

## Nottinghamshire County Council Reduced Timetable Guidance

### Purpose

All children of statutory school age, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. The following guidance is intended to support all maintained Nottinghamshire Schools, Academies, Studio Schools and alternative provision settings, hereafter referred to as 'schools', in the appropriate use and recording of reduced timetables (also referred to as part-time timetables). Nottinghamshire County Council recommend that all schools follow this guidance in order to ensure that legal and safeguarding responsibilities are met in relation to students who they place on a reduced timetable, by ensuring that schools do not inadvertently unofficially exclude students and that the likelihood of complaints being brought against the school in relation to the provision of education is reduced.

### Key points

DfE Guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance; Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities, Published: May 2022' is very clear about the use of part-time timetables. *'All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs.'*

Any decision to implement a part-time timetable should take into account the voice of the child, the views of the parent/ carer and advice from relevant support services. A reduced timetable implemented without the agreement of a parent/ carer constitutes an illegal exclusion.

In cases where the implementation of a reduced timetable is judged to be an appropriate step to take this should be for the shortest time necessary, with clear objectives and a plan for review to facilitate swift re-integration to full time provision. There should be a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision.

A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A full and accurate record should be kept of all decisions in relation to a reduced timetable and should include signed parental agreement. Supplementary recording forms are provided with this guidance.

When implementing a reduced timetable schools should have high aspirations with regard to what a student can achieve and respond quickly and effectively to any signs of disengagement with provision.

Where a reduced timetable has not been effective in meeting the objectives set and can therefore be judged to have been an ineffective strategy, the reduced timetable should not be continued and alternative interventions should be explored in conjunction with relevant support services. In cases where there is no clear plan for reintegration to full-time education advice should be sought from the Fair Access Team.

Schools should be mindful of and act upon best practise guidance as laid out below in order to safeguard the wellbeing of students, continue to raise levels of educational attainment and act lawfully in cases where a reduced timetable is being considered.

### When should a reduced timetable be considered?

A reduced timetable should only be implemented in exceptional circumstances, 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

## Best Practice Guidance

When considering placing a pupil on a reduced timetable the school should:

- Be satisfied that a reduced timetable is an appropriate intervention given the needs of the pupil. Schools should seek advice from appropriate education support services including; Education Psychology Service (EPS), Schools and Families Specialist Services (SFSS), Health Related Education Team (HRET), Primary Social Emotional Development Team (PSED), Virtual School regarding the appropriateness of the use of a reduced timetable. They should also be mindful of any advice given by other support services including; Social Care, Youth Offending Service (YOS), Family Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) regarding potential wider implications and risks to a student of implementing a reduced timetable. This should ideally be done through a multi-agency meeting, involving the student and their parent/ carer.
- Consult with the appropriate Local Authority Officer or Social Worker prior to implementing a reduced timetable for students in specific circumstances, including those with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Children Looked After (CLA) and those on a Child Protection Plan. Where pupils have an EHCP, the Integrated Children's Disability Service (ICDS) must be involved to ensure the EHCP is reviewed and amended where appropriate.
- Agree with the student, parent/ carer and support services the objectives of the reduced timetable as a planned intervention and a clear plan for re-integration to full-time education, including the support that will be provided to facilitate this.
- Carry out an assessment of need using the Early Help Assessment Framework (EHAF) if an established assessment is not already in place and make any referrals for support identified, for example through Springboard meeting, Family Service referral (including school attendance), AFN/ HLN/ Partnership funding bid, EHCP referral, HRET referral, CAMHS referral.

### When implementing a reduced timetable the school should:

- Document the decision making process in relation to the reduced timetable being implemented, complete a detailed action plan demonstrating a clear path to re-integration over the shortest time possible and obtain signed parental consent. Form A can be used to record discussions and planning if a suitable recording tool is not already in use. The school should try to ensure the pupil has an active involvement in the process of planning, reviewing and evaluating the planned intervention.
- Undertake a risk assessment of the pupil's needs to assess the impact that a reduced timetable would have on a pupil. It is essential that the pupil's welfare during any absence from school is considered, and school are satisfied that suitable arrangements are in place to ensure the safeguarding and care of the student during the time they would usually have been expected in school.
- Seek signed agreement from the parent/carer confirming that they will be responsible for the safety and welfare of the student for sessions they should usually be in school should be sought. This can be done using Form A if a suitable recording tool is not already in use.
- Students should be provided with suitable work to complete during the time they are not in school and arrangements should be made to ensure the work is assessed and feedback given to the student.
- Identify a named senior member of school staff to be responsible for monitoring and reviewing the timetable.
- Maintain and document effective communication with the student, their parent/ carer and support services with regard to progress towards re-integration to full time provision and any issues that arise during the period covered by the reduced timetable.

### **When reviewing the reduced timetable and planning next steps the school should:**

- Ensure that the voice of the student is considered in all decisions made.
- At regular periods convene a review meeting to assess the impact of the reduced timetable and plan to organise a return to full time education, if this is appropriate for the student. It is recommended to review within 4 weeks of initial implementation. Decisions made at this review should be recorded and Form B can be used to record this review if a suitable recording tool is not already in use. Use of a reduced timetable for a further period should only be agreed in exceptional circumstances with parental agreement and where progress towards the objectives set can be evidenced. The plan should be revised to reflect why an extension was appropriate and the original action plan updated and added to. It is not appropriate to simply continue the reduced timetable if the duration of the reduced timetable has not been used to plan other interventions or offer the agreed pastoral support.
- Consider whether referral for any additional support is required, for example through Springboard meeting, Family Service referral (including school attendance), AFN/ HLN/ Partnership funding bid, EHCP referral, HRET referral, CAMHS referral.
- In cases where there is no clear plan for reintegration to full time education advice should be sought from the appropriate Local Authority team, using the list below. If no appropriate teams are involved then the Fair Access Team should be contacted for advice, guidance and support.

### **When recording a reduced timetable the school should:**

- Keep a record of all students on a reduced timetable, keeping all documentation in relation to decisions regarding reduced timetables implemented. This can be done using Forms A and B if a suitable recording tool is not already in place. This documentation should be available if requested.
- Promptly complete the termly data request from Nottinghamshire County Council in relation to students with a reduced timetable.

### **Marking the register for student on a reduced timetable**

Schools should refer to DfE Guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance; Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities, Published: May 2022'

- Code C is to be used for sessions when it has been agreed that attendance is not required as part of a collaboratively planned reduced timetable.
- Code B should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site, therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work.

## Key Contacts

**Fair Access Team** (Pupils Missing Education Practitioner) [pme@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:pme@nottsc.gov.uk) Jo Carr 0115 8040311 Christine Sanderson 0115 8042614

**Health Related Education Team** 0115 977 3481 (Mel Loyeau for Broxtowe, Gedling, Rushcliffe and Hucknall, Joanne Lee for North Ashfield, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Bassetlaw and King's Mill Hospitals)

**Integrated Children's Disability Service** 0115 8041275; Bassetlaw and Newark & Sherwood areas: [icdsehcBandNSlocality@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:icdsehcBandNSlocality@nottsc.gov.uk); Mansfield and Ashfield areas: [icdsehcMandAlocality@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:icdsehcMandAlocality@nottsc.gov.uk); Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe areas: [icdsehcBGRlocality@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:icdsehcBGRlocality@nottsc.gov.uk)

**Virtual School** 0115 977 4747

## Related guidance

[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Children missing education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

March 2023