

Jane Davidson AM

Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning
Gweinidog dros Addysg a Dysgu Gydol-Oes



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Cardiff Bay / Bae Caerdydd
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Your Ref:

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Gwenda Thomas AM
Chair – Equality of Opportunity Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
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14 March 2006

Jane Davidson,

Equality of Opportunity Committee – Government Response to the Report on Service Provision for Gypsies and Travellers

Thank you for your letter of 5 December 2005 about implementing the recommendations of the above report. I am sorry that it has taken so long to reply but as you know, I have needed to clarify a number of the issues you raised.

As to the updating of Circular 52/90 – ‘Meeting the Education needs of Travellers and Displaced Persons’, in 2005, the National Foundation for Educational Research was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to undertake research into the Education of Gypsy Traveller Children in Wales. We received their final report in January and this will be used as the basis for the revision of circular 52/90. Alongside this report, Estyn has been commissioned, as part of its remit, to undertake inspections of a sample of LEAs providing Gypsy Traveller education in order to find out whether they are fulfilling their statutory duty to educate Gypsy and Traveller pupils. Their report was likewise not finalised until January and will also be used in updating the circular. In order to take forward its revision, we are proposing to commission an external individual to do so and are in the process of identifying a suitable candidate.

You may also be aware that we are proposing to publish a consultation strategy to support the achievement of minority ethnic pupils. The strategy will be complemented by operational guidance for teachers (being produced by ACCAC).



As part of that consultation, we propose to review the distribution of the 3 grant schemes currently in operation, namely the Asylum Seeker Grant, Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant and the Traveller and Displaced Persons Grant. The outcome of this consultation process will also be taken into account when updating Circular 52/90 – Meeting the Educational Needs of Travellers and Displaced Persons.

I hope this is helpful and I will certainly keep the Committee abreast of key developments.

Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane', with a long horizontal stroke above the first letter.

Jane Davidson AM
Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning