

Reduced Timetable Policy

July 2023

Children & Adults' Directorate
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
ME4 4TR



Reduced Timetable Policy

Guidance on the limited use of reduced timetables in exceptional circumstances Sept 2020

*This guidance is relevant to all schools, including academies and independent, special, pupil referral units and alternative provision settings, hereafter referred to as schools. Reduced timetables are sometimes referred to as “part-time timetable” or “reduced educational provision”. The term reduced timetable is used in this guidance. (Flexi schooling, by request of the parent and by agreement with the headteacher, is considered different to a reduced timetable and not part of this guidance; refer to Elective Home Education policy for further clarity.)

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Policy

1. The law and reduced timetables

- 1.1. The law states that all children have a right to full time education; see 5.1.
- 1.2. Department for education guidance, see 5.2, allows for a pupil with a medical, physical or mental health condition, that prevents them from attending full-time education, to be eligible for a reduced timetable as part of a range of supportive measures to help the pupil take their right to a full-time education.
- 1.3. Consequently, a reduced timetable is a rare, short term, time limited action which should offer support back to statutory full-time attendance and must be kept under constant review.
- 1.4. Absence from either the morning or afternoon session in a school day must be recorded as authorised by the school because schools have a statutory duty to provide full time education for all pupils of two sessions per day. See annex 1 for a guide to the hours of full-time education.
- 1.5. Schools are required to hold data on authorised reduced timetables and report this data to their local authority regularly. Attendance data is recorded daily in the school's regular register for all pupils.

2. Local authority statutory duties and guidance

- 2.1. Medway Council has a duty to ensure that all children and young people access a full-time education suitable to their age. This is a basic right of the child and includes any necessary, reasonable adjustments and support for any special educational needs so that the pupil can access their right to a fulfilling and full-time education. Schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education. Local authorities have a duty to hold schools to account and challenge when statutory provision is being infringed.
- 2.2. Medway Council regards the use of reduced timetables as a last resort in improving a pupil with a medical, physical or mental health condition. It guides schools to only consider reduced timetables in exceptional circumstances and after exhausting all other strategies within those limiting circumstances. Consequently, there is no basis for implementing a reduced timetable as a sanction for undesirable behaviours. See DfE guidance, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (May 2022)* page 18 sections 43 & 44, and page 57 sections 212 & 213.
- 2.3. If the criteria for a legitimate, temporary reduced timetable are met, then the following aspects are good practice and should form part of the understanding of, and documents shared with, all stakeholders:
 - 2.3.1. an assigned professional to monitor to lead on the plan and be the single point of contact between home, school and agencies. This person will either be the headteacher or their representative.
 - 2.3.2. written agreement from those with parental responsibility, (without this the school is suspending the pupil and must follow separate suspension protocols).
 - 2.3.3. written plan showing all supportive measures to enable the pupil back into their statutory education. This may be in the form of a pastoral support plan, individual learning plan, personal education plan, or an education, health, care plan.
 - 2.3.4. written objectives and timescales for implementation, recording of daily school review against the objectives, and mid-plan evaluation of impact involving relevant multi agency consultants. A plan period should not exceed 6 weeks and build up over that period to the full-time expectation. (Refer to 4.4.4 in exceptional cases)
 - 2.3.5. written assessments of risk with measures to minimise risk and ensure safety – see annex 2 for an exemplar of headings and requirements and proforma
 - 2.3.6. signed agreement that the pupil is able to return to full time education before the plan ends if progress is swifter than anticipated.
 - 2.3.7. free school meal daily entitlement must be sustained.
 - 2.3.8. commitment to a scheduled reintegration meeting where further support may be necessary once the pupil is full-time. This should be consistently recorded on the reduced timetable review notes.

3. Safeguarding considerations

- 3.1. Schools continue to have safeguarding responsibility for all pupils. Pupils who fit the criteria for a reduced timetable, even when there is parental responsibility for consent, are still the safeguarding responsibility of the school, whether the pupil is on or off-site.

- 3.2. Risk assessments that determine significant risk to the pupil off site, negate any possible support that a reduced timetable could offer. Reduced timetables cannot be considered as part of a supportive plan in those vulnerable circumstances.
- 3.3. Even greater care should be taken to consider the benefit of reduced timetables with pupils who are already vulnerable. The assigned professional must consult with other services involved to inform their risk assessment in all situations where a vulnerable pupil is being considered for a reduced timetable:
 - 3.3.1. Children in Care (CiC) must be discussed in consultation with the virtual school headteacher and social worker to gain joint agreement and support.
 - 3.3.2. Pupils who are supported with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), must be discussed in consultation with the local authority SEND officer.
 - 3.3.3. Pupils who are subject to a child protection plan or where they are considered, child in need or the family is being supported by an Early Help worker, then the school must consult with the child's social worker or Family Support worker. In addition, reduced timetables can only be implemented following a core group meeting or multi-agency meeting that has been convened prior to implementation.

4. Monitoring and reviewing with local authorities:

- 4.1. Monitoring and reviewing reduced timetables is essential good practice.

4.2. Schools must:

- 4.2.1. **report** the reduced timetable information to the local authority.
- 4.2.2. **evaluate** the use of reduced timetables upon pupil academic progress and ensuring quality assurance of provision.
- 4.2.3. **return** the fully completed Reduced Timetable School Parent Agreement to the local authority. A copy of the Agreement is in Annex 4 and available from reducedtimetables@medway.gov.uk
- 4.2.4. **demonstrate effective communication** with parents/carers and local authorities with regards to progress towards the pupil receiving their statutory entitlement to full-time education and the school delivering their statutory duty.

4.3. Local authorities must:

- 4.3.1. **maintain** a central database of all pupils not accessing full-time education.
- 4.3.2. **include** reduced timetable data in the **central record**.

4.4. Medway Council will:

- 4.4.1. **monitor** the use of reduced timetables, ensuring statutory compliance and the rights of the pupil.
- 4.4.2. **share** intelligence across teams within the Education and SEND directorate.
- 4.4.3. **examine** any arrangement for statutory compliance that extends beyond six weeks in line with the child's medical needs.
- 4.4.4. **advocate** for all pupils, and support or challenge schools as appropriate.

5. Key documents

- 5.1. [Education and Skills Act 2008](#), Section 4, subsection 436A Education Act 2006
- 5.2. Department for Education: [Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#) (May 2013)
- 5.3. Department for Education: [Children Missing Education](#) (Sept 2016)
- 5.4. Department for Education: [Keeping children safe in education \(Sept 2022\)](#)
- 5.5. [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(May 2022\)](#)

6. Complaints procedure

- 6.1 Resolution regarding complaints about the Reduced Timetable Policy should be made to the Reduced Timetable Lead Officer in the first instance:

Reduced Timetable Lead Officer
Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Chatham
ME4 4TR

e-mail: reducedtimetables@medway.gov.uk;

- 6.2 If the complaint relates to the actions of the Lead Officer, contact:

Lead Professional: Quality & Inclusion
School Effectiveness
Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Chatham
ME4 4TR

Review Date: July 2024

Annex 1 - A guide to the hours required to represent full-time education

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 when preparing a pupil for full-time attendance:

Reception & Key Stage 1	21 hours
Key Stage 2	23.5 hours
Key Stage 3	24 hours
Key Stage 4	25 hours

Pupils on a reduced timetable, must be coded as an authorised absence, (DfE attendance codes).

Code C: Exceptional circumstances, for pupils working at home

Code B: Off-site educational Activity, attending an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school, such as attending courses at college, attending unregistered alternative provision arranged or agreed by the school. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Ultimately 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 the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational

activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code, Code O: unauthorised.

Code B must not be used for any unsupervised educational activity i.e., when a pupil is at home doing some schoolwork.

[\(DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance\)](#)

Annex 2 – Essential aspects to be included on the schools' risk assessment

Reduced timetable - individual risk management plan

The risk assessment must be completed by the assigned professional who will be overseeing the pupil's reduced hours provision **before** any agreement is made with parents; this must be recorded on the reduced timetable agreement form with the parent/carer signature.

In line with the school's safeguarding responsibilities, it is important that the school carries out its own risk assessment to ascertain that it is safe for the child to not be in school full-time. It is recommended that a visit to the pupil's home is made and clear information obtained about who is responsible for the child when they are not attending a school session. This must be in partnership with the identified agency representative in 3.2.

Additionally, schools need to be mindful to the risks associated with the logistics of new transport arrangements for the child who may be accessing school at different times, chaperoned by different members of the family or other parties. Furthermore, schools will need to be clear on collection and arrival arrangements. This detail must be clearly written into the risk assessment below.

Risk assessments must include as a minimum:

- pupil's name and DOB
- school
- date of first risk assessment and subsequent risk assessment reviews
- risk factors presented to the child from others, to themselves and that they pose to others
- the level of risk e.g. low, medium, high / 0-5 rating for each risk
- the preventative strategies to manage the risks
- who will be responsible for monitoring the plan, how this will be done and how frequently and any actions taken if required
- list of adults (and other agencies) who are necessary for the risk plan to be effective and their role in ensuring this.

