

# Frequently asked questions around part-time timetables for children and young people of compulsory school age

## Who is this support and guidance for?

This guidance is intended to protect both children and young people (YP) as well as schools and education settings, should a reduced/part-time timetable be used, (this is not to be confused with flexi-schooling) and ensure that no child/YP is excluded illegally or unlawfully through a reduced or part-time timetable. This relates to all schools and services providing education to children of compulsory school age, regardless of their arrangements for governance. This includes:

- Local authority maintained community and foundation schools
- Sponsored and converter academies
- Free schools

## Can schools put a child/ young person on a part-time timetable?

The DfE document **School Attendance: guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities** (DfE. August 2020) states:

*“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.”*

## If we have agreed a temporary part-time timetable what would be best practice to ensure we can return to full-time education as quickly as possible?

When the school has explored and exhausted all other avenues ( behaviour plans, outside agency involvement e.g. BICs, Specialist Support Services, etc.) , **and** they believe that full-time education would not be in the best interests of a child/YP’s physical or mental health, **and** is therefore considering placing him/her on a temporary reduced timetable, the procedure below should be followed: :

- Consult with relevant agencies to determine the education and support provision that would best meet the child/YP’s individual needs, for a fixed term. Ensure all relevant support avenues been explored e.g. Early Help referral, consultation with advisory teachers, Educational Psychologists. School to consider a Team Around the Child Meeting to consult on the proposed part time timetable and the reintegration plan.

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- Meet with the parent/carer and pupil to discuss the idea of a part time timetable. Complete a detailed action plan, agreed with the parents/carer and pupil. The action plan shows a clear path to planned reintegration from reduced provision to full-time attendance as soon as reasonably possible. Where appropriate, the pupil should be actively involved in this planning. The plan should be regularly reviewed to consider if the pupil can return to full time education sooner than planned. The plan must be reviewed if there is a change to his/her circumstances or needs.
- If the child/YP 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 annual review, if for example the child/YP's needs have changed and it is considered that this could impact on the ability for the provision to meet his/her needs.
- Confirm, in writing, which adults will be responsible for care of the pupil during school sessions when he/she is not attending school.
- Obtain written consent to the arrangements from the child/YP's parents/carers. However, be aware that obtaining consent does remove the opportunity for challenge at a later date.
- Keep a central record of the arrangement and reviews and notify the Local Authority via the Education Welfare Team. Please use [ewt@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:ewt@barnet.gov.uk). If a child has an EHCP the school MUST inform the SEN team and the child/YP's case worker.
- Record the child/YP's absence from school for sessions when he/she is not in attendance as authorised absence (register code C). 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 an authorised absence.
- Provide sufficient and appropriately differentiated work for any time the student is not attending school. Provided the student 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 child/YP is not in school will be provided, marked, and how constructive feedback will be given. Also consider how the student 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.
- Keep the Local Authority informed of updates, plans or changes to the timetable including when the child/YP returns to full-time education.

Schools are responsible for safeguarding 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/YP will be exposed to significant risk if not in

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school, then a reduced timetable should not be implemented. Schools are also responsible for notifying the Local Authority about pupils of compulsory school age who are on a part-time timetable.

## How often should we review a part-time timetable?

Where appropriate, the pupil should be actively involved in planning and reviewing the part time timetable. The plan should be regularly reviewed to consider if the pupil can return to full time education sooner than planned. The plan must be reviewed if there is a change to his/her circumstances or needs. Best practice would be weekly and an increase of time in school when successful.

When you undertake a part-time timetable the school must ensure they are in regular contact with the family to ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are in place and provision described above is working.

## Part-time Timetable for Children/Young People in Care

Schools should ensure that corporate parents/carers, social workers and the Virtual School are involved in any decisions around part-time timetables for Looked After Children. Schools should be mindful when making a decision to implement a part-timetable that looked after children/YP may have already missed a significant amount of school. Any part-time timetable arrangement should be reflected in the next PEP.

## Part-time Timetable when a child/young person is subject to Child Protection or Child in Need

If a child/YP has an allocated social worker, the school must consult with the pupil's social worker before initiating a part-time timetable. All subsequent review meetings should involve the social worker and any other services/agencies involved.

If a pupil is known to and the family are working with Early Help, schools must inform the Early help Practitioners and again involve them in review meetings.

Schools must ensure they are in regular contact with the family to ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are in place and provision is working. If the pupil has an allocated social worker then the frequency of contact the school has with the pupil and family should be agreed with the social worker.

## Part-time Timetable for Medical Needs

Pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. This guidance is part of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Education Act 1996.

In some exceptional cases, it may be appropriate for a pupil to be on a part-time timetable due to their medical needs. This should only be on a temporary basis, and be part of a planned approach in making reasonable adjustments to support the pupil whilst they are undergoing

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treatment, and/or as part of their reintegration back into full-time education after a significant illness or medical intervention, i.e. an operation. It should be agreed by all parties, including the parent/carers and the young person, and regularly reviewed.

Where the pupil also has SEN, their provision should be planned and delivered in a co-ordinated way with a healthcare plan. Schools are required to have regard to statutory guidance, *“Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school”* (DfE, 2015).

## Covid 19 Specific Situations

### **Is there special guidance around how to transition due to the Covid -19 pandemic?**

Yes, please see attached Transition and Re-integration Plan for Vulnerable Pupils and Supporting Guidance and Pro-forma on how to support in this situation. Also available at

[Barnet Local Offer :: Home / SENCO Zone / News / Covid-19: Latest SEND News and Updates](#)

### **Will the local Authority be sympathetic if a child/young person is experiencing significant anxiety due to the Covid 19 Pandemic?**

We appreciate how difficult things have been with the pandemic and the increased anxiety that some families and young people have experienced in relation to returning to school. There is however, an expectation that, with the exception of a small number of children/YP who are clinically extremely vulnerable, children and young people will be back in full-time education (taking account, of course of the need to socially isolate if there has been a confirmed case in the child/YP's bubble). In Barnet, we are adopting a supportive approach to getting children and young people back into full-time education. Education Welfare Officers are here to provide assistance, guidance and support for families where they face barriers to returning children/YP to school. The EWOs will work in partnership with families, agreeing next steps and timescales to help support the child/YP back to school. Legal action is available for Education Welfare Officers to use however, this will be when all other efforts have been exhausted or there is a lack of engagement by the family.

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## SEND Specific Situations

### **Part-time Timetable when a child/ young person has SEND and or Disability**

A part-time timetable should only be used for a pupil with SEN and or a disability in very limited circumstances. A pupil should not be put on a part-time timetable because of their special educational need as this may constitute discrimination. In some cases, a special educational need may also be a disability and therefore constitute a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. In exceptional circumstances or if a parent/carer requests a part-time timetable the school should consider this carefully to ensure against inveterately discriminating against family wishes. Best practice is to discuss with an educational psychologist or advisory teacher, or medical professional working with the pupil. If agreed then you should contact your SEN case worker to inform.

### **If a child/young person has a special educational need and has arrived without an EHCP and the attached funding, can we put them on a part-time timetable.**

No, the funding pathway to support children/YP when they don't have an EHCP is through the schools notional SEN budget.

### **Exceptional Circumstance**

See guidance on The Local Offer

<https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/>

### **What do we do if a child/young person is experiencing extreme mental health issues around school anxiety and school refusal**

If children/young person is experiencing mental health difficulties it is important to seek appropriate guidance from mental health professionals to support and determine the way forward.

For moderate mental health needs schools can refer to BICS.

If you would like to refer a child, young person and/or family to BICS you should fill in the Universal Plus Form on the Barnet website.

The Universal Plus form can be found at this location:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/wwc/working-children-barnet/practitioner-guidance/children-family-and-young-people-hubs-0-19/how>

For more significant mental health needs you would refer directly into CAMHS NHS on the CAMHS referral form [Barnet CAMHS \(behcamhs.nhs.uk\)](https://www.barnet.gov.uk/camhs)

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For Universal Support over school refusal, school anxiety and SEMH interventions please refer to

[Early Intervention Guidelines for Supporting School Anxiety \(barnetlocaloffer.org.uk\)](https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/early-intervention-guidelines-for-supporting-school-anxiety)

[1074-universal-targeted-specialist-semh-interventions-july-18.pdf \(barnetlocaloffer.org.uk\)](https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/1074-universal-targeted-specialist-semh-interventions-july-18.pdf)

## Non- statutory School Age Children

### SENIF FUNDING

School nurseries and schools with nursery classes and PVI settings can apply for Early Years Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding to provide support to individual children with complex special educational needs and disabilities who are aged 2,3,4 if the child is in receipt of Free Early Years Funding.

To find out more about the full criteria and how to apply for EY SENIF please go to the Local Offer:

[https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/senco\\_zone](https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/senco_zone)

### Reception Children and part-timetables

It will be important to plan for children to settle into reception classes, sometimes due to individual circumstances it may be necessary to extend the settling period which will result in a part-time timetable. There is a range of support available to schools, please do contact the early years team to discuss.

# Best practice guidance for part-time timetables for children and young people of compulsory school age

**Although part-time timetables should only be implemented on an exceptional basis, when considering placing a pupil on a part-time timetable the school needs to ensure the following:**

1. Must be satisfied that a reduced timetable is an appropriate intervention given the needs of the pupil. There must be a clear and evidenced rationale for considering a reduced timetable as an intervention aimed at supporting the needs of the pupil and the maintenance of the education placement.
2. Must have signed parental permission, evidenced on the pupil file prior to the commencement of a time limited reduced timetable. If the parent does not agree, the reduced timetable arrangements cannot be implemented.
3. Must complete a detailed action plan, agreed with the parents/carers and the pupil, demonstrating a clear path of planned reintegration from part time to full time provision for as short a period as possible. The school must ensure the pupil has an active involvement in the process of planning, reviewing, and evaluating the planned intervention.
4. Must not put in place a reduced timetable as a long-term solution. If the pupil is still on a reduced timetable as the time limit approaches, a multi professional review should be held to organise full time education.
6. Ensure that where pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan, the Local Authority must be involved to ensure the EHCP is reviewed and amended where appropriate. An annual review should be convened to make the proposal known. The Local Authority must agree to the reduced timetable intervention and a reduced timetable must not interfere with additional support given to a pupil due to his/her educational needs.
7. Must undertake a risk assessment of the pupil's needs to assess the impact that a reduced timetable would have on the pupil. It is essential that the pupil's welfare during any absence from school is considered. The risk assessment should include the safety and wellbeing of the pupil as well as the risk of the pupil engaging in criminal activity or substance misuse or being at risk of exploitation or radicalisation whilst not in receipt of education during the school day.
8. Keep a central record of the arrangement and reviews and notify the Local Authority via the Education Welfare Team. Please use [ewt@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:ewt@barnet.gov.uk). If a child/YP has an EHCP the school MUST also inform the SEN team and the child's case worker.

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## Part-time Timetable Re-Integration Plan

<b>Name:</b> <b>Year Group:</b> SEN Status EHCP/SEN Support	<b>Class/Tutor:</b>	<b>Meeting with parents/carers:</b>	<b>Start date:</b>	<b>End date:</b>
	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Review 1</b>	<b>Review 2</b>	
<b>Objectives (what change do we want to see?)</b>				
<b>Success Criteria (what will the change look like?)</b>				
<b>What will the school do?</b>				
<b>Details of any Work Experience (if appropriate)</b>				
<b>Details of any alternative curriculum (if appropriate)</b>				
<b>Additional resources</b>				
<b>What does the part-time timetable look like for the pupil when they are in school – please indicate times and activities</b>				



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<b>Outcomes intended showing increase in time in school if appropriate</b>			
<b>What will parent/carers do?</b>	<b>What the pupil needs to do</b>		
<b>Parent/Carer signature:</b>	<b>Pupil signature:</b>		
<b>Designated teacher with responsibility:</b>			