

## **Irish Traveller Movement submission to the Department of Education, *Statement of Strategy 2021-2023***

November 2020

### **Improving the learning experience and success of learners**

**What do you think the key strategic priorities for education (primary and post-primary), over the next 3 years, should be?**

(57.2%) of male Travellers had only primary-level education, four times the general population (13.6%) and just 13% of Traveller girls completed second-level compared to 69% nationally. (Census 2016)

A Goal of the DES Traveller Education Strategy (2006-2011) stated *all Traveller pupils should remain in school and complete the junior cycle*. In 2017 Travellers were over 50 times more likely to leave school without a Leaving Certificate in comparison to the non-Traveller population. (1)

<sup>(1)</sup> ERSI report 'A Social Portrait of Travellers'

#### **Key strategic priorities**

- Implement all 14 of the education actions of the National Traveller Roma Inclusion Strategy with clear targets, indicators and budget, with an implementation plan in partnership with Traveller organisations and outstanding recommendations from the Traveller Education Strategy 2006, embedded also.
- Resources should follow the Traveller pupil. Direct and targeted resources are needed to promote Traveller inclusion and retention, with teaching supports reinstated based on need. The ethnicity question introduced under DES collection should be enhanced for purposes of identifying and segmenting data specific to attendance and attainment.
- Eradicate discriminatory practices, in enrolment processes, in teaching practice and in school practice such as the Reduced Timetable. Tackle poor attendance, provide tailor made and targeted learning supports, and enhance engagement between schools and Traveller communities. Home School Liaison Officers irrespective of DEIS status should be made available to Traveller pupils, where required and Traveller resources, should be re-instated for both primary and post-primary. (See further outlined in other sections.)

**List 3 key strategic actions that should be prioritised for primary and post-primary education over the next 3 years**

1. Implement robust data collection to “follow the child”, disaggregate and publish this data to establish need and apply appropriate and ring-fenced supports, attached to a national strategy with outcomes-based indicators and tracking.
2. Tackle the root causes of poor transition, retention and progression from junior cert onwards by enhancing supports to Traveller pupils and target specific needs-based resources to them. Increase the capitation grant and align with other vulnerable groups. Ease the digital divide especially during Covid. Ensure practical supports are also in place for school uniforms, books and or lunches where necessary and subsidised school/community-based supports for homework and afterschool clubs are in place.
3. Root out conscious and unconscious bias and tackle identity-based bullying. Use the Continued Professional development model for teachers to create intercultural understanding and implement an anti-racism component in the curricula, makes schools a welcoming place for Travellers by visibility of culture and identify as implicit within curriculum and school environment and cultivate a deepened engagement between local Traveller organisations, the community and schools, as key guardians to a framework for greater retention of Traveller students.

**How do you think we should measure our progress towards this goal- if we are successful in achieving this goal what will have improved/be different?**

Develop a robust oversight structure to oversee NTRIS actions which is inclusive of Traveller organisations. Use the school Inspectorate to evaluate effectiveness for Traveller pupils on outcomes-based indicators.

Broaden the use of the ethnic identifier and incorporate models to follow the progress of Traveller learners.

**Are there specific metrics you use to measure your organisation’s achievement in relation to this goal that could be adopted by the Department?**

No metric – qualitative via community engagement.

**Are there particular priorities under this goal that we should progress in collaboration with your organisation?**

Provide funding to independent Traveller organisations such as the Irish Traveller Movement to address educational inequalities for those pupils and support community engagement across, parents and pupils.

Liaison with Traveller organisation via NTRIS and related sub committees and where policy related intersection.

**How could greater collaboration/engagement benefit students under this goal?**

The Irish Traveller Movement is the national membership platform for over 40 local Traveller groups. It convenes a national Traveller Education Working Group and has an expertise in national Traveller policy and advocacy. Ongoing consultation between the DES and national Traveller representative groups is essential.

**Increasing progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage and learners with special educational needs**

## **What do you think the key strategic priorities for education (primary and post-primary), over the next 3 years, should be?**

In 2018/2019 there were 2,916 Traveller pupils in receipt of educational support. Despite welcome State efforts retention in primary and post-primary has not been focused on enough, and no restoration of the budgetary cuts (86-100%) in 2011.

The Review of the Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy 2019 found the focus for progressing Traveller retention, relied on DEIS schools. However, only 50% of Travellers attend DEIS schools, and so half of all Traveller pupils cannot access supports such as Home School Community Liaisons and the School Excellence Fund

The Intercultural Education Strategy 2010-2015<sup>[1]</sup> and more recently the Department of Education and Skills Action Plan on Bullying 2013<sup>[2]</sup> recognised that some children, particularly children of non-Irish nationals and Traveller children are more vulnerable to racist bullying because of their identity and recommended that preventative strategies needed to be put in place by schools to address this.

There is no specific inclusion for Traveller Children with 'disabilities' in the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy except under in Early Childcare and Education (ECE) pre-school scheme .

### **Key strategic priorities**

- Ensure Traveller students have an equitable chance, a targeted rather than mainstreamed approach with additional supports. **(See section 1)**
- Eradicate discriminatory practices in enrolment processes, in teaching and in school practice such as the Reduced Timetable. Make the anti-bullying guidelines and recommendations mandatory. Impose an anti-racism module within curriculum as mandatory.
- Implement findings of the Traveller education pilot to improve educational outcomes based on the evidence and extend the pilot to other areas, with adequate resources.
- Promote affirmative action to support Travellers to become teachers.
- Develop a strategy for Traveller children with additional needs, who experience intersectional disadvantage. Including where pupils can't access tutors who have cultural competence or understanding or can't secure a tutor at all, as they live on a halting site.

### **List 3 key strategic actions that should be prioritised for primary and post-primary education over the next 3 years**

1. Increase the capitation grant to Travellers and align with other vulnerable groups. Make Home School Liaison Officers available, irrespective of DEIS status, to Traveller pupils where needed. Reinstatement of Traveller resources and increase resources for Travellers at primary and post-primary, where needed. Target specific resources for Traveller pupils to ensure increased retention and attainment, where needed. Therefore, as above, capture more comprehensive data on Traveller pupils and "follow the child" with resources. Specific supports should be made available to access pathways for Autistic Traveller teenagers and young adults in order to combat the additional barriers experienced. Autistic Travellers and their families should be specifically consulted in the implementation and continued roll out of the Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004
2. Implement intercultural and anti-racism training, including an explicit focus on Travellers, for all teaching staff. Embed across the curriculum Traveller history and culture as implicit and not singled out, learning it. And make it accessible to children with additional needs,

especially Traveller children. Ensure that those elements are delivered by teachers with prior training and understanding of Traveller culture.

3. Expedite actions related to Traveller education Pilot and NTRIS actions in consultation with Travellers and embed the more comprehensive ethnic identifier in all school and education systems and link this across related stakeholder junctions, training and education boards, TUSLA, HSL, Schools Inspectorate, HEA, Education Research Centre, Solas, Learning Supports data.

**How do you think we should measure our progress towards this goal- if we are successful in achieving this goal what will have improved/be different?**

**Follow the Traveller learner.**

- Develop a Traveller focused strategy to oversee the actions. Establish Departmental leads to oversee the plan. Broaden the ethnic identifier with all education collection apparatus and all associated stakeholders in education.
- Develop robust oversight structures to oversee those actions which is inclusive of Traveller organisations. Use the school Inspectorate to evaluate effectiveness for Traveller pupils on outcomes-based indicators and specific tailored data collection across teaching related authorities. Traveller families are aware of existing and new supports available.
- Community and national Traveller representative organisation consultation.

**Improvements** Problems identified earlier in systems and action taken to remedy based on evidence and data. Increased number of Travellers in post primary and progressing to third level.

**Are there specific metrics you use to measure your organisation's achievement in relation to this goal that could be adopted by the Department?**

Not currently.

**Are there particular priorities under this goal that we should progress in collaboration with your organisation?**

**Anti-racism and interculturalism training for teachers:** The Yellow Flag Programme (YFP) is an 8-step whole school model for primary and post primary schools which promotes and celebrates diversity and inclusion, and challenges and combats racism and identity-based bullying. A significant high impact and cost benefit component of YFP is the anti-racism and intercultural awareness training provided to teachers (and the whole school staff team) which has been delivered **to approximately 2563 school staff to date**. As a result, schools reported of staff post training;

70% had a better understanding of racism, 72% had a better understanding of cultural diversity and 63% had opportunity to discuss and raise relevant issues in the school

**Traveller History and Culture in the curriculum.** The Irish Traveller Movement moved in conjunction with Senator Colette Kelleher to see through the Seanad the Traveller History and Culture in Education Bill 2018 and worked in an advisory capacity to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment on an audit of the curriculum commissioned by Minister Joe McHugh. Our work toward this is significant to the aims above.

The Irish Traveller Movement is also the innovator of the Yellow Flag Programme, is a National Traveller representative organisation to NTRIS and to the NTRIS Education Working Group coordinated under the DES.

### **How could greater collaboration/engagement benefit students under this goal?**

Traveller engagement, via the community and its representative bodies is critical to national Traveller policy. The Irish Traveller Movement is mandated by our membership to bring forward policy and related matters to national structures. In turn policy improvements are sought which ultimately can benefit all the Traveller community including Traveller students.

### **Helping those delivering education to continuously improve**

#### **What do you think the key strategic priorities for education (primary and post-primary), over the next 3 years, should be?**

Conscious and unconscious bias, identity based exclusion, historical prejudice, absence of Travellers in teaching and school management, institutional racism and poor awareness or knowledge of Traveller culture have a detrimental effect on young people's education and learning but also on their sense of identity and self-belief. Mandatory anti-racist/intercultural training or continuous professional development for teaching staff has been proposed in several statutory policies but is not available in practice.

- Compulsory anti-racism within education for all students and intercultural training should be required for all teachers as part of pre-service and in-service teacher training along with visibility of Traveller culture in the curriculum. A compulsory anti-racism module should be included in the curriculum, primary and post primary.

Many Travellers hide their identity /change their accent, for fear of being treated less favourably by teaching staff and fellow students and or fear of bullying, racism and discrimination.

- An anti-bullying education programme, not just guidelines, should be introduced in every school, as mandatory.
- Ensure that Traveller history and culture, and curriculum features related to Travellers, are delivered by teachers with prior training and understanding of Traveller culture.
- Publish and use disaggregated data based on ethnicity in secondary schools (PPOD) and primary (POD) to monitor participation and outcomes of Traveller students as essential to remedy gaps for those pupils. Schools must also be directed to report to the Inspectorate / TUSLA or the DES on children who are suspended using a reduced timetable.

The HSCL model is not resourced to work with Traveller pupils and many HSCL teachers are not available in rural DEIS schools and are not available at all in non-DEIS schools. 50% of Travellers attend non DEIS schools.

- Make Home School Liaison Officers available, irrespective of DEIS status, to all Traveller pupils, where required.

#### **List 3 key strategic actions that should be prioritised for primary and post-primary education over the next 3 years**

- Compulsory anti-racism and intercultural training for all teachers as part of pre-service and in-service teacher training along with visibility of Traveller culture in the curriculum

- Ensure that Traveller history and culture, and related curriculum features related to Travellers, are delivered by teachers with prior training and understanding of Traveller culture.
- Make Home School Liaison Officers available, irrespective of DEIS status, to Traveller pupils.

**How do you think we should measure our progress towards this goal- if we are successful in achieving this goal what will have improved/be different?**

- Provide more comprehensive collection (as referenced above) of Traveller pupil data and publish via (PPOD) and (POD) and collaborate on a national strategy between the DES as principals and Traveller representative groups and other education stakeholders towards continuous assessment of data-based outcomes and drivers, and review and renew strategies, as emerging.
- Monitoring delivery of in-service training, publish data, working with all the related education and teaching stakeholders and Travellers. Working with national Traveller stakeholders and the YF programme in a partnership approach.
- Resources will have been identified to deliver on increased actions.

**Improved:**

Matters of unconscious bias addressed and anti-racist/intercultural training or continuous professional development for teaching staff underway, to benefit all pupils.

Traveller pupils enhanced within school environment, confident in identify and as a result improvement in retention and attainment within schools.

Visibility of Traveller culture evident in curriculum, leading to improvement in positive narrative and value of Travellers.

**Are there specific metrics you use to measure your organisation's achievement in relation to this goal that could be adopted by the Department?**

**Compulsory anti-racism and intercultural training:** As referenced in earlier section a significant high impact and cost benefit component of the Yellow Flag Programme is the anti-racism and intercultural awareness training provided to teachers (and the whole school staff team) which has been delivered **to approximately 2563 school staff to date. It currently has metrics based on those participating schools.**

**Are there particular priorities under this goal that we should progress in collaboration with your organisation?**

- Yellow Flag has the expertise and ability to scale and grow this component of the Programme, in the short and medium term, and with the long-term view of adoption under DES policy.
- The Irish Traveller Movement is also the innovator of the Yellow Flag Programme, is a National Traveller representative organisation to NTRIS and to the NTRIS Education Working Group coordinated under the DES. Further collaboration is invited.

**How could greater collaboration/engagement benefit students under this goal?**

As previously referenced. Traveller engagement, via the community and its representative bodies is critical to national Traveller policy. The Irish Traveller Movement is mandated by our membership to

bring forward policy and related matters to national structures. In turn policy improvements are sought which ultimately can benefit all the Traveller community including Traveller students.

## **Building stronger bridges between education and the wider community**

**What do you think the key strategic priorities for education (primary and post-primary), over the next 3 years, should be?**

Supporting frameworks for inclusion of non-Irish national, as well as Traveller children, have included the *Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy 2006*; *The Intercultural Education Strategy 2010-2015*; and the *DES Action Plan on Bullying 2013* which recognised that some children, particularly children of non-Irish nationals and Traveller children are more vulnerable to racist bullying because of their identity and recommended that preventative strategies needed to be put in place by schools to address this. However, both the Strategies and the Plan, significant drivers of good intention, do not have mandatory requirements and so the ad hoc emphasis, is an inconsistent and ineffective remedy for Travellers who are risk of early school leaving, in the context of discriminatory barriers which particularly impact on them.

So, to build stronger bridges between education and the wider community, and of Travellers, a whole of education and community approach is required.

The Yellow Flag Programme takes a whole-school approach centred around fostering a positive sense of identity in children of minority identities, and within the majority community. Three related YF and Migrant Integration Strategy aims include;

1. *To review the effectiveness of training for teachers on managing diversity and tackling racism* (action 31)
2. *To ensure schools are encouraged to support migrant parents' participation in the school life of their children* (action 34). A YF compulsory step, Step 6 Going Beyond the School Walls is about developing relationships with parents and the wider community and fostering parental involvement is a key objective throughout the programme
3. *That the school curriculum will continue to foster and develop positive attitudes towards diversity and celebrating difference.* Step 7 of the YF Programme. Schools are provided with a comprehensive set of multi-media resources and guides for teachers on interculturalism, equality, diversity and anti-racism across subjects for primary and post-primary.

**List 3 key strategic actions that should be prioritised for primary and post-primary education over the next 3 years**

Community engagement: Community related projects and stakeholders such as sport, civil, recreational, arts and culture and where these intersect across education areas, should be both Traveller proofed to ensure inclusion and visibility of Travellers and should provide and enhance the opportunity for further collaboration to ensure engagement with Traveller pupils and parents and local Traveller organisations. For example, in award schemes, in placements in TY programmes, in career development and in local employment engagement and in music and arts initiatives. For schools to drive a focus for inclusion of Travellers across career, training, community activation programmes and education training boards, and through local employment networks.

Visibility of diversity: In developing framing models and schools-based programmes, the opportunity to enhance multi ethnic pupils, including Travellers as part of the diverse community must be factored in to the programme of work for the school and with a focus on where it intersects with community broadly. Yellow Flag is a transformative model capable of enabling the State and DES to deliver from an early stage, anti-racism strategies and objectives with expertise and ability to scale and grow components of the Programme, in short and medium term, and long-term view of adoption under DES policy, to serve all pupils including Travellers.

Can't see it -Can't be it- Active participation: Enhancing in targeted and proactive way, opportunities for Traveller students to be forefront to school and community related initiatives, and for schools to formally divest of norms to make affirmative actions to positively enhance and improve Traveller visibility within schools and community-based programmes. And in enhancing Traveller visibility in the in other way, for example guest speakers on non-Traveller topics, former pupils working in industry, in medicine, and in other areas. Traveller pupils invited to engage on community and school intersecting external forums and in schools-based decision-making forums.

**How do you think we should measure our progress towards this goal- if we are successful in achieving this goal what will have improved/be different?**

Measuring

- Monitoring delivery of actions by schools and in monitoring by DES, published data and working with community, teaching and local Traveller stakeholders. Working with national Traveller stakeholders and the YF programme in a partnership approach.

Improvements

- Travellers visible in community setting with possible affirmation of valid contribution active in local employment settings, participating in training and cultural and social settings.

**Are there specific metrics you use to measure your organisation's achievement in relation to this goal that could be adopted by the Department?**

No

**Are there particular priorities under this goal that we should progress in collaboration with your organisation?**

- ☑ Step 2 on the Yellow Flag 8 step programme is *"Going beyond the school walls: Engaging with the community - Making links with local & national Traveller/minority/migrant organisations"* Supported by a Steering Committee, comprising representatives of organisations in the areas of youth, migration, refugee and asylum and youth, anti-racism, teaching bodies and unions and student unions. **The Yellow Flag Programme is transformative change programme helping to combat racism and has the potential to collaborate with the DES on delivery on related aims under this theme.**
- The Irish Traveller Movement is also the innovator of the Yellow Flag Programme, is a National Traveller representative organisation to NTRIS and to the NTRIS Education Working Group coordinated under the DES. Further collaboration is invited.

**How could greater collaboration/engagement benefit students under this goal?**

In schools who participated in an independent evaluation of the Yellow Flag Programme it found

### Whole school and students

A high level of involvement by the parents, principals or deputy principals was found, the main issues identified by schools in the review to be addressed by YF were:

- action on combating racism (74%),
- ideas (or how to progress) intercultural action (60%),
- issues in relation to knowledge and appreciation of cultural diversity in the school (57%),
- experiences of racism in the school (54%).

The positive impacts on students because of the intercultural focus in the hidden and formal curricula included:

- Increased awareness, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity
- Improved student behaviours and attitudes to each other in relation to intercultural diversity and
- Positive impact on Black and minority ethnic including Travellers students in terms of empowerment and sense of belonging.

**81% of schools reported that they had integrated intercultural issues into the formal curriculum** (29% to a significant extent).

## **Providing better national planning and support services**

The Traveller Education Strategy 2006 did not have an associated action plan or budget and remained dormant until the actions of the NTRIS 2017 reasserted some of the aims of that plan. Robust oversight of national policy is critical to ensure the protection of Traveller pupils as a vulnerable group.

The current DES statement of Strategy 2019 -2021 does not explicitly name Travellers but refers to the role of the Department of Justice and the NTRIS actions. This new Strategy should clearly name Travellers and outline the individual strategy for Traveller Education with a clearly identified Plan and spearheaded by a Traveller education lead within the Department of Education and Skills.

The DES should also now develop an action and implementation plan for all actions they have responsibility for under the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) in partnership with Traveller organisations.

**What do you think the key strategic priorities for education (primary and post-primary), over the next 3 years, should be?**

Implement a cohesive national strategy for Travellers. The ITM recommend a coordinated approach to overseeing the development and implementation of a (S.M.AR.T.) strategy for Traveller education, in collaboration with Traveller organisations. And that there is a coordinated approach to overseeing its development and implementation. This should have a specific structure and independent chair. A ring fenced and independent budget should be made available.

Monitoring implementation and accountability should be implemented across all related school mechanisms, to measure effectiveness and reach to Traveller students, on all the actions related to (S.M.AR.T.) strategy for Traveller education, and for the National Traveller Roma Integration Strategy Traveller Education Pilot be incorporated into central planning and all related strategies streamlined.

The new DES Statement of Strategy should name Traveller pupils explicitly and be linked to above. All education institutions must be visibly welcoming of diversity and resourced to combat racism and anti-Traveller bias and have stringent plans to incorporate a fit for purpose system, for Traveller learners in third level.

**List 3 key strategic actions that should be prioritised for primary and post-primary education over the next 3 years**

1. Implement a (S.M.A.R.T.) strategy for Traveller education with a defined structure and independent chair and a ring fenced and independent budget. All cross-cutting actions in other areas (as above) be streamlined under this strategy.
2. Broaden Traveller data collection and incorporate models to follow the progress of Traveller learners, across all related education points. Publish and activate solutions where gaps are identified.
3. Roll out Compulsory anti-racism and intercultural training for teachers and incorporate anti-racism module in curriculum, as mandatory.

**How do you think we should measure our progress towards this goal- if we are successful in achieving this goal what will have improved/be different?**

**Measure**

A strategy developed and visible under the DES programme of work and assigned leads in place and an Action Plan published. Data and monitoring mechanism designed and reformed and in action. Teacher training and curricula module underway.

**Are there specific metrics you use to measure your organisation's achievement in relation to this goal that could be adopted by the Department?**

No – qualitative community engagement is central to our work and our grass roots community liaison is central to all our strategies including education.

**Are there particular priorities under this goal that we should progress in collaboration with your organisation?**

The Irish Traveller Movement has a role in the consultation and communication on the wider context of DES aims if the plans above are adopted, via the network of local Traveller based membership. We also host a Traveller Education Working Group, who are linked to local groups and offer expertise and local education insights.

We are also a National Traveller representative organisation to NTRIS and to the NTRIS Education Working Group coordinated under the DES. Further collaboration is invited.

**How could greater collaboration/engagement benefit students under this goal?**

As previously referenced. Traveller engagement, via the community and its representative bodies is critical to national Traveller policy. The Irish Traveller Movement is mandated by our membership to bring forward policy and related matters to national structures. In turn policy improvements are sought which ultimately can benefit all the Traveller community including Traveller students.

A greater emphasis on supports, and a national oversight plan with the capacity to ensure the Traveller student is supported across the lifetime of their education would enhance the possibility of improving retention and attainment.

## Implementing evidence-based policies.

**What do you think the key strategic priorities for education (primary and post-primary), over the next 3 years, should be?**

The availability of Traveller and intercultural related policies and evidence, provide the basis for implementations. They are as follows:

**National Traveller Roma Integration Strategy Traveller Education Pilot:** The intention of the pilot across its 5 Goals is to inform the development of a sustainable programme to address the gap in educational outcomes for children and young people from the Travelling and Roma communities.

Goal 5 of the pilot is- **Data and Evaluation** – To gather accurate data and evidence and learning on the pilots, to monitor progress and to inform policy. · develop a National Plan to evaluate qualitative and quantitative data; · establish baseline data in line with the National Plan; · develop a work plan to ensure compliance with relevant data protection requirements; and · identify potential improvements in data gathering and analysis. The pilot has now been completed with publication of its baseline report due, this should form an action plan linked to the a (S.M.AR.T.) strategy for Traveller education

**The Yellow Flag Programme** is an innovative whole school initiative which supports schools to celebrate diversity, promote inclusion and challenge racism. The Programme is well placed to deliver on State strategies and was independently evaluated in 2019. It confirmed its importance as a model to make national policy commitments and government strategies happen in practice, especially those governed by the Department of Education and Skills and Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth including:

- The National Traveller Education Strategy
- The DES Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023
- Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020.

**The National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy Education actions** are supported by long term DES evidence and policy, and progress is underway on some of those actions.

**List 3 key strategic actions that should be prioritised for primary and post-primary education over the next 3 years**

1. Implement a (S.M.AR.T.) strategy for Traveller education with a defined structure and independent chair and a ring fenced and independent budget, taking account of the National Traveller Roma Integration Strategy Traveller Education Pilot, the NTRIS actions, the remainder of the Traveller Education Strategy 2006 actions not yet consolidated under NTRIS
2. Broaden Traveller data collection and incorporate models to follow the progress of Traveller learners, across all related education points. Publish and activate solutions to address where gaps are identified.
3. Implement components of the Yellow Flag Programme into curriculum subjects to redress racism, combat identity-based bullying and promote inclusion and diversity

**How do you think we should measure our progress towards this goal- if we are successful in achieving this goal what will have improved/be different?**

## **Measure**

A strategy developed and visible under the DES programme of work and assigned leads in place and an Action Plan published. Data and monitoring mechanism defined and reformed and in action.

A Traveller Education Action Plan defined with targets for short, medium and long-term goals which would be led up by the Department of Education (with the participation of key stakeholders) with oversight of those measures

Improvements

Defined lead within Department but cross cutting all education settings. A ring-fenced budget to deliver on the actions, and towards real progress to improve retention and attainment.

**Are there specific metrics you use to measure your organisation's achievement in relation to this goal that could be adopted by the Department?**

No

**Are there particular priorities under this goal that we should progress in collaboration with your organisation?**

The Irish Traveller Movement has a role in the consultation and communication on the wider context of DES aims, if the plans above are adopted, via the network of local Traveller based membership groups. We also host a Traveller Education Working Group, who are linked to local groups and offer expertise and local education insights.

The Irish Traveller Movement is also the innovator of the Yellow Flag Programme, is a National Traveller representative organisation to NTRIS and to the NTRIS Education Working Group coordinated under the DES. Further collaboration is invited.

**How could greater collaboration/engagement benefit students under this goal?**

Evidence over many years has proven the disproportionate education outcomes for Travellers, during the period when Traveller resources via the Visiting Teacher Service and other supports were in place, was a time of the highest relation of Traveller pupils. When cuts were levied at Traveller education supports in 2011, it impacted directly on Traveller retention. Successive European and International human rights bodies and treaties, to which Ireland is a party, have reminded the State of its duty of care to Travellers and their education.

The opportunity for specific and targeted strategies, which will have supporting resources and robust monitoring could provide an opportunity for Travellers to have equal access and opportunity to better outcomes.

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[\[1\]](#) Intercultural Education Strategy, 2010- 2015 (2010) Department of Education and Skills and the Office of the Minister for Integration

[\[2\]](#) Action Plan On Bullying Report of the Anti-Bullying Working Group to the Minister for Education and Skills Janu