A copy of the Risk Assessment form is below and available from reducedtimetables@medway.gov.uk

Reduced timetable - individual risk management plan

Completing a risk assessment which addresses any actual or potential safeguarding, welfare or harmful behaviour concerns that may result from a change in the pattern of school attendance is essential. The assessment must be written to include the risks when the child is not in receipt of education during the school day, including the impact on the wider family.

Pupil's name		Date of birth	
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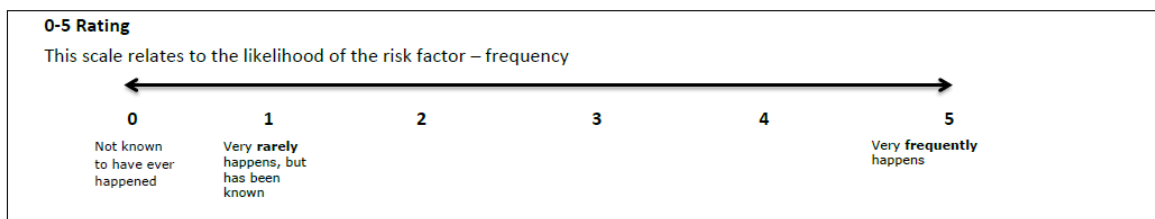
School		Year group	
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Name and role of contact in school	
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Date of first risk assessment	
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Dates of subsequent risk assessment reviews	
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Complete the risk analysis, using the 0-5 rating bellow:



Risk Factors – Identify all relevant risks	Likelihood scale 0-5	Strategies put in place to manage the risks	Likelihood scale 0-5 after risk management has been put in place
The risk/s presented to the child from others:			
The risk the child poses to themselves:			
The risk the child poses to others:			

What is the likely impact for the child if they cannot access their entitlement to a full-time school place?

What will be the benefit to the child of receiving a short term reduced timetable?

Monitoring the risk assessments		
Who will monitor the risk assessment?	How will the risk factors be monitored?	How frequently will the risk factors be monitored?
Details of further actions taken (if required)		

Views of parent/Carer and other agencies:

Partnership Working

Partnership working – other agencies	Name and role	Role in supporting the pupil to access full time education	Notified of pupil’s reduced timetable arrangements Y/N

Copy to be added to the ‘Reduced Timetable School Parent Agreement’ and shared with parent/carers.

Annex 3 – What does Medway need to know in order to fulfil this policy and be statutorily compliant?

Statutory duty	Medway Council fulfilment
<p>Medway Council has a duty to ensure that all children and young people access a full-time education suitable to their age. This is a basic right of the child and includes any necessary, reasonable adjustments and support for any special educational needs so that the pupil can access their right to a fulfilling and full-time education. Schools have a statutory duty to provide full time education. The local authority has a duty to hold schools to account and challenge when statutory provision is being infringed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the children and young people who are not in receipt of full-time education. • School name of the child • Medway's contact for reduced timetables: reducedtimetables@medway.gov.uk • If there are safeguarding concerns, then the named officer in section 3.3 should be engaged, and their acknowledgement recorded, i.e. virtual head teacher, SEND officer and / or social worker.
<p>Medway Council regards the use of reduced timetables as a last resort in improving a pupil with a medical, physical or mental health condition. It guides schools to only consider reduced timetables in exceptional circumstances and after exhausting all other strategies within those limiting circumstances. Consequently, there is no basis for implementing a reduced timetable as a sanction for undesirable behaviours.</p>	<p>Medway Council must know the fundamental reason for the reduced timetable provision. This must be recorded on the Reduced Timetable School and Parent Agreement which is returned to Medway Council.</p>
<p>If the criteria for a legitimate, temporary reduced timetable are met, then the following aspects are good practice and should form part of the understanding of, and documents shared with, all stakeholders:</p>	
<p>an assigned professional to monitor to lead on the plan and be the single point of contact between home, school and agencies. This person will either be the headteacher or their representative.</p>	<p>Name of the assigned professional to monitor the plan at the school – headteacher / or HT representative.</p>
<p>written agreement from those with parental responsibility, (without this the school is excluding the pupil and must follow separate suspension protocols).</p>	<p>Evidence of parental agreement to a reduced timetable.</p>
<p>written plan showing all supportive measures to enable the pupil back into their statutory education. This may be in the form of a pastoral support plan, individual learning plan, personal education plan, or an education, health, care plan</p>	<p>A written plan that has the capacity to support the child back into full-time education with evidence of incremental hours of education in school.</p>
<p>written objectives and timescales for implementation, recording of daily school review against the objectives, and mid-plan evaluation of impact involving relevant multi agency consultants. A plan period should not exceed 6 weeks and build up over that period to the full-time expectation. (Refer to 4.4.4 in exceptional cases)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written objectives to be achieved • Daily log of educated time in school • Daily recording of performance against the objectives • Mid plan evaluation • Evidence of time limited plan
<p>written assessments of risk with measures to minimise risk and ensure safety – see annex 2 for an exemplar of headings and requirements</p>	<p>Written assessments of risk</p>
<p>Signed agreement that the pupil is able to return to full-time education before the plan ends if progress is swifter than anticipated.</p>	<p>Agreement to admit child before end date of plan if good progress is made.</p>
<p>Free school meal daily entitlement must be sustained.</p>	<p>Evidence that daily free school meal entitlements have been maintained.</p>
<p>Commitment to a scheduled reintegration meeting where further support may be necessary once the pupil is full-time.</p>	<p>Evidence of an appropriate reintegration meeting that proactively plans for an effective and successful full-time education.</p>

