People and Work Unit

Final Report

External Evaluation of the Gypsy Traveller Learning and Future Employment Project

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September 2012

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Acknowledgments

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Glossary of acronyms

CaC:	City and County
CBC:	County Borough Council
CC:	County Council
ESF:	European Social Fund
EU:	European Union
PWU:	People and Work Unit
TES:	Traveller Education Services
WEFO:	Welsh European Funding Office

Executive summary

Introduction

The Gypsy Traveller Learning and Future Employment Project is part funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and "aims to improve the participation rates in education and employment of young people in the Gypsy Traveller population in West Wales and the Valleys." Seven different local authorities are delivering the project: Pembrokeshire CC (Lead Sponsor), Blaenau Gwent CBC, Carmarthenshire CC, Merthyr Tydfil CBC, Neath Port Talbot CBC, CaC of Swansea and Torfaen CBC (all joint sponsors). It started in September 2009 and will finish in September 2012.

This report responds to key evaluation questions, which reflect the project objectives of:

- improving levels of participation in education, educational attainment;

- enhancing positive outcomes for Gypsy Traveller young people, such as entry into employment and further education; and

- reducing discrimination against the Gypsy Traveller population

In addition, the report assesses the sustainability of the project.

Methodology

The evaluation has drawn upon a number of primary and secondary sources of data including:

- two types of questionnaires (young people's questionnaire and the self-assessment questionnaire) completed by young people[1];
- discussion groups with young people;
- key stakeholder interviews;
- project monitoring data; and
- relevant studies

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[1] Some of the self-assessment questionnaires were completed by project staff in consultation with the young person.

The main strengths of the methodology included:

- the range of evaluative tools used to collect data, including a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches, which enabled different types of evidence to be triangulated or compared; and

- the collection and analysis of the views and experiences of a range of key stakeholders, including Gypsy Traveller young people and project staff, throughout the project's lifespan, which enabled the evaluation to inform the project's development

The main weaknesses of the methodology included:

- the lack of an appropriate "comparison group"[2], such as pupils from another ethnic minority group, which could have been used to help estimate the counterfactual, i.e. what would have happened without the intervention, which would have strengthened impact assessment; and

- the low response rates to the surveys, which meant that the surveys may not be statistically representative

Context and challenges

Each local authority used a range of interventions to achieve its objectives. Common interventions included the use of discrete units for Gypsy Traveller young people, basic skills tutoring, social emotional support and links developed with colleges and employers.

The project faced challenges which made it difficult to achieve its targets. These should be taken into consideration whilst interpreting the progress of the project in relation to its targets. They included:

- a slow start to project delivery, for example having project staff in their posts delivering interventions[3]; this was due to a range of reasons, including the lack of

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[2] These are similar to a "control group" used in randomised controlled trials, in that they offer a group which is not subject to the 'treatment' (or policy, or intervention) and which can be compared with the 'treatment' group (the group benefiting from the policy or intervention). However, unlike a true control group, assignment to the comparison and treatment groups is not random.
[3] This was most notable in Merthyr CBC and CaC of Swansea where project delivery did not occur during the first year of the project.

a central team to provide project impetus at the beginning of the project and problems with match funding and staffing; and

- unrealistic targets in many local authorities, due to a range of reasons, including a lack of consultation with frontline staff and failures to fully utilise European funding expertise in their authorities

Findings: the impact of the project upon Gypsy Traveller young people's attitudes towards education and training.

The evidence indicates the project has had a positive impact upon Gypsy Traveller young people's attitudes towards education and training (e.g. school and college). For example the young people's survey showed:

- the percentage of young people who strongly agreed that what they learn in schools will help them get a job increased from 30% to 62% over a year;

- the percentage of young people who strongly agreed that they want to continue in post 16 education and training increased from 22% to 52% over a year;

- the percentage of young people who strongly agreed that they are doing well in school increased from 14% to 40% over a year; and

- the percentage of young people who strongly agreed that they want to do well in school increased from 36% to 57% over a year

Evidence from interviews with project staff supports these findings and suggests that parental engagement, provision of vocational courses and developing the social and emotional skills through 'one to one' or group support work with staff facilitated these changes in Gypsy Traveller young people's attitudes.

In addition, to a lesser extent, external factors such as the economic recession and a tightening of eligibility rules for benefits helped promote these changes, as previous ways of 'getting by' without education and training were becoming more limited.

Despite the improvement, project staff highlighted that in some local authorities, certain groups of Gypsy Travellers, most notably Irish Travellers, remained difficult to engage in education and training.

Findings: have levels of participation in education by young people aged 11 to 19 from Gypsy Traveller communities (the target group) increased?

The evidence suggests, through modest improvements in attendance, that the project has increased participation in education. For example, the self-assessment survey showed that Gypsy Traveller young people who had participated in the project for around a year had improved their attendance by 8 percentage points (from a 'low attendance'[4] to 'moderate or high attendance'[5] level).

Evidence from interviews with project staff supports this finding and suggests that the impact may be greater than that recorded by the survey. All local authorities had commented upon improvements in attendance, such as 20 percent in attendance during the last academic year in one of the authorities. Moreover, some project staff were adamant that Gypsy Traveller young people would not be attending school (especially post 14) if the project interventions were not available. The evidence also suggested that overall Pembrokeshire CC, Torfaen CBC and Neath Port Talbot CBC, which used some form of discrete Gypsy Traveller education units, had the most success in increasing participation. In addition, interventions such as improving transition links with primary schools, rewarding attendance and interventions previously highlighted to improve attitudes towards education and training were beneficial in relation to participation.

Notwithstanding the positive evidence, the evaluation and project would have benefited from more robust evidence in terms of attendance, such as local authority records showing changes in school attendance levels of Gypsy Traveller young people over the project lifetime.

Evidence from some project staff highlighted how the project had successfully persuaded young people who came under the definition of Gypsy Traveller to make themselves known to their schools (most notably in Carmarthenshire). This was through approaches such as 'word of mouth' identification from known Gypsy Travellers to find others. Indeed, in one school, twelve young people were identified who fell within the Gypsy Traveller definition, and an increase in the number of Gypsy Traveller young people at secondary schools throughout Wales has been

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[4] i.e. scoring between one to five out of ten (with ten being the best)
[5] i.e. scoring between six to ten out of ten (with ten being the best)

attributed, to an extent, to the project activities. This increased the support made available to them.

Findings: have levels of educational attainment amongst the target group throughout West Wales and the Valleys increased?

Although the number of Gypsy Traveller young people supported by the project who gain qualifications is likely to increase after the external exam results are published in August 2012 (when many Gypsy Traveller young people will get their exam results), the project is still very likely to be below target in terms of the number of Gypsy Traveller young people gaining qualifications[6]. Moreover, with the exception of Pembrokeshire CC and Carmarthenshire CC, each of the individual local authorities that make up the project is also very likely to be below their individual targets.

Project staff identified three main reasons why the project failed to reach its targets for the number of Gypsy Traveller young people gaining qualifications. Firstly, that the focus of the project was on developing basic skills and soft skills, which would in the future help Gypsy Traveller young people gain qualifications (as they lacked these skills). Secondly, that given the entrenched challenges Gypsy Traveller young people face, the project had been successful in helping them gain qualifications, even though it failed to meet its targets. Thirdly, it was anticipated that there would be more participants in the upper end of the 11-19 age range who were able to gain qualifications within the project's lifetime. These factors meant that the project's targets, in relation to the number of Gypsy Traveller young people gaining qualifications were unrealistically high.

The evidence suggested that effective approaches to help young people gain qualifications included combining interventions which catered for the social and emotional needs of young people through personalised support, with interventions to develop basic skills, through programmes such as CatchUp literacy.

In support of the project staff's comments upon improving basic skills, evidence from the self-assessment survey suggested that the project had a positive impact upon basic skills. For example the self-assessment survey showed that:

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[6] 60 Gypsy Traveller young people had gained qualifications in July 2012 from a target of 233 by September 2012.

- the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who had 'moderate or high'[7] level maths skills increased from 48% to 67% over a year;

- the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who had 'moderate or high'[8] level reading skills increased from 52% to 67% over a year; and

- the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who had 'moderate or high'[9]* level writing skills increased from 36% to 54% over a year

This evidence indicates that despite the small number of Gypsy Traveller young people gaining qualifications, basic skills had improved for most.

Findings: have positive outcomes for the target group in the form of people entering further education, employment or training, increased?

Although the project is likely to be below target in relation to the number of Gypsy Traveller young people entering employment[10], in our judgement, taking into account external factors, most notably the economic downturn and our experience of other projects, overall the project has been successful in supporting Gypsy Traveller young people into employment. Nevertheless, results from the local authorities have been polarised, with Pembrokeshire CC, Torfaen CBC and Blaenau Gwent CBC either on or over target, and Carmarthenshire CC, Merthyr Tydfil CBC and CaC of Swansea having very limited success. The evidence suggests that the more successful authorities shifted employers' attitudes towards Gypsy Traveller young people through increased interaction with them, for example through part-time work placements and by developing long-term relationships with employers.

The number of Gypsy Traveller young people who enter further learning is likely to improve after the external exam results in August 2012 (because qualifications will help young people enter FE colleges). Nevertheless, the evidence indicates the project is likely to be below target[11]. Again the results are polarised, with local authorities Pembrokeshire CC, Carmarthenshire CC and Blaenau Gwent CBC in a

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[7] Scoring between six to ten out of ten (with ten being the best)
[8] Scoring between six to ten out of ten (with ten being the best)
[9] *Scoring between five to ten out of ten (with ten being the best)
[10] 35 Gypsy Traveller young people had entered employment in July 2012 from a target 58 by September 2012.
[11] 25 Gypsy Traveller young people had entered further learning in July 2012 from a target of 79 by September 2012.

position in which they may reach their targets whilst Merthyr Tydfil CBC, CaC of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot CBC are likely to be well below their targets.

Notwithstanding the small number of Gypsy Traveller young people entering further learning, many project staff were confident that the young people currently too young to enter further learning would enter in the future, subject to continued support. For example as a local authority coordinator commented:

"College placements is becoming the norm, particularly for girls"

Moreover, evidence from the self-assessment survey suggests the project has successfully improved a range of young people's skills which should help them access employment, education and training. For example, the self-assessment survey showed:

- the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who had 'moderate or high'[12] level skills for 'using a computer' increased from 59% to 90% over a year;

- the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who had 'moderate or high'[13] level skills for 'working well in a team' increased from 55% to 85% over a year;

- the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who had 'moderate or high'[14] level skills for 'concentrating when required' increased from 53% to 74% over a year;

- the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who had 'moderate or high'[15] level skills for 'confidence with money' increased from 81% to 92% over a year; and

- the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who had 'moderate or high'[16] level skills for 'talking to others' increased from 72% to 82% over a year.

Some project staff described how they supplied laptops and computer access to Gypsy Traveller young people in addition to encouraging their participation in online

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[12] Scoring between six to ten out of ten (with ten being the best)
[13] Scoring between six to ten out of ten (with ten being the best)
[14] Scoring between six to ten out of ten (with ten being the best)
[15] Scoring between six to ten out of ten (with ten being the best)
[16] Scoring between six to ten out of ten (with ten being the best)

Gypsy Traveller forums, such as Travelling Ahead[17]. This helps explain the notable improvement in the number of young people reporting using a computer.

In contrast to all the other findings from the self-assessment survey the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who rated their 'future job prospects' as 'moderate or high' decreased by 15 percentage points over a period of a year (from 69% to 54%). This may have been influenced by the continued economic recession and knowledge of the project funding coming to an end. The evidence shows Gypsy Traveller young people were becoming increasingly pessimistic about their future job prospects.

The young people's questionnaire included an open question which asked '*what would you like to be or do when you leave school?*' Overall it showed that boys identified traditionally masculine roles, such as construction trades and boxing, whilst girls identified for traditionally feminine roles, such as jobs in the beauty industry and working with children. Encouragingly, they highlighted clear examples of their employment ambitions and some Gypsy Traveller young people provided examples of public sector jobs, such as teaching and the police, which have traditionally been less associated with Gypsy Travellers. Comparing findings from the survey undertaken a year on with those completed towards the beginning of the project, young women were more likely to opt for either the beauty industry or working with children than they were during the baseline survey. Interviews with some project staff suggest this may be due to the promotion of further education courses in these fields.

Findings: has discrimination against the Gypsy Traveller population been reduced?

Overall the discussion groups with young people highlighted that the project had helped to reduce discrimination through "positive interaction". Examples of this included Gypsy Traveller young people making friends with "Gorgios"[18] on trips and sport activities, and the Gypsy Traveller community engaging to a greater extent with public services and institutions.

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[17] Funded by the Welsh Government and Save the Children for the Gypsy Traveller community in Wales

[18] Term commonly used by Gypsy Travellers to describe people who are not Gypsy Travellers.

Project staff indicated that the project activities had helped to reduce discrimination, although the extent of the reduction was mixed between different authorities. Moreover, many of the project staff also highlighted that the gains made early on in the project had been somewhat lost due to the negative media coverage in many popular television shows, such as 'My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding', which encouraged discriminative attitudes towards Gypsy Traveller young people. Steps taken to reduce discrimination included informing schools and others about Gypsy Traveller culture through, for example a DVD on Gypsy Traveller culture; and ensuring that anti-bullying policies were implemented effectively in schools.

Some project staff highlighted the complexities of discrimination. For example, in some local authorities, entrenched divisions between different Gypsy Traveller communities (e.g. between 'Welsh' and 'Irish' Gypsy Travellers), contributed to discriminative behaviour towards each other and made it difficult to work with both groups. Some project staff also highlighted that many Gypsy Traveller young people were susceptible to showing discriminative behaviour towards Gorgios. Therefore, working with the Gypsy Traveller young people to change their behaviours and attitudes was also important.

Findings: have project participants' perceptions of the attitude of others to Gypsy Travellers changed? Has this contributed to increases in participation in education, training or employment?

The evidence suggests a reciprocal relationship in which changes in perceptions are supported by increases in engagement of Gypsy Traveller young people in schools, colleges and with employers. The evidence indicates that improvements in their own soft skills had facilitated this process. Nevertheless the extent of these improvements varied between local authorities.

Findings: how can the benefits of the project be sustained?

Overall many project staff were sceptical about whether the benefits of the project would be sustained. Many felt that if interventions ended, given the nature of the Gypsy Traveller community, trust with the community could be lost very quickly and

would be difficult to regain. Project staff also highlighted a number of barriers to sustaining effective interventions, such as continued public sector cuts and the lack of adequate funding options within the next year or so.

One option for sustaining the benefits was for mainstream services to take on lessons learned from the project. However, despite examples of effective interventions such as work to raise cultural awareness in schools, project staff highlighted how schools were still largely depended on project staff to work with the Gypsy Traveller communities. Moreover, because project staff provided support in a range of areas from health to housing, future provision would need to become more holistic. Whilst this is desirable goal, it also highlighted the challenge for local authorities to maintain the benefits, especially without extra funding.

On the positive side, Torfaen CBC has committed to funding many of the project interventions for another year due to the benefits gained. Evidence from the evaluation supports this and suggests the school based interventions within the local authority were particularly effective in gaining the project's results.

In addition, some project staff highlighted that local authorities should be able to sustain some basic lessons learned from the project. For example, providing Gypsy Travellers with the opportunity to complete courses such as those leading to health and safety certificates is likely to help them gain employment in the future.

Findings: project management

Some project staff struggled with the administrative demands of the project, also communication within and between local authorities was reported by some project staff as weak. For example, some project staff were unclear of what they needed to produce to prove certain results had been achieved. In our estimation these issues could have been overcome if all participating local authorities had taken on a more pro-active role within the project, as too much onus was placed upon the Lead Sponsor to repeatedly contact coordinators in order to explain or obtain data. In addition, as suggested by project staff and subject to capacity, the project would have benefited from a management board, more meetings between joint sponsors,

and meetings with personnel at senior levels which would have taken place between local authorities.

Notwithstanding these issues there had been some effective administrative developments. The Lead Sponsor had benefited from establishing a European Contracts Management Team, which managed a number of local authority WEFO projects. This approach had many advantages over establishing specific central administration for each EU project, such as enhancing the capacity to manage ESF funded projects by providing expertise and greater flexibility to respond to demands.

Conclusions

The objectives of the project are in line with the Welsh Government's 'Travelling to a Better Future' Gypsy Traveller Framework for Action and Delivery Plan (Welsh Government, 2011). Although overall the project has not achieved all its targets, the evidence suggests that in six of the seven the local authorities (Pembrokeshire, Torfaen, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent), the project has had a positive impact in many areas which should be sustained and built upon for the future. In Swansea however, the evidence suggests marginal benefits in a limited number of areas.

Despite progress, Gypsy Traveller young people are in continual need of support in order to gain some kind of parity with other groups of young people in areas such as school attendance, attainment and future job opportunities.

The conclusions summarise the lessons learned from the project. These range from the need for local authorities in Wales to take action to identify Gypsy Traveller pupils within schools, to the need for local authorities to adequately consult with frontline staff when drawing up targets for such projects.

1. Introduction

Aims and objectives

1.1. The Gypsy Traveller Learning and Future Employment Project is part funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). Seven different local authorities are delivering the project: Pembrokeshire CC (Lead Sponsor), Blaenau Gwent CBC, Carmarthenshire CC, Merthyr Tydfil CBC, Neath Port Talbot CBC, CaC of Swansea and Torfaen CBC (all joint sponsors). It started in September 2009 and will finish in September 2012.

1.2. The Gypsy Traveller Learning and Future Employment project "aims to improve the participation rates in education and employment of young people in the Gypsy Traveller population in West Wales and the Valleys."

1.3. The objectives of this project are:

- To improve levels of participation in education by young people aged 11 to 19 from Gypsy Traveller communities ["the target group"];
- To improve levels of educational attainment amongst the target group throughout West Wales and the Valleys;
- To improve levels of positive outcomes for the target group, in the form of people entering employment and further education or training; and
- To reduce discrimination against the Gypsy Traveller population by countering stereotypes, e.g. role models.

Evaluation questions

1.4. The objectives of the evaluation are summarised in the following key questions:

- Have levels of participation in education by young people aged 11 to 19 from Gypsy Traveller communities (the target group) increased?

- Have levels of educational attainment amongst the target group throughout West Wales and the Valleys increased?

- Have levels of positive outcomes for the target group, in the form of people entering employment and further education or training, improved?

- Have project participants' attitudes changed?

- Has discrimination against the Gypsy Traveller population been reduced?

- Have project participants' perceptions of the attitude of others to Gypsy Travellers changed? Has this contributed to increases in participation in education, training or employment?

- How many participants are still in employment, education or training 12 months after receiving ESF assistance?

- How can the benefits of the project be sustained?

This report

1.5.   Throughout this report the Gypsy Traveller Learning and Future Employment Project is referred to as "the project".

1.6.   All numbers provided in this report have been rounded to 0 decimal points. For example, 1.5 percent will be shown as 2 percent.

1.7.   In order to given an indication of the weight of opinion, references to 'some project staff' refers to two to four project staff and references to 'many project staff' refers to five to eight project staff (see list of names in appendix 1).

1.8.   In order to make the report accessible and readable, the report has a thematic structure. Each section is focused upon a particular evaluation question, discussing the findings in relation to that objective. However, data and findings in a particular section are often relevant to other evaluation questions. For example, survey results showing positive attitudinal change amongst young people towards education is discussed under the heading – 'Have project participants' attitudes changed?' Nevertheless, these results are also

relevant to the heading – 'Have levels of participation in education by young people aged 11 to 19 from Gypsy Traveller communities increased?'

2. Methodology

Background

2.1.   An inception report produced in November 2011, a summary of the feedback from the first round of interviews was provided in February 2011, a baseline results report on the young people survey in June 2011, and an interim report was produced in September 2012 in order to inform the project. Elements of these reports are included in this final report.

Overview

2.2.   This report mostly draws upon four primary and secondary sources:

- results from the baseline and final round of young people's surveys (see copy of questionnaire in appendix 3);

- results from the baseline and final round of the self-assessment surveys (see copy of questionnaire in appendix 4);

- the second and third round of semi-structured interviews with project staff (see full list in the appendix 1);

- monitoring data produced by the project; and

- a review of relevant studies (see bibliography)

2.3.   The main strengths of the methodology included:

- the range of evaluation tools used to collect data, including a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches, which enabled different types of evidence to be triangulated or compared; and

- the collection and analysis of the views and experiences of a range of key stakeholders, including Gypsy Traveller young people and project staff, throughout the project's lifespan, which enabled the evaluation to inform the project's development.

2.4.   The main weaknesses of the methodology included:

- the lack of an appropriate "comparison group"[19]**,** such as pupils from another ethnic minority group, which could have been used to help estimate the counterfactual, i.e. what would have happened without the intervention, which would have strengthened impact assessment;

- the low response rates to the surveys, which meant that the surveys results may be not statistically representative; and

- the fact that excluding methods used to measure the ESF monitoring and evaluation indicators, a wide range of monitoring approaches were used to measure impact of different types of interventions in areas such as soft skills. This made it difficult to draw conclusions on the impact of the project as a whole because, for example, progress was measured in different ways by different local authorities

Specifically

2.5.   **Young people's survey and self-assessment survey[20]:** local authorities started the project at different times, and were at different stages of development when the surveys were undertaken. Ideally, surveys would have been undertaken at the same stage of development within each authority's project. However, in order to ensure the young people's questionnaires would be administered by all local authorities, the surveys were undertaken by all the authorities within a similar time period[21]. Questionnaires were administered twice to measure distance travelled. Both questionnaires were completed by young people, who did not see what they had written in the baseline questionnaire. This is a positive, as it meant they could not purposely try and improve on what they had recorded previously. The young people had been benefiting from the project for a period of time before they completed the

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[19] These are similar to a "control group" used in randomised controlled trials, in that they offer a group which is not subject to the 'treatment' (or policy, or intervention) and which can be compared with the 'treatment' group (the group benefiting from the policy or intervention). However, unlike a true control group, assignment to the comparison and treatment groups is not random.
[20] This includes the young peoples' survey developed by the PWU and the Self-Assessment questionnaire developed by Pembrokeshire CC (see copies in appendix 3 and 4).
[21] Although a wider time frame was provided for the project self-assessment questionnaire.

baseline questionnaire and hence the survey does not measure the impact prior to the project intervention; instead it measures the continual impact of the project.

2.6. **Young people's survey:** 91 young people across all local authorities responded to the baseline survey (2011). The response to the final survey (2012) was less with 58 which included all local authorities bar CaC of Swansea. Therefore, results of the baseline survey were recalculated by excluding the responses of young people from Swansea, in order to make the results of the baseline and final survey more comparable. Local authority coordinators were requested to, where feasible[22], to involve the same young people.

2.7. Analyses of the names of young people who completed the questionnaire showed that with the exception of a few, the same young people had taken part in the two surveys. However, during the baseline survey many young people exercised their right not to write their names on the questionnaire, which meant it was not possible to check all names[23]. Moreover, the response rates to the survey - 42 percent for the baseline survey and 32 percent for the final survey - are not high enough to ensure that we can be reasonably confident that they are representative of all young people on the project. Nevertheless, the PWU are confident they provide an adequate indication of the changing views of young people on the project.

2.8. **Young people's survey graphs:** these illustrate the data from the young people's survey (see paragraphs 2.6 – 2.7 and appendix 3 for further details). The questionnaire provided the opportunity for Gypsy Traveller young people to rate their attitudes towards education, training and employment by responding to statements such as 'I am doing well at school' through the use of a five point likert scale (i.e. strongly agree, agree, don't know, disagree, strongly disagree).

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[22] Given the transient nature and fluctuating attendance rates of the young people
[23] In contrast, all the young people in the final survey wrote their names on the questionnaires which suggested the project had enhanced their feelings of trust.

2.9.   Graph 4.1 illustrates the impact (distance travelled) showing the difference between the percentage of young people who strongly agreed to each statement in the baseline survey in 2011 with those who strongly agreed to each statement in the final survey in 2012.

2.10.   Graph 4.2 illustrates the results from the final survey (2012) showing the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who either strongly agree, agree, don't know, disagree or strongly disagree to each attitudinal statement. This provides attitudinal data of the Gypsy Traveller young people towards the end of the project.

2.11.   **The project's self-assessment survey:** 58 questionnaires across four of the local authorities[24] were completed for the baseline survey (2010-11 academic year) and 39 questionnaires across four local authorities[25] were completed the final survey (2011-12 academic year). Most of these questionnaires were completed by young people, but some of them were completed by project staff in consultation with the young person.

2.12.   Whilst the project's self-assessment surveys provide valuable data, they are subject to some important potential limitations, meaning that caution should be taken in interpreting the findings from the self-assessment survey. Our analyses of the names of young people who completed the questionnaire however showed that the majority of young people represented in the baseline survey also took part in the final survey. One of the local authorities that responded to the baseline survey did not participate in the final survey and another local authority did not participate in the baseline survey, but participated in the final survey. Moreover, response rates to the surveys - 28 percent for the baseline survey and 19 percent for the final survey - are not high enough for us to be confident that they are representative of all the young people on the project during the survey.

2.13.   **The project's self-assessment graphs:** these illustrate the data from the project's self-assessment survey (see paragraphs 2.11- 2.12 and appendix 4 for further details) and are illustrated in a similar way to the young people's

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[24] Blaenau Gwent, Carmarthenshire, Torfaen and Neath Port Talbot.
[25] Blaenau Gwent, Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil and Neath Port Talbot.

survey (see paragraphs 2.6 – 2.7 for further details). The questionnaire provided the opportunity to rate different skills such as writing and relevant indicators such as attendance level in school.

2.14. During the baseline survey (2010-11 academic year) these skills and indicators were given a score ranging from one to ten (with ten being the best score) for each Gypsy Traveller young person. This process was then repeated for the final survey (2011-12 academic year). The data was analysed by calculating the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who scored between one to five, defined as 'low level', and the percentage who scored between six to ten, defined as 'moderate or high level'[26].

2.15. Graphs 6.1 and 7.1 illustrate the impact (distance travelled) of the interventions upon the Gypsy Traveller young people by showing the percentage difference between both surveys i.e. difference in the proportion of young people that scored six to ten in the baseline survey with that during the final survey.

2.16. Graphs 5.1, 6.2 and 7.2 illustrate the results from the final survey (2011-12 academic year) showing the percentage of Gypsy Traveller young people who achieved 'low level' and the percentage who achieved 'moderate or high level', providing data on where the Gypsy Traveller young people are towards the end of the project.

2.17. **Discussion groups:** For the interim report, discussion groups with young people were used to assess discrimination levels against the Gypsy Traveller community[27]. Information from these discussions is used in this report. However, follow up discussion groups were not undertaken for the final report. It was felt that the PWU did not know the young people well enough to gain the trust needed to ensure that they would express themselves freely. Therefore, the evidence of the impact of the project upon discrimination relies

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[26] Other options were considered such as defining appropriate scores into three separate levels, i.e. low, moderate and high. However, there were not enough questionnaires to do this i.e. a small number of improvements in a small number of questionnaires could potentially increase the proportions by a large amount reflecting improvements on a misrepresentative scale.
[27] In line with the project aim "To reduce discrimination against the Gypsy Traveller population by countering stereotypes"

primarily upon evidence collected through interviews with project staff, who had well established relationships with the young people.

2.18.   **Project staff interviews:** Three rounds of semi-structured interviews were undertaken with project staff. Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the names and numbers of project staff interviewed. Overall it shows that the views of key staff from all local authorities were collected throughout the project's lifespan.

2.19.   **Project monitoring data:** the evaluation looked at a database of the local authorities' results and outputs in order to assess progress against the project's targets.

2.20.   **Relevant studies:** reviews of a number of studies into Gypsy Traveller children and young people within Wales, Welsh Government strategies, and an Estyn report, were undertaken (see bibliography).

3. Context and challenges

Introduction

3.1. This section summarises the interventions and challenges which the project experienced, and which should be considered whilst interpreting the findings within this report. The evidence mostly draws from interviews with project staff.

Context

3.2. The project developed a range of different interventions to achieve its objectives. The interventions evolved somewhat as the project progressed: The interventions included:

- **Blaenau Gwent CBC** – learning mentors to work with schools and colleges focusing upon attendance, holiday activities such as art projects, and raising Gypsy Traveller cultural awareness within schools.

- **Carmarthenshire CC** – the project coordinator liaised with families, schools, and multi –agencies, identified Gypsy Traveller pupils and provided one to one support for young people and their families to access education and training. Specialised teacher support and a learning support assistant provided awareness-raising, general learning support and focused specifically upon basic skills in schools.

- **Merthyr Tydfil CBC** – arranging alternative educational provision to enable Gypsy Traveller young people to gain more vocational qualifications. Encouraging young people's involvement in the youth forum and at the local authority's wide Student Council Conference, and in activities and courses to improve their communication skills and other soft skills.

- **Neath Port Talbot CBC** – a discrete unit closely linked to a secondary school, providing specialist teacher hours in subjects such as sport, ICT and food technology, and social emotional support. In addition links with local colleges (vocational courses) and families were developed.

- **Pembrokeshire CC** – mainstream support for Gypsy Travellers in secondary schools and a discrete unit, closely linked to a primary school,

providing social emotional support and delivering basic skills, develop close links with colleges (most notably for vocational courses) and employers.

- **Torfaen CBC** – a discrete unit[28] closely linked to a secondary school, providing behavioural and academic support and developing links with colleges, families and employers was established. In addition, interventions to raise cultural activities of Gypsy Travellers within public services and encourage participation in youth forums were established.
- **CaC of Swansea** – Higher Learning Teacher Assistant taught within the Traveller Education Services (TES) room, liaised with schools (promoting attendance), and undertook partnership work with employment initiative.

Challenges

3.3. There was a slow start to project delivery. This was most notable in Merthyr Tydfil and Swansea where project delivery, such as having staff in place delivering interventions to the Gypsy Traveller young people, did not take place during the first year. Moreover, the other five local authorities struggled to establish delivery during the first nine months of the project. This was partly because there was no central team to provide impetus at the beginning of the project (an issue that was rectified after a period of time). There were also problems obtaining match funding, and staffing issues.

3.4. Many project staff highlighted that the project targets were overly optimistic. Different reasons were provided for this, including:

- within some local authorities a failure to consult some frontline project staff about targets they were expected to deliver;
- within some local authorities a failure by some project staff to use local authority expertise on European funding, which is likely to have contributed to unrealistic predictions; and
- the many localised challenges, which were not fully considered in some local authorities, when project targets were proposed. These challenges

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[28] Although technically a discrete unit, the provision within this unit was more integrated with the secondary schools than the discrete units in other local authorities.

related to the profile of the Gypsy Traveller population in some areas[29] and the level of development of traveller education services (TES) within the local authority[30].

3.5.   In addition, in some of the local authorities (most notably in Merthyr Tydfil CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC, and CaC of Swansea) there has been a high turnover of staff which, as highlighted by some project staff, worked as a barrier towards planning and delivering the project.

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[29] For example transient roadside Gypsy Travellers were on the whole harder to engage with than those established in residential housing.

[30] For example some were established in the 1990s others were almost starting from scratch.

4. Findings: the impact of the project upon Gypsy Traveller young people's attitudes towards education and training.

Introduction

4.1.   In this section we consider the evidence from the young people's survey and project staff interviews in order to evaluate the impact of the project upon Gypsy Traveller young people's attitudes towards education and training.

