

# *Lincolnshire Traveller Initiative*

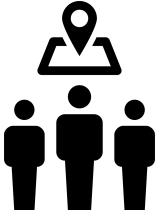
*Sarah Dirrane and Dr. Marianne Hewitt*

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*NERUPI Case Study*

# Methodology and Logic Model

## THE AIM OF THE INITIATIVE



This intervention aims to **combat the low attendance** (20% attendance rate\*) of **Travellers in secondary schools** by offering mobile education to support home learning.

This is part of **an holistic project that focuses on improving employment, health, social, personal and educational development** of the Travelling communities in Lincolnshire. The Prince's Trust initiative funded by LiNCHigher provides access / opportunity to gain a qualification.

## METHODOLOGY & SAMPLE



**Interviews with 11 parents**, conducted to explore the wider effects of the interventions on families



**Interviews with 15 learners**, conducted to explore barriers, outcomes and impacts of the programme in relation to learners' attitudes and aspirations towards their futures



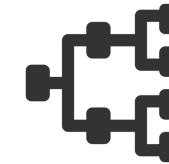
Gatekeeper approach required to gain access to Traveller sites and embed trust, permitting on-the-ground observation. Gatekeeper in this research was Paul Boucher, the leader of LTI



Secondary data analysed, including academic sources and official reports on Travelling communities in education



## LOGIC MODEL

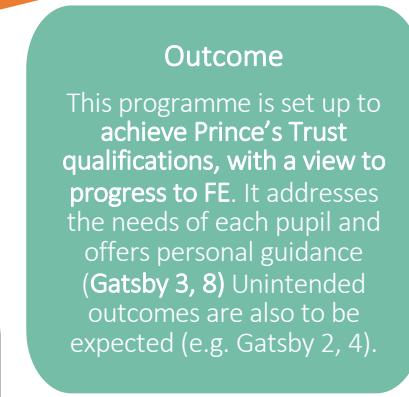


### Evaluation

Primary, qualitative research methods provide in-depth and rich data, capturing the nuances of any attitudinal/ motivational changes. Secondary analysis will provide a foundation upon which our findings are built.



**Output**  
This is a **high intensity, sustained activity**, offering one-to-one, face-to-face tutoring for secondary school aged Travellers.



This programme is set up to achieve Prince's Trust qualifications, with a view to progress to FE. It addresses the needs of each pupil and offers personal guidance (Gatsby 3, 8) Unintended outcomes are also to be expected (e.g. Gatsby 2, 4).



**Impact**  
Learners will develop their **confidence and resilience**. Learners will also develop their **study skills and capacity for academic attainment (NERUPI C and D, particularly levels 0-1)**. Unintended attitudinal / behavioural impacts are also expected to be evidenced.

# Using the NERUPI framework

The NERUPI framework was used to form the backbone of this evaluation and methodology, however, we have adapted the framework in line with the idiosyncrasies of this project. For example, this report allows for flexibility with the learner levels as there was a range of starting points for various participants. Many aims and objectives regarding higher education have been adapted to focus instead on further education, for reasons that will become apparent in the report.

## NERUPI evaluation FRAMEWORK

A |

Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education

B |

Develop students' capacity to navigate higher education and graduate employment sectors and make informed choices

C |

Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenges of university life and graduate progression

D |

Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment

E |

Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge and supporting attainment raising

The breakdown of NERUPI aims, objectives and levels can be found on [www.nerupi.co.uk](http://www.nerupi.co.uk)

# Context and Attitudes Towards Education

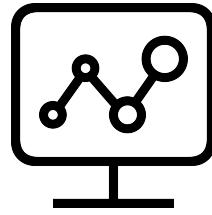


Photo from:

