

Education Services

Reduced Timetable Guidance

November 2022

Introduction

This guidance is to help all maintained schools, academies and free schools in the appropriate use of a reduced educational provision (sometimes referred to as a 'part-time' or reduced timetable), to ensure that schools comply with statutory obligations and that they do not inadvertently exclude a pupil illegally. For the purposes of this guidance, a reduced timetable means an agreement made with the 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.

Legal definition

You can access the latest DfE guidance on the use of reduced timetables (page 19).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf

Expectations

Essentially, schools must acknowledge that reduced timetables are:

- exceptional and should only be issued in accordance with a clear rationale based on the need of the young person
- time bound, temporary and should not exceed six weeks in duration

Achieving for Children expects to be notified as soon as a child starts a reduced timetable using the [PME/PAP/Reduced Timetable Notification google form](#).

Achieving for Children expects schools to:

- complete a written agreement which all stakeholders have signed and agreed to (including associated professionals) through a multi-agency meeting [Appendix 3 - Template of Reduced Timetable agreement form](#)
- set review dates in place with all stakeholders
- assign a member of the safeguarding team to complete and uphold a robust risk assessment in keeping with DfE guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (DfE, 2016). If evidence suggests that the child will be exposed to significant risk if not in school, then a reduced timetable should not be a considered option (See example risk assessment appendices ([Appendix 1](#)))
- ensure that parents and carers will be supported during the time when their child is not in school considering the pressures this may have on home life
- consider whether an early help support intervention should be in place to establish if there are wider needs and identify whether support should be required from external agencies

- consider the impact of a reduced timetable on travelling and transport arrangements or the pupil's access to free school meals and ensure it does not discriminate against the pupil or impede their access to education
- inform AfC of those pupils placed on reduced timetables by completing the [Pupils Missing Education \[PME\]/Pupils on Alternative Programmes \[PAP\]/Reduced Timetables: Notification Form](#) as soon as the reduced timetable begins or once agreed the pupil has permission to not access the full 25 hours.

When might a reduced timetable be used?

Examples of when a reduced timetable might be appropriate.

- Where a pupil has ongoing medical (or other) issues, which necessitates missing more than 15 school-days (or more than 30 sessions) cumulatively or consecutively. This would usually be supported by a medical (or other) professional in writing. We would recommend using our 15 days absence guidance document to support [[view here](#) - 'Guidance supporting pupils with Medical or Other Needs in Schools 11-22']. The [Alternative provision policy](#) may also be of interest.
- To support the engagement of pupils who have experienced Emotional Related School Avoidance (ERSA).

Marking the attendance register

Where it has been agreed that a young person does not have to attend school or any other provision or supervised activity, the Code 'C', (authorised absence), is to be used. (The 'B' code must not be used as there is no supervision from a member of school staff and they are not being supported off site by a member of staff).

The DfE's school attendance guidance on reduced timetables states:

'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 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 pupils in the primary phase.'

The appendices listed below are examples of what a school might use to record and track the details of a pupil's reduced timetable.

- [PME/PAP/Reduced Timetable Notification google form](#)
- [Appendix 1](#): Example Risk Assessment
- [Appendix 2](#): Example Checklist
- [Appendix 3](#): Template of Reduced Timetable Agreement Form