



Liverpool  
City Council

# Reduced Education Provision

**Liverpool Guidance for Schools**

**Children and Young People's Service**

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# 1 Overview

This guidance sets out the statutory expectations in relation to reduced educational provision.

The guidance is for all schools, including Academy and independent Schools, Special Schools, Pupil Referral Units and alternative provision settings, hereafter referred to as schools, in the appropriate use of reduced educational provision (referred to as 'part-time' or 'reduced' timetables), within the current legal and safeguarding framework for pupils.

The guidance identifies the exceptional circumstances where it might be appropriate to agree a short-term reduced timetable. It sets out the process that must be followed to ensure:

- the school's safeguarding responsibilities are met
- children's legal entitlement to a full-time education
- attendance and absence is correctly recorded on the registers.

The guidance also explains what schools must do if a reduced timetable is agreed. All schools are expected to have regard to this guidance in order to ensure statutory compliance and the safeguarding of children across the city.

## 2 The Legal Position

Schools have a statutory duty to provide full time education for all registered pupils according to their age, aptitude and ability, taking account of any special needs.

There is no statutory basis upon which to establish reduced educational provision for pupils. The Department for Education Guidance for school attendance states; that as a rule, pupils should not be placed on a reduced time table.

In very exceptional circumstances, the DfE acknowledge there may be a need for a temporary reduction in educational provision to meet a pupil's individual need. 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.

All children of compulsory school age are legally entitled to receive a suitable fulltime education and local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that all children in their area receive such an education.

The Local Government Ombudsman recommended (Out of school out of mind 2011) that the number of hours of teaching per week considered to represent full-time education is as follows:

*Table 1 Number of hours teaching per week for full time education*

Key stage	Number of hours
Reception and Years 1 and 2	21 hours
Years 3 to 6	23.5 hours
Years 7 to 10	24 hours
Year 11	25 hours

The assumption is that pupils should receive full-time education consistent with their Key Stage. A timetable is considered reduced, when it consists of something less than that which is provided to the majority of the pupil's peers in that setting. As a rule, schools are only permitted to provide less than full-time education, including placing a pupil on a reduced timetable, in very exceptional circumstances.

In the 2013 Ofsted Report 'Pupils missing out on education' the 'usual way' of attending school is referred to as 'the provision attended by the vast majority of children and young people of compulsory school age in England. Typically, they attend school for between 21 and 25 hours a week, as appropriate for their age, for 38 weeks a year.'

The report also established that all schools should notify the local authority of any part-time education arrangements. This includes schools maintained by the Local Authorities, Academies, Free Schools and Independent Schools. The local authority has a statutory responsibility to identify and track any pupil missing education. Any pupil on a reduced timetable is deemed to be at risk of missing education and therefore needs to be identified and tracked.

### 3 Safeguarding Responsibilities

Section 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2007 places a duty on Local Authorities and schools to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Schools must have regard and consideration for the safeguarding issues and the impact this might have on a child when considering a reduced timetable.

Schools have a safeguarding responsibility for all pupils on their roll and therefore must be aware that even with parental agreement to any arrangement they make, they are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils off-site during school hours.

It is important to highlight that there is no statutory basis upon which to establish a reduced timetable. However, in exceptional circumstances, schools may need to implement one, in order to support a pupil who cannot attend school full-time for a short, agreed period. Ofsted have made it clear that this has to be in the interests of the child and not the school. If arrangements are made primarily in the interests of the school, Ofsted may view this as 'gaming'.

### 4 Circumstances when a reduced timetable may be deemed appropriate

- For medical reasons – if a pupil has a serious medical condition, where recovery is the priority outcome. These arrangements would be part of a medical plan agreed between the school and health professionals. Please see the DfE statutory guidance “Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs” 2013 before offering a reduced timetable for this reason.
- Reintegration - as part of a planned reintegration programme into school following for example, an extended period out of school following exclusion, non-attendance, school refusal etc. (8 weeks as a maximum)

## 4.1 Registration Marks

It is important that schools act to ensure that the DfE regulations in respect of attendance are correctly observed for pupils on a reduced or part time table.

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

## 4.2 Registration Codes

### 4.2.1 Code C

To be used when a pupil has reduced educational provision that includes sessions which have been mutually agreed not to involve attendance at any other institution or supervised activity. The sessions that are agreed not to involve attendance, should be recorded as authorised absence code C. 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.

### 4.2.2 Code B

To be used if the pupil is receiving off-site provision, approved by the school.

A pupil marked 'B' should be present at another institution or an 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 pupil attendance information, to ensure they fulfil their legal and safeguarding responsibilities and apply the correct registration codes.

- A part-time/reduced timetable must not be treated as a long-term plan. The arrangement should always specify an end-date by when it is expected that the child will return to full-time education (or when an alternative will be provided). It must be regularly reviewed in the light of any changes to the child's circumstances.
- A part-time/reduced timetable should provide a means of achieving reintegration 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.

- The sessions the child is not expected to attend must be marked with registration code C. No other code can be lawfully used. Unlawful use of other codes such as B or D could lead to accusations of ‘gaming’ and a negative Ofsted inspection judgement.
- A child on a part-time/reduced timetable could be a ‘persistent absentee’ should the number of sessions the child is not expected to attend constitute more than 10% of all available sessions. The child may also have other sessions of absence due to illness etc.
- Any proposal to use a part-time/reduced timetable arrangement must be discussed with the parent/carer before the arrangements begin.
- A parent/carer must consent (and not be coerced) to a part-time/reduced timetable by signing an agreement form (Appendix 1). The agreement form must make explicit the parents are consenting to the arrangements; that they are taking responsibility for the pupil when he/she is not in school; and that they are guaranteeing that the pupil will be supervised off site.
- The part-time/reduced timetable must be for a limited period. The maximum length of a reduced timetable is 8 weeks. If a school believes there may be a requirement to go beyond this timeframe, they must seek approval from the Local Authority Children Out of Provision Panel (COPP)
- The objectives of any part-time/reduced timetable should be clearly recorded in writing and understood.
- Any part-time/reduced timetable arrangements must be regularly reviewed.

## 5 Assessing the Risk

Completing a risk assessment which addresses any safeguarding, welfare, offending or harmful behaviour concerns that may result from a change in the pattern of school attendance is essential.

A checklist and exemplar risk assessment are included as (Appendix 2&3) The risk assessment is not prescriptive and schools will want to develop their own risk assessment to meet the needs and risk of their school community. Guidance on



developing an appropriate risk assessment follows and schools should review their own risk assessments against these guidelines.

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

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 pupil plus, any known additional risk factors which will need to be taken into consideration whilst the pupil is not in receipt of education during the school day.

- Consideration must be given to the safety and wellbeing of the child – the welfare of the child is paramount.
- The risk of the child / young person to CSE as this will increase their vulnerability.
- The risk of the pupil engaging in criminal activity (Youth Offending Team should be consulted in the case of known offenders).
- The risk of substance misuse while not in receipt of education during the school day.
- The risk of radicalisation is something schools should always consider – vulnerability to this is increased as the child / young person may become more accessible, but also isolated and disengaged and therefore susceptible to being groomed.
- Ensure that the impact of a reduced time table on travelling and transport arrangements does not discriminate against the pupil or impede their access to education.
- Ensure that arrangements for reduced educational provision do not discriminate against a pupil's access to free school meals.

## **6 Vulnerable Groups additional considerations**

### **6.1 Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan**

- It is unlawful for schools to discriminate against pupils on the basis of their special educational needs and/or disability.
- A part-time/reduced timetable should only be used for a pupil with an Education, Health & Care Plan in very limited circumstances and when agreed with relevant agencies such as the SEND Team and the Education Psychology Service. A meeting should be convened to make the proposal known. The local authority must agree to the intervention.
- A pupil should not be put on a part-time/reduced timetable because of their special educational need as this may constitute discrimination. Special educational needs in some circumstances may also be a disability and therefore constitute a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.
- Schools must ensure that the provision specified in the EHC plan is delivered in order to meet the child's needs and secure their statutory entitlement

### **6.2 Children in Care**

A part-time/reduced timetable should only be implemented for children in care in very limited circumstances and only with the consent of both the child's social worker and the Virtual School Headteacher.

### **6.3 Children subject to a child protection/child in need plan**

Children on child protection/child in need plans are vulnerable and may be at greater risk if placed on a reduced timetable. Therefore, a part-time/reduced timetable should only be implemented in the most exceptional circumstances; only where it has been agreed following a core group meeting; and only with the consent of both the child's social worker and the Virtual School Headteacher.

The school must be completely satisfied that suitable arrangements are in place to ensure the safeguarding and care of the pupil during the period when they would 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 student for the session.

## **6.4 Reception age pupils**

For reception age pupils it is common practice to stagger admissions and gradually integrate the children into school. The admissions process may begin with shorter days e.g. mornings for a commonly agreed period of time, quickly building to full-time attendance. For the untimetabled sessions reception children are not expected to attend, the registration mark would be code X. This code can only be used for the first three or four weeks of the academic year. This is not considered to be part time/reduced provision and there is no need to notify the local authority of these children in this circumstance.

A small minority of children who are not 'school ready', may need an extended integration period to support their emotional and developmental needs. In this circumstance, the child would be regarded as being in receipt of a part-time/reduced timetable and an appropriate plan must be agreed in partnership with parents and signed consent recorded. The school must notify the local authority of these arrangements. The agreement must focus on ensuring that full-time attendance is achieved no later than the term following the child's 5th birthday. The correct code for the session the child is not expected to attend is code C regardless of whether the child is of compulsory school age or not.

## **7 Unlawful exclusions**

A part-time/reduced timetable that does not have clearly defined objectives, a specified end date, a review process, and/or the consent of parents/carers may be considered an unlawful exclusion by Ofsted.

## 8 Flexi-Schooling (part-time elective home education)

Parents may ask a Headteacher if they would agree to a flexi-schooling arrangement where the child attends school for part of the week and is educated at home for the rest of the week. Whilst some children may benefit from such an arrangement, Headteachers are advised to consider the following:

- The sessions the child does not attend have to be marked as authorised absence (code C) so the child will be recorded as a persistent absentee on the census
- The child's relationships with their peers in school may be impacted by their frequent absence
- The school remains responsible for the child's attainment and progress which may be difficult to influence if the child is not attending lessons in school regularly

## 9 What should all schools do when a part-time or reduced timetable is agreed?

When a part-time/reduced timetable has been agreed for an individual pupil, the school should notify the LA by completing the online form on the council website at: [liverpool.gov.uk/reducededucationprovision](https://liverpool.gov.uk/reducededucationprovision)

The school will be required to:

- Establish robust arrangements for monitoring and regular review of the plan by a named member of senior staff.
- Ensure effective communication with parents or carers and key professionals with regard to progress towards the pupil's full re-integration to school.
- The school may be contacted by the relevant LA officer for further details or to ensure the arrangement has ended once the agreed timescale has been expired

## 10 Appendix 1 Reduced timetable agreement

[school logo]

### **School/Parent Part-time/Reduced Timetable Agreement**

#### **Parent/Carer**

I understand my child has been placed on a part-time/reduced timetable for a limited period of time. I have discussed the matter fully with the school and agree, during the period of the part time timetable to:

- Take full responsibility for my child during the hours when not attending school
- Ensure there is supervision of school work
- Ensure there is a flow of work between school and home for marking and guidance
- Take full responsibility for the health and safety of my child when they are not in school

**Parent/Carer Signature:**

**Date:**

#### **School**

During the period of the part-time/reduced timetable the school will:

- Monitor the effectiveness of the part-time/reduced timetable
- Hold regular reviews on the agreed dates
- Provide work for the child to do whilst at home and mark all work completed

**School Signature:**

**Date:**

**Child's Signature (if appropriate):**

**Date:**

# 11 Appendix 2 Checklist for Reduced Timetables

It is expected practice for the Headteacher to oversee the completion of this 'Checklist' to show evidence that the necessary decisions have taken place to ensure the child is safe.

<b>Name of child:</b>	<b>Date of birth:</b>
<b>School:</b>	<b>Year group:</b>

Decision/Action	Completed
Is taken in the best interests of the child and has the understanding, approval and written agreement of parents/carers.	
In the case of a looked after child or a child subject to a CIN or CP Plan, the allocated social worker and the Virtual school Headteacher must have consented to the reduced education provision.	
Risk assessment completed and any risks are managed.	
Complies with the health and safety needs of the pupil, i.e. the school is satisfied that suitable arrangements are in place to meet the pupil's care needs when not at school.	
Complies with safeguarding best practice- i.e. statutory responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils.	
The reduced educational provision is time limited with reviews set.	
If the child has an EHCP the LA SEND team have been notified and have consented to the reduced educational provision.	
If the child has health and or medical needs the school nurse is informed (or other medical practitioner) to ensure medical needs are followed up.	

**Signature of Headteacher:**

**Printed:**

**Date:**

## 12 Appendix 3 Exemplar Risk Assessment

Please adapt as appropriate.

### Individual Pupil Risk Assessment

Pupil name:

Date of birth:

Year group:

School:

Completed by:

Completed on:

Agreed with Parents/Carers on:

### Parents/Carers agreement:

Name:	Signature:	Date:
Name:	Signature:	Date:

### 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 usually 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 or prevent risk:	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult support in classroom</li> <li>• Positive role modelling</li> <li>• Praise/acknowledgement for positive behaviour</li> <li>• Regular updates with parents</li> <li>• Behaviour management plan</li> <li>• Safe place and trusted personnel etc</li> </ul>
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"> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>Identify exactly what an adult would do if the risk is reported to them by a child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
Interventions to respond to adverse outcomes:	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any incidents to be logged, dated and signed according to incident/safeguarding protocols</li> <li>• Designated school adult</li> <li>• Contact parents</li> <li>• Contact other pupils' parents (if required)</li> </ul>

## Communication of Risk Assessment Plan

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

## Staff Training Issues

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

## Review of Risk Assessment Plan

Measures set out	Effectiveness in supporting the child	Impact on risk
Agreed proactive interventions to prevent risk		
Early interventions to manage risk		
Interventions 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:

**Parents/Carers agreement:**

Name:	Signature:	Date:
Name:	Signature:	Date:

**School agreement**

Name:	Position:
Signature:	Date:

Is a further review required? Yes/No

Agreed date: