

**Brent Reduced Timetable Guidance**

**September 2024**

1. **Introduction:**

This guidance sets out the statutory position in relation to part-time/reduced timetables, identifying the exceptional circumstances when it might be appropriate to agree a short-term reduced timetable. It sets out the process to be followed to secure safeguarding responsibilities and provides guidance to schools on what they must do if a part-time timetable is agreed.

ALL schools should have regard to this guidance in order to ensure statutory compliance and the safeguarding of children across the Brent.

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 a reduced education, including placing a pupil on a part-time timetable, in very exceptional circumstances, as there is not statutory basis upon which to establish a reduced timetable.

**2.0 Can a school place a pupil on a part-time timetable?**

*“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.”* DfE School Attendance Guidance May 2022)

All children of compulsory school age are legally entitled to receive a suitable full-time education and local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that all children in their area receive such an education. The assumption is that pupils should receive full-time education consistent with their Key Stage. The Local Government Ombudsman has established (in the report Out of school…out of mind (LGO. 2011 updated 2022)) that the number of hours of teaching per week considered to represent full-time education is as follows:

* Reception and Key Stage 1 (R, Y1 and Y2) - 21 hours
* Key Stage 2 (Y3 to Y6) - 23.5 hours
* Key Stage 3 (Y7 to Y9) and Y10 - 24 hours
* Y11 - 25 hours

The DfE Suspension and Exclusion statutory guidance (September 2022) makes it clear that part-time timetables should be avoided as a means of reintegrating a pupil back into school following a suspension. Instead, schools should design a reintegration strategy that offers the pupil a fresh start; helps them understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others; teaches them to how meet the high expectations of behaviour in line with the school culture; fosters a renewed sense of belonging within the school community and builds engagement with learning.

**2.1 Safeguarding**

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. When considering a reduced timetable, schools must give consideration to the safeguarding issues. 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.

**2.2** **Ofsted**

The DFE in February 2022 report[[1]](#footnote-1) identified that schools that are judged to be inadequate have poor attendance or weak systems to shape, monitor and evaluate their work around attendance. This can include the use of part-time timetables, usually for pupils with SEND or behavioural difficulties, which are not well planned, not tracked and/or not time-limited.

Schools should inform the local authority of any instances of a child been placed on a reduced timetable, so that the local authority is aware of the arrangements and can collate and monitor the data as required by Ofsted (September 2022). This includes community schools, academies and independent schools. Any pupil on a reduced timetable is deemed to be at risk of missing education and therefore needs to be identified and tracked by the local authority in line with its statutory responsibility.

**3.0 Operating protocol**

For the purposes of this guidance, a reduced educational provision 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. This should typically be for six weeks and of no more than eight weeks.

A part-time/reduced timetable must have clearly defined objectives, a specified end date, a review process, and/or the consent of parents/carers otherwise it could be considered an unlawful exclusion.

This guidance is not intended to be applied to those pupils where a Headteacher has agreed to a parental request for permission for their child to attend off-site provision (alternative provision). Provided that the school has a mechanism in place for ensuring that the pupil is attending the alternative provision and the pupil’s total educational programme is full-time, this arrangement would not be considered as a reduced educational provision.

**3.1 When might a reduced educational provision be considered?**

A reduced educational provision should only occur in exceptional circumstances, where every other avenue to ensure a pupil receives their full-time education has been exhausted. The exceptional circumstances are likely to be:

1. As part of a planned re-integration into school following an extended period out of school due to exclusion, non-attendance, school refusal or to facilitate a managed move between schools.

2. As a temporary fixed-term intervention to address and manage the impact of significantly challenging behaviour or emotional or social needs, whilst alternative arrangements are being made to assess and meet the individual needs or to coordinate with therapeutic intervention or other services.

3. As a method of managing pupils at risk of exclusion in limited circumstances. Brent Council regards reduced educational provision as the last resort and least desirable method of managing pupils at risk of exclusion.

4. 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. The local authority Medical Needs Policy 2018[[2]](#footnote-2) should be followed for those deemed not fit to attend school due to a medical reason.

**3.2 Checklists**

* Any proposal to use a part-time timetable must be discussed with the parent/carer before the arrangements start.
* A parent/carer must consent (and not be coerced) to a part-time timetable by signing an agreement form. The agreement form must make explicit that they are consenting to a part-time timetable; 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 timetable should be for a limited period. The suggested maximum length of a part-time timetable is half a term. If this time needs to be exceeded schools are strongly advised to discuss the situation with a relevant local authority officer.
* The objectives of any part-time timetable should be clearly recorded and understood.
* Any part-time timetable arrangements must be regularly reviewed.
* Part time timetables that do not have clearly defined objectives, a specified end date, a review process or the consent of parents/carers may constitute an illegal exclusion.

**If a part-time timetable is implemented schools should:**

* Ensure that a part-time timetable is not deemed to be an illegal exclusion.
* Provide pupils with sufficient and appropriately differentiated work to cover the hours they are not in school.
* Put in place arrangements to ensure that the work is marked/assessed and constructive feedback is given to the pupil.

**Vulnerable Groups - additional considerations**

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

* It is illegal for schools to discriminate against pupils on the basis of their special educational needs and/or disability.
* A part-time timetable should only be used for a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan 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.
* 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

**Pupils known to Children’s Social Care:**

* If the child is ‘Looked After’ by the Local Authority, Children’s Social Care and the Virtual School must be consulted.
* If the child is subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, Children’s Social Care and the Virtual School must be consulted.

1. **Record Keeping, Review and Monitoring**

If a part-time timetable is considered appropriate, then the school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and must record this as authorised absence using the ‘C’ code. This must not be recorded by using any other code.

Pastoral support plans should be reviewed by a member of senior staff. The designated member of staff should be identified and known to parents, pupils and other agencies. The designated member of staff should be responsible for reviewing the programme regularly, at least every two weeks, checking progress against incremental increases in attendance and recording outcomes and amendments.

Where a pupil moves school and has at any point been on a part time timetable all information relating to this should be sent to the receiving school.

1. **Notifying the local Authority**

**Schools should:**

1. Notify and consult the SEND 0-25 officer if the school is moving a pupil with an EHCP onto a part time timetable.

2. Notify and consult the Brent Virtual School if the school is moving a child or young person who is looked after onto a part-time timetable.

3. Notify and consult the Brent Virtual School if the school is moving a child or young person who is known to children’s social care onto a part-time timetable.

For all other pupils, where a school has a pupil on a part-time timetables they should notify and discuss the case with the school’s allocated Inclusion Support Officer and/or Education Welfare Officer.

**Appendix 1** – **Good Practice**

1. **Checklist for Reducing Educational Provision**

It is good practice for the headteacher to oversee the completion of this ‘Checklist’ to show evidence that the necessary decisions have taken place with their knowledge and agreement, to ensure the child is safe.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of child** |  |
| **Date of Birth** |  |
| **Year Group** |  |
| **School** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Decision/Action** | **Date Completed** |
| Is taken in the best interests of the child and has been completed with the understanding, approval and written agreement of parents/carers and in the case of a Looked After Child or child subject to a CIN or CP Plan, the allocated social worker and virtual school |  |
| The barriers to positive engagement in education assessment has been completed and any barriers 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 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022. |  |
| The reduced educational provision is time limited, with reviews set and has been shared with parent/carer and in the case of a Looked After Child or child subject to a CIN or CP Plan, the allocated social worker and virtual school |  |
| If child has an EHCP or Statement, the allocated SEND Officer is informed. |  |
| If the child has health and/or medical needs, the school nurse is informed (or other medical practitioner) to ensure medical needs followed up. |  |
| Registration will comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. |  |
| **Signature of Headteacher** | **Date** |
|  |  |
| **Printed:** |  |

1. **Recording attendance**

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

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

**Registration codes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **C Code** | **\*Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity**  To be used when a pupil has a reduced educational provision that includes sessions which have been mutually agreed not to involve attendance at any other institution or supervised activity.  The sessions agreed not to involve attendance should be recorded 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. |
| **B Code** | **Off-site educational activity**  This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. 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 pupils.  This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing schoolwork. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil’s absence using the relevant absence code. 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. |
| **W Code** | **Work Experience**  To be used if a pupil, in the final two years of compulsory education, is attending an approved work experience placement and is otherwise attending sessions at school. Attendance monitoring arrangements should reflect those applied for off-site provisions as above.  Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code. |

