

Guidelines on Traveller Education in Second-Level Schools



Guidelines on Traveller Education in **Second-Level Schools**



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Foreword

These guidelines on Traveller education for second-level schools are a vital part of the Department of Education and Science's strategies on social inclusion, combating poverty, the 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 to be 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 students for full and active citizenship.

The overall resourcing of Traveller education by means of a National Education Officer, an expanding Visiting Teacher Service, the employment of resource teachers for Travellers in primary schools, and the allocation of teaching hours in second-level schools, as well as the payment of enhanced capitation grants in both primary and second-level schools, has 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 to the development of education provision for Travellers.

Partnership has been very much in evidence in the development of education provision for Travellers. This is exemplified by the continuing 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 and 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 on 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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- Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers
- Advisory Committee on Traveller Education
- Co-ordinating Committee for Traveller Education
- Parish of the Travelling People
- Transition and Leaving Certificate Applied support teams
- Pavee Point Traveller Centre
- Traveller Women's Forum
- Irish Traveller Movement
- Inspectorate and administrative staff of the Department of Education and Science.

Introduction

Education is widely recognised as one of the most important means of tackling socio-economic disadvantage. Travellers are among the most marginalised, most deprived and most disadvantaged groups in Irish society. The establishment of the Equality Authority and the enactment of the Equal Status Act, 2000, together with the Employment Equality Act, 1998, give Travellers increased statutory protection against discrimination. While education in itself will not address all the issues, it can help in a very real way. However, matters such as improved accommodation and health care are also central to the progress of Travellers.

Educational objectives at second level promote the right of each student to full and equal access to, participation in, and benefit from educational provision, in accordance with his or her ability. The education of each student is valued equally, whatever their socio-economic background, gender or special educational or curriculum needs. Individual students are encouraged to reach their full potential as they advance through the education system.

The Department of Education and Science has set up the Advisory Committee on Traveller Education. This group, which includes representatives of the partners in education, including Traveller representatives, meets regularly and advises the Minister for Education and Science on matters relating to Traveller education. In addition, the Co-ordinating Committee for Traveller Education in the Department of Education and Science helps to advise on and co-ordinate actions and strategies related to Traveller education.

At present many young Travellers are being supported with extra teaching hours and extra capitation grants in mainstream schools. Many other Travellers avail of education in Youthreach Centres, in Senior Training Centres, and in a limited number of Junior Education Centres.

The purpose of this document on Traveller education in second-level schools is to provide guidelines for the following:

- managerial authorities
- boards of management
- principals, deputy principals and assistant principals
- teachers
- support staff
- parents
- other education partners.

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 for Travellers 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 national 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 second 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. Education of Travellers in second-level schools

3.1 Integration of Travellers

Irish society is a multi-cultural one. In this context it is essential for schools to foster an understanding of and a respect for Traveller culture. In embracing the concept of cultural diversity, the acceptance of difference and the achievement of equality are promoted. Asserting group differences can be liberating and empowering for a particular group and also enriching for society as a whole. It is vital to embrace the belief that group difference should be understood not as a deviation from the norm, which stigmatises a minority group such as the Traveller community, but as a shared relationship with others.

The policy of the Department of Education and Science is that Traveller children should receive their education in mainstream schools and in an integrated way. This policy reflects the thrust of the recommendations of the Task Force Report on the Travelling Community (1995).

Recommendation FR.95 of the report states that “all Travellers do not share the same educational needs and, while special provisions may be required to meet the varied educational needs, access to mainstream provision must be regarded as the norm for Travellers.”

The approach to policy is described in the White Paper, *Charting our Education Future*, as follows: “The main aim for Traveller children over the age of twelve is to encourage them to continue in full time education and to promote the continuation of their full inclusive participation in education, while retaining respect and value for their distinctive culture.”

Each Traveller child should be integrated into the everyday life and practices of the school to the greatest degree possible, taking his or her individual needs and abilities into account. Substantial progress is now being made in the integration of Travellers in primary schools, while much remains to be done at second level.

Opportunities within schools for fostering anti-racist and intercultural attitudes can be found within each aspect of the curriculum. In addition, each school's mission statement, characteristic spirit and atmosphere can be permeated by a commitment to providing equal opportunities for all young people and to recognising that preparation for a full life in an intercultural society is the right of every student.

