circular 7/99)
In 1999 the Department of Education and Science introduced new procedures for appointing resource teachers for Travellers (RTT).

The Department's policy in relation to the education of Traveller children is that they should be taught in an integrated setting. The RTT post is allocated on the grounds that the Traveller children are taught within their classrooms. The RTT works in partnership with the teacher in the child's own classroom, or, where necessary, the child is withdrawn for additional support.

Procedures for the appointment of an RTT are detailed in Circular 7/99. (See Appendix 3)

3.3   Capitation grants paid in respect of Traveller children

Where a school has been allocated a resource teacher for Travellers an enhanced level of capitation grant is payable in respect of each Traveller child.

It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure that this enhanced capitation grant is spent in accordance with the purpose for which it was granted. The standard capitation grant equivalent is spent

on the day-to-day running costs of the school. The remainder is allocated to resourcing Traveller education in the school, for example books, materials, teaching aids, and equipment.

3.4   The Visiting Teacher Service

The Visiting Teacher Service for Traveller education was set up in 1980 and the Department of Education and Science now employs forty visiting teachers throughout the country. The service seeks to provide opportunities for Traveller parents, their children and schools to engage in a process of development that maximises participation and attainment levels and promotes an intercultural education for all.

The aim of the Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers is that Traveller children should participate fully in an intercultural education system. The day-to-day work of the Visiting Teacher Service includes the following:

- **Liaison with families**
  The visiting teacher (VT) makes and maintains links with Traveller families in a designated area, advising them on educational provision and supporting them in all aspects of the educational development of their children. In working towards promoting mutual understanding, the VT builds bridges between the culture of the home and the culture of the school.

- **Liaison with schools and boards of management**
  The VT visits schools in an area, advising and supporting the teachers, parents and management in the provision of quality education for Traveller pupils.

- **Liaison with the Department of Education and Science**
  The VT works with the Inspectorate in implementing Department policy in relation to Traveller education. The VT also communicates regularly with the Department's administrative staff and with its National

Education Officer for Travellers in relation to Traveller education. The Visiting Teacher Service is also involved in the design, development and provision of professional development courses for teachers and parents.

The Visiting Teacher Service has a continuing role in the collection of data that is used to inform policy development and the Department's future educational provision for Travellers.

- **Liaison with other agencies**
  The VT facilitates an inter-agency approach to Traveller education, working closely with existing statutory and voluntary services to provide the maximum support for the families of school-going children.

3.5   The National Education Officer for Travellers

The work of the National Education Officer for Travellers includes the following:

- promoting and facilitating the education of Traveller children nationally
- working in liaison with the Inspectorate and in particular with the inspectors who are managers of the visiting teacher service
- maintaining a close working relationship with members of the Visiting Teacher Service and with the administrative staff in the Department of Education and Science
- proposing innovations in Traveller education and curriculum development in consultation with the Inspectorate, and advising the Department on particular needs in this area
- meeting and consulting Travellers and Traveller organisations
- seeking ways to involve Traveller parents in the education process
- consulting the relevant authorities on matters pertaining to pre-service and in-service training for teachers.

3.6   Transport

Where it is considered necessary, the Department of Education and Science provides grants of 98% of school transport costs. This service is managed by a variety of voluntary and other agencies.

3.7   Pre-school education

There are at present fifty-one Traveller pre-schools. In many instances these are located on Traveller halting sites. The Department of Education and Science provides an annual equipment grant for each pre-school and defrays 98% of the costs relating to tuition and transport. Traveller children also attend Early Start and local community pre-schools.

4 School planning and Traveller education

4.1 Introduction

School planning is a collaborative process that involves the identification of school development goals and teaching and learning priorities. The school development process aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all children through the successful management of innovation and change in the school. Within this process the distinctive nature and character of each school is recognised, and development goals are identified in the context of the school's unique strengths and capacities. A collaborative approach to planning ensures that all the expertise of the principal and teachers can be drawn upon in the development of a framework for action that will enhance the educational experience of every pupil.

The involvement of parents, the board of management and the wider school community in the planning process is also an important feature of collaborative school planning. The Education Act, 1998, defines the responsibilities of patrons, boards of management, school principals and teachers in the management and provision of the education service and requires that schools draw up plans for their continuing operation and development.

School development planning models provide schools with a strategic framework for addressing a wide range of organisational and curricular issues. Many of the specific development tasks and projects that a school undertakes will aim to enhance the learning experiences of all pupils, including those who are Travellers. For example, an initiative throughout the school dealing with problem-solving in mathematics would endeavour to meet the needs of all pupils in a general way and also provide

differentiated support for any pupil in the school with a particular individual need.

In addition to the school's general development activities, it is also important that the school planning mechanism be used in a focused way to ensure optimal educational experiences for Traveller children. The development of a coherent whole-school approach in the education of Travellers will, therefore, involve specific initiatives that aim to enhance the school's provision for Traveller pupils. The content of these Guidelines on Traveller Education will provide schools with useful resource material for planning in this important aspect of educational provision.

4.2　Support for school planning

Developing a School Plan: Guidelines for Primary Schools, published by the Department of Education and Science in 1999, provides schools with extensive guidance on the school planning process. The guidelines set out fundamental principles of school planning and present useful starting points for the development of a school plan. The importance of planning for action in the classroom is emphasised, and strategies for implementing specific development projects are outlined. The appendix includes useful planning tools and guidance on facilitating collaborative planning work.

The Primary School Curriculum is another important school planning reference. The introduction document, and the teacher guidelines for each subject, provide detailed support for programme planning and curriculum implementation. The documents also include a wide range of lesson exemplars that illustrate important approaches and methodologies. An important feature of the curriculum is the extensive planning support for the implementation of a coherent assessment policy in the primary classroom.

The Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) also provides support for schools engaging in collaborative planning. The curriculum in-service programme emphasises the importance of a process of review, implementation and evaluation and encourages schools to adopt a whole-school approach in the implementation of the curriculum.

The School Development Planning Support (SDPS) service is a national support agency that supports the adoption of whole-school planning approaches in schools. The initiative involves a phased programme of seminars and school-based workshop activities. This programme aims to build on the capacities of schools to engage in self-evaluation activities and to undertake specific development initiatives in a professional environment that is positive and supportive.

4.3   School development planning: process and product

The distinctive feature of a school development plan is that it brings together in an overall plan, national policies and initiatives, the school's aims and values, its existing achievements, and its development needs. By co-ordinating aspects of planning, the school acquires a shared sense of direction in promoting the best possible education for its children. In a development plan, priorities for development are selected, planned in detail, and supported by action plans and working documents.

School development planning, however, is more than just producing a written plan. It is the process of creating the plan in consultation with all the stakeholders and then ensuring that it is put into effect. The process involves reaching agreement on a sensible set of priorities for the school and taking action to realise the plan.

The guidelines on school planning *Developing a School Plan* suggest a school planning model that involves four main stages. The content below has been adapted from the guidelines document.

Stage 1   Review of current practice and provision
The review stage involves gathering information, views and opinions on a wide range of issues relating to school life. Discussion of the school's aims and objectives is of central importance in the initial stages of planning. The review of aims and objectives can generate a shared sense of purpose and vision among the school community and can ensure a continuing commitment to achieving the school's fundamental purposes. The school's priorities, strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities are identified in the context of meeting the needs of pupils.

Stage 2   Design of plan
Through a collaborative process, the school's specific priorities for development are selected and framed as realistic and manageable development targets. This stage of the process involves building a common understanding in relation to long-term and short-term priorities, the selection of attainable goals, and the establishment of an appropriate time frame. During this planning stage specific steps or tasks are set out, and the resource requirements are identified. The allocation of responsibilities and leadership roles for specific tasks is an important aspect of planning at this stage, and consideration is also given to methods of evaluating the development work and to procedures for reporting.

Stage 3   Programme of implementation
Implementation is the important action stage of the planning process. Those with leadership responsibilities have an important role in creating a climate of collegial support for teachers involved in the implementation of a particular initiative at classroom level. Review meetings of staff or cluster groups are useful in providing peer support and advice at this stage.

Stage 4   Evaluation
Evaluation of the progress towards meeting the goals and targets set out in the school plan is an integral part of the planning process. It takes account of the experience of all those involved in the tasks undertaken. When it is agreed that the particular goals have been met, it is then possible to move on to review other school priorities and thus continue the cyclical process. Where goals have not been fully achieved, the school planning process facilitates the identification of barriers or impediments to development. Revised goals and alternative development strategies may then be adopted, as appropriate. This evaluation stage is an invaluable learning and mutually supportive exercise for all involved in the school planning process.

School development planning: a continuous process
Effective school planning involves continuous review, design, implementation, and evaluation. This is a cyclical process in which policy and plans evolve from the ever-changing and developing needs of the school community. A continuous collaborative and consultative process of school planning can ensure the continuing enhancement of the education provided for all pupils in the school.

4.4   The benefits of school development planning
- Priorities are clarified and there is a greater awareness of purpose.
- It is an effective means of incorporating national, local and school priorities in the work of each individual school.
- There is an increased commitment to and ownership of school policy.
- It helps to improve communication and develop an atmosphere of openness.
- It brings about steady incremental improvement.
- It helps to identify the professional development needs of teachers.
- It overcomes the isolation of the classroom and helps to develop collegiality.

- It provides clarity of roles for all.
- It provides support for and recognition of effective practice.
- It facilitates the induction of new staff.
- It provides a clear reference point during the process of review, monitoring, and evaluation.
- It increases the feeling of being in control of events rather than being controlled by them.

4.5   School planning and educational provision for Traveller pupils

It is important to ensure that Travellers are positively and actively included in all the essential aspects of the school plan. In reviewing the school's provision for Traveller education it is useful to look at four elements of the school's development planning, each of which has a bearing on the educational experiences of Traveller pupils in the school.

- school mission statement and characteristic spirit of the school
- school policies in relation to school management and organisation
- the school's curriculum and assessment programme
- specific policies and practice in relation to Traveller pupils.

School mission statement and characteristic spirit of the school
The fundamental purpose of the school development plan is to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all the children in the school. The school's mission statement will reflect the ethos of the school community and encapsulate the aspirations, expectations and traditions of the school. In formulating the school's philosophy and in reflecting on its own ethos, the school community will build a shared vision of how the school can help each child towards achieving his or her full potential. A school philosophy that accommodates principles of equality, diversity and the promotion of a positive self-concept for each individual is likely to ensure a supportive environment in which the particular educational needs of Travellers may be met.

School policies in relation to school management and organisation

The school planning process facilitates the formulation of basic policies in relation to important routines and procedures of daily school organisation and management. Consistency in the implementation of agreed policies greatly assists in the effective running of the school. The school plan should incorporate a coherent set of general policies that reflect the particular situation in which the school operates. This would include policies on enrolment, the organisation of pupils, provision for special needs, safety procedures, codes of behaviour and discipline, home-school partnership, the allocation of specialist resources, and the special responsibilities of the staff of the school.

All schools are required under the Education Act to ensure that the school plan supports principles of equality of access and participation. These principles should be reflected in the school's general organisational policies and the school plan should formally set out the measures the school proposes to take to achieve these objectives. It is essential, therefore, that the school's general organisational policies are supportive of the particular educational needs of Travellers. With regard to equal opportunity it may be appropriate for certain general policies to make specific reference to provision for Travellers in order to ensure an inclusive school environment for all pupils.

The school's curriculum and assessment programme

The school's policy in relation to curriculum and assessment will be guided by the educational aims and objectives of the school and should encompass all the learning experiences, both formal and informal, that are provided for pupils as they progress through the school. The policy is informed by the core principles of the Primary School Curriculum, which underline the importance of developing each child's potential and of making provision for individual differences.

The school's broad curriculum programme should be sufficiently comprehensive and flexible to ensure that the needs of all pupils,

including Travellers, are properly catered for. Collaborative planning in relation to the intercultural dimension in the curriculum will be an essential feature of the planning process and will enhance the educational experience of every pupil. The integration of intercultural themes in the school's curriculum programme provides opportunities for pupils to appreciate the richness and diversity of society and to recognise and to challenge prejudice and discrimination.

Specific policies and practice in relation to Traveller pupils
These Guidelines on Traveller Education emphasise a range of specific issues that directly affect the educational experiences of Traveller children. These include:

- the Education Act, 1998
- the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- the Equal Status Act, 2000
- school enrolment and admissions policy
- intercultural approaches in the curriculum
- equality of access and participation
- school policy on assessment
- provision of supplementary teaching
- policy on recording and reporting
- Traveller pupils with special needs
- role of the classroom teacher
- transfer of pupils to other schools
- role of the resource teacher for Travellers
- contact with second-level schools
- role of the visiting teacher
- age-appropriate placement
- grants for the education of Travellers
- involvement of Traveller parents in the school and home-school liaison
- resources for learning and teaching
- liaison with outside agencies.

It may be appropriate for a school to adopt some of these issues as areas of particular emphasis in the development of a coherent school policy for Traveller education. A review process that looks at the school's provision in the light of these issues will enable the school community to establish clear development priorities and to undertake specific action planning activities that will enhance the educational provision for Traveller children.

4.6   Co-ordination of educational provision for Traveller pupils

The organisation of educational provision for Traveller pupils requires careful planning. The school principal, mainstream class teachers, the learning-support teacher and the resource teacher for Travellers may all have a role in providing for the children's educational needs. Other school-based resource staff may also be involved, and there is likely to be continuing contact with the Visiting Teacher Service and with outside support agencies. Regular liaison with parents will also be essential.

Providing Traveller children with high-quality learning experiences appropriate to their needs and interests requires a team approach in which all those involved share common goals. Individual roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined, and collaborative working strategies must be developed. The school's collaborative planning mechanism will be an essential support to all those involved and will help to establish and maintain the high levels of communication and co-ordination that are required.

5 Intercultural education in the primary school curriculum

5.1 An intercultural approach

An intercultural approach is important within the curriculum in order to help pupils to develop the ability to recognise inequality, injustice, racism, prejudice and bias and to equip them to challenge and try to change these manifestations when they encounter them. Young people should be enabled to appreciate the richness of a diversity of cultures and be supported in practical ways to recognise and to challenge prejudice and discrimination where they exist.

Aims of intercultural education
The aims of intercultural education include the following:

- to foster conditions conducive to pluralism in society
- to raise pupils' awareness of their own culture and to attune them to the fact that there are other ways of behaving and other value systems
- to develop respect for life-styles different from their own so that pupils can understand and appreciate each other
- to foster a commitment to equality
- to enable pupils to make informed choices about, and to take action on, issues of prejudice and discrimination
- to appreciate and value similarities and differences
- to enable all pupils to speak for themselves and to articulate their cultures and histories.

The intercultural approach should begin in the primary school and continue in an age-appropriate manner throughout the child's time in

school. It is concerned with the development of skills, attitudes, values and understandings and is reinforced and supported by the school climate and atmosphere.

Development of skills

The effective implementation of an intercultural approach requires the development of the following skills:

- communication skills: listening, asking questions, expressing one's own point of view without hurting others
- critical thinking skills: learning to see bias, determining hidden messages, recognising injustice and occasions of prejudice, developing clarity of thinking, challenging one's own and others' thoughts and opinions
- personal skills: assertiveness, self-confidence, expressing personal opinions, learning to forgive, to apologise and to say sorry, dealing with conflict
- decision-making skills: examining options and the consequences of particular behaviour and actions, taking action
- group skills: taking a leadership role, taking turns in speaking and listening, learning to compromise, learning to empathise, co-operating.

Attitudes and values

An intercultural approach helps to foster the following attitudes and values:

- appreciating the dignity of every human being
- having a positive attitude towards oneself and others
- valuing the sharing of power
- fostering equality in all aspects of life
- promoting justice in one's actions
- valuing reciprocity

- valuing artistic and intellectual freedom
- respecting difference and valuing diversity
- respecting democracy and having a willingness to participate
- having a sense of self-esteem and being able to promote the esteem of others
- valuing change
- having a sense of openness
- having a belief in taking positive action
- having a sense of personal and shared responsibility.

Development of relevant knowledge
An intercultural approach facilitates the development of relevant knowledge, for example:

- knowing one's rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of others
- understanding what it means to live in a democratic society and how to take part
- knowing one's own culture, language, and customs
- learning about the language, customs and cultural practices of others in one's own society and in other societies
- knowing the rights of the individual
- understanding and exploring concepts of justice, discord, harmony, injustice, peace, racism, interdependence, stereotyping, and culture
- knowing that opinions change as new information is assimilated
- learning about one's own talents and abilities and the talents and abilities of others.

5.2   A whole-school approach to intercultural education

The issue of pluralism was one of the main considerations taken into account in the revision of the curriculum.

> "The curriculum has a particular responsibility in promoting tolerance and respect for diversity in both the school and the community. Children come from a diversity of cultural, religious, social, environmental and ethnic backgrounds, and these engender their own beliefs, values and aspirations. The curriculum acknowledges the centrality of the Christian heritage and tradition in the Irish experience and the Christian identity shared by the majority of Irish people. It equally recognises the diversity of beliefs, values and aspirations of all religious and cultural groups in society."
> *(Primary School Curriculum, chapter 3, Key Issues in Primary Education.)*

The following sections may help guide staff discussion on interculturalism and facilitate the development of a shared understanding of interculturalism in the school:

The culture and ethos of the school
A school staff may wish to consider the culture and ethos of their school and how it responds to the needs of minority children, including Travellers, by:

- examining how the policies of the school reflect an inclusive approach, for example the code of behaviour, school rules and regulations, parental involvement, extracurricular activities, and the language in the school
- fostering a culture of respect for pupils both as individuals and as members of a particular community

- giving pupils a sense of belonging to the class, school and community and involving them in creating a caring and positive atmosphere around the school
- ensuring that the school's anti-bullying policy includes explicit anti-racist strategies
- challenging stereotypical views and fostering positive links with all pupils in the school
- providing appropriate in-service training for the staff that incorporates an intercultural anti-discrimination approach
- developing a school charter that celebrates diversity.

The curriculum

With regard to Traveller education it is crucial that there is a team approach rather than one directed at individual subjects. The starting point for any school in adopting an intercultural approach is to establish basic principles that will apply to every area of the organisation, the curriculum, and the life of the school. This does not require the addition of another subject area rather it means that an intercultural perspective should underpin all school activity and inform the concerns of the school. To achieve this whole-school approach, the staff should consider:

- ensuring that the culture of the Travelling community is acknowledged and celebrated by all pupils in the school
- displaying posters and artwork in the corridors and classrooms that reflect the diversity of the school population
- ensuring that textbooks and materials are free of bias and using materials and books that reflect Traveller culture
- including active approaches and opportunities for collaborative learning in the teaching methodologies employed
- implementing a curriculum that is relevant to the different groups in the school and that is centred on the child

- ensuring that there is no segregation of pupils because of actual or imagined difference
- fostering the principles of justice, equality and freedom of expression in all everyday dealings.

The involvement of parents and the wider community

Parental involvement is crucial to a child's success in school. For many reasons Traveller parents may feel reluctant about approaching their child's school. To improve school contact with parents the school staff might consider the following:

- developing strategies to involve the wider community in an intercultural approach
- establishing parent-teacher contact that offers opportunities to discuss and understand each other's points of view
- addressing parental fears and concerns about the perceived erosion of Traveller culture and identity through the education system.

Methodology

Central to a meaningful intercultural approach in school is the use of active learning methodologies. Active learning affords opportunities for children to question, to examine, to be critical, to work in small groups, to listen to the opinions of others, to share ideas, and to identify solutions. As they engage in these processes they can learn to recognise inequality and prejudice and to be able to effect change if required. Children need to take responsibility for their own learning, to internalise what they have learnt and to be able to transfer the learning in school to other situations that they will encounter. Adopting a content approach to intercultural education is ineffective. Children need to engage with intercultural issues in a way that will ensure their ability to challenge injustice in its many guises, at all stages of their lives.

5.3 Intercultural approaches and the curriculum

The content of the Primary School Curriculum is divided into seven curriculum areas

- Language (Gaeilge and English)
- Mathematics
- Social, environmental and scientific education (history, geography, science)
- Arts education (visual arts, music, drama)
- Physical education
- Social, personal and health education
- Religious education.

All the subject areas provide opportunities to promote an intercultural approach in the classroom and to make a unique contribution to the intercultural approach. The following sections deal with oral language, history and SPHE and illustrate how intercultural themes can be addressed through the curriculum. A "spiral" approach is recommended, whereby topics and issues are revisited at regular intervals in a manner appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child.

5.4 Language

Language is a powerful tool and is a particularly defining feature of one's culture and national background. While it has a vital role to play in children's learning, it can also be the area that poses greatest difficulty with regard to educational attainment. Children from varied cultural backgrounds do not always share the vocabulary used in school and may not have been exposed to a variety of books in their homes. Their language can be the feature that distinguishes them most from their peers. It can be a source of embarrassment and can be used by those in the majority as an opportunity to insult, demean or belittle. Moreover, the language of the school can be alien to many children, and the topics of discussion can be far removed from their realm of experience. The child

should not be expected to discard the language and culture of the home when he or she goes to school, and the curriculum should reflect this.

The curriculum acknowledges the centrality of language in the teaching and learning process. It provides an effective framework for developing an intercultural approach to language teaching. The emphasis on talk and discussion in all subject areas facilitates the exploration of ideas, emotions and reactions through increasingly complex language, thus deepening the child's experience and understanding of the world. Fostering such competence and confidence in using language can improve children's skills of communication. They can learn to clarify and interpret experiences, to acquire new concepts, and to add depth to concepts already grasped.

The language curriculum can provide opportunities for children to learn about the richness of other languages, to explore various means of expression, and to develop a range of ways of communicating. It can help them to understand their own way of life and develop their own sense of pride and belonging. Through the language programme outlined children can learn to participate in a discussion, clarify their own opinions, and learn to listen to the opinions and views of others. In this way they are given the opportunity to challenge their own opinions, to see the world from other viewpoints, and to explore concepts such as justice, peace, equality, and discrimination. The ability to effectively communicate is a necessity for achieving equality and for counteracting situations of intolerance.

Language: English – an intercultural approach

The following framework illustrates how an intercultural approach could be used in the oral language programme from infants to second class.

Language: English Content for infant classes	
Content objectives	**Intercultural approach**
Oral language: developing receptiveness to oral language	
The child should be enabled to • listen to a story or description and respond to it.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *stories reflecting the range of traditions and cultures.*
Oral language: developing competence and confidence in using oral language	
The child should be enabled to • talk about past, present and future experiences and plan, predict and speculate about future and imaginary experiences • initiate and sustain a conversation on a particular topic.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *opportunities for children to talk about their own experiences; validating individual experiences.*
Oral language: developing cognitive abilities through oral language	
The child should be enabled to • ask questions in order to satisfy curiosity about the world.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *opportunities for listening, taking turns, and engaging with others.*

Language: English	
Content for first and second classes	
Content objectives	**Intercultural approach**
Oral language: developing receptiveness to oral language	
The child should be enabled to • listen to stories, descriptions, instructions and directions and respond to them • listen to sounds and respond to them • use gesture and movement to extend the meaning of what he or she is saying.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *listening to stories from a variety of cultural backgrounds* - *using sounds that are familiar to the children* - *exploring with children their own conventions of communication and learning those of others.*
Oral language: developing competence and confidence in using oral language	
The child should be enabled to • talk about and reflect on past and present experiences and plan, predict, anticipate and speculate about future and imaginary experiences • focus on the subject under discussion and sustain a conversation about it • initiate discussions, respond to the initiatives of others, and have practice in taking turns.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *opportunities to validate the experience of each child* - *choosing a range of topics that is relevant to the class group* - *encouraging children to talk and communicate with each other in pairs or small groups* - *children listening to each other, talking about their own experiences, encouraging deeper understanding and clarification.*

Oral language: developing cognitive abilities through oral language	
The child should be enabled to	*An intercultural approach could encompass*
• listen to other children describe experiences and ask questions about their reactions to them • engage in real and imaginary situations involving language use/ *explain, persuade, enquire, report, agree* • become increasingly explicit in relation to people, places, times, processes, and events by adding elaborative detail to what he/she describes and narrates.	- *individual children describing in some detail aspects of their own lives and experiences.*

Oral language: developing emotional and imaginative life through oral language	
The child should be enabled to	*An intercultural approach could encompass*
• express feelings in order to clarify them and explain them to others • re-create stories and poems through improvisational drama • recognise and re-create sounds in the environment.	- *developing a sense of identity.*

5.5 Social, environmental and scientific education: history

"Exploring the lives of people in the past, and especially the causes and effects of their actions, contributes to the child's awareness of human character, motivation, belief and emotion. More immediately it can help

the child to understand more fully the world in which he or she lives."
(Primary School Curriculum, page 6.)

One of the principal aims of an intercultural approach in school is to help children to recognise that there are different ways of viewing the world and that there is more than one valid perspective. History can contribute significantly to achieving this aim by exploring aspects of history in such a way that children "will become aware of the individuals, groups, events, cultures, beliefs and values which have affected the lives of people in the past and shaped contemporary society in Ireland, Europe and the wider world." *(Primary School Curriculum, page 7)* Through a comprehensive history programme in the school, children can learn about other cultures and begin to appreciate the richness that this diversity brings.

The study of the past can also help children to develop a sense of empathy, which is central to an intercultural approach. Empathy is the ability to view situations from another person's point of view. "A sense of empathy is essential if the child is to become critically aware of his or her own attitudes and those of others, and it makes a valuable contribution to the development of mutual respect and understanding." *(Primary School Curriculum, page 9)*

Learning how to gather evidence is very significant for an intercultural approach. Sometimes attitudes are based not on evidence but rather on prejudice, presumption, and hearsay. As the curriculum fosters the skills of working as a historian, the child learns how to gather evidence from both primary and secondary sources. He or she can also begin to understand how the evidence may contradict a long-held belief or idea and therefore to challenge his or her own opinion. In gathering evidence children will also begin to understand bias in opinion and attitude and realise that the way in which the evidence is interpreted can lead to different perspectives and viewpoints.

SESE: history – an intercultural approach

The following framework illustrates how an intercultural approach could be used in the SESE: history programme in third and fourth classes.

SESE: history Content for third and fourth classes	
Content objectives	**Intercultural approach**
Local studies **My family**	
The child should be enabled to • explore aspects of personal family history or the family history of a person known to him or her • collect and use a range of simple historical evidence • examine changes and examples of continuity in the lives of parents and grandparents.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *children talking about their grandparents and their lives, and interests and events in their families* - *gathering examples of oral history, photographs, and family memorabilia* - *opportunities for children to take pride in their own background and tradition and to share it with others.*
Local studies **Homes**	
The child should be enabled to • explore changes which have taken place in the home and other homes in the area.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *giving children opportunities to talk about their homes, collecting and finding old artefacts.*

Local studies	
Feasts and festivals in the past	
The child should be enabled to	*An intercultural approach could encompass*
• become familiar with the origins and traditions associated with some common festivals in Ireland and other countries • explore, discuss, and record some of the ceremonies, stories, legends, poetry, music, dances and games associated with these feasts and festivals.	- encouraging children to explore festivals and celebrations associated with different cultural groups, agricultural practice, etc. - children sharing poetry, stories, games and dances from their own traditions with other children in the class.

Local studies	
My locality through the ages	
The child should be enabled to	*An intercultural approach could encompass*
• collect related local ballads, stories, and traditions.	- completing projects or creating dramas based on the cultural heritage of the children and so developing an appreciation of the different aspects of their own culture and the culture of various national and religious groups.

Story	
Stories from the lives of people in the past	
The child should be enabled to	*An intercultural approach could encompass*
• become aware of the lives of women, men and children from different social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, including the lives of "ordinary" as well as "more famous" people • listen to local people telling stories about their past • express or record stories through oral and written forms, art work, music, drama, mime, movement and information and communication technologies.	- *giving children from different cultures in the class or school the opportunity to tell their own traditional stories, reading stories from a variety of backgrounds to the children, encouraging them to find stories from different cultural and national backgrounds* - *inviting members of different groups in the locality to tell stories from their tradition and heritage to the children* - *encouraging children to create pictures of the stories they have heard and to discuss their representations.*

5.6 Social, personal and health education (SPHE)

The cornerstone of SPHE is the establishment of a foundation of skills, understanding and attitudes that will inform the child's decisions and actions in a range of personal, health and social issues, both immediately and in his or her future life. It is concerned with enabling him or her to develop ways of thinking, feeling and acting that are respectful of their own dignity and that of others. The SPHE curriculum is presented in three strands: *Myself, Myself and others*, and *Myself and the wider world*. The development of a range of personal skills (Myself) such as decision-making, listening, presenting one's own point of view and thinking critically will be central to developing an intercultural perspective. The strand *Myself and others* fosters an understanding of other people and

an appreciation of similarities and differences. It is concerned with helping children to develop healthy supportive relationships based on respect, honesty, and equality. It also includes the development of a range of interpersonal skills, such as dealing with conflict, working in groups, and group decision-making.

The third strand deals with developing citizenship in the widest sense and with enabling the child to take an active part in society and to promote justice, equality, and mutual understanding. A consistent approach by the school to SPHE throughout the child's time in school can help him or her to become more personally and socially responsible and to learn to live and work with others, especially those who may come from different social, cultural, religious or national backgrounds. Together with the other curricular areas it can enable the child to recognise and to counteract bias, prejudice and exclusivity wherever they may be experienced.

At all times SPHE deals with issues in an age-appropriate manner: for example, children's experience of community begins with the sense of the school as a community. In this regard children learn to work together, to celebrate together, and to understand that living in peace and harmony involves achieving a balance between having one's own sense of identity and being able to respect and work with difference. Children can learn that everyone has rights that must be respected, and that these rights are accompanied by various responsibilities. As children learn how to work in this way they will become citizens who value these concepts. The media education aspect of SPHE (linked with the language curriculum) gives children an introduction to the role of the media in supporting or challenging prejudice and discrimination. It can help children to see where attitudes emanate from and the power of various sections of the media when reporting on different groups in society.

Central to the SPHE curriculum is the active engagement of children in the learning process. As they become involved in a range of activities and

are encouraged to question, to analyse and to think critically there is a greater chance that they will come to own the learning for themselves and be able to make informed decisions and choices.

SPHE – an intercultural approach

The following framework illustrates how an intercultural approach could be used in the SPHE programme in fifth and sixth classes.

SPHE Content for fifth and sixth classes	
Content objectives	**Intercultural approach**
Myself **Self-identity**	
The child should be enabled to • recognise and appreciate that each person is a unique individual and that this individuality is expressed in many different ways.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *opportunities for children to listen to and discuss the opinions of others.*
Myself **Making decisions**	
The child should be enabled to • distinguish between assumption, inference, fact, rumour and opinion in making a decision.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *exploring the democratic process in a real way in the classroom.*

| Myself and others | |
My friends and other people	
The child should be enabled to • identify the different groups to which friends can belong and recognise what constitutes a healthy group.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *opportunities for children to explore the role of leadership in the context of catering for the needs of all groups in society* - *opportunities to work in different groups within the classroom and developing strategies for doing this work effectively.*
Myself and others **Relating to others**	
The child should be enabled to • examine the various ways in which language can be used to isolate and discriminate against people.	*An intercultural approach could encompass* - *exploring stereotypes, prejudiced opinions, hearsay and bias regarding different groups in society.*

Myself and the wider world **Developing citizenship:** *Living in the local community*	
The child should be enabled to	*An intercultural approach could encompass*
• explore how inequality might exist in the local community and suggest ways in which this might be addressed.	- helping children to explore and recognise their responsibilities towards other groups in society - identifying examples of inequality in their own area, for example taking an issue and examining it in some detail and making suggestions about how this could be remedied.

Myself and the wider world **National, European and wider communities**	
The child should be enabled to	*An intercultural approach could encompass*
• begin to explore the concept of democracy • recognise and acknowledge the various cultural, religious, ethnic, or other groups that exist in a community or society and explore ways in which these differences can be respected • explore how justice and peace can be promoted between people and groups, both nationally and internationally.	- opportunities to learn how to listen to and accommodate the views of others - opportunities to learn about the different cultural, ethnic, religious and other groups in Ireland and in the wider world - raising children's awareness of justice and peace issues in the world and the importance of individual and group contributions to the process.

5.7 Conclusion

Adopting an intercultural approach in school is a challenge. It demands commitment from all members of the school community and will not be achieved overnight. It demands that the school community is conscious of the intercultural dimensions of all aspects of its work and life and that it seeks to provide an environment in which a climate of inclusiveness is promoted. The Primary School Curriculum provides a framework for adopting an intercultural approach in schools and if supported by an informed philosophy and practice will contribute significantly to promoting justice, equality, and good citizenship.

6   The Traveller child in school

6.1   Experience of formal schooling

Within the Traveller community, experience of formal schooling varies greatly from family to family. An ever-increasing number of Traveller children are regular school attenders, familiar with the school environment, the school system, and how it operates. However, some children and their families have had less experience of school life and may need additional help and support.

Not all Travellers are the same, and not all Traveller children have the same educational needs. In this chapter, some suggestions are offered to help teachers respond in a positive manner to the needs of Traveller children. The Visiting Teacher Service is available to offer advice and support in this regard.

6.2   Traveller identity and the culturally affirmative school

Intercultural education aims to develop understanding among pupils and teachers from different cultural and racial origins. This presents an important challenge for teachers, given the negative attitudes to Travellers and their culture.   Teachers may be uncomfortable about raising the issue of cultural identity in class, and Traveller children themselves, conscious of the negative public image of their culture and life-style, may not wish to be seen as different or have particular attention drawn to them.

Traveller culture and life-style can be acknowledged in the following ways:

- by the school plan having a positive, active policy on the promotion of an inclusive, intercultural ethos in the school, including a strong anti-racist and anti-bullying strategy
- by the staff devising practical ways in which this policy can be implemented
- by parents being welcomed when enrolling their children in a school and by their child being welcomed in the classroom by both teacher and pupils.
- by supporting parents in becoming active partners in their child's education and keeping them informed of their child's progress.

In the classroom the Traveller child can be acknowledged and validated by

- being involved in activities, being listened to and valued, and having a sense of belonging
- reflecting the child's experience in images, materials, and the language of the classroom
- drawing on the personal experiences of the child as a basis on which to develop new learning experiences and skills and reflecting the child's experiences and culture in an integral way in the curriculum
- displaying images of Traveller culture in the entrance area of the school.

