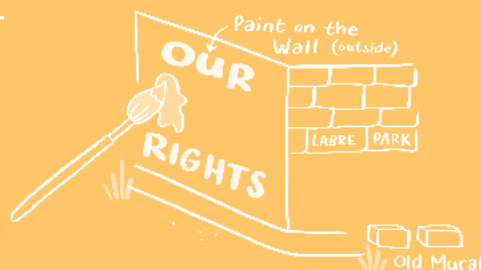




Hearing the Voice of Ballyfermot Traveller Children



“We have Rights ... to stuff ... to say no.”



September 2023




Thank you!


What do you wish for?




Acknowledgements



We would like to thank all those who were involved in this project *Hearing the Voice of Traveller Children in Ballyfermot: The Traveller Children from Ballyfermot*, who contributed openly to the project and whose voice is the central pillar of this report. To the BTAP Project staff who supported the consultation process. The researcher Liz Harper's listening skills, dedication and commitment to the voice of the children being heard and communicated, were above and beyond what was originally contracted. The Graphic Harvester/Illustrator, Hazel Hurley, who captured the children's voice through illustrations that complemented the children's narrative.




Thank you to the Ballyfermot Traveller women, who contributed and advised on the project; to the steering group consisting of staff from Ballyfermot Traveller Action Project, Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership - Family Matters Area Based Childhood Programme, and Dublin City South Children & Young People's Services Committee and not least to our funders.

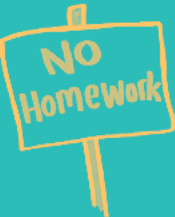


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Harper, L (2023). *Hearing the Voice of Ballyfermot Traveller Children*. Dublin: Ballyfermot Traveller Action Project (BTAP) on behalf of Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership (BCP) and Dublin South City CYPSC. Available at: <https://www.cypsc.ie/connected-respected-contributing-to-their-world/voice-of-ballyfermot-traveller-children-2023.3647.html>



Introduction

This report details a project which aimed to document the views of Traveller children aged 4-12 years living in Ballyfermot. The project consulted with Traveller children to express their views on their experiences of engaging with services in the Ballyfermot area. The consultation is a part of a larger process of influencing change to achieve better life outcomes for and with Travellers in the area so that all Traveller children in Ballyfermot reach their full potential.

The report begins with the background to Traveller Culture and Labre Park¹ and to the project itself. The methodology used is then outlined and in the main section of the report are the findings from the consultations with the children. The findings are then summarised and the final section outlines the conclusions. A series of appendices contain:

- i. Outline of tendering process
- ii Tender Brief
- iii. Graphic Boards
- iv References
- v Glossary of terms

“We have Rights
... to stuff
... to say no.”

Using the Lundy model supported by a graphic harvester this report articulates the thoughts and in some cases the dreams of the Traveller children in their own powerful words.



¹. Labre Park is a Traveller Halting site in Ballyfermot.

Background

Traveller Culture

As a means of bringing an understanding of Traveller culture to this report the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 'Traveller Culture and History Research Report' (2023)² has been used. The NCCA report identifies Traveller culture as beliefs, norms and values which are 'defining features of a person's identity'. Areas of Traveller culture highlighted in the report include nomadism (accommodation); family networks/structure; marriage patterns; religious expression; Traveller language (Cant/Gammon); art; storytelling; music and Traveller economy which incorporates horse ownership.

When we listen to the voice of the children in this report, we hear the Traveller children reference a number of these norms and values including nomadism. This is done through their desire for a choice of homes which includes mobile homes. It can also be seen in their reference to horse ownership and the refurbishing of a handcart or La-ork. Although Cant or Gammon was not used by the children in our engagement with them, there are several phrases or words that they would use in everyday conversation, a glossary of which is in Appendix iv.

Labre Park

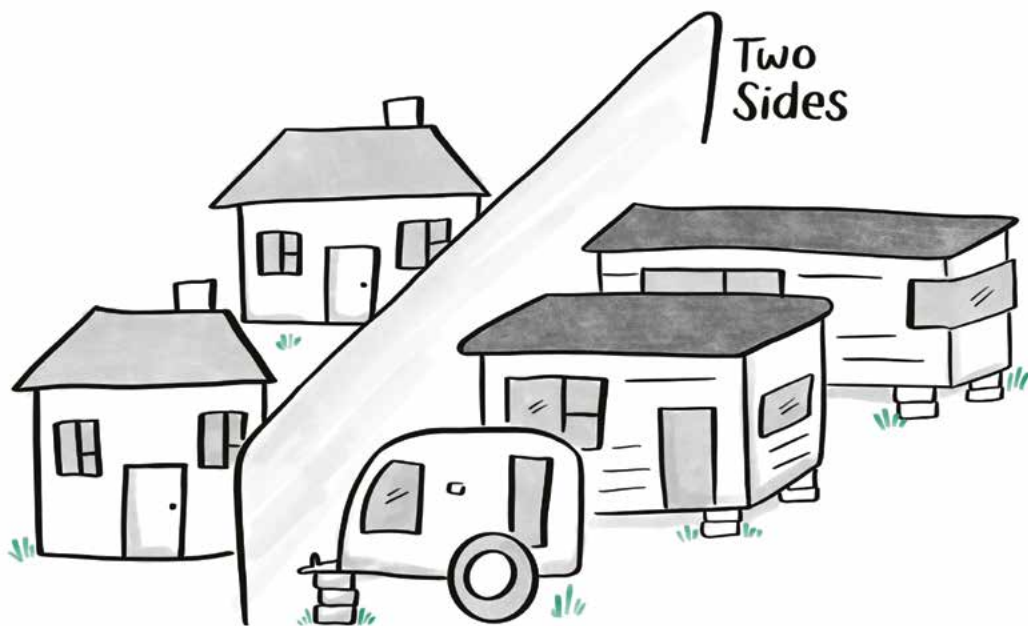
The Labre Park Traveller Halting site was first opened in 1967 to cater for 40 Traveller families. Situated in Dublin on the outskirts of Ballyfermot, the site was built in the middle of an industrial estate and offered families the most basic of facilities known as Tigín (tiny home). Over the course of time, some of the Tigín's were replaced by houses. However, most families were left living in trailers, with no water, toilet facilities or electricity and the only play area, being ground, that had previously been used as a dump. Children in particular, were negatively impacted by these harsh conditions. Resulting in poor outcomes in relation to health, education, and general flourishing.

² National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2023)



In more recent times, water, toilets and electricity have been supplied to all families, however, the basic infrastructure on site remains inadequate. Collapsed drainage systems, regular rat infestations, broken paths, roadways, and uneven broken ground on which trailers are parked remained. While some welcomed work was commenced by the Local Authority in the past 18 months to address these issues, the work has now been stalled due to funding issues. Although some positive signs are emerging from DCC in respect of a playground. There is still no safe place for children to play.

Since 1999 Dublin City Council has committed to the regeneration of Labre Park. On previous occasions plans for regeneration came close to agreement, only to fall apart. The regeneration plan which was due to commence in 2019 included two play areas for children, and as part of that plan the children were consulted on what type of play areas they would like. That process collapsed in 2020 with the fourth generation of Traveller children left without decent living conditions and a play area.



Most recently, there has been commitment to another regeneration plan, however the fear is that children currently living in Labre Park will themselves be adults before this comes to fruition.

Generations of Traveller children in Labre Park have had their dreams of decent living conditions and a play area dashed. This is compounded by the ever-present spectre of racism and discrimination that blights the lives of all Travellers.

Background to the Project

Dublin City South Children and Young Peoples' Services Committee (DCS CYPSC), Ballyfermot Traveller Action Project (BTAP) and Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership (BCP) commissioned this project 'Hearing the Voice of Ballyfermot Traveller Children.'³

Up to one hundred Traveller children in the area experience very challenging life circumstances from social, education, emotional and health perspectives.

Many Traveller children in Ballyfermot live in dire temporary and overcrowded accommodation. Ballyfermot Traveller's educational attainment in early years, primary, secondary and third level is extremely low in comparison to the settled community. Health and wellbeing outcomes have been reported as being poor. Traveller adults regularly report experiencing racism and discrimination in the community at large.

This project aimed to hear and understand the lived experiences and needs of Traveller primary school-aged children living in Labre Park and the surrounding areas of Ballyfermot. The findings will support local services gain insight and understanding into the views and experiences of Traveller children and act on them as appropriate.

The project was managed by a steering group made up of representatives from BCP, DCS CYPSC and BTAP. Liz Harper, consultant, was engaged to plan, undertake, and document the consultation and Hazel Hurley – a graphic harvester participated in some of the sessions.

The target groups for the project were Traveller children aged 4-6 years and 7-12 years. BTAP staff facilitated the children's participation. A one-page flyer provided information on the project for parents and BTAP staff visited parents at home to explain the project and get consent forms signed in advance of meetings. Meetings were scheduled for afterschool times. They took place on the Labre Park Site in BTAP premises.

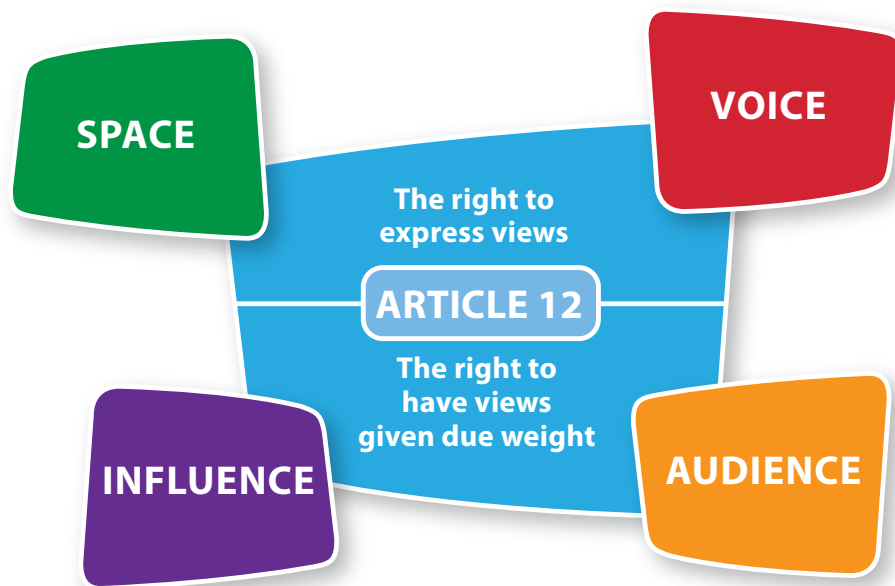


“Better things in Life”



Methodology

The consultation was structured on the Lundy Model framework.



The consultation was facilitated and structured in a way that supports children to express themselves freely in the following ways.

SPACE – The project used BTAP premises on the Labre Park site. Children take part in activities in these premises regularly and they know the project staff well.

Project staff identified the children and supported the work. They organized art materials and provided food for each of the sessions.

VOICE – Children were supported to express their views – the meetings were informal in a space that children were familiar with, with adults who were known and trusted. Open questions were used.

AUDIENCE – This report documents the views of children, and the results of the graphic harvest are available also.

INFLUENCE – The views will be used locally to inform local services of Traveller Children views.

The outcomes of the consultation were considered using -

Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 – 2020

Active and healthy, physical and mental well-being

- 1.1** Physically healthy and making positive health choices
- 1.2** Good mental health
- 1.3** Positive and respectful approach to relationships and sexual health
- 1.4** Enjoying play, recreation, sport, arts, culture and nature.

Achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development

- 2.1** Learning and development from birth
- 2.2** Social and emotional wellbeing
- 2.3** Engaged in learning
- 2.4** Achieving in education.

Safe and protected from harm

- 3.1** Secure, stable caring home environment
- 3.2** Safe from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- 3.3** Protected from bullying and discrimination
- 3.4** Safe from crime and anti-social behaviour.

Economic security and opportunity

- 4.1** Protected from poverty and social exclusion
- 4.2** Living in child friendly sustainable communities
- 4.3** Opportunities for ongoing education and training
- 4.4** Pathways to economic participation and independent living.

Connected, respected and contributing to their world

- 5.1** Sense of own identity, free from discrimination
- 5.2** Part of positive networks of friends, family, and community
- 5.3** Civically engaged, socially and environmentally conscious.
- 5.4** Aware of rights, responsible and respectful of the law.

A graphic harvester/illustrator documented three of the sessions

Originally there were six sessions planned- three for 4-7 year olds and three for 7-12 year olds. Two more sessions were added, one for each age group to focus on education. There were eight sessions altogether. All sessions took place in BTAP's premises, a container on the Labre Park site. Along with the facilitator, BTAP staff attended each session; arts activities painting, making slime, playing board games, and stickers were used and food provided. The sessions were 45mins to an hour in length. While some children attended each of the sessions, there were many who came for just one.

- The first two sessions asked the question –

If you could make a wish for your community what would it be?

- The subsequent 4 sessions took a lead from what the children identified.
- The final two sessions focused on school and experiences of school. Here the starting point was –

What is good about school – what do you like?

What do you not like and what could be different?



Findings...

The following outlines what the children articulated in all the 8 sessions. Direct quotes are in inverted commas or bullet points.

Children were curious about how the information gathered in this consultation would be used. The introduction to each of the groups explained the process and underlined that it aimed to gather the views of children but would not mean that their wishes would come true.

Children asked –



They were also concerned about who would see the result:



Enjoying play, recreation, sport, arts, culture, and nature

Children were very interested in this area. When the younger children were asked if they had a magic wand what would they wish for some answers were:

Things to play with...

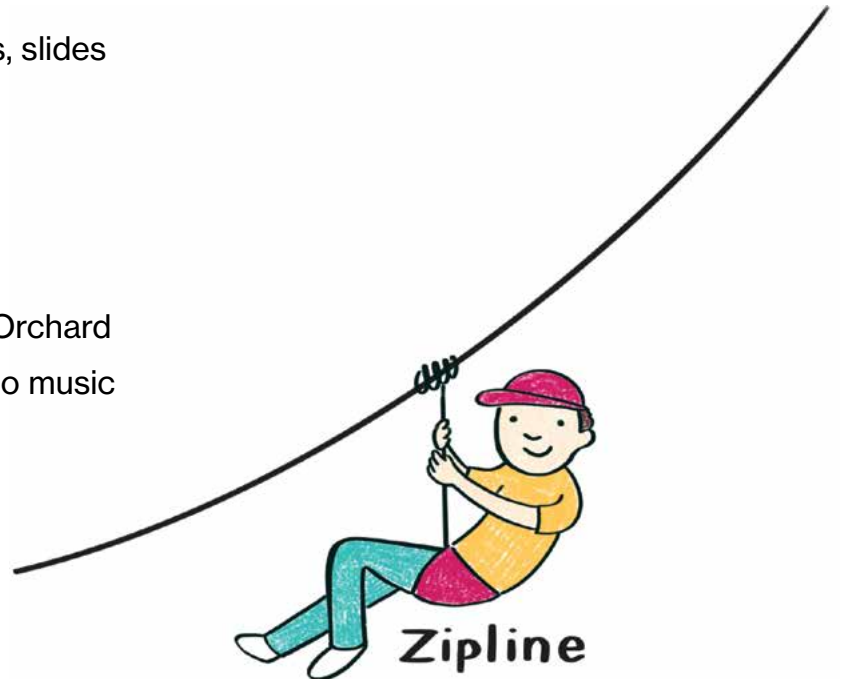
- 🗨️ A trampoline
- 🗨️ A mini house
- 🗨️ A mini doll
- 🗨️ A mini kitchen
- 🗨️ Shower

Older children identified...

- 🗨 Ziplines, Monkey bars, slides
- 🗨 Animals
- 🗨 Horses
- 🗨 Skate park
- 🗨 Playground
- 🗨 Swimming in Cherry Orchard
- 🗨 Baking and listening to music

Food...

- 🗨 Brownies
- 🗨 Milkshakes
- 🗨 Cake
- 🗨 Muffins
- 🗨 Pizza



The local youth center – Familibase (BASE) featured strongly here. Some of these children had been involved in an arts based programme where they painted bricks on a wall on the Labre Park site. The wall was demolished.

Their hopes...

- 🗨 Spray painting in the BASE
- 🗨 A group in the BASE
- 🗨 We should put our rights on the wall
- 🗨 Bricks in the wall at the BASE



Children had also painted wagons in Familibase and put them on the wall.

Children talked with excitement about a project that they were involved in. They were working with an adult from BTAP on a project to make a hand cart. The project was over several different sessions:

They explained how the trap was to be made...

- 🗨️ Project with Shay – I like it
- 🗨️ We're going to sand it first and (the wagon) a handcart and a wagon and next week we're sanding and making a wagon and a handcart

An important aspect was how this project linked children into their family history...

- 🗨️ My great, great, great grandfather used to build wagons and my Daddy used to help build the wagons

Children were aware of how different their lives are from those of their grandfathers...

- 🗨️ We'd be building wagons and we'd be doing it together

Animals featured strongly in consultations with both age groups
Both groups were interested in animals:

The younger children liked having dogs. One wanted a puppy...

- 🗨️ A little puppy

Another would like...

- 🗨️ A big dog - an outside dog in case he pees in the house



Good Housing
for Everyone

Part of positive networks of friends, family, and community

The younger children talked about their families. One wished for a new cousin, and another wished for love for her family and for her baby brother. Civically engaged, socially and environmentally conscious. The older group were very concerned with the environment and housing in particular.

They were interested in the regeneration plans for the site and wanted...

- 🗨️ A new site

More particularly they mentioned...

- 🗨️ Good housing for all and
- 🗨️ Beds for homeless
- 🗨️ Toilets and showers where everything is clean

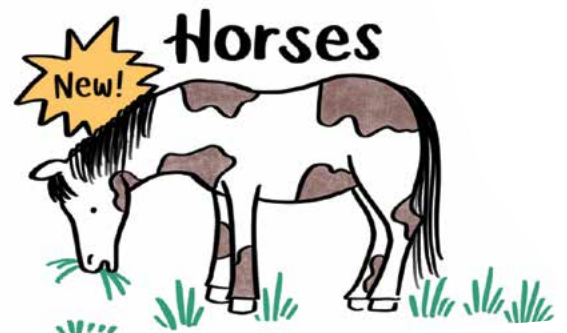


They had a strong sense that there should be different types of housing available...

- 🗨️ Two sides of the site - houses on one side and trailers at the end
- 🗨️ Space for horses and trailers

Their wish was for...

- 🗨️ Better things in life for the community



They identified things that would improve their environment...

- 🗨️ A park
- 🗨️ A big field
- 🗨️ New horses
- 🗨️ New fields - more space
- 🗨️ Everything clean
- 🗨️ Hay
- 🗨️ Horses and stables food and hay
- 🗨️ Tank of water for the horses a safe place
- 🗨️ A vegetable garden - grow veggies - apples, tomatoes, watermelons, red peppers, bananas, strawberries

More space for the horses

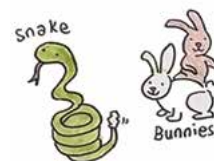




Many of these would support health and wellbeing and positive mental health

Animals other than horses were also identified...

- 🗨️ A dog shelter
- 🗨️ A petting zoo
- 🗨️ Bunnies
- 🗨️ Tarantulas and a massive pet snake



Aware of rights, responsible and respectful of the law

Older children said...

- 🗨️ I'm proud to be a Traveller
- 🗨️ We have rights to speak and to say no

“I'm proud to,
be a Traveller”

In using local services the children said they liked going to the library...

- 🗨️ You can read books
- 🗨️ You get a library card, you get books and then bring them back
- 🗨️ There are computers you can use in the library
- 🗨️ It would be good to have PlayStations in the library

In relation to local food outlets...

- 🗨️ The local chipper has good food

When asked about what happens if they are sick, children said they went to Our Lady's (National Children's Hospital at Crumlin)...

- 🗨️ There's a big fish tank there
- 🗨️ People are nice there



Public transport...

- 🗨️ Go on the LUAS - it's not bad. There are loads of people when it's busy. It's a twenty minute walk

“There's
a big fish
tank there-
people are
nice there”

Activities...

- 🗨️ Club
- 🗨️ Swimming lessons
- 🗨️ GAA in school

- Boxing in school
- Dancing
- Boxing for boys
- Ice Skating in Dundrum at Christmas - went on the bus
- Exchange House - we got a lift from Jimmy. There's a girls' group - they do baking in town



Places to travel to...

- New York
- The moon
- Places in Ireland
- Courtown in the Summer
- England

Engaged in learning - Achieving in education.

When asked about how they felt about school. Both groups responded negatively...

- It's bad
- I hate everything
- I hate it
- I like a day off
- I don't like school
- Sometimes I like it - sometimes I don't
- I used to like it now I don't



Is there anything you like about it?

- More better when you're playing with someone
- Play in the yard
- Friday - my favourite day - we have the Base after school
- My teacher is nice
- All the teachers are nice
- Loads of good things about school
- I love every bit of it



With the younger children - the playground and access to it were highlighted...

- ☞ I play in the playground
- ☞ I'm not allowed play in the playground - only if you have five stars
- ☞ I don't know why you get stars
- ☞ If you win a prize you're allowed in the playground
- ☞ When it's wet we don't get into the yard


only if you get
5 stars you can
play in the playground

What do you do instead?

- ☞ We watch Netfilix in school. My teacher said there's no new Matilda. It's on Disney
- ☞ Once we went to the zoo

When asked what you do in school...

- ☞ I'm in senior infants
- ☞ In our school on Wednesday we do PE
- ☞ My sister does circle time
- ☞ I have boys and girls in my class
- ☞ We did art - painting
- ☞ We could paint what we liked
- ☞ You do colouring
- ☞ Have to colour in numbers
- ☞ Your teacher reads you stories
- ☞ Sit in little groups
- ☞ Sit with your friends
- ☞ We do jobs in school
- ☞ Lots of tables and boys and girls
- ☞ I have a boy teacher and I have a girl teacher
- ☞ I'm able to read
- ☞ Make my communion



Food and lunches were good...

- 🗨 Cheese pasta
- 🗨 Eat in school
- 🗨 Chicken curry with rice

When asked: 'Is school like how you thought it would be?'

- 🗨 It's bad, bad, bad
- 🗨 We all do the same thing at the same time
- 🗨 All sitting at tables
- 🗨 Read stories - we read stories
- 🗨 Sometimes my teacher lets me read stories
- 🗨 We read the stories out loud
- 🗨 At the end of the day we have table top
- 🗨 Choose what we do
- 🗨 Loads of good things about school
- 🗨 I love every bit of it

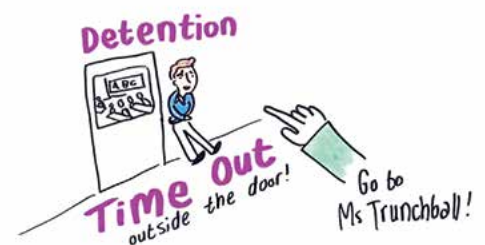


Children report moving around the school...

- 🗨 I go into different classes
- 🗨 I have to go into my brothers classes
- 🗨 Sometimes you move around

Where do you do your homework?

- 🗨 Two people in the school go to the afterschool



Children talked about detention...

- 🗨 He doesn't listen - teacher puts him in a different class.
He's put outside the door - time out
- 🗨 You hold the timer and face the other way
- 🗨 Detention - he got in trouble
- 🗨 I was going to the toilet and my brother ran up and down the class - he got in trouble Detention - time out
- 🗨 I go into a different class
- 🗨 The principal - I was in her office - She's very strict

Children from the older group were in different schools...

- 🗨️ All have boys and girls - only boys in my school - loads of girls and only 4 boys
- 🗨️ 24 boys and 2 girls in my class

When asked, what you do in school? - older children answered...

- 🗨️ School stuff
- 🗨️ Work
- 🗨️ Reading, Writing, Maths, English, Geography
- 🗨️ Science
- 🗨️ We do P.E
- 🗨️ My Favourites – maths and handwriting
- 🗨️ Explosions – Toothpaste – it blows up - an experiment
- 🗨️ Electricity
- 🗨️ Space
- 🗨️ Boxing in school
- 🗨️ At 2 o'clock every day we get to play with tablets. Chromebooks
- 🗨️ Reading handwriting
- 🗨️ We watch stuff on screen
- 🗨️ We Watch Netflix and Disney Plus every week
- 🗨️ Every day - every big break
- 🗨️ You have to go outside
- 🗨️ When its rainy we get to watch a movie



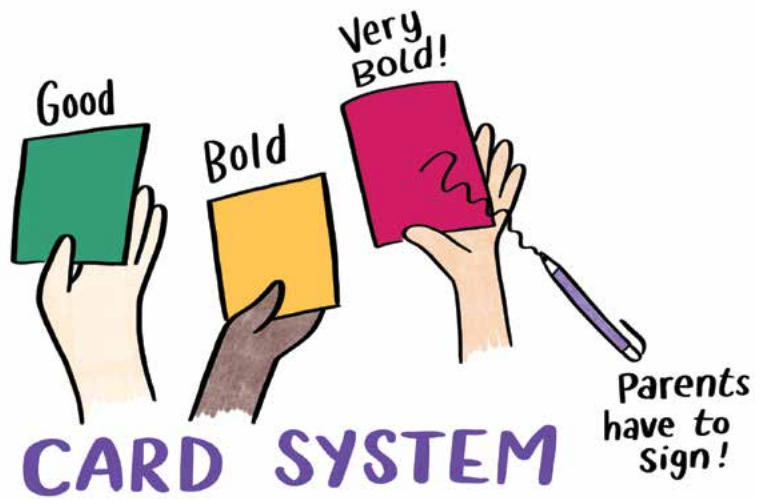
What games do you play?

- 🗨️ Art
- 🗨️ We do P.E
- 🗨️ In the yard
- 🗨️ We do art
- 🗨️ We do drawing and painting



In relation to detention and sanctions...

- 🗨 You get a yellow card if you get in trouble.
- 🗨 They get three cards - Yellow card, Red card if you're very bold
- 🗨 My Mam has to sign something before you get back in



Do you ever go swimming? In Ballyfermot?

- 🗨 They give you a stick and they make you swim
- 🗨 I learned to swim by myself

Golden time

- 🗨 On Friday you get to play games and do connect sand
- 🗨 We sit at tables
- 🗨 I sit with my cousin
- 🗨 Same people all the time



Spelling tests

- 🗨 I have Spelling tests every Friday - I get 100% and I get a prize

Teachers and adults in the classroom

- 🗨 There are two adults in the class
- 🗨 We've three teachers
- 🗨 Two back⁴ teachers
- 🗨 One for Art
- 🗨 Teachers are all nice - they read stories
- 🗨 There are people from down the country but they're not Travellers



4. A back teacher is a Special Needs Assistant SNA

What's your favourite time?

- Art
- Painting / everything, stickers. Teachers put up drawings on the wall most times
- We have a track suit uniform

The Sensory room...

- We have a sensory room
- All games
- Chill Pill
- Big fish tank - Not fishes in it
- Not a place to be quiet - to play - not for everyone
- People who have anger issues go to the sensory room
- SNA decides when someone goes to the sensory room

What don't you like about school?

- Not allowed have chewing gum
- Starts too early in the mornings. I'm still half asleep

Are there differences between schools?

- In India they have 80 hours school
- In China 46

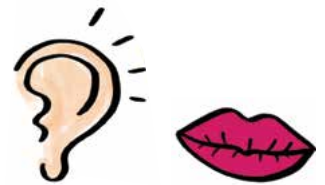
Homework

When asked what they'd change about school one thing was...

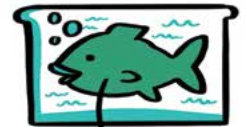
- No homework
- The President bans homework

They went on to say...

- If you don't do your homework you don't get in trouble
- M never brings in his homework
- I just wait to the end of the year
- Other boys and girls bring homework in every day



Sensory Room

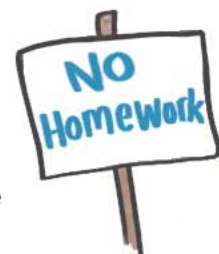


Fake fish tank



The SNA decides who goes

People with **Anger** issues!



The President Should **BAN** HOMEWORK

Does the teacher look at it?

- She (teacher) says bring it in tomorrow and then says the same again the next day
- She (my sister) brings it in I don't know why she brings it in she doesn't have to
- We have a deal with the teacher
- I don't have to bring in my homework
- I hide it and if she gives me more I hide that



Does she talk to your parents?

- She has parent teacher meetings
- Mine was only two months ago

We ^{Hide it!} have a deal with the teacher



...Summary of Findings

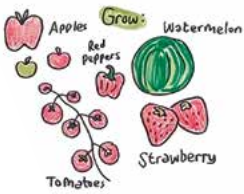
Traveller children have a lot to say and are very willing to give their views. They are interested in how the consultation findings will be used. The children are articulate and clear in what they are saying. They did not all have the same views, and this consultation was not aimed at arriving at a consensus. Their views have been reflected in their own words.



It was beneficial to have a familiar space on the site and the support of the project staff who already have good relationships with the children was invaluable. Project staff also have good relationships with parents, which facilitated children's participation.

The main areas of concern were different for the different age groups:

Environment – The older children had the strongest opinions about the area where they live. Housing was a key issue and they articulated very clearly the wish to have different types of housing. They talked about houses and bays for trailers in two separate parts of the site. They talked about the expense of heating a trailer as opposed to a house. They wanted everything to be clean and to have showers and toilets. They wanted good housing for all, including the homeless. Older children were interested in growing things such as tomatoes and strawberries.



Play and Recreation – This was the area where the younger children had the strongest views. This is not surprising for a group of 4-6 year olds. They talked about an area to play safely, a playground and they listed out things to play with. There is currently no play area in Labre Park. Playing with others was important rather than playing on your own. One child mentioned an iPhone – other than that it was more the company than technology.



Older children mentioned skate parks and zip lines and there was a lot of enthusiasm for the project where children worked with adults to build a wagon over several sessions.



The BASE⁵, the local youth center, featured hugely here. Older children also talked with enthusiasm about a project they had done on the site with workers from the BASE. They had painted a wall articulating their rights- but since then the wall has been demolished.

5. FamiliBase-Child and Family Youth Service in Ballyfermot



Animals – Both groups talked about animals and their care for them. There were differences in the two groups here. The younger children focused on smaller animals, like dogs, while the older children were concerned about horses and having good conditions, space, water and hay for them. Older children were also interested in snakes and tarantulas!⁶



Local services – The library was mentioned by the older group as a place where there were computers and where you could borrow books.



School – Young people said very little about school in the earlier sessions. It was decided to add two sessions which would focus specifically on school. Questions were ‘what is good about school’ and ‘what would you change?’ The children all said that their teachers were nice- although some of them were considered strict.



The younger children talked about art-based activities and there was a sense that they moved around a lot from tables and to different rooms and into different classes. They talked about sitting with their cousin or their brother or going into other classes.

Older children talked about reading and writing and were enthused by science and experiments - especially those resulting in explosions.

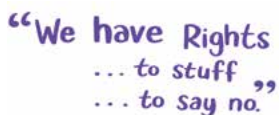


Homework and detention – It was surprising that both groups talked-in a lot of detail about detention and sanctions used in school although they were not asked directly about this. Both groups could detail the steps and stages in the disciplinary procedures in their schools.

In relation to homework, some of the older children said they never did homework and that they had a deal with the teacher. They did not know about parent teacher meeting outcomes.



Aware of Rights – The older group were aware that they had rights and the right to say no. They articulated that they were proud to be Travellers.



6. Care of animals is closely reflective of Traveller culture.

...Conclusions

Active and healthy, physical and mental well-being



It is well recorded in research the critical importance of play for the development of all children's mental, social, emotional and physical health. The Traveller children clearly stated their desire for adequate and safe play space and space for their animals, on site in Labre Park, which is currently not available. Is the absence of such a fundamental right contributing to the children's development, education, wellbeing, confidence and their ability to make positive health choices?

Achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development



Research supports the benefits to children's self-esteem and worth when, in their formative years at home, school and in the community, their culture is being celebrated and affirmed, particularly through education and learning. The children presented a variety of experiences in their primary school educational journeys in Ballyfermot and Bluebell. What remains unclear is if the disciplinary measures and homework exemptions described in very distinct detail by the children, were particularly being applied to Traveller children only in these classes and or schools?

There was no mention by the children if their identity and culture as Travellers was included in the curriculum of learning and play in school, or if it was explained, affirmed, celebrated, and/or shared in the classroom with other children. Further exploration of this matter would be required with the children, parents, and school staff.



The children reported doing jobs in school and talked about being frequently sent to other classes to mind siblings. Is this a common experience for children in primary school?

Safe and protected from harm



Children wanted good housing for all, toilets, and showers, where everything is clean. The lack of adequate housing, surrounding environment and sanitation services led to an outbreak of Hepatitis A which caused harm to children and adults on the site⁷. Should we expect that all children have a right to adequate housing, clean water and an environment that is safe from harm?

Economic security and opportunity



Research supports the importance of significant adults - family members, teachers, youth workers - having high realistic expectations of children in relation to work, education and training. These expectations are formed from an early age through play and conversations with those adults that are important to them in their lives. All children in Ireland have the right to have high expectations of them around work, employment and to be protected from poverty and social exclusion. There were no expectations mentioned by the Traveller children in this regard. Further exploration of this matter would be required with the children, parents and school staff.

Connected, respected and contributing to their world.



The children had a strong sense of their Rights as Travellers and being proud of their different identity. There was no sense though from the children of having 'friends' in school or otherwise, other than their own family and extended family. What remains to be explored further is are they as minority children experiencing their world at home, in school and the community, which is free from discrimination?

⁷ *Outbreak Report of Hepatitis A Outbreak in Dublin West: Nov 2020-Jan 2021.*
Department of Public Health, HSE East.

...Final Comments

Hearing the Voice of Ballyfermot Traveller Children highlights the importance of listening and hearing the views of young children in areas of their lives that are important to them.

Using the Lundy Framework of **Space, Voice, Audience** and **Influence** acted as a guidance for the adults involved, kept them on track and reminded them to ask, is this really what the children said and in what context?

It is clear from this report that appropriate gatherings 'Space' were provided, that the children's 'Voices' were facilitated and listened to attentively and will now be given an 'Audience' through this report, a presentation to the Ombudsman's Office for Children and a local launch in Ballyfermot.

What remains is the challenge posed by the children to all adults, service providers and policy makers: *'Is it going to happen, is it really going to happen?'* In other words, will *Influence* for positive change, as outlined in Lundy's Framework, become a reality for Traveller children in Labre Park and Ballyfermot?

In conclusion, the responsibility remains with adults that have influence over children's lives: parents, community workers, statutory workers and policy makers to honour the children's voice with their actions. These adults need to lead positive practice and policy change, recognising Traveller culture and identity for and with Traveller children and their families, in areas such as Housing, Education, Health, Environment and Safety, and so ensuring that the future generations of Traveller children will reach their potential and have 'Better Outcomes and Brighter Futures'.



Appendix i | Outline of the tendering process

The Project proposal was advertised publicly on *Activelink* by Ballyfermot Chapelized Partnership (BCP), with a closing date of July 6th 2022. Interviews were conducted with shortlisted candidates on 12th July 2022. Ms Harper was engaged by BCP as an independent contractor and satisfied all the criteria that that entailed including references, Garda Vetting and supply of tax clearance access number.

A consultancy contract for services between Ballyfermot Chapelized Partnership and Liz Harper was agreed and signed on 20th Sept. 2022 with an agreed schedule of work outlined.

The contract fee agreed was €5K, (€3K of which was funded by Dublin City South Children and Youth People Services Committee, and €2K of which was funded by the SICAP - Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme).

Three separate invoices were issued by the contractor to BCP for payment at agreed times on the work schedule.

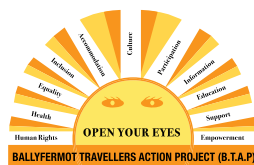
Final payment was made to the Contractor, on satisfactorily receiving the final draft of the report.

Appendix ii | Tender Brief

Hearing the voice of Ballyfermot Traveller Children

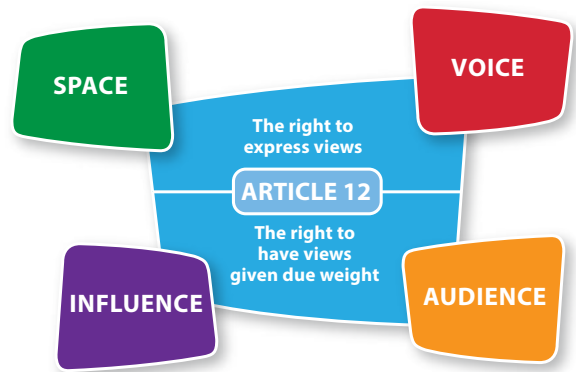
Dublin City South Children and Young People's Services Committee (DCS CYPSC); Ballyfermot Traveller Action Project (BTAP) & Ballyfermot Chapelized Partnership (BCP) are inviting expressions of interest to facilitate consultation with local Traveller primary school aged children, living in Labre Park and the wider Ballyfermot area. To consult children to express their views on their experiences of engagement with services in the Ballyfermot area.

This child consultation is part of a larger process of influencing change that supports better life outcomes for and with Travellers in the area, so that all Traveller children in Ballyfermot reach their potential.



The Project

- The consultation would be structured on the Lundy Model Framework (National Participation Strategy), Model below.
- The consultation will be facilitated and structured in a way that the children can express themselves freely.
- The themes and topics of the consultation will be agreed with the children to include; Health & Wellbeing; Education & learning; Inclusion & Integration.
- All themes agreed will be related to the 5 National Outcomes for Children
- The consultation discussions will be recorded by a Graphic Harvester in order to create a record of the children's views that will be a visible and available in a picture style report.
- Findings from the voice of Ballyfermot Traveller children's consultation and the visual animation model will be used locally to visually inform local services of Traveller children views



Background Context

This project - Hearing the Voice of Ballyfermot Traveller Children, comes about in the context of up to one hundred Traveller children in the area experiencing very challenging life context circumstances from both physical, social, educational emotional and health perspective.

Many Traveller children in Ballyfermot live in dire temporary and overcrowded accommodation. Ballyfermot Travellers' educational attainment in early years; primary; secondary and third level is extremely low in comparison to the settled community. Health and wellbeing outcomes for Travellers have been reported as being poor. Ballyfermot Traveller adults also report regularly experiencing racism and discrimination in the community at large.

Dublin City South Children and Young People's Services Committees (DCS CYPSC)

Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) are a key structure identified by Government to plan and co-ordinate services for children and young people in every county in Ireland. Their age remit spans all children and young people aged from 0 to 24 years. The purpose of the DCS CYPSC is to ensure effective interagency co-ordination and collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for all children and young people in their area. The Committees are responsible for improving the lives of children, young people and families at local and community level by improving the provision and delivery of key services. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (BOBF) Framework (2014-2020) is a key policy document for CYPSC which provides a framework for planning and actions. Further details on CYPSC can be found at <https://www.cypsc.ie/your-county-cypsc/dublin-city-south.231.html>

Ballyfermot Traveller Action Project (BTAP)

The aim of BTAP is to resource, support and enhance Traveller potential, ability, and skills to address the issues that affect their lives.

In solidarity with other like-minded groups and organizations, BTAP addresses all forms of racism and discrimination faced by Travellers in the wider Ballyfermot area. We also seek to validate and celebrate Traveller culture and identity by supporting and resourcing Travellers to assert their ethnicity thereby enhancing a positive sense of cultural diversity in the wider



community. The thematic framework set out in the National Traveller and Roma inclusion strategy (NTRIS) 2017-2021, which includes cultural identity, education, employment and Traveller economy, children and youth, health, gender equality, anti-discrimination and equality accommodation, Traveller and Roma communities and public services, guides the work carried out by BTAP. In turn, our organization functions under an effective organizational structure that maintains the principles of a community development approach to working with the Traveller community.

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership & Family Matters ABC

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership's mission is to work with and act as an advocate on behalf of the community of Ballyfermot Chapelizod to enhance the social and economic development of the area and thereby increase education, employment, and life options for local people. Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership works collaboratively with community and statutory agencies to ensure that individuals who are distanced from opportunity due to marginalization are supported to reach their full potential.

BCP is the lead agency of the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme *Family Matters* <https://www.bcpartnership.ie/family-matters-abc-programme/> which has a vision of: 'An Ireland where no child is impacted by poverty and all children are supported to reach their full potential.'

Through prevention and early intervention approaches, the Area Based Childhood Programme aims to work in partnership with families, practitioners, communities, and national stakeholders to deliver better outcomes for children and families living in areas where poverty is most deeply entrenched. It achieves this by working at three levels namely: Service delivery, Workforce capacity building and Policy and practice change.

Consultation - Aim and Objectives:

The aim of this consultation is to hear and understand the lived experiences and needs of Traveller primary school children living in Labre Park and surrounding areas of Ballyfermot, to inform and improve their life outcomes and experiences. The consultation will facilitate them in expressing their opinions. As a result, DCS CYPSC; BTAP; BCP and the local Community services will gain insight and understanding as to the views and experiences of Traveller children and act upon them where appropriate.

The consultation is based on the LUNDY Model of Participation

SPACE – Children must be given safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their views

VOICE – Children must be facilitated to express their view.

AUDIENCE – The view must be listened to.

INFLUENCE – The view must be acted upon

Target Group

Traveller Children age groups 4-6 & 7-12 years who live in Labre Park and surrounding areas will be engaged.

Expression of Interest.

- To develop and apply a suitable methodology and framework to consult with this group of Traveller children
- To focus the consultation in line with Better Outcomes Brighter Futures 5 National Outcomes.
 1. *Active and health with physical and mental well being*
 2. *Achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development*
 3. *Safe and protected from harm*
 4. *Have economic and security*
 5. *Connected, respected, and contributing to their world*
- To apply the principles and practice of **the Lundy Model** - Child and Youth Participation Framework.
- To work in collaboration with the Advisory Group including stakeholders to design, implement and record the consultation process based on recommendations from the Advisory Group, that includes representatives of DCS CYPSC, BTAP and BCP.
- To provide a space for children to express their views, experiences and needs in a positive, confidential, and safe manner.

To record⁸ and collate children input to include thematic areas for consideration across the 5 National Outcomes and their links to local services supports.

- To produce a draft report and present its findings to the Advisory group
- To produce final report that will inform the future planning of local stakeholders and service providers to and with Traveller children & families in the area

Submission should include

- An understanding of the lived experience of the Traveller community.
- Methodology and timeline for this piece of work, including logic framework, outcomes; outputs and activities.
- Details on the process of engaging children and obtaining their consent.
- Details on obtaining parental consent for consultation with their children.
- A brief overview of organisation/ consultancy with personnel names for the project lead.
- Outline of relevant experience and in particular consulting directly with children. Please include links to similar reports.
- 2 Referees, including contact details.
- Breakdown of costing, inclusive of VAT.
- Tax clearance certificate/number.

Criteria Assessment

- Relevant experience.
- Clear methodology for proposal
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of consultation with Young People
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of issues facing the Traveller community
- Ability to complete the work in agreed timeframe.

Finance

DCS CYPSC an SICAP will contribute a maximum budget €5,000.00 (including VAT, and all associated costs for the duration of the project.) inclusive of expenses, materials; travel etc

⁸. Graphic Harvester/Illustrator will be engaged



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- Giaquinto, G. (2011). The Youth Education Strategy (YES): An Integrated Strategy and Protocol to Support the Retention of Traveller Boys in Education. *Ballyfermot Traveller Action Project (BTAP) on behalf of the Education Working Group of the Labre Park Interagency Committee*. [unpublished].
- Kelly, D. and Mc Dermott, R. (2021). *Outbreak Report of Hepatitis A Outbreak in Dublin West: Nov 2020-Jan 2021*. Department of Public Health, HSE East, Doctor Stephen's Hospital, Dublin 8.
- Lundy, L. (2007). 'Voice' is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. *British Educational Research Journal*, [online] Volume 33:6, p927-942. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01411920701657033> [Accessed online August 4 2023].
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2023). Traveller Culture and History Research Report. Available at: https://ncca.ie/media/5959/traveller-culture-and-history-research-report_en.pdf [accessed online July 8 2023].



| Glossary of Cant Gammon words used by children | |
|--|-------------|
| English | Cant Gammon |
| Traveller | Mincear |
| Book | Stormaih |
| Hand | Malya |
| Priest | Coonick |
| Road | Tobra |
| Cabbage | Cob |
| Gardai | Shade oge |
| Bread | Dora |
| Bed | Leah |
| Dog | Comrah |
| Car | Rog |
| Horse | Currie |
| Cart | La-ork |
| Shop | Gruppa |
| House | Cen-ya |
| Fire | Chirra |
| Clothes | Tugs |
| Money | Grade |
| Tea | Weed |
| Milk | Alamuck |
| Drinking | Lushing |
| Door | Rulas |
| Man | Feen |
| Woman | Beoir |
| Boy | Sublic |
| Girl | Lackeen |
| Children | Golyas |

Voice of Ballyfermot

School

on Friday... **SPELLING TEST** 100% Prize from the Mystery Box

Sensory Room
Take a Chill Pill
Fake fish tank
The SMA decides who goes
People with Anger issues!

Games in the yard
Duck Duck Goose
Monkey Tails

Your teacher reads you stories once upon a Time

We do jobs in School
On Wednesdays we do P.E.

It's more better when you're playing with someone

I love every bit of school!

☆☆☆☆☆
Only if you get 5 stars you can play in the playground

Safe & Clean

Our Lady's Hospital

Cleaning Up
Cleaning brush, bucket, and bin

Clean Showers

Wellbeing

Better things in life for the community

more space

Grow plants & flowers

Grow Red Peppers, Strawberry, Apples, Watermelon, Tomatoes

Heating is expensive in trailers

Gas

I'm proud to travel a Traveller

**Is it going
Is it really going**

CYPSC
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEES
CUSTY NA SEIRBHÍOÍ DO LEANAÍ & DO ODRÁIRÍOÍ ÓGA
Dublin City South
Cathair Bhaile Átha Cliath Theas

OPEN YOUR EYES
BALLYFERMOT TRAVELLERS ACTION PROJECT (B.T.A.P.)

Not Traveller Children

Our Culture Our Rights

aring



There's a big fish tank there - people are nice there

lets



Zipline

My great great grandfather used to build wagons and my Daddy used to help build the wagons



We'd be building wagons and we'd be doing it together



Good Housing for Everyone

"We have Rights ...to stuff" ...to say no."

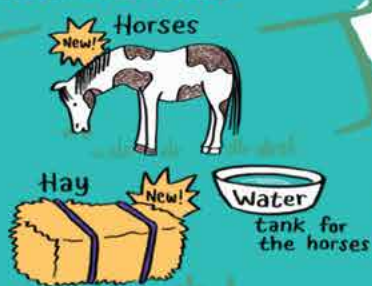


Child Friendly Community

Playground



More space for the horses



Petting Zoo

Fields

to happen?
ng to happen?





I'm proud to be a Traveller