3.2 An intercultural approach

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

Aims

The aims of intercultural education include the following:

- to foster conditions conducive to pluralism in society
- to raise students' awareness of their own culture and to attune them to the fact that there are other value systems and other ways of behaving
- to develop respect for life-styles different from their own so that students can understand and appreciate each other

- to foster a commitment to equality
- to enable students 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 students 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 atmosphere of the school.

Implementation

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

- *communicating 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 thoughts and opinions and those of others
- *personal skills*: assertiveness, self-confidence and expressing personal opinions, learning to forgive, to apologise and to say sorry, dealing with conflict

- *decision-making skills*: examining options and 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.

Outcomes of intercultural approach

Knowledge

An intercultural approach facilitates the development of relevant knowledge:

- 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.

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.

3.3 A whole-school approach to intercultural education

In the context of Traveller education it is crucial that there is a team approach rather than an individual staff or subject-focused approach. The starting point for any school in adopting an intercultural approach is to establish basic principles that will inform every area of the organisation, the curriculum, and the life of the school. Staff collaboration is essential in promoting a whole-school approach to intercultural education.

The following questions may help to guide discussion on interculturalism and facilitate the development of a shared understanding in the school.

School level

- What is understood by an intercultural approach and how can it be implemented in the school?
- Is enough known about the different cultures in the school?
- Do school policies reflect an intercultural approach, for example code of behaviour, enrolment policy, parental involvement, school rules and regulations, and extra-curricular activities in the school?
- Is the atmosphere positive, supportive, and secure?
- Are there opportunities to celebrate diversity in the school?

School programme

- Is the implemented curriculum relevant to the different groupings in the school?
- Are the interests of minorities included in all school programmes?

- How does planning take place for an intercultural programme in the school? Are development and progression evident?
- Are textbooks and resources bias-free?
- What kind of teaching methodologies are employed? Do they include active approaches and opportunities for collaborative learning?
- Are the principles of justice, equality, and freedom of expression fostered in all everyday dealings?

Parents and community

- How are parents facilitated to be involved in their children's education?
- What kind of contact is maintained?
- How are parental fears and concerns about the erosion of Traveller culture and identity addressed?
- How is the wider community involved in the intercultural approach?

4. Enrolment of Travellers in second-level schools

4.1 School policies

There are approximately 600 Traveller children in each age cohort from 12 to 18 years of age. This amounts to a potential enrolment of 3,600 Travellers in second-level schools. At present there are approximately 2,000 Traveller students enrolled in second-level schools. Enrolment of all Traveller students therefore presents a major challenge. Second-level schools should be open and welcoming in accepting Traveller students. To refuse to enrol a student on the grounds that he or she is a Traveller is totally unacceptable and is in breach of equality legislation. All second-level schools are encouraged to play an active part in the achievement of the stated aim of national policy, which is to enrol all Traveller children in schools.

School policies should facilitate Traveller enrolment. It is the policy of the Department of Education and Science that, on enrolment, all Traveller students are placed in an age-appropriate mainstream class. Some school enrolment policies at second level have not been designed with Travellers in mind and can therefore indirectly act as a barrier to access. Enrolment policies that give priority to applicants from the catchment area or to siblings of students already enrolled can lead to access difficulties. While it is desirable that schools are informed well in advance of enrolment, this is not always possible for travellers, especially as migration features prominently in Traveller culture. Enrolment policies must therefore take into account the particular needs and lifestyles of Traveller families.

A welcoming atmosphere, coupled with assistance in the provision of books and uniforms, can facilitate the initial transfer. School authorities

are asked to be mindful of the fact that many Traveller parents have not attended second-level school. Apprehensions and fears exist among many Traveller adults in relation to second-level schools. Among the influences on Traveller participation in second-level education are:

- complex structures in second-level schools
- the preference of some Traveller families for single-sex schooling
- fears of marginalisation or cultural erosion
- the absence of a tradition of second-level attendance
- early assumption of adult and childminding responsibilities.

4.2 Department of Education and Science schemes

There are a number of distinct schemes provided by the Department of Education and Science that help to promote the education of Travellers in second-level schools. These can be summarised as follows:

- *Designated Areas Scheme*: This is a scheme of assistance to schools in designated areas of disadvantage. This scheme has been operating since 1990. It provides additional teaching hours together with a supplementary payment in respect of each student.
- *Home-School-Community Liaison*: This scheme provides for the appointment of a co-ordinator together with a supplementary payment in respect of each student in the school.

