

Social Work Online Team Training (SWOTT) toolkit:

LEARNING OBJECT 2: MARIA AND GEJZA

Understanding automatic prejudice: Working Together to Safeguard Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children



Maria (aged 11 years) and Gejza (aged 12 years) are sisters who attend the same secondary school. They have lived in the United Kingdom with their parents for around 4 years. The sisters' heritage is Roma and the family are originally from Slovakia. The school report that Maria has some level of learning difficulty, although understanding of the challenges that she lives with have not been fully assessed. Both children are reported as achieving below average progress in their educational attainment. Their parent's understanding and use of English is extremely limited.

In October, a member of the teaching team raised a concern that Maria and Gejza were regularly missing from home and school, escalating concerns regarding the risks of sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation. In the referral, a report was made that Maria reported that Gejza had a "boyfriend" who was almost 18 years old. The incident was assessed to meet the threshold for Early Help, it was not perceived as a high-risk situation.

In December Gejza disclosed she had been sexually assaulted by her "boyfriend" and the case has now been assessed to meet the threshold for Section 47 assessment.