



Race Equality
in Education



For Gypsies,
Travellers
and
Roma

The Rt Hon Lucy Powell MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

By post and email to: Sec-OF-STATE.PS@education.gov.uk

16 October 2026

Dear Lucy,

Re: Educational inequalities experienced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people

We write from the APPG on Race Equality in Education and the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma, following our joint parliamentary event, *Addressing Educational Inequalities for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities*, held on 14 September.

The event brought together parliamentarians, education professionals, community representatives and young people to discuss the experiences of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people in education, and how current and forthcoming reforms can better address persistent inequalities.

We were particularly struck by contributions on experiences of racism and bullying in schools. Young people and education professionals described racism as a significant barrier to participation and a factor in children feeling they do not belong in school. The event also highlighted concerns about the current arrangements for reporting racist bullying and incidents, with a call to reinstate reporting by schools to local authorities.

We would therefore welcome an update on whether the Department is considering reinstating a requirement for schools to record and report racist bullying and incidents, including how such information could be used to strengthen accountability for tackling racism in schools.

gypsy-traveller.org/appg All Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma

Co-chairs: Mary Foy MP, Baroness Janet Whitaker | Honorary President: Lord Nick Bourne

Friends, Families & Travellers (Charity Number: 1112326) acts as Secretariat to the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma.

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The event also highlighted the importance of ensuring that teachers have the knowledge and confidence to recognise and challenge racism, including through racial literacy in teacher education. We note approaches in Wales and Scotland to embed anti-racism within teacher education and professional learning. We would welcome an update on what consideration the Department is giving to strengthening anti-racism training and racial literacy in teacher education and professional development in England.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of children seeing their histories, cultures and communities reflected in education. There was particular concern about the limited representation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities within the curriculum, alongside calls for the Roma Holocaust to be appropriately reflected in Holocaust and wider history education. This is particularly timely given the Government's curriculum reforms and its commitment to a curriculum that reflects the diversity of society.

We would be grateful for an update on how Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities will be involved in the development and implementation of the revised curriculum, and how the Department intends to ensure that their histories, cultures and contributions are meaningfully represented.

Finally, the event touched on the importance of ensuring that practical and vocational routes are not regarded as second-best options for young people for whom mainstream academic pathways may not provide the most effective route to engagement and progression. The accompanying [Friends, Families and Travellers briefing](#) highlights wider concerns about limited access to vocational and college-based provision for 14-16-year-olds, alongside evidence of demand for earlier access to practical and vocational learning among Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people.

In light of the Government's plans to expand technical education for 14–16-year-olds, we would welcome an update on how the Department intends to ensure that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people can access these opportunities, including funded college-based provision, and how it will monitor participation and progression for these groups.

We hope that the experiences and views shared at the event will help inform the Department's approach to tackling educational inequalities and ensuring that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people can participate fully and equally in education.

[gypsy-traveller.org/appg](https://www.gypsy-traveller.org/appg) All Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma

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We would be grateful for a response to the points above and would welcome the opportunity to continue this discussion with you and your Department.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Janet Whitaker, Co-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma

Kim Johnson MP, Officer of the APPG for Race Equality in Education and member of the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma