# School experiences of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children:

# An exploration of Psychological Sense of Community

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#### Declaration

This thesis is being submitted for the award of Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology. I declare that it is my own work and does not include material that is the work of others without acknowledgement, that I have consulted all materials cited, and I have not submitted this assignment for any other academic award.

#### Overarching Abstract

This thesis explores school experiences of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children and is comprised of three chapters: a systematic literature review, a bridging document, and an empirical research project.

The systematic literature review explores GRT children's experiences of school inclusion. An interpretive qualitative synthesis approach, meta-ethnography, was adopted to analyse five recent papers. Findings suggest commonalities in school experiences of prejudice and the perceived purposelessness of education. Experiences of relationships with adults, social integration and cultural appreciation varied. These five constructs offer a starting point for understanding barriers to participation and experiences that support social inclusion in schools for GRT children.

The bridging document aims to link the meta-ethnography and the empirical research project. This chapter discusses the rationale for the thesis, including underpinning ontological and epistemological assumptions and the implications for the chosen methodology. Consideration is also given to ethics, quality and rigour during the research project.

The empirical report explores GRT children's experiences of school using the theoretical lens of Psychological Sense of Community. A qualitative approach was adopted. Six individual semistructured interviews were transcribed and analysed using Thematic Analysis. Psychological Sense of Community is postulated to involve four elements and these were used as a deductive framework, whilst themes were constructed inductively from the data itself. Findings suggest specific, cultural factors which impact on the experience of Psychological Sense of Community for GRT children. Many appear to experience a sense of belonging to a sub-community of GRT children within the wider school community. It is concluded that Educational Psychologists may find Psychological Sense of Community helpful in exploring the cultural nuances involved in promoting inclusive practices for GRT children in schools.

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# Chapter 1: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children's Experiences of School Inclusion

#### Abstract

**Aims:** This systematic literature review aims to explore Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children's experiences of school inclusion, as a first step in hearing the lived experiences that are documented in existing literature.

**Rationale:** GRT children are consistently identified as the lowest performing ethnic group at all stages of education, and the most at-risk ethnic group for rates of school absence and exclusion. Despite a number of legislative and policy initiatives, barriers to GRT children's participation in education persist.

*Method:* A systematic search of the current literature was conducted and searches were refined, until five were selected to be included in the analysis. A meta-ethnographic approach was applied to synthesise and re-interpret the five papers, following Noblit and Hare's (1988) seven step process.

**Findings:** Findings suggested five new constructs which are used here to offer a new interpretation of GRT children's experiences of school inclusion. These broadly related to their experiences of: relationships with adults, social integration, prejudice, purposeless education, and cultural appreciation.

*Limitations:* As a meta-ethnography is an interpretation of an interpretation, it should be acknowledged that my own personal values, assumptions and experiences will have impacted on the synthesis and the new interpretations reached.

**Conclusions:** It is concluded that Educational Psychologists can utilise the five new constructs as a framework in practice, as a starting point for understanding barriers to participation and experiences that support social inclusion in schools for GRT children.

#### 1.1 Introduction

The aim of this meta-ethnography is to synthesise the literature and offer a new interpretation of the inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children in schools, based on their lived experiences. In this introduction, terminology is firstly explored, as defining the term GRT is problematic given the heterogeneity of this ethnic group. The examination of a recent Government publication of outcomes for GRT children in education then sets the scene for the Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Wider literature is then considered which argues the importance of considering inclusion for GRT children in schools. This provides a rationale for the key question considered for the meta-ethnography.

#### 1.1.1 Terminology

The term 'GRT' constitutes a range of groups with different histories, including: Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers, Scottish Gypsies/Travellers and Welsh Gyspies/Travellers (House of Commons, 2017). The accession of 'A2 countries' such as Bulgaria and Romania into the European Union also led to an increase in Romanian Roma groups arriving in the UK; as such, this group makes up the majority of the GRT community in some parts (Foster & Norton, 2012).

Defining the term GRT is problematic. Whilst there are many cultural priorities in the groups, such as high regard for the family unit, defined gender roles, and a nomadic lifestyle, there are distinctive practices within each group (Hamilton, 2018b). In using the umbrella term 'GRT' I do not intend to suggest a homogenous or distinct group. It is recognised that the groups encompassed by this term are diverse throughout the UK (Bhopal & Myers, 2009) and this generic category is used to include all who identify themselves with any of these groups. It is hoped that all individuals find this terminology acceptable.

#### 1.1.2 The current education climate

In 2017, the Government conducted the Race Disparity Audit (Cabinet Office, 2017). The espoused philosophy behind the audit claimed to tackle "burning injustices" (p. 1) that exist amongst ethnicities in the UK. By collecting data, the audit intended to shine "a light on how people of different ethnicities are treated across public services" (p. 4), including education and employment.

The data-driven approach highlighted strikingly poor outcomes for GRT children across all aspects of education. Throughout their schooling, GRT children were shown to have the lowest attainment and progress of all ethnic groups. Data demonstrated this group as having the poorest school attendance, as well as being the most likely to be excluded from school compared to other ethnic groups. GRT children were also the least likely to stay in education, employment or training; the lowest rate of any ethnic group.

This data does not differ much from previous Government reports before it (Department for Education, 2010; Department for Education and Skills, 2006). Despite a number of Government initiatives over the last decade to improve outcomes for GRT children in schools, spanning over a decade (Department for Education, 2010, 2014; Department for

Education and Skills, 2003a, 2005), the findings from the Race Disparity Audit demonstrated

#### 1.1.3 'Vulnerability' and Social Justice

that there has been little change.

The outcomes for GRT children from the Race Disparity Audit appear to suggest that this group is particularly vulnerable in the education system; the 'vulnerability' of GRT children is often commented upon in the literature (Bhopal & Myers, 2016; D'Arcy, 2014; Hamilton, 2018a, 2018b; Myers, 2018; Smith, 2017). Within the wider literature on research with vulnerable groups, Liamputtong (2007) considered the term 'vulnerable' as difficult to define. As a socially constructed concept it is used interchangeably with terms such as the 'hard-to-reach' and 'hidden populations', and may refer to groups such as children, the elderly, immigrants and ethnic communities. Despite the variation amongst these groups, Liamputtong argued that they are "the silent, the hidden, the deviant, the tabooed, the marginalised" (p. 4) who often lack the opportunity to have their voices heard. Within this review, 'vulnerability' will be considered to result from the ways in which this group is positioned within society (Liamputtong, 2007), as, despite the presence of GRT communities since records began, they are still regarded as 'outsiders' and continue to be marginalised (Jordan, 2001).

Within its discourse on social justice, the Coalition Government (2010-2015) highlighted that educational disadvantage can be exacerbated by factors such as ethnicity (HM Government, 2012). For the purpose of this project, social justice is conceptualised as "full and equal participation of all groups in society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs" (Schulze, Winter, Woods, & Tyldesley, 2017, p. 57). Social justice is a nuanced concept, and while

some thinkers emphasise distributive justice, which focuses on the fair distribution of resources and eliminating unjustified disparities, others consider that there are further aspects to social justice (Gewirtz, 1998; Young, 1990). Fraser (2001) considered the *recognition* of the distinctive perspectives of ethnic minorities. In aligning recognition with ethics, she argued that what should be recognised is "the status of group members as full partners in social interaction" (p. 24), with the aim of "reciprocal recognition and status equality" (p. 24). Fraser claimed, therefore, that misrecognition occurs when there is an "institutionalised pattern of cultural value that constitutes some categories of social actors as normative and others as deficient or inferior" (p. 25).

With particular relevance to ethnic groups, Prilleltensky (2013) defined 'procedural justice' as the concept of having a voice, and participating in processes and decisions that affect our lives, recognising the importance of this for fair treatment of minorities and ethnic groups. Promoting procedural justice for GRT children in the education system is therefore important, given their marginalised position in wider society.

#### 1.1.4 Contributing Factors

In the attempt to gain a better understanding of the reported poor educational outcomes for GRT children, the literature has highlighted a number of barriers created by the current education system. Common family practices of the GRT community include mobile employment, obligations to and demands of a dispersed family, and a focus on the initiation of children into a family business. These often impact on capacity for GRT children to attend school, whilst also fulfilling these cultural practices (Deuchar & Bhopal, 2013; Foster & Norton, 2012; Myers, McGhee, & Bhopal, 2010). Although some GRT families are less transient and are now settled in houses or on sites, nomadism and periodic travel continues to be valued (Levinson, 2015). Sustaining this particular cultural practice can be challenging, with a schooling system that presumes a settled community and therefore only offers the option of a sedentary education (Cudworth, 2008; Myers, 2018).

Despite the implementation of anti-bullying policies and recognition of their ethnic status, researchers frequently highlight the issues of racism and discrimination that GRT children are subject to when they do attend school (Bhopal & Myers, 2016; Derrington, 2005, 2007; Deuchar & Bhopal, 2013; Jordan, 2001). As a result of poor school experiences related to racism and discrimination, GRT children often self-exclude from education (House of Commons, 2017; Myers et al., 2010). The racism they experience is often overlooked by

schools; it appears there is a reduced social stigma to racist attitudes against this ethnic group in comparison to others (Bhopal, 2011; Foster & Norton, 2012). Stereotypes and cultural assumptions held by schools may therefore exacerbate the poor achievement of GRT children and non-inclusive practices of school settings (D'Arcy, 2017).

#### 1.1.5 The inclusion of GRT children in schools

The somewhat bleak picture that is painted for GRT children in the current educational climate then leads to the question of their experiences of inclusion in schools. A route to improving educational outcomes for GRT children may be through improving their inclusion in education.

Inclusion is often conceptualised as consideration of the equal entitlement of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), regarding children with SEN being educated in mainstream schools or special schools (Gibb, Tunbridge, Chua & Frederickson, 2007; Norwich, 2010; Norwich & Eaton, 2015). Therefore, such a conceptualisation may be somewhat unhelpful when considering inclusion for GRT children who may or may not fall into the 'SEN' category. As an alternative, viewing inclusion as a consideration of the "barriers to learning and participation" (Booth & Ainscow, 2002, p. 4), may be more helpful. This resolves the notion that inclusion only refers to the consideration of children with SEN, by encompassing wider difficulties that may be experienced through factors such as ethnicity and culture (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). As commented by Booth and Ainscow (2002): "Making schools more inclusive may involve people in a painful process of challenging their own discriminatory practices and attitudes" (p. 7).

#### 1.1.6 Rationale for literature review

Thus far, the literature reporting the poor educational outcomes for GRT children has been considered, with further exploration of contributing factors that may be further exacerbated by GRT children's 'othered' position in society. A route to improving educational outcomes for GRT children may be through improving their inclusion in education, by exploring the barriers to learning and participation that are experienced in schools. Whilst the Race Disparity Audit focused on gathering numerical data about GRT children, their rich, lived experiences were somewhat ignored. This has motivated me to engage with existing literature as a starting point for hearing the voices of GRT children, with particular interest in their experiences of school inclusion. The British Psychological Society stated in their 2017

Practice Guidelines: "Promoting social inclusion is a broader task than promoting equality and tackling discrimination and stigma. Psychologists are encouraged to: recognize that they have a professional duty to actively promote equality and opportunity; challenge social conditions...that contribute to social exclusion and stigmatization" (p. 36). It is hoped that by bringing together recent studies that explore GRT children's experiences of inclusion in school, this will provide a richer picture of the current educational landscape for GRT children in the UK and help to inform the practice of EPs.

#### 1.2 Method

Given the nature of exploring the lived experiences of GRT children being key to the research synthesis, it was decided that the review would focus on qualitative research. Rigorous synthesising of qualitative studies can "increase their importance and relevance in the evidence base" (France et al., 2015, p. 2). Meta-ethnography, developed by Noblit and Hare (1988), is an interpretive qualitative synthesis approach, which allows the researcher to reinterpret the conceptual data in a number of studies, as opposed to simply aggregating and summarising their findings (Atkins et al., 2008; France et al., 2014). With relevance to the focus of this review, it was hoped that adopting the meta-ethnography approach would allow for the "critical examination of multiple accounts of a situation" (Noblit & Hare, 1988, p. 13); in this case, the experiences of school inclusion for GRT children.

The seven stages of meta-ethnography as defined by Noblit and Hare (1988) are used hereafter as an organisational heuristic.

#### 1.2.1 Phase 1: Getting Started

In the original method, Noblit and Hare (1988) defined this stage as "identifying an intellectual interest that qualitative research might inform" (p. 26), where the focus is on "a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (p. 27). Considering the literature described in the introduction and the rationale for this synthesis, the research question to be explored was: What are GRT children's lived experiences of school inclusion?

#### 1.2.2 Phase 2: Deciding what is relevant to the initial interest

After establishing the focus of the synthesis, relevant studies were sought to be included. Noblit and Hare (1988) suggested that a meta-ethnography can be derived from any given number of studies. A systematic search was carried out, as noted by Campbell et al. (2011), to "locate the maximum amount of primary research in the most efficient way before undertaking further assessment of the material" (p. 27).

The search was carried out between August and October 2017 using the following databases: British Education Index, ERIC, PsychInfo and Scopus. The final search string was as follows: Gypsy OR Roma OR Traveller AND (education) AND (inclusion). All terms were 'exploded' to ensure that search results included all related and narrower terms of keywords.

Although the initial search produced over 800 results, a large number of results were immediately excluded based on their title as they had no relevance to GRT children or education. The search results were refined using a process of 'berrypicking' (Bates, 1989) using the inclusion criteria listed below:

- Related to GRT children's experience of school inclusion, in order to answer the research question
- Empirical design and qualitative methodology, in order to be appropriate for metaethnography
- Conducted in the UK, as this review will inform UK based empirical research
- Studies with papers generating data from GRT children
- Studies that involved GRT children who had attended or were attending school as, as
   their insights were crucial to ascertaining a better understanding of lived experiences
- Studies that were published in the past 10 years

Employing the inclusion criteria, 33 papers were read in full. With reference to Light's (1980) 'judgement calls', this was a key decision point in deciding which studies should be included, until the number of papers were steadily refined to the final five selected for the synthesis (see Figure 1).

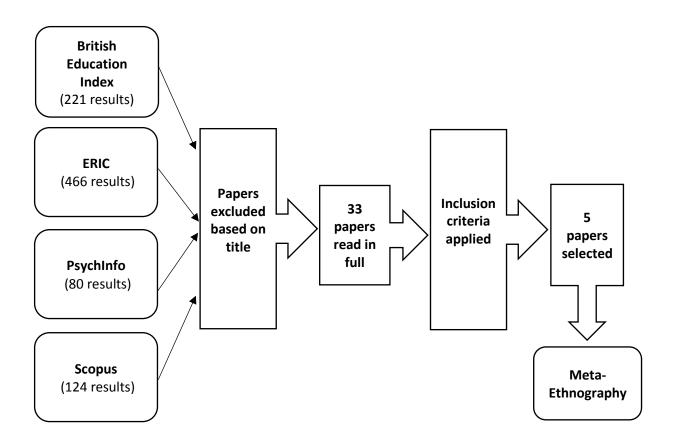


Figure 1: Flow chart representation of systematic search

It has been suggested that, when conducting a synthesis of qualitative research, one should appraise the quality of the papers chosen; for example, by using the quality appraisal checklist developed by Walsh and Downe (2006). They acknowledge, however, that "a tension exists regarding the extent to which a researcher should search out and establish the state of knowledge about the topic being explored before undertaking the primary data collection analysis" (p. 116). Barbour (2001) suggested, that using such checklists can be "overly prescriptive", reducing research to "a list of technical procedures" (p. 1117). Quality appraisal checklists are further problematic, given that conceptualisations of 'good quality' vary widely (Sandelowski, Docherty, & Emden, 1998). Furthermore, Sandelowski et al. (1998) contended that, if adopting a checklist approach, synthesists would have to adopt quality criteria that was "so general that they can be applied to any qualitative study, arguably an impossible task given the range of qualitative research practices" (p. 368). I therefore adopt a stance of "appreciation of the inherent complexities and ambiguities" (Yardley, 2000, p. 224) in appraising qualitative research, appreciating each study for their unique contribution to the synthesis.

#### 1.2.3 Phases 3 & 4: Reading the Studies & Determining how the studies are related

As described by Noblit and Hare, this stage involved repeated reading of the studies, noting the themes and concepts that arose in each. Following Britten et al.'s (2002) worked example, contextual information about each study's sample, setting and methodology were also noted as these details would provide context for interpretations. These are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Contextual Information of papers selected for meta-ethnography

Study	Sample	Setting	Method
Gould (2017)*	GRT children (n=10)	England Secondary School	Semi-structured Interviews, Focus Groups
Levinson (2015)	GRT children (n=25)	England Traveller Site	Semi-structured Interviews, Focus Groups
Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	GRT children (n=63)	Northern Ireland Primary/Secondary School	Semi-structured Interviews
Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	GRT children (n=27)	Scotland & England Primary School	Group Interviews
Myers & Bhopal (2009)	GRT children (n unknown)	UK Secondary School	Semi-structured Interviews

<sup>\*</sup>Gould's (2017) published study was a summary of the findings from a thesis document, authored under the maiden name, Boot. As original data in the published paper was limited, the thesis document, Boot (2011) was therefore used to source original data.

After having noted all of the concepts in each of the five studies individually, commonalities between the concepts were identified and developed into over-arching themes of data presented across the five studies as the process progressed (Atkins et al., 2008; Evans & Hurrell, 2016).

For pragmatic reasons, it was decided that only concepts that arose in at least two of the studies were taken forward as themes.

#### 1.3 Findings

#### 1.3.1 Phases 5 & 6: Translating the studies into one another & synthesising translations

Themes derived from Phase 4 represented the first stage of analysis of the data generated from the studies. The translation of themes from the lists of concepts from each paper proved difficult for a number of reasons. Firstly, the studies all had a slightly different focus, therefore different aspects of their data had been prioritised. For example Gould's (2017) study had a particular focus on identifying 'good practice' whilst, in contrast, Bloomer, Hamilton, and Potter (2014) focused on 'challenges and barriers'. The first attempt at translation saw 14 themes that were specific and narrow in their focus; this felt uncomfortable and did not appear to achieve a 'translation' in the sense that many themes encompassed concepts derived from only two papers. Barbour (2001) raised the issue of qualitative researchers aiming to "produce an artificially neat and tidy account that is descriptive rather than analytical and which militates against formulating in-depth analyses" (p. 1116). A decision was therefore made to have broader themes, which encompassed more concepts from the studies, with acknowledgement that the synthesis was therefore likely to involve multiple translations. This would, however, allow for a deeper level of analysis. Eleven themes were identified from analysis of the concepts generated, and are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: List of themes taken forward for synthesis

List of Themes
Support from staff
Relationships with teachers
GRT children stick together
Relationships with non-GRT peers
Discrimination due to ethnicity
Lack of response to racism
Curriculum not of value
Aspirations unsupported
Others learning about culture
Tolerance of nomadism
School world dissonant from GRT culture

Synthesising the studies then involved examining the concepts within each theme and deciding if they were similar in meaning (reciprocal translation), if they contradicted each other (refutational translation), or whether they identified different aspects of the topic (line of argument) (Noblit & Hare, 1988). This informed the type of translation that would then be carried out. From examining the concepts within the themes, seven themes had concepts which were similar and overlapping in meaning, whilst four themes had concepts which contradicted each other. It therefore became apparent that there were two types of synthesis appropriate: reciprocal and refutational.

The synthesis was achieved by using two large grids for each translation, demonstrating how each theme was expressed across the papers. The table was primarily populated with Schutz's (1962) notion of first-order constructs: direct quotes from the participants involved in the study which illustrate their personal experiences. Themes that formed a reciprocal translation are demonstrated in Table 3, whilst themes that formed a refutational translation are expressed in Table 4.

As noted by France et al. (2015), the overall aim of a meta-ethnography is to reach new interpretations with at least three levels of interpretations expressed. Where first-order constructs or direct quotes from participants may not be available, Schutz (1962) referred to 'second order constructs'; the study's researcher's interpretation of what participants originally said during data collection. The third level of interpretation is reached as a result of the meta-ethnography, known as 'third order constructs', resulting from new interpretations following the synthesis (Britten et al., 2002). Therefore, following the translation and synthesis of the studies, themes were further compared with each other to reach new interpretations and understandings. These are expressed in Table 5.

Table 3: Reciprocal themes

	Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
Support from staff	GRT pupils also identified the importance of having particular members of staff with who they could discuss their work.  "(GRT TA) and (HT) help me if I'm behind, they help me to catch up on any work."  "(Teachers) help me catch up and explain any work that I don't understand."	Perhaps most significant has been the utilization of a Teacher Assistant/GRT liaison officer, who has developed stable and warm relationships with the children and their families. The sense of trust engendered by the presence of this single person seems to be of central importance.	One 10-year-old girl in the BELB area spoke about receiving extra support for Numeracy and Literacy and was "much better at it now".		
GRT children stick together	Both pupil focus groups made several references to the natural group formation. They identified being together at break times, having peers who supported them at difficult times, and spending time with	In school it seemed evident that, in general, the Gypsy children stuck together.  They remained almost exclusively in friendship groups with other children from their site.			Safety and security were linked to children knowing there were other children from the site attending the school.  The importance of having trusted people around.

	Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
	GRT pupils who have left the GRT site as important.	Some of the Gypsy youngsters expressed regret that there			One reason to 'stick together' was as a protection mechanism.
	"We always regroup and meet up again. We like to be together."	were not more Gypsy children at school. One suggestion was			"I like it more when I know that my friends and my cousins who
	"We try to stick up for each other. We rely on one another for support."	that separate Gypsy classrooms would be a good thing.			live on the site come to school I feel safe and know if anything happens they will look after me. It makes me
	"Seeing all the girls makes me happy because school is the only place that I get to see them as we don't all live on the site anymore."				feel more secure because they understand me and know what I'm about."
Discrimination	Some pupils felt that		Many children	Many of the pupils	Within non-Gypsy
due to ethnicity	having GRT culture made explicit in the school setting highlighted their ethnicity unnecessarily.		perceived that negative treatment by a teacher was as a result of their ethnicity.	admitted that they had encountered racist attitudes from other People.	society GRT groups were seen in a bad light and made to feel they did not belong. Such attitudes were also
	"I don't really want it (GRT ethnicity) shown in school, although we are proud of it. It is easier if it's not		The Traveller children highlighted instances when this bullying was	"People treat me differently by calling me names and saying 'you're stupid' just because I'm a	found within the school.  "Outside people think we're scum, they think we're dirty and think

	Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
	brought up, people tend to laugh about it."		specifically as a result of their ethnic identity.  Children clearly recounted incidents where they experienced racism and were discriminated against in the education system purely on the grounds of being a Traveller.	Traveller—something like 'gypsy' calling you names when they walk past."  "A lot of the other kids do pick on us just because we're Travellers."	we're bad. That's how people see us and some of the teachers and the kids here [in the school] see us like that and don't want us to be like them."
Lack of response to racism			For those who were being treated unfairly by fellow pupils, or indeed teachers, and suffering racist abuse, such as being called derogatory names or being ignored in class, the school experience was less than enjoyable, and there was a view that some schools were not taking appropriate action to overcome such difficulties.	In spite of the distress that the bullying incidents caused the pupils, they clearly felt that teachers did not respond appropriately to it.  "They used to call me 'gypsy' in another schoolno one cared."  "I was getting bullied in my old schoolno one listened to me, 'cos I kept saying to the teacher 'she's	

	Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
				bullying me again' but they said 'go and sit down' and they didn't even listen to me, to what I was saying." I went and told my teacher but she said 'stop being a grass'".	
				"Because we're white a lot of the teachers don't think we have prejudice and so they don't take us seriously when we tell them the other kids have been calling us a pikey. They don't see it as important and most of the time think we started it anyway."	
Curriculum of no value		Some subjects were described as being boring and pointless. Subjects taught at secondary level were seen as being of	The curriculum was not always meeting their needs with many emphasising that they desired to see more		

	Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
		absolutely no value to future life. The youngsters all argued that once they had acquired the basic ability to read and write at primary school, there was no point in staying on any longer.	vocational subjects being offered.  "What use is history or geography to you when you have to bring up a family, it won't put food on the table for you or help?"		
		No opportunities through school were anticipated to pursue vocations that would be of interest (such as tree-surgery and mechanics).			
		"There's nothing to learn from there anyway."			
Aspirations unsupported		There is a conviction that neither schools nor careers agencies will intervene to send them in alternative directions.		Others felt that teachers underestimated their potential and the ambitions that they had beyond engaging in careers in the	

Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
			Travelling community.	
			"See the teachers, they just think that you're going to grow up and be a Traveller but some Travellers will grow up to be footballers, to be famous people, some Travellers grow up and go to drama schools, dancing schools. The teachers—they don't say it but you can tellthey look at you andthey just think that you're going to grow up to be a Traveller and that's it."	
			"Some of the teachers don't think we can be ambitious, because they just see us as Travellers and think that's not going to mean anything to us	

	Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
				when we get older. But we know that we are also ambitious and want to do things that the other kids here want to do."	
School world dissonant from GRT culture		School was compared by several children to prison, with secondary education being noted especially for its dull routine.  There were strong cultural reasons not to attend school. A common complaint was that schools adhered to boundaries between adult and child worlds that did not operate in Gypsy society.	Feelings of being 'trapped' were discussed with the young people who said that the restrictions were not what they were used to within their culture, and although young Traveller females in particular were not allowed to 'roam' the streets as they pleased, there was still a sense of 'freedom'. "You don't go outside, it is like prison." "I really hated it and having to wear the		

Table 4: Refutational themes

	Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
Relationships with teachers	GRT pupils identified the importance of having responsive and trusted school staff who they could talk to about any issues.  "My tutor teacher is alright and I could speak to her."  "We know which teachers to go to."  "Some teachers are alright to talk to."	At school, the view was unanimous that they were loathed by teachers.  Such was the hostility, it was asserted, that even the school bus drivers had sometimes driven past without picking them up.  "No one wants us there."		One grouphad very negative views, which for some were based on their experiences of teachers who they described as 'evil'.  "My teacher is a witch".	The relationship between the school and the GRT community, the sympathetic attitudes of some of the teachers.  "We feel safe when we come here and we feel looked after. Because we know the teachers will look out for us."
Relationships with non GRT peers	GRT pupils identified the importance of having secure friendships in the school setting.  It is interesting to note that GRT pupils referred to seeking social interaction with non-GRT peers as well as GRT peers, suggesting significant	The other pupils were described as being 'OK.'  Some reference was made to amicable relationships with non-Gypsy children.  There seemed a generally calm atmosphere between them and the non-Gypsy children.			Children described instances when they got into fights over name-calling with other children.  "We do get into fights because we stick up for ourselves and don't want people to think they can treat us bad. When we fight people do call us names and that

	Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
	experiences of social inclusion.  "We do have friends who aren't Gypsies too."  "Other children do sometimes help us, we do have friends that aren't Travellers and they are normally alright if we want help with anything."	At school, the view was unanimous that they were loathedby non-Gypsy pupils. This was seen as being deeply-rooted and intractable.  "They're different from us; they hate us and we hate them."			makes us more angry and want to fight more."
Others learning about culture	Some pupils felt that having GRT culture made explicit in the school setting was positive.  "In Design Technology I am making a Gypsy wagon which relates to our community."  "In history we are learning about Hitler and his relationship with Gypsies."			Teachers often reinforced and maintained their status as the marginalised 'other' through an unwillingness to gain knowledge about Travelling culture and share this knowledge in the classroom. "In class, we were all asked to draw a picture of our house and I drew a picture of my wagon and the	

Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
"In school we discuss different races, it's taken really seriously."			teacher told me to rub it out and draw a house."  "You're not even allowed to talk about it. The teachers don't actually want to learn other people about what you're like."	
			"We get circle time and the teacher talks about people who have a different colour of skin and who talk different— individuals and all that, and I always	
			that, and I always think 'why do you not talk about Travellers—why people call them different names n'that?"	
			"I think they should learn other people about travelling because not many people know about it,	

	Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
Tolorance of		Institutional flovibility		and sometimes when you're getting bullied they don't actually know what they're talking about."	
Tolerance of nomadism		Institutional flexibility was evident in the tolerance of frequent absences; for instance, to attend funerals or weddings, or to go to the annual Horse Fairs		Pupils felt that there was a general lack of opportunity for their voices to be heard or to be included in extra-curricular school activities due to teachers' unwillingness to accommodate the Travelling season.  "Most people have been dying to be in the choir and they don't have a lot of tryouts for the Travellers because either the Travellers are always away or when you get called back because you're not there you never get put in the choir."	

Gould (2017)	Levinson (2015)	Bloomer, Hamilton & Potter (2014)	Deuchar & Bhopal (2013)	Myers & Bhopal (2009)
			"When you miss lots of the classes and then you come back, it's like it's harder to fit in and the teachers don't do much to make sure you're included and that can be hard sometimes, leaving and coming back to join in with the others."	

Table 5: Synthesis

Themes	Interpretation	Construction
Support from staff (Reciprocal)	Many GRT children described their experiences of receiving support from school staff to give additional help with school work. In addition, children had valued the support from a designated staff member.	Relationships with Adults There is general consensus that GRT children experience some form of additional support in school with their academic studies. This support is valued and normalised, as GRT
Relationships with teachers (Refutational)	GRT children experienced varied relationships with teachers. Whilst some felt 'safe' and 'looked after', and were able to identify staff whom they could trust, others had negative experiences with teachers which had led to poor relationships.	children recognised that many children in schools receive additional interventions for academic subjects. Whilst academic support appears to be readily offered, pastoral support and relationships appear to be less well developed. GRT children have varied experiences of how well they are received by teachers, leading them to perceive that they are rejected and unwanted by school staff.
GRT children stick together (Reciprocal)	When in school, GRT children feel protected by being in close proximity to other children from the GRT community, and seek out opportunities to reform as a group.	Social Integration GRT children show preference for being with other GRT children whilst they are in school. Being with fellow GRT children aids a sense of safety and security, so much so that GRT
Relationships with non GRT peers (Refutational)	The extent to which GRT children seek social interaction with non-GRT peers varied. Whilst at times there was a calm atmosphere and social integration, GRT children experienced a deep-rooted feeling that they were loathed non-GRT peers and described instances of fights and bullying.	children rely on each other for 'protection'. This may be due to the varied experiences of successful social relationships with non-GRT children; for some such relationships are poorly developed and leave GRT children at risk of experiences of bullying.

Themes	Interpretation	Construction
Discrimination due to ethnicity (Reciprocal)	GRT children experienced racism and discrimination which they perceived to be directly associated with their GRT ethnicity. Instances of discrimination by ethnicity were experienced from both staff and other children. This affected some GRT children's willingness to have their GRT ethnicity made explicit in school.	Prejudice GRT children regularly experience prejudice due to their ethnic status. Not only do they experience this from peers, but also from school staff. It therefore seems probable that staff who hold racist views about GRT children are therefore less likely to intervene
Lack of response to racism (Reciprocal)	Where instances of racism occurred, GRT children experienced little action or response from adults in school to intervene in the situation. GRT children reported that they did not feel 'listened to' and often felt blamed, as though they had brought it on themselves.	and take action to prevent others. GRT is perhaps not perceived as a valued ethnicity in its own right compared to others, where racism would be regarded as intolerable.
Curriculum of no value (Reciprocal)	GRT children perceived the school curriculum as pointless, with time devoted to subjects with content that would be of little use to them in the future. GRT children also experienced a lack of opportunity to engage in more vocational subjects that would be of more use to them.	Purposeless Education GRT children perceive the curriculum on offer to them would not equip them for their future careers or the skills required in adulthood.
Aspirations unsupported (Reciprocal)	GRT children experienced little support from schools or careers agencies to support them in their career or further education aspirations. This was fuelled by an underlying perception that teachers had little ambition for GRT children.	This is further exacerbated by the notion that teachers lack ambition for GRT children and therefore do not offer them career guidance or provide alternative pathways to gain skills that would be more beneficial to them.
Others learning about culture (Refutational)	The extent to which GRT children experienced a willingness from others to learn about GRT culture varied. Some GRT children experienced explicit references to their culture, and there were opportunities to develop this through the school curriculum. For other GRT children, there was an ignorance from staff and children about GRT culture, and hostility towards explicit references to GRT culture in the classroom.	Cultural Appreciation  There are notable varied experiences of acceptance of GRT culture for GRT children in schools. Some staff appear to go above and beyond in ensuring that cultural norms are embedded into the curriculum, whereas

Themes	Interpretation	Construction
Tolerance of nomadism (Refutational)	GRT children's experience of school's willingness to accommodate the nomadic tradition of GRT culture varied. In some cases, school were tolerant of frequent absences. Other children experienced exclusion from some school activities as teachers' were unwilling to accommodate the travelling season.	some appear to be very resistant to GRT recognition. This then impacts on how tolerant staff are of GRT customs and traditions, which, in turn, can lead to GRT children experiencing school culture as too far removed from what they know and perhaps too far out of their comfort zone.
School world dissonant from GRT culture (Reciprocal)	GRT children commonly experienced feelings of being 'trapped' and prison-like. They experienced school policies such as wearing a uniform and boundaries between adults and children as too different from what they were used to in their own culture.	

# 1.3.2 Phase 7: Expressing the synthesis

Noblit and Hare (1988) acknowledged that a "written synthesis is only one form" (p. 29), encouraging alternative forms of the synthesis to be presented in order to increase its accessibility, particularly when the purpose is to inform practitioners. A visual model, presented in Figure 2, attempts to present the synthesis from Table 5 in an accessible format.

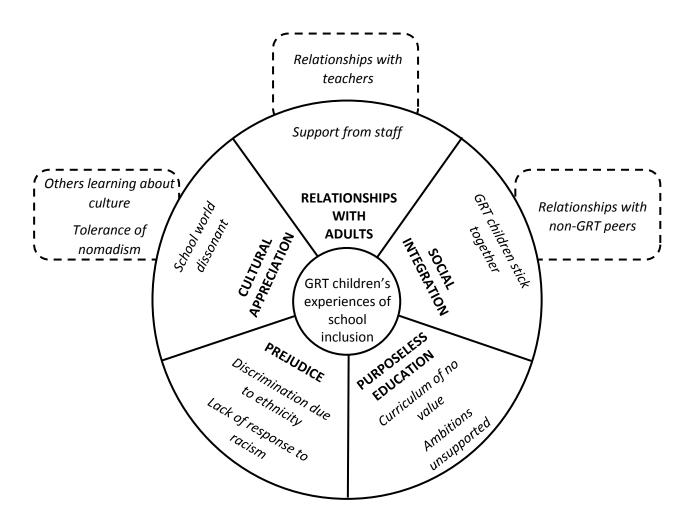


Figure 2: A visual representation of GRT children's lived experiences of school inclusion

As can be seen, the broad constructs are equally positioned around the central area of interest, as all of the experiences are equally valued. Reciprocal translations, i.e. the common experiences of GRT children, are represented in each segment of the circle. Three constructions included refutational translations, demonstrating a varied experience by GRT children. These are represented by the dash-lined boxes connected to the construct segment. This model is further described in the discussion.

### 1.4 Discussion

The third order interpretations that were constructed through the synthesis presented as complex, illustrating a coming together of reciprocal and refutational translations. This warranted further exploration of each construct in turn.

### 1.4.1 Relationships with Adults

Relationships with adults in school appeared to be key to enhancing GRT children's experience of inclusion. However the variation was noted in the willingness of teaching staff to support GRT children academically compared to their willingness to build pastoral relationships. Children involved in the studies by Gould (2017) and Bloomer et al. (2014) specifically discussed their experiences of being supported to meet their academic needs, but few children commented on being supported emotionally.

One way of interpreting this might be that it is easier for staff to offer learning interventions which are structured and directed to a specific learning target. Wider support for emotional wellbeing which requires an emotional connection may be more personally demanding. Meaningful connections between teachers and children are of importance given the impact of their relationships on social and emotional wellbeing and academic outcomes in school (Hattie, 2009; Hills, 2016; Murray-Harvey, 2010; Norwich & Eaton, 2015; Roffey, Williams, Greig & MacKay, 2016). Hamilton and Morgan (2018) highlighted the importance of school staff adopting a dual teaching and pastoral role, although they recognised that the process of developing a relationship with children in schools, such as acquiring knowledge of social emotional history and family, is time consuming and sometimes regarded as being 'somebody else's' role. It may be, therefore, that schools with embedded pastoral systems and structures with key pastoral staff may be more effective in supporting pupils' wellbeing (Reichardt, 2016). When supporting the social and emotional needs of children in school, Swan and Riley (2015) highlighted the importance of teacher empathy, defining it as "the ability of the teacher to express concern for, and take the perspective of a student or students, and involves both cognitive and affective elements" (p. 223). Forging empathic relationships with children in school, being responsive to their needs and strengthening their sense of belonging is said to be critical in multi-cultural and diverse educational settings (Goroshit & Hen, 2016).

## 1.4.2 Social Integration

Not only were relationships with adults in school a key issue in GRT children's experiences of school inclusion, but also their relationships with their peers. As the model demonstrates, there were varied experiences of how well received GRT children were by non-GRT children. GRT children's experiences suggested poor development of social relationships which generally led to them experiencing frequent bullying from the non-GRT children; so much so that GRT children perceived themselves to be 'loathed' by non-GRT children. One way of interpreting this might be that GRT children preferred to be with other GRT children whilst in school, where social relationships were well developed, reciprocal and successful. These experiences appear particularly reflective of the concept of social capital; in a school context, social capital refers "not only to the connections made between people but the quality of those interactions which build mutual trust and reciprocity" (Roffey, 2013, p. 39). Roffey (2013) argued that exclusive social capital – where some are marginalised or actively rejected - can have "devastating effects" (p. 42) on children's wellbeing and sense of belonging. Such exclusive social capital can lead children who are excluded to join together, such as the GRT children in the studies included in the synthesis. The study by Levinson (2015) refers specifically to GRT children forming their own exclusive social group having been isolated from their peers. Exploring social capital further, Putnam (2000) suggested two distinctions, firstly the concept of 'bonding social capital', where people are connected within a social group through a defined network of foundations of reciprocity and unity. Although there are psychological benefits to those within the group, Roffey (2013) argued that such groups "seek to maintain a sense of cohesion and superiority by excluding those who don't fit" (p. 40). This seems particularly reflective of the experiences of the GRT children in the studies examined. In contrast, Putnam's (2000) notion of 'bridging social capital' is more inclusive, promoting connections across diverse social and cultural groups. The two distinctions are summarised in the following metaphor: "Bonding social capital constitutes a kind of sociological superglue, whereas bridging social capital provides a sociological WD-40" (Putnam, 2000, p.23). If schools are to be committed to bridging social capital between ethnic groups, there must be a focus on relational values from school staff to enable all children to feel valued, welcomed and included (Roffey, 2013).

### 1.4.3 Prejudice

Encompassing two themes with reciprocal translations, the experiences of prejudice that GRT children reported resonated across the five studies. GRT children shared their experiences of discrimination from both staff and non-GRT pupils due to identifying themselves as GRT, and most concerning, the lack of intervention from school staff in addressing racism. When considering the discriminative attitudes held by other children and staff towards GRT children, Brown (2017) highlighted that teachers can often hold stereotypical ideas about their pupils, which he argued can come from "backgrounds and education largely removed from pupils in socially disadvantaged positions" (p. 79). Drawing on Bourdieu's (1977) concept of an individual's habitus, which shapes world view, Brown (2017) argued that the social structures inhabited throughout life shape teachers' constitution of the appropriate ways of being. In a school context, he argued that these 'ways of being' are "often far-removed from the reality of pupils in socially disadvantaged areas, and manifest themselves in behaviours, attitudes and reactions which are misunderstood within a pastoral care environment" (p. 79). When exploring the process of ethnic-racial socialisation, research suggests that class teachers become "significant sources of influence" on the development of children's ethnic-racial attitudes, perhaps even more influential than the attitudes of parents (Priest et al., 2016, p. 810). It may not be surprising, therefore, that the attitude the teacher holds impacts on the likelihood of whether or not they will intervene in racist incidents in the classroom (Side & Johnson, 2014). Even when teachers claim to not hold racist views, prejudice can still exist through the inaction following racist incidents (Lewis, 2018). Considering lack of intervention from teachers following racist incidents, Castagno (2008) distinguished between 'teacher silence', whereby the teacher does not respond to other pupils racist comments, and 'active silencing', whereby the teacher closes down racist comments and does not engage in an open discussion. Both, Castagno argued, are detrimental in 'normalising' racial inequality through lack of action. In considering why teachers may choose inaction, Pearce (2014) highlighted the pressure that is placed on teachers in the current performativity environment to maintain "the appearance of harmony" should controversial racist issues arise, with the hope of avoiding risk of negative publicity and disruption to school life (p. 396). Pearce argued, however, that whilst teachers may feel that the 'safest' course of action is avoidance, those involved in racial incidents are left confused, feeling insecure, and

ultimately the unprotected victim. Where children from ethnic minorities have experienced bullying due to their cultural identity, they can then position themselves against normalising judgements, and can face a dilemma between their cultural identity and a desire to 'fit in' (Side & Johnson, 2014). Within the discourse of social justice, their ethnicity therefore positions them as inferior to the normative (Fraser, 2001). When supporting staff to manage prejudice in a culturally diverse classroom, it may be beneficial for teachers to be supported to reflect on their personal values and attitudes in relation to racial diversity to avoid the reinforcement of prejudiced attitudes (Priest et al., 2016).

## 1.4.4 Purposeless Education

GRT children's experiences of a curriculum of no value, paired with experiencing a lack of support to achieve their ambitions, formed the second construct made of reciprocally translated themes. Considering the wider literature raises questions, however, as to whether these issues are pertinent to a wider population of children in UK schools. In a current neoliberal climate of performativity, testing and datafication, the education sector is governed by teacher accountability which has led to tightening of a prescribed curriculum and a 'one size fits all' approach (Winter, 2017). Conversely, teachers can face "ontological insecurity" regarding their professional identity, facing insecurity, self-doubt and anxiety, and as a result develop a defensive structure in response to performativity policies (Singh, 2018, p. 491). Considering constructs of teacher professionalism, Keddie (2018) argued that the current educational climate is associated with 'entrepreneurial professionalism', reducing teacher practice to compliance, competition and regulation, polarised to 'traditional professionalism' ideas of autonomy, care and criticality. As a result, children in the classroom are positioned as "dependent and passive recipients of content...rendering them voiceless and inactive in shaping the direction of their learning and behaviour" (Keddie, 2018, p. 205). With a curriculum that does not "welcome the other", Winter (2017, p. 60) argued that the current curriculum is inadequate as it overlooks teachers' ethical responsibility to respond to difference. As a neoliberal subject, it may be that teachers are forced to make decisions about where to invest their time and efforts in relation to being successful within the performativity agenda (Ball, 2015). This may offer some explanation to why GRT children are perhaps viewed as less worthy of investment and therefore experience a curriculum that does not meet their needs.

### 1.4.5 Cultural Appreciation

The final construct relates to ideas surrounding acceptance and inclusion of GRT culture within the school environment. GRT children had varied experiences in how well their cultural norms were received and whether or not they were actively promoted, particularly in the curriculum. Children in the study by Deuchar and Bhopal (2013) spoke of the unwillingness of school staff to gain knowledge about GRT culture and share this in the classroom. There was a general consensus from GRT children that the school environment and their cultural environment were often polarised, which made it challenging to find ways to be successful in both. Feelings of being 'trapped' were also highlighted; further research with children from ethnic minorities saw this to be associated with strong images of school as an environment where they experience feelings of being suppressed and oppressed due to their cultural background (Rizwan & Williams, 2015).

Whilst acknowledging that schools should strive to create an environment that is culturally inclusive, Faas, Smith, and Darmody (2018) recognised that "well-intentioned notions of equality can also result in assimilation", whereby "nuances of individual learning styles" (p. 460) are overlooked and all children are treated the same, despite their diversities and differences. To avoid practice such as this, many advocate for 'culturally responsive teaching' (Bassey, 2016; Ebersole, Kanahele-Mossman, & Kawakami, 2016; Gay, 2010; Hoque, 2018; Jogie, 2015; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018; Woodley, Hernandez, Parra, & Negash, 2017), whereby teachers draw upon the "cultural characteristics, experiences and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Furthermore, Hoque (2018) argued that a culturally responsive pedagogy is key; teachers should relate classroom curriculum to the child's cultural background to empower them intellectually and to recognise the cultural capital they bring to the educational environment (Woodley et al., 2017). Such teaching and pedagogy promotes social justice for children from the most marginalized cultural groups whilst encouraging all children to become social change agents (Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018).

#### 1.5 Conclusion & Implications

The Race Disparity Audit (Cabinet Office, 2017) painted a somewhat bleak picture of the outcomes for GRT children in the English education system. What it did not do, however,

was to explore the underpinning lived experiences of GRT children in schools, that impact on how well they are included within the education system. This final section aims to draw together the new interpretations from this qualitative review, address the limitations, and offer some ideas for moving EP practice forwards.

### 1.5.1 Summary

On the basis of the systematic review reported in this paper, I have offered five new constructs which I hope are a starting point for hearing the key issues that GRT children are experiencing when they attend school. The constructs themselves present as complex, with varied experiences amongst GRT children in their relationships with adults, social integration and how well their culture is appreciated in the school setting. The findings also suggest consensus in GRT children's experiences of instances of prejudice, and general agreement that the educational offer from school had little purpose in enabling them to fulfil their aspirations.

The meta-ethnography provides a deeper insight into the experiences of inclusion for GRT children than previous literature has perhaps offered. Firstly, it suggests that there is more work to be done in fostering relationships between GRT children and the non-GRT individuals in school to support a sense of inclusion. This was particularly evident in supporting an emotional connection between GRT children and school staff in addition to supporting academic needs. The meta-ethnography also suggests that prejudice and discrimination may be inadvertently perpetuated through teachers' own personal values and attitudes, which can lead to normalising of racial inequality. This is located within the wider political performativity climate, with increasing pressure on teachers to produce results whilst causing minimum disruption to school life. Furthermore, issues of a lack of recognition of difference within the curriculum and a 'one size fits all' approach, underpins a perception of unworthiness and disempowerment as it fails to meet the distinct needs of the GRT community.

## 1.5.2 Limitations

Whilst the meta-ethnography has been a helpful process to reach new understandings, limitations of the approach taken to synthesise the studies should be recognised. Given the nature of meta-ethnography, as an interpretation of an interpretation, it should be acknowledged that my own personal values, assumptions and experiences will have

impacted on the synthesis and the new interpretations reached. As suggested by Noblit and Hare (1988, p. 35), "the values of the researcher are ubiquitous" and the person engaging in the synthesis is "intimately involved". Therefore, the judgements and biases are acknowledged and accepted, and are subject to the critique and debate of others.

# 1.5.3 Implications for EP Practice

Many of the findings for the meta-ethnography indicate issues with relationships and fundamental, psychological needs being unmet. Findings also suggest that social justice for GRT children is not being recognised, particularly with regards to Prilleltensky's (2013) notion of procedural justice for ethnic minorities. Wicks (2013) advocated for EPs to endeavour to use psychology explicitly in practice, to support others to reach new understandings. Whilst the traditional work of EPs may have been in the field of promoting inclusion for children with SEN, there are opportunities for EPs to be proactive and work as a change agent for children who are marginalised within the school system (Roffey, 2015). EPs are particularly well placed to encourage social capital for GRT children to enhance their sense of belonging and connectedness to the school community (Roffey, 2012, 2015). EPs are also well placed to support staff to reflect on their own personal values and attitudes towards the GRT community and consider the impact of these on their day to day practice. This can be explored within their work at all levels, from the individual GRT child and their family, at a school level when consulting with staff, and when developing wider inclusion policies for GRT children within LAs (Scottish Executive, 2002). It is hoped that this metaethnography has offered new and richer understandings based on the experiences of GRT children themselves. This may enable EPs to implement practices and processes that foster a positive sense of inclusion for GRT children.

Finally, the meta-ethnography has demonstrated a limited number of research papers which focus on GRT children's lived experiences of school inclusion. The available research spans a range of disciplines, and there is a lack of research from the perspective of EPs (with the exception of Gould, 2017). Future research which aims to hear the school experiences of GRT children from a psychological perspective may therefore be helpful.

#### 2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a context and narrative of my journey as an applied psychologist and as a researcher. As Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 are intended to be stand-alone papers, this Bridging Document aims to form a link between the two.

#### 2.2 Rationale for Thesis

I began to critically reflect on working with children and families from ethnic minority groups during my practice placements as a Year One Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP). The Local Authority (LA) I was placed in was a diverse borough with a number of refugee and asylum seeking families. Within the schools there were children from a range of cultural backgrounds. At this time, working with children and families from ethnic minority groups was relatively new to me. My previous roles prior to becoming a TEP had involved working in rural educational settings in the North East of England, with a majority White British population. When working with cultural difference, The British Psychological Society state in their 2017 Practice Guidelines: "It is expected that all psychologists will have the necessary skills and abilities to work with all sections of the community" (p. 32). I therefore felt that as a TEP it was important to develop my practice to enable me to widen my perspective to be able to relate across difference, in order to support inclusive practice.

Moving to another LA Educational Psychology Service (EPS) to complete my second and third years of training, I was motivated to learn more about working with children and families from ethnic minority groups and develop my practice. I learnt that there was a proportionately higher population of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families in the LA given its size<sup>1</sup>. GRT families had been historically attracted to the area by an annual horse fair. Many had remained in the town, now living either on one of the three LA owned GRT camps or in housing.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> LA-specific reference removed to maintain anonymity

In the initial weeks of my Year Two placement I was surprised to learn that the Educational Psychologists (EPs) in the service had limited knowledge of the GRT community and practice was generally underdeveloped in this area. I was struck on learning that the EPS was unaware of the existence of the Traveller Education and Achievement Service (TEAS), which I found through internet searching. As such there were no multi-agency links or shared working between the two. During my Year 2 placement, I developed links with the TEAS, and spent time with the GRT community to begin to build relationships. I hoped this would support my practice as a developing EP, by "developing a productive working relationship with culturally...diverse groups of people" (British Psychological Society, 2017, p. 33) and find ways to build rapport and respect with the GRT community.

At the same time there was a broader, national agenda regarding outcomes for ethnic minority groups from the UK Government, in the form of the Race Disparity Audit (Cabinet Office, 2017). Findings of this are discussed in more depth in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3. As a result of the poor outcomes documented for GRT children, the LA I was working in were invited to contribute to a working group, aiming to develop 'best practice' to improve educational outcomes for GRT children in the UK. Whilst education officers from the LA were invited to attend, there was no representation from GRT children or families at the working group, nor was there a mechanism in place to enable those attending to feed the views of the GRT community into this forum. This motivated me to engage in research that would hear the lived experiences of GRT children in the schools I was working in, to enable professionals to support them in a culturally sensitive and empowering way. I was particularly interested in doing this in a way that was informed by psychological theory in an attempt to add rigour. I also recognised the importance of the research role of EPs in informing strategic work within LAs (Cameron, 2006; Lee & Woods, 2017).

### 2.3 From Meta-ethnography to Empirical Research

My meta-ethnography was the first step in hearing the lived experiences of GRT children documented in existing literature, with a particular focus on experiences of school inclusion. From the perspectives of GRT children, findings suggested five constructs which offered a starting point for exploring GRT children's experiences of school.

The experiences of school that were constructed through the meta-ethnography resonated with the anecdotal stories I was hearing in the LA in which I was based. This did not sit comfortably with me, perhaps as it conflicted with my core values of respect, promoting empowerment, and participation for all groups. As suggested by Brockbank and McGill (2007), the addition of the strong emotional response to these stories and the experiences of the GRT children in the wider literature had become my "critical energy" (Barnett, 1997, p. 172) and I began to think more deeply about my own assumptions and beliefs. Argyris (1980) argued that an effective change in practice is the result of congruence between espoused theory and the theory-in-use. This motivated me to use my empirical research as a first step in hearing experiences of GRT children in the LA.

When I was conducting the literature review I found few studies exploring GRT children's lived experience of school inclusion. Existing work spanned a range of disciplines and offered a broader focus compared to my own specific interest in experiences of school inclusion. Furthermore, at the time of my systematic searching, I came across only one empirical study that was conducted by an EP (Gould, 2017, included in meta-ethnography). Whilst the findings from my meta-ethnography were helpful as a starting point to develop my practice, I felt that the focus was still too broad and not necessarily underpinned by psychological theory. My aim in progressing from the systematic literature review to the empirical research was to explore GRT children's lived experiences, as an applied educational psychologist, through the lens of psychological theory. Therefore, the application of psychological theory was an important consideration as I developed my work. The theoretical perspective I used in the empirical research was Psychological Sense of Community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986), as a sense of belonging to a school community is said to be a fundamental need when promoting inclusion for children in schools (Warnock & Norwich, 2010). My theoretical stance is further developed in the empirical report in Chapter 3.

#### 2.4 Philosophical Stance

## 2.4.1 Philosophical Assumptions

Billington and Williams (2017, p. 9) contend that research which "populates the landscape of educational psychology" should "identify and make transparent the epistemological,

ontological and methodological assumptions". My ontological perspective is relativist, which rejects the notion of objective realities. I subscribe to a relational ontology whereby I assume humans to be relational beings. From this philosophical perspective the self is relational and develops through social interaction with those around us. Sampson (2008) recognises the multiple voices of human nature in a dialogic formulation, suggesting that we all play many roles within varied life situations, therefore assuming an ever-shifting multiplicity as the norm. This has implications for my epistemology, as I consider that as humans we jointly create meaning through dialogue (Gergen, 2009). My epistemological perspective lies within the social constructionist paradigm, assuming knowledge and meaning to be co-created through social and cultural activity. Meaning making is therefore social and dialogic, with language playing a fundamental role. Individuals construct their interpretations of their experiences and we can never have direct access to a reality beyond 'discourse': the set of meanings and representations that produce a particular version of events (Burr, 2004). Individuals construct their own realities and shared meanings through interactions with others. Gergen (2009) contends that it is in the context of communities experiencing an "explosion of ethnic, political and religious conflicts...[is] where constructionist practitioners find their work most useful" (p. 170), as their stance enables them to consider competing value investments and recognise the legitimacy of each. To me this has relevance for the kind of research I was embarking upon.

### 2.4.2 Methodology

Given the philosophical assumptions underpinning this work I adopted a qualitative, interpretive methodology. Burr (2004) contends that qualitative methodology is "ideal for gathering linguistic and textual data...and less likely to decontextualise the experience and accounts of respondents" (p. 105). This is important given my concern to situate the lived experiences of the GRT children in this research within context. Qualitative researchers from a social constructionist perspective are concerned with subjective experiences. I therefore problematized constructions such as preconceived variables and cause-effect relationships, rejecting the objective stance of measuring such constructs (Billington & Williams, 2017; Willig, 2013). Underpinning this approach is the view that knowledge and experience "does not represent an objective view of external reality, but is profoundly shaped by our subjective and cultural perspective, and by our conversations and activities (Hardy & Hobbs, 2017, p. ix). This is consistent with my philosophical stance, therefore a qualitative

methodology enabled me to be actively engaged in the research and did not distance me from the context and process. As such, I recognised that the analytical accounts were a co-construction of research data between the children I interviewed and myself (Mauthner, Birch, Jessop, & Miller, 2002; Osborn & Smith, 1998).

In terms of researcher reflexivity, it was important to acknowledge that my own personal values, history and perspective have informed and shaped the research (Burr, 2003). For example, my experiences of spending time with the GRT children on the camps as a TEP who did not live on the camp, and as an individual with a grounding in psychological theory will have influenced my interpretation of their stories (Clarke & Braun, 2013). It was also important to adopt a position of reflexivity throughout the data collection process. I was aware that I was bringing my own expectations to the semi-structured interviews with the children, which I had to acknowledge may encourage or inhibit certain narratives (Murray, 2003). I therefore tried to adopt a stance of 'open curiosity' throughout the conversations with communication based ideas of intersubjectivity and attunement, in the hope that this would encourage a sense of mutuality in the dialogues between myself and each child (Marková, 2003).

### 2.5 Ethics, Rigour & Validity

Groundwater-Smith and Mockler (2007) argued that there is an "intrinsic and fundamental relationship between ethics and quality within practitioner research" (p. 204). This research has received the full ethical approval of the university, and it also followed BPS ethical guidelines (British Psychological Society, 2009, 2018). There were, however, a number of specific ethical considerations beyond the standard procedural requirements, which will now be considered.

### 2.5.1 Positioning of Children

My intention throughout this research project was to hear and explore the rich, lived experiences of GRT children in school. It is therefore important to think about how my research positions children. A number of researchers contend that adults can never completely understand the world from the point of view of a child; that children are experts in their own lives, and therefore the assumption that adult knowledge is superior must be

challenged (Christensen & Prout, 2005; Clark, 2001; Dockett & Perry, 2011; Farrell & Danby, 2015; Fattore, Mason & Watson, 2012; Punch, 2002). Furthermore, it is argued that 'letting children speak' is not enough; the unique contribution that a child's perspective can give to an adult's understanding of their social world must be considered (James, 2007). Murris (2013) argues that this is dependent on how an adult conceptualises childhood, otherwise an "adult will not 'hear' the child who speaks" (p. 246). In this research I assumed children to be and attempted to position them as competent social actors rather than pre-adults (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008), and as participants who should be involved, informed, consulted and heard (Christensen & Prout, 2002). As social constructionists call for the "democratisation of the research relationship" (Burr, 2003, p. 109), I acknowledged that the accounts of the children were valid and did not privilege the account of myself as a researcher above theirs (Matusov & Marjanovic-Shane, 2016). The epistemological and ethical considerations involved in developing my methodology, therefore, aimed to promote these factors throughout and reduce the power imbalance between the children who participated and myself as researcher. I took a number of steps in attempting to manage this, which will now be explored.

#### 2.5.2 Building Relationships

I considered relationships to be crucial before, during and after the research. As I was aware that I was interrupting the lives of others, I felt a moral obligation to ensure this interruption was meaningful for those involved (Liamputtong, 2007). Developing relationships prior to the data collection was crucial, as "the challenge for the researcher is to encourage the participant to tell his or her story" (Murray, 2003, p. 102), which in my case would be during a single session of data collection with each child. Therefore, knowing the GRT community, building a rapport and forming trusting relationships with the GRT families was essential. To support this, I spent almost 12 months prior to the data collection element of the project immersing myself in the GRT community as much as possible. This was supported by the TEAS, given the relationship of trust they have with the GRT families in the LA. I joined the TEAS on home visits, visited the GRT camps, and shadowed the TEAS during their day-to-day meetings with professionals, endeavouring to build relationships with potential participants prior to the collection of data. However, I also recognised that this could be 'faking friendship' (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002) and therefore ensured that when it came to data collection for my empirical research that all involved knew that they had the right not to

participate, without affecting their relationship with the TEAS or the service they received. It was vital that existing relationships were not exploited in any way, and that relationships were not affected in a negative way by the research. It was hoped that awareness of the sensitive relationships with the GRT communities would ensure that long term relationships were maintained.

To maintain positive relationships throughout, a TEAS teacher was present during all of my interactions with the GRT children during the project. It was hoped that this would enable the children to feel more comfortable with a trusted adult present, who was external to school but with whom they already had a developed relationship. The TEAS teacher was also able to bridge the gap between the children and myself as a researcher, as an individual who had relationships with both.

### 2.5.3 Problematizing Consent

Consent for children is discussed across a wide range of literature (Bhattacharya, 2007; Dockett & Perry, 2011; Moore, McArthur, & Noble-Carr, 2017; Parsons, Sherwood, & Abbott, 2016; Renold, Holland, Ross, & Hillman, 2008). Hardy and Majors (2017) questioned the ethical issues involved in explaining research to children "in terms that they understand sufficiently in order to give informed consent or to decline to be interviewed" (p. 13). They suggest that spending time in the research setting and talking to the children involved prior to the data collection can be an effective process for children to decide whether or not they wish to participate. This process was therefore adhered to in this research project (see section 2.5.2). Informed, written consent was achieved through an accessible format from both parents and children prior to data collection (see Appendix A and B). Before each interview, I explained to the children about what would happen with the data, how it would be stored, and that audio recordings would be deleted following transcription. However, it was recognised that consent is not resolved by completion of a form at the beginning of the research, and consent was viewed as fluid and "always in-negotiation" (Renold et al., 2008, p. 432). I recognised that it may be difficult for the children to express their dissent; there were regular 'check-ins' with the children throughout the data collection process, particularly given the sensitive topic of discussing ethnicity. In attempting to maintain transparency and support the children's understanding of what counted as 'data', the audio recorder was kept in full view, and children were reminded of the covert recording, by asking: 'Is it okay to press record?' prior to the recorder being activated. The children were

also encouraged to choose a fictitious name for themselves, with the hope that this would encourage the notion of "becoming participant" within the research project (Renold et al., 2008, p. 442). Throughout the interview, I checked for non-verbal cues to determine whether the children wanted to continue, which they may have otherwise found difficult to communicate verbally (Parsons et al., 2016).

### 2.5.4 Transformational Approaches

There are difficulties in determining rigour and validity in qualitative research, as "replicability, testing hypotheses, and objective procedures are not common terms in qualitative researchers' vocabularies" (Cho & Trent, 2006, p. 319). As an alternative to the objective stance, Cho and Trent (2006) suggested a holistic conceptualisation of validity, combining transactional and transformational approaches which focuses on the most important aspects of theory and practice (see Figure 3).

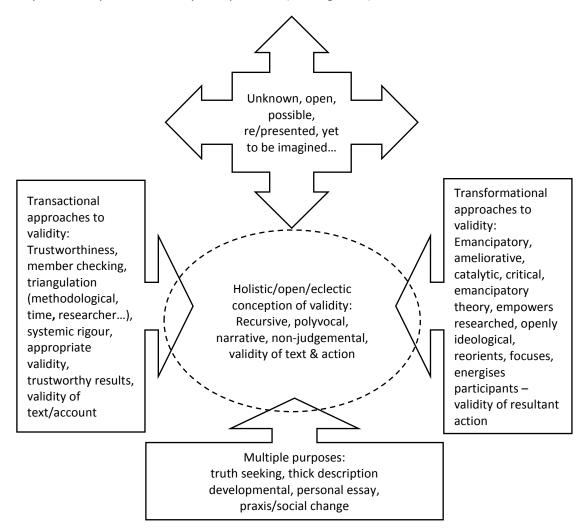


Figure 3: An alternative framework for understanding validity in qualitative research (Cho & Trent, 2006)

In this sense, validity is viewed as "an interactive process between the researcher, the researched and the collected data" (p. 321), whilst adopting approaches that support a process of social change. Particular attention was paid to transformational approaches, such as aiming for the research to be emancipatory and empowering for the GRT children involved. For example, many of the children commented that it was the first occasion that they had been approached by an adult to share their experiences of their GRT culture. As contended by Cho and Trent (2006), validity should be a recursive process; one that is not just acknowledged during the brief data collection. I attempted to maintain a commitment to building relationships with those involved before, during and after the data collection process. This was particularly relevant to a research project which intended to be participatory in nature (van der Riet, 2008). Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) suggested that participatory research has an "epistemological advantage" (p. 499) as it explores the perspective of the child as opposed to the perspective of the adult. The most genuine participatory approaches are said to be those which are child initiated with shared decisions with adults (Hart, 1992). However, there are concerns as to how conducive participatory methods are in educational contexts (Bae, 2009; Lansdown, Jimerson, & Shahroozi, 2014; Mager & Nowak, 2012). When engaging in research with children, Hill (2006) suggested eight considerations that researchers should be mindful of, on the basis of children's views about how they want to be consulted. These were: fairness, effectiveness, agency, choice, openness, diversity, satisfaction and respect. Children in Hill's research emphasised that it was these core principles that were important rather than the method adopted. I was therefore mindful of these principles at all stages, when considering the research design, theory, questions and interpretations of the children's views.

## 2.5.5 Data Analysis

Consideration was also given to maintaining quality and rigour throughout the process of analysis of the data, through the method of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This is a flexible approach to data analysis due to its "theoretical freedom" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 78) and can provide a rich account of the data. However, as contended by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 84), "researchers cannot free themselves of their theoretical and epistemological commitments, and data are not coded in an epistemological vacuum". I therefore recognised that the analysis would be influenced by my own theoretical and

analytical interests. A hybrid process of inductive and deductive analysis was adopted as this approach complemented the research question. This allowed for a data-driven approach, allowing themes to be constructed directly from the data using inductive coding, whilst also using the deductive template of the chosen theoretical perspective (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). I acknowledged that member checking of themes would have been desirable, however the constraints of the research project made this difficult to achieve. However, Barbour (2001) suggested that research supervision can be used as an alternative, to have "another person cast an eye over segments of data or emergent coding frameworks" (p. 1116). Barbour contended that alternative interpretations can act as the "devil's advocate" (p. 1116), encouraging thoroughness in the interrogation of the data and of the development of the analysis. However, the "degree of concordance" (p. 1116) between the researcher and supervisor is not important as the content of disagreements can provide further insights for refining codes. Therefore, codes and themes were revisited following discussions in supervision where alternative interpretations had been put forward. Whilst notions of objective validity were rejected, a trail of evidence throughout the research process is still required to demonstrate rigour, integrity and competence (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Attempts were made to ensure transparency in the process of analysis, and this is detailed in Chapter 3, with a full analysis trail included in the Appendices. Chapter 3: "There's a school community but not everyone is happy about it." Experiences of school as a community among Gypsy, Roma & Traveller children.

#### **Abstract**

**Aims:** The aim of this research was to use Psychological Sense of Community (PSOC) theory to explore Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children's lived experiences of school as a community.

**Rationale:** PSOC is an important aspect for Educational Psychologists (EPs) to consider when discussing inclusive practices with school staff, to ensure that all children benefit from the positive outcomes associated with being part of the school community. Given the poor school experiences of GRT children, it is reasonable to assume they may have a poor PSOC in school, or that some elements are more readily experienced than others.

**Method:** An interpretive, qualitative methodology was adopted. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on an individual basis with six GRT children. Data was analysed using Thematic Analysis.

**Findings:** Findings suggest particular issues relating to the four elements of PSOC for the GRT children interviewed. These relate to issues of identity, unwillingness of others to be influenced by GRT culture, and a mismatch between their aspirations and the curriculum on offer. Many GRT children appeared to experience a sense of belonging to a sub-community of GRT children within the wider school community.

*Limitations:* There are issues with generalisability to the wider GRT population, as data collection was somewhat restricted. It is also acknowledged that the research drew upon a theoretical model developed in dominant western culture and may be limited in the insights it can offer.

**Conclusions:** EPs may find PSOC helpful in exploring the cultural nuances involved in promoting inclusive practices for GRT children in schools.

#### 3.1 Introduction

The aim of this empirical report is to explore the experiences of school as a community amongst Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children in one English Local Authority (LA). In this introduction, terminology is firstly explored, followed by a consideration of relevant background literature and theory, which leads to a rationale for the current project.

### 3.1.1 Terminology

For the purposes of this research project, the broader term 'GRT' has been used, whilst acknowledging that this does not suggest a homogenous group. I recognised that there are distinctions between the bodies of communities. It is hoped that all individuals referred to by this term will find this terminology acceptable.

### 3.1.2 Background

The Race Disparity Audit (Cabinet Office, 2017) identified GRT children as the lowest performing ethnic group at all key stages in education, who also have significantly above average rates of absence and exclusion from school. This reflects ongoing concern over the apparent lack of positive outcomes for GRT children in education (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012; Department for Education, 2010; Department for Education and Skills, 2003a, 2006). Issues persist despite legislation and policy aimed at promoting social inclusion (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2009; Department for Education and Skills, 2003b; H M Government, 2010), and it is argued that GRT children continue to lag behind their peers in terms of educational outcomes (Hamilton, 2018a). As a result of their poor outcomes, Government documentation consistently refers to GRT children as a 'vulnerable group'. Within this study, 'vulnerability' will be considered to result from the ways this group is positioned within society (Liamputtong, 2007). School systems themselves create a number of barriers which marginalise GRT children. These barriers include inflexibility of admission arrangements following periods of travel, professionals with limited experience of GRT culture, values and practices aimed at the white middle-class settled community, and experiences of racism and discrimination (Deuchar & Bhopal, 2013; Frehill & Dunsmuir, 2015; Gould, 2017; Hamilton, Bloomer & Potter, 2012; Hamilton, 2018b; Levinson, 2015; Smith, 2017). Such barriers may also result in GRT children self-excluding and becoming home educated (Bhopal & Myers, 2016; Cabinet Office, 2017). Stereotypical

'scripts' about GRT children in school are apparent, which are based upon negative assumptions, such as undesirable behaviours, low academic abilities, and lack of educational aspirations (D'Arcy, 2017; Myers, 2018). Hamilton (2018a) argued that in order to improve school experiences for GRT children, a "fundamental shift in societal attitude is required and critical thought paid to inclusive education, or young learners who remain in education may end up on the periphery of both societies" (p. 4).

## 3.1.3 School inclusion for GRT children

The notion of inclusion is more complex than all children being educated 'under one roof' (Warnock & Norwich, 2010). There is an "uncomfortable relationship" between the concept of inclusion and the field of Special Educational Needs (SEN), as inclusion covers broader agendas, including those of social justice and equity (Black-Hawkins, 2014, p. 445). A broad definition of inclusion is said to involve promoting the *participation* of all children in school, regardless of factors including their economic status, social class or ethnicity (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Lambert & Frederickson, 2015).

Social inclusion is a process whereby all members of the community's needs are recognised and met, resulting in feelings of value and respect (British Psychological Society, 2017). Lauchlan and Greig (2015) argued that some schools fail to provide a welcoming environment for children, limiting their opportunities to thrive and progress. Individuals who belong to ethnic minority groups such as GRT may be at greater risk of social exclusion due to a lack of understanding or respect for diversity of such groups (British Psychological Society, 2017).

Roffey (2015) argues that inclusive school environments are said to be those where children feel connected to the school community and have a sense that adults in school care about them. A sense of belonging is a protective factor and considered by some to be a fundamental psychological need (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Bond et al., 2007; Roffey, 2013; Warnock & Norwich, 2010; Waters, Cross, & Runions, 2009). Non-familial, supportive relationships in school serve as a protective factor, fostering positive mental health outcomes and prolonged school engagement (Lardier et al., 2019). Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the development of positive relationships within the school environment can impact on academic success, contributing to feelings of validation, support, well-being and modelling of problem solving (Liang, Tracy, Taylor, & Williams, 2002; Noble & McGrath, 2012; Osterman, 2000; Prati, Cicognani, & Albanesi, 2018; Prince & Hadwin, 2013).

Developing a stronger community orientation may be important to inclusion and is concerned with "creating systems and contexts that promote participation in the life of the school" (Roffey, Stringer, & Corcoran, 2013, p. 6). It is plausible to suggest, therefore, that a socially inclusive school environment is one which promotes a sense of community. This may be a useful area of focus when considering positive school experiences for GRT children.

### 3.1.4 Psychological Sense of Community

Community can be described as both territorial, in a geographical sense, and relational, with a focus on the "quality of character of human relationship" (Gusfield, 1975, p. xvi). Furthermore, a *sense* of community is described as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 9). As a review of the community psychology literature is beyond the scope of this paper, sense of community is conceptualised hereafter using McMillan & Chavis' (1986) widely used theory, 'Psychological Sense of Community' (PSOC). This relational theory suggests four elements that contribute to an individual's sense of community:

- Membership; a sense of belonging and relatedness
- Influence; a sense of mutual influence and group cohesiveness
- Integration and fulfilment of needs; a sense of competence, reinforcement and reward
- Shared emotional connection; a sense of affect, positive interactions and shared events.

Whilst wider research has had a more narrowed focus, such as children's sense of school belonging or school connectedness (Bond et al., 2007; Prince & Hadwin, 2013; Waters et al., 2009), PSOC offers a theoretical perspective which encompasses a wider stance, with consideration offered to broader systemic issues (Sayer, Beaven, Stringer, & Hermena, 2013). It also encompasses the importance of having a sense of influence within the community. This has relevance to Prilleltensky's (2013) notion of social justice when considering fair treatment for ethnic minority groups, which suggests a need to participate in the processes and decisions affecting our lives. In order to experience a PSOC in the school setting, children need to feel securely connected with others in the school environment and

experience themselves as worthy of the respect of others. Even if one is not aware of this need, its satisfaction affects psychological development, and overall experience of well-being and engagement with school (Osterman, 2000).

A number of quantitative methods have been developed with the aim of 'measuring' PSOC in the general population, including the 'Sense of Community Index' (Chavis, Hogg, McMillan, & Wandersman, 1986), 'Sense of Community Index II' (Chavis, Lee, & Acosta, 2008), and the 'Brief Sense of Community Scale' (Peterson, Speer, & McMillan, 2008). The 'Neighbourhood Youth Inventory' (Chipeur & Pretty, 1999) was developed specifically for children, and subsequent scales have been developed for use in the school context (Lardier Jr, Reid, & Garcia-Reid, 2018; Sayer et al., 2013; Stringer & Traill, 2009). Whilst some measures have supported the four factor model of McMillan & Chavis's original theory, others have suggested a departure from the original framework (Chipeur & Pretty, 1999; Long & Perkins, 2003; Proescholdbell, Roosa, & Nemeroff, 2006). For example, Sayer et al. (2013) found the constructs of 'influence' and 'reinforcement of need' did not emerge when using their measure with primary school children. Lardier Jr et al. (2018) argued, however, that suggested 'flaws' in the theory may be attributable to how researchers choose to 'measure' the multidimensional construct rather than the theory itself. Furthermore, Mossakowski, Wongkaren, Hill, and Johnson (2019) suggested that qualitative research is necessary in the field of exploring PSOC to help develop new understandings of the nuanced differences between groups. There have been somewhat limited examples of qualitative approaches to gain a sense of children's PSOC (Pooley, Pike, Drew, & Breen, 2002) and few qualitative studies which have explored PSOC with children in schools (Pooley, Breen, Pike, Cohen, & Drew, 2008).

#### 3.1.5 Rationale

Given the school experiences of GRT children as described above, it is reasonable to assume that they may have a poor PSOC in school, or that some elements are more readily experienced than others. Pooley et al. (2008) suggested that children from ethnic minorities are at risk of a poor PSOC, as they are more likely to perceive themselves to be less deserving of a complete educational experience. Research has previously explored GRT children's school experiences, with some focus on experiences of inclusion (Bloomer et al., 2014; Deuchar & Bhopal, 2013; Gould, 2017; Levinson, 2015; Myers & Bhopal, 2009). However there has been limited research which has explored GRT children's experiences of

relationships in school, particularly through a psychological theoretical perspective such as PSOC. PSOC is arguably an important aspect for Educational Psychologists (EPs) to consider when discussing inclusive practices with school staff, to ensure that all children benefit from the positive outcomes associated with being part of the school community (Sayer et al., 2013). This is consistent with The British Psychological Society Practice Guidelines, which suggest that "promoting social inclusion is a broader task than promoting equality and tackling discrimination and stigma. It requires psychology professionals to address wider structural issues in society which maintain excluding processes and power differentials" (2017, p. 36).

The aim of this research therefore was to use PSOC theory to explore GRT children's lived experiences of school as a community. It was hoped that this would afford new understandings of how needs are being met, but also the aim was that this would inform schools and services working with schools of the barriers to social inclusion currently faced by GRT children. The research also aimed to explore this theoretical perspective from an interpretive stance, as much of the research applying PSOC relies on objectivist methodology. The research question to be explored was: What are the experiences of Psychological Sense of Community in school among Gypsy Roma & Traveller children in one English Local Authority?

### 3.2 Method

#### 3.2.1 The Local Context

The LA in which the research took place had a higher than average population of GRTs given its size. A historical annual horse fair led to many GRT families travelling to the area and many have remained, living on either one of three LA owned GRT camps or in housing. In an attempt to support the GRT children and families in education, the Traveller Education and Achievement Service (TEAS) have a vital role in supporting staff and GRT children in schools and providing outreach services to GRT families. At the time of the research, there were 241 GRT children on roll in LA schools and 85 GRT children registered as home educated. Traditionally GRT children attend one of four Primary schools and one Secondary school. Members of the GRT community spoke openly to me during this research process of

their continued experiences of persecution and the general lack of understanding about GRT culture, despite their presence in the town for hundreds of years.

## 3.2.2 Sampling

This research has received the full ethical approval of the university, and it also followed BPS ethical guidelines (British Psychological Society, 2009, 2018). Further ethical considerations are discussed in Chapter 2.

I established a relationship with the TEAS staff (see Chapter 2), who were keen to be involved in the research process. GRT children were recruited through opportunity sampling; this process was complex and is illustrated in Figure 4.

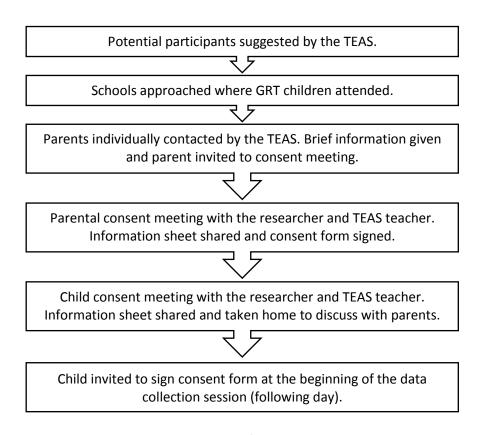


Figure 4: A graphic representation of the sampling and consent process

After suggesting children who may want to take part, the TEAS teacher gave parents initial information. This was followed up with individual meetings with parents, where the aims of the project were shared. Opportunity for parents to ask questions was provided, and the consent form was signed. Some parents showed initial interest and then withdrew prior to the formal meeting. Others however who were initially reluctant contacted the TEAS at a later point requesting their child's involvement in the research. A flexible approach was

therefore taken to ensure parents and children were able to change their minds if they wished, without affecting pre-existing relationships.

Once consent had been given from parents, individual meetings were held with the GRT children. Meetings were held the day prior to the data collection, to allow them the opportunity to discuss this with parents outside of the meeting. It was hoped that this supported the notion of empowering the children to give 'informed' consent. At the beginning of the data collection session the children were then offered the opportunity to sign the consent form.

### 3.2.3 Participants

Six GRT children participated in the research, from four different schools across the LA.

Details of the GRT children are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6: Participant Details

Participant	Details
Mary <sup>2</sup>	Education: Primary School (Year Six) Accommodation: House
	Lifestyle: Does not shift <sup>3</sup>
Annie	Education: Primary School (Year Six)
	Accommodation: Camp X
	Lifestyle: Shifts annually to Appleby Fair
Billy	Education: Primary School (Year Five)
	Accommodation: House and Trailer
	Lifestyle: Shifts regularly throughout the year (internationally)
Suellen	Education: Secondary School (Year Eight)
	Accommodation: House (Previously Camp X)
	Lifestyle: Does not shift
Henry	Education: Primary School (Year Six)
	Accommodation: House
	Lifestyle: Shifts occasionally to visit Father who works abroad

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> All children have been given a pseudonym to protect their identity

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Term used by the GRT children to describe periodic travel to other locations

Participant	Details
Sienna	Education: Primary School (Year Six)
	Accommodation: Camp Y
	Lifestyle: Shifts regularly between four camps in the UK

#### 3.2.4 Semi-Structured Interviews

Given that the rich, lived experiences of children was central to the research question, a qualitative approach was adopted. A semi-structured interview method through co-construction allowed scope for the children to discuss wider issues that may not have been anticipated, with the aim of the session being an empowering experience (Clarke & Braun, 2013; Westcott & Littleton, 2005). It was hoped this approach would yield rich data about individual views, and enable children's perspectives and experiences to be heard (Willig, 2013).

Whilst the intention was for the conversation to be as free-flowing as possible, a framework of questions was developed as a guide to facilitate the discussion. This aimed to strike a balance between empowering the children to lead the conversation whilst providing a flexible structure to ensure they did not feel overwhelmed. Open ended questions were developed which aimed to explore the GRT children's experiences of the multidimensional PSOC in their school: Membership, Influence, Integration and Fulfilment of Needs, and Shared Emotional Connection. Previous questions used by Sayer et al. (2013) and Pooley et al. (2008) were drawn upon as a guide, and further questions were developed which drew upon my reading of the theory (McMillan & Chavis, 1986) (see Appendix C). A visual tool was also used in order to support the interviews, given the abstract notion of 'community' which was the focus (Pooley et al., 2002). Pupil View Templates (Wall & Higgins, 2006; Wall, Higgins, & Smith, 2005) were used as a participatory method (see Appendix D for example). Participatory research uses visual tools alongside conventional approaches such as semi-structured interviewing, to encourage active representation of ideas that are not limited to the written or spoken word (van der Riet, 2008). In this research Pupil View Templates aimed to support exploration of children's attitudes, beliefs, descriptions and reflections during the discussion. A central image depicted the context to be explored; this initiated discussion and acted as a 'semiotic tool' to scaffold and mediate the conversation (Vygotsky, 1978). In an attempt to increase the children's ownership of the process, they

were given a choice of either using a photograph of their school building or drawing their own image (Whitehead, 2012). The template was then annotated using 'thought bubbles' to explore internal processes, and 'speech bubbles' to explore external factors (see Appendix D). The template acted as a reminder of the context under discussion, a record of the conversation and also a stimulus to support further elaboration (Wall & Higgins, 2006). In this way, the template was used as a tangible, visual representation creating space for dialogue (van der Riet, 2008). It was also used as a basis for checking with the child what had been said at the end of the interview.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted on an individual basis with a TEAS teacher present, who was encouraged to be an active participant in the conversation. As interviews took place in the school that each child attended, consideration was given to the space used to ensure it was private, and a safe space to talk openly about potentially sensitive issues (Clarke & Braun, 2013). In all cases, a room was chosen that was located in a separate area of the building away from classrooms. Children were invited to see the space and given the option to change the location if they preferred. With consent, all interviews were audio recorded to allow free-flowing conversation without the inhibition of note-taking.

#### 3.2.5 Process of Analysis

Data analysis drew upon Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to Thematic Analysis. A hybrid process of inductive and deductive thematic analysis was used. This allows for existing theory to be integral whilst allowing for new themes to organically develop directly from the data (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). As PSOC is postulated to involve four elements, these were used as a deductive framework, whilst themes were constructed inductively from the data itself. Table 7 describes the process taken in further detail.

Table 7: Process of Thematic Analysis

Step	Description
Familiarisation with data	(a) Repeated listening of the audio recordings from each semi-structured interview.
	(b) Transcribe each recording verbatim.
	(c) Read through each transcript to begin process of immersion in the data.

Step	Description
	(d) Notes made of initial 'noticings'
2. Coding	(a) Read through each transcript and identify extracts of text that appear to relate to the research question. Provide each extract with a brief phrase (code) that captures the essence of the text.
	(b) Organise codes under the four elements of Psychological Sense of Community which they appear to relate to (Membership; Influence; Integration & Fulfilment of Needs; Shared Emotional Connection).
	(c) Collate additional codes that do not readily fit with one of the four elements of the theory into a separate group, which may indicate potential new understandings.
	(d) Review code labels and attached data extract to ensure each code is distinct. Where codes overlap, develop a broader code.
3. Identifying themes	(a) Take each list of codes under each area of Psychological Sense of Community and begin to identify broader patterns of response or meaning.
	(b) Group these codes together as sub-themes where there is a central organising concept.
	(c) Where possible, reduce sub-themes into overarching themes
	(d) Revisit codes that were not organised into one of the four elements of the theme; consider meaning behind code and move to an existing sub-theme or create a new subtheme that captures the meaning of the code.
4. Reviewing themes	(a) Re reading themes, subthemes and codes to ensure they fit well together and 'tell a story' that represents the data extract.
	(b) Explicitly identify the link between each sub-theme and overarching theme to area of Psychological Sense of Community.
	(c) Review themes to ensure they 'belong' to the area of the theory under which they have been organised; if better placed in other area move accordingly.

Step	Description
	(d) Create four visual maps of themes to demonstrate relationship between the area of theory, theme and subtheme.

### 3.3 Findings

Through analysis, overarching themes were identified that described issues relating to the four elements of PSOC. These will now be explored. Tables of the complete analysis demonstrating the relationship between data extracts, codes, sub-themes and themes can be found in Appendix E<sup>4</sup>.

## 3.3.1 Thematic Map 1: Membership

Children's experiences of membership to the school community were grouped into three themes, shown in Figure 5.

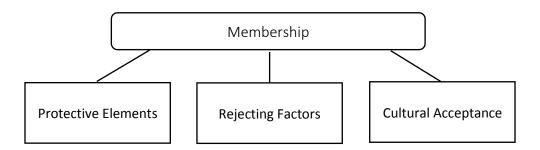


Figure 5: Thematic map of themes relating to 'Membership'

The theme 'Protective Elements' pertains to the things that the GRT children suggested enabled them to have a sense of membership of the school community. Children described their experiences of being treated the same as others, which appeared to promote a sense of being part of a collective which enhanced feelings of security. There was also a sense of relatedness to others and emotional safety in school; for many children, feelings of familiarity and a sense of 'knowing' others enabled them to feel that they 'fit' with the school community, even if they shifted frequently (Box 1).

<sup>4</sup> References to names of individuals or places have been changed to protect anonymity.

#### Box 1: Relatedness

"I do feel that I fit in because like...because we just talk about the same things to be honest." Henry

"When I'm here with them like...I feel like I've known them for ages." Sienna

It seemed that there were aspects of their school experiences that enabled them to feel a sense of membership to the school community. However, some children reported experiences of bullying and rejection, and they were not confident that all staff would address this effectively (Box 2).

#### Box 2: Experiences of bullying

"It depends how they're feeling really... so say if I went to like... Mrs Brown...and said like 'oh yeah they were being horrible about my culture' and stuff like that...she'd do something about it...but if I went to like...I don't know Mrs Smith she'd be like 'oh yeah well I'll look into it later' because she says she has more important matters..."

Suellen

Some children commented on a feeling of 'difference' and an urge to change something about themselves in order to feel a sense of belonging to the school community. This included changing their physical appearance or changing and explaining their language in order to be understood by the non-GRT community. Whilst there was recognition that their ethnicity made them 'different' to others, some noted that there was no positive celebration of their ethnic identity in school (Box 3).

Box 3: No celebration of difference

"No there's nothing...they don't make a big thing of it [GRT culture]." Mary

'Cultural Acceptance' described the degree to which GRT ethnicity was accepted within the school community. Some children felt their cultural norms were known, accepted and catered for, for example, being given a part in the school production despite awareness by staff that the children may shift. However, other children described a varied response to GRT

culture and a sense that GRT ethnicity was not equally valued in the school community (Box 4).

## Box 4: GRT ethnicity incompatible

"It's not like... a 'thing' to be a Traveller there if that makes sense...it's more like posh people...it's not like common to see a Traveller in like your class or something....it's just all like Gorjas<sup>5</sup>." Suellen

There was also a sense that it was important to preserve GRT identity, and a perceived risk of cultural erosion by being a member of the school community (Box 5).

#### Box 5: Preserving GRT Identity

"She was losing her Gypsy instincts if that makes sense...like her ways... if you went to Secondary School...and they say something that maybe you don't want to know about...and you think well that can be losing my Gypsy."

Annie

## 3.3.2 Thematic Map 2: Influence

The process of analysis yielded less on influence than the other three aspects of PSOC. The data was grouped into four sub-themes which therefore became overarching themes as they could be reduced no further. These are shown in Figure 6.

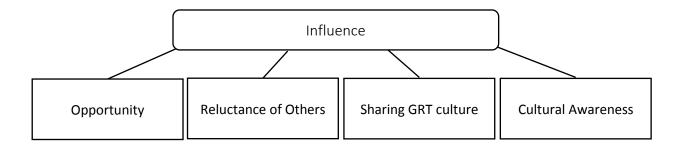


Figure 6: Thematic map of themes relating to 'Influence'

GRT children appeared to share some experiences of opportunities to influence the school community, such as being selected as the 'leader' in Football Club and influencing non-GRT peers' fashion choices (Box 6).

-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Term used by the GRT children to refer to a non-GRT individual

### Box 6: Influenced non-GRT's appearance

"I've influenced like my friend's like the way that they dress...they're starting to like the stuff that I like...like blinged out jeans...and diamanté tops and stuff like that..." Suellen

However, there was a sense that others were reluctant to be influenced by GRT culture, for example, children perceived others to be uninterested in learning their cultural traditions (Box 7).

Box 7: No interest in learning GRT traditions

"No...I don't think so...I don't think they'd be bothered about it [learning GRT traditions]" Henry

The children appeared to perceive the sharing of their GRT culture to be limited. Reasons for this varied, perhaps due to other curriculum demands, or because culture-specific contributions were not valued. Some children explained however how they preferred not to share their culture, explaining a desire to keep cultural idiosyncrasies 'safe' (Box 8).

Box 8: Keeping cultural idiosyncrasies safe

"I don't really want to [share our culture] because I don't think they need to know." Annie

There was also a sense that children did not experience consensual validation, in this sense, a shared experience and understanding of GRT culture, as there was a general lack of GRT cultural awareness in the school community (Box 9).

Box 9: People don't know about GRT culture

"I don't think so because they don't really know much about Travellers." Mary

Despite a positive visit to the GRT camp, organised in one school, children felt this had been quickly forgotten. They perceived this as an isolated attempt to raise cultural awareness, therefore somewhat tokenistic (Box 10).

"No... no-one ever mentioned it [the camp visit] again...
everyone just forgot about it..." Sienna

### 3.3.3 Thematic Map 3: Integration & Fulfilment of Needs

Three overarching themes described the experiences of needs being met through the school community. These are demonstrated in Figure 7.

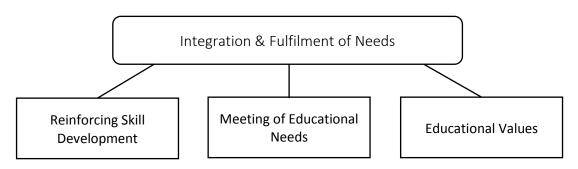


Figure 7: Thematic map of themes relating to 'Integration & Fulfilment of Needs'

GRT children described some occasions where they had the opportunity to demonstrate competence in GRT specific skills, for example, domestic skills they had acquired from their cultural experiences (Box 11).

Box 11: Opportunity for demonstrating skills

"My form tutor...his desk used to be really messy and I was like 'oh yeah well...this is what we do to keep our house clean and neat and organised'...and he's used some of those tips to keep his desk organised." Suellen

There was the perception, however, that teachers were not always aware of the specific skill-sets which GRT children had, and there were limited opportunities to demonstrate these to the wider school community.

The ability of the school community to meet the educational needs of the GRT children varied. Some perceived there to be a purpose in attending school, in particular to acquire functional skills such as handling money and developing verbal communication skills, which would be important for future careers (Box 12).

### Box 12: Important aspects of education

"Yeah...well I know how to count money...that's one main thing... I think I'll be needing to know how to like count money..." Billy

Other children felt that school did not meet their educational needs, particularly the volume of repetition they experienced when shifting between schools, and the work they had missed being explicitly highlighted to them upon their return (Box 13).

### Box 13: Missing out when shifting

"I feel like I've missed stuff because there's lots of pages that just say 'absent absent absent' on every single page...like...my book is just filled with 'absent'..." Sienna

The final theme demonstrated a difference in the 'Educational Values' of the GRT children, compared to the perceived values of the school community. Children shared the disparity they felt between their culture and the school culture; differing constructs of education, the absence of shared values and the measurement of 'success' criteria, which often resulted in them defending their lifestyle choices (Box 14).

Box 14: Disparity between GRT culture and school culture

"When they're saying 'get a proper education' they see education as being one thing and we see it as...something else..." Billy

Many shared the alternative pathways for GRT children, such as the typical route for boys in joining their fathers at work, and their perceptions of teacher's views on this (Box 15).

Box 15: Teachers views on 'the future'

"They're not used to it and think 'that's a bit weird...why would you want to do that...why would you want to waste your life..." Suellen

### 3.3.4 Thematic Map 4: Shared Emotional Connection

The final thematic map demonstrates the three themes relating to 'Shared Emotional Connection', shown in Figure 8.

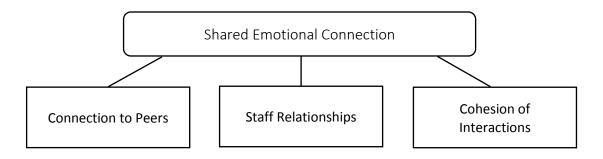


Figure 8: Thematic map of themes relating to 'Shared Emotional Connection'

The theme 'Connection to Peers' explored relationships between the children in the school community. Whilst most GRT children spoke of their friendships with non-GRTs, their accounts suggested they had closer connections to GRT peers. GRT children described having distinct groups of friends (GRT and non-GRT) and consciously moving between appropriate discussion topics depending on the group they were interacting with. Several children referred to the special connection they have to the other GRT children in the school community and why this connection was preferable (Box 16).

Box 16: Safety of GRT connections

"Well we can like...talk about everything that... I don't know...like Gypsy things." Mary

'Staff Relationships' described the quality of interactions that GRT children experienced with staff in school; the varied interest of teachers in GRT children, and the varied relationships as a result of this. All children spoke about the quality relationship they experienced with the TEAS teacher who supported them in school; their unwavering interest, and their knowledge and experience of working with the GRT community which enabled an open and honest relationship (Box 17).

"Cause like...she like...understands the Travelling community because she's worked with Travellers...all in the town...so she'd actually understand..." Suellen

The final theme, 'Cohesion of interactions' described the children's perceptions of their wider connections within the school community. These were varied with some feeling that teachers liked GRT children whilst others perceived the GRT community to be widely disliked. The children appeared to be happier to share their cultural life events with others if they perceived they were liked by teachers. There was a general consensus of a perceived 'school family' which I interpreted as the 'spiritual bond' referred to by McMillan and Chavis (1986). However, most children perceived there to be a sub-group of GRT children within the wider community, and some did not feel a sense of being connected to the wider school community (Box 18).

#### Box 18: Community experience

There's a school community but like...not everyone is happy about it...some people feel more included than others...so I know like I'm in this big school but I don't really feel as included because of like...who I am really... I'm not like other people so it just makes me feel really awkward and like I stick out...it's not fun..." Suellen

#### 3.4 Discussion

The research question to be explored was: What are the experiences of Psychological Sense of Community in school among Gypsy Roma & Traveller children in one English Local Authority? The implications of the findings for the research question will now be discussed in the light of the wider literature and the theoretical concepts of PSOC (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

#### 3.4.1 Membership

Difficulties in experiencing a sense of membership to the school community appeared to be linked to issues of identity. There were uncertainties amongst the GRT children of how they

could 'fit in' with other members of the school community whilst preserving their GRT identity, and a sense of having to 'change' to fit in with the majority. There was also uncertainty as to others' awareness of their GRT identity, and whether revealing their GRT identity would unsettle the status quo. Wider literature suggests difficulties in distinguishing between community and ethnic identity and how to establish notions of belonging, inclusion and exclusion for each (Mossakowski et al., 2019; Puddifoot, 1996). Some GRT children take active measures to hide their ethnic identity when "crossing into the non-Gypsy world" to adopt a school community identity (Myers, 2018, p. 362), as revealing ethnic identity may place them outside of the boundary of those who belong (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). If ethnicity is a strong, central component of one's identity, this can increase sensitivity to intergroup experiences, such as discrimination (Mossakowski et al., 2019) which may limit PSOC within school.

The components of 'Membership' (e.g. shared values, norms and symbols) as suggested by McMillan and Chavis's theory propose uniformity, which is arguably "antagonistic to the promotion of respect for diversity" (Rochira, 2018, p. 973). When unity between sub-groups is hard to achieve and a binary code of "us versus them" (Macia, 2016, p. 117) exists within a community, there is a risk of separation and power imbalance. Rochira (2018) grapples with holding diversity and sense of community in tension, and suggests there is a need for positive inter-ethnic exchanges, such as sharing food traditions, histories and customs. These offer ethnic groups the opportunity to represent their community to allow a "cultural junction" to be reached (Rochira, 2018, p. 977), which facilitates appreciation of respect for diversity. Connections between diverse cultural groups can then be nurtured, promoting social inclusion that supports the development of bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000). Schools may need to find ways to encourage GRT children to be open about their identity, whilst providing genuine opportunities to build connections between the GRT children and wider school community. It is important that such opportunities are meaningful and sustained, such as regular visits to the GRT camp and experiences shared and embedded within the school community. They then may be perceived as less tokenistic than previous attempts.

#### 3.4.2 Influence

In these interviews GRT children described examples of how they had influenced others in the school community, but these were limited. The limited nature of these experiences is not uncommon across PSOC research which has explored children's influence in school (Pooley et al., 2008). Research by Sayer et al. (2013) suggested that primary school children may have a lesser sense of influence over their school community, due to salient power imbalances that exist between teachers and pupils, and most of the participants in this research were primary school children.

A sense of influencing others in this research, therefore, appeared to depend more on the cultural awareness of others and their willingness to be influenced by GRT culture. This reflects McMillan and Chavis's (1986) notion of consensual validation, which involves people possessing "an inherent need to know that the things they see, feel, and understand are experienced in the same way by others" (p. 11). GRT children in this research appeared to lack a sense of reciprocal influence within the wider school community, as their attempts to culturally influence others were not validated. McMillan (1996) asserted that, where some members of the community are allocated more power than others, this causes issues with authority and members are unable to influence each other reciprocally. GRT children may be even less likely to have influence, being subject not only to teacher-pupil power imbalance, but an additional power imbalance as a result of their ethnicity. Montero (1998) suggested, however, that minorities can be successful in repressing the dominant influence of the majority by adopting a position of "perseverance, consistency, insistence and resistance" (p. 288), exercising their influence through a subtle process of conversion over time. It is important, therefore, that schools support GRT children to exercise their influence within the school community, and that they are given regular opportunities to do so. For example, being provided regular opportunities to demonstrate GRT specific skills and teach these to others. This may be an important supporting role for the TEAS, who can bridge the gap between the school community and the GRT community, given their status in both groups, and their professional status as an advocate for the GRT children.

#### 3.4.3 Integration and Fulfilment of Needs

This element focused on how well the educational needs of the GRT children were met, based on their future aspirations within the GRT community. Although functional skills were valued and seen as important, the wider curriculum was seen as contributing little, and therefore did not serve their needs. This is a vital aspect of reinforcement, which is a key motivator to be part of group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). This is likely to be a crucial factor in the retention of GRT children in education, particularly beyond primary school. Children

commonly discussed the likelihood of exiting education in Year Six. Some however were keen to return to college to access skills based courses at 16. GRT children may miss essential development of their literacy and numeracy skills, raising concerns about their outcomes (D'Arcy, 2014).

Sense of community is fostered when people have shared values, and similar needs, priorities and goals (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). However, different constructions of 'education' and success criteria were apparent in the interviews with the children who participated in this research. Hamilton (2018a) contended that "the individualist nature of mainstream education (gaining formal qualifications for social and financial independence), goes against the collective principles of the GRT cultures, putting individuals at risk of intracultural conflict" (p. 12). However, Hamilton also noted that some GRT children strive to achieve formal qualifications, therefore educational professionals should not assume the vocational route. This suggests that it is important to identify GRT children's aspirations at a young age and to provide an education which enables them to achieve this. Schools may choose to adopt a proactive role in communicating the relevance of progression to Further Education, particularly in primary schools, to demonstrate that this may be a useful and helpful educational journey for GRT children to engage with.

#### 3.4.4 Shared Emotional connection

GRT children spoke about positive interactions, shared community events, and a strong emotional bond with their GRT peers. This connection was extended to the TEAS teacher, who, although not of GRT ethnicity, was valued for their understanding of GRT culture and allowing the GRT children to be heard. Access to those with GRT connections enabled the school community to be a setting where the children could express themselves and see themselves "mirrored in the eyes and responses of others" (McMillan, 1996, p. 315). The strong sense of social unity amongst the GRT children appeared to suggest a subcommunity within the wider school community. Brodsky and Marx (2001) explored the notion of a multiple PSOC within a setting, suggesting that 'micro-belongings' can exist in sub-communities within the macro-community, particularly where there are subcultural groups. Brodsky and Marx suggested a positive relationship within the sub-community can promote success of the macro-community, and thus the two are mutually dependent. Although some may fear that the existence of a sub-community will make the macro-community less meaningful, the sub-community should be respected, promoted and

supported, and should not be "viewed as threatening or experienced as divisive" (Brodsky & Marx, 2001, p. 176). It is contended that "the answer to the "problem" of diversity lies less in erasing difference, but promoting and recognising the necessity of diversity as a rich, textured whole" (p. 177). This suggests that schools may want to promote and encourage the development of GRT sub-communities to support a sense of micro belonging, whilst exploring ways to foster a positive connection to the macro-community. The aforementioned "cultural junction" (Rochira, 2018, p. 977) may offer a way forward in strengthening the connections between established groups within the wider school community.

#### 3.5 Conclusion & Implications

There is limited empirical literature exploring GRT children's experiences of school from a psychological, theoretical perspective. This final section aims to summarise the key findings of the current study, consider the limitations, and offer some implications for the practice of EPs.

### **3.5.1** *Summary*

The aim of this research was to explore GRT children's rich, lived experiences of school as a community, informed by the theory of PSOC (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Findings suggest that, for the children in this research, their GRT identity should be fostered, perhaps through the encouragement of a GRT sub-community which supports the development of micro-belongings. It may be that by encouraging frequent shared experiences of GRT culture with the wider school community, and increasing others' exposure to GRT culture through regular, subtle opportunities of influence, a "cultural junction" (Rochira, 2018, p. 977) may be facilitated. The findings also suggest that schools need to support GRT children to realise their aspirations and understand these within the context of family practices. This has implications for the width and flexibility of the curriculum offered, particularly where GRT children shift frequently between schools. This research has provided the GRT children involved with the opportunity to share their experiences and have their voices heard. In addition, the application of psychological theory has been helpful to further unpick school experiences from the often surface level issues

that are regularly reported in the literature. The themes presented in the findings have a likeness to the constructs offered in the systematic literature review in Chapter 1. However, the application of PSOC has enabled consideration of the multifaceted nature of social inclusion for GRT children. Within the four elements of PSOC, there are some suggestions for ways in which social inclusion within the school community can be facilitated for GRT children in schools, whilst also celebrating difference. This goes further than improving the curriculum and highlights the cultural nuances that are specific to this ethnic group.

#### 3.5.2 Limitations

Issues regarding GRT children's availability due to travelling commitments meant that fewer children took part than was expected, therefore there are issues of representation. I do not consider the findings to be generalisable to all GRT children as the work was focused on GRT children's experiences within one LA. This project does not intend to represent the views of all GRT children. The issues raised here will offer a starting point for further dialogue with the GRT community, schools, and the TEAS.

It is also important to acknowledge that this research drew upon a theoretical model that was developed in western society. EPs must be cautious of how the application of psychology that is predominantly predicated from white western communities is relevant to groups such as GRT whose cultural beliefs and experiences differ significantly (Williams, Weerasinghe, & Hobbs, 2015). As there is a lack of appropriate and culturally relevant psychology to particular ethnic groups, psychology based upon dominant western cultural understandings may be limited in the insights it can offer (British Psychological Society, 2017). It is hoped, however, that the cultural nuances that have been constructed in this study offer a helpful way forward for applying theory to practice.

### 3.5.3 Implications for EPs

Researchers assert that EPs should consider sense of community in schools when discussing inclusive practices with staff (Sayer et al., 2013), and this is arguably most important for children from marginalised groups such as GRT. This research has been useful in exploring the perspectives of GRT children about their experiences of PSOC in school. EPs are well placed to explore these experiences with school staff, emphasising how such experiences are likely to influence motivation and attainment (Pollock, 2019). The findings of this project could therefore be incorporated into a framework for practice, editing McMillan & Chavis's

(1986) original theoretical framework with the addition of the specific GRT cultural nuances under each element where relevant. For example, within 'Shared Emotional Connection', EPs may want to support staff in encouraging the development of GRT sub-communities within school, to encourage the development of micro-belongings. Within the 'Influence' element, there is continuing work to be done to support GRT children in schools to have cultural influence over the majority. EPs can promote this through continued links with the TEAS and raising their profile within the LA. The findings have also been helpful to build the foundations for a larger project within the LA, supporting career development and future aspirations for GRT children who have disengaged with the formal educational offer. It is hoped that EP involvement in such projects will build capacity within the LA and secure a Service Level Agreement between the EPS and the TEAS, ensuring that multi-agency working continues (Myers, 2018). A framework for practice is particularly useful for the current EPS in the LA where no such model exists when working with GRT children in the local schools. Ideas and new interpretations may be helpful for EPs working with the GRT community in other areas, although findings should be treated with caution and may need to be tailored to individual GRT communities. It is hoped that the insights into the nuanced experiences of GRT children using PSOC will offer EPs a way forward in promoting positive change for GRT children in education.

# 4.0 Appendices

# 4.1 Appendix A: Parent Information and Consent form

# About the Project

	About the Project
an Th fee	y name is Lucy Pollock. I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist working for In doing a research project to explore Gypsy Roma and Traveller children's experiences of school. We research aims to find out how teachers in schools can help Gypsy Roma and Traveller children to sel part of their school community and improve their experience of school. I am doing this research part of my Doctoral studies at Newcastle University
Yo	ur Child's Involvement
•	I would like to involve your child in a discussion with me, where I will be accompanied by  from the Traveller Education and Achievement Service. You will be asked if you agree to this. I will only speak to your child if you agree.
•	An information sheet will be provided for your child and it will be made clear that they can choose not to take part if they wish
•	During this discussion we will chat about your child's experiences of school. The discussion with your child will be scheduled at a time which will minimise the disruption to their school day. You will be informed of the date and time of the interview once this has been arranged.
Fu	rther Information
•	It is not compulsory to take part in this project, so your child can withdraw from the project prior to, during, or after the discussions, and they can choose not to answer questions if they wish.
•	Notes will be taken about what your child says. They will be able to check these throughout, and at the end of the discussion. I will also audio record my conversation with your child, with your permission. Your child also will be given the choice about whether or not their voices are recorded. If you and your child agree to this, the recording will be stored securely and it will be destroyed once the project has been written up.
•	I will be writing a report based on this research. Your name, your child's name and your child's school name will not be used when the project is written up, so answers will remain confidential and anonymous.
•	You and your child will be able to see the research report when it is finished.
me Ba	you have any further questions about the aims of this research project, please feel free to contact e at any time. I have included my contact details below, and those of my supervisor, Dr. Wilma rrow, who is based at Newcastle University. You can also contact from the Traveller lucation and Achievement Service, and I have also include her details below.

# Parental Consent Form

# Dear [Parent's name]

Your child is invited to be involved in a project which will explore you're their experiences of school, and I am writing to provide you with information about the project and what it will involve. I have attached an information sheet with details about the project. This includes information about how to contact me if you would like to discuss this further, or if you have any questions about the project. My research supervisor is Dr. Wilma Barrow who is based at Newcastle University. I have also included her contact information.

When you have looked over the information please could you complete the form below to let me know if you are happy for your child to take part in this project. I am happy for you to discuss this with from the Traveller Education and Achievement Service, if you wish to do so, before you return the form.
Yours Sincerely Lucy Pollock Trainee Educational Psychologist
I am happy for my child to meet with Lucy and to talk about his/her experiences of school.
I have read and understood the information provided about the project and had opportunity to ask any questions.
Yes No
I am happy for the discussion between my child, Lucy and to be audio recorded.
Yes No
Signature Date
Thank you for agreeing for your child to be involved in this project. Your child's views will be greatly valued.

### 4.2 Appendix B: Child Information and Consent form

# About the Project

•	My name is Lucy Pollock. I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist working for
	I am doing a research project to explore Gypsy Roma and
	Traveller children's experiences of school.
•	Myself and from the Traveller Education and Achievement
	Service will visit you to have a chat about your experiences of school. Taking
	part in this discussion is your choice. You do not need to take part.

- We will talk to you about your experiences of school and what school has been like for you. I will use what you tell me in the discussion to write a report about school experiences of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.
- Your real name will not be used in the project and the real name of your school will not be used. If I use anything you have said I will make sure that nobody will be able to work out that you said it. This is called making the data 'anonymous'.
- If you don't want to answer a particular question, you don't have to.
- You can ask us questions at any time.
- You can stop at any time, if you wish. You won't have to give a reason for why you want to stop.
- I will audiotape our discussion so that I can remember all of the information you have shared. The audio recording will be kept securely and will not have your name attached to it. It will be destroyed when I have written the report.
- Your parents have agreed that you can take part in this project.

Please read the statements below and tick  $\checkmark$  the boxes if you agree. If you tick  $\checkmark$  in the boxes this means you are happy to be involved in the project.

Triester Miles	I have read the information about the project and talked to the adults involved about it.	
$\bigcirc$ °	I have had time to think about the information.	
<b>EXIT</b>	I know that I can leave the project at any time and I won't have to give a reason.	
NAME	I understand that my real name will not be used.	
	I understand that notes will be taken about what I say.	
	I am happy for my voice to be recorded during the session.	
	I am happy to take part in the project.	

Signed:	Date:

### 4.3 Appendix C: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Red font: Thought bubble (Internal) Green font: Speech bubble (External)

em		

As a Gypsy/Roma/Traveller...

- Do you feel that you belong in this school? What do you feel that it means to 'belong' to this school?
- Do you feel that secure and safe in this school? What helps with this?
- Do you feel that you fit in with the other people in your school?
- How do you know that you are part of the school?
- Are there things that you do to contribute to being part of this school?
- Do you make an effort to be part of this school? How?
- Would you tell other GRT children to come to this school?
- Are GRT children able to feel they belong in this school?
- Do you feel that the teachers and other adults in school accept who you are?
- Are there people that don't belong in this school?
- Are there things that the school does to help you feel as though you belong?
- What does the school do to make sure that GRT children can have their say about things that happen in this school?

#### Influence

As a Gypsy/Roma/Traveller...

- Do you have new ideas are you feel you are able to bring to change things in the school?
- What new ideas are you able to bring from the GRT community into school? Are these accepted by the adults and other children?
- How are your ideas about changing things in the school received by others?
- Do you feel that your ideas about XXX fit with the ideas that the school have about XXX?
- Are there things you feel you have to change about yourself to 'fit in' at this school?
- What do the teachers in school think about the ideas you are able to bring from the GRT community?
- Are the teachers in school interested in hearing your ideas?
- What do you think the teachers think is important about the GRT community?
- Are the adults and children in school interested in hearing about the GRT community?

#### **Integration & Fulfilment of Needs**

As a Gypsy/Roma/Traveller...

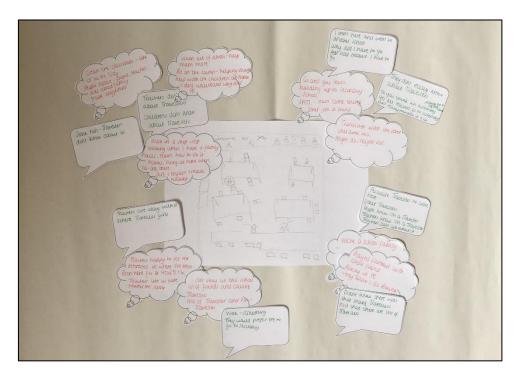
- Do you feel that you can succeed in this school? What successes have you had?
- What benefits/positive outcomes do you get from being part of this school?
- What goals do you have? Is this school able to help you to meet these goals?
- What is important to you about being part of this school?
- What do have to do to be successful in this school? What does a successful pupil look like?
- Do other GRT children succeed at this school?
- Do the teachers want the same things for you as you want for yourself? If not, what are the differences?
- Are there things that are important to other people in this school that are important to you too?

#### **Shared Emotional Connection**

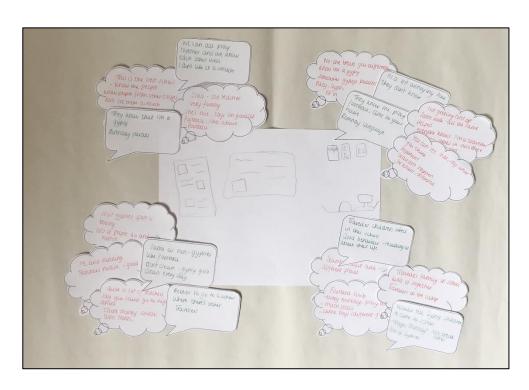
As a Gypsy/Roma/Traveller...

- Do you enjoy spending time with other people at this school?
- How do you get on with other people at this school?
- Are there some events in your life that have been important to you that you have been able to share with people at school?
- Are there things that have gone well/not so well for you at school that other people have been aware of?
- Do you feel that there is a 'community spirit' in your school?
- Does the school encourage people to care for each other?
- Would other GRT children say that they are liked by people in this school?
- What would the adults in school say they liked about the GRT children in this school?
- What do other people think about the children from the GRT community?
- Is the school proud of your achievements?
- Is the school keen to involve GRT children in sharing their important events?

# 4.4 Appendix D: Examples of Completed Pupil View Templates



Henry's Pupil View Template



Billy's Pupil View Template

# **4.5 Appendix E: Thematic Analysis**

Membership				
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme	
"They justthey just treat me like any other children" "No they mix with the Non-Travellers cause like they're all in different years" "ErrmWell all of us get the same work really"	Treated the same as others No segregation Given same work	Equality Collectives enhance security		
"NoI can just be myself" "YeahI do feel that I fit in because likebecause we just talk about the same things to be honest"	Being yourself Feeling of fitting in	Relatedness Sense of belonging and		
"Other people who like don't like school or don't like the lessonsI feel like I can like[fit in with them]" "Their Mam's don't have proper proper jobsand stuff like thatlike I feel like I fit in with them almostyeah"	Fit in with other 'school rejecters' Commonalities with non- working parent families	identification, that one fits in with the group		
"Have likereally good motivation to have like an amazing job like a doctornurseor likea teacher or something likereally really good jobs that are likeeveryone knows aboutthey fit"	Academically driven people fit in		Protective Elements	
"[name of teacher] knows what a gorja is because [name of Gypsy child] calls [child] a Gorja all the timeso the teacher knows what it meansShe says to [name of Gypsy child] you know she's a gypsy so stop calling a Gorja" "She's [the teacher] funnyshe says like words in weird ways on purpose "Wellthey'd always help you with your work orif you're ever stuck on	Teachers' know GRT language  Funny teachers  Help with work	Teacher support Emotional safety/security established		
something"  "Because obviously she [the teacher] wants me to try and finish my work so then that's done and like try and get through as many things as I possibly can"  "My mam can'tmy dad can do mathsmy mam can't even spell 'girl' or anythingshe can't spell anything I would try and do itand then I would ask the teacher like the next day if it wasn't due in"	Teachers help despite uncertainty Support with homework			

Membership				
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme	
"Well sometimes I don't get told off I've never actually been told off or had a detention yet" "YeahI do because like everybody is nicethey're all nice" "Because likeobviously there's dinner ladies out and that the gates are always lockedandlike so when you go to the classroom the teacher always	Not being told off  People are nice  Feeling safe	Emotional Security Emotional safety/security established		
closes the door so likewhenever anything could happen" "Errthey see me run pretty much every yearyeahthey say I'm the fastest in the class"	People notice strengths			
"Yeah it doeslikeyeahit helps likelike there's things where you can volunteer to take like classes on a trip and my mam does that they just welcome everybody in"	Parents welcomed into school			
"Yeah because when I'm here with them likeI feel like I've known them for ages"  "Ermyeah my class do cause yeahwe've been there a long time"  "Yeahcause we start this school because it's better because it's near to the campso we're only down thereits only round the corner and it's not far to drive"	Knowing people  Been at school for long time  Proximity of school to camp	Familiarity Sense of belonging /identification, that one fits with the group		
"They just include us all in everything"  "Ermwe go every Monday night and we sometimes play football matches or do shooting"  "Ermhe picked me for a football team"	Included in everything Attending school clubs Chosen for extra activities	Involvement  Personal  investment in the  group, group  intimacy		
"Well yeah because sometimes you get bullied at school which here you don't"  "Likein this schoolI don't knowI'd probably go and tell the teacherthey would liketell them offsomething like that	No bullying Teachers respond to bullying	Experiences of Bullying Boundaries of	Rejecting	
"Right so you sometimes get called 'pikey'you get called 'gypo'and some things like that"  "It depends how they're feeling reallythat sounds horrible but ermlikeit depends on the people that you're talking toso say if I went to like [name	Called derogatory names  Varied response to bullying	people who belong and people who do not, emotional	factors	

Membership			
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme
of teacher]or something and said like 'oh yeah they were being horrible		safety – response	
about my culture' and stuff like thatshe'd do something about itbut if I		to this	
went to likeI don't know [name of teacher] she'd be like 'oh yeah well I'll look			
into it later' because she says she has more important matters"			
"Well if people ask you like if I was like to say cause I didn't translate 'Oh I live	Change and explain vocabulary	Changing self	
in a trailer' you would have to like…explain what it was to them"		Boundaries of	
"It just made me feel a bit like 'oh I have to change this about me so I can fit	Changing appearance	people who	
in with them''oh yeah I need to stop wearing all these clothes so I look like		belong and	
them''oh I need to liketone it down'"		people who do	
"Yeah so like my friend that lives in [town] there's some stuff that she can	Different to peers	not, sense of	
dolike not necessarily that I'm not able"		identification,	
"I stand out because likeone the way I look I've got a big Armani a big	Different appearance	common symbol	
bright pink Armani bag that I can just fit all my stuff inand like I've got		systems	
designer shoes like Vivienne Westwood shoesor like some people just go to			
new look and buy a £20 pair of shoes and like wearing make-up and do my			
hair andI haven't got earrings in today but I have big earrings too"			
"Nothey don't pick out the good differences"	Differences not positively	No celebration	
	highlighted	of difference	
"No there's nothing [special event to celebrate gypsies]they don't make a big	No GRT celebration event	Sense of	
thing"		Identification	
"Like they'll say 'Oh she's back!' and stuff like that"	Welcomed back from Travelling	Acceptance of	
"YeahI'd get a part but I wouldn't be herelike they'd put a part on for me	Involvement despite	Travelling	Cultural
just in case I only went for the day"	uncertainty of travelling	Sense of	
		belonging and	Acceptance
		acceptance	

Membership				
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme	
"It sounds horrible when you say 'belong' I've got like this friend and she's Muslimthere's stuff that she can't do because it's like against her religion and stuff like thatsounds horrible when I say belong but she doesn't like 'belong' here"	Ethnic minorities don't belong	GRT ethnicity incompatible Sense of belonging and		
"Say if I said 'oh yeah I went to the temple' and one of the thingsthe towers fell off the mosqueif they fell off they'd be like 'oh wow did they' like they would actually acknowledge that question and give a replyshe just went 'mmm' and turned away and started writing on the board with me!"	Ethnicities not equally valued	acceptance Sense of Identification		
"Some aspects yeahothersno because there's some things that like my friends do and likeI don't necessarily can't do because it's not likeTravellerish if that makes senseso like if my friends likeI don't know it's hard to explainlike say my friends like want to go to like university and stuff like thatI couldn't necessarily do that because I'd be at home cleaning and helping my mam and stuff like that"	Some aspects not Traveller-ish			
"It's not like a 'thing' to be a Traveller there if that makes senseit's more like posh peopleit's not like common to see a Traveller in like your class or somethingit's just all like Gorjas"	Not a 'thing' to be a Traveller			
"I wouldn't tell them I was a Traveller or anything because I'd be	GRT ethnicity unknown to	Others knowing		
embarrassedbecause they'd be asking loads of questions and stuff like	others	of ethnicity		
thatit would just make me feel really really awkward"		Sense of		
"Everybody knows I'm a Gypsythey know that Gypsies travel a lot so"	GRT ethnicity known to others	belonging and acceptance		
"Some teachers yeahthey're like 'oh yeah that's part of your culture'"	Teachers accept cultural norms	Acceptance of		
"They are just like 'hmmm well why are you leaving schoolwhy are you	Teachers question cultural	Cultural Norms		
wasting your life cleaning and cooking' and stuff like that"	norms	Sense of		
"Some people likerespectbut others are like 'well that's stupid why are you doing thatwell why are you wasting your life' and then others are like 'yeah well that's your culture you can do whatever you want'"	Varied response to GRT culture	belonging and acceptance		

Membership				
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme	
"Really what I look at it is asyou're born a Gypsy, you can't help ityou're not born a Gypsy, you can't help it so "My big sistercause my big sistershe went through full schoolnot like leaving how I willshe did go to [name of secondary school] for like a weekbut because she was losing her Gypsy instincts if that makes senselike her ways if you went to [name of Secondary School] with themfull schooland they say something that maybe you don't want to know aboutand you think well that can be losing my Gypsy"	Identity  Danger of losing Gypsy ways	Preserving GRT Identity Sense of belonging and identification		
"I've never told anyone…I just say where I've been…when I've been…when I've just come back from Scotland" "Erm…I've never really told them I want to be a boxer"	Don't tell about Travelling Don't tell about future aspirations	Minimising cultural associations Sense of belonging and identification		

Influence	ce	
Data Extracts	Codes	Theme
"Ersometimes weI could pick the team for football"  "I've influenced like my friend's like the way that they dressthey're starting to like the stuff that I likelike blinged out jeansand diamanté tops and stuff like thatmy friendall she would wear was likeAdidasNike trainersand now I've likenot changed her but likeinfluenced her to be more like'oh yeah try these glittery jeans on and stuff like that'"  "It depends on the teacher that you're talking to"	Opportunity to lead in football club Influenced non-GRT's appearance	Opportunity  Members are more attracted to a group if they have some influence over what the group does
"No they don't ask about me being a Traveller"	on teacher Teachers don't ask directly	Polystones of Others
"It depends what type of teacherif you're that teacher that's a knowledge box and knows everything or if you're that type of teacher that doesn't get involved in anythinglike just sits at the desk"	Teacher interest varies	Reluctance of Others  Cohesiveness is contingent on a group's ability to influence its members
"Nothey just don't really talk about Travellersit's not really mentioned"	Teachers don't mention GRT culture	
"NoI don't think soI don't think they'd be bothered about it [learning GRT traditions]"	No interest in learning GRT traditions	
"Not really [get chance to share]nowin Year six definitely not because likeyou don't have enough time in a day to do itso say on an afternoon you have to do your RE"	No time to share GRT culture	Sharing GRT culture  Pressure for conformity and uniformity comes from the need for consensual
"We were doing like 'weather' and I was likeand I said oh yeah there was one time when it was storming and our satellite fell off the top of the trailer and she was like'hmmm okay'and didn't acknowledge whatever I said just turned away'"	GRT references in lessons not valued	validation – that things we experience are understood in the same way by others
"Not everybody just if some people come and ask me"  "Well it depends really what class you're insince when you get older you don't but when you were younger in the little classes you could"  "If someone asked me about my culture then yeahl'd be happy to [explain]"	Culture not readily shared More opportunity to share when younger Share GRT culture when given opportunity	Influential by sharing culture

Influence				
Data Extracts	Codes	Theme		
"Nonot reallyand I don't really want to because I don't think they need to know"  "Yeah because maybe some people are likeoh I won't tell anyone then start speaking it and I think 'okay right you said to me that you won't tell anyone' and I think it's important that you keep your promises especially with my culture and my language and then they go round saying it and some people that do it don't even know what half of it means"	Don't want to share Keeping cultural idiosyncrasies safe			
"ErmI don't think so because they don't really know much about Travellers"  "They were justamazed!They just said that like 'Really? Will we be able to go to your trailer?"  "Like there could be more things about Travellers around the school"  "Noeveryone just forgot about it"  "Yeahbecause we don't have any displaysI can remember when we did because we used to bring in the cans and we used to show them all off"	People don't know about GRT culture Positive reaction to camp visit More awareness would be better Camp visit forgotten No displays in school	Cultural Awareness  Consensual validation – that things we experience are understood in the same way by others		

Integration & Fulfilm	nent of Needs		
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme
"Wellwe bake at schoolor sometimes you do in likethe infants"  "My form tutorhis desk used to be really messy and I was like 'oh yeah wellthis is what we do to keep our house clean and neat and organised'and he's used some of those tips to keep his desk organised"  "Once we done boxing in PElike two years agowell like we didn't boxwe didn't sparwe just done parts"  "Yeahwe learned about like Christians and churches and thatand like I know about that"  "They don't really say thatI don't really do artwe don't paint that much"	Opportunity to demonstrate baking skills Opportunity to demonstrate cleaning skills Opportunity to demonstrate boxing skills Demonstrate religious knowledge No opportunity to demonstrate skills	Opportunity for demonstrating skills  Demonstrating competence to others	Reinforcing skill development
"They don't know I can do white lining" "They'd say not a lot of non-gypsies know how to clean up very welllike some of them don't cleanand gypsy girls have to clean up when they go home"	Teachers unaware of skills Teachers aware of cleaning skills	Teacher awareness of skills Others' awareness of competence	
"Like when I'm in food tech and textileslike they try to teach me new things and I'm likeI already know this from likesitting with my Granny and my mam and stuff like thatand they've just taught meyeah so food tech I can sit and complete and have it all in the oven because I've had my granny and stuff saying 'this is how you do it' and 'this is a better way' and just YeahI know how to do this"  "Yeahwell I've doneI was doing column addition when I was here and then when I went to Scotland they called it 'chimney sums' and I was doing it again I think it's very easy because I've learned about it once"	Learning skills already gained from GRT culture  Doing the same work in different schools	Repetition in Learning Association with school as a rewarder How does the school serve the needs	Meeting of educational needs
"Yeahbecause like college you'll learn how to do like different things don't youyou can learn maths in college can't youbut girls can do hair and beauty and boys can do different things as well"	College course will help with future career	Important aspects of education	

Integration & Fulfilment of Needs			
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme
"The lessons that I have here aren't necessarily for things I need but likethe skills that I'll need to maybe do a certain aspect of that job so like if I want to do beauty I'll need good communication skills and the school could help me not be shy and communicate with people"  "Yeahwell I know how to count moneythat's one main thing I think I'll be needing to know how to like count money"  "So that isn't really the reason though why I come to schoolI have to learnbecause you won't get a good job"	Key skills are important  Handling money  Value education	Association with school as a rewarder How does the school serve the needs	
"I want to be a footballerif I was a footballer I would be the world's bestsometimes we go outside and do footballand football at break time and football club"  "Theymost people likedon't do like white lininglike non-Travellersthey don't do white lining so they don't teach them"	School will help with future career School doesn't help with future career	Purpose of school Association with school as a rewarder How does the school serve the needs	
"Sometimes when people say 'You've missed' like 'good school trips' or something"  "I feel like I've missed stuff because at there's lots of pages that just say 'absent absent absent' on every single pagelikemy book is just filled with 'absent'I feel likewhy did I have to miss out and thatlike why did I have to goand I feel bad because I had to go"	Missing events when shifting Missing school work when shifting	Missing out when shifting Association with school as a rewarder How does the school serve the needs	
"Well we have to pass likeour SATsbecause it goes up every year" "I don't know reallyit depends if like they've got good grades and stuff like that" "Some of them [GRT children] don't want to do their SATsquite a lot of them don't"	Successful pupils pass exams Good levels to be successful	Education 'success' criteria Shared values	Educational Values

Integration & Fulfilment of Needs			
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme
	GRT children don't want to do SATs		
"When they're saying 'get a proper education' they see education as being one thing and we see it assomething else" "So likeyou learn morebut you're there for quite a lot and you learn nearly everything from being at this schoolI think" "Well yeah because sometimes me mam likeshe needs more help with the kids so she's got three kids to look afterlike yeahshe needs more help so likesome things are more important at home than they are here"	Different construct of 'education' Primary school education is adequate Home commitments more important  Don't have shared values	Disparity between GRT culture and school culture Shared values	
"No not reallycause like things that are important to me they don't think are importantlike keeping a nice tidy house and looking your best at all times" "Like I wish I'd never said thatthey think that I'm really stupid now Yeah I was likeI sound really stupid nowor I'll say like my Dad is a doctor or something like maybe seem likemore like them" "Likewellnot my fault I'm like this is itit's my mam's decision not yours"	Feeling stupid  Defending lifestyle choices		
"Some of them doand some of them already know when you leave school people do thatso they understand likeif you do leave school and you don't go to [name of secondary school] or anythingyou will have to likeclean up and that"	Teachers accept domestic lifestyle	Teachers views on 'the future' Shared values	
"Well they would likehelp you at your work at stuff like thatand they would help yousupport your dreamscause they said to everyone in the class 'whatever you want to do you can do'they always say that"  "She'd be like 'I'm disgusted'like that he shouldn't be dropping out of school 'I'm disgusted'she'd probably be like that"  "They think it's just a bit strangepeople will just be like 'oh yes I want to go to	Teachers support future ambitions  Teachers want different for future  Different expectations for		

future

school I want to be a doctor...they're not used to people coming in and saying

'oh yeah I want to leave school when I'm like 14 or something I want to clean and look after babies and cook and stuff like that... they're not used to it and

Integration & Fulfilment of Needs			
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme
think 'that's a bit weirdwhy would you want to do thatwhy would you want to waste your life'" "I don't really say it that oftenI've said it onceto the teacher and I've said it about once to some people in my class The teachershe didn't really care"	Teachers don't care about future choices		
"Because I thinkwellin our Gypsy culture it's very important that the boys goso say if there's a boy 13goes to help his Dadtilingsomething like thathe's got to do it because we think in our Gypsy culture that if their Dad goes to work by himself then he's just sat at home while all the girls are cleaning upthen it's like 'well why isn't he at work with his dad?' Why isn't he helping his Dad"	Important for boys to work with Dads	Alternative pathway for GRT boys Shared values	
"I'll first of all I'll be going to work for quite a while and I think when I'm older I'll be able to afford a van so I'll get a van and then maybeI don't knowmy dad can come to work with me"	Boys need to earn money		
"Well my dad he dropped out of [name of Secondary school] in his last year I thinkI think thatbut yeah Traveller boys do drop out of school and concentrate on their boxinglike a lot of my people that go to my gym still don't go to school"	Boys pursue boxing		

Shared Emotional Connection			
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme
"Well in this school I feel like some non-gypsies like [name of gypsy child] she plays with some non-gypsiesbut it's whatwho's friend it islike if it's my friend and she's a non-gypsy because I'm a gypsy and she's a non-gypsy I'm not just going to say I don't want to be your friend because you're a non-gypsybecause at the same time that's racist to them because she's not a gypsy"	Mix of friends Invited to non-GRT events	Friendships with non-GRT children Contact hypothesis	
"I see my Traveller friends when likewhen I'm at the gymand I see non-	Distinct groups of friends	Discrete	
Traveller friends at school" "You be and like it's different because at Revise we talk about all of the fights	Calastina dissussian tanias	friendships	
"Yeahand like it's different because at Boxing we talk about all of the fights that I've been doing and then also obviously I like football so I talk about	Selecting discussion topics	Contact	
football with them and stuff like that"		hypothesis	
Joolsan With them and stay, me that		Quality of interaction	
"I don't knowwell we all know each other and we make friends straight	GRT friendships preferable	Safety of GRT	
awaywhich we already are friends"		connections	Connection to
"YeahI thinkthere was like [name of traveller] and cause I was friends with herif someone was being horrible to me [name of traveller] would say something back to themI know it wasn't the right thing to do but it was likeshe stuck up for me"	Gypsies support other Gypsies	Shared valent event hypothesis	Peers
"My gypsy friends because obviously like I said I can talk to them In my own language and that makes me feel goodI know think it sounds silly but it makes me feel good because I can talk to someone in my language"	Connection to other GRT children		
"I'd be a bit uncomfortable without not having anyone the same like my culture with me"	Preferable to have GRT children in school		
"Well we can liketalk about everything that I don't knowlike gypsy things"	Common language with GRT peers		
"Not a lot of people know Romneywe sometimeswe shift onto a big field it's	<b>Events that only GRT</b>		
called 'Missions and Conventions'only Gypsy people know"	children understand		
"I would only tell the Travellers"	Only share GRT news with		
	GRT children		

Shared Emotional	Connection		
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme
"It's good because she [TEAS teacher] asks how we feel and she sorts it out"  "She [TEAS teacher] is very interested"  "You can say like anything you wanttalk about anything like what you think and stuffNo one will know"  "Cause likeshe likeunderstands the Travelling community because she's worked with Travellersall in [name of the town] so she'd actually understand"	Helped by TEAS Teacher TEAS teacher interested Open conversation with TEAS teacher TEAS teacher GRT culture	Valued support from TEAS Teacher Quality of interaction	
"Wellother than [name of TEAS teacher]then nonot really"	Can only share with TEAS teacher		
"Well they're interested about our life really Yeah sometimes"	Teachers sometimes interested	Teacher interest in GRT children	
"Yeahthe only thing she likes to ask people about is their bookswhat books they've read"  "Well some of them arewell they are quite nosey about it Well they ask like they ask where you livewhich I live in a house nowThey all think I still live in a trailer but I don't."	Teachers not interested  Teachers are 'nosey'	Quality of interaction	Staff Relationships
"They ask how much schools I've been to and what schools I've been to"	Teachers interested in different schools		
"One time when I was travelling I missed likeme first day in that class and I didn't really know the teacher"  "So there's like teachers that I can have a proper conversation with and teachers that I'm like 'Yeah I know the answerwrite it down' so I don't really likeI know teachers don't need to be your friends or anything but some teachers I treat as my friend because I can have a proper conversation with them"	Not knowing the teacher upon return Varied relationship with teachers	Quality of relationships with teachers Quality of interaction	
"Yeahbecause that's what they saythe head teachercalls us a family"  "There's a school community but likenot everyone is happy about itsome people feel more included than othersso I know like I'm in this big school but I	School community spirit Not fully included in school community	Community experience Spiritual Bond	Cohesion of interactions

Shared Emotional Connection			
Data Extracts	Codes	Sub-theme	Theme
don't really feel as included because of likewho I am really I'm not like other people so it just makes me feel really awkward and like I stick outit's not fun" "Yeahand sometimes schools with loads of gypsies inthere's a Gypsy family"	Gypsy community in school		
"Some people don't like gypsies and I don't really know whyI don't know if it's because of our traditions of Appleby or our horsesor likemaybe sometimes because we speak in a different languagecause some people don't like that"  "Likethey just I don't knowthey just like us She might say 'because she lives on a camp and she's well-behaved'something like that I feel that like people like us Travellerslike they want to know about us"	People Dislike Gypsies  Teachers have positive perception of Gypsies	Others' perceptions of GRTs Quality of relationship	
"Well I would only tell it to my teacher and like the other Travellers"  "Yeah like when I won a fight I show the school what I got like this massive trophy"  "Wellwhen I've been somewhere and I come back I can say to them 'Oh it was good' like 'I went to here' or 'I went to another school and I learnt this' or 'I learnt that"'	Only share events with select few Sharing awards from GRT events Sharing experiences from Travelling	Sharing of life events Shared valent event hypothesis	

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