4.2.   In interpreting the results from the young person's survey, refer to the methodology section.
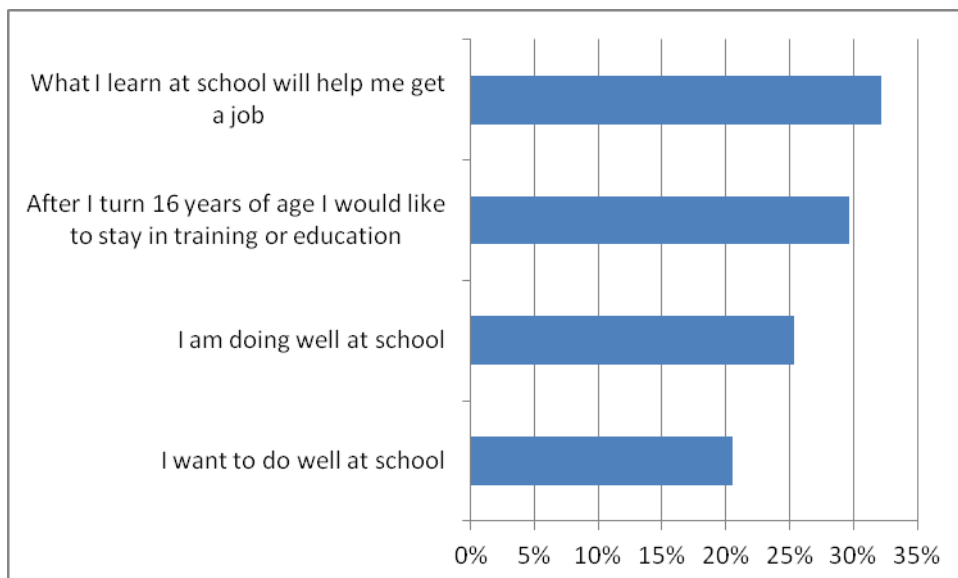
Young people's survey

Findings

4.3.   Graph 4.1 highlights that the project has had a positive impact upon Gypsy Traveller young people. The greatest impact has been upon attitudes towards the benefits of education or training, with an increase of around 30 percentage points in the proportion of young people strongly agreeing "that what they learn in schools will help them get a job", and that "they want to continue in post 16 education and training". This indicates the project is having the desired impact upon attitude towards learning.

4.4.   There has also been a positive impact in terms of the percentage of young people who feel they are doing well in school (approximately a quarter more), which suggests an improvement in their academic abilities and/or confidence. Moreover, around a fifth more wants to do well at school which provides further evidence that the project is changing their attitudes towards learning.

4.5.   Graph 4.2 shows the overall results of the 2012 survey. Encouragingly it shows that over three quarters of young people surveyed either strongly agree or agree to each statement and the proportion of young people strongly disagreeing or disagreeing is small. However, it also highlights there is still some room for improvement, most notably in terms of the percentage of young

people who believe they are doing well in schools or want to stay in post 16 education or training. Interviews with many project staff highlighted that boys in particular often relied on family ties and connections in order to gain employment and our comparative analyses of female and male responses showed males were twice as likely to strongly disagree or disagree to both of the statements. This indicates changing the attitudes of boys is more challenging and that quality careers advice for them should be seen as a priority.

4.6.   Graph 4.2 also shows that the proportion of young people reporting that they "did not know" is relatively high. This may indicate a lack of feedback from learning settings and/or weakness in young people's self-awareness and self-evaluative skills.

Graph 4.1 showing the percentage point <u>increase</u> in the proportion of young people who <u>strongly agreed</u> to each survey statement in the final survey in 2012, compared to the baseline survey in 2011.

Source: Young people's survey produced by PWU

Graph 4.2 showing the results of the final young peoples' survey 2012.
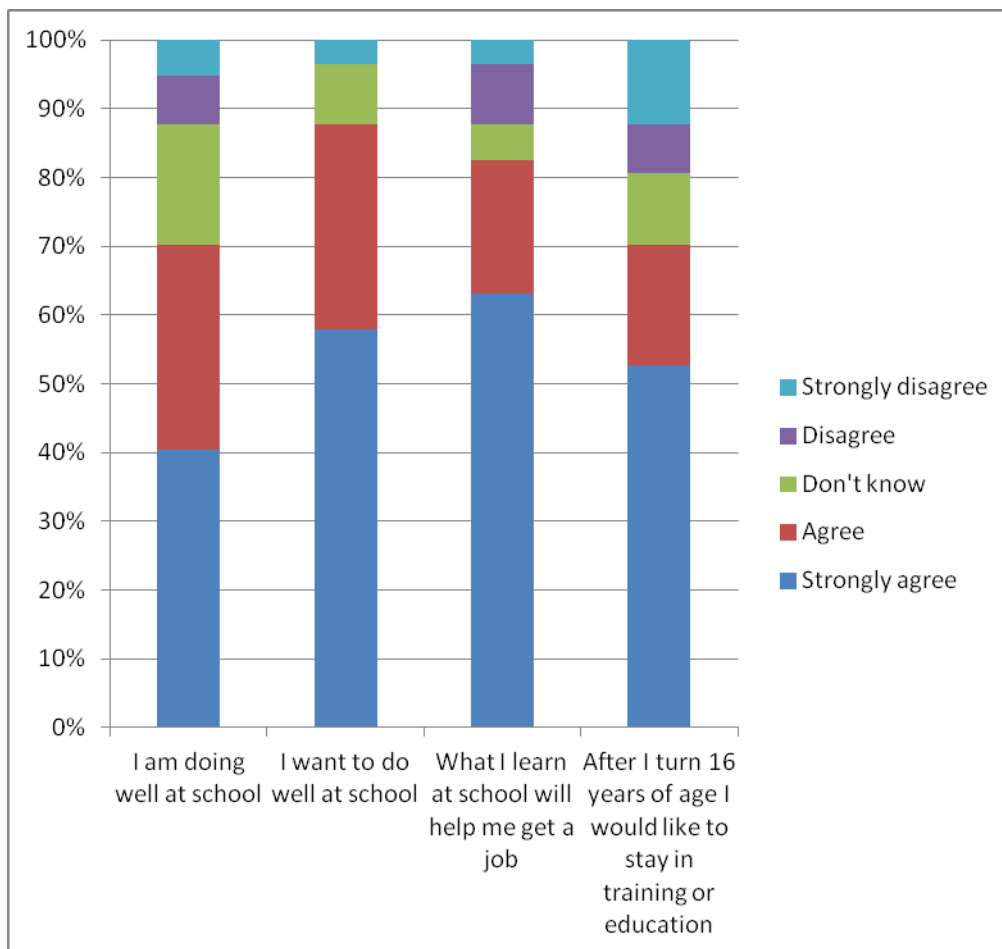
Source: Young people's survey produced by PWU

Project staff interviews

4.7.   Many project staff supported the positive evidence from the young peoples' survey, highlighting how the project had improved the attitudes of the young people towards learning. Many emphasised that parental engagement was the most effective way of changing attitudes. For example, project staff would help parents in accessing services such as health and this interaction enhanced parents' trust with the project staff and subsequently increased the value they placed upon the services the provided by the project (i.e. education, and training).

4.8.   A range of other approaches were also highlighted by some staff. For example:

- working with schools to educate them about Gypsy Traveller culture to improve their provision such as informing teachers of practices which encourages Gypsy Travellers young peoples engagement in learning;
- providing more vocational qualifications, which enhanced the relevance of learning within the Gypsy Traveller community; and
- 'one to one' or 'group' staff support in managing the behaviour and enhancing the social emotional skills of young people

4.9.   It has not been possible to evaluate which approaches were the most effective as these approaches were delivered in different ways, under different circumstances within different local authorities. However, some project staff felt a holistic long-term approach was needed in order to enable a significant change in attitudes.

4.10.   Some project staff also identified external factors which helped to positively change attitudes towards learning during the lifetime of the project. These included:

- training and qualifications requirements in order to work in such fields as construction was increasingly being policed;
- the economic downturn made the job market more competitive; and
- claiming benefits had become increasingly difficult, hence there was more of an incentive to gain qualifications and find work as means of getting by

4.11.   Many project staff highlighted that despite improvements, in comparison to 'Gorgio' communities, the attitudes of Gypsy Traveller young people still had "a long way to go". Indeed, some project staff commented on how the Irish Travellers in some local authorities were still largely unengaged in education. Some project staff highlighted the need to work with Gypsy Travellers consistently from a young age (e.g. in nursery school) until their early adulthood (e.g. to 21 years of age) in order to fully change their cultural attitudes towards learning.

5. Findings: have levels of participation in education by young people aged 11 to 19 from Gypsy Traveller communities increased?

Introduction

5.1.   In this section we consider the evidence from the self assessment survey, project staff interviews and relevant studies in order to evaluate whether levels of participation in education by young people aged 11 to 19 from Gypsy Traveller communities (the target group) increased.

5.2.   In interpreting the results from the self-assessment survey, refer to the methodology section.

Self-assessment survey

Introduction

5.3.   Attendance rates amongst pupils tend to decline a little as pupils become older[31], and in the absence of other effects, we would therefore expect to see some decline as most of the Gypsy Traveller young people completed the self-assessment questionnaire approximately a year on. Therefore any improvements should also take this into consideration.
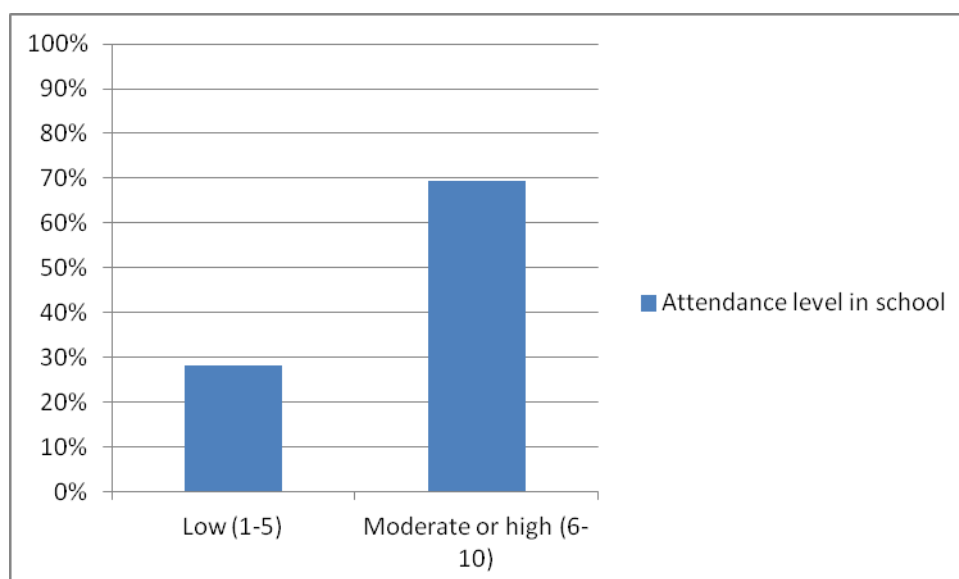
Findings

5.4.   The proportion of young people with moderate to high levels of attendance increased by 8 percentage points from 62 percent to 70 percent as the project progressed (from 2010-11 to the 2011-12 academic year). This indicates the project had increased participation in education through modest improvements in attendance.

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[31] For example our analysis of absence rates (authorised and unauthorised) within maintained schools of the projects local authorities showed approximately 0.2% increase from year 10 to year 11 in 2009-10 (most recent readily available data from statswales).

5.5.   Graph 5.1 shows that approximately 70 percent of young people scored moderate or high levels of attendance (at or above point six on a ten point scale) and approximately 30 percent scoring low levels of attendance (at or below point five on a ten point scale) in the 2011-12 academic year. This would appear to indicate that attendance is an on-going issue for a considerable proportion of Gypsy Traveller young people.

5.6.   It is important to bear in mind that this is a subjective measure of attendance. Therefore, when responding, young people (and in some cases with the help of tutors) may have used different yardsticks for deciding what a low, moderate or high level of attendance would be and the same level of attendance might be considered high by one young person, but moderate or low by another. It is also therefore not possible to directly compare these results with published data on rates of attendance.

5.7.   As highlighted in the interim report, it is not possible to compare the attendance rates of Gypsy Traveller young people with that of other groups of young people, as Gypsy Traveller young people attendance rates are not published by the Welsh Government (Estyn, 2011). However other studies (Jones et al, 2006; Wilkin et al, 2010) highlight that attendance rates amongst Gypsy Traveller young people are very low.

Graph 5.1 showing the percentage of young people who scored low, and moderate or high levels of attendance in the 2011-12 academic year.

Source: Self-assessment survey

Project staff and other sources

5.8.   The findings from the survey of a positive impact on attendance are consistent with other evidence. For example, as reported in the interim report many project staff highlighted improving attendance as a key success of the project. These project staff also highlighted that the improvement of attendance was the stepping stone towards accomplishing other project objectives. Moreover, at some stage in the evaluation, all the local authorities reported improvements in attendance. For example, some were confident that the Gypsy Traveller young people who were now regularly attending school, would not attend school at all unless the project existed, and others reported up to 20 percent improvements in attendance during the last academic year. Evidence from the feedback from project staff suggested that local authorities Pembrokeshire CC, Torfaen CBC and Neath Port Talbot CBC, which used discrete units, had the most success in increasing attendance. This indicates that effective discrete[32] units can be a useful tool in encouraging participation. The evidence suggest this is likely to be due parents feeling more at ease that their children are catered to separately to the mainstream, and that the more controlled environments offered by the discrete units, make it easier to monitor attendance issues and implement interventions effectively.

5.9.   As highlighted in the interim report, a range of approaches was used to encourage high attendance amongst Gypsy Traveller young people. These included providing awards for high attendance and improving transition links with primary schools which helped parents feel more at ease[33]. This was in addition to the same approaches which helped change Gypsy Traveller young peoples' attitudes towards learning (see section 4 for more details).

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[32] The units are not completely separate to the schools, for example the Gypsy Traveller young people in Torfaen shared play time and the majority of lessons with the mainstream school.
[33] Attendance often lowered considerably amongst Gypsy Traveller young people when they started secondary school. Improving transition at this stage is also a key recommendation of National Foundation of Education Research report into the education of Gypsy Traveller Children in Wales (Jones et al 2006).

5.10.   Some project staff reported large fluctuations in attendance rates within their authorities. Sometimes these could be due to incidents which schools could respond to. For example, a parent may stop their children going to school after hearing that their child was provided information on abortions (which did not fit in with their culture). However, at other times, they were due to family incidents or circumstances which the project had little influence upon. Such 'triggers' were reported as common within the Gypsy Traveller community, and emphasised the need for greater cultural understanding in many schools.

5.11.   In some of the local authorities, significantly improving the attendance of boys especially after they turned 14 years of age remained challenging. As highlighted in the interim report, boys were provided by their parents with the freedom to make their own decisions and hence were less likely to have parental pressure to attend school.

5.12.   Some project staff also highlighted barriers to improving participation in education which were largely out of the control of the project, such as the home education policy, which meant parents were able to keep their children at home. Project staff had little faith that those kept at home were being adequately educated. Moreover, in some local authorities, project staff commented upon the lack of sites for Gypsy Travellers, which meant that families were continually moved on and hence education was not seen as a priority to them.

5.13.   A recommendation was made in the interim evaluation report to systematically collect attendance data amongst young people centrally by the project. The evaluation also attempted to collect 'hard data' on attendance levels (i.e. local authority records showing changes in school attendance over time). However, despite sources of evidence such assurances of improved attendance from local authority coordinators, records of a few individual pupils, and the data from the self-assessment survey, 'hard data' collected by local authorities or the project as a whole was not available.

5.14.   Some project staff highlighted how the project had successfully persuaded young people who came under the definition of Gypsy Traveller to make themselves known to their schools. Carmarthenshire CC in particular has

been pro-active in encouraging this process, which has resulted in large increases in officially identified Gypsy Traveller pupils. The authority mainly used 'word of mouth' from known travellers to identify others, and this resulted in the identification of populations of different kind of travellers ranging from new age, Irish, and fairground. An example was provided how one school in particular reported that they did not have any Gypsy Travellers and the project was able to help identify twelve.

5.15. In support of the project staff comments, Davies (2012) reported an increase in the number of pupils at secondary school who were now recognised as Gypsy Travellers and attributed this increase partly to the project activities.

5.16. Notwithstanding the project's good work in officially identifying Gypsy Traveller pupils, the evidence suggests Carmarthenshire CC had gained more success than the others and not all local authorities were pro-active in this area.

6. Findings: have levels of educational attainment amongst the target group throughout West Wales and the Valleys increased?

Introduction

6.1.	In this section we consider the evidence from project data, self-assessment survey, and project staff interviews in order to evaluate whether levels of educational attainment amongst the target group throughout West Wales and the Valleys increased.

6.2.	In interpreting the results from the self-assessment survey, refer to the methodology section.

Project data

6.3.	60 Gypsy Traveller young people had gained qualifications compared to a target of 233 by September 2012. The numbers who gain qualifications is likely to increase after the external exam results are published in August 2012. However, the project as a whole is still likely to be below target and with the exception of two local authorities (Pembrokshire CC and Carmarthenshire CC) all the other local authorities are also likely to be below their individual targets. Notwithstanding this, in terms of numbers, Torfaen CBC gained the most qualifications with 20. The evidence suggests its targets, like the other local authorities that underachieved, were overestimated (see section three for further details). CaC of Swansea performed the worst, with no Gypsy Traveller young people gaining qualifications.

Project staff interviews

6.4.	Overall the project staff interviews highlighted three main themes, all of which were linked to the overestimation of targets (see section three for further details). Firstly, that the focus was largely on developing basic skills and soft skills, which would in the future facilitate the process of gaining qualifications as many of the Gypsy Traveller young people lacked these skills. Secondly, that the project had been successful in gaining qualifications, considering the challenges the Gypsy Traveller young people needed to overcome. Thirdly, it was anticipated that there would be more participants in the upper end of the

11-19 age range who were able to gain qualifications within the projects lifetime.

6.5. The interviews suggest that the local authorities which gained the most success in aiding the Gypsy Traveller young people in gaining qualifications used a mix of interventions which catered for the social and emotional needs of young people through personalised support in addition to developing basic skills through basic skills programmes such as CatchUp.

6.6. In addition, some project staff highlighted other approaches which proved successful. These included providing:

- flexibility in the curriculum approach, such as enabling young people to participate in exams early;

- work related curriculum opportunities;

- informal learning opportunities, such as educational trips; and

- responding to cultural needs, for example, by supplying ingredients needed as part of the process of gaining qualifications in areas such as food hygiene, as fathers of boys were unlikely to let them bring in food to school

Self-assessment survey

Findings

6.7. Graph 6.1 shows there has been positive improvement in basic skills, with similar improvements shown in reading, writing and mathematics skills. This provides support to the project staff comments that the project has had success in improving basic skills (see paragraph 6.4). Moreover, it suggests that despite the project not being likely to reach its target in terms of gaining qualifications, the Gypsy Traveller young people are gaining some of the skills needed in order to obtain qualifications.

Graph 6.1 showing the increase in the proportion of young people who scored moderate or high level mathematics and reading skills from 2010-11 (academic year) to 2011-12 (academic year).
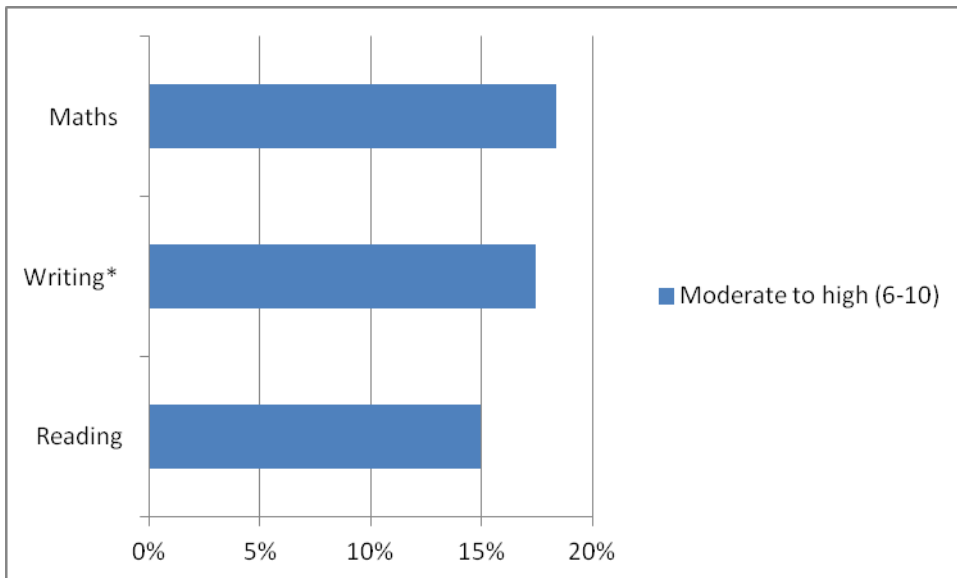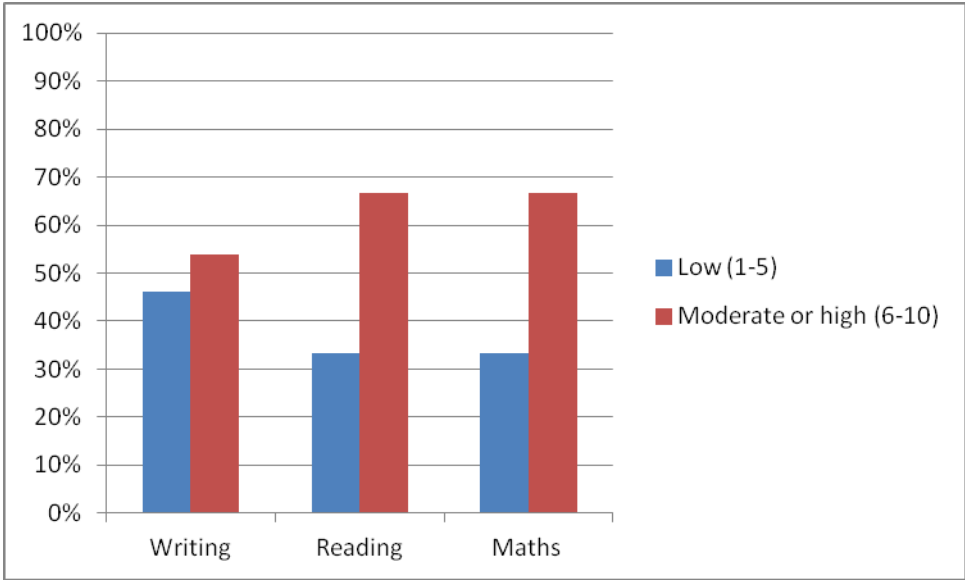

Source: Self-assessment survey

This includes a wider range levels (5-10) in the moderate to high category of writing as young people were starting from a lower baseline[34].

