

Part of item 5
Schools Forum
10 November 2017

Surrey's REMA Gypsy Roma Traveller Service

National Context

- Race Disparity Audit (published by the government 10/10/2017) states Gypsy Roma Traveller population is nationally the most disadvantaged educationally of all the ethnic minority groups. 'Pupils from Gypsy and Roma, or Irish Traveller background had the lowest attainment and progress, and were least likely to stay in education after the age of 16.' (2.10).

Surrey Context

- Surrey has one of the largest GRT populations in the UK.
- Improving the outcomes for this community has been recognised as a key priority for Surrey in its Brighter Futures Strategy.
- Over the last year, there has been increased mobility of GRT population both into Surrey and within Surrey. Changes in planning legislation and the selling-off of GRT sites across the country has led to a national increase in GRT mobility and a sharp rise locally in unauthorised encampments. High mobility creates additional challenges for the school community to meet the needs of pupils with additional literacy and learning needs due to their mobility.
- A strong specialist service offer is required to maintain GRT school placements and address these additional needs.

Surrey's REMA GRT service

- The REMA GRT team has unique links to the GRT community within their home environment, with significant work (50%) being carried out on GRT Sites as well as in schools. It is the only Surrey service which offers support to schools in understanding the legal framework around this population, and which addresses issues of their attendance, behaviour, progress and achievement, home-school relations, and teacher training.
- The impact of Surrey's GRT service can be seen in the small but significant improvement in GRT pupil outcomes shown in local data (e.g. Increasing number of GRT children accessing early years education. 11% increase in number of secondary transfers 2014-16, plus case studies showing impact on individual pupil achievement, against the national trend.
- Since the withdrawal of the Education Support Grant, REMA GRT service has been funded by transition funding (one year only) and primary school de-delegation.
- REMA's network training events for teachers new to working with GRT pupils have been very popular and successfully traded, but the high mobility of this group and the kinds of challenge it presents is not

conducive to individual school trading. Surrey's GRT service would not be financially viable if dependent on a fully traded model.

- Without the support of a dedicated team, there is a strong risk that the outcomes for one of Surrey's most vulnerable groups will decline in line with the findings of the national Race Disparity Audit.