

1 Background

A number of different groups are covered under the generic term: GRT - Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers and, Showmen and Circus people, Bargees (boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Many traveller families will travel for work purposes.

2 Why it matters

Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) pupils need to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible. School's approach to regular attendance should, however, be balanced with a sensitivity which recognises the lifestyle and cultural traditions of GRT communities. Nevertheless it is important to monitor the attendance of GRT pupils closely to ensure attendance does not impact on their progress and attainment.

7 What to do

- Follow up any unexplained and unexpected absences in the usual manner
- Communicate with any subsidiary schools to confirm when they are expected so it is clear who is checking absences
- Report CME in the same way as all pupils if the school is unable to establish whereabouts after completing reasonable enquiries.
- It is good practise for schools with GRT pupils to ensure guidance is in their attendance policy

6 To consider

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/gypsy-roma-and-traveller-pupils-supporting-access-to-education>
- Would the school benefit from a specific staff member who makes links with families and explains the process in order to support them?
- Who will be responsible for knowing which school the children are due to attend and chasing any unexplained absences?
- Would the school benefit from doing work around being an inclusive community?

3 The Law

The Education Act 1996 and the Education (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make statutory provision for all of these groups. This includes specific codes around travelling for work and attending a subsidiary school during this time.

4 Codes - T Code

On days when a pupil from a GRT family is known to be out of the area for work purposes and is not in educational provision, schools can use the T code. Parents should make sure they let the school know in advance when they are going to be travelling and when they expect to return. This enables the child's attendance and absence to be recorded accurately.

The term 'travelling' means travelling as part of the parents' trade or business. It does not mean travelling as part of a holiday. The T code can only be used if the child is travelling for work purposes with their parents, not with any other relatives.

The children need to attend a minimum of 200 school sessions and the school can stipulate how this can be broken up as part of their attendance policy.

5 Dual Schools - D Code

The law allows for dual registration. To help ensure continuity of education it is expected that the child(ren) should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling. This allows schools to use the D code. The child remains on the D code until the subsidiary school informs the base school they have left and are off roll, or until they return to the school full time.

GRT Children Attendance