- *Free Books Scheme*: This scheme provides schools with seed capital to set up book rental schemes and also with assistance in providing free books for necessitous students.
- *The Early School Leaver 8 to 15 Initiative*: Financial assistance is provided for schools to assist them in setting up preventive measures and interventions to combat early school-leaving.
- *Stay-in-School Retention Initiative*: This project aims to have a significant impact on the level of student retention in second-level schools and on the numbers of students who successfully complete the Senior Cycle. Participating schools devise a collaborative programme of in-school and out-of-school actions that will prevent early school-leaving.

5. Long-term school planning and Traveller students

5.1 Planning process

The long-term planning process in schools should address the following issues:

- development of structures to facilitate liaison with parents
- development of structures to facilitate liaison with primary schools
- review of school mission and aims
- review of curriculum provision to ensure that the values of minorities are included
- equality-proofing of policies, in particular homework, anti-bullying policies and code of behaviour
- professional development of school staff.

Second-level school plans need to include clear and precise policies on the enrolment of Travellers. The Education Act, 1998 states that “The school plan shall state the objectives of the school relating to equality of access...”. School plans and policy documents should give full recognition to the educational needs of Traveller students. Existing school policy documents should be reviewed to see if they contain an intercultural and inclusive perspective. Statements of characteristic spirit should be revisited to see whether they reflect a spirit of inclusivity. It is important that minority groups such as Travellers are recognised in a school's planning and self-review. In designing or revising school plans in line with the Education Act, 1998 it is important that minorities such as

Travellers be affirmed. The school should ensure that it has a school policy on bullying and on the promotion of equal opportunities. Such policies can reflect the diversity of student intake in a sensitive way and help protect all students.

Parental awareness of the value of education, and second-level education in particular, is in many ways the key to increased participation. It is therefore important that second-level schools establish and maintain good procedures and structures for communication with Traveller families. In many cases it will be possible to build on work already done by the primary school authorities and the resource teacher for Travellers.

Liaison with the primary school when the students are in fifth and sixth classes is essential, especially to identify the number and circumstances of Traveller students likely to transfer. An annual meeting between the resource teachers for Travellers in the primary school, the visiting teacher for Travellers and representatives of school management with responsibility for enrolment is recommended. The visiting teacher for Travellers will normally advise the receiving second-level school regarding the educational needs of any Traveller students about to transfer. The transfer between schools of documentation concerning Traveller students should not differ from the practice operating for students in general.

In-career development opportunities are provided by the In-Career Development Unit (ICDU) of the Department of Education and Science with regard to Traveller education. Travellers are invited to address in-career development seminars. Such in-career development courses should be supported by schools. The local visiting teachers for Travellers may provide advice on teacher training needs and opportunities.

5.2 Assessment and Traveller students

Second-level schools frequently employ their own assessment procedures

in relation to incoming first-year students. These procedures can be employed for the purpose of identifying students who would benefit from additional learning support throughout the curriculum. The school psychologist can be consulted in relation to current best practice in this area.

The assessment of Traveller students should not essentially differ from the assessment of other students. The focus of any assessment should be on the learning development of the child and should not relate to their status as Travellers.

Assessment is an integral part of good educational practice and should inform both curriculum and teacher methodology. Assessment should ideally commence at the infant stage in primary school and continue right through to the stage of leaving the second-level school. It is a whole-school responsibility involving the principal, teachers and any learning-support members of staff. Good assessment procedures have a diagnostic orientation and lead to outcomes which enable the school authorities to make appropriate provision for the educational needs of the students in their care.

Second-level schools frequently employ their own assessment procedures in relation to incoming first-year students. The guidance and learning-support members of staff have a central co-ordinating role in this process, and the school psychologist may be consulted regarding models of good practice. In relation to the assessment of Traveller students, the teacher or teachers most involved in Traveller education should also be consulted.

A psychological assessment may be requested in the context of determining whether a pupil requires some exceptional intervention or provision such as inclusion in a special class or access to a resource teacher. It should certainly never be used to determine the eligibility for admission of a Traveller child to a school. The psychological assessment

should take place following completion of the school-based assessment procedures and 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 Traveller culture will need to be considered when interpreting the results of tests administered.

6. Short-term school planning and Traveller students

6.1 Introduction

The short-term planning process in the school should address the following issues:

- deployment of resources to meet particular needs
- opportunities for parents and their children to visit schools in advance and meet the teacher or teachers involved in Traveller education
- explanation of school policies, procedures and rules to parents and students
- provision in advance for school uniforms, textbooks, equipment, and transport.

6.2 Before entry

Traveller parents may wish to visit and view the school with other prospective parents, or they may wish to visit the school independently, either when the school is functioning or initially while the school is closed.

Visits by sixth class primary pupils to second-level school could be undertaken to:

- familiarise them with the building

- familiarise them with the structure of the second-level school day such as timetable, different subjects and teachers, the canteen, uniform and specialist facilities
- introduce the Traveller students to the principal and deputy principal, their year head, tutor and other teachers.

The second-level school will need to verify and ensure, where necessary, that there is transport for the students to and from school.

Primary schools should be in a position to provide relevant data concerning the academic progress and educational needs of all students about to transfer to second level.

Where applicable, details relating to any student 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 at primary level are, subject to appropriate modification, transferred to the second-level school. There should be effective liaison between second-level schools, primary schools and the school psychologist regarding the impending transfer of all such pupils so that the necessary arrangements, and where appropriate, review procedures, can be put in place.

6.3 After entry

There will be a need to build up student profiles, to include the following:

- educational history of the child
- strengths identified
- special needs
- resources and supports needed.

School rules and the code of behaviour should be explained fully to parents and students and should be applied in a flexible and caring manner. The accommodation and the economic and cultural background of Travellers need to be understood in the context of the application of the school rules dealing with uniforms and homework.

7. Retention of Traveller students in second-level schools

7.1 Policies and approaches

Schools should develop policies and approaches aimed at encouraging Traveller students to attend regularly and to remain at school.

The following measures are likely to impact positively on attendance and retention:

- ensuring a characteristic spirit that values diversity
- ensuring that Traveller culture and lifestyle are respected
- ensuring that the curriculum is accessible to all
- monitoring and tracking attendance
- liaising closely with families
- liaising with the Visiting Teacher Service
- liaising with local attendance committees
- liaising with school attendance or welfare officers.

7.2 Statutory requirements

The functions of the National Educational and Welfare Board, set up under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, are

- to provide a new system to support students to attend school regularly
- to ensure that children educated outside of recognised schools receive a minimum education
- to provide a new structure for further education and training for school leavers with low qualifications.

The Act requires every student to be in full-time education until they are sixteen or have completed three years of second-level education, whichever is later. This poses particular challenges for Travellers and second-level schools with Traveller students.

7.3 Strategies

Retention rates for Travellers in second-level schools are improving but are still very low. The reasons for this are complex and include the lack of a tradition of second-level education, career ambitions, and above all the attendance rates of some Travellers. The relationship between attendance and attainment is particularly relevant. The monitoring and tracking of attendance, and liaising closely with families and local attendance committees where they exist, can have a significant impact.

The use of mentoring and friendship or buddy systems can help Travellers settle into school life. The inclusion of Travellers in initiatives such as student retention programmes and paired reading programmes can also have a beneficial impact.

It is important to point out that Traveller parents can play a significant role in relation to the attendance and retention of their children at school. Traveller parents increasingly appreciate the value of education and the importance of their children staying on at school. Furthermore, they realise that schools are a safe, caring environment for their children and

have an important function in preparing them for working life. They also appreciate that schools are making an effort to protect, affirm and enhance Traveller culture.

A collaborative approach involving all the partners in education is necessary in order to support Traveller parents in relation to the attendance and attainment of their children in school.

8. Validation of Traveller culture within the curriculum

8.1 Introduction

In the validation of Traveller culture the following points should be considered:

- each child is an individual and should be valued
- the total curriculum should be accessible to all
- cultural diversity should be validated
- teachers should be aware of each child's educational needs
- teachers should be sympathetic to Traveller culture and life-style
- respect should exist between individuals (teacher/student and student/student).

The policy of the Department of Education and Science is to integrate Travellers in second-level schools rather than to assimilate them. As Travellers are often a small minority of students, schools have to be proactive in acknowledging and validating Traveller ways of living throughout the curriculum in an intercultural context. Adopting an intercultural approach in the curriculum does not require the addition of another subject area. This would be contrary to the principles that it espouses. Rather it means that an intercultural perspective should underpin all school activity and inform the concerns of the school.

Specific curriculum areas offer opportunities to affirm Traveller culture and sensitise other students to that culture. The Transition Year

programme and the Leaving Certificate Applied programme also provide such opportunities. Many subject areas in the curriculum provide opportunities to include and validate Traveller culture. It is acknowledged, however, that more needs to be done to identify and promote these opportunities. The following sections illustrate some of the opportunities existing within subject areas for the recognition and affirmation of Traveller culture.

8.2 Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)

Many areas of the CSPE curriculum are relevant to mutual understanding between Travellers and the rest of the population. The aims of the syllabus encourage students to apply positive attitudes, imagination and empathy in learning about peoples and cultures. The encouragement of students to engage in active participatory social interaction is also a stated aim of the syllabus. Action-research projects provide opportunities to conduct attitudinal surveys within and towards the Traveller community. Concepts such as democracy, citizenship, rights and responsibilities, human dignity and the law can be applied to the equality and discrimination issues that arise regarding the mutual respect between Travellers and other groups in Irish society.

8.3 Music

There are two dimensions to music in the second-level school. It is considered both a leisure activity and an area of study. In each case, its main activities are listening, performing, and composing. Students can take part in one or more of these three areas at levels to suit their own needs and talents, regardless of age or status.

The Junior Certificate music syllabus suits the entire range of student aptitude and ability. It also allows for diversification in the form of set pieces and the selection of material of one's own choice. One of the aims of the course is to encourage social awareness and understanding of the artistic views of others through musical activities. This helps to break

down barriers. Nowadays, the musical voice of Travellers can proudly stand alongside and integrate with those of other traditions and genres.

Music enables students to express their cultural heritage and explore and develop their own sounds. At the same time they absorb an increasing number of new influences, helped in no small way by the advances of technology. Music is therefore a powerful tool in linking people.

8.4 Metalwork

The metalwork course is based on practical and physical activities. The Traveller community has experience of many of the practical processes taught on the course, such as beaten metalworking and general metalworking techniques. Many of these activities reflect the culture, craft and tradition of the Traveller community.

The course has educational validity and applications for all students, irrespective of their abilities.

8.5 Business Studies

Business studies is that part of the curriculum that enables the student to make informed decisions in the everyday business of living. The management of personal finances is an important lifeskill that must be practised by everyone. For all students this can be achieved through reference to familiar personal and household situations. Individuals are also consumers, and students are introduced to the concepts of consumer rights, consumer protection, and being a good consumer. The development of economic awareness through the study of business allows students, as citizens, to make informed contributions to the democratic process. Enterprise is a strong feature of Traveller culture. The Junior Certificate business studies curriculum encourages students to focus on enterprise and employment and apply skills to the commercial aspects of their own lives and those of their households.

8.6 Geography

The Junior Certificate geography syllabus aims to contribute to students' understanding of important issues in contemporary society. It also deals with the sharp inequalities that exist. Concepts relating to the variation in quality and type of accommodation in towns and cities as well as the important concepts of the migration and movement of peoples, have particular relevance for Traveller culture. The cultivation of an awareness of all types of stereotyping and prejudice and the development of positive attitudes, self-esteem and self-confidence all contribute to mutual understanding between Travellers and the rest of society.

8.7 History

Irish Travellers have a long and proud history in Ireland and elsewhere. This history has to be validated in the history curriculum in second-level schools. Travellers should be made aware of their own history and culture. The strength of the craft, music and oral traditions of the Traveller community is an area worthy of exploration for all students. The value of the study of history in combating prejudice and racism is well recognised. The importance of diverse points of view is central to all history curricula.

8.8 Mathematics

Mathematical skills and concepts are not bound by culture or tradition. However, relating these concepts to the students' life experiences can considerably enhance their understanding. Using examples from Traveller ways of living will enable the students to see the relevance of mathematics in everyday life. It will also help to ensure that Travellers can not only use mathematics as a problem-solving process but also appreciate it as a subject with intrinsic merit.

8.9 Home Economics

Home economics has direct relevance to the present and future life of every young person. The Junior Certificate syllabus aims to equip students with a range of important skills for personal independence and

for shared responsibility in the families and communities in which they live. It encompasses studies of many of the processes that are necessary for day-to-day living, particularly in the household. The main areas deal with the basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, and personal development. It builds on students' knowledge of different forms of home life and on their immediate experience of making choices in relation to the organisation of their own lives. In this regard there are many opportunities to relate course content to Traveller culture. For example, social and health studies provides opportunities to examine the local community. Various aspects of child development may be studied within the childcare option. The emphasis throughout the course is on the development of creative, practical and decision-making skills through a wide range of practical activities.

8.10 Art, Craft and Design

The art class provides a forum in which to validate, affirm and celebrate cultural and ethnic differences. Topics that provide opportunities to explore different lifestyles and different value systems include self-portraiture, painting, and the drawing of, for example, diverse types of housing and accommodation. The whole notion of recycling is inherent in three-dimensional studies. Art can be a powerful force in helping to illustrate and celebrate difference.

8.11 Science

The Junior Certificate science syllabus stresses environmental awareness as well as practical life skills in areas such as electricity and uses of energy. It also contains an option known as local studies. This allows students to carry out practical work within or outside the school as part of an investigative project. It provides students with the stimulus to research an idea, to design an investigation within their capabilities and to implement the plan with modifications as appropriate. There is no prescribed or set content for the option.

8.12 Physical Education

The physical education programme embodies a holistic approach to the concept of physical activity for young people. Through participation in physical education students are provided with a series of learning experiences that are designed to contribute to individual and collective well-being. They are motivated to choose a life-style that is active, healthy, and meaningful. Their self-concept is enhanced through the development of skilful and artistic performance of practical activities. Personal and social skills are developed, and positive attitudes towards interaction with others are encouraged. Most importantly, physical experience for students contributes to the development of leisure pursuits and participation in team sports.

8.13 Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)

The Junior Certificate syllabus in SPHE stresses the need for a supportive environment in schools. It states that the principles of fair play, respect, tolerance and reward for effort should permeate the whole school climate. The programme provides opportunities for all students, including Travellers, to explore their personal lives and their social development. The syllabus emphasises such issues as “belonging to a group” and “appreciating difference”. Within the relationships and sexuality education section of the syllabus students are encouraged to respect themselves and others. The emphasis in the SPHE programme on self-esteem, and the exploration of such issues as bullying, coping with change and an awareness of rights and responsibilities may help Traveller students to participate fully in school life and to give schools opportunities to validate Traveller culture.

8.14 Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP)

The JCSP is an intervention programme in selected schools in disadvantaged areas that offers a flexible approach to the curriculum at second level. It is aimed particularly at students at risk of leaving school early. The students following this programme take at least two subjects at

Junior Certificate level, usually English and mathematics at Foundation Level and may take other subjects as appropriate. A student profile is kept as a positive record of the student's achievement. There is a module on Traveller culture in the programme.

8.15 Transition Year programme

Since 1994, second-level schools have the option of offering their students a three-year senior cycle. This may involve students following a Transition Year programme, followed by one of the three Leaving Certificate programmes: the Established Leaving Certificate, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, and the Leaving Certificate Applied.

Features of the Transition Year programme

- Transition Year is a one-year programme between the end of the Junior Certificate programme and the start of the Leaving Certificate programme.
- The Transition Year aims to promote in students greater maturity, an orientation to adult and working life, and the development of technical, academic and general skills.
- Each school develops its own individual Transition Year programme, best suited to the needs of its students. This flexibility means that the particular needs of individual students, including Travellers, can be well catered for in Transition Year.
- The Transition Year aims to help students understand themselves better and to become more confident.
- The Transition Year presents students with opportunities to develop important life skills.
- The Transition Year provides opportunities for students to catch up

on skills and curriculum content that might have been missed, for whatever reasons, during the Junior Cycle programme.

- A Transition Year curriculum will normally include work experience, short modules, project work, visits to places of educational interest, enterprise education (mini-companies), computer studies and visiting speakers.
- Social awareness modules, project work and visiting speakers in particular, present schools with clear opportunities to link directly with the lives, history and culture of Travellers.

8.16 Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)

The Leaving Certificate Applied programme was introduced in 1995 to meet the needs of a diversity of young people who were not being adequately catered for by the other Leaving Certificate programmes or who chose not to opt for such programmes. The Leaving Certificate Applied has proved to be very suitable for a number of Traveller students. The following points should be noted in relation to it:

- It is a distinct, self-contained two-year Leaving Certificate programme offering a pathway to national certification for all participants, including Travellers.
- It is a student-centred programme, which concentrates on the needs and interests of participants. In this regard the Leaving Certificate Applied is particularly appropriate to Travellers, in that individual needs and interests can be adequately met and Traveller culture can be affirmed and its potential maximised to the students' benefit.
- Active teaching and learning in the Leaving Certificate Applied course promotes the development of qualities such as self-confidence, independence, responsibility and initiative as well as the skills of co-operation, teamwork, problem-solving and decision-

making. Work experience and work simulation provide an important opportunity to apply and further develop these.

- The primary objective of the Leaving Certificate Applied is preparation for adult and working life. It offers students, including Travellers, a relevant, broad and practical course.
- Assessment in the Leaving Certificate Applied is largely based on the accumulation of credit for achievement throughout the two years of the programme.
- The Leaving Certificate Applied provides access to further education and training. It is not only available in mainstream schools but is now being offered in a number of Youthreach centres and some community workshops.

9. Good practice in the use of additional resources

9.1 Additional teaching hours

The conditions for granting extra teaching hours and other resources to second-level schools that enrol Traveller students are outlined in Circular M43/99 (Appendix 1). Schools are still at a learning phase in the best use of extra teaching hours. Withdrawal of students with specific learning needs is a suitable strategy for some Traveller students but other strategies, such as support within the classroom and team-teaching, have also proved to be effective. Whatever strategy is decided upon with regard to the use of the additional teaching hours it is necessary that Traveller students should have access to the full curriculum in each subject area. Offering a restricted curriculum to Traveller students is actively discouraged.

Co-ordinating and monitoring the enrolment, attendance and progress of Travellers in the school are essential. Liaison with the visiting teacher for Travellers is also an important function, as is obtaining information from primary schools. Provision should also be made for continuing liaison with Traveller parents.

In the primary school there may have been a resource teacher for Travellers who had a detailed knowledge of the Traveller child and his or her family. This knowledge and experience should be sought by the second-level school, especially in relation to attainment and attendance records.

9.2 Education and pastoral care

In second-level schools a teacher or a number of teachers may have particular responsibility for co-ordinating and/or supporting the

educational provision for Traveller students. This support role requires effective communication skills, empathy, and a flexible approach. Care should be taken to ensure that a team approach is adopted in relation to the education and the pastoral care of Travellers. The team may include the following:

- principal
- deputy principal
- guidance counsellor
- chaplain
- year head
- class tutor
- home-school-community liaison teacher
- teacher or teachers with extra hours
- learning-support teacher
- adult mentor
- student mentor
- visiting teacher for Travellers
- parents.

9.3 Special capitation grant

It will be necessary for the school to ensure that it gets the appropriate capitation grant, as defined in circular M43/99, in respect of the enrolment of Traveller students. Steps should be taken to ensure that the capitation grant is used for the education of Traveller students.

The following are considered appropriate uses for this grant:

- expenses incurred in enhancing the Traveller student's experience in school
- measures to encourage attendance and participation
- educational visits and school trips
- student materials: pens, art supplies, ingredients for home economics.
- PE equipment, textbooks, uniform, classroom and learning equipment, computer support.

10. National support structure for Traveller education

10.1 National Education Officer for Travellers

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

- promoting and facilitating the education of Traveller students at a national level
- identifying the educational needs of Traveller students and recommending appropriate measures to the Department of Education and Science
- working in liaison with the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Science
- maintaining a close working relationship with members of the Visiting Teacher Service and with the administrative staff in the Department
- 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, Traveller organisations, health authorities, social workers, and, where appropriate, voluntary organisations and committees
- discussing the placement of Traveller students in second-level schools with the appropriate authorities and advising the Department of any difficulties that may arise
- seeking ways to involve Traveller parents in the education process

- consulting the relevant authorities on matters pertaining to pre-service and inservice training for teachers.

10.2 Visiting Teacher Service for Traveller education

The Visiting Teacher Service of the Department of Education and Science is a service that fosters and promotes opportunities for Traveller parents and their children, with the help of school personnel, to engage in a process of educational development. This is aimed at maximising participation and attainment levels and helping to combat racism and promote interculturalism.

The aim of the Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers is that Traveller students should participate fully in an intercultural and anti-racist education system.

The day-to-day work of the Visiting Teacher Service includes the following areas:

- **Families**

Visiting teachers (VTs) make and maintain links with Traveller families in their area. They advise families on educational provision in the area and support them in obtaining access to appropriate schooling for their children. In working towards promoting mutual understanding, the VT builds bridges between the culture of the home and the culture of the school.

- **Schools**

VTs visit schools in their area to support the work of the teachers and the schools in the provision of high quality education for the Traveller students.

- **Other agencies**

The VT works closely with existing statutory and voluntary services to provide the maximum support for Traveller families and school-going students.

- **In-career development**

The Visiting Teacher Service is involved in the design, development and provision of in-career development courses for teachers.

- **Data compilation**

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

Appendix 1

Support for second-level schools enrolling Traveller students

Circular Letter M43/99

An Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta,
Brainse an Iarbhunoideachais,
Teach Haicín,
Baile Átha Cliath 2.

Department of Education and Science,
Post-Primary Branch,
Hawkins House,
Dublin 2.

Tel: 01-809 5020

Fax: 01-809 5048

To the Management Authorities of Second Level Schools and the Chief Executive Officers of Vocational Education Committees.

Circular Letter M43/99

SUPPORT FOR POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS
ENROLLING TRAVELLER STUDENTS

Traveller teacher allocation

Post-Primary Schools that enrol Traveller students may apply to the Department for additional teaching hours to assist them in providing learning support in the area of literacy, numeracy and social skills. Generally, the level of teacher support provided will be an additional 0.07 teacher per Traveller student. However, each case will be decided individually based on the particular educational requirements of the student. Also, it will be necessary to consider each application in the context of the overall staffing situation of the school or the Scheme in the case of VECs.

Applications for additional teaching hours from schools under the aegis of a VEC should be made to the relevant CEO on the form accompanying this circular; each VEC should submit a single application based on information received from its

second-level schools to the **Vocational Teachers Section, Dept. of Education and Science, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath**. Applications from Secondary and Community and Comprehensive Schools should be forwarded direct to **Post-Primary Teachers Section, Dept. of Education and Science, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath** on the form accompanying this circular.

Applications should be submitted before 13th December 1999.

Where an additional allocation of teaching hours is approved it will be on condition that the hours are utilised solely to cater for the educational requirements of Traveller students. Also, Schools and VECs will be required to submit a progress report to the Department before the end of each academic year outlining the manner in which the hours were utilised and the progress made by each Traveller student.

Additional Per Capita Grant for Schools

In order to encourage participation by Traveller students in the second-level system and support second-level schools in responding to the needs of such students, an additional grant will be paid in respect of schools in the Free Education Scheme. The additional annual per capita grant will be £336 for each Traveller student enrolled in your school on 30 September 1999. The grant will be allocated to assist schools in providing appropriate teaching materials and supports for Travellers and in meeting other costs incurred by schools in responding to the educational needs of Travellers. The grant will be paid on the basis of the number of Travellers enrolled as indicated in the application form appended to this circular.

Schools which have already applied for additional teaching hours in advance of the issue of this circular must complete the application form for the purposes of the additional capitation grant.

Copies of Circular

Please provide a copy of this circular to the appropriate representatives of parents and teachers for transmission to individual parents and teachers.

**John Dennehy,
Secretary General.
December, 1999.**

**APPLICATION FOR CONCESSIONARY TEACHING HOURS AND/OR
ADDITIONAL PER CAPITA GRANT IN RESPECT OF TRAVELLER
STUDENTS**

School Name: _____

School Roll Number: _____

School Address :

Number of hours required per week: _____

Total Number of Traveller students enrolled on 30 September _____ :

Year 1: _____ Year 2: _____ Year 3: _____

Transition Year: _____ L.C. 1: _____ L.C.2 : _____

A copy of the educational programme that has been devised for these students is attached:

Yes _____ No _____

If no, please indicate the date on which this will be available: _____

I certify that the above information is correct, that any additional resources allocated on the basis of this application will be used to support Traveller Education and that a report will be submitted as required to the Department of Education and Science

Signature of Principal/Manager: _____

Date: _____

Authenticating stamp or seal of school:

NOTES:

- Appendix A must be completed in respect of each individual Traveller Child.
- All applications from schools under the aegis of VECs must be routed through the relevant CEO for transmission to the Department
- Please return this form to Post-Primary Teachers Section, Dept. of Education and Science, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath before 13th December.

Appendix to Circular Letter M43/99

DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL TRAVELLER CHILD REQUIRING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Class in present school: _____

Number of years in this school: _____

Previous educational history:

Names of any previous schools they attended including Primary and level of attainment:

Additional support provided for them in these schools (if any):

Details of any additional special educational needs (Psychological Reports must be provided in respect of students said to have specific special educational needs):

Please return this form to Post-Primary Teachers Section, Dept. of Education and Science, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath before 13th December.

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

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 or local diocesan office		
Resource teachers for Travellers in the primary schools		
District inspector primary		
Post-primary inspector		

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