

**(Draft) Minutes of the Taskforce on Traveller Education
Adelaide House, Belfast, Tuesday 30th November 2010**

1) In Attendance:

1.1	Robbie McVeigh	(Chairperson)
	Dorothy Angus	(DE)
	Jim Mulkerrins	(DES)
	Shirley Gillespie	(Early Years)
	Derek Hanway	(An Munia Tober)
	Briega Rainey	(DEL)
	Ken Fraser	(OFMdFM)
	Philomena McDermott	(ELBs)
	Gerry Macdonald	(An Tearmann)
	Kieran Shields	(SELB)
	Paula Madden	(Irish Traveller Movement)
	Gerry Devlin	(GTCNI)
	Deirdre McAliskey	(NIHRC)
	Bob Collins	(ECNI)
	Gerry Murphy	(St Mary's PS)
	Caroline Evans	(DE)
	John McGoran	(DE Secretariat)
	Victoria Goodfellow	(DE – Secretary)
	Debby Nelson	(DE Secretariat)

2) Apologies:

2.1	Catherine Joyce	(Chairperson)
	Una Magee	(Barnardo's)
	Rose Marie Maughan	(Irish Traveller Movement)
	Kathleen O'Kane	(Early Years)
	John McCavana	(ETI)
	Clare Mangan	(ESAIT)
	Samantha Cummings	(Craigavon Traveller Support Group)
	Aodhan Macsheafraidh	(CnaG)
	Colette Murray	(Pavee Point)
	Annie McDonagh	(Traveller Representative)
	Kathleen Sheridan	(Traveller Representative)
	Barbara Fitzgerald	(Traveller Representative)
	Barbara Purcell	(Traveller Representative)
	Ann Donahue	(Traveller Representative)
	Jim Begley	(Youth Justice Agency)
	Jacquie Reid	(NITC)
	Malachy Crudden	(CCMS)
	Mollie Simpson	(NICCY)
	Colin Jack	(OFMDFM)
	Mairead McCafferty	(NITICU/NASUWT)
	Fidelma McCoy	(Armagh Travellers Support Group)
	Margaret Boyle	(Derry Travellers Support Group)
	Stephen Jackson	(DEL)
	Pamela Larmour	(CCEA)
	Kathryn Stevenson	(Children's Law Centre)

3) Welcome, minutes from previous meetings and matters arising

- 3.1** The Chair welcomed everyone and asked if the minutes from the previous meeting (21st June 2010) could be agreed.
- 3.2** Changes to the previous minutes were discussed:
- Philomena McDermott attends Taskforce on behalf of all Education and Library Boards not just the WELB
- 3.3** Minutes were agreed.
- 3.4** DE explained that The Education of Children and Young People from the Traveller Community School Circular was issued to all schools in August 2010. A copy was included in the meeting papers for information.
- 3.5** It was brought to everyone's attention that this week, beginning from the launch on Monday 29th November 2010, is Traveller Focus Week. Events will be held across the north and the south of Ireland. A programme of events is available on the Equality Commission's Website.

Action: DE to make changes to previous minutes from 21st June 2010.

4) Draft Report of the Chairs of the Taskforce

- 4.1** Robbie McVeigh gave a presentation (attached at Annex A) regarding the draft report which had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. The chair asked for all comments and guidance that members may have regarding the draft report.
- 4.2** The draft report was discussed and the following key points were made:
- Lack of Traveller Representatives and Traveller Support Groups Representation at the meeting to give their views.
 - The paper will need to be gone through line by line for all members to be able to commit to the report.
 - Several of the sub-groups did consult with Traveller children.
 - The term institutional racism is not appropriate.
 - Structure for the report should have been agreed previously as report should be shorter, sharper and with more focus.
 - Work of the Sub-Groups should be crucial to the report..
 - Timeframe needs to be set and as soon as possible as the final report needs to be completed in Minister's time in Office but needs to have a shelf life which extends beyond the current Minister. Report should be completed for the end of March 2011. With 'What is the position now?', 'What needs to be achieved?' and 'How do we go about it?'

- Information on the current dedicated funding and provision for Traveller education in the north of Ireland needs to be included.
- Focus of the Report should be 'A New Start' and needs to be focused on improving practice and outcomes for Traveller Children. Need to create a report that challenges the system.
- More focus needed on the six issues and a set of key principles should be agreed and identified in the report.
- Clear action points needed and Stats should be included in the Report.
- Good to highlight background but report lacks recommendations and practical actions.
- There is a substantial imbalance in the critical analysis.
- More key papers need to be reflected such as the ETI Report.
- The legislative context doesn't feature eg UNCRC and the Human Rights Act.
- DE's financial position needs to be considered when completing the report (However, DE will not know their budget until the new financial year). DE keen to move the work forward.
- A small sub-group should look at the report to develop it further for Taskforce consideration.
- NGO and Statutory sectors should work together for the sake of Traveller Children and Health needs to be on any implementation partnership.

4.3 It was agreed that the joint chairs should re-draft the report within two weeks with comments and suggestions welcomed from all members.

4.4 Bob Collins offered to be part of a small group of Taskforce members that will look at the report. Bob will be available from the 16th December 2010.

4.5 Once the report has been redrafted it will be circulated to all members before the next Taskforce meeting which will be held in January 2011.

- Actions:**
- **Joint Chairs to re-draft report by 14th December 2010**
 - **all members to send in any comments, factual corrections or suggestions regarding the report to DE by 8th December 2010**
 - **DE to redraft the current context section of the report**
 - **DE to analyse the six sub-group reports**
 - **DE to ask for volunteers for a small sub-group of Taskforce members to work on the report**

The next meeting of the Taskforce will take place in January 2011. Details will be issued to all members at a later date.

Taskforce on Traveller Education

Draft Report and Action Plan

Taskforce TOR

- 1. to review the educational needs of Traveller children and the current delivery of services;
- 2. to consider best practice models;
- 3. to actively consult with members of the Traveller community in relation to the work of the Taskforce;
- 4. to make recommendations to improve educational access, attainment and outcomes for Traveller children in pre-school, primary, post-primary and youth provision;
- 5. to assist the Department to develop an agreed action plan for both the statutory and non-statutory sector to see how together improved educational outcomes can be achieved by all Traveller children;
- 6. to monitor the action plan over a two year period on a six monthly basis;
- 7. to inform the National Traveller Monitoring and Advisory Committee in the south of Ireland; and
- 8. to ensure that recommendations for improvements are underpinned by the Convention on the Rights of the child(1) (UNCRC) and other relevant equality and human rights legislation

Review current delivery of services

- DE 'current provision' document is template for annual review
- DE 'a total of over £1 million is provided annually by the Department of Education as additional funding for the education of Traveller children in the north of Ireland'.
- Where is the added value?

'Irish Model'

- Developed Traveller-specific analysis
- Developed Traveller-specific provision
- Statutory/TSM partnership well-established
- Traveller Education Strategy in place

'British Model'

6.34 "Institutional Racism" defined:

- consists of the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.
- Racism defines educational experience of many minority ethnic students
- Developed multicultural and anti-racist approach to education – including Irish Travellers as part of 'G/R/T'

Six core issues/themes

- Access
- Attendance
- Integration/segregation
- Evaluation
- Partnership
- Resourcing

- *How to integrate good work of subgroups?*

Action Plan

1. A 'New Start' for Traveller Children and Young People in Education
 - **Action Plan: High Profile Launch of Taskforce Report by Minister signalling this 'new start'.**
2. A New 'Forum on Traveller Education'
 - **Action Plan: New Forum established within three months of Taskforce Launch.**
3. New relationships with DE and ESA
 - **Action Plan: New Forum to work to existing 'shadow' ESA structures.**
4. Capacity Building on working with the statutory sector for TSM in the north
 - **Action Plan: Initiative to be resourced and implemented within three months of Taskforce launch.**
5. Traveller-specific Home/School/Community liaison
 - **Action Plan: Further discussion needed – pilot already in place?**
6. Implementation
 - **Action Plan: Established with launch of Taskforce report.**