



Guidance on the use of reduced timetables for pupils of compulsory school age

September 2020

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is intended to protect both children and young people and school, should a reduced timetable be used, and ensure that no child is excluded illegally through the imposition of a reduced timetable (sometimes referred to as 'part-time' timetables).

All schools and services providing education to children of compulsory school age, regardless of their arrangements for governance including:

- Local authority maintained community and foundation schools
- Sponsored and converter academies
- Special Schools
- Independent mainstream schools
- Free schools
- University Technology Colleges
- Education Support Centre (ESCs) and Primary Behaviour Services

What is this guidance about?

For the purpose of this guidance, a reduced educational provision means an agreement made with a pupil, parent or carer and, in some circumstances the Local Authority, that the number

of hours spent in education is reduced for a time limited period of generally no more than six weeks.

The Local Authority's Access to Education for Children and Young People Unable to Attend School for Medical Reasons [found here](#) should be followed for those children and young people deemed not fit to attend school due to a medical reason.

This guidance is not intended to be applied to those children and young people where a flexible learning programme has been put in place. In such cases, provided that the school has a mechanism in place for ensuring that the child attending the alternative provision and the child's total educational programme is full-time, this arrangement would not be considered as a reduced educational provision.

Responsible officers:

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Background and context

It is recognised that there may be occasions when a child or young person is unable to attend school full-time, due to, for example, recovery from illness, exceptional family circumstances, pregnancy, or returning home from a period in custody. Also, there may be instances when a child is experiencing severe poor emotional wellbeing at school and is finding it increasingly difficult to cope with full-time attendance. In such circumstances the law permits the temporary use of a part-time/reduced timetable. This guidance explains the legal position regarding such timetables clarifies responsibilities and identifies the best practice to be adopted.

The DfE perspective

In *the DfE document named School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities* (DfE. August 2020) the DfE poses the question whether a school can place a pupil on a part-time timetable? The answer given is as follows:

As a rule, no. All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. In agreeing to a part-time timetable a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

The Ofsted perspective

In a report titled *Pupils missing out on education* (Ofsted. November 2013) Ofsted highlighted concerns that children not accessing full-time education tend to have lower aspirations, limited levels of achievement and, most seriously, face potential safeguarding risks (such as child sexual exploitation and trafficking). As a consequence of the report's findings, Ofsted has strengthened its approach to monitoring local authorities' and schools' arrangements for managing attendance. Local authorities are now required to obtain from all schools, regardless of their arrangements for governance, up-to-date and accurate data on all children not accessing full-time education. Schools are similarly required to maintain data on pupils on their roll but not attending full-time and report to governors on a termly basis.

The legal position

All children of compulsory school age are legally entitled to receive a suitable full-time education and local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that all such children in their area receive such an education. There is currently no legal definition of what constitutes 'full-time' education. It may nonetheless be useful for it to be borne in mind that in state schools' children of compulsory school age normally receive around five hours of education a day for about 190 days a year. The Local Government Ombudsman established (in its report *Out of school...out of mind* (LGO. 2011)) that the number of hours of teaching per week considered to represent full-time education is as follows and can be used as a guide:

Reception and Key Stage 1 (R, Y1 and Y2)	21 hours
Key Stage 2 (Y3 to Y6)	23.5 hours
Key Stage 3 (Y7 to Y9) and Y10	24 hours
Y11	25 hours

DfE guidance states in very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a reduction in educational provision to meet a young person's needs.

A reduced timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. The arrangement should always specify an end-date by when it is expected that the child or young person will return to full-time education (or when an alternative will be provided) and be reviewed regularly in the light of any changes to the child or young person's circumstances. A temporary reduced timetable should provide a means of achieving re-integration to full-time education. It should never be used as a form of exclusion from school for part of the school day or as permanent provision.

If a child or young person is unable to access full-time education due to a diagnosed health need, schools and local authorities must follow the Department for Education guidance *Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs* 2014.

Responsibilities

The local authority is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all children of compulsory school age who are not receiving a suitable full-time education, receive this unless they are deemed to be medically unfit to do so, or it is otherwise considered to be in the best interests of the child's mental or physical health not to.
- Collecting and monitoring data about all children of compulsory school age who are not accessing full-time education, from all schools and services in the local area regardless of their individual governance arrangements. Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services and was published on 18th September 2020:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-from-2018/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services>

- Providing transport support for eligible pupils to access appropriate education

Schools (including academies, Free Schools, UTCs, Special Schools, ESCs and Primary Behaviour Service) are responsible for:

- Providing full-time education to all children on roll and appropriate support to enable pupils to participate in education full-time;
- Informing the local authority of any instance of a child or young person being placed on a reduced timetable (Appendix 1), so that the local authority is aware of the arrangements (Education Inspection Framework, 2nd September 2019).
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework>
- Any change in the educational arrangements for a child looked after should be discussed and agreed with the Virtual School before action is taken.
- Any change in the educational arrangements for a young person with an EHCP should be discussed and agreed with the SEND Officer
- A completed and signed off checklist (Appendix 2) needs to be sent to ISL Access and Inclusion.
- If the young person is eligible for transport support, informing the SEN transport team 5 days in advance of the start of the reduced timetable and providing the end date.
- Record the child or young person's attendance, using appropriate registration code; in order that both the school and HCC/ISL can monitor when the child or young person began and ended their reduced educational provision (Appendix 4) Recording Attendance.
- Establish robust arrangements for monitoring and regular reviews of the plan by a named member of staff.
- Ensure effective communication with parents or carers and key professionals with regards to progress towards the child or young person's full re-integration to school.
- Ensure that arrangements for a reduced educational provision do not discriminate against a young person's access to free school meals.
- Providing information to governors about any children placed on reduced timetables, so that governors can fulfil their responsibilities to monitor the school's provision.

Best practice

Schools wishing to establish a reduced educational provision need to consider their position within the context of the legal requirements and considerations outlined above. The Local Authority expectation will be that all occurrences of reduced educational provisions are signed

off by the schools Head Teacher having completed the check list – see Appendix 2. The Head Teacher will ensure that the decision is taken as part of a planned strategy.

It should proceed as follows:

1. Consult with relevant agencies to determine the education and support provision that would best meet the child or young person's individual needs, for a fixed term.
2. Complete a detailed action plan, agreed with the parents/carers and pupil (Appendix 3). The action plan shows a clear path to planned reintegration from reduced provision to full-time attendance over a maximum of a six-week period. Where appropriate, the child or young person should be actively involved in this planning. The plan should be reviewed if there is a change to his/her circumstances or needs. An example is shown in Appendix 3.
3. If the child or young person has an Education, Health and Care Plan, consult with the local authority's SEND team to ensure that the EHCP is implemented fully under a reduced timetable. The school should also consider whether it is appropriate to arrange an interim review, if for example the child's needs have changed and it is considered that this could impact on the ability for the provision to meet his/her needs. Transport arrangements for eligible children will not be amended unless confirmation is received by the SEN Transport Team that the SEND team have been consulted and support the reduced timetable.
4. If the child or young person is a child looked after, consult with the Virtual School before a reduced timetable is considered. The school assigned Education Adviser will be able to work with the school and the social worker to agree a plan to support educational progress during the part-time period and the return to full-time education. The detailed action plan may be uploaded to the Personal Education Plan for ease of future reference.
5. Confirm, in writing, which adults will be responsible for the duty of care for the child or young person during school sessions when he/she is not attending; (schools retain full duty of care for all children who are on the school roll if they are receiving education off-site).
6. **Obtain written consent to the arrangements from the child or young person's parents/carers.** Should parents/carers not agree to the reduced timetable, it cannot be implemented, as without parental agreement a reduced timetable would be considered to be an unlawful exclusion. **A PARENT SIGNATURE MUST BE ADDED**
For a child looked after, the foster carer will need to defer to the social worker to obtain the agreement of the person with legal parental responsibility.
7. Keep a central record of the arrangement and reviews and notify the local authority, using the form provided for this purpose (see Appendix 1 to this guidance). If the student is eligible for transport support, the SEN Transport Team (email schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk) must be informed 5 days prior to the start of the reduced timetable to enable amended transport arrangements to be put in place. Transport will only be agreed if the SEND area team have confirmed support for the

reduced timetable and an end date is provided.

8. Record the child or young person's absence from school for sessions when he/she is not in attendance as authorised absence (register code C).
9. Provide sufficient and appropriately differentiated work for any time the child or young person is not attending school. Provided the child or young person is medically fit, the combination of work completed at home and in school must constitute full time education. The school should consider how work for when the pupil is not in school will be provided, sent home and marked and how constructive feedback will be given. Also consider how the pupil will be kept in mind and feel included in school life, e.g. how will they continue to have contact with the rest of their class and key staff.
10. Inform the Local Authority Access Team when the child or young person returns to full-time education. Any amendments to transport arrangements will cease on the agreed end date.

Safeguarding Considerations

Schools have a safeguarding responsibility for all pupils on their roll and therefore must be aware that even with parent/carer agreement to any reduced timetable arrangement they make, they are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils on roll who are off-site during school hours. If evidence suggests that the child or young person will be exposed to significant risk if not in school, then a reduced timetable should not be considered an option.

Assessing the Risk

Completing the risk assessment which addresses any actual or potential safeguarding, welfare, offending or harmful behavior concerns that may result from a change in pattern of school attendance is essential. An exemplar risk assessment is included as Appendix 5. This is not prescriptive, and schools will want to develop their own risk assessment to meet the needs and risk of their school community.

Risk assessments should follow the five steps identified by the Health and Safety Officer:

Step 1: Identify possible hazards

Step 2: Decide who may be harmed and how

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide on precaution

Step 4: Record your findings and implement them

Step 5: Regularly review your assessment and update if necessary

The risk assessment should include the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person as well as the risk of the child or young person engaging in criminal activity or substance misuse whilst not in school.

Consideration must be given to the safety and wellbeing of the young person.

These factors must be taken into account when undertaking a risk assessment:

- The child or young person is 'looked after' by the local authority (Virtual School & Social Worker must be consulted).
- The child or young person is subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan – or concerns (Social Worker must be consulted).
- The risk of the child or young person to CSE as this will increase their vulnerability.
- The risk of substance misuse while not in receipt of education during the school day.
- The risk of radicalization is something the school should always consider- vulnerability to this is increased as the child or young person may become more accessible, but also isolated and disengaged and therefore susceptible to being groomed.
- Any factors that may affect school transport, these factors must be shared with the SEN Transport team.

The school must be totally satisfied that suitable arrangements are in place to ensure the safeguarding and care of the child or young person during the period when they otherwise have been expected to be in school and secure a written agreement from the parents or carers about who is responsible for the welfare of the child or young person for the sessions in question.

Notifying the Local Authority about pupils of compulsory school age who are on a reduced timetable

Please return the attached form Appendix 1 (available on SIMS or at <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>) using Anycomms Plus within five school days of a pupil starting and ending a reduced timetable.

If the pupil is eligible for transport, the SEN transport team must be informed at least 5 days before the start of the reduced timetable and provided with start and end dates. Schools must also provide confirmation that the reduced timetable has been agreed by the SEND area team.

The information provided will be used by the Local Authority to:

- Discharge its safeguarding responsibilities to collect and analyse data relating to children not in full time education (Ofsted Framework: Inspecting local authority children's services, September 2020).
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-from-2018/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services>
- Analyse data relating to the use of reduced timetables to inform service delivery at a local and a county level.

The information will allow schools to:

- Inform the Local Authority when a child or young person is placed on a reduced timetable. A completed referral form, checklist and risk assessment needs to be sent to HCC.
- To demonstrate transparency and accountability in the use of reduced timetables to create reports for use in monitoring and analysing data relating to child or young people on reduced timetables.

Further information and advice

Schools and parents can seek further information and advice from their Integrated Services for Learning (ISL) area team.

Pupils on Reduced Timetables
Form for schools/academies to use to notify the local authority
Statutory School Age Only

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. Advice from the Department for Education (November 2016) states that any part-time timetable must be time limited and the decision to implement it must have the agreement of the pupil's parents. Pupils on part-time timetables should be recorded using register code C (authorised absence) for the sessions they are not in school. As part of the *Framework for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers* (Ofsted November 2017); local authorities are required to provide detailed data on school-age children in their area who are not in full-time education.

School/Academy: _____		
LA number: _____	DSPL Area: _____	

Pupil's Name: _____
UPN No: _____

Date of Birth: _____
Year Group: _____
Ethnicity: _____

SEND: Yes/No	EHCP: Yes/No	SEND Officer Name:
Details		

Child Looked After: Yes / No	<u>OR</u>	Previously Looked After: Yes / No
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PSP / Risk Management Plan in place: Yes / No
Reduced Timetable Reintegration Plan in place: Yes / No

Child Protection Plan: Yes / No	Child in Need: Yes / No
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Date when pupil started the part-time timetable: _____

Is the pupil eligible for transport support? Yes / No
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What were the reasons for the part-time timetable? (please circle)

New School	ASD	Support with home life	Medical	Following exclusion
Transition to Special School	Mental Health	Reduce anxiety	CAMHS recommendation	Improve attendance
Other (please state)				

Details of part-time timetable (including number of hours attending school each week):

When is the part-time timetable due to be reviewed? _____

Date part-time timetable ended, if applicable: _____

If the part-time timetable has not already ended, please notify the LA when it has.

School contact name: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date Local Authority informed: _____

Please upload to AnyComms Plus to LA service ISL-Behaviour (file type Part-time Timetable) within 5 days of pupil starting or ending a part-time table.

The information provided by this form is intended to enable schools which find it necessary to utilise a part-time timetable to demonstrate greater transparency and accountability. The information provided will be monitored by the local authority on a half-termly basis and will be used to support schools to more effectively discharge their responsibility to ensure that all children are able to access suitable, full-time education. The information collected will also be used to support both schools and the local authority to more effectively discharge their respective safeguarding responsibilities.

Appendix 2

Checklist for using Reduced Timetables

It is expected practice for the Head Teacher to oversee the completion of this 'Checklist' to show evidence that the necessary decisions have taken place to ensure the child is safe. Please return to ISL Access and Inclusion.

Name of child			
Date of Birth		Year Group	
School			

Decision / Action	Completed
Is taken in the best interests of the child or young person and attracts the understanding, approval and written agreement of parents/carers and in the case of a Looked After Child or young person subject to a CIN or CP Plan, the allocated worker	
Risk assessment completed and any risks are managed.	
Complies with Safeguarding best practice i.e. statutory responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people.	
The reduced timetable is for a limited period with review dates set.	
If the child or young person has an EHCP the LA SEND Officer is Consulted	
A parent signature has been obtained	
Appropriate and sufficient work has been set for any sessions the child or young person is away from school	
If the student is eligible for transport support the transport team is informed at least 5 days in advance <i>and informed of the end date.</i>	

Appendix 3 **Reduced Timetable Re-integration Plan**

Name: Year Group:		Class/Tutor:	Meeting with parents:	Start date:	End date:
	Plan	Review 1		Review 2	
Objectives (what change do we want to see?)					
Success Criteria (what will the change look like?)					
What will the school do?					
Details of any Work Experience (if appropriate)					
Details of any alternative curriculum (if appropriate)					
Additional resources					
Outcomes					
What will parent/carers do?			What the pupil needs to do		
Parent/Carer signature:			Pupil signature:		
Designated teacher with responsibility:					

It is important that schools act to ensure that the DfE regulations in respect of attendance are correctly observed for pupil's on a reduced timetable.

The registration codes applied will depend on the precise arrangement for providing education.

Registration codes

C Code

To be used when a pupil has a reduced timetable that includes sessions which have been mutually agreed not to involve attendance at any other institution or supervised activity.

The sessions agreed not to involve attendance should be recorded as authorized absence. The school should be satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place for the care and welfare of the pupil during the time when they would otherwise be at school. This is particularly important for pupil's in the primary phase.

B Code

To be used if the pupil's is receiving off site provision, approved by the school including any work experience forming part of the aforementioned alternative provision.

A pupil marked 'B' should be present at another educational institution or appropriately supervised activity agreed by the school.

The school should establish robust arrangements with other providers to promote the effective and timely sharing of individual attendance information, to ensure they fulfil their legal and safeguarding responsibilities and apply the correct registration codes.

W Code

To be used if a pupil, in the final two years of compulsory education is attending an approved work experience placement and is otherwise attending sessions at school.

Attendance monitoring arrangements should reflect those applied for off-site provisions as above.

Appendix 5 Exemplar Risk Assessment

Individual Pupil Risk Assessment

Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Year Group:

School Name:

Completed by:

Date of Completion:

Agreed with Parent(s)/carer(s) on:

Parent(s)/Carer(s) Agreement:

Name:

Date:

Signature:

Name:

Date:

Signature:

School Agreement:

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

Proposed Review Date:

IDENTIFICATION of RISK	
Describe the risk	
Is the risk potential or actual?	
Who is affected by the risk?	
ASSESSMENT of RISK	
In which situation does the risk actually occur?	
How likely is it that the risk will arise?	
If the risk arises who is likely to be injured/hurt?	
RISK REDUCTION	
Proactive interventions to reduce / prevent risk	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult support in class Positive role modelling Praise/acknowledgement for positive behavior Regular updates with parents Risk Management Plan Safe place
Early interventions to manage risk	<p>Identify exactly what an adult will immediately do if the risk is observed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Identify exactly what an adult will do if the risk is reported to them by a child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Inventions to respond to adverse outcomes	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any incidents to be logged, dated and signed according to Incident/safeguarding policy Designated school adult Contact parent/carer Contact other pupils parents (if required)

COMMUNICATION OF RISK ASSESSMENT PLAN

Plan and strategies shared with:	Communication method:	Date Actioned:

STAFF TRAINING NEEDS

Identify training needs:	Training provided to meet needs:	Date training completed:

REVIEW of RISK ASSESSMENT PLAN

Measures set out	Effectiveness in supporting the child or young person	Impact on risk
Agreed proactive interventions to prevent risk		
Early interventions to manage risk		
Intventions to respond to adverse outcomes		

Does the Risk Assessment need to continue: Yes/No

Are there any additions/alterations to the plan: Yes/No

If 'Yes' list these here:

Risk Assessment Reviewed On:

Parent(s)/Carer(s) Agreement:

Name: Date:

Signature:

Name: Date:

Signature:

School Agreement:

Name: Position:

Signature: Date:

Is a further Review required: YES/NO

Agreed Date:

Green	Amber	Red
<p>The school have used the Hertfordshire Reduced Timetable Guidance</p> <p>The child or young person is planned to be on a reduced timetable for no more than 6-8 weeks</p>	<p>The school have extended the reduced timetable beyond 8 weeks</p>	<p>The school have used a reduced timetable inappropriately based on the evidence obtained</p> <p>There is concern from the information presented as to why this action has been taken and there is no effective 'exit strategy' or long term plan</p>
INDICATORS		
<p>Satisfied that appropriate agreement from parent/carer and any other agency is in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social care for CiC, CIN or CP case • SEND where child or young person has an EHCP <p>Action plan for increasing time Time limited</p> <p>LA aware when the young person has an EHCP</p> <p>Social care aware when the child or young person is in care</p> <p>Risk assessment completed</p>	<p>There is little evidence of progress</p> <p>There has been no increase in time</p> <p>Parental dissatisfaction or concerns expressed by another professional</p>	<p>The child or young person is known to be at significantly at risk from harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSE • Radicalisation • Other abusive situations • The child or young person is in care, subject to a CP or CIN plan <p>The child or young person has not been attending regularly for some time</p>
WHAT TO DO NEXT		
<p>Inform the LA Access Team of this practice</p> <p>Watching brief</p>	<p>Inform the LA Access Team of this practice</p> <p>Talk to colleagues who may also visit the school</p>	<p>Inform the LA Access Team of this practice</p> <p>Raise with Safeguarding Team</p> <p>Raise with Head of Access & Inclusion and HfL Advisor</p>