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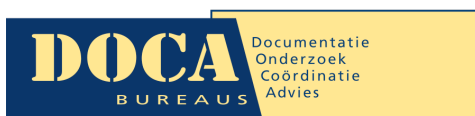
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# Inclusion and education in European countries

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INTMEAS Report for contract –2007-2094/001 TRA-TRSP0

Final report: 13. UK



Rae Condie  
Lio Moscardini  
Ann Grieve  
Iain Mitchell

Lepelstraat  
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#### INTMEAS Reference Group

George Muskens, project leader

Jaap Dronkers, expert adviser

José Ramón Flecha, expert adviser

Jill Bourne, expert adviser

Danielle Zay, leader French research team

Ingrid Gogolin, leader German research team

Pál Tamás, leader Hungarian research team

Francesca Gobbo, leader Italian research team

Michał Federowicz, leader Polish research team

Albina Nečak Lük, Sonja Novak Lukanovic, leaders Slovenian research team

Mariano Fernández Enguita, leader Spanish research team

Elena Dingu Kyrklund, leader Swedish research team

Rae Condie, leader UK research team

# **Inclusion and Education in the United Kingdom**

**Final report to DOCA Bureaus, Netherlands**

**Professor Rae Condie**

**Dr Lio Moscardini**

**Dr Ann Grieve**

**Iain Mitchell**

**University of Strathclyde**

**Glasgow, Scotland.**

**May 2009**

# **Inclusion and Education in the United Kingdom**

**Final report to DOCA Bureaus, Netherlands**

**Contract -2007-2094/001 TRA-TRSP0: Strategies for  
supporting  
schools and teachers in order to foster social inclusion**

**Professor Rae Condie**

**Dr Lio Moscardini**

**Dr Ann Grieve**

**Iain Mitchell**

**University of Strathclyde  
Glasgow, Scotland.**

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## 1. Introduction

The focus in this report is strategies that address the disadvantages experienced by minority background students in schools within the United Kingdom (UK) and the wider policy context in which these operate. More specifically, the focus is on four groups of students:

- Ethnic minority students including refugee and asylum seekers' children;
- Gypsy/traveller students;
- Students in care (Looked After Children – LAC); and,
- Linguistic minorities e.g. Gaelic, Welsh.

The devolved nature of government in the UK means that while some broad principles are common across the four nations that constitute the UK (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales), the particular emphases adopted and the strategies developed to foster social inclusion vary from one to another. In addition, there is no integrated policy for social inclusion but rather separate policy statements for each of the categories of disadvantage identified in the study. All four countries within the UK have a combination of private and state-funded schooling. In much, if not all, of this report the emphasis is on the state-funded sector.

## 2. The national context

The political complexion of the United Kingdom (UK) has changed significantly in the last ten years, most notably with the creation of national parliaments or assemblies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland following referendums on devolution in the late 1990s. Responsibility for the devolved powers was transferred to the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999 and to the Northern Ireland Assembly on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1999. Unfortunately this was later suspended and only restored on 8 May 2007 (<http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/role/devolved.cfm>). As a result, much of the policy documentation in Northern Ireland is not underpinned by legislation but reflects developments in other regions of the UK, notably that in England, although tailored to meet the specific issues and needs of Northern Ireland.

Educational policy for Wales, prior to the establishment of the Welsh Assembly, was typically subsumed into that for England and, often, Northern Ireland. Scotland's educational system has always been separate from that of England, although tending to reflect similar concerns and priorities.

While the UK Parliament retained authority over the devolved parliaments or assemblies, it transferred considerable powers to them, albeit at varying levels and for similar if not identical areas of responsibility. Devolved powers usually include matters such as education, health and prisons, while those powers that remain with the UK Parliament are known as 'reserved powers'. 'Reserved powers' include defence and other matters with a national (UK-wide) or international impact. Therefore issues relating to social inclusion and minority group experiences are the responsibility of individual parliaments or assemblies. For example, while the UK government ratified the European Charter, it fell to regional assemblies to develop and implement appropriate policies.

As a result, this report looks at the four countries that comprise the United Kingdom individually, highlighting the key approaches taken, and provides examples of initiatives or projects designed to address the needs of one of the four groups identified which reflect these policies and which have been shown to have had some impact on young people.



### 3 Disadvantaged groups and education

For the purpose of this report, four distinct groups of young people have been identified: ethnic minority students; looked after children; gypsies and travellers; and, minority language speakers. While these are identified as categories of students who, according to the statistics, tend to experience lower levels of participation and educational achievement in post-16 education, other factors such as gender, socio-economic status and disability can also result in educational disadvantage. While this study does not intend to investigate these additional factors, it will take them into account where they are pertinent to the disadvantage experienced by the students listed. It is also acknowledged that these four categories of students are not mutually exclusive in that an individual student may be a member of more than one of these groups, thereby at risk of experiencing multiple disadvantage. This is considered in greater depth in the final report.

In educational terms, specific groups of students (identified by gender, social class, ethnic origin or other variable) are defined as disadvantaged if the statistics on participation and attainment are significantly lower than those of the general population and/or in comparison with those of other groups. Strategies which are adopted to address social inclusion within the educational sector, normally with the aim of bringing these metrics into line with those of the general population, predominantly focus on measures intended to raise participation and attainment. In addition, many strategies to address educational attainment seek to raise self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation as interim outcomes in the drive to improve attainment. These are seen as necessary underpinnings or pre-requisites for educational achievement. In reviewing the literature, the team has sought to identify both those initiatives that were intended to impact directly on attainment and also those which address various interim outcomes.

In much of the literature, including policy statements, the terms 'integration' and 'inclusion' are often used interchangeably. However 'inclusion' refers to efforts to include the child with his/her own culture and values into the school, within a culture that celebrates diversity (Corbett, 2001) while integration refers to a process that seeks to equip the child to meet the demands of mainstream education and culture. Good practice highlighted within this report relates to the inclusion, rather than integration, of children from diverse backgrounds. Historically, the first efforts were to integrate such students into the mainstream educational culture; more recently, greater emphasis has been placed on valuing and respecting the background culture, traditions and values of all students.

#### 3.1 Ethnic minority students, including refugees and asylum seekers' children

The terms 'asylum seeker', 'refugee' and 'immigrant' are often used interchangeably with little or no common definition or shared understanding. The Refugee Council offers the following definitions:

*Asylum seeker:* someone who has fled persecution in their own homeland, has arrived in another country, made themselves known to the authorities and exercised their legal right to apply for asylum.

*Refugee:* someone whose asylum application has been successful and who is allowed to stay in another country, having proved they would face persecution in their homeland.

(EIS, 2007)

Other related terms such as illegal immigrant, failed asylum seeker and economic migrant are also encountered. Essentially, all are terms used to describe people who, for one reason or another, have left their homeland and arrived in another country. There is no entirely accurate national demographic data in the UK on the numbers of

asylum seeking and refugee children although in 1993 it was estimated that there were about 99,000 refugee children of compulsory school age living in Britain.

Under the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1949), which has now been incorporated into domestic law (Human Rights Act, 1998), there is 'a right to education' for all people within a country's jurisdiction (Article 2, Protocol 1). Added to this is the stipulation that the state shall respect the '*religious and philosophical convictions of parents*' concerning the education provided.

The system for asylum seekers and refugees in the UK is complicated and can involve families being dispersed across the country, resulting in possible isolation. In addition, it can take a long time for applications and appeals to be processed, creating uncertainty and insecurity. The reliance on dispersal and temporary accommodation may mean that children are forced to move to new schools frequently and this can have a profoundly negative impact on their capacity for socialising, retaining friendships and receiving support from communities.

### 3.2 Gypsy/traveller students

Gypsies and travellers are not a homogeneous group, comprising a diverse range of cultures and traditions. In the United Kingdom the term Gypsy/Traveller is applied to a range of peoples from different backgrounds and origins including: Scottish Gypsy/Travellers, Irish Travellers, English Gypsies, Welsh Gypsies, Roma, New Age Travellers, and Occupational Travellers (circus and showground travellers). The use of the '/' between Gypsies/Travellers is commonly used to reflect official awareness of the fact that some families call themselves Gypsies, while others prefer to call themselves Travellers (STEP, 2005).

In Scotland, there are no clear statistics for the numbers of Gypsy/Travellers, with estimates varying from three to five thousand nomadic Gypsy/travellers and perhaps as many as 17,000 when housed Gypsy/Travellers are included (Lloyd et al., 1999). There are no published statistics on the numbers of Gypsy/Traveller pupils in Scottish schools. Recent school census forms can help to identify the number enrolled but this figure does not indicate those children who have not enrolled or who have 'dropped out' of schools (Jordan and Padfield, 2003). In England, there are about 1,100 Irish Travellers and 2,300 Gypsy/Roma students in secondary schools with more than twice as many registered in primary schools (DfES, 2006). In England and Wales, the 2003 Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) recorded almost 4,000 Irish Traveller pupils and 6,000 Gypsy/Roma pupils. Traveller groups in UK schools are becoming more diverse with an increasing number of Roma pupils arriving from Eastern Europe.

Gypsy/traveller students are recognised as the most at risk group within the education system. Recent research has detailed the extent of risk, deprivation and social exclusion among children and young people of gypsy/traveller communities (Parry et al., 2004; DfES, 2003; Lloyd et al, 1999).

In England it is estimated that many Gypsy/Traveller students are not recorded in the Annual School Census and are not present during key stage assessments. Nor do they always continue in education up till Key Stage 4 (14 – 16 year olds); for those that do have a recorded result, attainment is very low:

- At Key Stage 1, 28% of Travellers of Irish Heritage and 42% of Gypsy/Roma pupils achieved Level 2 or above in Reading compared to 84 percent of all pupils.
- At Key Stage 4, 42 percent of Travellers of Irish Heritage and 23 percent of Gypsy/Roma pupils achieved 5+ A\*-C GCSE/GNVQs compared to 51 percent of all pupils.

(DfES 2005a, p.9)

There are complex factors surrounding school attendance, exclusion and interrupted learning that are socially and culturally driven, which continue to marginalise this group of learners. Efforts to address these problems have not been totally successful due to a failure to establish a co-ordinated and integrated response (Jordan and Padfield, 2003). The average attendance rate for Traveller pupils is around 75%, this figure is well below the national average and is the worst attendance profile of any minority ethnic group (Ofsted, 2003).

'Interrupted learning' is a term used to describe the school attendance pattern of Gypsy/Traveller students often on account of their mobility. Negative experiences of the educational system can cause Gypsy/Travellers to disengage from it; self-exclusion of this kind is evidenced by the high levels of rejection of attendance at secondary school, with many Gypsy/Traveller students not transferring from primary to secondary (Jordan and Padfield, 2003). Decisions to self-exclude for reasons such as bullying, racism or family problems, such as homelessness, are often identified by schools as a consequence of weak parenting rather than as a deficit of the educational system (Jordan and Padfield, op. cit.). Paradoxically, attempts to promote increased school attendance by travellers are hampered by some pupils being excluded for disciplinary reasons; this is viewed as being connected to the *wider processes of social exclusion* with difference being reviewed as deviance (Lloyd and Stead, 2002, p.23).

Significant factors in the low achievement levels of students from Gypsy and Traveller families include disrupted attendance patterns and disaffection with the school system, particularly at secondary levels (Ofsted, 2003; Jordan and Padfield, 2003; Lloyd et al., 2002). Many of the initiatives identified focus on providing ways in which schools and travelling communities can remain in touch, notably through ICT. Addressing disaffection means considering the tensions between the educational system and the culture and lifestyles of these families and communities. The investigation of specific strategies in the second phase of the study will look particularly at initiatives intended to address these two key issues.

### **3.3 Looked After Children**

The precise definition of 'looked after- children varies by region of the UK. In England, the term 'looked after' has a specific legal definition based on the Children Act of 1989: *A child is looked after by a local authority if he or she has been provided with accommodation, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours... or is placed in the care of a local authority by virtue of an order made under part IV of the Act (that is, under a care order)*. Therefore, young people under the age of 18 can be looked after by a local authority either under a court order (including Emergency Protection Orders, Interim Care Orders and full Care Orders) or through an arrangement made voluntarily with the child's parents.

In Scotland, the term 'looked-after' was first introduced in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, replacing the previous term, 'in care'. The term refers to the status under law of young people under the age of 18 who have formally come under the supervision of the local authority, either through an order from the Children's Panel or other statutory order. Looked After Children (LAC) do not necessarily live away from their birth parents. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006, 56% of LAC in Scotland were living at home with either their parents or with other family members while still under local authority supervision ('We Can and Must Do Better, 2007). If, however, they can no longer be looked after by the family and are in a children's home, residential school or a foster placement, the children become Looked After and Accommodated (LAAC).

It should be noted, however, that the acronym 'LAC' is used much more commonly than 'LAAC' in Scottish policy and strategy documents, even when the policies and strategies in question are only directly related to children living away from the family home. 'LAC' is also often used interchangeably with 'in care', even though 'in care' should specifically

refer to children who are subject to a Care Order. The more general term that acts as an equivalent to 'LAC' should be 'in public care'. This report will use the terms 'LAC' and 'in public care' and make clear when it is discussing initiatives that are specific to accommodated children.

In Northern Ireland the definition is similar, with The Children (NI) Order 1995 stating that a 'looked after' child is one 'who is in the care of a Trust or who is provided with accommodation by a Trust'. Looked after children in Northern Ireland can live:

- in a residential home
- in a residential school
- in a foster placement
- in a family placement with a relative or occasionally at home

There are a number of reasons why children might come under local authority care. These include:

- children suffering sexual, physical or emotional abuse;
- children suffering neglect;
- families unable to cope with a child's behaviour;
- parents with mental health issues or drug or alcohol addictions that prevent them looking after their children safely; and/or,
- children having complex health needs or disabilities that require full time specialist care

In addition, only a very small percentage of LAC have become looked after due to their own criminal behaviour. It is also worth noting that Britain has an increasing number of looked after children who are unaccompanied asylum seekers.

Throughout the United Kingdom, looked after children continually under-achieve at school in comparison with their non-looked after peers. Department for Education and Skills statistics for 2006 in England show that only 12% of children who had been looked after for 12 months or more achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A to C, compared with the national average of 59% of children (NFER, 2008).

There are numerous reasons for this under-achievement, including disruption within the home environment, disruption caused by having to move schools and lack of an educationally-rich environment in residential settings. LAC have consistently higher than average rates of low attendance, exclusions, and truancy. They are also vulnerable to social problems at school such as bullying. These are all specific educational issues that are tackled in both policy and practice regarding looked after children.

Throughout the United Kingdom there is an impressive amount of policy and practice relating to the educational achievements of children in public care, reflecting how the issue retains a high profile on both a national and local level. There is, however, still a widespread acceptance, as seen in policy document titles such as 'We Can and Must Do Better', that many of these measures have not had the desired effect in closing the attainment gap between LAC and their non-looked after peers.

### **3.4 Minority Language Speakers**

The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (2001)<sup>1</sup> defines regional or minority languages as those that are:

- a. traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population; and
- b. different from the official language(s) of that State;

(Council of Europe, 2001, Part I, Article 1)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/148.htm>

The charter specifically excludes dialects of the official languages of the State or the languages of migrants (often referred to as 'community languages' in the literature.). In practice, much of the UK legislation and policy regarding minority languages makes explicit reference to the place of community languages in education.

Across the UK, government support for minority languages is typically expressed as a commitment to ensuring that communities retain their sense of identity, that the nation as a whole embraces the cultural diversity that such languages reflect, and that they are integrated into public policy. In addition to identifying benefits to the community, minority language support is also viewed as benefiting the individual, particularly with regard to educational outcomes and life chances. The specific languages thus supported vary across the UK. Scotland, Wales and Ireland all have (different) indigenous minority languages that they seek to protect and preserve. In England, there is no widely recognised indigenous heritage language although there are movements campaigning to have, for example, the Celtic language Cornish recognised as such. In all four countries of the UK a number of minority community languages are recognised and supported within the educational system.

In 2001, the British government ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, Scots, Welsh and Irish were given the highest level of protection; Scots and Ulster Scots were given more limited protection. In addition to these indigenous heritage languages, each of the countries within the UK recognises and, to varying degrees, have policies and initiatives in place to support community languages.

For indigenous, heritage languages, this takes the form in Wales, Ireland and Scotland, of language-medium teaching of various types, from total immersion to single subject study for external certification similar to provision for other modern foreign languages such as French or Spanish. The second phase of the this study will look more closely at the impact of such strategies, investigating examples of free-standing schools, partial immersion and the teaching of the curriculum through minority languages. In addition, further study will be undertaken into the position of Scots and Ulster Scots in the education system and investigate specific projects which were established to enhance their standing and increase their visibility in the school curriculum.

Minority community languages appear to have received less attention, and funding. However, the second phase of the study will identify and evaluate the impact of specific projects within the four nations that comprise the United Kingdom.

#### **4. Case studies of socially inclusive strategies in school education**

There are policies in place in each of the countries within the UK which aim to ensure that the educational needs of minority and/or disadvantaged groups in society are met. Although these vary in detail and focus, they are all based on the principle of integrating provision into mainstream schooling. Only in severe cases of physical disability or behavioural disturbance is specialist provision made through, for example, special schools or units.

Government educational policy and curricular documents for schools normally make reference to, and include guidance on, potentially at risk groups such as the disabled, 'hard to reach' (e.g. gypsies and travellers) and those whose home or family language is other than English (e.g. Urdu, Chinese). Having given such guidance, and sometimes funding, the government then essentially leaves regional and local educational bodies to develop their own strategies and initiatives for ensuring the inclusion of such pupils. Therefore, in practice, new projects or initiatives have tended to be instigated and implemented at a local or regional level, often to meet what are typically local needs, within the broad framework of national educational policy.

As a result, many of the initiatives identified in the search for case studies in phase 2 of the project, are relatively small-scale and localised. In addition, they frequently lack

systematic evaluation. Consequently, much of the literature is descriptive, without sufficient evidence to allow the reader to judge the effectiveness of the initiative or the lessons for others that might be reliably drawn. This should be borne in mind when reading this report.

In the case studies, the focus on four key groups of pupils:

- Ethnic minority students including refugee and asylum seekers' children;
- Gypsy/Traveller students;
- Students in care (Looked After Children – LAC); and,
- Linguistic minorities e.g. Gaelic, Welsh, community languages.

For each of these groups, we have identified examples of initiatives or developments from England and Scotland which were designed to support the pupils and, in many instances, their families and wider community.

The following four sections of the report outline the policy context in each of the four countries within the UK in turn, identify some of the strategies adopted to address educational disadvantage and finally, for England and Scotland, explore some of the specific initiatives or practices established to address the educational disadvantages experienced by the specific groups of students highlighted above.

## **5. England**

### **5.1 Ethnic minorities, including refugees and asylum seekers**

According to a report by Save the Children, many children in England are missing out on a good-quality education. Some 9,000 are permanently excluded from school each year and an additional 10,000 are simply not getting an education, due to the complexities of registering for a school place, being dispersed and so on. These figures include asylum seekers and refugee children, whose human rights are not being respected (Save the Children, 2007). One of the most significant principles is the right of children and young people to be involved in decisions that affect their lives and their environments. However, In England it is the parent who is recognised formally and not the child, when it comes to key decision making processes.

#### **a. Policy**

Local authorities have a duty to provide full time education for all children of compulsory school age who live within their area (Education Act, 1996; Section 14). This means that children, even if newly arrived in the United Kingdom, have the same entitlement to free education as those who have UK status by birth. The nationality of the child or the status of their immigration has no bearing on whether they have any entitlement to support.

*'It is Government policy that children from asylum seeking and refugee backgrounds are given the same opportunities as all other children to access education. LEAs have a legal duty to ensure that education is available for all children of compulsory school age in their area, appropriate to age, ability and aptitudes and any Special Educational Needs (SEN) they may have. This duty applies irrespective of a child's immigration status or rights of residence in a particular area'.*

(Teachernet: Refugee and asylum seekers' children p.1.)

In addition all local education authorities (LEAs) and schools have a general duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) to eradicate racial discrimination and

promote equal opportunities and positive relationships between people of different racial backgrounds. LEAs therefore require schools to ensure that admission policies and practices are monitored and reviewed by each school. Parents of refugee and asylum-seeker pupils have a duty to make sure that their children receive an education (in England DES circular 11/88).

However, despite there being no statutory requirement, many LEAs put into place arrangements to support the immigrant families in aspects of schooling. These arrangements address enrolment arrangements and extend to strategies at classroom level to support individual children. In England, each LEA has a measure of autonomy in how they support the education of refugee and asylum seeking children. The sorts of strategies that are in place at this level include working with voluntary organisations and other agencies to provide a more integrated support framework.

One example is the Immigration Advisory Service available at the local Citizen's Advice Bureau in Swindon ([www.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov)). This provides support for parents in applying for school places. There are particular difficulties associated with placing children in schools. Doyle and McCorrison (2008) noted reports that some asylum seeking or refugee children had to wait up to seven months for a place despite support from and involvement of, a number of other agencies and organisations.

The difficulties do not end when a place has been secured. Tomlinson (2005) raises issues about the content of the curriculum in English schools. She argues that little attempt has been made to refine the curriculum to take account of the cultural diversity now part of English society. The Qualifications and Curriculum authority (QCA) in 1999 insisted that the amended curriculum (from 2000) would assist in developing a rational outlook and prepare young people to take a positive role in an ethnically diverse culture. Much of this focused on citizenship education. It is interesting to note, however, that Figueroa (2003) has pointed out that key issues such as diversity, conflict resolution, international or global issues, gender, ethnic equality and anti-racism do not feature in the goals set for this aspect of education (Figuera, in Tomlinson, 2005)

Some LEAs have created posts such as 'Asylum seeker and refugee support teacher' and many have developed collaborative partnerships with other services such as Housing Associations. In some instances, collaborative working has been extended to include agencies which can help support pupils with complex needs.

The literature indicates that many LEAs recognise the need for clear communication with schools and for appropriate staff training, not only for teachers but for school governors and school board members. Swindon, for example, suggested that a nominated person in each school should act as a reference point for refugee and asylum seeker matters ([www.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov)). In support of this approach, Whiteman's (2005) research found that the integration of asylum seeker and refugee children depends on the diversity of ethnicity in individual schools, as well as the availability of resources and support.

## **b. Strategies**

According to the QCA guidance the national curriculum for England should play a significant approach to planning an appropriate curriculum for asylum seeking and refugee pupils (QCA, 2004). The national curriculum has four key goals and one of these relates to the establishment of appropriate education for all pupils, irrespective of social background culture race and gender, among other circumstances. Because of their experiences and their social grouping in this country, i.e. almost exclusively housed in poor socio-economic areas, children of refugees and asylum seekers are considered more likely to underachieve in school. The results of this can be disaffection with school, low self esteem and in some cases exclusion from school (*Transforming secondary education*, DfES, 2001).

Some of the strategies identified in the literature include:

#### *Buddy systems*

Whiteman (2005) found one primary school in her study, a 'Centre of Good Practice' that a mentoring system was used to support the asylum seeker and refugee children.

#### *Support for learning English*

In order to achieve, it is essential that asylum seeker and refugee children learn English – the language of instruction in the vast majority of UK schools. Many schools have put in place support systems for children who need to learn English as an additional language (EAL), but resources at school level are often stretched (Doyle and McCorrison, 2008). The pressure on resources is not only at school level. Pressure has increased on central peripatetic teams and school based Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant support staff, put in place by LEAs. This grant is designed to support schools to make provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils who are at risk of underachievement. Schools are expected to set targets at whole school, class and individual levels and to monitor and evaluate the attainment of bilingual pupils (Ofsted, 2004). However the needs of refugee and asylum seekers are complex and not only concerned with bilingualism, which seems to be the focus for this grant.

Practitioners need to be well equipped to support the huge diversity within the groups of children joining British schools (Rutter 2001), and this suggests the need for to respond to this cultural change.

#### *Provision of interpreters*

Doyle and McCorrison (2008) reported that some schools translated materials for parents/carers and provided interpreters. Others use link workers and bilingual support staff as interpreters, necessary for working with students and to address the needs of parents and carers. Other examples of good practice that they observed included booking trained interpreters for events such as admission interviews and pupil background assessments (Vincent and Warren, 1998). Whiteman (2005) found in one of the schools in the north east of England, interpreters were used only occasionally, usually for meetings with parents. Interpreters were accessed through the LEA or psychological services.

#### *Friendship clubs*

No evidence of such initiatives was found. However there was evidence that some schools used 'after hours' clubs to boost children's attainment, though these clubs were not always conducted in the mother tongue because of the diverse range of pupils. OFSTED (2003) reported on one instance where a school was attempting to support children by running breakfast clubs and another of the development of mother-tongue classes.

#### *Anti racist anti bullying strategies in place*

It is notable that a recent OFSTED report (2003) does not specifically mention the place of anti racist and anti bullying strategies in the inclusion and support of asylum seeker and refugee children. Neither of these is mentioned by DFES (2004). All studies of refugee pupils' experiences indicate that a majority suffer racial harassment in school and in their neighbourhoods. No educational policies designed to counter a hostility fed by the media, economic migrants, asylum seekers and refugees could be found (Tomlinson, 2005). However all schools are required to record all racist incidents and parents/carers and governors should be informed of these and the actions taken to deal with them. LEAs should be informed, annually, by Governing Bodies of the frequency and pattern of any such incidents (DFES, 2004).

### **c. Case study**



This section of the report draws on two key studies: Arnot and Pinson (2005) and Ofsted (2003). Arnot & Pinson (2005) relate good practice to integration in three areas, referring to *'the social aspects of integration, whether the children feel safe and secure in school and whether their needs were being met so that they could fulfill their potential'* (ibid: 53). In this instance the focus appears to be on integration rather than inclusion, with the aim of providing information and guidance in order that the student and his/her family can understand and access educational provision (more 'fitting-in' than genuine inclusion).

i. Settling in

No specific strategies were described for settling asylum-seeker/refugee children into schooling. However, Ofsted reported that one secondary school had a system in place where the asylum seeker/refugee tutor groups were 'briefed in advanced' (Ofsted 2003:21). It was felt that the LEA support provided, and the additional teaching they received in withdrawal groups<sup>2</sup> from the school, were beneficial in helping the students to settle in.

ii. Homework support

Arnot and Pinson (2005) reported that a number of schools ran lunchtime/after school clubs and/or summer schools though these seemed designed to socialise asylum seeker and refugee children rather than support their learning or homework. In one LEA there were some schools which ran homework clubs specifically for asylum seeker and refugee children.

iii. Home school relations

Many LEAs have established school-parent partnership projects. In addition, some schools employed a specific home-school link teacher to support integration. Translators were used at times, mainly for parents' evenings although in some instances, the students or other members of the asylum seeker/refugee community had the task of translating. This was considered to be undesirable but at times unavoidable. However, some schools found the cost of interpreters to be an issue, as was the ease of access to professional interpreters.

iv. Friendship

No specific strategies were identified in any studies for promoting friendship although it was recognised that making friends was an important part of settling in and being socially integrated (Arnot & Pinson, 2005)

v. Bullying

Some schools (especially secondary schools) used the 'Red Card to Racism' Scheme to overcome intolerance, and questionnaires to parents and pupils to scope out the problems encountered by students (Whiteman, 2005: 384). Show Racism the Red Card (SRTRC) is an antiracist education charity which aims to raise awareness amongst young people about the dangers of, and issues surrounding racism in society. It uses well known professional footballers to help get the message across and the charity produces a range of materials for use in schools as well as other educational settings.

Most good practice identified by these studies related to policies at LEA level rather than specific targeted actions by teachers or schools. Good practice related in some cases to the formation of multi disciplinary teams or comprehensive education policies, which may relate for example to teacher training. In addition it was felt that citizenship education was good practice, however it related to valuing refugee and asylum seeker children rather than supporting them in their learning.

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<sup>2</sup> Withdrawal groups: when individual or small groups of students are removed from their classes for specific, targeted additional support for short periods of time during the school day.

## 5.2 Gypsies and Travellers

In England and Wales, raising the achievement of Gypsy/Traveller students is recognised as the responsibility of all within the education system (DCSF, 2008). Under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 Gypsy/Travellers are recognised as an ethnic minority group and the Act gives public authorities a statutory general duty to promote race equality. It states that public authorities and schools have a general duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups. The Act also places specific duties on schools, in particular to improve the educational experience for all children including those belonging to minority ethnic groups.

The problems of underachievement of ethnic minority groups have been recognized. Ofsted (2003) reported that Gypsy/ Traveller students have the lowest results of any ethnic minority group and are the most at risk group in the education system. Ofsted have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate progress is being made in schools and local education authorities, an outcome of their work being the development of best practice in schools. As part of this policy of supporting schools and public authorities, Ofsted have published a document outlining good practice (Ofsted, 2005).

Concerns of identification of Gypsy/Travellers students have been raised by Ofsted (2003) who considers that about 12,000 Traveller children are not registered with a school and that at Key Stage 4 this represents about 53% of these pupils. A research study by Derrington and Kendall (2004) found high drop out rates of Gypsy Traveller students at secondary school.

### a. Policy

The Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is committed to raising the attendance and achievement of Gypsy/ Traveller pupils (DCSF, 2008). In recent years a number of documents have been published with the aim of developing inclusive practices for ethnic minority groups. In March 2003 the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) published *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Ethnic Minority Pupils*, and *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Gypsy Traveller pupils: A Guide to Good Practice* in July 2003. The *Every Child Matters* initiative (DfES, 2004) is described on the government website as a 'ten-year strategy to make England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up'. The *Children's Plan* (December 2007) reinforces this aim. These documents are intended for local authorities, educational organisations and staff working with students from ethnic minority groups and aim to offer guidance to ensure that Gypsy/Traveller students enjoy a positive school experience in accordance with the agenda of *Every Child Matters*.

### b. Strategies

The document *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Gypsy Traveller Pupils* was published as a guide to good practice (DfES, 2003). It recommended that schools respect and address the needs of Gypsy/Traveller students and makes a number of recommendations. These included the need for the development of a culturally-relevant curriculum and the need for staff training in order to develop the knowledge and understanding required to support Gypsy/Traveller students.

The DfES also recommended that schools should establish successful relationships with the Traveller Education Support Service (TESS). In 2005, the DfES published *Aiming high: Partnerships between Schools and Traveller Education Support Services in Raising the Achievement of Gypsy Traveller pupils*. This brief document outlined strategies for developing this partnership and gave advice on effective classroom strategies (DfES, 2005b).

Most recently the DCSF has published *The Inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and Young People* (DCSF, 2008). This document offers guidance and a range of advice and strategies for supporting Gypsy/ Traveller students.

Friends, Families and Travellers (FFT) is an organisation that was established in response to the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act. The FFT is a registered charity, with a Board of Trustees, that seeks to address the problems facing the Gypsy/Traveller community. It provides an extensive body of resources, documents and information on its website including material that has been specifically designed for teachers and youth workers working with young Gypsy Travellers. In addition, there is a teachers' resource pack specifically tailored for teachers and youth workers who are new to working with Gypsy/Traveller students ([www.gypsy-traveller.org](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org)). The FFT was short listed for the Human Rights Award 1999.

The National Literacy Trust also provides a wide range of support materials, resources and documents from its website. Some of these materials are drawn from work carried out within the Literacy and Social Inclusion Project. This was a three-year project was funded by the Basic Skills Agency and delivered by the National Literacy Trust. (<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/database/travellers.html>).

The ELAMP Project (Marks, 2005) was funded by the DfES, coordinated by the National Association of Teachers of Travellers (NATT) and supported by a number of other agencies. It took place in 2004 and explored the use of ICT with Gypsy/ Travellers. Its aim was to look at the potential of ICT, specifically laptops and datacards, to support the learning experiences of Gypsy /Traveller students. The evaluation report of the ELAMP Project highlighted the strengths and limitations of ICT and argued for a *more prominent role for home-school learning agreements* (Marks, 2005, p.2).

The Welsh Assembly Government commissioned a qualitative study into the education of Gypsy/Traveller students (Jones, Powell and Reakes, 2006). This study involved strategic interviews with respondents from eight organizations, including the Welsh Assembly Government and Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. The research showed that there was a need for additional funding to support the education of Gypsy/Travellers on account of the additional educational needs of this group resulting from lack of attainment and cultural influences which impact on their engagement in education (Jones, Powell and Reakes, op.cit.)

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) carry out educational research in England and Wales with the aim of informing government policy. NFER are currently undertaking a research project entitled 'Approaches to working with children, young people and families for Traveller, Irish Traveller, Gypsy, Roma and Show people communities'. The main aim of this study, outlined on the NFER website, is to *'conduct a literature review and supplementary investigation of the range of issues around and approaches to working with Travellers, Irish Travellers, Gypsies, Roma and Show people, and the support, training and other programmes available to staff involved.'*

In recent years NFER have been responsible for a number of studies focussing on interventions to support Gypsy/Travellers. One study in Wales looked at the education of gypsy/travelers (Jones, Powell and Reakes, 2006). (See the NFER website for further details of this and other studies in this area:: <http://www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/change-for-children/gypsytraveller-children.cfm>.)

Other recent research includes studies by Derrington and Kendall (2007) and Mason and Broughton (2007). Derrington and Kendall's paper outlined the developments in educational policy that have impacted on the educational outcomes for Gypsy/Traveller students. They draw from a recent five-year study and present findings that suggest that issues of racism, cultural dissonance and low teacher expectations are contributory factors in the achievement and educational engagement of Gypsy/Traveller students. Mason and Kendal's case study highlighted the need to develop networks between

services and communities in order to advance social inclusion for Gypsy/Traveller children and families.

### **c. Case study**

The project outlined here was established in order to investigate the absence of Gypsy/Traveller children from Sure Start support projects in Leeds.

#### *Background*

Sure Start is a government-funded programme which aims to achieve better outcomes for children, parents and communities by increasing the availability of early years childcare for all children, improving health and emotional development for young children and supporting parents as parents and in their aspirations towards employment. The policies and programmes of Sure Start are part of the Government's Ten Year Childcare Strategy, *Choice for parents, the best start for children*, introduced in December 2004; they apply in England only. Achieve is a network that operates through the General Teaching Council of England (GTC). Its aim is to bring professionals together to promote racial equality and diversity in schools. Following Achieve's Traveller Education Conference in Leeds (March 2007) the Traveller Education Services (TES) set up a project to look into the observed absence of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children in Sure Start support projects in Leeds.

Research was carried out by the project leader to determine how many Gypsy/Traveller children had accessed the eight Sure Start projects over the ten years that they had been running in Leeds. The findings showed that the projects that responded had no record of any children from these ethnic groups accessing their services over the previous ten years. As a consequence a new project was established to address this issue. The Leeds primary care trust Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Advisor was involved in identifying funding for the new project. The Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange (GATE) and Leeds Play Network were involved in establishing the project. The three main challenges identified, some of which are ongoing, are: sustaining funding (a continuing concern); data exchange (addressed by setting up contracts between main agencies); storage for the toy library (the Children's Centre was identified as a suitable solution).

#### *Project aims and implementation*

The aim of the project was to involve Gypsy/Traveller parents and carers in ensuring that their children received the best possible start in life. The project had four strands: working with children and parents; advocacy; the toy library; to add value to work with Gypsy/Travellers.

#### *Working with children and parents*

The objectives of this strand were to:

- support Gypsy/Traveller children from birth to three years old to develop to their full potential through play;
- increase parents' knowledge of how their children learn and develop through play, to value and understand the role they can play; and,
- support parents to create a safe learning environment at home

Regular play sessions for Traveller children under three years of age in their homes, whether trailer or house, were established. Toys, books and other equipment from the lending library were introduced through play activities aimed at developing language, co-ordination and other skills.

Parents and carers, often grandparents and older siblings, were actively involved in all the play sessions showing the adults how they could carry on with the play activities at

other times and to help them gain the confidence to do so. There was sustained work with parents and carers to create safe play opportunities for their children in the limited space of a trailer and to explore with them ways that they might keep children safe whilst playing outside. Gypsy/Traveller children have a high level of accidental injuries (Morris & Clements, 2001).

Visiting play workers established a child profile for each family. Parents were encouraged to look for evidence of their child's progress and to consider ways they could record their child's achievements. With parental consent the child profile could accompany the child to nursery school, if not it would remain a confidential record for the family and project. Home visits meant that parents and children were in their home surroundings, making it easier to talk and share information and to involve parents in the play activities.

The project involved working with about 30 families over six-month period. There was a programme of regular visits with each family for an approximate period of six months and records were kept of each visit – dates, times and play activity. A child profile was developed for each child to record progress while involved in the project.

### *Advocacy*

The objectives of this strand were to:

- increase parents' involvement with community support services such as Sure Start and the children's centre initiatives as well as other family learning opportunities;
- ensure Gypsy/Traveller children's particular health and development needs have been identified and that they are accessing the appropriate help and support they may need before they start nursery education; and,
- raise awareness with other agencies and support services of the particular needs of Gypsy/Traveller parents and their children and to highlight the difficulties they experience in accessing provision.

Through their close contact with parents and children, play workers were in a position to observe and identify or be told about a range of difficulties families faced. GATE's advocacy worker or other appropriate services could be contacted to provide the necessary advice and support. Any action taken was only with the consent of parents. In line with Child Protection legislation, independent action would only be taken if the child was considered to be at risk.

Records were maintained of all referrals made to other agencies and the nature of the referral. Logs of any advocacy role involving children and record the outcome were kept. A record the successful introduction of Gypsy/Traveller children and parents into the work of the Children's Centres was maintained.

### *Toy library*

The objective of this strand was to:

- establish a toy library to increase Gypsy/Travellers access to quality toys, books and other learning materials that will reflect will their priorities and culture.

The Travellers Education Network (TENET) and the National Association of Teachers of Travellers (NATT) were consulted to ensure that the materials in the library reflected and celebrated Gypsy/ Traveller culture and interests.

Safety equipment was also made available. For example, stair gates for families living in houses and other equipment suitable for families living in trailers. Parents were able to borrow toys free of charge and weekly drop-in sessions were set up. Play workers also introduced the resources into their play sessions. An inventory of toys and equipment purchased and replaced was kept along with a record of service usage.

### *Add value to work with Gypsy/Travellers*

The objectives of this strand were to:

- ensure the dissemination of good practice to support further work with the Gypsy/Traveller community in Leeds and other areas;
- encourage Gypsy/Travellers to take up work in the areas of childcare, early years or play;
- involve Gypsy/Traveller parents in all aspects of the planning, delivery and evaluation of the project; and,
- promote the benefits of partnership working for the delivery of services for Gypsy/Travellers.

Gypsy/Travellers were represented on the planning group and their continued support was effected through their involvement on the Partnership Group. All the proposed worker posts were advertised through the various Gypsy and Traveller networks. However the project leaders were aware that Gypsy/Travellers are underrepresented in the areas of childcare, early years and play work and that applicants may not come forward with the appropriate experience. To address this, training opportunities for Gypsy/Travellers to gain experience in this area of work were established as part of Sure Start for Travellers Project. The project established links with Leeds Play Network to identify appropriate training for the successful applicant(s) as well as providing quality work experience. Sure Start for Travellers was independently monitored and evaluated by Save the Children Fund.

### *Outcomes*

The main successes of the project have been demonstrated through the increased status given to the work with Gypsies and Travellers and the award of funding to further the project aims. The following specific successes were observed. There was an enhancement of the value given to the work of the team which resulted in a staffing increase from two workers to four. The project included the development of weekly drop-in sessions for Roma families. Funding was available to facilitate translation and advocacy support. Through partnership working with play development workers, holiday provision for older children was introduced. Families were self-referring for visits from the team and there was closer involvement with children's centres.

There was evidence that the project resulted in a number of key improvements. Children were entering the education system with a wider variety of play skills and more developed social skills. There were increased opportunities for interagency collaboration, for example project staff were able to support a survey conducted by South Leeds Health for All on the plight of Roma families in the UK, during their home visits. Links with the Gypsy/Traveller education service meant that more children accessed schools and pre-school provision. There was improved access to services, increased and more effective contact points and improved information exchange between Gypsy/Traveller families and services. The toy library was extended to include equipment for children with additional support needs and it was made available to the wider community.

The two case studies presented above have been selected as examples of effective inclusive approaches in supporting Gypsy/Traveller children and their families. The Scottish example usefully illustrates good practice in advance of the now established Code of Practice (Scottish Executive, 2005). These guidelines set out systems for ensuring effective support for children with additional support needs. The English example demonstrates the importance of investigating the effectiveness of national initiatives in reaching all communities and how services are accessed by these communities. It then highlights the benefits of prompt and appropriate responses to the findings of these investigations.

## 5.3 Looked after children

### a. Policy

The Children Act (1989) gave local authorities legal responsibility for children in public care either with the agreement of their parents/carers or as a result of family court proceedings. Importantly, local authorities were to act as a 'corporate parent' in respect to looked after children.

The 'Quality Protects' initiative (1998 –2004) was backed by a grant of £885 million and ran for five years. It emphasised the 'corporate parent' message with all those involved in children's services being asked to consider the question: 'Is this good enough for my child?'

The responsibilities of local authorities were increased with 'Guidance on Education of Children and Young People in Care' (2000) which required each local authority to appoint a 'nominated champion', a LAC Co-ordinator, to over-see and promote inter-agency working regarding the education of looked after children. Other measures in the paper included: Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for looked after pupils; a designated teacher in each school with responsibility for looked after pupils and a limit of 20 school days to provide suitable education for looked after children who change care placement.

'Education Protects' was launched in 2000 as a joint Department of Health (DoH) and Department for Education and Skills (DfES) initiative to drive educational improvements for looked after children. Its focus was on multi-agency coordination in order to improve educational attainment. One of its recommendations was the introduction of local authority training for designated LAC teachers in schools. These designated teachers would have a responsibility to make sure that a Home-School agreement is drawn up.

'Education Protects' provided extra funding through the *vulnerable children grant* (DfES, 2003) to develop multi-agency educational strategies across local authorities, not simply to be used in schools, although the funding could be used to provide individual bursaries for looked after children.

'The Role of the School in Supporting the Education of Children in Public Care' (2003) set out to provide examples of good practice in implementing the recommendations of the 'Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care'. It gave special consideration to the role of Designated Teacher. The other areas covered in the research were PEPs, Specific Initiatives to Support the Education of Children in Public Care, Transition Planning and Admissions, Post-16 Provision, Exclusions, Attendance and Truancy, Celebrating Achievement, Funding, Multi-agency Working, Local Authority Guidance Materials, Awareness of Policy among Staff, Identified Governors, National Initiatives, Funding, In-School Support, Identifying Individual Needs, The Management of Transitions, Meeting Needs, Exclusions, Attendance and Truancy, Bullying, Raising the Attainment of Pupils in Public Care, Successes, Support Activities and Challenges. This research serves as a good practical guide to the various areas of responsibility a school has with regard to its looked after pupils.

The Social Exclusion Unit's report 'A Better Education for Children in Care' (2003) identified five key reasons why looked after children underachieve in education: instability in the young peoples' lives; too much time being spent not in school; not enough help with education; not enough support and encouragement for education in the care environment and not enough support with their emotional, physical and mental wellbeing. The report also found a variety of underlying problems that it identified as hampering progress in the education of children in care. These included weak management, lack of resources, poor planning, systems and structures that hindered multi-agency working and too much bureaucracy. The report laid out specific action to allow local authorities to provide looked after children with a full range of educational

opportunities and set targets to narrow the achievement gap between children in public care and other pupils.

This was supplemented by 'If this were my child ... a councillor's guide to being a good corporate parent' (2003), published by the DfES along with the Local Government Information Unit.

The 'Every Child Matters' (2004) green paper identified five outcomes it wanted for all children - that they should be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being. The subsequent publication 'Every Child Matters: Next steps' (2004) put a responsibility on the director of Children's Services in each local authority to promote the educational achievement of LAC.

In the same year, 'Who Does What' (2004) was published as a practical guide for carers and social workers to support looked after children through their education, from pre-school to when they leave care. The document indicated clearly where responsibility lay for various aspects of the education process for LAC, including; Starting Pre-School, Starting School and Changing School, PEPs, Appeals, Attendance, Checking Progress, Reviewing Progress, Study Support, Planning for Life After School, Work Experience, SEN, Annual Reviews, Taking Part in School Life, Bullying, Exclusion, Mentors and Counselling, Education Out of School and Absence from School. This was supported by the 'Who Does What Checklist' (2005) which further clarified the direct roles and responsibilities of social workers and carers, and gave a list of key educational events in a child's life, what age they happen and what key activity the social worker or carer needs to engage in to support children through them.

In 2005, the 'DfES Statutory Guidance: Duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children' described the necessary actions which local authorities were expected to undertake to fulfil their role as corporate parent and clarified the individual roles for local authority personnel (both in education and social work) and carers in delivering an effective educational experience on a daily basis.

Supporting Looked After Learners. A Practical Guide for School Governors (2006) offered specific guidelines for looked after children in the areas of Planning, Designated Teachers, Admissions, PEPs, Inclusive Schooling, Home School Communication, Curriculum and Options, Raising Achievement and Expectations, Exclusions, Special Educational Needs (SEN), Pastoral Support, Behaviour, Bullying and Study Support. These issues were each addressed by dividing them into three areas: What the governing body should ensure; Information the governing body should know or be given quick access to by the school; Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team.

More recently, the '**Care Matters**' white paper (2007) set out a number of proposals for extra educational funding for children in care, new schemes funded by the private sector and a pilot programme to introduce 'virtual head-teachers'. Through 'Care Matters', each child in care who is in danger of falling behind in their education is to receive an annual education budget of £500 to be spent on books and after school activities. How this money is spent will be decided upon by the children and young people, in discussion with their designated teacher, social worker and carer, and will be a part of their PEP. This funding is for extra activities to complement and support LAC's learning and should not be seen as a replacement for educational services that the school or local authority should be providing. £56.25 million has been allocated for this to be spent between 2008 and 2011. In addition, a £2,000 university bursary will be available for every young person in care that goes onto higher education. This was also due to be available from 2008.

Another 'Care Matters' proposal was for looked after children to have their education monitored by a 'virtual school head', who would assume responsibility for all the children in care in their area. This entails working with school staff, local authorities and carers to



oversee the progress of these young people and improve their educational prospects. The white paper also puts the designated teacher role within the school on a statutory footing.

'Care Matters' also gives looked after children top priority regarding admissions, allowing them places in the best schools, even if these schools are full. There will be a specific obligation for local authorities to try not to force LAC to move schools in the important transition age of 10 to 11. Strong efforts will also be made to reduce the overall number of times looked after children change schools. The White Paper also puts a heavy emphasis on encouraging private funding for looked after schemes and greater networking between the private sector and local authorities.

## **b. Strategies**

### *i. Raising attainment*

There are numerous strategies employed both nationally and locally to improve the educational attainment of LAC in England. For many of these, strategies to help children in care are a part of larger programmes to promote educational achievement in general among young people from disadvantaged areas. Examples of these include the DfES programmes 'Excellence in Cities' and 'Education Action Zones' which have operated programmes of homework support and family literacy specifically for children in public care.

The EMIE section of the National Foundation for Educational Research website (<http://www.nfer.ac.uk/emie/>) provides a list of English local authority websites which detail their specific strategies for raising the educational attainment of LAC.

One strategy focuses on 'out of school hours' learning. *ContinYou* is a project funded by the Department for Education and Skills with the aim of improving educational outcomes for looked after children through improving access to study support, both in schools and in the community. In its pilot phase, it involved three local authorities: Greenwich, Kirklees and Nottinghamshire.

The project produced the 'Taking Part' pack, designed to help children's services and other agencies make study support and out of school learning (oshl) an important part of raising the educational achievement of looked after children. The pack enables children's services to:

- focus on the benefits of study support, particularly for looked-after children
- consider the barriers to participation and how an authority might address them
- identify key allies in the authority and how to 'make the case' to or on behalf of them for putting study support at the heart of the local authority's strategy
- ensure that strategic and child-level planning takes into account the importance of leisure and cultural activities as part of their study support provision

Three regional seminars were held in May 2005 to disseminate the information gleaned from the Taking Part project. Following these, *ContinYou* is offering a consultancy service to local authorities to support implementation of the Taking Part resources. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) was engaged to evaluate the pilot scheme but has declared the difficulty in doing this due to the lack of evaluation of the situation before the project began: *We can't evaluate the effect without knowing what the starting point is.*

It is however unlikely that students will progress if they do not attend school in the first place. In 2004, the Who Cares? Trust produced *Think Smart: Staying in School*, an interactive CD Rom that was designed specifically for looked after children between the ages of 10 and 15 and addressed the issue of the importance of education and the need for regular attendance in school. It also offered guidance on what to do if faced with

exclusion or expulsion. It featured quizzes, games, photo stories and other information aimed at encouraging greater engagement with the education process.

As part of the 'Care Matters' (2007) push to raise levels of private sponsorship of educational programmes for looked after children, HSBC's Global Education Trust provided £1 million of funding for an initiative to provide private tutors to children in care from four local authorities - Warwickshire, Gateshead, Dudley and Merton. These tutors will be responsible for the children's overall education, not just their academic achievement, and therefore the success of the project will be measured in terms of increased participation in social activities and improvements in self-esteem as well as on academic results.

The one-to-one tuition programme is part of the government's two-year '*Making Good Progress*' pilot project which is running from September 2007 in 500 schools throughout England to improve attainment amongst children in danger of falling behind at school. The HSBC funding, however, is specifically for local authorities to work with looked after children. The company has also offered places on its training programme for any children in care who excel on the programme.

HSBC has also promised further resources for a pilot programme to allow care leavers to enter its Management Academy Programme. The 'Access to MAP' scheme would allow care leavers to work for HSBC while attending college on a day release basis where they would study for relevant vocational qualifications.

*ii. Raising self esteem, confidence, motivation and aspirations*

Raising self-esteem, confidence, motivation and aspiration are often stated interim goals of projects designed to raise the educational attainment of LAC. Projects which have a more specific goal of raising aspiration are often also designed to increase their participation in higher and further education.

In June 2006, the Frank Buttle Trust ([www.buttletrust.org](http://www.buttletrust.org)) introduced a Quality Mark in England to be awarded to institutions who have shown extra support for students who have been in public care. The Quality Mark was launched in Wales in November 2006 with Jane Davidson, the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, setting a target of the end of 2007 for all of Wales' Higher Education institutions to have been awarded the Quality Mark. Since then, 24 English and Welsh institutions have been awarded the quality mark.

*AimHigher* is a national programme, run by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) with the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), which aims to widen participation in higher education by raising the aspirations and developing the abilities of young people from communities who are often under-represented within higher education, typically from lower socio-economic groups and disadvantaged backgrounds.

*Stepping Stones* is a project designed to encourage looked after children into higher education that was developed in Leeds and which took advantage of the partnerships already in place within *AimHigher* in the area. As well as working with the education coordinator for Leeds Social Services, partners in *Stepping Stones* include Education Protects, Leeds Mentoring and Pathway Planning, City Learning Centres, Leeds University and Leeds Metropolitan University. The partnership between *Stepping Stones* and the universities of West Yorkshire is given the umbrella title Higher Education Aspiration Raising West Yorkshire (HEARWY) and it meets regularly to share strategies and best practice. *Stepping Stones* looks to involve actively the young people and, importantly, their parents and carers. To this end, the organisation runs a range of out-of-school activities during evenings and holidays. Examples include homework support programmes with undergraduate students and S6 pupils, mentoring schemes, family days at the universities to encourage a familiarity with, and understanding of, university life and courses exclusively for carers. Leeds Metropolitan

University runs week-long summer schools to teach children in care about the social and academic side of university which are reported to raise the confidence levels of the young people taking part (Hopkins, Community Care, 2003). Hopkins (2003) draws attention to the need for programmes such as Stepping Stones to be run by someone with an understanding of both social services and education.

*iii. Support for schools/teachers working with minority background students*

'How are schools supporting looked-after children?' (2008) is one of a series of papers that reports on the findings of the Annual Survey of Trends in Education carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research. Three hundred and forty-seven (347) primary schools and 854 secondary schools took part in the survey, carried out in the summer term of 2007. These schools were asked whether they had agreed policies in place for the educational provision of LAC and for cooperating with and supporting the local authority in promoting the educational achievements of children in public care. Over half, 59%, of primary schools reported an existing policy for LAC educational provision, up 4% from the 2006 survey, and 63% of secondary schools reported an existing policy, again up 4% from the previous year. Regarding a policy for cooperation with the local authority, 52% of primary schools had a policy in place, up 2% from the 2006 survey and 59% of secondary schools reported a similar policy, an increase of 4% (Lewis, Chamberlain, Gagg, Rudd, 2007).

The survey found that, at secondary school level, schools in deprived areas were more likely to have policies in place to support looked after children than higher-achieving schools in more affluent areas. The survey identified this as an issue requiring to be addressed quickly as, since February 2007, following the measures brought in by the 'Care Matters' white paper, schools are required to give looked after children priority in admission, even when schools are full, thereby giving them access to the best schools. This therefore puts an onus on **all** schools to put policies in place, regardless of whether or not they currently have any children in care on the school roll.

The schools were also asked whether they prioritised looked after children in their support strategies. In general, secondary schools were more likely to do this than primary. The most common ways in which schools prioritised children in care were by allocating a designated teacher, providing praise and encouragement and by maintaining regular school attendance. Other strategies included support for additional educational needs; nominating a governor responsible for LAC; avoiding exclusions; providing extra support when joining/leaving school mid-year; providing extra support during formal key stage assessments; providing key worker/mentor support; accessing and participating in out of school learning; and prioritising in admission arrangements.

The survey noted that, for both primary and secondary, schools from more deprived areas were again more likely to prioritise children in public care in their support arrangements. This suggests that local authorities should target high-attaining schools in particular in order to make sure that they too have strategies for prioritising LAC in support arrangements. The survey did, however, find it encouraging that more schools were prioritising regular school attendance for LAC; an area highlighted by the 'Care Matters' white paper.

*iv. Procedures for identifying, tracking and supporting looked after children*

Following the recommendations of the 'Care Matters' (2007) White Paper a two-year pilot scheme was set up to introduce 'virtual schools' of looked after children run by 'virtual heads'. Eleven local authorities were chosen nationwide to take part, with the expectation that if the pilot is successful, the initiative will be extended across the whole country. The 'virtual head' will take responsibility for the educational monitoring of all looked after children in their local authority, gather all the relevant information about each child in their care and act as their champion; examining and sharing this information and liaising with all relevant local authority services to ensure that the children in their care make the best possible educational progress.

Merton was one of two local authorities in London chosen for the pilot and it has laid out detailed plans for the responsibilities of the virtual head and the multi-agency framework in which they will operate. Stated partnerships within the Merton Virtual School include; Education workers, Social Care, CAMHS, SIPS and Education advisers, Admissions, Research and Information, Education Welfare Service, SEN, Corporate Parenting Officer, Connexions, Schools and other education establishments in and outside Merton, Behaviour Support Team/ Inclusion, Foster Carers and Children and Young People. Such is the range of these partnerships that the Merton project notes that the Virtual Head must be someone 'capable of bridging two cultures – education and social services, under the umbrella of Children's Services.' ('The Virtual School for Looked After Children and Young People'; Merton London Borough, [www.younglondonmatters.org](http://www.younglondonmatters.org))

Outside of the school environment, the 'Who Does What' guide (2004) and checklist (2005) offers social workers and carers a way of monitoring who is taking responsibility for the various aspects of looked after children's education.

### **c. Case study**

In 2003, the government published a White Paper (White Paper: The Future of Higher Education – needs reference) which set the target that, by 2010, 50% of all people between the ages of 18 and 30 should have the opportunity to enter higher education. This however cannot be achieved without widening participation in higher education by encouraging and enabling young people from backgrounds which have been, in the past, underrepresented in colleges and universities, to apply for higher education programmes.

**Aimhigher** was part of the government strategy for achieving these aims. It developed out of pre-existing government programmes with similar aims, although with a much reduced coverage. By 2004 Aimhigher had become a single unified programme with a clear remit to raise the aspirations and achievement levels of young people from various groups, considered as under-represented in the post-compulsory education sector. (For further detail regarding developments in Leeds in response to this policy initiative, see <http://www.aimhigherwm.org/>). The groups identified as underrepresented included particular socio-economic groupings, the disabled, minority ethnic groups, those living in rural and coastal areas, families with little or no experience of higher education and young people in care.

Individual local authorities developed Aimhigher programmes accordingly and with regard to their own needs and contexts. Leeds is the second largest metropolitan authority in England, with a population of approximately 750,000. There are many areas of serious disadvantage within its borders. Around 11% of the population are from Black and ethnic minority groups with significant numbers of migrant or asylum-seeking families.

In Leeds, the Aimhigher programme is based on a comprehensive strategy targeted at learners in the 14-19 years age range, through a number of activities and initiatives designed to support the personal and social development of young people from identified, disadvantaged groups. (It is worth noting that some young people will be members of more than one group, thus being at risk of multiple deprivation.)

Aimhigher Leeds provides a framework for working with young people, schools, colleges and universities in an integrated and comprehensive manner. It aims to be responsive to the needs of learners and changes in these over time, as well as to external drivers of change. In line with this, it has established strong links with other related initiatives at the local and national levels, with representatives on key bodies such as the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) Strategy Group. All activities are regularly monitored and evaluated through a range of evidence-gathering strategies and instruments and against

a number of indicators, including the numbers gaining access to higher education but also others relating to improved attainment and progression rates, as well as personal attributes such as raised aspirations, motivation and self confidence/esteem.

The programme has been praised by OFSTED for the effectiveness of its work, notably with evidence of progress in looked after children, Black and Ethnic Minority Learners and white working class boys. In particular the work with looked after children has been identified as exemplary (OFSTED, 2008).

In 2007, Aimhigher Leeds commissioned an external evaluation of its programme. The evaluation focused on four key groups – Looked after children, Black and ethnic minority learners, White working class boys and the Gifted and Talented (Challis, Wilkinson and Maguire, 2009). This section of the report focuses on the findings regarding the first of these, Looked after children, drawing on the overall programme as appropriate and situating the discussion within the wider aims of the programme.

The evaluation was concerned to capture a range of evidence, from ‘hard’ statistical data on achievement and progression to ‘softer’, qualitative data on the nature of the student experience for those participating. It sought feedback from students, their parents and other key stakeholders including mentors, programme coordinators and those responsible for the management and organisation of various activities as well as the overall programme.

The majority of looked after children across England are in foster placements; in 2005, for example, the figure was 68% (DfES, 2006). For significant numbers, their local authority acts as a ‘corporate parent’. Such children form an important group within the widening participation agenda. There is however relatively little data on their achievements and progression beyond the age of compulsory schooling in the UK, nor in much of Europe (NFER, 2005).

The data available in England are provided by local authorities on a statutory basis and collated centrally and published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The 2007 report provides an overview of the number of LAC and some key statistics (DCSF, 2007). The actual number looked after continuously for at least 12 months across England has been fairly consistent in recent years. Approximately three quarters were of school age in 2006-07, 28% of whom were recorded as having special educational needs. Regarding educational attainment, smaller percentages of LAC achieved the relevant age-related National Curriculum targets. For example, at Key Stage 2, 49% of looked after children attained Level 4 while the corresponding figure for all children of this age (11 years) was 82%. There was evidence however of a slight improvement over the two preceding years.

Another key comparison is the number of students in the final year of compulsory schooling who gained at least five GCSE or GNVQ awards at grades A\* to C. In 2006, 13% of LAC achieved this as compared with 62% of all 16 year olds (Year 11).

Looking beyond school, only 66% of LAC remained in full time education at the end of Year 11 (16 years), compared with 80% of all children. Only 6% went on to undergraduate study at a university (DCSF, 2007). They were also more likely to be unemployed and to have been in trouble with the law.

It was in 2003 that proposals for activities designed specifically for looked after children were incorporated into the Aimhigher Leeds initiative, with the aim of raising aspirations and supporting progression to higher education. Central to the provision for LAC is the ‘Stepping Stones’ programme. Stepping Stones consists of a suite of activities undertaken in collaboration with other stakeholders. Its aims mirror those of the wider Aimhigher programme: promoting the educational achievement of LAC; raising aspirations; widening participation in further and higher education; and, contributing to the corporate culture of achievement (Challis *et al*, 2009: 27).

One collaboration with a Learning Centre within the city provided support for LAC during the summer holidays of 2006. Entitled 'Create My Summer', it focused on the creative arts (e.g. drama, music, film and art) with children attending for a week's activities. Two week-long events were staged, with high attendance rates and considerable benefits to the young people participating, both in terms of developing friendships and increasing self-esteem. It is hoped that this can be rolled out to other Learning Centres across the authority.

Three separate projects are run in collaboration with the city's universities. The first, Next Step, involves LAC in a revision programme run by Metropolitan University over a series of 6-7 weekends. Targeted at pupils in the last two years of compulsory schooling, it aims to be as responsive to their needs as possible in order to repay the commitment made by them in attending on Saturdays. For example, when the LAC expressed a wish for shorter sessions over a longer period, the team responded by increasing the number of sessions and reducing their duration.

The second project, Family Days, involves both young people and carers and takes place during half-term breaks. It gives carers the opportunity to find out more about the programmes as well as the chance to discuss individual children's needs. The third component, Mentoring, is an extension of the Leeds Mentoring programme for disadvantaged young people, a strand within the Aimhigher initiative and described the evaluation report as the 'flagship of Aimhigher' (ibid: 64). Mentoring sessions are organised on a weekly basis at community centres, where undergraduate students work with looked after children. (The students are designated as 'ambassadors' and are also involved in the Family Days and Next Step projects.)

Those pupils who are involved in Stepping Stones are also given access to the full range of Aimhigher activities, as appropriate to their ages and needs. This includes residential summer schools and various academic support programmes. One issue that is highlighted in the evaluation report is that of transport for these young people. Lack of transport was perceived as a barrier to participation for many LAC as not all care placements were necessarily within the school catchment area. Transport has therefore been provided by Aimhigher and the schools involved to take them to the Learning Centre for the activities and then to take them to their homes afterwards. Care is taken to ensure that they are not left to struggle with public transport in the evening and that, when they are dropped off, there is someone there to meet them.

There is evidence that these activities have made an impact on the achievements of looked after young people in Leeds with, for example, several of the children in one school exceeding predicted achievements, often by significant levels. More broadly, the number of young people in the area successfully applying for a place in higher education has increased by approximately 4% each year since 2000. Analysed by socio-economic groupings, the data show a consistent level of success across all groups with the 'long term unemployed or never worked' group showing the greatest increase (144% over the 7 years from 2000). However, it should be noted that penetration of the Russell Group of universities (20 UK research-intensive establishments) has stayed fairly constant and relatively low (approximately 22% of all successful applications by LAC in England).

The evaluation of Aimhigher Leeds notes that *'tasters, or immersed experiences of University life ... (are) ... extremely beneficial'* in overcoming the barriers, real or perceived, to higher education for looked after children (ibid: 28). Both of the Universities involved have been awarded the Quality Mark of the Frank Buttle Trust (see Phase 1 report for details) in recognition of their work with looked after young people.

Aimhigher works to involve not just the young people but their communities and families so that they too can feel some sense of involvement in the initiative and acknowledging a degree of responsibility for its impact and ultimate success.

The evaluation sought to determine the reasons behind the success of Aimhigher Leeds. A number of themes emerged from the evidence, including the use of ongoing, formal and informal evaluation and reflection on the activities and their outcomes by management and the teams themselves. They had developed skilled, committed teams and effective procedures which gave them confidence in their ability to deliver effective programmes and activities. In addition, while they reported that they took a pragmatic approach to getting things done, all the work was driven by a shared vision of what they wanted to achieve.

Looking to the future, the team had identified a need to address the 'churn' in the care system that affects many of the looked after young people they encountered. Many LAC do not stay in the system but experience periods of being looked after at various times before they are 18 years old. This typically means interrupted schooling and disruption to their educational careers. The Aimhigher team would like to develop some form of educational planning process, particularly for the 14-19 year age range but, as with other ideas they have come up with, the limited resources available mean this is unlikely to be developed much further in the immediate future.

## 5.4 Linguistic minorities

Between 1985 and 1989, a survey of the local authority provision for language support in England and Wales noted that most local education authorities (LEAs) were making some provision in relation to the needs of bilingual pupils, with others indicated a need to make occasional provision for individual pupils, as and when a need was identified (Bourne, 1990). The majority of language support staff were providing additional support in learning English, with small percentages (<10%) of community or bilingual language teachers. It was noted that slightly more primary than secondary schools were receive such support. In some instances, the posts were school-based while in others they were part of central teams that ranged across schools and communities.

Over the period of the survey, a number of improvements were observed. For example, there was a greater emphasis on curriculum learning **through** language (either English or other languages) rather than support for the learning **of** English and there was evidence of increased teaching of languages other than English within schools. A number of constraints to the continuing development of support for bilingual pupils, including the need for staff development, resources, models of good practice and the involvement in minority linguistic groups in educational decision-making. Bourne concluded by noting that, while there had been initiatives aimed at addressing minority languages in the classroom, there was little systematic evidence of the practices developed or their effectiveness. This report establishes a baseline for considering developments since then.

### a. Policy

The policy for language learning in English schools is set down in the National Curriculum (1999) which requires schools to offer at least one official working language of the EU and requires students in Key Stage 3 (11-14 years) to study at least one modern foreign language (though not necessarily one from the European Union). There is no compulsion to study a language in Key Stage 4 (14-19 years) although schools must make provision for those who choose to do so. These requirements related to the academic study of a language for external certification purposes.

The National Language Strategy is set down in *Languages for All: Languages for Life* (2002). The rationale is expressed in terms of the need to improve understanding between people; to support global citizenship and to recognise the importance of understanding the people and cultural traditions of other countries. The plan aims to

improve the opportunities for language learning at school, primary and secondary, enriching the experience and transforming the language capability of the UK.

The Strategy sets out a series of initiatives designed to meet the aims of the strategic plan. It is comprehensive, with proposals for schools, for further and higher education and learning in the community. The focus is primarily on modern foreign languages teaching, predominantly European languages, as academic subjects with an emphasis on early language learning and what is referred to as the 'primary entitlement'. The document targets pupils at the upper primary stages (Key Stage 2: 7-11 years) on the basis that early intervention can be more effective than delaying language learning until later in a student's school career. In addition, it is envisaged that schools will draw on the expertise of members of the community, native speakers and those with relevant skills, to enable them to meet this entitlement. Other than this, little attention is given to community language learning.

The National Centre for Languages (CILT) is recognised, and partly funded, by the government as providing expertise and advice on the learning and teaching of languages. (CILT existed previously as the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research and became the national Centre for Languages following its merger IN 2003 with another body, the Language National Training Organisation, which previously set the standards for and promoted enhanced capability in the use of foreign languages in the work place.). CILT now sets the standards for languages, translation and interpreting as well as a source of expertise for business and commerce. Based in London, CILT has 'branches' in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales (<http://www.cilt.org.uk/index.htm>). The website hosts a number of specialised units with interests in specific areas of language learning.

In addition to providing online support and resources, CILT runs staff development programmes for community language teachers, as well as modern European languages. It also published reports and reviews on the impact of interventions and initiatives. The CILT report *Positively Plurilingual*, based on survey of community languages in 2005, points to research that indicate the educational and career benefits that can accrue as a result of second language skills and understanding (CILT, 2006). The findings indicate that, as well as improved academic performance, bilingual children tend to be more positive to learning in general and more secure in their compound identity. The numbers of bilingual children are substantial, with over 100 languages spoken by school children in Scotland, 21% of Welsh population already bilingual in English and Welsh, and almost 100 other languages spoken amongst children, while in Northern Ireland, there is a growing investment in Irish-medium schooling. With more than one in eight of the schoolchildren in England already speaking a language other than English, initiatives in language learning aim to harness the advantages bilingualism can bring for the benefit of the individual child's educational and life chances

## **b. Strategies**

The Language Strategy identifies a number of pathways to language learning. These include: specialist language teachers, working with individual or clusters of schools; staff development for existing primary teachers; outreach working from Specialist Language Colleges (and an increase in the numbers of these); an increased use of the Comenius scheme to place language assistants in schools, particularly primaries; learning opportunities drawing on wider expertise such as that offered by businesses, universities and colleges, parents and the wider community. In addition, the use of ICT is seen as having significant potential as are innovative partnerships involving schools in other countries.

A key aim is to introduce a recognition system which will give people credit for the acquisition of language skills and complement the existing qualification frameworks. This has resulted in the 'Language Ladder', a scheme for recognising skills across the



four modes of language, speaking, listening, writing and reading. The Ladder provides a framework against which achievement can be measured, progress recognised and rewarded and transitions between primary and secondary, for example, supported. It is mapped on to National Curriculum Levels and other external qualifications such as GCSE and A levels. In addition, there is an external rewards scheme which is based on the Ladder, Asset Languages. Through this, as students progress, competence can be assessed at the end of each Key Stage and teachers are supported in making interim assessments of competence.

A National Director for Language for England has been appointed, Dr Lid King, based in the Department for Children, Schools and Families. He was previously Director of CILT and his remit is to 'develop, steer, progress and deliver the strategy and champion language learning' (National Strategy, p.41).

Many of the projects initiated by the Strategy are being driven by or overseen by CILT. The CILT website (<http://www.cilt.org.uk/index.htm>) hosts or links to other websites and networks which aim to support language learning and, in particular, community language learning. For example, there are two concerned with languages in the primary sector, the National Centre for Early Language Learning (NACELL) and Primary Languages and Languages ICT. NACELL website provides guidance, advice and resources for teachers and those involved in early language learning across a range of languages (<http://www.nacell.org.uk/index.htm>). The website also has details of a community languages training school in the Local Borough of Tower Hamlets. Primary Languages and Languages ICT provides ideas and guidance for teachers in using ICT in language learning.

Similarly, the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) has developed a resource sharing facility for teachers in a range of community languages. Languages Work is a new range of resources designed to highlight the benefits of language learning, beyond school and providing guidance on effective approaches for teachers.

A number of initiatives have been established to take forward the aims of the National Language Strategy. Many of these are relatively small scale, in response to local interests or needs (CILT, 2006). Some are intended to support community language learning, such as 'Language of the Month' at Newbury Park Primary School. Here pupils and parents work together, alongside teachers, to produce ICT-based materials. Similarly 'Teach a Friend a Language' encourages students to pair up and learn each other's languages. Performances, in the community languages, are put on for parents and friends. Initiatives in specific languages e.g. Chinese, Urdu and Polish, are also identified.

Primary Language Pathfinders are pilot projects which were established to investigate how primary language learning could be best supported and delivered. Nineteen Local authorities were involved, with 1400 schools, to address key issues related to language learning. Although European languages are most visible, several local authorities have focused on the learning of community languages at KS2.

The National Strategy has identified a series of specific action and initiatives, with a time line for their implementation, across each of the sectors identified. In 2008, Dr King outlined progress to date drawing attention to the Pathfinders projects and to baseline research being undertaken to determine more accurately the situation in primary schools (CILT, 2008). He also referred to significant advances in pre-service teacher training, notably courses run in partnership with countries in Europe such as France and Spain which involve placements in primary schools. While much of the attention has been on early language learning, Dr King raised the issue of addressing the situation in secondary schools and he noted that an important debate on the role of non-European community languages in the strategy has still to be had.

### c. Case study

In order to support the integration and achievement of children whose first or home language is other than English, supplementary schools have been established in many communities. Broadly speaking supplementary schooling refers to a practice of providing additional or extra support, typically *'organised by and for particular ethnic groups outside of mainstream education'* (Strand, 2007: ?). They usually take place on Saturdays and may be referred to as 'Saturday schools' as a result. They can take place in various venues such as community/learning centres, school buildings, youth clubs or places of worship and are frequently staffed by volunteers and funded by the community itself, charities or local authorities.

Supplementary schools vary in size, the activities they undertake, the subjects they support and the ages of the children involved. It is difficult to determine just how many such schools exist as there is no official register of supplementary schools and no systematic survey has been undertaken. However, it is estimated that there are approximately 3000 such schools, variously named 'supplementary', 'complementary', 'Saturday' or 'community' schools across England (for further description see <http://continyou.org.uk/>). A recent government press release gives the number as approximately 5000, providing support for minority language speakers, including African Caribbean, Afghan, Somali, Greek, Jewish, Turkish, Russian and Iranian communities across England and Wales. (ref to press release).

Although diverse, they shared the broad aim of developing the minority ethnic child's cultural identity, self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as, in turn, promoting and supporting her/his achievement in the mainstream school sector (Abdelrazak, 1999).

For three years, between 2001 and 2004, the Department for Education and Skills (now the Department for Children, Schools and Families - DCSF) provided funding for supplementary schools through the Supplementary School Support Service (S4). The broad aims were: raising the achievement of ethnic minority pupils; promoting cooperation and/or partnership with the mainstream school sector; developing the organisational and management efficiency of supplementary education; and sharing good practice across the supplementary school movement. Direct support was in the form of grants to organisations operating supplementary schools that provided learning activities in English for minority ethnic learners. In addition, it offered training in behaviour management and curriculum development to those working as tutors in the supplementary schools.

Initially established as a pilot project in 2001-02, there appears to be no single evaluation report on the Supplementary Schools Support Service although several local authorities as well as researchers and interested groups have undertaken investigations into various aspects of its impact. For example, as part of the evaluation of the pilot project, the Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) and African Schools Association (ASA) funded an exploration of the attitudes of pupils attending supplementary schools in England (Strand, 2007). The study sought evidence of pupils' attitudes on a number of dimensions including attitudes to: mainstream school; supplementary school; reading; mathematics; and learning. In addition, it sought to determine the reasons why they attended supplementary schools and their likes and dislikes regarding their experiences. All questions used a 5-point Likert-type scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree).

The supplementary schools in the sample were based in one of four main cities (Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham and London) and had received S4 funding. A total of 772 pupils in 63 schools (out of 72 approached) responded to the questionnaire, across the primary and secondary age range, with a mean age range of 12.1 years; slightly more girls than boys responded (52% and 48% respectively). Approximately one third had started attending supplementary school in the previous 6 months, 27% had attended for between 1 and 3 years and 21% had attended for over 3 years.

The number of books in the home (as reported by pupils) was taken as a proxy indicator of the educational level of the home (a measure also used in several national and international studies). The data indicate that the pupils in the sample were substantially more disadvantaged than those in other, nationally representative studies in England. This is not surprising given that supplementary schools tend to support inner city communities where pupils may be subject to greater economic and social disadvantage.

The findings provide an insight into the pupils' attitudes to their mainstream and supplementary school experiences as well as learning in general. In addition, the data was analysed by age and gender as well as length of attendance, adding to the understanding of their experiences and attitudes.

The study found that the pupils' views of supplementary school were more positive than their views of mainstream school and that the gap between the two widened with age i.e. the disaffection observed in relation to mainstream schools was not as much in evidence with regard to supplementary schooling (Strand, 2007). This was the only statistically significant age-related finding and it is argued that supplementary schools may be more effective in continuing to engage and motivate students as they progress through the educational system.

Several questions focused on learning in general, without differentiating according to the context in which it took place. Pupils were generally positive regarding reading and mathematics; the majority of them liked learning these subjects although they were generally more positive regarding language. There was evidence of some gender bias with girls more positive than boys about reading and boys more positive about mathematics. These findings reflect stereotypical differences found elsewhere. Pupils' views were also analysed by length of attendance. There was some evidence that those who had attended for between one and three years were more positive in their attitudes to mathematics, reading and learning in general.

With regard to the nature of their learning experiences, they particularly enjoyed lessons where they could work with their friends, discuss ideas and/or use materials and apparatus in practical tasks.

Looking more closely at the role of supplementary schools, the researchers identified a wide range of learning activities on offer. The pupils valued the ways in which these activities supported and promoted improvement in their educational performance generally as well as the specific help they received in English, mathematics and other subject areas. In addition, they felt that the supplementary schools provided a greater understanding of the language and culture of their home and ethnic community and they valued the support provided by the volunteer tutors in the supplementary schools.

The reasons for attending supplementary schools were varied although the majority were related to improving academic performance. For example, the most frequently cited reason was to get help in areas where they were experiencing difficulty, although the authors point out that a significant proportion (27%) attended because they wanted to do more of the subjects etc. that they enjoyed. Most pupils in the sample identified more than one reason for attending. For example, approximately one third attended because their parents wanted them to do so and around one-fifth gave reasons that related to developing a better understanding of the home culture or to improve a home language.

Strand (2007) argues for further, systematic research into the benefits that supplementary schools can bring, particularly for longitudinal studies which can track the influence of such schools over a longer time period

Although the S4 has been disbanded, support for supplementary schools continues in a number of ways. Firstly, supplementary education has gained a place in a number of government policy documents, notably those on extended services for pupils within and around mainstream school provision. In addition, the Qualifications and Curriculum

Authority (QCA) has officially recognised the role of supplementary education in contributing positively to the achievement of the children of ethnic minorities. Thirdly, the local authorities are now supporting supplementary or complementary schools, as well as mother-tongue schools. Local education authorities<sup>3</sup>, through children's trusts, now recognise and, in some instances, provide support to supplementary schools. In addition, increasing numbers of mainstream schools, primary and secondary, are establishing partnerships with the supplementary sector.

In 2007, a new national resource for supplementary schools was announced by the government. Jointly funded by the DCSF and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the National Resource Centre (NRC) for Supplementary Education is managed by ContinYou. (ContinYou is a registered charity and one of the UK's leading community learning organisations.)

The ContinYou website lists a number of strengths and weaknesses in many of the supplementary schools that they worked with.

*Table 2: Strengths and weaknesses of supplementary schools*

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Parents are more engaged and involved in supplementary schooling than they tend to be in mainstream education.</p> <p>Schools are flexible and are often able to respond to the learning needs of local communities better than mainstream schools can do.</p> <p>Different approaches to learning foster the development of students' self-esteem and confidence.</p> <p>Supplementary schools can promote the development of students' linguistic skills, cultural identity and religious awareness.</p> <p>Students are engaged in positive education and leisure activities outside 'the school'.</p> <p>The commitment and enthusiasm of staff and volunteers from the community is evident.</p> <p>Supplementary schools can contribute to improved behaviour and social skills among students.</p> <p>They can help reduce isolation by connecting children and families with others from a similar linguistic and cultural background.</p>	<p>They lack secure, sustainable funding and often rely on small, short-term grants.</p> <p>They often lack teaching resources.</p> <p>They lack public recognition, particularly from mainstream schools.</p> <p>The quality of teaching can be variable.</p> <p>They are often dependent on the commitment of a few people, making them vulnerable to turnover of staff and volunteers.</p> <p>They are often dependent on the commitment of a few people, making them vulnerable to turnover of staff and volunteers.</p>

(Adapted from ContinYou website: <http://continyou.org.uk>)

## 6 Scotland

### 6.1 Ethnic minority students, including refugees and asylum seekers

<sup>3</sup> Following the Laming inquiry into children's services, the government published the Green Paper, Every Child Matters, which led to the Children Act 2004. This in turn led to the establishment of 'children's trusts' in local authorities, an initiative that aimed to provide an integrated service for children, bringing together all the services for children and young people in an area. Children's trusts are therefore partnerships between the different services for children and young people, including the local education authority. (For further information, see <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/2008/05/13/52883/childrens-trusts.html>)

Scotland has long been a destination for immigrants but the numbers of refugees and asylum seekers started to increase in Scotland after 1999, when significant numbers of Kosovan refugees came to into the country as part of the UK Government's Humanitarian Evacuation programme. This increase in numbers brought with it a change in the profile of refugees and asylum seekers. Prior to this, the majority of refugees and asylum seekers had tended to be men, either single or with families who remained in the country of origin (Macaskill and Petrie, 2000). Since the Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999 Scotland has increasingly accepted asylum seekers from a diverse range of countries

What little data there is on the numbers of asylum-seeking and refugee children in Scottish schools may be inaccurate. There are no accurate demographic data on the number of asylum-seeking and refugee children in schools, partly because the disclosure of immigrant status is not mandatory. In 2006, the Scottish Executive's figures suggested around 2,300 asylum seekers and refugee children lived in Scotland<sup>4</sup>.