6.8.   Graph 6.2 shows that despite improvements almost half of the Gypsy Traveller young people have low writing skills, and approximately a third has low reading and mathematics skills. This suggests basic skills need to be developed further, especially writing skills.

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[34] This change is legitimate as the aim is to measure relative progress e.g. from a low to a high level rather than the absolute outcome.

Graph 6.2 showing the percentage of young people scoring low, and moderate or high level basic skills in the 2011-12 academic year.

Source: Self-assessment survey

7. Findings: have positive outcomes for the target group in the form of people entering further education, employment or training, increased?

Introduction

7.1.   In this section we consider the evidence from project data, self-assessment survey and young people's survey in order to evaluate whether positive outcomes for the Gypsy Traveller young people in the form of people entering further education, employment or training, have increased.

7.2.   In interpreting the results from the self-assessment survey, refer to the methodology section.

Employment

Project data

7.3.   35 Gypsy Traveller young people had entered employment compared to a target of 58. Although the project is likely to be below target, in our estimation taking into account external factors such as the persistent economic recession and our experience of other projects, the project overall has been successful in helping Gypsy Traveller young people gain employment.

7.4.   The data shows that whilst Pembrokeshire CC, Torfaen CBC, and Blaenau Gwent CBC are either on or over target, in another three local authorities (Carmarthenshire CC, Merthyr Tydfil CBC and CaC of Swansea) no or very few young people have entered employment, highlighting very mixed results across the seven local authorities.

Project staff

7.5.   In the local authorities which had gained success in employment, project staff highlighted a shift in attitude that employers had towards Gypsy Traveller young people, which had been facilitated by the project. For example, the young people were able to work part time whilst in school, encouraged to

attend work placements, and relationships were developed with local employers.

7.6. Many project staff (within both the local authorities which have performed well and not so well) highlighted approaches such as vocational courses and helping young people with their CVs. The evidence suggests that whilst these interventions play their part, working directly with employers was an area in which some of the local authorities could have improved upon in order to achieve their targets.

7.7. Some project staffs were frustrated by the fact that some of the young people had gained self-employment utilising skills taught by the project but were unable to prove it because the young people were "not on the books", and working informally.

7.8. Some project staff felt the project targets placed too much emphasis upon post 16 outcomes. For example, 11-15 year olds on the project were unable to gain employment and represented a large proportion of the project participants. Again this highlights the issue of overestimating targets (see section three for further details).

7.9. In Pembrokeshire CC, employment was sometimes prioritised for Gypsy Traveller young people (16-19 of age) over qualifications, especially as the companies supplying the employment opportunities had good internal training and staff development programmes. It is likely that this approach had facilitated the local authorities' ability to deliver well against its employment targets.

Further learning

Project data

7.10. 25 Gypsy Traveller young people had entered further learning compared to a target of 79. The numbers who enter further learning is likely to increase in August 2012, when young people now aged 16 complete school, which may result in three of the local authorities (Pembrokeshire CC, Carmarthenshire CC and Blaenau Gwent CBC) achieving or coming near their targets.

However, overall, the project is likely to be below target. For example, two local authorities (Merthyr Tydfil CBC and CaC of Swansea) have yet to have any young people entering further learning.

Project staff

7.11. Encouragingly many of the project staff were confident that the number of young people engaged in the project who were currently too young to enter further learning (i.e. aged 14 to 16 years) would do so in August and beyond the lifetime of the project (subject to continued support). For example, some project staff commented on the change of attitudes towards college:

"College placements is becoming the norm particularly for girls" Local authority coordinator.

7.12. Our analysis of approaches by local authorities who proved more successful in gaining further learning showed no clear patterns. However, many project staff highlighted the use of vocational courses as beneficial. Some project staff highlighted close ties with local colleges, and the use of personal support through project staff as effective practice.

**Self-assessment survey and project staff**

Findings

7.13. Graph 7.1 shows that project has improved many skills which are likely to help young people access employment, education, and training. These findings were supported by the judgments of many project staff, who highlighted that the project had improved the soft skills of young people, such as their confidence, which are closely associated with the skills listed in the graph. The graph also shows that the most notable improvements had been in 'using a computer' and working 'well in a team'. Some project staff described that they supplied laptops and computer access to young people and were encouraged to access online Gypsy Traveller Forums such as through the Travelling Ahead website[35] and Equal Voice[36].

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[35] Funded by the Welsh Government and Save the Children for the Gypsy Traveller community in Wales

7.14. During the baseline survey (in the 2010-11 academic year), a relatively large proportion of young people, (around two thirds), reported moderate or high level skills in their 'confidence with money' and 'talking to others' and hence there was less room for improvements in these areas. This may, to an extent, explain the smaller increases compared to the other areas. As highlighted in the interim report these are areas which are likely to be valued within the wider community and which may not necessarily be seen by Gypsy Traveller young people as educationally based, in the way other skills may be.

7.15. Graph 7.2 shows that 80 percentage or above of the Gypsy Traveller young reported 'moderate or high' level skills for using a computer, ability to concentrate when required, confidence with money and talking to others. This suggests the Gypsy Traveller young people had developed useful skills for employment, training and education.

7.16. In contrast to the other positive results and comments from project staff, the proportion of young people that rated their 'future job prospects' at a 'moderate or high' level has decreased by 15 percentage points (graph 7.1) over the year. The evidence from graph 7.1 show a lack of impact upon job prospects, and graph 7.2 shows almost half of the Gypsy Traveller young people rated their future job prospects as low. Indicating this as an area in need of improvement. In our judgement this result may be influenced by the continued recession and bleak economic outlook. Moreover, within some of the local authorities the project sometimes recruited from within the Gypsy Traveller communities, and with the project finishing in September 2012 their job prospects would be diminished.

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[36] Youth Forum established by West Monmouth schools in Torfaen with the assistance of Save the Children

Graph 7.1 showing the difference in the proportion of young people who scored moderate or high level skills beneficial to employment, education and training from 2010-11 (academic year) to 2011-12 (academic year).
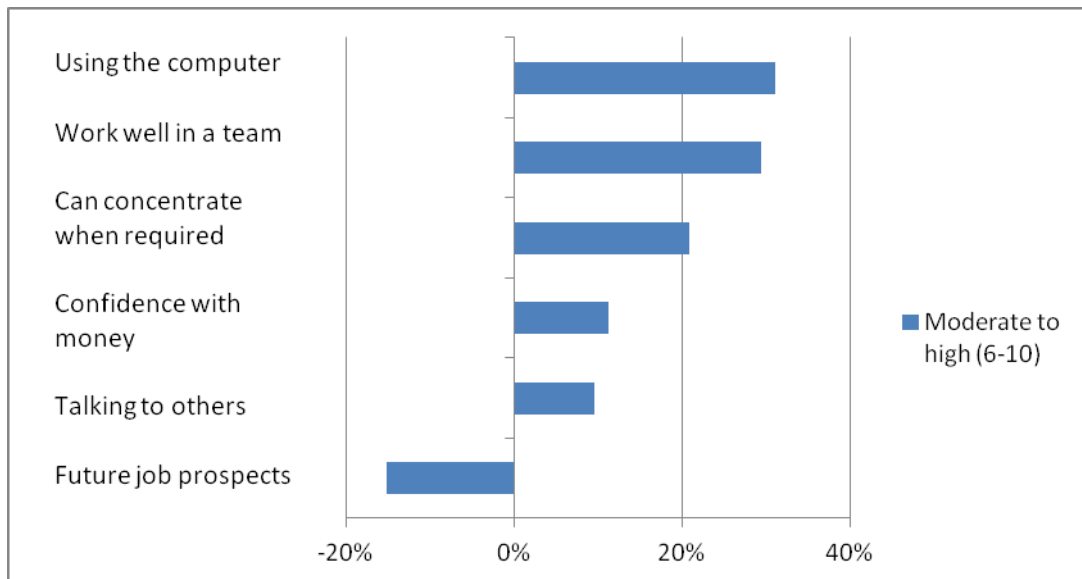
Source: Self-assessment survey

Graph 7.2 showing the percentage of young people scoring low, and moderate or high level skills beneficial to employment, education and training in the 2011-12 (academic year).
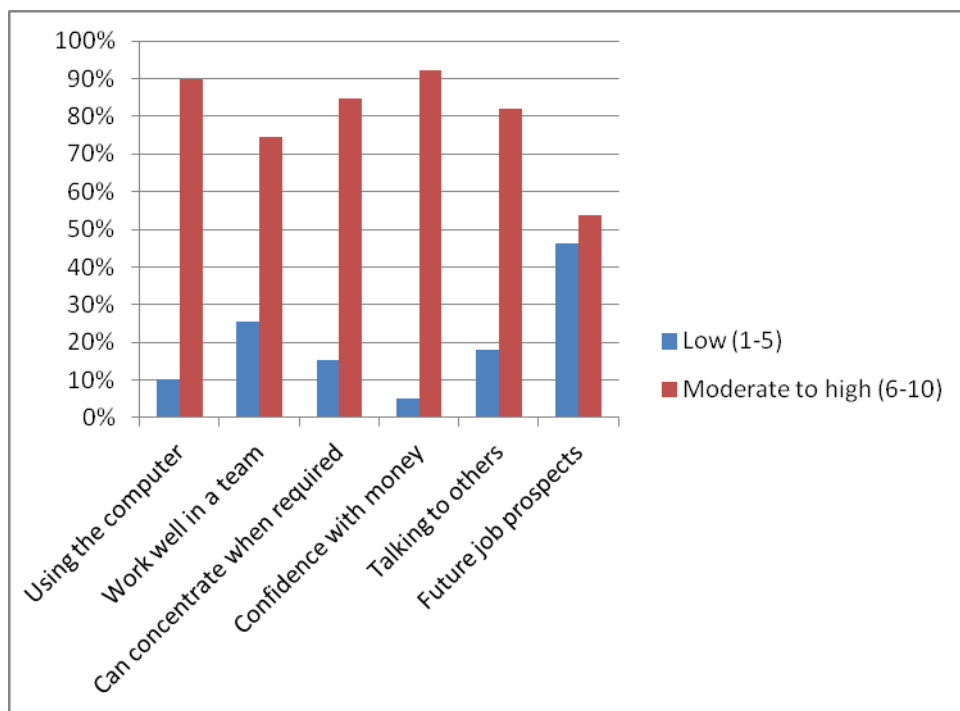
Source: Self-assessment survey

Young people's survey

Introduction

7.17. The questionnaire included an open question which asked '*what would you like to be or do when you leave school?*'. Some young people provided more than one answer, for example "Beautician or Care Worker". When this was done, both examples were counted. Under this heading we report and compare the findings from the baseline survey in 2011 and the last survey in 2012. Please refer to the methodology when interpreting the young people's survey results.

Findings

7.18. Table 7.1 shows the results from both young people's surveys. As highlighted in the interim report the type of employment the Gypsy Traveller young people aspire to largely reflects that shown in the Save the Children Gypsy Traveller consultation report (Aspinwall and Larkin, 2010) with boys generally preferring masculine type roles, such as construction trades, and boxing and girls opting for traditionally feminine roles as the beauty industry and working with children.

7.19. This gendering of career aspirations is common amongst many disadvantaged groups. For example, comparing these results to a survey which asked a comparable question to young people from Communities First areas in South Wales (Hall and Watkins, in press) highlights that that these masculine and feminine type roles are also typical in areas of relative deprivation amongst non-Gypsy Travellers.

7.20. There is also evidence that the aspirations of Gypsy Traveller young people are not only gendered, but also lower than that of other disadvantaged groups. For example, the results noted above of young people from Communities First areas in South Wales, indicated higher overall levels of ambition, as there were more examples of aspirations to secure white collar employment such as accountancy or being a pilot (ibid.).

7.21. Notwithstanding this, both surveys show that the majority of young people provided clear examples of their employment ambitions. Moreover, as also highlighted in the interim report, there are examples of young people identifying public sector jobs, such as teaching and the police, which have traditionally been less associated with Gypsy Travellers and may indicate some change of attitude within the community.

7.22. Overall, table 7.1 highlights that during the period between the surveys ambitions have not changed considerably, although by the final survey young women were more likely to opt for either the beauty industry or working with children than they were during the baseline survey. Interviews with some project staff and evidence from project documents suggests this may be due to the promotion of further education courses in these fields. Whilst it is encouraging that young women are considering these careers, the evidence also suggests that greater diversity of options in careers should be promoted to Gypsy Traveller young people and to young women in particular.

Table 7.1 showing the number of young people that indicated different types of employment, training or other future prospects and the gender spilt in the baseline survey (107 comments) and last survey (71 comments).		
What they want to be or do when they leave school?	**Baseline survey No. of responses (107 comments)**	**Last survey No. of responses (71 comments)**
Construction trades (most notably plumbing and bricklaying)	16 (males)	11 (males)
Beauty industry (most notably hairdresser and beautician)	13 (females)	18 (females)
Sport person (most notably boxing)	10 (males)	4 (males)
Scrap industry	7 (males)	1 (males)
Teaching	7 (mixed)	1 (females)
Further Education (most notably college)	6 (mixed)	2 (males)
Artistic or fashion industry	6 (females)	2 (females)
Don't know	6 (mixed)	8 (mixed)
Mechanic	4 (males)	1 (males)
Health and fitness industry	4 (mixed)	
Work with dad	3 (males)	3 (males)
Get married	3 (females)	1 (female)
Work with children	3 (females)	6 (female)
Gardening	3 (mixed)	
Lawyer	2 (mixed)	1 (female)
Police/army	2 (mixed)	3 (males)
Get a job		3 (mixed)
Nothing	1 (male)	
Miscellaneous (e.g. travelling with fair, work in shop etc.)	11 (mixed)	6 (mixed)

Source: Young people's survey produced by PWU

8. Findings: has discrimination against the Gypsy Traveller population been reduced? Has this contributed to increases in participation in education, training or employment?

Introduction

8.1. As highlighted in the methodology section, discussion groups with young people were held to gain evidence on discrimination for the interim report. For this section, we have also drawn upon evidence collected through interviews with project staff.

8.2. There was limited evidence in terms of the impact that changes in discrimination levels or attitude of others to Gypsy Travellers had upon participation in education, training and employment.

Discrimination

Discussion groups

8.3. Overall the discussion groups[37] held in 2011 highlighted that project activities and outcomes had helped to reduce discrimination through "positive interaction". This included: young people making friends with Gorgios on trips and sport activities through the project; and parents and young people engaging with public services and institutions (e.g. education, training, employment and health) to a greater extent.

8.4. Young people also reported a reduction in name-calling. However, some young people reported that they were still experiencing name-calling referring to their Gypsy Traveller culture.

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[37] A discussion group within four local authorities which included 15 girls and 10 boys of mixed age between 11-18

Project staff

8.5.   All the project staff indicated that the project activities had helped to reduce discrimination, although the extent of the reduction was mixed. Moreover, many of the project staff also highlighted that the gains had somewhat been reduced due to the negative media coverage of Gypsy Travellers, in many popular television shows, such as 'My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding', which encouraged discriminative attitudes towards Gypsy Travellers.

8.6.   Many approaches to reducing discrimination were highlighted by project staff. These included five distinct areas:

- Steps to reduce the differences between young Gypsy Traveller young people and other young people. For example, ensuring Gypsy Travellers in discrete units wore the same uniform as those in the mainstream, and encouraging Gypsy Travellers not to walk around the school in 'gangs', which could intimate others.
- Steps to encourage 'positive interaction' between Gypsy Traveller young people and other young people. For example, including both sets of young people in activities such as the mosaic art project.
- Steps to inform schools and other organisations about Gypsy Traveller culture. For example, the production of a DVD on Gypsy Traveller culture.
- Steps to ensure existing policies within schools reduce discrimination. For example, monitoring of anti-bullying policies, and the use of Education Inclusion Officers.

8.7.   Many project staff had highlighted barriers to reducing discrimination, the most common being that media coverage had increased name-calling and negative stereotyping of Gypsy Travellers. Other barriers included WEFO funding restrictions on certain interventions. For example a project coordinator described how activities associated with "show racism a red card"[38] were ineligible for funding. In addition there was reluctance from some Gypsy

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[38] A course designed to reduce racism and delivered by the UK's anti-racism educational charity.

Traveller communities to become involved in activities which made their identities known (i.e. DVDs).

8.8. Some project staff highlighted that many Gypsy Traveller young people were susceptible to showing discriminative behaviour towards others. Therefore, working with the Gypsy Traveller young people to change their behaviour and attitudes was also important.

8.9. As highlighted in the interim report there were divisions within the Gypsy Traveller communities, which resulted in discriminative behaviour towards each other. This was very evident in one of the local authorities between the 'Welsh Gypsy Travellers' and the 'Irish Travellers' due to historic traveller sites conflicts. As the project progressed these attitudes remained entrenched so the project had to work around the issue, rather than addressing them. For example, the Irish Travellers were taught separately to the Welsh Gypsy Travellers.

Project participants' perceptions of the attitude of others to Gypsy Travellers changed and has this contributed to increases in participation in education, training or employment.

8.10. As highlighted in sections five to eight the evidence suggests a reciprocal relationship in which changes in perceptions are supported by increases in engagement of Gypsy Traveller young people in schools, colleges and with employers. Other studies suggested Gypsy Traveller young people's suspicion of Gorgios discouraged their engagement in educational institutions (Aspinwall and Larkin, 2010; Welsh Government, 2011). The project helped to reduce these suspicions through engagement with these institutions. The evidence indicates improvements in their own soft skills had facilitated this process. Nevertheless the extent of this improvement was mixed between local authorities.

8.11. As highlighted in paragraph 8.5 the excessive media coverage around Gypsy Travellers has had a detrimental effect. The evaluation lacks the evidence to prove whether this has had a negative influence upon participation in

education, training or employment. Evidence from discussion groups indicated that the Gypsy Traveller young people themselves had mixed feelings in regard to the influence of the media on Gorgios. This ranged from showing them in a negative way which did not reflect their culture to being glad that it showed that they were different to Gorgios.

9. Findings: how can the benefits of the project be sustained?

Introduction

9.1.   In this section we consider the evidence from project staff interviews to assess how benefits from the project could be sustained.

Project staff

9.2.   Many project staff highlighted the grave need to sustain the projects interventions. Many staff felt that the trust which the project had helped to build with the Gypsy Traveller communities would be lost if large elements of the interventions were not sustained. Moreover staff were concerned that given the nature of the Gypsy Traveller community, this trust could be lost very quickly and would take many years and a large amount of resources to regain.

9.3.   Some project staff also felt that the skills and experience gained by many project staff members would be lost, as most were likely to gain employment in areas not associated with Gypsy Travellers, or become unemployed.

9.4.   Although a number of options for sustaining the project were considered, overall, many project staff were sceptical about whether the benefits of the project would be sustained. One option of sustaining the benefits was by sustaining funding for current or similar interventions. Many staff highlighted barriers to achieving this, which included:

- the increasing difficulty of finding other sources of funding, given continued cuts to the public sector; and
- the likelihood that there would be no further European funding in the short term, as funding for this project was not being extended, and because future European funding of a similar project was not likely to materialise for another two years.

9.5.   The other option of sustaining the benefits was that public services took on lessons learned from the project. However, despite some good work which had been done in raising cultural awareness in schools, project staff highlighted how schools were still largely dependent upon specific project staff to work with the Gypsy Traveller communities. Moreover, as highlighted in this report, project staff provided support in areas ranging from health to housing, which meant that future provision would need to be more holistic. Whilst this is desirable goal, it also highlights the challenge for local authorities to maintain the benefits, especially without extra funding.

9.6.   As highlighted in the interim report and by some project staff, the ideal scenario is to have a fully integrated and supported system for Gypsy Traveller young people within mainstream services. In our estimation this was the next logical step for the local authorities which had the most established and successful TES provision. However, by and large this had not been achieved within the project. A difficulty in achieving this ideal scenario is that as indicated by evidence from this report, TES discrete units[39], were an effective way of engaging gypsy young travellers. However, as the name suggests, they rely upon provision which to a certain an extent is separate to the mainstream, and hence does not provide the ideal platform to develop mainstream services.

9.7.   There is a Welsh Government annual grant which provides part funding to TES and its aims reflects some of the educational ambitions of the project. Nevertheless, local authorities have been accessing this grant during the project funding and hence it is not additional, and the grant is not enough to sustain large elements of the project.

9.8.   Encouragingly one of the local authorities has committed to funding many of the project interventions for another year due to the benefits gained. However, as yet, the local authority is not fully committed to fund all interventions and staff who are currently financed by the project. Evidence

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[39] The units are not completely separate to the schools, for example the Gypsy Traveller young people in Torfaen shared play time and many lessons with the mainstream school.

from the evaluation suggests that the school based interventions within the local authority were particular effective in gaining the results and therefore should be sustained.