In this way, the Traveller pupil adds to the existing diversity of the school, contributes to the learning experiences of all pupils, and leaves school proud of his or her own cultural identity.

6.3   Age-appropriate placement and teaching strategies

Age-appropriate class placement is an integral element of the Department's policy on Traveller education. Not only is it important for the Traveller child's self-esteem that he or she be placed in a class with children of his or her own age but age-inappropriate placement militates strongly against transfer to second-level education. Traveller pupils should transfer from primary school at the same age as their non-Traveller peers, i.e. at twelve years of age, so that they can experience a minimum of three years at second level before reaching the minimum school-leaving age.

For the interrupted learner or the child who has had only intermittent schooling and whose attainment levels are not that of his or her age cohort, the class teacher will need to consider alternative strategies to enable the child to fully participate in the work of the class. The child needs to be involved as much as possible in all activities. The older beginner reader can take part in and contribute to many subjects by using methods that rely on speaking and listening, including verbal presentations, discussions, taping stories, and help from peers and teachers with written instructions. Peer tutoring has been shown to be effective in increasing retention of learning for both parties. In conjunction with the learning-support teacher or RTT, an appropriate programme of work can be devised. For older children, the motivation to learn to read may be the most important consideration. The language experience approach, where children learn to read by using their own writings about their own interests, can be very effective. This approach allows early reading activities to blend in more easily with what the rest of the class is doing.

6.4   In the playground

Teachers have noted that some Traveller children tend to cluster together in small groups in the yard and not play with other children.   For children who are new to a school, this tends to be for reassurance and support. In the life of a Traveller everything revolves around the family and the

larger extended family. The Traveller children have shared similar backgrounds and experiences, and so, in the initial adjustment to the perceived alien environment of the school, they will naturally seek the company of those familiar with and accepting of them. When the children are fully integrated they have more opportunities to make a wider circle of friends. Teachers play a vital role in encouraging children to forge relationships through collaborative work and planned interaction within the classroom. This helps to develop mutual respect.

6.5   School attendance

The report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995) identifies school attendance as one of the four main issues in Traveller education. The reasons for poor attendance among some Traveller families are many and varied. The school can encourage better attendance by having high expectations, by developing good liaison strategies between school and the Traveller families, by issuing regular reports to the parents on the attendance and attainment of their children, by motivating the children to attend and by supporting and encouraging the parents in every possible way. It is also important to ensure that the school acts in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act, so that the right of all children to receive an education is protected.

On a very practical level, it can be most helpful if the Traveller child is shown around those parts of the school he or she will need access to, to ensure that he or she knows the routine in respect of assembly time, break time, and home time, and is introduced to the relevant teachers and to other school staff, such as the secretary and caretaker.

7 Developing home-school links

7.1 Co-operation between home and school

The Education Act, 1998 gives statutory rights to parents in relation to their children's schooling. It is important that schools where Traveller children are enrolled make contact with the children's parents in order to promote co-operation between home and school and to maximise parental participation in the education process. There are a number of ways of doing this, depending on the resources available to the school. Home-school arrangements need to be sensitive towards, tolerant of and responsive to children's family backgrounds and the circumstances of their out-of-school lives.

7.2 Developing home-school liaison

Some Traveller parents may have had little or no experience of school themselves, may have little contact with the local community, and may feel they are not wanted wherever they go. Confidence and trust between schools and Travellers need to be developed so that Traveller children can benefit from their experience in school. Many parents feel vulnerable, so initial contacts need to be friendly and supportive. It is important to ensure that Traveller parents are included when letters or notices are sent home. There may be some literacy difficulties, which may result in parents not responding to or misinterpreting the letter, so it may be necessary to follow up a letter with a phone call or personal contact with parents.

Parents are the prime educators of their children. Some Traveller parents may lack the confidence or the skill to support their children's learning because
• they may not have gone to school
• schooling may have been sporadic

- they may have been unsuccessful at school
- they may have had a bad experience of school
- there is still a strong Traveller cultural, family and traditional practice (a) of taking children out of school even before the completion of primary school and (b) of not making the transfer to second level .

It is important, therefore, for Traveller parents to identify their needs in relation to their children's education, school retention, and certification. Meeting those identified needs is a critical factor in the development of parents' awareness of their role and capacities and in fostering their self-worth and self-confidence.

Curricular, learning and leisure needs ought to be addressed through the provision of courses, classes and activities related to the identified needs of parents. This in turn enables parents, over time, to become a resource to their own child, other children, and the wider Traveller community.

Home visitation, with the objective of establishing bonds of trust between home and school, is both a symbolic and a real expression of care. Home visitation also supports parents in the identification of their developmental needs.

Schools have found it supportive

- to contact parents with good news
- to listen to parents
- to involve parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school
- to welcome parents to the parents' room
- to encourage Traveller children to do homework just like other children and to become involved in homework clubs supported by parents
- to discuss with parents the many ways in which they can help their child at home

- to promote parent-to-parent support
- to raise awareness among parents of Department programmes that are appropriate to their children's needs
- to involve Traveller parents in pre-school activities, shared reading, and provision of meals during the school day.

There is, therefore, a continuous need to develop links between the school and the Traveller parents, and in this regard it may be helpful for schools to consider:

- building up regular contact with parents and letting them know that they are welcome in the school
- informing parents about what their child is learning at school
- showing parents the textbooks and copybooks that their children are using
- contacting parents with good news about their child's progress, as good news helps build positive relationships and makes it easier to deal with more difficult issues should they arise.

It may be difficult, for a variety of reasons, for Traveller children to do homework. An understanding of this is essential; but Traveller children should be encouraged to do what other children in the school do in relation to homework and other activities, such as participating in homework clubs. Parents also may feel that they cannot help with their children's schoolwork if they have poor literacy skills. It is important to discuss with parents the various ways they can help their children and to encourage them to have high expectations for their children.

7.3   Contacts for supporting Traveller education

Advice and support can be obtained from the following individuals or agencies in relation to developing and maintaining links with Traveller families:

The visiting teacher

The visiting teacher will be in regular contact with Traveller families in an area. Teachers can be facilitated in going on family visits with the visiting teacher or with the home-school-community liaison co-ordinator in order to meet and build up rapport with the family. Every opportunity should be taken to encourage parents to visit the school. Traveller parents may have had few or negative experiences of formal schooling. Confidence and trust between schools and Travellers need to be established to benefit the children's learning. The Visiting Teacher Service always encourages direct contact between school and family.

Resource teacher for Travellers

The resource teacher for Travellers should, in consultation with the principal, timetable visits to Traveller families.

Home-school-community liaison scheme

As Travellers are an integral part of the school community, all home-school liaison work should include Travellers. This may require additional support and encouragement.

Other agencies

Health board or local authority personnel may be of assistance in contacting and communicating with Traveller families.

Local Traveller support groups and partnerships

Traveller support groups and partnerships may be involved in a variety of projects with the local Traveller community. These activities may include after-school clubs, homework clubs, and personal development courses. The groups may be contacted directly for further information.

National Education Officer for Travellers

The NEO may be contacted for advice and information. (See Appendix 2)

8   Assessment

8.1   Teaching, learning, and assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. It is central to effective learning in all areas of the curriculum. It involves processes that improve teachers' capacity to support pupils' learning by examining and reflecting on patterns of children's work. The purpose of examining pupils' work is to gain an insight into the individual child as a learner and to establish standards for performance. By focusing on all aspects of learning, it is likely that assessment will serve the purpose of enabling teachers to help pupils develop to their full potential, regardless of where that potential lies. The emphasis, therefore, must be on how children are performing in relation to the aims of the curriculum and the learning objectives of each curriculum area. Assessing pupils' attainment levels in literacy and numeracy must be balanced with assessing performance in SESE, the arts and physical education and with the development of practical and social skills related to the wider curriculum.

Current thinking moves assessment beyond testing and examining to a level where pupils' learning is central and where the aims of assessment are to identify strengths on which to build when adapting the curriculum to suit individual needs. Learning activities can then build on the knowledge, skills and understanding already acquired and can attempt to bridge gaps in pupils' attainment. In this way, the process of assessment makes a substantive contribution to learning.

8.2   A range of assessment approaches

Assessing pupils' learning is a continuous task occurring throughout each day. Informal assessment, ranging from teacher observation, homework, and work samples to pupil self-assessment, is generally less structured than teacher-designed tests, pupil-teacher conferences, check-lists, and

standardised tests. Each approach is important and helps to build a picture, that forms the basis of individual pupil learning.

Teacher observation takes place daily and contributes to the monitoring of pupils' progress in the learning process. It is a useful tool in determining the child's learning needs and in adjusting methodologies to suit these needs. It provides immediate information, which can be used not only in adjusting methodologies but also in allowing conversation between pupil and teacher and in forming the basis for feedback. Observation can serve as a formative and a diagnostic assessment tool.

Teacher-designed tasks and tests are a move towards a more structured approach to assessment. Tasks can be written or performed in all curricular areas and can include constructing a scene observed in the visual arts, presenting the results of a science investigation, playing a musical composition (performed), written work in pupils' copybooks, taking a mathematics test, and recording research results (written). In each instance, the process and the product need to be examined closely to gain an understanding of the pupil's learning and to inform the teacher's own practice. In many instances, completed tasks provide opportunities to discuss learning not only with the pupils themselves but also with others involved in the learning process: parents, resource teachers, learning-support teachers, and visiting teachers. The use of both performance and written tasks and tests encourages all pupils to demonstrate the level of understanding of a subject and ensures that talents other than literacy skills are assessed.

Portfolio assessment is a relatively new concept in primary schools. It is based on two simple ideas: that pupils can demonstrate what they are learning and what they understand through an organised collection of their work, and that their learning can be assessed through these collections. Four elements are essential in portfolio design: contents, time-frame, structure, and pupils' involvement. It involves collecting a

range of work samples over a period and provides a display of pupils' development and learning in various curricular areas. Examples of a range of activities incorporating strands of many areas of the curriculum can be accompanied by pupil self-assessment or comments from teachers or peers, or both. A portfolio can be built up over a term, a year, or a longer period. It may take many forms depending on the nature of presentation of work – written, oral, multi-media, photographs, maps, and construction; and may be designed to include all presentations, work demonstrating obvious development over time, or samples of "best effort". Pupils are involved in selecting the work, in assessing the samples in the portfolio, and in commenting on their work through reflection exercises. As an assessment tool, portfolios provide the teacher with a broad picture of pupils' learning and development, on which further learning can be based.

Projects involve pupils in collecting, organising and presenting information that often spans a number of curricular areas. While work on projects can be undertaken individually, working collaboratively adds a further dimension to the task and encourages shared learning and group reflection. Project work concentrates on both process and product, and presentation can take many forms – written, oral, multi-media, performance, and construction. Assessment criteria can be determined at school or class level, or checklists or rating scales can form the basis of assessment. Pupils can be encouraged to determine assessment criteria and gradations of quality in the form of a rubric.

Curriculum profiles are cumulative records of achievement in an area of the curriculum based on teacher judgements. Curriculum profiles provide a formal structure for teachers' informal observation. They entail short descriptions of pupils' achievement, behaviour and attitude in relation to learning and record teachers' judgements regarding whether curriculum outcomes have been achieved. They allow teachers to reflect on and interpret pupils' performance and grade achievement in accordance with

short statements based on important curriculum content objectives. Curriculum profiles allow teachers to make a valid and reliable assessment of a child's performance in many curricular areas.

While serving a useful purpose, teacher observation, teacher designed tests and tasks, portfolios, projects, and curriculum profiles may not present an objective view of pupils' progress. *Standardised tests* are useful tools for adding objectivity to pupil assessment. *Norm-referenced tests* show a child's performance in relation to the performance of other pupils at the same age or class level. *Criterion-referenced tests* check how well a teaching approach has worked in helping children reach certain curricular objectives by determining what the child knows and what skills have been acquired, and relating this to a standardised percentile scale.

Assessment and the learner

The process of assessment needs to inform pupils and teachers about what pupils know and understand at a particular time, and about how to proceed with subsequent learning and teaching. Therefore, where possible the child should be involved at various stages in the process. Depending on age and ability, pupils can help identify criteria by which work will be assessed. Goals can frequently be set by pupils, and the manner in which the achievement of these goals will be demonstrated can be agreed on before embarking on the task. Work can be divided into stages so that pupils can receive feedback from peers, engage in self-assessment, and receive continuing feedback from teachers. Where more than one teacher is involved in the learning process, regular conferences, including the pupil, can take place to assess current learning and to determine future learning and teaching strategies.

8.3 Authentic, appropriate, purposeful assessment

Assessment fulfils a variety of purposes in the learning and teaching process. *Formative* assessment assists teachers in planning and supporting future learning for pupils. It takes place continuously and is informed by the learning objectives set by the teacher and the learning goals of individual pupils. It has two principal components: establishing criteria, and providing feedback. Criteria related to agreed goals should be known by the pupils, the classroom teacher and other teachers involved in the learning process. Feedback should be given frequently, with the emphasis on information about what has been achieved as well as what might be improved, and should come from a variety of viewpoints, including pupils' own reflection, and shared reflection with peers and the teacher or teachers.

Another form of assessment is used to indicate areas of learning difficulty in particular children. Weaknesses in children's understanding, gaps in their knowledge or a lack in certain skills may need to be identified. Particular talents in certain subject areas may also be apparent and may need to be fostered. Objective testing may be required as a diagnostic tool in such cases. *Diagnostic* testing may need to be administered by a specialist.

By using formative and diagnostic assessment, teachers build up a picture of a child's achievement and development in many areas of the curriculum. In this way a profile of what the pupil has achieved can be described and recorded for the purpose of reporting to parents, teachers, or other schools. This would normally occur at the end of a programme, a term or a year or on transfer from one school to another. Assessment used in this way is *summative*.

Assessment provides a valid indication of the success or otherwise of teaching approaches, methodologies, and strategies. It can be useful in determining the effectiveness of programmes and resources and can supply teachers and schools with information about effective and valuable

learning experiences. In this way assessment fulfils an *evaluative and planning* role, helping to inform decisions about future whole-school learning and teaching strategies.

The selection of appropriate forms of assessment at various stages in a child's learning is important if further development is to take place. As with all pupils, teachers organising learning experiences for Travellers need to be aware of the particular goals that have been set for each individual. Class teachers, in collaboration with the pupils themselves and with parents and other teachers — learning-support, resource, or visiting — should set goals. These goals may vary somewhat from goals set for other pupils, as the culture of the Traveller pupil should be central in learning experiences. However, while relating to the Traveller culture, the learning objectives in each curricular area will be similar to those for all pupils.

Once goals have been set and learning activities have been organised, the form of assessment most appropriate to the activity and the expected outcome can be selected. While literacy skills are important, building on the strengths of the individual may lead to the selection of a broader range of assessment tools. Project work and the building up of portfolios may provide more scope for recording and reporting on all aspects of learning outcomes. The use of standardised testing and diagnostic testing are important elements in the assessment process to ensure that records of progress are authentic and that difficulties or special talents are recognised. It is possible that standardised tests may not provide a true reflection of Traveller pupils' attainment levels, because of their culture, but results may play a useful part in establishing a profile of overall attainment.

8.4   Individual programmes and classroom planning

As previously stated, one of the main purposes of assessment is the gathering of information about pupils' achievement to determine future learning needs and teaching strategies. By using a variety of assessment

tools, teachers monitoring the progress of Traveller children will gain insights into their needs. This will help in making decisions about children who should receive supplementary teaching and will determine the emphasis and content of such teaching.

Class teachers should identify Traveller pupils requiring learning support. Preliminary screening by class teachers and the selection of pupils experiencing difficulties should be followed by diagnostic assessment by learning-support teachers. Learning-support teachers will then be in a position to develop individual learning programmes, as part of *Individual Profile and Learning Programmes,* in consultation with class teachers, resource teachers, and parents. These programmes, developed before supplementary teaching begins, address the medium-term planning in relation to providing learning opportunities for pupils. Short-term planning and progress reports should be maintained through *Weekly Planning and Progress Records*, which form the basis for continuous planning and teaching.

Screening by class teachers, diagnostic testing by learning-support teachers and consultation and collaboration with others involved in the pupil's learning completes the information-gathering stage of the assessment process. A record of pupils' learning strengths and attainments and priority learning needs can then be created. Setting specific learning goals or targets related to needs and based on strengths is the next step. When these have been decided, specific learning activities can be organised for pupils to undertake under the instruction of the class teacher, resource teacher, learning-support teacher, or parent. Collaborative planning greatly enhances the possibility of successful outcomes. Monitoring of progress, with the emphasis on learning outcomes, by all concerned is essential and may demand regular meetings between classroom and other teachers. Assessment should become a permanent feature of pupils' learning and should form the basis for establishing new learning goals and activities.

8.5 Assessment and whole-school planning

The importance of whole-school planning in the area of assessment cannot be over-stressed. To ensure that all pupils experience success, a common understanding of the purpose and forms of assessment in the school is vital. A school policy on assessment should contain guidelines for all teachers on all aspects of the process. A common understanding and approach to assessment becomes more imperative when organising learning experiences for Travellers, since an individual Traveller pupil may engage with a number of teachers in the school. The school plan should indicate what role each teacher — class, resource, visiting and learning-support — plays in the assessment of Traveller pupils' learning.

The following elements might be included in a whole-school plan for assessment:

- purposes of assessment
- role and responsibilities in relation to assessment
- lists of informal assessment processes: observation, tasks, homework, projects, portfolios
- list of formal assessment processes: standardised tests and when they will be administered
- procedures for administering tests
- recording of results
- use of assessment results: formative, summative, and diagnostic
- storage of and access to records (awareness of the Freedom Of Information Act is important)
- assessment of pupils with learning difficulties, including Travellers
- assessment of exceptionally able pupils, including Travellers
- communication of assessment results between teachers
- communication of assessment results to parents
- communication with other schools when pupils transfer

- procedures for collaboration between teachers in relation to assessment, target-setting, learning activities and monitoring progress for all pupils who engage with more than one teacher, including Travellers
- procedures for the referral of pupils with special needs.

In some schools it may be possible for a teacher to take specific responsibility for the co-ordination of assessment, which would include assessment issues in relation to Traveller pupils.

8.6   Recording and reporting

Since many of the approaches to assessment included here are informal, the process may involve the ongoing gathering of information. The recording of such information may take many forms and will depend on school policy about recording and reporting. All pupils will need some results of assessment recorded, but it may not always be practical for teachers to record all observations in relation to all pupils. However, pupils experiencing learning difficulties or those engaging with more than one teacher, including Travellers, will need assessment information recorded to ensure a co-ordinated approach to their learning.

Teachers may devise a system for recording progress over time to build a comprehensive picture of a pupil's level of understanding, skill, and knowledge. These may take the form of *notebooks, logs* or *forms* on which data can be recorded. Assessment information may be built up in a *portfolio*, which is subject-based or cross-curricular. "Pass-along" portfolios are specifically designed to provide information for a pupil's next teacher, class, or school. This type of portfolio ensures continuity from one year to the next and can be particularly suitable for pupils moving from school to school or for those whose progress is a cause of concern. Building *profiles* of attainment is another form of recording data suitable for passing assessment information on to others. Individual

profile cards can contain information ranging from actual levels (scores or grades) achieved by pupils for each subject area to descriptive comments based on pupils' strengths and learning needs or on attitudes towards and interest in various aspects of a subject area.

Schools and teachers must decide on the most appropriate way to record information about assessment to facilitate effective communication. Since pupils are central to the assessment process, information should be recorded in a suitable manner for feedback to them. Assessment details may be communicated to parents in a variety of forms. Consideration should be given to the provision of information in oral and written forms and to the amount of detail appropriate. A comprehensive report, including test results and recent learning targets, is advisable when pupils are transferring from one school to another.

8.7   Other supports

As with all pupils, Travellers who experience learning difficulties may need to be assessed by an educational psychologist, following completion of the school-based assessment procedures. The procedures for referral, which are the same for all pupils in the school, should ensure that the issue is dealt with in a sensitive manner in consultation with parents. The psychologist will determine the most useful instruments for assessment having regard to concerns about the validity and reliability of standardised individual tests in relation to minority groups. Where standardised testing is used, the Traveller culture will need to be considered when interpreting results of tests administered. The psychologist will provide the parents and the school with a report, and the interpretation of the assessment findings will play an important role in deciding on learning goals and targets and on teaching strategies. If a psychological report suggests that a Traveller pupil could benefit from additional special educational support, the school should make arrangements in the usual manner. The preparation of individual

educational programmes will involve the collaboration of the RTT, the resource teacher for special needs, and the class teacher.

On transfer to second level, details relating to the child's special educational needs should be made available by the primary school to the second-level school, subject to parental consent. It is particularly important that any additional resources or supports which have been allocated to Traveller pupils are, subject to appropriate modification, transferred to the relevant second-level school. Primary schools should, therefore, early in the school year alert the relevant second-level school regarding the impending transfer of all such pupils so that the necessary arrangements, and where appropriate, review procedures, can be put in place.

8.8   Transfer between schools

Travellers are likely to transfer between schools more frequently than other pupils. For this reason, the gathering of information about attainment, strengths and learning needs, the recording of these in a comprehensive manner, and accurate reporting are vital to the maintenance of continuity of education provision. Where possible, when Traveller children are transferring from one school to another, an information conference involving the various teachers who have been and who will be concerned with the organisation of learning should be set up. The strengths and learning needs of the pupil should form the core of the conference. Profile cards or "pass-along" portfolios are further useful tools in ensuring continuity.

Primary schools engaged in the education of Travellers often provide the only formal education for these pupils. Traditionally, transfer to second-level schools has not been considered an option. A goal for all those engaged in teaching Travellers is to increase the number of pupils transferring to second-level education. Primary school teachers —

principals, learning-support, resource, visiting, and class — should provide as much support as possible to ensure that transfer to second-level school is smooth. Providing information about the goals and targets that have been set and successfully attained will allow teachers at second level to build on previous success. Descriptions of Traveller pupils' interests and strengths will indicate starting points for work in new surroundings.

Opening channels of communication, with the second-level school, will allow teachers familiar with the Traveller pupils to pass on relevant details to those who will continue the work. Passing on comprehensive reports on attainment levels will increase awareness of pupils' needs. Visiting teachers for Travellers can reassure Travellers and guide teachers until pupils become accustomed to the second-level environment. Meetings between primary and second-level teachers can allay fears or provide practical solutions to problems about particular needs, transport, resources or other issues, that cause anxiety or become impediments to the transfer of Travellers to the second-level school.

9 Transfer to second-level education

9.1 Travellers and second level

The Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995) notes that "in the past thirty years in Ireland there has been a significant improvement in both the standard of and access to second-level education for the general population of young people. However, this improvement has had little or no impact on the Traveller population in Ireland during this time."

The report continues: "A range of special initiatives for Travellers introduced in the primary sector in recent years has benefited many children. However, only a small minority of Traveller children have transferred successfully to second-level schools and very few of these have completed a full second-level education."

In recent years the number of Traveller children transferring to second level has gradually increased, and there are now more than a thousand young Traveller pupils enrolled in second-level schools.