Refugee and asylum seeking children, like all others, are a diverse group and so cannot be readily labelled in terms of their educational requirements. However, as a result of past experiences, they are more likely to have experienced similar difficulties, including:

- overwhelmingly traumatic events requiring psychological interventions
- isolation in school;
- bullying, often of a racist nature;
- living in socially deprived areas, often in temporary accommodation;
- having unemployed parents;
- requiring support to learn English; and,
- acting as a supporter for others, often parents, who are less able to speak English.

Thus they are likely to suffer from multiple disadvantage (Candappa and Egharevba, 2000; Jones and Rutter, 1998; Rutter, 1994; Stead *et al*, 1999)

Education may be the only statutory service that can provide sustained support to these children and young people therefore, it is argued, schools have the opportunity to play an essential role in the lives of asylum seekers and refugee children.

#### **a. Policy**

Scotland has a vision for society where all its children are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included; this vision applies to asylum seekers and refugee children as well as those born there. Recent Scottish legislation (SEED, 2000) states that all children are expected to be educated in their local mainstream school, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Children (Scotland) Act, 1995, requires local authorities to ensure that they have taken into account a child's racial, linguistic, cultural and religious identity within their service provision. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 states that children may require additional support for a variety of reasons. These may include those who are being bullied, are particularly gifted, have experienced a bereavement, or are not attending school regularly, as well as those who have English as an additional language or learning difficulties, mental health problems, or specific disabilities such as deafness or blindness. While this list does not explicitly include asylum seeker refugee children, the comprehensive nature of the Act ensures their inclusion.

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<sup>4</sup> Pupils in Scotland 2006 - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/02/27083941/0>

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 has an impact wider than education alone, as it demands a holistic collaborative approach, integrating the activities of a number of professions such as health, social work and so on in meeting children's needs, physical, social and educational. Under the Act, education authorities have a duty to establish procedures for identifying and meeting the additional support needs of every child for whose education they are responsible. They must keep those needs under review. Other agencies will have a duty to help education authorities meet these expectations.

In addition, also relevant to the plight of asylum seekers and refugees is the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which came into effect in Scotland in 2002. This legislation sets out the statutory duty of public authorities in the promotion of racial equality.

In Scotland, local authorities must provide nursery places for all children aged 3 and 4 years as well as primary and secondary education between the ages of 5 and 16 years. All children are entitled to this provision, regardless of their immigration status. Compulsory schooling ends at 16 years of age, with an optional 2 years of further study. Refugee and asylum seekers' children are entitled to this additional two years.

There are two main forms of tertiary education: college and university. The college sector tends to focus on vocational education, either through award bearing programmes resulting in national qualifications such as the Higher National Certificate or Diploma, or non-award bearing training programmes. These programmes can be undertaken on a full or part time basis. Refugee and asylum seekers' children can attend college, assuming they meet the entry requirements, and they can study to HND level for no more than 16 hours each week. In addition, they can take course in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).

Until 2007, the university sector was less accessible. Previously, the children of asylum seekers were required to pay 'overseas students' fees if they wished to progress to university. These are significantly higher than those for 'home' students and usually well beyond the means of these families whose parents were not allowed under the terms of their stay to seek employment. In recognition of the inequity that resulted, a number of universities established scholarships specifically for the children of asylum seekers. These covered fees but families still had to find the means to support the student through the four years of her/his course of study. Following lobbying by the universities, groundbreaking legislation was introduced in August 2007 when the Scottish Government announced that the children of asylum-seeking families and young unaccompanied asylum seekers who fulfil specific criteria (mainly residence requirements) are to have the same access to full-time further and higher education as Scottish children (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2007/08/03082811>).

There is no specific national education policy for asylum seeking and refugee children. Rather they are covered by the various pieces of legislation outlined above. There are few specific policies at local authority (LA) level either. A study by Candappa with Ahmad, Balata, Dekhinet, and Gocmen (2007) indicated that out of the 32 LAs in Scotland, the 14 who responded had few specific policies or support structures in place for asylum seekers and refugee children. Eleven LAs reported that there were specific policies for bilingual learners and almost all had, for example, a teacher with a remit to support these learners. Other LAs had policies which were more generic but appropriate for asylum seekers and refugee children, for example those concerned with students' additional support needs. Most of the authorities surveyed reported that anti-racist and anti bullying policies were in place and that they also had policies relating to vulnerable children which were seen as appropriate for new arrivals. Four LAs had policies relating specifically to asylum seekers and refugee children. In Glasgow, in addition to specific policies related to asylum seekers and refugee children, the Glasgow Asylum Seekers Support Project (GASSP) was formed specifically to support these children and young people.

## **b. Strategies**

Because asylum seekers and refugee children are diverse in their educational requirements the strategies to support them tend to be equally diverse and tailored to specific contexts. However as mentioned earlier, because it has been identified that asylum seekers and refugee children have common experiences there are a number of common supportive approaches.

### *Buddy systems*

Buddy systems typically involve matching individual children with local children who can provide friendship, guidance and support on a day to day basis within school. Candappa with Ahmad, Balata, Dekhinet and Gocmen (2007) found evidence that both primary and secondary schools in Scotland have used such systems to good effect.

### *Support for learning English*

Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education (HMIE, 2007) in Scotland found that, in general, there was good support for students to learn English and pupils at all levels were achieving well. In the college sector, they found a similar situation for students over 16 years of age. HMIE reported that members of staff appeared to value pupils as individuals and that this positive ethos, combined with support for learning English, helped asylum seekers and refugee children to feel included and communicate with other adults and children.

### *Provision of interpreters*

HMIE found in their audit of provision in Glasgow that specialist support staff in particular made good use of the Glasgow Translation and Interpretation Service (GTIS). However more basic requirements for interpreters, for example in issues of discipline or medical matters, interpreters, were often not met. In many schools there was a need for basic school related information to be made available in arrange of languages and/or plainer English. Similar comments were made by Candappa with Ahmad, Balata, Dekhinet, and Gocmen (2007).

### *Friendship clubs*

Candappa with Ahmad, Balata, Dekhinet, and Gocmen (2007) suggest that many schools recognised the importance of friendships for children's well-being and organised clubs to encourage socialising. An important dimension is the support for the wider family within the community. HMIE reported on work that was being undertaken to engage with parents and build relationships. Schools involved parents in their children's education and school life including support programmes for enrolment, workshops related to the curriculum, homework clubs and social events. This approach mirrors aspects of the media clubs set up as part of an action research project in a number of European cities where clubs became more social in nature despite the initial concept of learning to use media. These clubs allowed children to form friendships, and also to share another language. This was considered by the authors to be significant in the building of friendships and a feeling of inclusion (Christopoulou and Rydin, 2004).

### *Anti racist anti bullying strategies in place*

A report by HMIE relating to schools in Glasgow detailed that asylum seekers and refugee children felt safer in primary schools than secondary schools although both sectors had anti-bullying and anti-racist policies in place. Primary schools on the whole had a more inclusive ethos. Christopoulou and Rydin, (2004) considered that bullying, although commonplace across a wide range of children was more likely to occur where the children were asylum seekers and refugees: *'Being foreign, in itself, makes migrant children more prone to be excluded by their peers, especially in places where peer groups are already formed'* (p.14). With regard to anti-racist attitudes, Husband (1995) emphasises that educational professionals need a personal and moral engagement with

the implementation of anti-racist policies at an individual level, through dialogue and interaction.

### c. Case study

Scotland's devolved government has been urged to consider the benefits of *'defining itself as a multilingual nation, in which linguistic, cultural and ethnic pluralism is treated as the norm and not as a problem'* (Landon 2001:34). Children come to school with a wealth of knowledge and educational experiences – in the family and community, pre-school centre, nursery and school – and the *'curriculum needs to recognise and complement the contributions that these experiences can make'* (Scottish Executive, 2004: 9). McGonigal and Arizpe (2007) reported that many of the teachers involved in their study did value and build upon the knowledge and skills that bilingual pupils brought to the classroom.

Since the 1980s, all children in Scotland have a right to education, and recent legislation (see policy documents cited in first report) establishes the duty of education authorities to identify and meet the additional support needs for all children for whom they are responsible. In this respect asylum seeking and refugee children are treated as having additional support needs. Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice (2005) specifies that: *A need for additional support does not imply that a child or young person lacks abilities or skills. Any lack of English should be addressed within a learning and teaching programme which takes full account of the individual's abilities and learning needs.* Ambitious Excellent Schools (2004) and A Curriculum for Excellence (2004) propose that all Scottish learners, including bilingual learners, should become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. In addition however, racial equality is promoted through statute (Race Relations [Amendment] Act, 2000).

Research conducted by Candappa *et al* (2007) into the educational experiences of students in Scotland focused on primary and secondary schools in two Scottish cities. The aim was to identify good practice in supporting the learning of the children of refugees and asylum seekers.

The first of the two cities has been receiving refugee and asylum seekers under the Government dispersal programme since 2000, and therefore has seen large numbers in areas where in the past few refugees had lived. The second city, although with a longer history of accepting refugees, has had fewer refugees living there.

Case study schools, for the most part, played a positive part in the lives of their students, but city wide the experiences ranged from very good to very negative. The diversity of experience may in part derive from different perceptions of good practice, that is, whether schools aim to **include** all learners or simply **integrate** them. Broadly speaking, inclusion is seen as more effective than integration in that it takes account of the background, values etc. of those it seeks to support. If the aim was simply to provide sufficient information to allow an individual student to understand and fit in with the dominant culture, then many achieved this. If the aim was to include the new student, embracing the culture, values and traditions that she/he brings with her/him, then the outcomes were less positive.



### *Key issues*

#### i. Settling in

Some secondary and primary schools had established a 'buddy system' where refugee or asylum seeker children were befriended by Scottish children. This was found to be helpful by both asylum seeker and refugee children. This finding was validated by the HMIE report (2007) which also reported that befriender projects targeted at unaccompanied children and young people were considered good practice. Children and young people were recruited on a voluntary basis and matched up with asylum seeker/refugee children. They met regularly and took part in a range of social activities.

In addition, where children were personally welcomed by members of the senior management of the school, where uniforms were made available for children to make them feel part of the school community, and where needs were assessed and programmes implemented by specialist staff, asylum seeker/refugee children felt more at ease and settled in more readily. These forms of support were also welcomed by parents.

#### ii. Homework support

Some schools in the first city established homework clubs to help support asylum seeker and refugee children. However, in the second city, no homework clubs were reported as available within schools (HMIE, 2007). This may have been because there was no need for them; the study found no evidence that those in this city felt a need for one.

#### iii. Home school relations

Candappa et al's (2007) study highlighted that parents were keen to be involved in their children's education and to support them as much as possible. Parents commented favourably on the availability of interpreters at parents' evenings. However, often schools communicated with the home by letter, in English, which posed difficulties for parents.

#### iv. Friendship

All of the students involved in Candappa's study reported that they had friends within the school; some from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Some schools made an effort to encourage children's socialising through various clubs. However, other children tended to make friends from within their own ethnic group, if there were any such students at the school. However, 'real friends' were reported as involving similar religious and ethnic factors (Candappa, 2000).

#### v. Bullying

HMIE (2007) reported that most head teachers of primary schools promoted a positive ethos and implemented speedy and effective responses to bullying or racial harassment from both staff and pupils within the school community. Secondary schools were seen to be less effective in this respect.

Learning in 2(+) Languages (LTS, 2005) notes that good practice in the areas discussed above such as creating a welcoming ethos, developing good relationships with parents and carers and creating a more multicultural, multilingual classroom through books, language assistants, and collaborative work enabled refugee and asylum seeker children to achieve their potential.

## **6.2 Gypsies and Travellers**

Through the Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act of 2000, the Scottish Parliament established the entitlement of all children and young people in Scotland to a school education. Following the Act, the Scottish Executive published the document *Standards*

*in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000 Guidance on presumption of mainstream education* (Scottish Executive, 2002) providing guidance to local authorities in supporting pupils with additional support needs. The Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED, 2003) outlined five national priorities for education, these are: Achievement and Attainment; Framework for Learning; Inclusion and Equality; Values and Citizenship and Learning for Life. These priorities are deemed relevant to all pupils.

Scottish Gypsies/Travellers are not currently recognised in law as a minority ethnic group. However the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Parliament have recommended that they be treated as if they had the status of a minority ethnic community, with all that that implies under the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000). The Scottish Commission for Racial Equality is currently seeking to establish the same legal status for Scottish Gypsies/Travellers as Gypsies/Travellers living in other parts of the UK.

#### **a. Policy**

Under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act, 2004, some Gypsy/Traveller students would be recognised as having Additional Support Needs. The Act places a legal obligation on local authorities and schools to ensure that appropriate support should be in place for all pupils with additional support needs. The Scottish Executive *Code of Practice* (2005) provides a framework for best practice in implementing the 2004 Act.

In 2005, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) published guidance for schools: *Taking a closer look at equality and inclusion – Meeting the needs of gypsy travellers* (HMIe. 2005). This document provides a framework which supports schools in undertaking self-evaluation on the effectiveness of support that they provide for Gypsy/Traveller pupils.

#### **b. Strategies**

A range of support materials has been developed by key agencies to ensure the effectiveness of provision for supporting Gypsy/Traveller students. The Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP), based in the University of Edinburgh, has established a comprehensive website that is accessible by interested agencies and individuals. STEP has produced a wide range of information and materials for all agencies involved in supporting the education of Gypsy/Traveller students. These include a library of books, articles, research reports, work packs, audio and video cassettes, DVDs and a database of useful contacts, available on their website. It is a rich source of data and information that provides useful support strategies. For example the following frequently asked questions are answered for teachers:

- What might help a new Traveller pupil settle in?
- Are there any resources I can use?
- How can I find out what work they may already have done?
- How can I best help a pupil who may be with the school for only a short period?
- What about Travellers who settle down in my area or who live in houses all year round? What do I need to know?
- How do I note their attendance?

Research carried out by STEP has shown positive results when information and communication technologies (ICT) are used to support Gypsy/Traveller learners (Padfield, 2006).

Research carried out in 12 Scottish schools examined how schools perceived and responded to the culture and behaviour of Gypsy/ Traveller children. The findings raised issues of the challenges schools were faced with in trying to reconcile cultural diversity with the norms of behaviour and attendance (Lloyd et al, 1999). An extensive and thorough report evaluating the impact of national guidance for developing inclusive educational approaches for Gypsies and Travellers has also been published (STEP, 2006). This report emphasised the importance of recognising and being sensitive to the diversity of cultures within Gypsy/Traveller communities and recommended that policy and practice be informed by an awareness of the cultural values of these communities.

The Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP) continues to provide support to a range of agencies, local authorities and colleges through its work with the Gypsy/Traveller communities, consultancy, research and publications. These documents range from concise pamphlets to inform and support parents, families and teachers, to commissioned evaluative reports and research studies. (All research findings and papers are available on the STEP website <http://www.scottishtravellered.net>)

In 2004, the Scottish Executive guidance to local authorities and schools were published, this guidance was based on the outcomes of 'The Equal Opportunities Committee Inquiry into Gypsy Travellers and Public Sector Policies' in 2001. The report by the Scottish Executive outlined a response to the 37 recommendations made by the EOC following the Inquiry. These recommendations dealt with a range of issues including legislation and policies, social inclusion, terminology and identification of Gypsy Travellers, education and housing strategies.

Learning and Teaching Scotland, (LTS) is a non-departmental public body, funded by the Scottish Government, with responsibility for the development of the Scottish curriculum. Within the 'Inclusive Education' section on their website, LTS make available a wide range of materials, case studies, support literature and documents. In 2003 it published advice by STEP which outlined recommended practice for developing an inclusive approach towards Gypsy/Traveller students (LTS, 2003). The key recommendations were that authorities should:

- take a lead in reviewing enrolment, attendance and achievement levels
- refer to appropriate reports for advice on developing practice to include Gypsies and Travellers
- identify a designated member of the senior management to progress plans for improving achievements in Gypsy/Traveller communities
- consider how to make most effective use of peripatetic staff and integrated support services
- identify and reserve some short-term pre-school placements
- consider how to take account of views of children in the decision making process
- consider the extent to which allocation of funding and resource provision might support schools in their ability to support inclusion
- consider together with schools how records and recording procedures can provide support for interrupted learners
- review their current approaches to flexibility and innovation in the curriculum
- together with Learning and Teaching Scotland evaluate existing pilot projects on the use of ICT based distance learning opportunities

(LTS, 2003, p.20)

### **c. Case study**

#### *Background*

This case study describes how the headteacher and staff of a Scottish Highland primary school developed an inclusive approach for all their pupils including Gypsy/Traveller pupils. It is taken from an edited account produced by STEP staff (STEP, 2004).

The school is a village primary school, it has a population of around 140 pupils, this includes a nursery class for 4-year olds. Pupils are usually taught in composite classes, that is classes where children of one, two or more year stages are grouped together to form a class. There is also a playgroup for pre-school children.

Gypsy/Travellers are regular visitors to the area and many stay on a council-managed caravan site on the outskirts of the village. Many of the families return to the area year after year and, in turn, their children re-enrol at local primary schools. The number of children coming to the area varies year on year, with typically between 5 and 12 pupils enrolling, depending on the number of visiting Gypsy/Traveller families. The report stated that Gypsy/Traveller families encourage their children to attend school and cites anecdotal evidence suggesting that children enjoyed returning to familiar environments.

#### *Previous practice*

Classes were usually organized in June for the following session and although allowances would be made for Gypsy/Traveller pupils, the school would have no idea of the actual number of pupils who might turn up or their ages. Pupils from Gypsy/Traveller families would usually arrive at the school in late August and March, frequently turning up at the school in the morning just as classes were beginning. This, combined with part-time clerical assistance, meant that there was only minimal support in place to help children and families settle in. Enrolment forms contained the minimum amount of detail with the result that communication between schools about individual children was limited.

In the past Gypsy/Traveller children experienced segregated provision being accommodated in a separate room in a seldom used building. A teacher was employed for the duration of their stay. Such practices fostered a 'them and us' culture.

#### *Changing practices*

In 1993 the school ended the practice of segregating Gypsy/Traveller children, a decision welcomed by the staff. Gypsy/Traveller children were put into their peer classes, these were usually composite classes because of the size of the school. This practice resulted in local children developing friendships with the Gypsy/Traveller children and positive relationships between families and staff. These positive developments were not always reflected in the local community with some local people unsympathetic to the culture of Gypsy/Travellers.

The learning of Gypsy/Traveller children is generally interrupted and because of this the school began to keep folders for each child. These contained samples of their work at school and provided a useful starting point for their return to the school. The school also sought to address the problem of identifying children's educational experiences during the periods of their absence from the school. This required an understanding of Gypsy/Traveller culture and of the kinds of support for learning that Gypsy/Traveller children would need.

#### *The development of inclusive practices at Local Authority level*

In 2002 a Development Officer (DO) was appointed by Highland Council to develop educational provision for Gypsy/Traveller children and families across the authority's schools. The Headteacher found the support from the Development Officer to be essential in developing good practice as the DO had contact with the children as they moved between schools. The school also found guidelines that outlined effective

inclusive approaches and were disseminated by Learning Teaching Scotland to be of value (LTS, 2003). The school system, in general, was identified as presenting a number of barriers to inclusion, the most common being issues of adult literacy and the consequences of this on communication and enrolment procedures with the school. The lack of or limited relevance of the curriculum to Gypsy/Traveller children was also recognised as a barrier, as was the mismatch between the school calendar year and the work and family patterns of Gypsy/Traveller families. In light of these issues the school recognised the need to adopt a flexible response in working with the families.