9.9.   There were certain advantages some local authorities had which increased their chances of sustaining elements of the project. For example, some of the local authorities had well established TES, and the Gypsy Traveller community represented the largest ethnic group in the authorities, which facilitated the process of gaining further funding.

9.10. Some project staff highlighted that in the likely event that it was not feasible to sustain elements of the project, some basic provisions should be sustained by local authorities. These included providing courses useful for employment, such as health and safety, and providing Gypsy Travellers with opportunities to undertake exams earlier in the year due to their travel commitments towards the summer term.

10. Findings: project management

Introduction

10.1. In this section we consider the evidence from project staff interviews to evaluate the management of project.

Project staff

10.2. The project faced a number of problems. As with other ESF projects the project staff often struggled with the high administrative demands of the project. In addition communication within (also see paragraph 3.4) and between the local authorities were reported by some project staff to be weak. For example, even some project staff were unclear of what they needed to produce to prove certain results had been achieved. Moreover, the project on the whole struggled to collect evaluation and monitoring data from all local authorities, such as the self-assessment questionnaires.

10.3. Although the late start of the project and the number of participating local authorities using different systems and process complicated the situation, in our estimation, many of the administrative problems could have been more effectively addressed if all the participating local authorities had taken on a more pro-active role within the project. Too much onus was placed upon the Lead Sponsor, for example, they were required to repeatedly explain elements of how ESF funding worked to coordinators of other local authorities and had to repeatedly contact other local authorities for data. In support of this, feedback from some project staff suggested resources within the project could have been used more effectively if there had been a project management board and more meetings between joint sponsors, in addition to the meetings with personnel at senior levels, that took place between local authorities.

10.4. In addition with the benefit of hindsight, the external evaluation (PWU) should have been more pro-active in encouraging the production of some monitoring and evaluation data. For example large emphasis was place upon local

authorities to complete the evaluation young people's questionnaires but not enough emphasis was placed upon assisting the project central team to collect self-assessment questionnaire and attendance data.

10.5. However, the administrative problems notwithstanding, there have been some effective developments. As the European Manager reported, the Lead Sponsor had benefited from establishing a European Contract Management Team, which managed a number of local authority WEFO projects in which they are also the Lead Sponsor. This approach had certain advantages over establishing specific central administration for each EU project. This included:

- the ability to adjust the administrative resources available to projects in line with the peaks and troughs of workload;
- facilitating the process of sharing good practice between projects; and
- simplifying the funding of central support function and enhancing the allocation of resources in line with project needs

10.6. In addition, some project staff highlighted that administrative systems improved as the project progressed and the designs of monitoring tools such as the self-assessment questionnaire followed a simple and short design.

11. Conclusions

Overview: the project's impact

11.1. Overall, the evidence indicates that the project has been successful in developing basic skills, soft skills and employment opportunities of Gypsy Traveller young people, but has had limited success in encouraging entry into further learning or enabling Gypsy Traveller young people to gain qualifications.

The effectiveness of the project in different local authorities

11.2. The evidence also shows that some local authorities have had much more success than others in achieving results (e.g. employment, qualifications, entering further learning). Pembrokeshire CC has been the most consistent in terms of gaining results, whilst all the other local authorities with the exception of CaC of Swansea (which had limited results in all areas), had some areas in which they were successful in delivering results. This shows that although overall the project did not achieve its targets, the majority of the local authorities were successful in certain areas.

11.3. Within all the local authorities there was evidence that, on the whole, project staff were highly dedicated, working with a wide range of key stakeholders and services including the Gypsy Traveller communities, public services, employers and voluntary sector organisations in order to get results.

Lessons learned

11.4. The report highlights that many local authorities overestimated what they could achieve. This emphasises the importance of local authorities consulting suitably with the personnel with the right expertise (e.g. with experience of ESF funded projects) and with frontline staff who will be 'on the ground' delivering the project, before decisions on project targets are made.

11.5. In some local authorities the project has highlighted considerable numbers of Gypsy Travellers who have **not** previously identified themselves as Gypsy

Travellers to the schools they attend. Whilst this is not necessarily the case in all local authorities in Wales, the evidence from this project suggests that there are many Gypsy Traveller young people who potentially need educational support and are not currently known to local authorities.

11.6. The report highlights the importance of working closely with Gypsy Traveller families and communities in order to improve attitudes towards learning amongst Gypsy Traveller young people. The report also highlights the importance of building strong relationships with colleagues and employers in order to promote further learning and employment amongst Gypsy Traveller young people.

11.7. The report highlights how the current home education policies can be used by parents to excuse Gypsy Traveller young people from attending school and that local authorities often lack adequate checks on whether the Gypsy Traveller young people were been educated appropriately.

11.8. With the benefit of hindsight, given the number of local authorities participating in the project, the wide range of different interventions used and some difficulties experienced in collecting data, the project would have benefited from:

- The use of standardised tools for pupil profiling (e.g. P.A.S.S.[40]) and proven intervention programmes (e.g. CatchUp literacy[41] and numeracy[42]) used across all authorities; and

- The joint sponsor local authorities taking on a more pro-active role in ensuring the right data is produced and delivered for the project as too much onus was given on the Lead Sponsor to chase up and explain data.

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[40] Designed as a profiling tool to identify pupils at risk of disaffection and used to inform interventions pupils need to improve attitudes towards learning.
[41] Brookes (2002) reviewing unpublished data by Lawes, (2006) highlighted that Catchup literacy for years 7 and 8 targeting young people with low attainment reported "modest progress" (p.239).
[42] Dowker (2010) highlighted how the Catchup numeracy pilot made twice as much progress as would have been expected in the time-frame without the intervention

Sustainability and future relevance

11.9. There are concerns about the sustainability of project funded interventions. Torfaen CBC had secured further funding for another year for many of the interventions which the project is currently funding. However, project staff were sceptical, especially with continued public sector cuts, that the benefits of the project would be sustained in the near future. They were concerned that this which would result in loss of trust from the Gypsy Traveller communities and staff expertise built up by the project.

11.10. The long-term goal is to have a fully integrated and supported system for Gypsy Traveller young people within mainstream services. Most of the local authorities had taken positive steps towards this goal however, by and large, this had not been achieved within the project. In our judgement, this was the next step for the local authorities who had the most successful TES provision, subject to available funding and support.

11.11. Evidence from the report highlights that Gypsy Traveller young people are in continual need of support in order gain some kind of parity with Gorgios in areas such as school attendance and attainment, and future job opportunities and ambitions.

11.12. The objectives of the project are in line with the Welsh Governments 'Travelling to a Better Future' Gypsy Traveller Framework for Action and Delivery Plan (Welsh Government, 2011). The project contributes towards ensuring "equality of opportunity for Gypsies and Travellers in Wales" (Ibid. p.9); addressing issues such as "social exclusion and racism; educational disadvantage; and social and economic issues" (Ibid. p.9). The evidence suggests that in six of the local authorities (Pembrokeshire, Torfaen, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent) the project has had a positive impact which should be sustained and built upon for the future. The other local authority (CaC of Swansea) was a year late in delivering the project, and experienced a high turn over in staff and problems with match funding. Notwithstanding this, the evidence suggests the project has only had a marginal benefit in Swansea.

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Appendix 1: List of project staff interviewed at different rounds

First round (December'10 to February '11), 2nd round (June '11 to August '11), final round (May'12 to July'12).			
Name and local authority	**Round 1**	**Round 2**	**Final round**
Rebecca Bevan, Blaenau Gwent	X		X
Gareth Bond, Pembrokeshire (central team)		X	X
Sarah Bowen, Merthyr Tydfil			X
Gwenan Burson, Carmarthenshire	X		
Liz Reeves-Davies, Carmarthenshire	X	X	X
Gwyn Evans, Pembrokeshire (European Manager)			X
Louise Flynn, Merthyr Tydfil		X	
Lynne Hopkins, Neath Port Talbot	X	X	
Madeline Jones, Swansea		X	
Gwenda Jones, Swansea	X		
David Jones, Blaenau Gwent		X	
Kimberely Marshman, Blaenau Gwent	X		
Michael McMahon, Neath Port Talbot		X	
Paul Relf, Swansea	X		
Lynne Robinson, Torfaen		X	X
Beverly Stephens, Pembrokeshire	X	X	X
Teresa Winiarski, Merthyr Tydfil	X		
Total	**9**	**9**	**7**

Appendix 2: Project staff Interview Schedule – Last round

External Evaluation of the Gypsy Traveller Learning and Future Employment Project

The People and Work Unit have been commissioned to evaluate the Learning and Future Employment Project. As part of this research we are conducting interviews with key stakeholder such as your-self. We will not name individuals in relation to any comments or issues highlighted within the reports we produce, however, we will collectively list all the project staff we interviewed within the appendix.

Are you happy with that? And do you have any questions?

Thank you for your time

Overview

1. **Overall, how do you feel things have been going with the project?**

   Strengths, Weaknesses?

The project aims and objectives

Within your local authority……

2. **Do you feel [know] that the project has been successful in increasing the participation in education of G people?**

   How? how do you know (measure), Anything could be improved? Strengths? Is it what you expected?

3. **Is the project showing signs of increasing educational attainment of GT young people?**

   How? how do you know (measure), Anything could be improved? Strengths? Is it what you expected?

4. **Is the project showing signs of "positive outcomes" in terms of helping them enter employment and fur education or training?**

   Definition issues? how do you know (measure), if not why not? Anything could be improved? Strengths? Is it w expected?

5. **Has the project been successful in changing the attitudes of GT young people?**

   How? how do you know (measure), Anything could be improved? Strengths? Is it what you expected?

6. **Has the project showed any signs of changing the attitudes (less discrimination) of others (wider comm towards GT young people?**

How? how do you know (measure), Anything could be improved? Strengths? Is it what you expected?

7. Has the project helped anyone to find employment yet?

Too young etc…how, if no why not etc .Any ideas?

8. Anything else?

Lessons learned?

Thanks for your time!

Appendix 3: Young People's Questionnaire

1. Your name? ....

2. Please tick (√) the boxes that describe you:

I am a male	I am a female

Age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16

3. Please tick (√) the boxes that best describe how you feel about each statement:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am doing well at school					
I want to do well at school					
What I learn at school will help me get a job					
After I turn 16 years of age I would like to stay in training or education					
What would you like to be or do when you leave school?					

Appendix 4: Self-assessment Surveys

Gypsy Traveller Learning and Future Employment Project

Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Participant name

Local Authority

Please rate the following out of ten as you see yourself now
1 being the lowest where you are not very confident
10 being the highest where you feel you are excellent

writing	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High

reading	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High

talking to others	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High

maths (sums and figures)	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High

confidence with money	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High

work well in a team	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High

can concentrate when required	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High

using the computer	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High

attendance level in school	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	High

future job prospects	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	High

Participant Signature

date

Teacher/Mentor Signature