In recognising the need for positive action in this area, the Department of Education and Science in the White Paper on Education (1995) set the following targets: *"The overall policy objective is that, within ten years [i.e. 2005] all Traveller children of second-level, schoolgoing age will complete Junior Cycle education and 50% will complete the Senior Cycle."* Many complex factors contribute to the low rate of participation of Traveller children in second-level education, ranging from health and accommodation to cultural needs.

9.2   Issues for parents

Traveller parents are concerned about many issues relating to second-level education. In this regard the principals and teachers in primary schools have an important role to play in helping Traveller parents to enrol their children in second-level schools. The following issues are relevant and need to be taken into consideration:

- Travellers do not have the same level of custom or tradition in sending their children to second-level schools
- some Travellers believe that primary education is adequate for their children's needs
- enrolment procedures in some second-level schools are not sufficiently flexible to allow for the enrolment of nomadic Travellers
- many Traveller parents have a fear of negative influences, such as drugs, alcohol, and negative peer influences
- the assumption of adult responsibilities at an early age.
- the high cost of uniforms and books
- the fear of parents regarding the erosion of Traveller culture and identity.

9.3   Issues for pupils

Fears and concerns also exist among Traveller pupils and may include the following:

- fear of an unfamiliar environment
- concern about low attainment levels
- a belief that they are too old to be at school
- fear of prejudice and bullying
- fear of isolation in the event of being the only Traveller in the class or school
- peer pressure from those who do not attend school
- concern that they will be unable to cope with homework.

## 9.4	Successful transfer to second level

Primary schools can assist in the transfer of Traveller children to second-level schools by

* ensuring the placement of children in age-appropriate classes
* making links with the local second-level schools and relevant teachers
* liasing with parents to ensure that they are aware of dates of enrolment for the second-level schools, assessment tests, and open days
* encouraging transfer
* having the expectation that Traveller children will successfully transfer to second level
* inviting Travellers who have successfully transferred to visit the school and talk to Traveller pupils in fifth and sixth classes.

## 9.5	Supports

The Department of Education and Science has introduced the following resources to support Traveller pupils in second-level schools:

* additional teaching hours, 1½ hours per week for each Traveller pupil
* enhanced capitation grant.

Appendix 1

Teaching resources

To support schools in promoting an inclusive intercultural and anti-racist approach to curriculum development, a number of education centres, Traveller organisations and Traveller education services publish books and educational packs both as background reading for teachers and as resources for pupils. Information on how to contact these groups is included below, as are reading materials that have been recommended by teachers working with Travellers.

Intercultural resource packs

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Starting Out (pack for class)	Pre-school and infants: large poster-size pictures and work cards that can be photocopied.	Southern Education and Library Board
Homes (individual pupil packs)	Junior and middle classes: project material on different homes for different people.	Copies available from the National Education Officer
Playing with Pictures (pack for class)	Junior and middle classes: picture pack based on an intercultural theme.	Copies available from the National Education Officer
Raising Awareness of Diversity and Racism	An activity pack for schools and youth workers.	National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism
Team Planet	All classes: this programme is divided into four levels and explores the concepts of nurturing, dependence, interconnections and sustainable development.	Trócaire

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Learning Together (pack)	Infant and junior classes; develops language and self-esteem.	Available from National Committee for Development Education and Trócaire
Windows on the World Valuing Ourselves and Others Naming Ourselves and Others Heroes and Heroines Stories and Story Telling	Shaping and being shaped by culture Age: 4–6 Age: 6–8 Age: 8–10 Age: 10–12	Columban Fathers and Sisters; available from Trócaire
Homes Pack	Junior and middle classes; develops receptive and expressive skills.	Drumcondra Education Centre
Start with a Story	Infant and junior classes; suggests how children can use story books for exploring their feelings, experiences, and issues.	Available from Trócaire and NCDE
OK Let's Go (pack)	Sixth class primary to second level; programme aimed at children who are potential school leavers.	Deis na Gaillimhe
Beyond the Stereotype	Booklet of notes and ideas for including Traveller perspectives in the curriculum.	Devon TES
The Tinder-Box Assembly Book Starting points, stories, poems and classroom activities	Infant and junior classes; the material is set out in themes, which include stories, poems, activities.	Compiled by Sylvia Barratt; available from Trócaire and NCDE
Wee People: Conflict Resolution in Primary Schools	All classes.	Eileen Healy
Johnny McGorey Reading Scheme	Includes thirty graded booklets for children who require catch-up reading material.	jmcgorey@ireland.com
Literacy Trail	Reading scheme depicting Traveller life-style; includes photocopiable readers and workbooks.	West Midlands Education Service
Banjara Education Pack	Intercultural education pack based on Banjara Gypsies in India.	S. D. Bullough

Audio-visual resources

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Nomadism: Then and Now (slide and tape)	Senior classes; based on interviews with Travellers talking about their lives.	Pavee Point Traveller Centre
A Close-Knit Community (video)	Middle and senior classes; twenty-minute video, includes a fun pack.	Norfolk Traveller Education Service
Dream Flight (video)	Middle and senior classes: depicts a nomadic way of life in west Africa.	National Committee for Development Education
Light The Candle (video)	Explores the faith and beliefs of the Travelling community.	Parish of the Travelling People
Somebody Told Me	Senior classes; an awareness-raising pack with a range of activities that can be photocopied, photographs, and a video.	West Midlands Traveller Education Centre
Education for Travellers (support video)		Scottish Traveller Education Programme
Interrupted Learners		Scottish Traveller Education Programme
Are we missing out? (video 1998)	Information on four Traveller families going to secondary school.	DFEE, UK Phone: (0845) 6022260
Where does education begin? (video 1997)	Work and play with young Travellers.	Norfolk Traveller Education Service
Young Pavee Voices	A resource involving young Travellers reflecting on their lives.	Pavee Point Traveller Centre
Travellers at Appleby Fair	Video depicting this famous horse fair.	Manchester Education Committee

Games and posters

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Jigsaws (wooden)	Pre-school and infants; jigsaws made to order from photos or designs.	Lisheen Toys Ltd
Posters	Posters depict nomadism and culture of Travellers.	Pavee Point Traveller Centre

Periodicals

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Glocklai	Yearly journal of the Association of Teachers of Travellers.	ATTP
Voice of the Travellers	Quarterly journal produced by NATC.	NATC
Interface	Information newsletter published by the Gypsy Research Centre (European Commission).	GRC
Parish (Travellers) Newsletter	Published quarterly by the Parish Office.	Parish of the Travelling People

Reading schemes and classroom materials

The following reading schemes have been found to be particularly useful for the interrupted learner.

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Nelson Wellington Square	Junior infants to sixth class; stories with high interest combined with a low level of reading difficulty.	Carroll Educational Supplies and ETC Consult
Open Door	Infants and junior classes; reading and language programme.	Carroll Educational Supplies and ETC Consult
Ginn 360 Series All Aboard	Infants to senior classes; a reading scheme suitable for children who are having difficulty in learning to read.	Surgisales
Go Books Reading Scheme	Infants to sixth class; reading and language programme.	Prim-Ed Publishing

Homework Helpers	Wide range of mathematics and English books that are useful for homework and class work.	Frank Schaffer Publications Well Red Ltd
Stile Phonics	Early phonics 5–9 Phonics practice 9–14 Self-checking system for individual learning.	LDA and Surgisales
Picture Qs. and Writing Sentences	Materials which can be photocopied, suitable for all classes. Useful for independent class work and homework.	Learning Materials Ltd and Surgisales
Reading Recovery	An early intervention programme providing intensive help for children with reading difficulties. Assessment procedures for entry to the programme and instruction strategies are described by M.M. Clay in "The early detection of reading difficulties", 1985.	Heinemann
Doodleloops	Drawing based on phonic sentences.	Apple Publications
Teenage Twelve	Reading using phonic skill.	R Gibson and Sons 17 Fitzroy Place Glasgow C37SF
Maths Together	Six different packages; one for each age and ability level.	Maths Together 24 Melrose Avenue Stameen Co. Louth
Breakthrough to Literacy	Infants to senior classes; a language experience approach.	Longman Group and Irish agents, Carroll Educational Supplies

Children's books

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Shaun's Wellies	Infant classes; a pop-up picture book.	Norfolk Traveller Education Service
Traveller: Nomads of Ireland	Helps pupils to explore and develop a better understanding of the issues facing Travellers as a nomadic minority in Ireland.	Pavee Point Traveller Centre
Melissa to the Rescue	A winter adventure story for infant and junior classes about Melissa, who rescues a foal.	Avon Consortium Traveller Education Service
Travellers at Fairs and Festivals	Infant classes; picture book.	Norfolk Traveller Education Service
Families at Appleby Horse Fair	Infant classes; picture book.	Norfolk Traveller Education Service
1–10 Counting Book 1 1–10 Counting Book 2 Amber and Annie's Counting Book	A set of counting books for infant classes.	Norfolk Traveller Education Service
Fireside Tales of the Travelling People	Junior and senior classes; short stories ideal for reading to class.	Duncan Williamson
The Broonie, Silkies and Fairies	Junior and senior classes; short stories ideal for reading to class.	Duncan Williamson
Just Like You	Infants and junior classes; photographs of Traveller children at home and in school.	Haringey Council Education Support Service
Snowy	Junior and middle classes; a picture book about Rachel, who lives on a canal barge.	Collins
The Lion and the Gypsy	A beautifully illustrated book about a boy setting off on a journey to see his parents. Suitable for reading to all age groups.	Geoffrey Patterson
A Horse for Joe	Middle and senior classes; a boy dreams of owning a horse.	Wiltshire Traveller Education Service
Let's Talk about Racism	Middle and senior classes.	Angela Grumell Gloucester Press

Christy's Dream	Set against the background of a Dublin tower block estate, this book is about a boy who longs for a horse of his own.	Caroline Binch
The Diddakoi	Middle and senior classes; a novel about Kizzy, who is bullied in school.	Rummer Godden Piper
The Blue Horse	Senior classes; a novel about a young Traveller girl determined to get an education.	Marita Conlon McKenna
Two Little Travellers	Picture wordbook suitable for infant classes.	Advisory Service for the Education of Travellers - ASET, Oxford
The Life and Story of Mary Orchard	Middle and senior classes; Dorothy Orchard tells of her mother's life.	Devon Consortium Traveller Education Service
Discovery Flaps Come Home with Us Come and Play with Us Come and Eat with Us Come and Ride with Us	Infant classes; to encourage a broader and deeper understanding of what life is like for many people in communities around the world.	Trócaire

General reading

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Traveller Ways, Traveller Words	An insight into the lives of ordinary Travellers as they experienced it from early in this century, in their own words.	Pavee Point Traveller Centre
Pavee Children	A study of childcare issues for Travellers.	Pavee Point Traveller Centre
Travellers Resource Pack	Includes pamphlets on the Traveller economy, culture and sexism.	Pavee Point Traveller Centre
Still no Place to Go	A survey on Traveller accommodation in Dublin	Pavee Point Traveller Centre
The Education of Gypsy and Traveller Children	From all over Europe examples of action research and progress in Traveller and Gypsy education.	Romaneston Publication