### *Strategies for inclusion*

The STEP study showed that staff in the school had worked hard supporting all the children through developing more inclusive strategies: *'We want them to come to school and feel welcome without a focus on them'*. Establishing good relationships and trust at all levels within the school community was viewed as critical to the success of the initiative.

Gypsy/Traveller children were attending the local playgroup and nursery and this allowed more time for relationships to be developed between the school and the families. As Gypsy/Traveller parents became aware of the progress that their child was making, school-based learning took on a greater importance. An example of this was the attendance of both local parents and Gypsy/Traveller parents at a school meeting for all parents on the teaching of reading at the early stages.

The school recognised that in order for support to be effective it was essential that there should be a key contact person in the school and a contact person in the local authority. The development of trust and positive relationships within the local community was also vital. The study identified the effectiveness of the partnerships between Gypsy/Traveller families, and their children, and other professionals as the key to the progress that was made.

Co-ordinated arrangements were put in place to support access to educational provision. Following the appointment of the Development Officer (DO), transfer records were developed. These detailed the work a child had covered while they were attending the school and could be taken by Gypsy/Traveller families from school to school. Copies were kept by both the family and the school. This record meant that important information about the child was more up to date for the next school. Feedback from this initiative was positive, with evidence that children were able to start work immediately without the need for constant re-assessment at each new school. It was useful to teachers too in providing immediate information about a child's progress. In order to support this, parents were encouraged to notify schools of their intention of moving on so that the transfer record could be ready for them.

Teaching resources that were more culturally relevant to Gypsy/Traveller children were developed and introduced. These included literary resources published by Traveller Education Services in England. The staff also developed cultural information packs which were put together in collaboration with the families.

Funding was made available to employ additional support staff. Although this was recognised as a positive move it proved problematic in practice because of the need to redeploy staff while Gypsy/Traveller children were not in school. A further problem was the time it took for staff to be cleared through Disclosure Scotland<sup>5</sup>. Attempts to resolve these problems are ongoing.

The findings of the project carried out in the Highland school were made into a pack and distributed to all schools in Scotland. The study reported that the more inclusive strategies appeared to be effective. Examples were given of increased participation and collaboration between Gypsy/Traveller children and their families and the school and

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<sup>5</sup> All adults working with children have to be checked for criminal convictions through the Scottish Criminal Records Office, a process known as Disclosure Scotland.

local community. A reunion was organised for children who had attended the nursery and were then leaving primary school. Commenting on the experience of one Gypsy/Traveller child the report states that '*...in times past a Traveller child might not have remembered his primary days as happy days. He said that, "it would have been nice to see everyone and all the teachers, again".*

### 6.3 Looked After Children

In Scotland, as in England, there are a number of significant legislative documents and policy statements related to the care and education of children and young people over the last decade.

#### a. Policy

In 1995, the Children (Scotland) Act (1995) stated: *Children who are looked-after should have the same opportunities as all other children for education, including further and higher education, and access to other opportunities for development. They should also, where necessary, receive additional help, encouragement or support to address special needs or compensate for previous deprivation or disadvantage.*

There was little more published until 2001 when *Learning with Care* described the results of a joint inspection by HMI and SWSI in 1999-2000. The purpose of the inspection was to evaluate the social work and educational services provided by local authorities to meet the educational needs of looked after children. From this, it provided nine main recommendations.

In January 2002, Minister for Education and Young People, Cathy Jamieson, set local authorities three targets for improving the educational attainment of looked after children, based on the recommendations from *Learning with Care*:

- all looked after children should receive full-time education;
- all looked after children should have a care plan which adequately addresses educational needs; and
- all schools should have a teacher designated to championing the interests of these children.

In October 2001, Jack McConnell announced funding of up to £10 million to provide books, equipment and homework materials for every looked after child in Scotland. The funding was intended to ensure that all looked after children are provided with an educationally rich environment. This money was allocated in 2002 and more than 11,000 children received between £500 and £2500 worth of equipment or support. In October 2004, the Scottish Executive allocated a further £6 million to improve educational outcomes for looked after children.

In 2003, Who Cares? Scotland<sup>6</sup> were commissioned to produce the report *A Different Class?*, a consultation exercise designed to record the educational experiences of a large number of looked after children across the country. The findings from the study provided baseline data on the young people's achievements and qualitative information on their educational aspirations. The report also sought to find out why looked after children become disengaged with education and asked the young people themselves to suggest how their educational attainment may be improved. It also looked to discover whether looked after children had noticed any positive educational changes from the 2001 £10 million investment by the Scottish Executive in this area.

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<sup>6</sup> Who Cares? Scotland is a voluntary organisation that provides a range of services for young people in public care, including advocacy, advice, information and support. ([www.whocarescotland.org](http://www.whocarescotland.org))

*Extraordinary Lives* (2006) was a review, carried out by the Social Work Inspection Agency, of all areas of local authority care for looked after children with an emphasis on identifying good practice and recommending future improvements. The review produced six key messages, with an emphasis on local authority departments working together to champion looked after children and allowing them as great an opportunity to develop into successful adults as any other child: *There is nothing inevitable about looked after children doing less well in education.*

With specific regard to education, the review identified four factors that played a key role in helping looked after children become effective learners and offered some examples of good practice in these areas. These were: learning environment; family and home circumstances; health; and social and environmental factors. The report then suggested ten action points to help looked after children achieve academically and six key points to consider.

'Extraordinary Lives' makes the point that looked after children can benefit from programmes designed to target pupils who are slow to learn or suffer some form of educational disadvantage without necessarily singling them out as looked after. There is a range of strategies in place to fulfil the potential of pupils who are underachieving, which include some looked after children. From these the review highlights *A Curriculum for Excellence* (Scottish Executive 2004), *Ambitious, Excellent Schools* (Scottish Executive 2004) and *Determined to Succeed* (Scottish Executive 2004).

In addition, *More Choices, More Chances*, the Scottish Executive's strategy for reducing the number of 16-19 year olds in Scotland who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) was published in 2006, along with *Workforce Plus*, the Executive's Employability Framework for Scotland. Specific mention is made in these documents of the high percentage of looked after children in the NEET category and there are suggested actions for young people of school age (pre-16) in order to improve the educational experience of those most at risk of disaffection and disengagement with school. These areas for action are: Transforming the learning environment; Flexible, personalised learning opportunities with appropriate recognition; Recognition of wider achievement; Developing employability; and, A focus on outcomes.

Focusing more specifically on LAC, 'Looked After Children and Young People: We Can and Must Do Better' (SEED, 2007) sets out 19 actions aimed at improving the lives and educational outcomes of looked after children. These actions were based around the five themes of the report; 'Working Together'; 'Becoming Effective Lifelong Learners'; 'Developing into Successful and Responsible Adults', 'Being Emotionally, Mentally and Physically Healthy' and 'Feeling Safe and Nurtured in a Home Setting'. Actions relating to education fall mainly into the first three themes, though action 18 within the final theme calls for accommodation that 'must appropriately support their longer-term outcomes in terms of education, employment and training'.

An 'implementation board' is responsible for seeing that the actions, and the 57 tasks that are associated with them, are completed. In order to do this, eight working groups have been established under the five themes of the report; four 'Working Together' working groups and one working group for each of the other themes.

## **b. Strategies**

### *i. Raising the attainment of Looked After Children*

Funded by the Scottish Executive, *Reading Rich* is a three-year project, carried out in partnership with NCH Scotland and the Scottish Book Trust, aiming to promote a love of reading and improve literacy among children in care. This followed a 2005 report from Audit Scotland that 60% of sixteen and seventeen year olds in care in Scotland had not passed standard grade English or mathematics (TES Scotland, 06.05.05). The first phase of the project involved over 50 children from three Scottish regions; Central

Scotland, Moray and the Western Isles, and originally focused on creating a rich reading environment for children, aged between three and sixteen, in residential and foster placements. The initiative also featured writers in residence working with children in residential and foster homes in Fife, Ayrshire, Edinburgh and the Western Isles. Included in the Scottish Executive funding for the initiative is money for a full evaluation to see how it may affect future funding for LAC initiatives.

The £10 million of additional funding for looked after children announced by the Scottish Executive in 2001 was to provide books, equipment and homework materials for every looked after child in Scotland in order to help provide them with an '*educationally rich environment*' and '*to raise the educational attainment of looked after young people to meet their ambitions and abilities*'. The money was distributed among local authorities based on the number of looked after young people in each local authority's area, with £500 allocated for each young person looked after in a community placement, and £2500 for young people in local authority or independent residential homes, residential schools or secure accommodation.

The Scottish Executive's *Report on Educational Attainment of Looked After Children* (2002) gave extensive details on how much of this funding each local authority was given and how the money was spent. It found that around half the money had been spent on ICT equipment, including PCs, laptops, printers, educational software and filtered internet access. Other areas the money was spent on include; books, library expansions and reference materials; homework facilities including desks, furniture, workstations, appropriate lighting and defined study areas; outdoor educational equipment; arts and crafts materials and individual packs of basic school materials such as a school bag, pens and erasers. This report stated a belief that the extra funding has increased expectations for the future educational attainment of looked after children by allowing many of them to achieve specific learning outcomes identified in their PEPs.

The 2003 Who Cares? Scotland consultation report *A Different Class?* was undertaken to ascertain whether looked after children had noticed any educational benefits from the £10 million investment. It reported several disappointing findings, including:

- 58% of young people interviewed were unaware that money had been recently invested in their educational attainment.
- Only 22% of young people were consulted about the best way the money could be spent to improve their education.
- 77% reported that they did not perceive any direct benefit from the investment.

ii. *Strategies to raise self esteem, confidence, motivation and aspirations*

Innovative Routes to Learning (IRL), an educational project at the University of Strathclyde, has run a series of programmes working with looked after children from different West of Scotland local authorities. These projects are aimed at raising both the young people's self-confidence and their aspiration to go on to reach a positive destination upon leaving school. They involve the young people working in groups on a series of progressively more difficult challenges.

IRL also runs introductory programmes designed to encourage LAC to attend its sister project, the Summer Academy @ Strathclyde; a two-week summer programme with the purpose of encouraging young people from more deprived areas into Higher Education. The Summer Academy programme is based on a 'Challenge Curriculum' that offers educational, recreational and study support components and is located at the university's Jordanhill Campus. It is carried out by undergraduate student mentors. The introductory Summer Academy LAC programme was conceived in 2007, with the purpose of familiarising the looked after children with the Jordanhill Campus, the



mentors they will work with on the Summer Academy itself and the kind of activities they will be taking part in. It was felt that this would increase the chances of the young people attending the full two-week course.

In September 2007, the Frank Buttle Trust introduced its Quality Mark in Scotland. The mark is for institutions who have shown extra support for students who have been in public care and has been awarded to four universities in Scotland; Strathclyde, Glasgow, Abertay and Edinburgh. The universities of Strathclyde and Glasgow have since worked together with Glasgow local authority to devise a series of events for secondary school LAC pupils in order to raise their aspirations of attending higher education.

*iii. Support for schools / teachers working with minority background students*

Following on from the 2001 '**Learning with Care**' report, the Scottish Executive commissioned a multi-agency project in January 2002 to develop new materials that would assist local authorities in improving the educational outcomes for looked after children in Scotland. The agencies involved included Save the Children, Who Cares? Scotland, the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF), the Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care and the University of Strathclyde's Faculty of Education.

The materials were aimed at carers and local authority education and social work staff and were designed to help these staff improve the educational attainment and outcomes of looked after children. They included: training materials; an information booklet; an education report and quality indicators that would allow local authorities to determine whether their residential units were an 'educationally rich' environment for LAC. These self-evaluation markers were designed to be used not just in a range of care settings but also by schools and local authority managers. This emphasised the 'corporate parent' role which calls for local authority departments to work together and take a collective responsibility for the education of LAC.

In order to ensure that the materials were fit for purpose, Save the Children and Who Cares? Scotland consulted 27 looked after children and young people in order that their opinions and experience would be represented within the materials. '**We Can and Must Do Better**' (2007) described the training materials as providing 'an ideal multi-disciplinary training opportunity for teachers, social workers, foster carers, residential workers and other relevant professionals working with looked after children and young people.' It goes on to say that they have been used 'extensively, though not consistently, across Scotland'.

*iv. Procedures for identifying, tracking and supporting looked after children*

The £10 million of funding issued to local authorities in 2001, as well as being used for materials that children in care could access directly, was also used to set up ICT systems to improve communication between local authority departments and allow information on the educational attainment of children in care to be shared. Several Scottish local authorities have used the Strathclyde Educational Establishment Management Information System (SEEMIS) for this purpose. SEEMIS is used to monitor and track pupil progress in terms of attendance, attainment and exclusions.

From 2006, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) developed inspection work in schools that specifically looked at schools' provision for looked after children. The nine recommendations in 'Learning with Care' acted as a starting point for this work. In 2007, schools were asked, during HMIE inspections, to supply information on the attainment and progress of looked after children, as well the school's approach to meeting the specific needs of these pupils.

### **c. Case study**

In 1995, the legislation for the care of Looked After Children (LAC) in Scotland was strengthened, requiring local authorities, through their social work services, to ensure that every child had an individual care plan, which was established in consultation with the children themselves and reviewed at regular intervals. This followed similar legislation in England and Wales where new processes and associated documentation for the assessment, planning and review of the care of LAC had been developed for use throughout both countries. A series of radically reviewed forms formed the core of the initiative.

Rather than adopt these in their entirety, the Scottish Executive decided to modify them to reflect the context in Scotland. The modified materials were then piloted and evaluated before being implemented on a national scale. The pilot trials were evaluated formally by the Executive, with some additional small scale evaluations by those researching or working directly with LAC. This section reviews some of the key findings from these evaluations.

The initiative had a three-fold aim. Firstly, it aimed to improve the parenting experiences for young people in care, whatever the nature of that parenting. This, in turn, would lead to an improvement in a range of outcomes including academic achievement and personal development. Secondly, it was intended that the changes to procedures and materials would improve the quality of the information about children held by local authorities and government, thus enhancing the development of policy and practices. Thirdly, it sought to gather data for the statutory annual statistical returns required of local authorities and the Scottish Executive.

In order to meet these aims, new processes of assessment were accompanied by revised care planning and review forms which were completed by appropriate professionals, carers and the LAC themselves.

The evaluation of the materials and associated processes involved gathering feedback from a number of professionals and carers working with LAC who had been involved in the pilot exercise. Broadly speaking, the findings were favourable, although the report did make twenty recommendations for improvement. Five of these were concerned with improving the training for those working with the new processes and documentation, while a further two highlighted a need for increased ownership of the materials and better inter-agency partnership working in their implementation. One criticism of the methodology however focused on the very small number of LAC whose views had been sought during the evaluation (Francis, 2002).

In an attempt to address this, Who Cares? Scotland undertook an informal consultation with young people who had experienced the new processes and documentation (Francis, 2002). Approximately 20 LAC were involved.

As with the formal evaluation, the young people were generally positive about the forms and the procedures. They did however express a number of reservations. For some, while they appreciated that more time would be spent on gathering information on them and, in turn, having more robust evidence on which to base care plans, the time taken to complete the forms was considered excessive. The changes to the graphics, presentation and content were all seen as positive. In particular some of the additional questions, such as one on bullying, were singled out for approval. On the negative side, some of the drawings used to illustrate the forms were perceived as more suitable for younger children and, as a result, somewhat patronising for older ones.

In both the formal evaluation and the Who Cares? report, a significant concern was the extent to which one set of forms and procedures could deliver all three of the original aims. In particular, the feedback identified a tension between improving the care experience for young people and the needs of local authority and government to gather accurate statistical data. This continues to be an issue although the plight of looked

after children continues to receive considerable attention, including support programmes and initiatives by local authorities and, notably, the Frank Buttle Trust.

## 6.4 Linguistic minorities

The wide-ranging National Cultural Strategy, published in 2000<sup>7</sup> following devolution, identified, as one of the key priorities, the promotion 'of Scotland's languages as cultural expressions and as means of accessing Scotland's culture'. While the two indigenous languages, Gaelic and Scots, are explicitly mentioned in the action statements associated with this priority, the document recognises that other minority languages are also to be valued. It endorsed the recommendation in the national curriculum guidelines for the teaching of English across the primary and early secondary years<sup>8</sup> that teachers should encourage respect for the mother tongue languages of all the children, be it English, Gaelic or Scots, or one of the community languages such as Urdu, Punjabi or Cantonese and foster an interest in its literature (SOED, 1991). However, it should be noted that the Scottish national curriculum guidelines are not mandatory.

### a. Policy

Although the Cultural Strategy, and the curriculum guidelines, emphasised the value of diversity and recognised the importance of minority languages in the national culture, no specific policy document existed that considered the implications for education. Following on from the Cultural Strategy, the government launched the Scottish Inquiry into the role of educational and cultural policy in supporting Gaelic, Scots language and minority languages differentiated between minority languages (as defined above) and community languages i.e. languages spoken by members of significant immigrant communities, or their descendants, within Scotland. The report of the Inquiry (Scottish Parliament Corporate Body, 2003) noted that in the absence of any published, explicit policy for minority languages, it could be concluded that there was, in effect, an implicit default policy which essentially allowed minority languages to die out. The Inquiry aimed to address this through identifying ways in which the government could support and encourage language use in Scotland. They identified 3 principles which would serve as organisers for the language policy:

- i. the conservation and revitalisation of Scotland's existing linguistic heritage;
- ii. the integration of Scotland's language resources with public policy priorities; and,
- iii. the development of new and extended opportunities.

Gaelic and Scots are defined as minority languages (indigenous heritage languages) while the most frequently used community languages are Urdu, Cantonese, Polish and Arabic. The authors also called for the languages used by the aurally and impaired such as British Sign Language and Braille, to be classed as minority languages.

The European Charter, however, places Scots and Gaelic in two different categories. While recognising both as minority languages, Gaelic is identified as in need of specific protection and support to ensure its survival.

The Gaelic language Act (2004) required the production of a national language plan for Gaelic. Published in 2007, The National Plan for Gaelic: 2007-2012 was developed on behalf of the government by Bord na Gaidhlig, a statutory, non-governmental public body, funded by the government. Addressing the use of Gaelic in the home, community, place of learning and workplace, the national Plan sets priorities and targets for the subsequent five years, including education. The National Gaelic Education

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/nationalculturalstrategy/docs/cult-14.asp>

<sup>8</sup> [www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/guidelines/englishlanguage.asp](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/guidelines/englishlanguage.asp)

Strategy (Annex A) identifies a need for an expansion of Gaelic medium education and new initiatives proposed include a 'virtual' classroom environment for the delivery of Gaelic medium subjects.

## **b. Strategies**

English and Gaelic are the official languages of the Scottish Government. Scotland has a total population of just over 5 million, with approximately 1.5% speaking Scottish Gaelic, the most frequently cited minority language. The 2001 Census data showed that, while the number of Gaelic speakers dropped significantly during the 1990s, there was a small but encouraging increase in the numbers who could read, write and understand Gaelic. ([http://www.bord-na-gaidhlig.org.uk/about\\_gaelic/gaelic\\_today.html](http://www.bord-na-gaidhlig.org.uk/about_gaelic/gaelic_today.html)).

The Scottish Executive has a system of specific grants for Gaelic medium education as well as grants to support other aspects of Gaelic in the community and funding for Gaelic broadcasting. Much of this is addressed through the Gaelic Development Agency (<http://www.bord-na-gaidhlig.org.uk/welcome.html>) which works in partnership with the Scottish Executive and Gaelic organisations to improve the position of Gaelic in Scotland and beyond. Funded by the Government, it has a particular interest in education and a key aim of increasing the number of Gaelic speakers.

Mac an Tailleir (undated, <http://www.cnampshleite.org.uk/tailleir.htm>) identifies 4 stages in the development of provision for monitory languages: exclusion, single subject teaching, partial immersion and total immersion. He describes how, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Gaelic was excluded from schools, with English as the medium of instruction. Subsequently, in the 1960s and 70s, Gaelic could be studied as a subject in secondary schools for external certification. Since then, Gaelic medium education (GME) units, attached to mainstream schools, have been established to provide some instruction in Gaelic and in 2006, the Glasgow Gaelic School opened, based on total immersion principles.

Mac an Tailleir argues for total immersion in that it ensures that all interactions, formal and informal, in and outwith the classroom, are conducted in Gaelic, allowing fluency to develop in all aspects of language use. Partial immersion, he argues, can discriminate against minority language speakers, who are marginalised and prevented from experiencing the holistic learning experience that majority language speakers enjoy.

At present, there are over 60 primary schools offering Gaelic medium education, with additional teaching resources in Gaelic. The government has also taken steps to increase the numbers of Gaelic-medium teachers, both in primary and secondary schools, in a number of ways, notably through the introduction of Gaelic-medium preservice programmes.

While there are no official figures for the numbers speaking the Scots language, it is generally considered to be relatively widely spoken and, increasingly, promoted as a living language and the focus of academic study (National Cultural Strategy, 2000). The 2001 Census did not contain a question relating to Scots speakers, partly on the grounds that a lack of a shared definition of Scots amongst those who claimed to be speakers would cast doubt on the accuracy of the responses. This issue of definition is an ongoing one.

The implementation of a language policy in response to the European Charter has been *'half-hearted, ill thought-out and buried in a swathe of other 'cultural' issues'*, according to Millar (2206, p.63). As a result, there is little in the way of initiatives to promote Scots. Millar's analysis of the UK and Scottish responses to the Charter draws comparisons between the respective positions of Gaelic and Scots although he acknowledges that this is in part due to the categorization of the two languages in the Charter. He notes that the periodic reports on progress required by the European Commission as evidence

of adherence to the Charter, place considerably greater emphasis on developments in Gaelic but say little or nothing regarding Scots. His findings on local authority language policies indicate a similar position at the local level.

It is only when discussing the academic study of the two languages does there seem to be equal attention given in government reports. Otherwise there is little evidence of status or acquisition planning for Scots in the official documentation.

Another area of interest is that of minority community languages such as Urdu, Punjabi and Cantonese. In an investigation into the experiences of minority ethnic pupils, Ashrad *et al* (2005) found that teachers, pupils and their parents had differing perceptions of the extent to which schools did, in practice, foster inclusion and deal with discrimination. While much of the study was concerned with experience of racial discrimination or racist bullying, and interpretations of these terms, some mention was made of the support for the English as an additional language (EAL) provided by the school or authority. Teachers in some schools were positive in their appreciation of the contribution and support provided by EAL staff and there appeared to good working partnerships between them. However, in other schools there was little evidence of true partnership but rather, EAL staff were expected to deal with all language and, in some cases, race issues that arose. Rather than seeing minority pupils as cultural enrichment, they saw them as problematic. Participants in the study identified a need for appropriate staff development, improved resources for learning and teaching and, for some, the need to increase the number of minority ethnic teachers, resulting in a more ethnically diverse teaching force and a broader range of role models for children.

McPake (2006) found that Urdu was the most extensively taught language after Gaelic in Scottish Primary and secondary schools, albeit typically as a second or modern language for external certification. She identified over 100 complementary classes, schools or centres for community language learning although these tended to be concentrated in the 25 or so most frequently used languages. Many of those teaching in complementary provision have little or no training in supporting language learning and many are unpaid volunteers. She also argues for an inclusive language policy that is also comprehensive, that involves community learning needs as well as academic and recognises the benefits that language skills can bring to society as a whole, not just in terms of academic achievement in schools.

### **c. Case study**

The promotion of Scotland's indigenous languages, Gaelic and Scots, is an explicit commitment from the Scottish Government (see Interim report). Similarly, teachers are encouraged to recognise and support for the community languages of their pupils. For example, the national curriculum guidelines for the teaching of English across the primary and early secondary years<sup>9</sup> state that teachers should encourage respect for the mother tongue languages of all the children, be it English, Gaelic or Scots, or one of the community languages such as Urdu, Punjabi or Cantonese and foster an interest in its literature (SOED, 1991).

In Scotland, Gaelic is the most extensively taught language after English, with Urdu next in frequency (McPake, 2006). The main strategy to date has been one of total or partial immersion where, for all or part of each school day, teaching and learning is conducted in Gaelic. Thus there are schools that operate entirely in Gaelic<sup>10</sup> and yet others with Gaelic-medium units where pupils spend part of the day receiving instruction in Gaelic. A third approach is that of the Gaelic Learning Primary Schools programme, where

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<sup>9</sup> [www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/guidelines/englishlanguage.asp](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/guidelines/englishlanguage.asp)

<sup>10</sup> The first Gaelic school in Glasgow, Scotland, opened in 2006, with all teaching in Gaelic. Subsequently others have been opened, with further schools scheduled. See <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/1999/02/91c0a979-e7ff-4f2c-ae33-f0c10602132a>

Gaelic is part of the curriculum alongside modern foreign languages such as French or German.

i. Gaelic Learning in Primary Schools

The Gaelic Learning in Primary Schools programme (GLPS) was initiated in 1998, with the first pilot programme 2000-01. It represents a more limited approach than total or partial immersion but, it is argued, '*serves different aims and offers opportunities to pupils and their parents which would otherwise not be available*' (Johnstone, 2003: ?). It is one in a range of measures designed to promote Gaelic in Scottish schools, with the specific aim of encouraging more learners in secondary schools by introducing them to the language and culture during their primary school career. Although no exact figures are available, it is estimated that approximately 4000 pupils were involved in 2007.

The programme was originally funded by the government with a grant of £5K, rising quite quickly to £80K in 2002-03. The participating local authorities applied for and received funding from the Scottish government's Gaelic-specific grant. The authorities were very supportive of the programme, with some providing additional funding for e.g. teaching resources.

In essence, Gaelic is treated as if it were another modern foreign language in the Scottish primary classroom. In the beginning, primary class teachers who were interested volunteered to take a course specially designed to prepare them for teaching Gaelic. They did not need to be fluent in Gaelic, or speak it at all. The programme covered both instruction in the language and, to a lesser extent, the Gaelic culture. The course was organised on a day-release basis, over 3-4 terms, with a total of 20 days training. Provision has since been for follow up sessions with 2 in-service days per year for two years, for those teachers who have completed the course.

The programme bears a number of similarities to the Modern Languages in the Primary School programme (MLPS: ref) which has been in place for several years and prepares primary teachers to teach in, for example, French and Spanish. A key difference is that while the MLPS programme focuses on teachers working with the last two years of primary school, the GLPS programme includes those working with younger children. During the training, most of the participants will teach Gaelic, or teach in Gaelic, for up to 60 minutes per week, in their own classrooms.

An evaluation was commissioned in 2002 by five of the local authorities who had been participating in the programme. Typically schools had included Gaelic alongside the other modern languages in the school curriculum, resulting in a trilingual approach where instruction was provided in 3 languages – English, Gaelic and another European language such as French or Italian. In the evaluation report, Johnstone (2003) notes that this approach, which promotes Gaelic as another modern European language alongside the more conventional ones, is in the spirit of the Conclusions of the Barcelona Summit (March 2002 – ref needed).

The evaluation draws on the perceptions of the teachers involved, the course tutor and representatives from the Scottish government, Her Majesty's Inspectorate (Education) and the General Teaching Council (GTCS - the professional body for teachers in Scotland). There was no direct assessment of pupils' or teachers' skills included in the evaluation and it is clearly acknowledged in the report that it is not a national evaluation but limited to five local authorities only.

Overall, the primary teachers who participated in the training and went on to teach through and about Gaelic were very positive about their experiences. They considered that learning in and about Gaelic benefited pupils by boosting their confidence, raising awareness of the cultural heritage of Scotland and improving their language skills more generally. In some places, the local community had become involved, raising awareness and reviving interest in Gaelic more widely. The tutor on the original programme had made informal visits to several schools and reported that young

children were writing in Gaelic and that she had been impressed by the displays in several classrooms.

The programme proved popular with local authorities and several formed a consortium to support developments through the production of resources and additional follow-up events. One authority developed a support pack for teachers that they subsequently sold to others while another modified and developed the original training programme to meet the specific needs of the schools and teachers within their area. Some local authorities were more involved than others and, at the time of the evaluation, were at different stages in implementing the programme, reflecting local priorities and existing expertise. The initial interest shown and the subsequent involvement of local authorities have been perceived as auguring well for the long term sustainability of the project.

While the prospects for extending the project were considered to be good, there was concern expressed that a lack of continuity between primary and secondary schools required to be addressed. Some of those interviewed as part of the evaluation were concerned over the extent to which it was possible to ensure progression and continuity in the pupils' experiences as they move from primary to secondary school. In some areas, there was no formal Gaelic provision in the first year of secondary although suggestions had been made to provide a degree of continuity through, for example, extra curricular activities to retain pupils' interests and encourage further development or video-conferencing, drawing on expertise in other places.

The training programme was well-regarded although it was suggested that it should be longer, allowing a range of learning experiences for the teachers, including more discussion and role playing. One of the issues raised was concerned with the balance of grammar and using the language for communication (talking and listening, primarily). While the teachers were expected to, and wanted to, have a good grasp of the grammar, it was not expected that they would be teaching the rules of grammar to their pupils, at the primary stages. There was difference in view regarding just how much grammar was needed although it was concluded that it was teachers' general understanding of language and the concepts involved in language learning that needed reinforced. There was also a perceived need for additional materials on culture and heritage to support the teachers' learning.

Other considerations included value for money, particularly with regard to the impact on achievement in later years, and the need to make space within an already packed curriculum at both primary and secondary stages. In addition some respondents were concerned that headteachers were not always supportive. More, it was felt, was needed to gain the support of senior management in schools, perhaps through more communication and evidence of impact.

Suggestions for further improvement included the development of more materials, primarily for the follow-up events and a national event such as a 'good practice' conference which would bring teachers together and provide an opportunity for shared learning.

For the teachers who participated, it was suggested that the programme could be recognised by the General Teaching Council and credit given to those involved, in terms of continuing professional development.

GLPS was perceived as much less radical than a Gaelic-medium approach and, as a result, less threatening to non-Gaelic parents. Consequently, they were more likely to be supportive and become interested in their child's experiences.

While the programme was originally conceived to promote Gaelic and to support language learning in primary schools, there was the danger that without proper support and commitment at local and national levels, *'it could descend into token provision, which would have adverse effects on pupils'* (Johnstone, 2003:19).

## 6.5 A note on policy relating to special needs

There has been considerable development over the years in the terms used and the support offered to children who may be disadvantaged in the school system for any number of reasons. The following extracts illustrate the extent of this change.

- i. The Education Scotland Act (1980): definition of special educational needs (SEN)

*Young people have special educational needs if they: have greater difficulty in learning than most of their own age group; suffer from a disability or handicap which prevents them being educated with their own age group.*

- ii. The Education (Additional Support for Learning Act) (Scotland) 2004: statutory definition of Additional Support Needs (ASN)

*A child or young person has additional support needs for the purposes of this Act where, for whatever reason, the young person is, or is likely to be, unable without the provision of additional support to benefit from school education provided or to be provided for the child or young person.*

The term 'Special Educational Needs' traditionally only applied to children and young people with particular types of learning needs. The new concept of 'Additional Support Needs' refers to any child or young person who, for whatever reason, requires additional support for learning and this may be short-term.

The key difference between SEN and ASN is that SEN only applied to pupils within a limited group, usually based on some form of disability: cognitive, sensory, physical impairment, communication disorder, genetic condition. Many vulnerable pupils were not recognised as being entitled to special help or recognition under this definition, therefore the introduction of Additional Support Needs legislation.

## 7. Wales

### 7.1 Asylum seekers and refugees

In 2003 there were an estimated 2,335 asylum-seeking and refugee children of compulsory school age living in Wales, almost all of whom were resident in Cardiff, Swansea and Newport. The largest national group were Somalis, resident in Cardiff, a city that has had a small Somali population since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (<http://www.multiverse.ac.uk>).

#### a. Policy

National policy for the support of asylum seeker and refugee children is very similar to that in England. The main educational provision for asylum seekers consists of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). However, refugees have the same entitlements to education and learning as British citizens, even though they may need extra support depending on how long they have been in Wales, and depending on their educational background, particularly their understanding of English, as well as any emotional support requirements.

#### b. Strategies

The strategies identified within research and government documents in Wales made no reference the issues raised by Scottish and English work. Instead more general support strategies were discussed.



Research carried out by Reas (2004) indicated that in Wales there was a dilemma regarding whether to identify asylum seeker and refugee children in schools to staff and other pupils. *'Non-identification could limit the risk of discrimination. However, the identification of asylum seekers would raise other pupils' awareness of their problems and counteract negative media images'* (<http://www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/pims-data/summaries/the-education-of-asylum-seekers-in-wales-implications-for-leas-and-schools.cfm>).

Special arrangements for placing asylum seeker and refugee children in schools might include placing children in lower-ability sets, locating all asylum seekers in the same class, out-of-age placements and new-comers' classes. Areas where provision was most often felt to be inappropriate included shortage of interpreters, funding, and gaps in support at LEA level.

([http://www.elwa.org.uk/doc\\_bin/Research%20Reports/081105\\_learning\\_insight\\_asylum\\_seekers.pdf](http://www.elwa.org.uk/doc_bin/Research%20Reports/081105_learning_insight_asylum_seekers.pdf))

General guidance on support was given by Education Learning Wales and related to generic support for learning. The report refers to the work of Allander (1998) and argues that *'learning methods for learners with limited first language literacy should focus on the learners' immediate personal experiences, cultural backgrounds, familiar topics, and concrete, real world materials rather than abstract and de-contextualised themes'* (CI research, 2004). It advocates a multi sensory approach, with experiential learning and visual aids. However, it includes a warning that teachers should not make assumptions about shared cultural contexts. The document also suggests an approach that moves from concrete to abstract, based on the work of Ramm (1994).

### **c. Case study**

The only reports dealing with asylum seeker and refugee children in Wales focused on the experiences of the local education authorities (LEAs) rather than exploring the support and educational experiences (Reakes & Powell, 2004). All children in Wales, whatever their status, have entitlement to full education and are required to go to school and nursery.

Reakes and Powell (2004) found that all LEAs had implemented processes specifically for families of asylum-seekers and refugees. These processes were mainly concerned with initial enrolment in schools and included meetings, visits to schools and welcome/information packs. It was found that most local education authorities in Wales modified educational arrangements for asylum seeker and refugee children. In contrast to Scottish schools, children were sometimes placed in lower ability sets (classes or groups within classes), and in 'out of age' placements (e.g. placed in classes alongside younger children). Using language to screen children is considered to be 'bad' practice and putting children into classes of younger children, despite their ability, is also considered to be unsatisfactory practice (Mayena and Brady, 2006).

Some LEAs formed newcomers' classes and some schools located all asylum seekers in one class (Reakes and Powell, 2004). LEAs found that the lack of interpreters made the assessment of some asylum seeker and refugee children difficult. Mayena and Brady (2006) described this practice as exclusionist, but also recognised that in some LEAs it could constitute good practice. For example, where there are a number of asylum seeker and refugee children needing additional language support, there may be central support base with additional resources such as textbooks, bilingual dictionaries, language mentors and interpretation services. Schools and teachers can draw on these to support their teaching.

Racist comments and bullying were experienced by some refugee and asylum seeker children although this tended to be more prevalent in secondary schools. Unsurprisingly, because the Welsh education system is very similar to that of England,

the few reports available concentrate on the benefits to schools of accepting asylum seekers into the system. Education and Learning Wales ELWa's (2005) report recognised that pedagogical approaches needed to concentrate on promoting confidence and success in the classroom but that this depended on additional funding being forthcoming. It also recognised that there were institutional barriers which needed to be overcome in order to successfully meet the educational needs of asylum seeker and refugee children. Some of these barriers related to the systems and processes in place in schools.

Schools often expect parents to play an active role in their children's education. Parents of refugee and asylum seekers may find this challenging if they too lack literacy skills in English. Teachers themselves may lack the training and skills that would enable them to better support learners from troubled backgrounds. They may lack awareness of the cultural and social factors which may adversely affect the learning of refugee and asylum seeker children. There may be a lack of specific support for asylum seeker and refugee children at transitional stages in their education. It is recognised that these issues need to be addressed, and that adequate funding should be made available to move forward positively.

## **7.2 Gypsies and Travellers**

With regard to gypsies and travellers, Wales shares policy with England (see Section 4).

## **7.3 Looked after children**

Policy in Wales regarding LAC is similar to both England and Scotland, in that local authorities have the status of 'corporate parent' in relation to children in care. Policy also takes into account section 52 of The Children Act 2004 which makes it a positive duty of local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children in their care.

At the local level, policy is similar to that in England, including the designation of nominated teachers in schools, the appointment of looked after children education co-ordinators within the local authority and the obligatory use of Personal Education Plans (PEPs). In 2007 'Towards a Stable Life and Brighter Future' followed on from 'Guidance on the Education of Children Looked After by Local Authorities' (2001), with policy being shaped by three over-arching aims:

- to provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children.
- to bring the educational attainments of our Looked After Children nearer to those of their peers.
- identifying the schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children. Asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

(Welsh Assembly Government, 2007)

The paper calls for closer collaboration and greater coherence between relevant professionals and agencies in order to produce better educational outcomes for looked after children and offers specific guidance as to the content and purpose of PEPs, the responsibility for which it places on social workers. The paper also reiterates the duty a local authority has in considering the educational needs of looked after children when placing them in schools under the 'Placement of Children (Wales) Regulations' (2007) and the requirement under the 'Children's Homes (Wales)' (2007) regulations that every residential home has a link worker who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked after children.

In June 2006, the Welsh assembly announced funding of £15.4m to be distributed to schools and local authorities under the 'RAISE' programme, designed to improve levels of attainment and standards of education for disadvantaged children. £1m of this money was to be distributed to local authorities as a separate grant specifically for supporting the education of looked after children. The local authorities would receive this money in both 2006-07 and 2007-08.

The stated intention of this LAC-specific funding takes into account the local authority status as 'corporate parent': *The intention of the grant is to enable educational support to be provided for looked after children of the sort that parents would normally provide for their children; particularly when their children are approaching crucial examinations at age 16.*

## **7.4 Linguistic minorities**

The National Assembly for Wales has only been in existence since 2000. The official languages of the Assembly are English and Welsh, with all information including minutes of the Cabinet meetings and Cabinet papers, accessible in both languages.

In the late 1980s, approximately 19% of the population were Welsh speakers (Bourne, 1990). Bourne's report on the needs of bilingual pupils and the provision made for language support in schools found some differences in the positions in England and Wales. A key factor is the existence of a national indigenous language, spoken by a significant proportion of the population, in addition to any community languages. Welsh speakers were more involved in decision making and the government has undertaken consultation on language provision at community level. Where resources allowed, parents had a choice on the balance of languages used in the classroom and, consequently, whether their child was taught in English or Welsh, either as a first or second language. The Welsh National Curriculum continues to uphold this choice.

### **a. Policy**

The Welsh Language Board (WLB) was established in 1993 as a statutory body with responsibility for the promoting and facilitating Welsh language usage. Since then, it has initiated new projects, worked in partnership with other agencies on others and funded yet others (Welsh Language Board, 1999). The Board published A Strategy for the Welsh Language in 1996, followed by A Vision and Mission for 2000-05.

Describing Wales as a bilingual nation, the Vision and Mission statement emphasises the need for partnership in securing the future of Welsh, involving both public and private bodies. It argues that ensuring the survival of Welsh, like any other minority language, will demand continual work to establish and sustain it, to ensure that it is valued and, critically, seen to be valued by key institutions, as well as to ensure that it remains vibrant, up to date and relevant to those who might use it.

The strategy aims to make Wales increasingly bilingual and multilingual against the wider political context of a devolved UK and a progressively more diverse Europe. Each of its aims is accompanied by specific targets, with timelines.

### **b. Strategies**

The Vision and Mission document (WLB, 1999) identified four areas of language planning: acquisition, usage, status and corpus, with aspects to be addressed in each. Acquisition had two dimensions: transmission within the family and Welsh within the education system. (The Scottish National Plan for Gaelic acknowledges that the Welsh Vision and Mission statement influenced its development and uses the same four dimensions of planning in its Educational Strategy.) The document notes a number of

barriers to children's acquisition of the language from their parents, the anticipated primary source of learning. Where only one parent in a family speaks Welsh, there is only a 50% likelihood that the children will be brought up speaking Welsh. Significant proportions of adults lack confidence in speaking the language and, during adolescence, many young people give up speaking Welsh on a regular basis. Intervention begins early with the provision of advice and information for pregnant mothers, through specifically trained midwives and health visitors as well as resource packs. This emphasis on the benefits of bilingualism continues into work with schools as well as other agencies working with young people.

More formally, Welsh-medium and bilingual education are core strands in the strategy, from pre-school provision through schooling to tertiary education and lifelong learning. With only 6.3% of children aged 3 speaking Welsh, the development of Welsh-medium and bilingual nursery education is considered a priority, on the basis that languages are acquired more easily and naturally at an early age than in later life.

The WLB has reported on a decreasing use of the language in schools as pupils move from primary to secondary and again from secondary to further and higher education. These discontinuities at transition stages are continuing to cause concern.

Bilingual resources and support packs have been produced to support teachers, and training colleges began providing bilingual methodology courses in 2004. The Vision and Mission statement encouraged schools to move from teaching the language itself, to teaching other areas of the curriculum through Welsh. Similarly, colleges and universities were encouraged to use Welsh in some or all of their courses and through lifelong learning provision, courses were provided for adult learners in increasing numbers.

Usage planning also had two dimensions, the economic benefits of bilingualism for the speaker and the society, and the use of Welsh in all aspects of life, including social, cultural, leisure and community use. Status planning depends on two conditions: firstly, that key status institutions such as the National Assembly and the Regional Committees (local government) support the use of the language; and, secondly, the language must be relevant and modern, reflecting current society through its ability to deal with new technologies, for example. The fourth aspect, corpus planning, focuses on two dimensions: the need for linguistic standardisation and for the development of a form of the language that people find useful, relevant and worthwhile learning. While acknowledging that languages must change and grow in response to changes in society and the wider context, the WLB recognised the need for specialised, standardised dictionaries and consistent rules for translation.

Specific strategies identified included:

- increasing opportunities for bilingual preschool education by expanding the number of bilingual units across Wales;
- providing advice and support for parents in aiding their children's learning of Welsh;
- providing more teacher training, pre-service and in-service in bilingual methodologies in the classroom and resources to support learning and teaching;
- redesigning the educational support service to improved the language support (Welsh-medium, bilingual and Welsh as a second language) available to schools;
- promoting a Welsh cultural dimension to the curriculum in schools;
- investigating the reasons behind the discontinuity observed at the transition from primary to secondary school;

- using information and communications technologies to increase the incidence of Welsh language use in the curriculum;
- establishing a central agency concerned with the development of bilingual education in Wales.

Each of the strands of the strategy has specific targets, often quantified, accompanying each. A significant activity in the next phase of this project is to evaluate the extent to which these targets have been met and to determine the factors contributing to their success, or otherwise.

## **8. Northern Ireland**

For much of its recent history, educational policy in Northern Ireland has been part of that developed for England and Wales. While such policy has tended to acknowledge specific issues or key differences between these countries, the main principles have been adopted across all three countries. The establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly provides the opportunity for the development of policy and practices that more fully address these.

### **8.1 Ethnic minority students, including refugees and asylum seekers**

The policy and strategies for Northern Ireland appear to be much the same as those in England and Wales.

### **8.2 Gypsies and Travellers**

In Northern Ireland, Travellers have some limited legal protection and are defined in the Race Relations Order 1997 (RRO) as: 'a community of people commonly so called who are identified (by themselves and others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, including, historically, a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland' (ECNI, 2006, p.11).

### **8.3 Looked after children**

In Northern Ireland, the definition of a 'looked after child' is one '*who is in the care of a Trust or who is provided with accommodation by a Trust*' (The Children (NI) Order, 1995). This accommodation can be a residential home or school, a foster home or in a family placement, that is living with a relative or occasionally living in the family home. As in other regions, there are a number of care orders that can be applied (Interim, Full or Residential) as well as 'Voluntary Accommodated'. When the decision is made that a child becomes 'looked after', a care and development plan is put in place. This sets out the living and care arrangements.

The key aim of the Children (NI) Order is to protect children and promote their welfare. It emphasises the need for agencies such as the Health and Social Services, Education and Library Boards<sup>12</sup>, Trusts and parents to work together to resolve the situation.

Recent developments have been driven by data which indicate that educational achievement amongst LAC is significantly lower than that for other students and this may well have negative effects on their life chances in the longer term. The Children (NI) Order states that these children have as much right to educational experiences and

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<sup>11</sup>Health and Social Care Services in Northern Ireland are delivered by Health and Social Services Boards (HSS Boards) and 19 Health and Social Services Trusts (HSS Trusts). Each Trust manages their own staff and services on the ground and controls its own budget.

life chances as any other children but it also acknowledges that, as a result of their experiences, they may have additional or special needs.

While targets for improving the educational attainment of looked after children and care leavers were included in the 'Priorities for Action' document (2004–05), there was no specific funding provided to support this in the draft Priorities and Budget 2005-2008.

## 8.4 Linguistic minorities

Irish Gaelic, one of the Celtic languages in the UK alongside Welsh and Scottish Gaelic, is recognised as a minority language in Northern Ireland and has been ratified as such by the UK government, in line with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. It is not recognised as an official language of the state, however. Three major dialects are spoken in Northern Ireland - Ulster, Connacht and Munster - although only Ulster is spoken and taught in schools.

The last native Irish speaker in Northern Ireland died in the 1970s (Mac Poillin and Ni Bhaoill, 2004). As a result, out of a population of just under 2 million, the majority of Irish speakers are second language learners, learning Irish through school or informal language provision. The first Irish-medium schools were established in the early 1980s. They were funded by the government, as were a number of Irish language projects. The 2001 Census reported that approximately 10% of the population had some knowledge of the language.

### a. Policy

When the Northern Ireland Assembly was re-instated in 1998, the Good Friday Agreement, which set down the conditions under which it would operate, recognised the importance of Irish, Ulster-Scots (as a dialect rather than a minority language) and the languages of other ethnic communities within Northern Ireland. Two cross-border agencies, operating across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, *Forus An Gaeilge* and *Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch*, were established with the responsibility to promote these two languages, Irish and Ulster Scots respectively, on both sides of the border.

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC), created as part of the Good Friday Agreement, has argued for recognition and respect for those who use minority languages, dialects and other forms of communication, such as sign language, as they all contribute to the diversity and richness of the culture of NI. In addition to sign language, the Commission made specific reference to Chinese, Urdu and the languages of Travellers. The NIHRC seek legislation to ensure that linguistic communities are supported in a range of ways, including the through the educational system.

As with Scotland and Wales, education legislation and policy is a devolved responsibility. The Education (Northern Ireland) Act, 1998, set out the duty of the Northern Ireland Regional Assembly to promote the development of Irish-medium education. At national level, the Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI) oversees policy and its implementation while at regional level, educational policy and oversight is the responsibility of the five Education and Library Boards, funded by DENI.

Legislation commits the NI government to facilitating Irish-medium education or, at least, providing the opportunity to study Irish throughout schooling (where numbers are sufficient and parents wish it), the teaching of the language, its culture and history, and the provision of teacher training to meet these commitments. The first Irish-medium primary school was established in 1971 and the first secondary school in 1991. In 2000, the Department of Education established two agencies, one to support the development of Irish-medium education and schools and a second to provide, primarily, small grants to non-state funded schools and preschools to support Irish-medium education.

## **b. Strategies**

For the Irish language, the main strategy adopted is Irish-medium education. This can take place in a number of different types of school. There are Irish-medium units which, although hosted and managed by English-medium schools, are essentially self-contained, with all instruction in Irish. There are also state-funded Irish-medium primary and secondary schools that are not attached in any way to English-medium provision. In addition, there are free-standing independent (private) Irish-medium schools. Both forms of organisation adopt total immersion approaches to learning and teaching. In 2004, all Irish medium units were in Catholic schools and managed by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (Mac Poillín and Ni Bhaoill, 2004).

Another body, the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), promotes integrated education and support parents in establishing integrated schools, with a religious balance in pupil enrolments, staff etc. (i.e. both Catholics and Protestants). In this sector, Irish can be studied as a subject within the curriculum.

The Council for Irish-Medium Education (Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta), was set up in 2000 with the remit of promoting good practice, issuing advice and guidance to those setting up Irish-medium schools and units. A complementary body, the Trust Fund for Irish Medium Education (Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta) provides financial support for new school provision, at pre-school, primary or secondary levels, supports schools as they develop and provides funds for enhancing existing provision.

Irish is a core subject within Irish-medium establishments, in addition to the core National Curriculum subjects of English, mathematics and science and technology. In 2004, it was reported that preschool, primary and secondary Irish medium units and schools experienced a lack of specialist resources and staff trained in Irish-medium pedagogies and approaches (Mac Poillín and Ni Bhaoill, 2004). In addition, many staff were second language learners of Irish, with varying levels of competence in its use. While the Department of Education had established special needs units, the specific needs of special education in the Irish-medium sector were not being addressed. Newly qualified teachers entering the profession were not always prepared adequately to teach in total immersion situation, with only one training institution providing dedicated training in Irish medium practices.

There was little research into Irish-medium education prior to 2000, due in part to the political situation. Since then, there have been a number of projects investigating immersion education, 'good practice' in Irish-medium education and the achievements of pupils in Irish-medium units.

The situation in Northern Ireland is more stable than it has been for a long time. The provision of Irish-medium education continues to grow and develop through the extensive planning and funding bodies. An important aspect is the emphasis on continuity through the preschool, primary and secondary sectors. To complement the expansion of provision, there is a need to both improve the resources available to teachers and address the shortage of qualified teachers through both preservice and inservice training.

A range of projects, including educational initiatives, has been funded by the government focusing on the other indigenous language, Ulster Scots, through the Ulster Scots Agency. The level of protection given under the European Charter is significantly less, and this is reflected in the funding available. In 2007, the Agency was allocated over £12M in funding for projects across governmental departments for a 5 year period, with an additional £11M earmarked for the establishment of an Ulster Scots Academy. In comparison, Irish language projects were allocated £11M for a range of projects, again covering all aspects of government, over the same 5 year period.

([www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/languages/cal\\_committee\\_brief\\_-\\_indigenous\\_language\\_policy.htm](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/languages/cal_committee_brief_-_indigenous_language_policy.htm)).

In 2006, an Ulster Scots website was launched at Stranmillis College, Belfast, to support language learning by primary school children. Declared as the first step in introducing an element of Ulster Scots into the primary classroom, the website features resources for teaching and quizzes and interactive games for children working independently as well as a speaking dictionary which gives both meanings and pronunciation (BBC news, 31.03.2006 - [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern\\_ireland/4862990.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/4862990.stm)).

More broadly, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure supports a range of indigenous and minority ethnic language users as well as those using British and Irish sign languages through various projects (<http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/languages.htm>). One of its key tasks is to provide guidance for the government that will enable them to discharge their obligations under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Under the St Andrews Agreement (2006), the government is committed to introducing an Irish Language Act. Consultation has been extensive, continuing throughout 2007. In 2008, debate was still continuing with the government expressing reservations over the estimated cost of its implementation and arguing that the implementation of the European Charter would provide a more cost effective solution ([http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/languages/irish\\_language\\_act.htm](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/languages/irish_language_act.htm)).

## **9. Discussion**

The first phase of the project provided an outline of the policy context and described some of the strategies in place for four categories of minority group students in each of the four countries within the United Kingdom. Although there are some variations in the nature of policies and the approaches adopted to address the needs of minority groups, all four countries have, to a greater or lesser degree, an overarching philosophy of integrating provision within an 'inclusive education' approach.

In the second phase, attention was given to investigating in greater depth some of the initiatives adopted to address the disadvantage experienced by many students within these groups. Set against the broader concerns of social integration (bullying and harassment etc.), these provide examples of activity under four categories of support: raising attainment; addressing interim outcomes such as aspiration and motivation; providing support for teachers/schools in working with these students; and, procedures for identifying, tracking and supporting them. In many instances, these are local initiatives in response to national policy rather than nationally-driven activities.

This section of the report summarises the main findings.

### **9.1 Ethnic minority students including refugee and asylum seekers' children**

The context for support for refugee and asylum seekers varies according to which area of the UK is considered. In Scotland, for example, the context is complicated by policy differences from that of England and Wales. In addition each country within the UK has its own internal cultural and linguistic differences. For example, in Scotland, where asylum seeker and refugee families may have been dispersed from England, the children have to learn to read and write standard English in school but have to cope with a different accent '*in the playground, on the street and in the media*' (McGonigal & Arizpe, 2007: 6).

Policy also states that the support available to asylum seeker and refugee children should take account of their specific needs related to their experiences arising from their country of origin. These experiences could include the loss of parents, carers or other



family members as well as experiences of interrupted education (Menter, Cunningham & Sheibani, 2000).

Within the inclusive approach set out in policy documents, British schools are encouraged to promote a respect for the skills, knowledge and values that set asylum seeker and refugee children apart from their, typically, monolingual peers. Knowledge of other languages is increasingly seen as something positive, which should be nurtured and which has the potential not only to increase bilingual children's cognitive abilities and develop their understanding of new languages but also to enrich the host culture.

When schools have practices in place that provide additional support to refugees and asylum seeking young people, these should be delivered in a way that does not mark out these young people as different from their peers

Schools should continue, and develop, efforts to get parents/carers involved in extra-curricular activities. Events such as International Days may be a good idea as they celebrate diversity and give refugee and asylum seeking parents/carers a chance to contribute to raising cultural understanding across the school community.

It is essential that those involved in education have a working knowledge of children's entitlements to education and are able to be effective advocates for a group of children who experience racism, discrimination and high levels of social exclusion.

Where children who are seeking asylum are unaccompanied then those under 16 are usually placed in residential care, as there may be few appropriate fostering placements. As a result, some of the discussion regarding looked after children is also relevant to asylum seeking and refugee children.

## **9.2 Gypsy/Traveller students**

In the UK Gypsy/Traveller students are recognised as the most at risk group within the education system. Recent research has detailed the extent of this in terms of risk, deprivation and social exclusion among children and young people of Gypsy/Traveller communities (Parry et al., 2004; DfES, 2003; Lloyd et al, 1999).

Two case studies are outlined below as illustrations of good practice in working towards addressing these challenges. The first of these cases studies is based on the work of the Scottish Travellers Education Programme (STEP). STEP is funded by the Scottish Government and is based at Edinburgh University. It has a remit to develop and support inclusive educational approaches for Gypsies and Travellers. The case study described below is one of a series of studies disseminated through STEP. It shows how a primary school in the Scottish Highlands worked with its local authority, Highland Council, to develop an inclusive educational approach for Gypsy/Traveller pupils.

The second case study, Sure Start for Travellers, outlines work carried out in England by Traveller Education Services (TES). It details a project carried out by TES in Leeds and disseminated through the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) as part of their strategy of supporting teachers by linking them with the latest research and examples of good practice. The project looked into the absence, in Leeds, of Gypsy/Traveller children from the Government sponsored Sure Start programmes

## **9.3 Students in care (Looked After Children)**

Support for looked after children across the United Kingdom has developed along similar lines in each of the four countries, albeit with some significant differences due to the different legal and education systems. The case studies presented here depict and reflect upon initiatives in England and Scotland respectively. The first draws on the evaluation of a major initiative in Leeds, a city which has significant areas of social and economic disadvantage. The second reflects on the ways in which Looked After

Children are supported, drawing on research into the impact that changes in official processes and procedures have had.

Much policy and practice in recent years has been an attempt to provide better coordination between educational and social work services within local authorities in order that a more consistent, unified and effective approach may be taken with LAC. The sharing of relevant knowledge is particularly important for this. To this end, the concept of a Virtual Head of a Virtual School who takes responsibility for children in public care within an authority seems both innovative and promising.

Programmes, both in and out of school, that aim to improve the educational goals for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds without specifically targeting LAC would appear to often offer some degree of success, taking into account how looked after children often do not want to be singled out because of their in-care status.

There is still a need for clearer, more consistent policy and practice on making the home environment of looked after children more 'educationally-rich'.

#### **9.4 Linguistic minorities**

Two initiatives designed to improve the learning experiences of minority language speakers have been identified. In England, where there are no recognised indigenous minority languages, the focus is on the integration and support of ethnic minority pupils whose first or home/community language is other than English. The second example comes from Scotland where there are two recognised indigenous languages, Scots and Gaelic, and looks at an evaluation of a programme to support Gaelic learning in Scottish primary and secondary schools.

#### **9.5 Summary**

The case studies explored in this report reflect a range of approaches from locally-driven needs-based projects such as those for Gypsy/Traveller children to those driven by national policy targets such as Aimhigher. Most involve some form of intervention, working directly to enhance the life chances of disadvantaged groups. At least one, the modifications of assessment processes and accompanying documentation for LAC in Scotland, indicates how essential procedures can be improved by bringing the target group into the discussion.

A key factor in several of the intervention projects described is the extent to which they seek to involve the family and wider community and to address flaws or inefficiencies in the educational and care systems rather than taking a deficit model of the individual child. In many instances this involvement of the wider community is more than consultation but rather tends towards active involvement and encouraging family and carers to take greater ownership of the process and responsibility for successful outcomes.

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<b>Young People in Public Care'. NFER</b>



## **Social inclusion – web addresses**

### **General**

[http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/links\\_and\\_publications/](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/links_and_publications/)

### **Joseph Rowntree Foundation**

<http://www.google syndicated search.com/u/jrf?sa=Search&q=minority+&hq=inurl:www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings>

### **Gypsy, Roma Travellers**

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/database/travellers.html>

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/inclusiveeducation/findresources/supportinglearners/gypsytravellers.asp?strScope=Individual>

<http://www.scottishtravellered.net/>

<http://www.grtleeds.co.uk/ourService/index.html>

[http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/raising\\_achievement/gypsy\\_travellerachievement/?section=1](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/raising_achievement/gypsy_travellerachievement/?section=1)

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<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects/>

<http://www.surestart.gov.uk/aboutsurestart/about/everychildmatters/>

[www.rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk/TheConstitution/](http://www.rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk/TheConstitution/)

<http://cmis.northamptonshire.gov.uk/CmisWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=1522>.

Merton Virtual School: [www.younglondonmatters.org/uploads/documents/implementingcar\\_370688.ppt](http://www.younglondonmatters.org/uploads/documents/implementingcar_370688.ppt)

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/news/newsreleases/2005/August/looked-after.htm>

Vulnerable Children Grant:

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/sickchildren/vcgc.shtml>

English Local Authorities' Strategies:

[http://dev.nfer.steelhosting.co.uk/emie/content.asp?id\\_Category=158&id\\_Content=4725&level=3](http://dev.nfer.steelhosting.co.uk/emie/content.asp?id_Category=158&id_Content=4725&level=3)

Kic.in2.study:

[http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Learning/cla/looked\\_after.htm](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Learning/cla/looked_after.htm)

Excellence in Cities:

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/Database/secondary/excellence.html#summary>

National Children's Charity:

<http://www.nch.org.uk/aboutus/index.php?i=460>

<http://www.teachingexpertise.com/articles/looked-after-children-new-law-improves-education-rights-1771>

Learning and Teaching Scotland:

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/lookedafterchildren/index.asp>