<http://www.lincsti.co.uk/ourstory.html>

# Setting the Context

Lack of  
accurate &  
detailed data



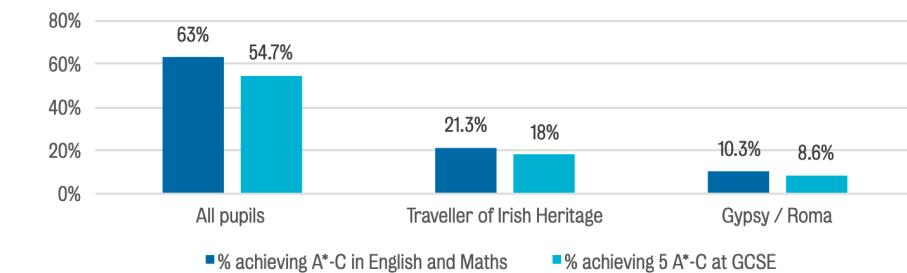
## How Gypsy, Roma & Traveller children perform at school

*[They are the]lowest performing groups in primary and secondary education in the UK ... across all measures of attainment, progress, behavior and attendance"*

**Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results by ethnicity (2016)**



**% of pupils achieving A\*-C in English and Maths and 5A\*-C at GCSE (2015-16)**



\*Reference: Ellie Mulcahy et al, *The Underrepresentation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils in Higher Education. A Report on Barriers from Early Years to Secondary and Beyond* (King's College London, 2017)

# Lincolnshire Traveller Initiative

## Paul Boucher – leader of LTI

- ✓ Background in education
- ✓ Historic connections with the community
- ✓ 20+ years of working with the community – developed a strong bond / deep trust, respect and acceptance within the community
- ✓ Backbone of the community – ‘one stop shop’ for all their needs
- ✓ Provides Prince’s Trust and other qualifications – funded by LiNCHigher



*“I get a big buzz when somebody gets their first Prince’s Trust certificate or gets a job.”*

### Successful LiNCHigher Collaboration

*“LiNCHigher funding has had a big impact in terms of the **amount of young people** we’ve been able to reach, and the **numbers of qualifications** we’ve been able to do. They have arranged college visits with a presentation of the certificates at Bishop Grosseteste University. It’s been a good partnership. **The Travellers are appreciative.** They know we’re being funded by LiNCHigher. I’ve made that quite clear and they’re appreciative of that.”*

### Raising Aspirations

*“If our young people go into college, there are certainly loads amongst them with the **ability to go further**. Get them in. Get them off the sites, and into college, and mixing with people that have got their own aspirations. Who knows where they can go?”*

*“Paul has been extremely supportive with me” I’m glad I did come here because Paul and the [others] have been really good teachers. They really have.” – Traveller, female, 16*

## Changes since LTI was established (1999)



### Higher inspection pass rate

*“We have a contact with the county council for the education of 11- to 16-year-olds that are home educated. When we started with that contract, 22% of Traveller children passed their inspection visits, and 78% failed. **Now it’s 98% that pass.**”*



### Future goals

*“Ambitions are changing. More girls are saying, ‘I’m not going to get married at 16. I’m going to get a job and I’m going to earn money,’ and boys are partly having to but partly choosing to look at other possible jobs. That’s a significant change.”*



### Education

*“I think more [Travellers] value education, whereas education was very low on their priority, so, yes, been a lot of change.”*



### Societal views of Travellers yet to change

*“Yes, a lot of things have changed. I think what hasn’t changed, sadly, is the prejudice and discrimination. That’s strong – stronger than people would believe.”*

# Shifting Perspectives

## Parents have a positive view of education

- The parents we interviewed were generally very supportive and encouraging of their child's pursuit of a good education
- Mothers, in particular, are the driving force behind encouraging their children to become the first generation in their families to pursue a qualification

*"My mum's more modern in that respect. She gets certificates and she's working and doing things like the Prince's Trust. My mum's always been there to say that you can do things, women can do more things. I've always wanted to do more than just get married. She's always said that I can do whatever I want. So, she's actually happy that I'm doing it." – Traveller, female, 15*

## Gendered expectations

- This shift in attitude towards learners pursuing educational qualifications has largely been focused on the female learners. Males are still expected to work with their fathers in trades / self-employment.
- Future trajectory / careers – Female Travellers are interested in hair and beauty, males are following their father's footsteps in manual labour routes, however, they want to be supported by educational certificates

*"I think everybody needs an education. I think, like, do you know how some Travellers just forget about education? It's like, it doesn't really matter. It does, especially for girls. Because, boys can always go to work with their dads. But girls, if they need a job then they'll have the Prince's Trust behind them." – Traveller, female, 12*

## Education is valued

- Education is generally valued by both the parents and the learners. However, fathers overwhelmingly have little /low literacy levels with mothers driving the change
- Travellers tend to go to primary school. College, rather than secondary school, is often taken up by Travellers at the age of 15. College provides the flexibility for learners to fit study around their commitments and cultural values. It is also viewed as the 'safe' option by parents as college pupils are perceived to be more independent and mature than secondary school pupils.

*"I wouldn't want to be one of those people that couldn't read or write. I used to love school when I was in school, but this just fits my lifestyle completely. Especially now I'm older as well. I loved school. I love reading and writing... when I was at primary school, I never missed a day. Never, ever, ever missed a day." – Traveller, female, 16*

## Positive shift in attitudes towards education and future goals

Paul Boucher echoes this in his interview and noted that the attitude towards education had largely shifted over the years. This is further backed by literature on the subject (Bhopal, 2004\*). University-level study is not yet considered, as there is a lack of knowledge about this route, and many Travellers are unwilling to leave their communities to study.

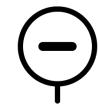


FE viewed  
more  
favourably



HE not  
considered

# Barriers



Despite their positive view on education, there are several significant barriers that learners and their families face when accessing the formal education system.

Comprised cultural norms & values

There are entrenched expectations of purity until marriage in the Travelling Community. There was an inherent fear, particularly for female learners, that their reputation would be jeopardised and irreparably damaged in a formal education; idle gossip and rumours about contact with male students could easily start and compromise the 'purity' of young female learners. Therefore, female learners are withdrawn by their parents at secondary school age.

Mobility

Frequent moves and unstable housing options makes it difficult to access formal education, with intermittent attendance at school significantly affecting their education. Girls are unable to move around unchaperoned which is a significant barrier to participation, especially if their parents work full-time.

Commitments to the home [females]

Females, especially, have a duty to care for the children and help with housework.

*"Because with me being a young Travelling girl, I've got to clean and help in the household and stuff like that. They're my responsibilities and my lifestyle and being home educated just fits in perfect with that. You wouldn't be able to do mainstream school. It wouldn't fit in."* – Traveller, female, 16

Lack of knowledge / engagement with education system

The lack of previous engagement with the education system - many of LTI's participants are the first in the family to get qualifications - means that there is a limited knowledge of how to navigate to the formal education system.

# Bullying and Prejudice

Many of the Travellers have had negative experiences in school. They have been targeted with prejudice, bullying and harassment from students and teachers. This has frequently led to **exclusion / learners being withdrawn from school**.

Despite this, the Travellers have maintained a positive view of education.



50% of British people admit to having an 'unfavorable view' of Roma people.

*"I know a lot of people don't think it, but the Gypsies get a lot of stick, a lot of stick and there's not much done about it. We don't know how to stick up for ourselves. It's awkward especially when a lot of us can't read and write. You don't know what to say or do. Hopefully, probably a couple of more years, I'll be reading and writing."*

– Parent

*"The pervasive discriminatory behaviour directed toward Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people is borne out of ignorance and is usually based on ill-informed cultural stereotypes. This lack of understanding or cultural awareness causes significant damage to the trust Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities have in British society; and perhaps understandably leads to them withdrawing from the support and services they desperately need."*

*'The Last Acceptable Form of Racism?' The Traveller Movement, September, 2017, p. 5*

*"Like, so if we went to school, we'd have to be picked up and they walk home. Yes. And they find that **weird**. And different ways that we talk. Like we say, "Mam" and they say, "Mum". My teacher used to tell me that I was **strange**. And she would always **correct our English**. I loved schools because of my friends. And **when I left, I cried**. I did cry. I'll admit it."*

Traveller, female, 15

*"If you live in a small little down like this a lot of people know you're Gypsy, they don't want to employ you. So we've had all that. He would have liked to stay at school but unfortunately, he was put in **hospital**. It was really severe, **fractured nose, cut open ear**, he had to have it stitched and glued. He was covered in **bruises, busted nose, busted lips, bottom tooth knocked out**. That was the second time and the third time we pulled him out. The school couldn't do a lot about it. I called the police. I had the police up here but there wasn't a lot they could do about it because they were both 13 at the time. They didn't want either one of them having a record. So what can you do? Not a lot."*

– Parent

*"Back then, when I was at school, you couldn't say that you were a Traveller because if you had have done, it was, you know, **you'd have been picked on** or... I mean, even my headteacher, when we had lunch on the field in the summer, he'd say afterwards, if we left rubbish, "Look at this, it looks like a packet of **dirty gypsies**." So, how were you ever going to say to him, "I'm from the Travelling community," when he's got that- you know, he's giving that to the rest of the school?"*

– Parent

*"I went to secondary school as well until Year 9, half-way through Year 9. I didn't go further than that... It was more to do with **bullying** than anything else. We **decided to leave** and join the Prince's Trust and Lincoln Travellers Initiative."*

– Traveller, male, 15

# Impact of LTI's Prince's Trust Initiative

**LiNC**  
HIGHER  
Realising aspirations

**ors** Uni Connect  
Programme

**C** COSMOS



Photo from:

<http://www.lincsti.co.uk/ourstory.html>

# Impacts of the Initiative



There was a very large appreciation for the Prince's Trust Initiative, provided by LTI. The Travellers are aware that without it, they would have very limited options: either home schooling from parents who can read and write, or a personal tutor if they could afford it. The relevant NERUPI levels to frame further evaluations are indicated below.



For many, thanks to the initiative, they are going to college. For others who previously didn't realise the benefits or purpose of school/ formal learning, they altered their perceptions of education and what education could do for them.

**NERUPI A and B, L0**



The impact of getting qualifications has had a wider impact on the community as a whole. Parents are becoming more open to the idea of their children going to college and future careers, as well as rethinking their own options in education.

**NERUPI D and E, L0-1**



For the older participants, employability skills are practised, such as interviews skills and CV-writing. The Prince's Trust qualifications stand the learners in good stead for employability & FE.

**NERUPI A and B, L1**



The initiative provides the option of getting a job that wasn't considered previously. For female Travellers, they can consider being independent before they marry, and male Travellers can back up their skills in manual jobs with qualifications, to upskill in the future.

**NERUPI A, B, and C L1**



Confidence generally improved across the board. Participants were proud that they could pursue these options, and the certificates boosted their self-esteem. This gives them more confidence to form a connection to the 'outside world'.

**NERUPI C, L0-1**



The base-level of health among Traveller communities is generally poor. The initiative provides valuable information on nutrition and healthcare, e.g. First Aid.

Overall, the initiative had a cumulative effect of increasing motivation. Those who had successfully gained qualifications had a desire to go on to the next step, and, in turn, parents, younger siblings, and other relatives, witnessed the success of the initiative and were inspired to educate themselves, too.

# Travellers' Opinions of the Prince's Trust

The following quotations, captured during face-to-face interviews with young members of the Travelling community, are evidence of the achievement of NERUPI aims through Lincolnshire Traveller Initiative.

*"It's been really, really, really good. I wouldn't change it. I fully enjoyed it on the bus. We've mixed potion stuff, erupting volcanoes for science. We've done loads of fun stuff on there. Yes. It was like they made different methods and stuff fun. So, there was a different way of making maths fun, there was a different way of making literacy and English fun."*

- Traveller, female, 16

NERUPI D/E

*"I was really proud of getting my first Prince's Trust certificate because it was, just, like-, when I was in school, like primary and that, I wasn't really a star pupil, let's say. I wasn't really good at much. I can remember being in school and keep asking people-, because I think if you'd done so well on the handwriting, you got a pen instead of a pencil. I kept trying to get that and I never did because I can't write, so I don't blame them. That was the first, like, school thing that I really got as a certificate kind of thing."*

- Traveller, male, 14

NERUPI C/D

**"I'm just excited to do something new instead of staying at home all the time. I thought, like a lot of girls my age they look for boyfriends and then get married at 19 or 20 or even earlier than that and then they have children...I didn't want to do that. I wanted to grow up and do what I want instead of just doing what everyone else expects me to do. I want to live though. I don't want to get married yet. That's why I thought it would be quite good to do the Prince's Trust."**

- Traveller, female, 12  
NERUPI A/B

*"I've kind of got more confidence to go actually... I was scared to do the whole college thing but now I've got a place and I'm actually can't wait to actually go and do something for myself and have a bit more confidence in myself and just do what I want to do."*

- Traveller, female, 15  
NERUPI A/B/C

**"100% because before I wasn't really interested in getting a job until I done the Prince's Trust. Now, I'm determined to get a job. I want a job now."**

- Traveller, female, 16  
NERUPI A/B

*"I've gotten more confident in talking to people because before, I couldn't talk to any strangers, I'd be very shy. I could talk to anyone now, they all love me."*

- Traveller, female, 16  
NERUPI C

*"Definitely, honestly, it sounds really cliché, but I am excited about going to college and doing everything in the future, yes, definitely. Without Prince's Trust, college would be a chance, because I don't go to school. I wouldn't be going to college. I wouldn't be excited about the future."*

- Traveller, male, 14  
NERUPI A

# Impacts

## Addressing Individual Needs

The providers aim to be flexible to be able to provide the learners with whatever they need in order to progress. The Functional Skills qualification is an example of this.

*"We work in and around them to a great extent, and we don't say, "No" very often. We are a bit, "Yes, we can do that. If we can't do it, we know somebody that can."*

– Paul Boucher

### Provision of Functional Skills

*"I had a request from a family that we hadn't worked with. 'My son wants to do a plumbing apprenticeship, but they've told him he needs his Level 2 Functional Skills Maths and English to do an apprenticeship.' ... He wanted to do the apprenticeship, so I said, 'I'll see if I can find out a bit more about Functional Skills and who can do it for you.' Now we offer Functional Skills too and it complements everything else."*

– Paul Boucher

## Breaking Down Barriers



**Positive view of education:** Word of mouth referrals and experience of working with other generations within the family, has led to families being more receptive and open to participate in educational activities



**Improving knowledge & perceptions of education:** informing both the parents and learners of the different routes / HE options

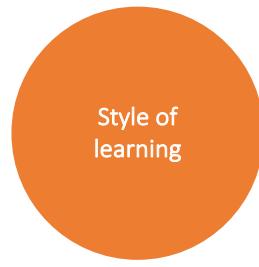


**Trust:** learn in a safe environment without fear of prejudice or discrimination



**Mobile van:** essential for access, particularly as females are unable to go out unchaperoned

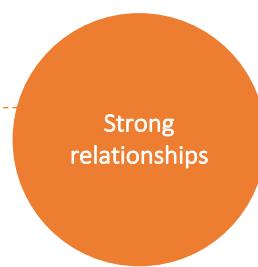
## Experience of the Prince's Trust Initiative



At the learner's own pace,  
1:1 tutoring



e.g. trips to BGU,  
confidence-building



Trust Paul and other teachers, family-like connections form



Wide portfolio of skills, CV-building

**Overwhelmingly positive:**

Learners have a real motivation to learn & participate. They look forward to learning.

# Parents and wider community

The parents and relatives of the target learners also benefit from the initiative, which in turn, ensures that the impacts are long-term and sustainable.

Experience  
of education

- The vast majority of the learners' parents haven't had much engagement with education system.
- The parents are extremely positive about education, but this view jars with their principles and cultural values when it comes to schooling.
- Parents believe that the educational system is not designed for the Travelling Community. Although other ethnic communities are generally accommodated for, Travellers are not
- Often, their own negative memories of school are solidified if their children also suffer prejudice.

Impacts

- Parents are aware of the positive effect that the initiative has on their children
- An unintended impact of the initiative is that the parents also get involved and learn alongside their children
- Parents are very appreciative of the initiative and then act as community advocates to help to spread the message to other families in the Travelling Community
- The trust between the community and LTI means that if an official from outside the community comes to visit alongside the bus (e.g. a social worker), they will be more easily accepted by the community.

## Health

The statistics on the health of Travellers are concerning, but LTI is working on improving the health of Travellers, through interventions and education.

*"Ten years' less life expectancy. Five times higher incidence of cancer... They don't have vaccinations... Really getting to grips with health is tricky, and capturing the men more is a challenge... the men neglect their health terribly, but we're on it. We've got a big oral health programme coming up, and eye testing. The scope is endless, really."*

- Paul Boucher

*"Recently, we had to do a healthy lifestyle. We had to cook a meal, we had the chance to go to the college, Boston College I think it was, to do a first aid course..."*

- Traveller, male, 14



*"I think since I've been doing the healthy lifestyle one I've been doing much more exercise... I didn't used to have a very good sleeping pattern, but now I think I have a bit of a better one because now I've learned how important it is and stuff, and exercise, how important it is. I didn't used to really do that. Then different food groups, making sure I've got a little bit of each in there..."*

- Traveller, female, 13

*The preparing for a healthy lifestyle was a good one to do because, obviously, I knew that there were, like, salts and fats in everything, but I never really did understand it, and I never did understand, like, how much was in each, and then when I saw it, I was, like, "Okay, that's a fair bit." So, obviously, then, with that, I did actually stop- because I used to eat a lot, but, obviously, when I did that and I realised it, I was, like, "Right, I need to stop, I really do need to stop." So, I did cut down on everything. – Traveller, female, 14*

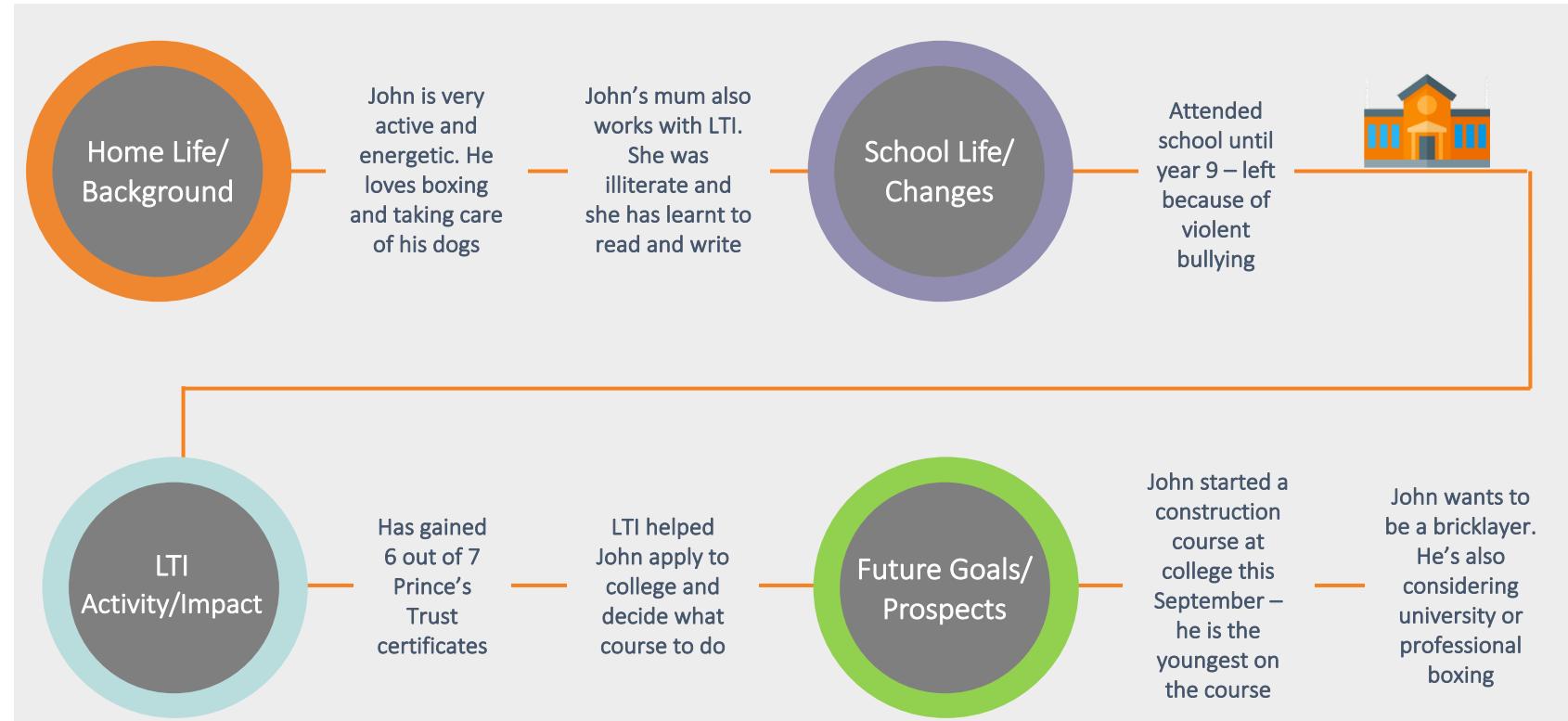
# Learner Case Study

## John\*

15 years old, male

*"Prince's Trust is more life skills and I think it comes in a lot more useful [than school]. Some of the things I didn't have a clue about. It was really helpful and I enjoyed it as well... I got six of the seven Prince's Trusts that I need to get. You can do five just to pass, I want to do seven to get the best. "*

- John



*"I've tried everything to keep him in education of what you can do, I've tried everything for him. I didn't go to school, and I don't want my kids brought up like I was brought up. I did want to read and write but mum and dad were like – unfortunately, that's how the old ones are – they're sort of set in their ways and they don't want you mixing with others, if you know what I mean. Fortunately, my kids are going to school. I want them to learn to read and write. I want them to learn, to have an education."*

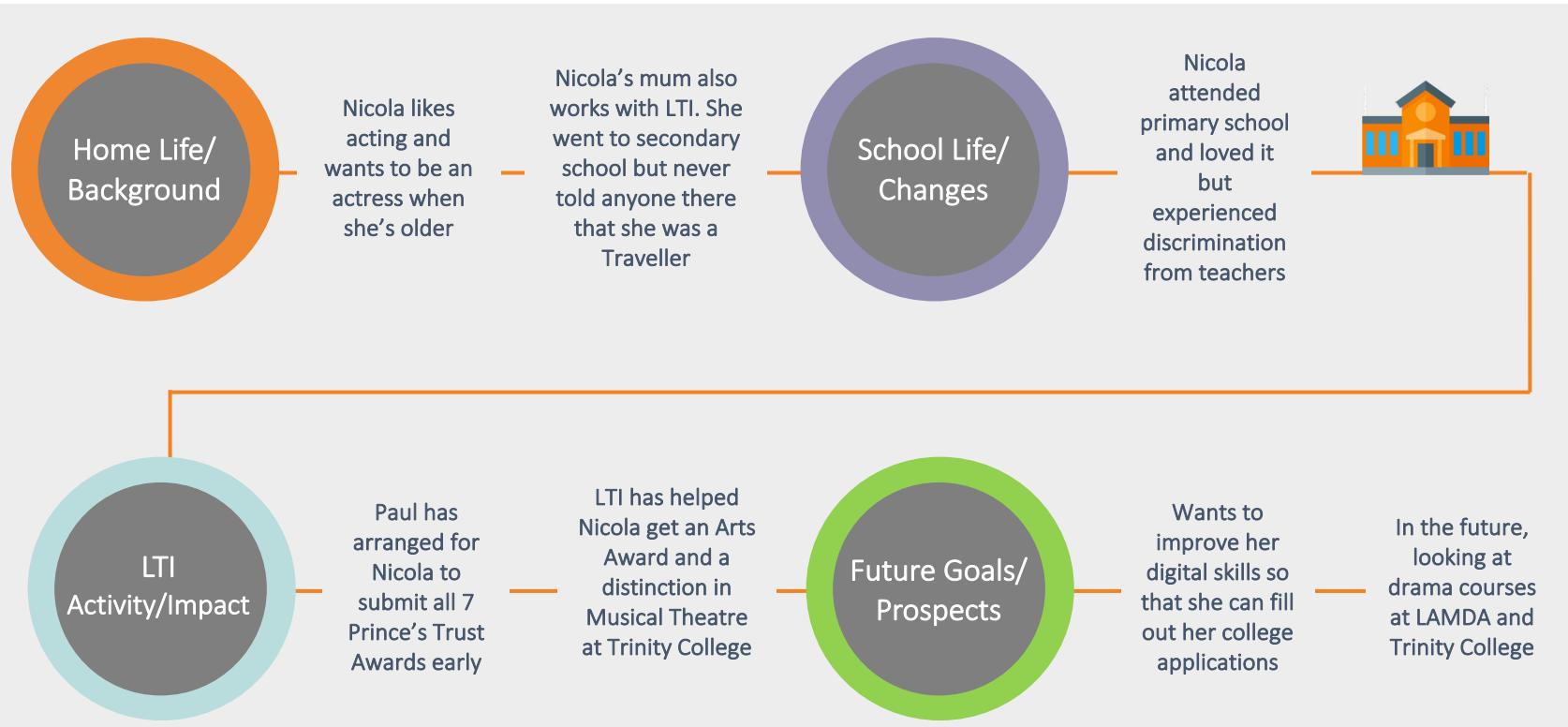
- John's mum

\*Names have been changed to protect anonymity

# Learner Case Study

## Nicola\*

12 years old, female



*"They still should go to school, and that's why I contacted LTI because I thought I'm not going to be able to, probably, have a structured education, if you know what I mean, but with LTI, it is structured. There's plan. Because home-educating, it is hard, very, very hard. I know people that are not from the Travelling community that have wanted to home educate, but they don't hardly get any support.*

*- Nicola's mum*

# Summary

In **very specific situations**, with learners who require a range of **specialised interventions** depending on their gender, location, community, parents' attitudes, etc., LTI's Prince's Trust initiative **addresses barriers** and **successfully equips learners with education and qualifications**.

## NERUPI

Learners in this intervention gain some or all of the following educational benefits:

- A developed knowledge of the benefits of Further Education (NERUPI A Level 0-1 [adapted for FE])
  - Experience of a HE campus (NERUPI B Level 0-1)
- The opportunity to study subjects that align with their personal interests and future careers (NERUPI B Level 0-1)
  - Confidence in their academic abilities (NERUPI C Level 0-1)
    - Study skills (NERUPI D Level 0-1)
    - Prince's Trust qualifications

## Gatsby benchmarks

The initiative also provides a stable careers programme for the learners (1), which addresses the needs of each pupil (3), offers personal guidance (8), and links learning to future careers (4).

On top of the NERUPI and Gatsby objectives, The Prince's Trust initiative is supporting LTI in fulfilling a crucial role in providing support and services that Travellers are otherwise unable, or not confident, to access in mainstream society. This intervention has become imperative in the lives of Travelling Communities. Without it, entire communities in the UK would be in significantly lower educational outcomes, lesser ambitions and worse health.

As a final note, arguably the largest, prevailing barrier for Travellers is prejudice and bullying. In placing Travellers in colleges, LTI ensures that other students mix with Traveller students. Therefore, an indirect consequence of LTI is helping to educate others about Travellers, making a dent on societal ignorance and helping to subvert ingrained cultural stereotypes that have led to pervasive discrimination, racism and violence against Travellers.

# *Lincolnshire Traveller Initiative*

*Sarah Dirrane and Dr. Marianne Hewitt*

## *NERUPI Case Study*

To contact the authors of this report,  
please email [Sarah@cosmosltd.uk](mailto:Sarah@cosmosltd.uk) or  
[Marianne@cosmosltd.uk](mailto:Marianne@cosmosltd.uk)

For more information about us, please  
visit [www.cosmosltd.uk](http://www.cosmosltd.uk)