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
School Provision for Traveller Children	The standard textbook for teachers of Gypsies and Travellers.	John-Pierre Liegeois, Government Publications
The Alienation of Travellers from the Education System	Explores Traveller values, and Travellers and schooling.	Máire Mac Aonghusa, Sociological Society of Ireland
The Traveller Gypsies	A study of the Gypsy community in Britain.	Judith Okley, Romaneston Publications
The Challenge of Diversity	A report published by the INTO in 1998.	INTO, Dublin
Travellers in Education	A report published by the INTO in 1994.	INTO, Dublin
Black Stones around the Green Shamrock	A poetry anthology by and about Travellers, suitable for senior classes.	National Education Officer
With Travellers	A handbook for teachers.	National Education Officer
Penance, Communion and Confirmation	An information booklet for teachers.	Parish of the Travelling People
Broadening Horizons	This book aims to provide an introduction to the life-styles of Travelling children and the issues which affect their access to education.	Sally Naylor and Kanta Wild-Smith, Traveller education Service Essex
Learning in Culturally Diverse Classrooms	Reports of an action-research project undertaken by teachers.	Southwark Traveller Education Project
The Routes of Resistance: Travellers and Second-level Schooling	A study of Travellers and education.	Máirín Kenny, Ashgate Publishers
Unlearning Discrimination in the Early Years	Draws on relevant theory and research to challenge some preconceptions about early childhood development.	Babette Brown, Early Years Trainers Anti-racist Network
School Information for Parents	This booklet had been designed to assist schools in communicating with parents.	Blackrock Education Centre
Travellers Citizens of Ireland	Collection of articles on Traveller life.	Parish of the Travelling People
Home-school Work in Multicultural Settings	Collection of articles on home-school links.	Edited by John Bastiani

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young People	A book that shows adults how to look at their own biases and how they may influence young children.	Louise Derman-Sparks
All Our Children	Theoretical and practical information on racism, sexism, Travellers and disability.	Eytarn
Moving On: Traveller Participation in Post-Primary Education and Training	Research on attitudes to post-primary education among the Travelling community in south County Dublin and north Wicklow.	Patricia and Deirdre McCarthy, Southside Partnership, Heritage House Dundrum Office Park Co. Dublin
Teaching Special Needs: Strategies and Activities for Children in the Primary Classroom	This book is about teaching children with special needs in the mainstream primary classroom.	Sylvia McNamara, Gill Moreton
Intercultural Sourcebook: Cross Cultural Training Methods, Volumes 1 and 2	Intercultural Support	Sandra Fowler and Monica Mumford, 1995 and 1999
Traveller People: A Bibliography	Contains a general reference list, a list of educational materials, thesis material, and resources for use in the classroom.	Compiled by Michael O'Reilly and Tomás Ó Briain, Blackrock Education Centre

Computer software

Subject	Details	Supplier, author or publisher
Respect for Diversity in Early Childhood Care and Education	CD–Rom based on the anti-bias curriculum developed by Louise Derman Sparks.	DIT Now Childcare Project
Clicker 4	Junior infants to sixth class; develops phonic and language skills, content free, creates tables of words and sentences.	Crick Software
Wordshark 2	Junior infants to sixth class; develops phonic skills.	White Space
Oxford Reading Tree Talking Stories	Junior infants to sixth class; software to support children's language skills.	Sherston Software
On the Farm	Junior infants to first class; develops children's language skills	Inclusive Technology
Thinking Things	Junior infants to first class; develops auditory processing, categorising and language.	Edmarc
Storymaker	Junior infants to sixth class; helps children to make their own stories.	
Penfriend: The Predictive Typewriter with Speech	Supplies a spoken word bank when prompted with an initial letter. Helps children's story writing.	

Websites

Subject	Details
The Patrin: Dedicated to Romani Culture and History	http://www.geocities.com/~patrin/countries.htm
Rom News: Site for the Roma National Congress	http://www.romnews.com/31.html
Scottish Traveller Education Programme	http://www.mhie.ac.uk/~step/index.html
University of Hertfordshire Press	http://www.herts.ac.uk/uhpress/gypsies.html
National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism	http://www.nccri.com
Artemis: Gypsy and Traveller Education	http://www.jokak.demon.co.uk/artemis/homepage.html
Exchange House Travellers' Service Dublin	http://www.connect.ie/tribli/index.htm
Irish Traveller Movement	http://www.itmtrav.com
Pavee Point Traveller Centre	http://www.ireland.iol.ie/~pavee~
Equality Authority	http://www.equality.ie

Names and addresses of suppliers

Surgisales Teaching Aids Ltd 252 Harold's Cross Road Dublin 6 Phone: (01) 4966688	Norfolk Traveller Education Service Travellers' Resource Base Turner Road Norwich, NR2 4HB. Phone: 0603 766133 Fax: 0603 767315
Lisheen Toys Ltd Ballyheigue Co. Kerry Phone: (066) 33436	Pavee Point Traveller Centre North Great Charles Street Dublin 1 Phone: (01) 8780257 Fax: (01) 8742626
National Committee for Development Education 16–20 South Cumberland Street Dublin 2 Phone: (01) 6620866 Fax: (01) 6620808	Romanestan Publications 22 Northend Warley Essex CM14 5LA
Apple Educational 76 Dame Street Dublin 2 Phone: (01) 6773808 Fax: (01) 6719014	Prim Ed Publishing Bosheen New Rross Co Wexford Phone: (051) 440075 Fax: (051) 42 29 82
Carroll Educational Supplies Unit 5, Western Industrial Estate Naas Road, Dublin 12 Phone: (01) 456729/ 4567280 Fax: (01) 4569998 Freephone: 1800 512512	Crosscare The Catholic Social Service Conference The Red House Clonliffe College Dublin 3 Phone: (01) 8360011 Fax: (01) 8367166

The Southern Education and Library Board 3 Charlemont Place The Mall Armagh BT61 9AX Phone: (048) 375 25353	EYTARN PO Box 28 Wallasey CH45 9NP Phone/Fax: 0044 151 639 6136
West Midlands Education Service for Travelling People The Graisley Centre, Pool Street Wolverhampton West Midlands WV2 4NE. Phone: 00 44 1 902 714646	Trócaire 12 Cathedral Street Dublin 1 Phone/Fax: (01) 874 3875
Haringey Education Team The Lodge Church Lane London N17 8BX Phone: 00 44 208 808 7604 Fax: 00 44 208 365 9094	Devon Consortium Traveller Education Service DCC Southern Divisional Office Redworth House, Ashburton Road Totnes TQ9 5JZ Phone: 0044 1393 386 811
Avon Consortium Traveller Education Centre Charborough Road Filton Bristol BS12 7RA Phone: 00 44 1 454 86220/21 Fax: 00 44 1454 862619	Essex County Council Education Dept. Information Services Publications PO Box 47 Chelmsford CMI 1LD Phone: 00441 376 340 360
Drumcondra Education Centre Drumcondra Road Dublin 9 Phone: (01) 8576400 Fax: (01) 8576499	Southwark Traveller Education Projectavey Street, SE 15 6LF Phone: 0044 171 525 1165 Fax: 0044 171 525 1190

Wiltshire Traveller Education Service Broadcloth Lane Trowbridge BA 14 7HE Phone: 0044 1225 353 435	Frank Shaffer Publications Well Red Ltd Dublin Road Naas Co. Kildare Phone: (045) 86325
Centre de Recherches Tsiganes, Université de Paris V 106 Quai de Clichy France F92110 Fax: 3314 7312923.	Ashgate Publishing Ltd Gower House Croft Road Aldershot Hampshire 6U11 3HR
Deis na Gaillimhe City of Galway VEC Island House Cathedral Square Galway	Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP) Department of Equity Studies and Special Education Moray House Institute of Education Edinburgh University, Holyrood Road Edinburgh EH8 8AQ
Parish of the Travelling People St. Laurence House 6 New Cabra Road Dublin 7 Phone: (01) 838 8874 Fax: (01) 838 8901	S. D. Bullough Tannan Consultancy 54 Woodside Rathfarnham Dublin 14
Quaker Peace Education Project Magee College Derry BT 487CJ Phone 0504 265621 Ext 5225	ETC Consult 17 Leeson Park Dublin 6 Phone: (01) 497 2067 Fax: (01) 497 2518

Appendix 2
Useful contacts

1. **National Education Officer for Travellers**
   Maugie Francis
   Department of Education and Science
   Office of the Inspectorate
   Merchants' Road
   Galway
   Phone: (091) 568922 / 562300
   Fax: (091) 561734.

2. **Parish of the Travelling People**

The Parish of the Travelling People works within the education area to promote Traveller children as part of a distinct social group whose culture, including nomadism, ought to be recognised and respected within the school system. Two catechists employed by the parish work on providing resource materials for schools. This material is in the area of religious education but is often used in other subject areas also. In response to requests both from within the Archdiocese of Dublin and nationally, the parish has published a teacher's textbook containing the essential elements for an adequate preparation for the reception of the sacraments of First Communion, Penance, and Confirmation. Its purpose is to bring the Traveller expression of faith into consciousness in the classroom and integrate it in an inclusive manner in the religious education programme. The parish team attempts to visit all the schools with Traveller children in the Archdiocese of Dublin to provide a resource for teachers. In order to remain informed on issues relating to Traveller education and to influence policy-making, the Parish of the Travelling People networks with other bodies, which include:

- Crosscare
- Irish Traveller Movement Education Working Group
- diocesan advisers
- the Association of Teachers of Travelling People
- the Visiting Teacher Service.

Various books, videos and educational packs that the parish offers on loan to schools can be seen in its well-equipped resource room at the parish office.

Parish of the Travelling People
6 New Cabra Road
Phibsboro
Dublin 7
Phone: (01) 8388874

3.   National Committee for Development Education (NCDE)

The NCDE was established in 1994 by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and represents the development and education programme of Irish Aid. Development education seeks to engage people in reflection, analysis and action for local and global solidarity. In co-operation with other agencies and organisations the NCDE aims to promote and support development education in all sections of Irish society. Visitors are welcome at the NCDE resource centre.

The centre, which specialises in development education resources, contains a wide range of educational and information materials, including videos, books, slides, photo packs, and teaching manuals, available for sale or on loan. The NCDE resource centre is open to the public on weekdays from 9:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and from 2:00 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. A catalogue is available on request. For those outside Dublin, the NCDE offers a mail order service for the purchase of materials. Information and materials for loan can also be posted out on request.

National Committee for Development Education
16–20 South Cumberland Street
Dublin 2
Phone: (01) 6620866

4. Irish Traveller Movement (ITM)

The Irish Traveller Movement was founded in November 1990. It is a national network organisation of groups and individuals working in the Traveller community. Members are united by a common understanding of Travellers as a distinct social group in Irish society. Within the organisation there are four national working groups which progress policies and plans for each of the following areas:

- – accommodation
- – education
- – youth
- – anti-discrimination.

Catherine Joyce, National Co-ordinator of the Irish Traveller Movement, extends an invitation to teachers to join the education group so as to ensure greater success in meeting the challenges in education today. The ITM has forty-eight constituent members. A list of names and addresses of Traveller groups is available from the ITM head office.

Irish Traveller Movement
4–5 Eustace Street
Dublin 2
Phone: (01) 6796577
Fax: (01) 67965788
E-mail: itmtrav@indigo.ie

5.   Pavee Point

Pavee Point is a non-governmental organisation committed to human rights for Irish Travellers. The group comprises Travellers and members of the majority population working in partnership to address the needs of Travellers as a minority group that experiences exclusion and marginalisation.

Pavee Point acknowledges the distinct culture of Travellers and the importance of nomadism to the Traveller way of life. The group seeks to combine local action with national resourcing and direct work with research and policy formulation.

> **Pavee Point**
> **46 North Great Charles Street**
> **Dublin 1**
> **Phone: (01) 8780255**
> **Fax: (01) 87442626**
> **E-mail: pavee@iol.ie**

6.   Jean-Pierre Liegeois

The INTERFACE publication is co-ordinated under the supervision of Jean-Pierre Liegeois, who is the consultant to the European Commission on the education of Gypsy and Traveller children. He publishes in INTERFACE project headings for development funded by the EC. Groups and individuals involved in the education of Traveller children can apply for funding to undertake a project. Links through publications and with colleagues in other member-states are encouraged. A list of various conference reports and the INTERFACE publication are also available from the address below.

Jean-Pierre Liegeois
Centre de Recherches Tsiganes
Université de Paris V
106 Quai de Clichy
Clichy
France
Fax: 3314 7312923

7.   Association of Teachers of Travelling People (ATTP)

The Association of Teachers of Travelling People was set up in the early 1970s to address issues facing Travellers and their teachers in school. As members discovered, the issues were not just how to help Traveller children to learn in school but also recognising and celebrating their culture.

The ATTP holds a conference each year and publishes an annual journal, Glocklai. (Glocklai means teacher in Gammon, the Travellers' language.) The journal carries papers and other material on topics related to intercultural education and Travellers.

Further information about membership is available from the ATTP honorary secretary:

Brenda Ó Tighearnaigh
66 Redesdale Road
Mount Merrion
Co. Dublin
Phone: (087) 6868281
E-mail: brendaot@tinet.ie

8. National Traveller Women's Forum

The National Traveller Women's Forum is an alliance of Traveller women and Traveller organisations from throughout Ireland that aims to "work collectively to challenge the racism and sexism experienced by Traveller women and promote Traveller women's right to self-determination, the attainment of human rights and equality within society."

> **National Traveller Women's Forum**
> **Unit 4, Tuam Centre**
> **Tuam Road**
> **Galway**
> **Phone: (091) 771 509**
> **Fax: (091) 771235**
> **E-mail: ntwf@iol.ie**

9. Citizen Traveller

The main objective of Citizen Traveller is to develop a three-year campaign to support the work of Traveller organisations in creating a better understanding between the settled and Traveller communities in Ireland, creating an environment in which to promote Travellers as equal citizens in Irish society, and encouraging the Traveller community to take pride in their own cultural identity.

> **Citizen Traveller**
> **5 New Cabra Road**
> **Dublin 7**
> **Phone: (01) 868 1462**
> **Fax: (01) 868 1611**
> **E-mail citizentraveller@iol.ie**

10. Equality Authority

The Equality Authority was established in 1999 when the Employment Equality Act came into force. The Act mandates the Equality Authority to work towards the elimination of discrimination and towards the promotion of equality of opportunity. The legislation covers nine grounds including membership of the Traveller community.

Equality Authority
Clonmel House
Dublin 2
Phone: (01) 4173333
Fax: (01) 4173366
E-mail: info@equality.ie

11. National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

NEPS was formally established as an agency in the Department of Education and Science with delegated authority to provide and develop psychological services to all pupils who need it in primary and second-level schools and in other relevant centres supported by the Department of Education and Science.

The service is organised on a regional basis: NEPS psychologists are allocated to ten regions corresponding to the health board regions.

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
Frederick Court
24–27 North Frederick Street
Dublin 1
Phone: (01) 889 2700
Fax: (01) 889 2755

12. Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism

The committee is a partnership of Government departments, agencies and non-government organisations. It was established by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in July 1998. The aim of the committee is to provide a structure within which to develop policies and actions aimed at developing an integrated approach towards combating racism and to act in a policy advisory role to the Government. The development of such an approach goes hand-in-hand with the promotion of a more participative and intercultural society, which is more inclusive of groups such as refugees, Travellers, and minority ethnic groups.

Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism
26 Harcourt Street
Dublin 2
Phone: (01) 4785777
Fax: (01) 4785778
E-mail: nat.racism.ctee@eircom.net

Appendix 3 (i)

Department of Education and Science Circular 7/99
Appointment of Resource Teachers for Travellers in Primary Schools

CIRCULAR 7/99

An Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta,   Department of Education and Science,
Baile Átha Luain,   Athlone,
Co. na hIarmhí   Co. Westmeath

CIRCULAR TO Boards of Management and Principal Teachers of National Schools

Applications for posts of Resource Teacher for children of the Travelling Community.

1.   Introduction
Following a review, the Department of Education and Science has decided to introduce new procedures for appointing Resource Teachers for children of the Travelling Community.   The revised procedures take effect from the date of this Circular.

The Department's policy in relation to the education of Traveller children is that they should be taught in an integrated setting. In order to assist with the integration of the Traveller children, a Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT) post is allocated to primary schools to cater for the educational needs of Traveller children of primary school-going age.

The RTT post is allocated on the basis that the Traveller children are taught either within their classroom with the RTT working in partnership with their classroom teacher or withdrawn in groups for intensive tuition according to their ages and perceived needs by the Resource Teacher for Travellers.

1.1 Pupil Teacher Ratio
The pupil teacher ratio applicable for Resource Teachers for children of the Travelling Community is 14:1.

2.   New Procedures

The Chairperson of the Board of Management of a school wishing to appoint a Resource Teacher for children of the Travelling Community should write to the Inspector stating that the school is seeking the appointment of a Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT) and requesting that the Inspector visit the school to review the case for such an appointment.

Applications for a Resource Teacher for Travellers may be sought on a shared basis between a number of schools.

3.   Information required by the Inspector

The school must have the following information available to the Inspector when s/he calls:

- Name and Date of Birth of each child;
- Pupil's current class level;
- Confirmation that the school has received parental agreement regarding acceptance of the services of a resource teacher in respect of each child;
- Confirmation that suitable accommodation is available.

4.   Criteria for appointment

Initial criteria to appoint an RTT include:

- A sufficient number of eligible children;
- Availability of suitable accommodation;
- Distance from home to school for the children concerned is reasonable for commuting purposes;
- Whether other suitable provision is available for the children in question.

5.   Notification to schools

The Inspector will evaluate the information made available and subsequently notify schools if s/he intends to forward the application to a relevant senior Inspector for further consideration. This should not be construed that the applications have been approved. Alternatively, the Inspector will notify the

school concerned that the application has failed to meet the initial criteria for an RTT appointment.

School Authorities may appeal such a decision to the Special Education Section of this Department.

The Department will notify schools when the appointment has been sanctioned. Schools should allow a minimum of two months' processing time after the Inspector has advised the school that the application has been forwarded to the relevant senior Inspector. Schools, which have not heard from the Department within this time, should contact the Special Education Section at the address below.

6.   Appointment of a permanent teacher

All posts are sanctioned on a temporary basis initially. Posts are sanctioned on a permanent basis when the relevant pupil-teacher-ratio has been met for two consecutive quarters for a permanent RTT appointment. The relevant quarterly enrolment dates are the end of March, June, September and December.

The Chairperson of a school seeking a permanent appointment should write accordingly to the School Inspector giving details of the relevant enrolments.

Enquiries about this circular should be made to:
        Special Education Section 1
        Department of Education and Science
        Cornamaddy
        Athlone, Co Westmeath

        Telephone No.   (0902) 74621 or (01) 873 4700
        Fax No.   (0902) 76939

L Kilroy
Principal Officer
April, 1999

Appendix 3 (ii)

Department of Education and Science letter of sanction for appointment of a Resource Teacher for Travellers in Primary Schools.

An Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta,   Department of Education and Science,
Baile Átha Luain,   Athlone,
Co. na hIarmhí   Co. Westmeath

Chairperson
Board of Management

County: School: Roll:

Dear Chairperson
I wish to refer to your application for sanction to appoint a temporary Resource Teacher to cater for the educational needs of Traveller children in the above school.

Following consideration of reports furnished by the Department's Inspectorate it has been decided to sanction the appointment of a Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT), on a temporary basis, pending enrolments, subject to the Rules for National Schools and to the following conditions: -

(a) **That for administrative purposes the Resource Teacher for Traveller's base school will be :**

(b) That Traveller parents have agreed that their children may avail of the service of the Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT)

(c) That Traveller children are age appropriately placed in mainstream classes

(d) That suitable accommodation is available for the Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT)

(e) That the Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT) caters for Traveller children of primary school going age.

(f) That the Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT) and Remedial Teacher

in consultation with the children's class teacher identify the educational needs of the individual Traveller children. That an educational programme is devised on the basis of those needs and informed by The Learning-Support Guidelines issued recently to all schools. This programme is to be reviewed on a regular basis and at least once a year.

(g)   That the Traveller children are taught in an integrated setting, either within their classroom with the Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT) working in partnership with their classroom teacher or withdrawn in groups for intensive tuition according to their ages and perceived needs.

(h)   That the local school's inspector is consulted by the school Principal regarding the organisation of the service.

(i)   That the Visiting Teacher for Travellers is informed of the arrangements and the date on which the Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT) will be taking up the post.

(j)   That the teacher selected is a fully qualified national teacher who, having satisfactorily completed his/her probationary period, has secured the Department's Teaching Diploma.

(k)   Existing permanent staff of the school may be appointed to the post and replaced in their post on a temporary basis.   S/he will maintain seniority within the school in accordance with established procedures in this regard. A Principal or Vice-Principal may not take up a post of RTT.

(l)   That the need for the post be reviewed on a regular basis.

Revised guidelines concerning the education of Traveller children in National Schools are currently being compiled and will issue to all schools shortly.

It should be noted that the Resource Teacher for Travellers should liaise with Traveller parents to keep them informed of their children's progress and to encourage and develop parental involvement.

It is not necessary to keep the names of the children catered for by the Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT) on a separate roll, but details of enrolment of the Traveller children must be maintained by the Principal, and recorded separately on the School Return to the Department on a quarterly basis. This is in order to facilitate the continuation of appropriate supports for the pupils in question.

In relation to age appropriate placement of Traveller children, your attention is drawn to Primary Circular 11/01(retention of pupils in Primary Schools). Decisions on appropriate placement of Traveller children should result from discussions with the Principal Teacher, School Inspector, Resource Teacher for Travellers, Visiting Teacher and most importantly, the Parents of the children in question.

Where a school has been allocated a Resource Teacher for Traveller post(s), an enhanced level of capitation grant is payable in respect of each Traveller child. The amount of the grant in excess of the normal capitation grant is intended to be used to enhance Traveller children's learning and participation in school, purchase books, materials and teaching aids for use with the Traveller children and should not be used for purposes relating to the day-to-day running of the school.

All posts are sanctioned on a temporary basis initially. Posts are sanctioned on a permanent basis when the relevant pupil-teacher ratio has been met for two consecutive quarters for a permanent RTT appointment. The relevant enrollment dates are the end of March, June, September and December.

Please forward details of the fully qualified teacher you propose to appoint to this temporary post on the attached Notification of Temporary Appointment form.

Yours sincerely

_____
Special Education Section

Appendix 4

Traveller education – local contacts

Contact	Name and Address	Telephone No.
Visiting teacher for Travellers		
Local authority social worker		
Local health centre or community care office		
School attendance officer/education welfare officer		
Local Travellers' support group		
Regional representative, Association of Teachers of Travelling People		
Parish of the Travelling People / Dublin		
Chaplain / local diocesan office		
Resource teachers for Travellers in the primary schools		
District inspector primary		
Post-primary inspector		

Bibliography

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Department of Education and Science (1998). *Survey by Primary School Inspectorate of Traveller Participation in Education,* Unpublished, Dublin.

Department of Education and Science (1999). *School Planning: Developing a School Plan, Guidelines for Primary Schools,* Dublin: Stationery Office.

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Department of Education and Science (2000). *Learning-Support Guidelines*, Dublin: Stationery Office.

Department of Social Welfare (1963). *Report of the Commission on Itinerancy*, Dublin: Stationery Office.

Department of the Environment and Local Government (2000). *Statistics.*

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Ruane, B. (1986). *Council of Europe: Racism and Society*