Annex 4 – Copy of the Reduced Timetable School Parent Agreement

Reduced Timetable School and Parent Agreement

The use of reduced timetables (also referred to as part-time timetables) is detailed in [‘Working together to improve school attendance’](#) (DfE, updated September 2023). 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 reduced timetable to meet their individual needs.

A reduced timetable might be implemented for the following reasons:

1. medical condition that prevents the pupil from attending full-time education
2. mental health and well-being
3. re-integration possibly following exclusion or medical treatment
4. support a school refuser with their attendance

A reduced timetable should not be used to manage a pupil’s behaviour.

A reduced timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution.

Policy

Full details of Medway Local Authority’s Reduced Timetable Policy can be accessed from the Council’s website.

Prior to the timetable being implemented, a written agreement must be made with the pupil’s parent/carer.

The agreement provides details of the reduced timetable plan with

- dates and times the pupil will be in school during the period of the reduced timetable
- support measures the school will put in place during this time to enable the pupil to return to full-time education
- what will be provided whilst the pupil is at home during school hours.

The plan should not exceed 6 weeks and the time in school should increase per week to support the pupil’s return to full-time education.

A date for a review of the plan between the school and parent/carer must be agreed. If necessary, the plan can be extended for up to a further 6 weeks; a new Reduced Timetable Agreement must be put in place.

A written risk assessment must be completed to ensure the safety of the pupil.

Free school meal daily entitlement must be sustained.

Reduced Timetable School and Parent Agreement

Pupil's name		Date of birth	
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School		Year group	
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Name of parents / carers	
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Name and role of contact in school	
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Is the pupil CIC?	Choose an item.	FSM	Choose an item.	SEN Status	Choose an item.	Social status	Choose an item.
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Q1 **Has the pupil had a previous reduced timetable?** (not within the last 6 weeks)

If yes, date and reason?	Start date:	Reason:	Choose an item.
	End date:		
Comments: (if applicable)			

Q2 **Is this an extension to a current reduced timetable?**

If yes, reason for extending:

Date risk assessment completed: (copied to parent / carer)	
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Date of meeting with parent/carers agreeing the reduced timetable:	
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Reason for the reduced table	Choose an item.
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Other (please state) <i>A reduced timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.</i>	
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Timetable

Start date of reduced timetable	
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Review date	
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End date of reduced timetable	
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Number of hours in education at school each week:	Week 1 number of hours	Week 2 number of hours	Week 3 number of hours	Week 4 number of hours	Week 5 number of hours	Week 6 number of hours

Number of hours in education at school each week during weeks 7-12 (if review has taken place and decision is to extend)	Week 7 number of hours	Week 8 number of hours	Week 9 number of hours	Week 10 number of hours	Week 11 number of hours	Week 12 number of hours

Start and end times pupil will be attending school					
Week commencing	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

What in-school provision and interventions are the school delivering?	
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What provision is in place when the pupil is out of school during school hours?	
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Agreement

The school agrees to:	
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The parent / carer agrees to:	
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The pupil agrees to:	
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View of pupil:	
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View of parent / carer:	
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View of other agencies: Please see reference 3.3 in RT policy	
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I understand my child has been placed on a reduced timetable for the period specified above and have discussed the matter fully with the school. I agree to the details above and to:

- take full responsibility for my child during the hours when not attending school
- ensure there is supervision of schoolwork during those hours
- ensure there is a flow between school and home for marking and guidance

Signature

(Parent/Carer):

.....

Date:

.....

During the period of the reduced timetable the school agrees to the details above and to:

- monitor the effectiveness of the reduced timetable

- hold a review on the agreed date
- Update risk assessment when applicable

Signature (School): _____ Date: _____

Name and signature of other agencies (if required):

Virtual School Rep: _____ Date: _____

Attendance Advisory Practitioner: _____ Date: _____

Youth Offending Officer: _____ Date: _____

This form should be retained with the pupil's school records and returned to the local authority via email to: reducedtimetables@medway.gov.uk