

## Roma Families in Plymouth

Historically, in July 2000, EAL Service in Plymouth had the first meeting of the Refugee Education Sub-Group. It was becoming apparent that Plymouth, which has taken part in the dispersal programme of Asylum Seekers and Refugees, had accepted families with considerable needs .

From September 2001, Devon Consortium Traveller Education Service has been involved with Asylum Seekers in Plymouth when two Roma Families, one Polish and the other Czech, arrived in Plymouth.

Six schools, three Primary and three Secondary have children from these families on roll.

DCTES has most involvement with Lipson CC where there is support in class for one of the students.

Refugee Week, 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> June 2002, has been celebrated in Plymouth by all the schools that have Refugees or Asylum Seekers on roll. They produced work for an exhibition.

The Polish and Czech Roma boys performed a break-dancing routine at the 'end of week entertainment 'at the Barbican Theatre as well as being part of the entertainment put on at Lipson CC when the Commonwealth Baton came through.

**connexions**

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Within Connexions there are specific areas of expertise, which have been developed. One of these is for working with Travellers pre and post 16. The Connexions PA's discussed common concerns with DCTES and the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer, Peter Blayney, and it was agreed that a good practice guide would be helpful to all working in this field. Working towards this goal has given all involved a clearer understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. Joint working and mutual support has enabled this project to move forward to the draft stage. We hope the publication will be available by the end of the year.

Multi-agency working is invaluable to providing total and joined up solutions in supporting young Travellers taking the first steps towards their working careers.

 **TRAVELLER  
HEALTH MATTERS**

### **'TRAVELLER HEALTH MATTERS' MOVES FORWARD**

The report from the conference, jointly organised by DCTES and the North and East Devon Health Authority is now out. Launched at the Health Forum, the report was received with interest and a commitment to work to implement the recommendations. A new interagency Traveller Forum will meet in June to guide developments. Copies of the report are available free – contact the DCTES office on 01392 386811 or email [maxford@devon.gov.uk](mailto:maxford@devon.gov.uk)



# CONGRATULATIONS

More achievements by Traveller children this year! Congratulations to all including –

- Teresa Pepper and Joeboy Hughes for passing their driving tests
- The group of parents and children in Plymouth who took and passed their Food Hygiene Certificate together (Monty Howell Snr, Monty Jnr, Jean & Thomas Kefford Snr, Thomas Jnr and Ella Devey)
- Rohan Foster (Great Torrington CC) 100 % Attendance
- Monty Howell for gaining Bronze ASDAN Award



Welcome new in the Watts Road Building  
are the neighbours from EAL.

## ETHNIC MONITORING

Two categories of Travellers – those with ethnic identities recognised and protected in law – have been added to the list for the school PLASC return for January 2003.

The groups are Gypsy/Roma and Traveller of Irish heritage. The Gypsy/Roma category includes all Gypsy Travellers and also Roma families from Eastern Europe, some of whom have come to this country as refugees or asylum seekers. Parental consent is necessary for identification as for all groups. All the children in these ethnic groups should be included in the returns, whether or not they are still travelling, living on permanent sites or settled in housing.

DCTES staff will support schools in discussing this monitoring with parents if asked. Children from Fairground, Circus or New Traveller families do not have ethnic minority status, but the DCTES still has the remit to monitor their attendance and achievements along with the other Traveller groups.

## CHILDREN'S FUND PROJECT

Devon's English as an Additional Language Service and the DCTES are jointly involved with other partners in a project within the Children's Fund.

The project is being co-ordinated by DEREK and planning is well underway to appoint new development workers, who will work with Black, Minority Ethnic and Traveller communities.

To begin with a programme development manager will refine the strategic ideas and activities of the project. We are in the embryonic stage of this exciting project and will keep all interested informed.

If you would like to be kept up to date contact either service at Redworth House.

## **RACE EQUALITY POLICIES (DEVON)**

All schools should now have their race equality policy in place. DCTES is working with Bryan Smith, Gillian Feest and other advisers in Devon to support schools in preparing their policies. A series of briefings will be given to academic councils and a day conference held in September. In thinking about your policy please consider whether it covers equality issues – particularly those of access – for Gypsies and Travellers.

## **RACE EQUALITY POLICIES (PLYMOUTH)**

All schools should have or are close to having their Race Equality policy and action plan in place. In Plymouth, two courses have recently been run for schools and a further 80 plus Headteachers and Chairs of Governors have signed up for 2 conferences being held in July. A sample policy and action plan will be available at these half-day conferences where the implications of the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) will be discussed. For further information, contact Christina Smale.

## **CITIZENSHIP & KS3 LITERACY**

The DCTES team is working on new resources for schools.

Resources for Citizenship will be available on our website and on a CD Rom, we hope by the end of the year.

We are collaborating with the Literacy Consultants on a new publication within the folio series. This will contain an introductory section on Gypsy and Traveller groups and an annotated booklist of fiction and non-fiction titles particularly suitable for year 8. The final section will contain a series of extracts from a selection of the texts with accompanying lesson plans.

In reviewing the texts we have enlisted the help of young Traveller readers, who were forthright in their opinions.

The plan is for these new resources to be launched at a training day next autumn/winter, watch out for details

# Devon Consortium

## Traveller Education Service

Serving Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

Newsletter 11

Summer 2002

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## From Where I Stand

I am a member of a Romany Gypsy family and have travelled around the country most of my life. I have therefore attended a lot of schools and never really fitted in always being the 'new girl'. At one school the bullying got so bad that I used to make myself physically sick just to go home early and at the age of eleven I left school completely. I never considered my lack of education as almost everyone I knew had left school at about the same age.

When at the age of eighteen my family decided to settle down I unquestioningly moved with them to Devon to live on a field they owned. At twenty I got a job in a local factory and whilst working there I realised that I no longer had a phobia of socialising with non-gypsies something that I had carried with me from my school days, I found that when I told them I was a Gypsy they didn't make an issue of it. I soon got a job in an office doing work I enjoyed but my knowledge of computers was somewhat lacking. So I started attending evening classes on computers and mathematics with the intention of gaining a GCSE and I found that I actually enjoyed learning so much that after I finished my computer course I enrolled on an English course.

At almost 23 years old as I look into the future I hope that within the next two years I shall have my English and Maths GCSEs and who knows university is even a possibility as almost anything is possible if you put your mind to it. But who's to say what any of us might want in two or three years time as we can only see things from where we stand now.

**Louise Broadway**

## Full Circle

My name is Rebecca Purdy, I have lived in Bovey Tracey all of my life, and attended the school I now work at. I come from a traditional Gypsy family background and although I have never travelled regularly I have kept in touch with the tradition. I started work at Bovey Tracey School, in June of last year, as an LSA for the Travelling children, and I have found my job both interesting and rewarding working with families from my culture who are still travelling is fascinating to me and gives me great pleasure.

## THE RIDE update

### 'WHERE WE ARE NOW'

As you know we have moved on to our site. It was not completely finished when we pulled on. At that time we were waiting for a grant to start Phase 2 to come through from the government. We have since received the Grant and hope that work will start to complete our amenity blocks and landscaping by the end of July. Hopefully the work will be finished before Christmas.

Sue Damella, from the Urban Village Project is also hoping to make a little play area for the children in a secluded spot at the back of the site.

Since settling on the new site, I am doing voluntary work with B.E.M Cop (Black & Ethnic Minority Cooperative, Plymouth) and also attend Anti-Racism Task Force meetings.

**Susan Watson**

# GOODBYE & THANK YOU

I can still hardly believe that I will be leaving my job as Head of the Devon Consortium Traveller Education Service at the end of this term. It seems a long time since I was working alone out of the back of my car behind a waste disposal site in Plymouth – 1979 in fact !

Some of you reading this have been my colleagues and support for all that time and have seen, with me, the Traveller Education Service evolve and grow into the brilliant team of people it is today ! So though I'm moving on I know that the service is left in safe hands for the future.

For me it's time for a change, but there are many many people I will be sad to leave behind. I will miss families and children and colleagues all over Devon, in Plymouth and in Torbay who have made my life enjoyable and interesting, challenged me and taught me so much. I cannot begin to name names.

Together we have worked hard to give equal opportunities to Gypsy and Traveller children and we have achieved a great deal – but still nearly 100 children came into this area last year and had no chance to get into school because there was no place for them to stay. There is still along way to go and much to do.

I am going across the world to Ethiopia on a VSO placement and will be working as an adviser for distance learning. So I will probably still need help and support from colleagues here ! One way or another I hope to be able to stay in touch with many of the people who have made my time in the Westcountry so memorable.

My thanks and good wishes to all.

**Cathy Kiddle  
Head of Service**

## OFSTEDS

We have just had to prepare documentation for the second OFSTED of Plymouth LEA – so we know just how time consuming it can be.

Let us help with the documentation for your school. If you have Traveller children on roll do let us know quickly when you have news of your next OFSTED. We are there to support you.

## KEEP CHECKING

[www.devon.gov.uk/eal/traveller](http://www.devon.gov.uk/eal/traveller)

There are often updates and new additions. For instance since Easter the booklet for Headteachers and School Administrators has been updated. Also there is a new version of the good practice leaflet for Teaching Assistants.

More photographs – the latest on fairground art – are being added from our extensive archive. Download them for curriculum use.

Let us know if there are particular photo-topics you would like to see there.

The main service resource base is in the Watts Road Building in Plymouth. There are smaller reference collections in the Literacy centre in Exeter and the professional centre in Torbay, mainly of books suitable for use in the primary curriculum.

The North Devon Professional centre in Barnstaple holds a collection of the titles produced by the DCTES.

Small loan collections are available to any school on request.

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**For more information please contact:**

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New Website: [www.devon.gov.uk/eal/traveller](http://www.devon.gov.uk/eal/traveller)