**\*Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity:** An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature, approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded

1. **Exemplar Parent(s)/ Carer(s) Agreement**

Parent /Carer Consent Form – to be completed by parents and carers

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Child Name:** |  |
| **DOB:** |  |
| **Year Group:** |  |
| **School:** |  |
| **Review date:** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I/we can confirm that (School name) have shared the individual pupil barriers to positive engagement in education assessment with me/us. |  |
| I/we can confirm that the (School name) have shared with me/us the planned timetable and reintegration plan and provided us with a copy. |  |
| I/we can confirm I/we believe this reduced timetable provision is in the best interest of our/my child. |  |
| I/we consent to the implementation of this part-time table table/alternative provision. |  |
| I/we have agreed to the reduced timetable and have not been pressured to do this. |  |
| I/we understand it is our duty to ensure that (Child’s name) is not present in a public place in school hours during this reduced provision, unless there is reasonable justification for this. |  |
| I/we have been notified of the first review date for this reduced provision and the school have confirmed they will provide an update. |  |
| School have evidenced due regard for ‘Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities’ Published: May 2022 Applies from: September 2022 |  |

### Parent(s) / Carer(s) agreement:

| **Name:** |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date:** |  |
| **Signature:** |  |
| **Name:** |  |
| **Date:** |  |
| **Signature:** |  |

1. **Exemplar ‘Assessing the barriers to positive engagement in education’ (please adapt as appropriate**)

**INDIVIDUAL PUPIL BARRIERS TO POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATION ASSESSMENT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Pupil Name:** |  |
| **Date of birth:** |  |
| **Year Group:** |  |
| **School:** |  |
| **Completed by:** |  |
| **Completed on:** |  |
| **Agreed with Parent(s)/Carer(s) on:** |  |

**PARENT(S)/CARER(S) AGREEMENT:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Signature: | Date: |
| Name: |  |
| Signature: | Date: |

**SCHOOL AGREEMENT:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Signature: | Date: |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Review Date 1 |  |
| Review Date 2 |  |
| Review Date 3 |  |

**Identification of barriers to positive engagement in education**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Describe the barriers to positive engagement in education** |  |
| **Are the barriers to positive engagement in education potential or actual?** |  |
| **Who is affected by the barriers to positive engagement in education?** |  |

**Assessment of barriers to positive engagement in education**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **In which situation/s do the barriers to positive engagement in education usually occur?** |  |
| **How likely is it that those barriers to positive engagement in education will arise?** |  |
| **If a barrier to positive engagement in education arises who, if anyone, is likely to be injured/hurt?** |  |

**Reduction of barriers to positive engagement in education**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Proactive interventions to reduce/prevent barriers to positive engagement in education** | * Meeting and greeting pupil when they arrive at school * Adult/s offer support in classroom * Positive role modelling * Praise/acknowledgement for positive behaviour * Regular updates with parents * Behaviour management plan * Safe place & trusted personnel etc. available * All relevant staff know about the plan |
| **Early interventions to manage risk** | Identify exactly what an adult will immediately do if any of the barriers to positive engagement in education is observed:       Identify exactly what an adult will do if any of the barriers to positive engagement in education is reported to them by a child: |
| **Interventions to respond to the identified barriers to positive engagement in education** | For example:   * Any incidents to be logged, dated and signed according to Incident/Safeguarding protocols * Access to counselling * Access to mentoring * Restorative justice * Designated school adult who child/young person knows * Contact parents * Contact other pupils’ parents (if required) etc. |

**Communication of barriers to positive engagement in education plan**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Plan and strategies shared with: | Communication method (written, oral, pictorial, diagram, etc.) | Date actioned: |
|  |  |  |

**Staff training to support mitigate barriers to positive engagement in education**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Identified training needs | Training provided to meet those needs | Date training started / completed |
|  |  |  |

**Support plan to reduce the barriers to positive engagement in education**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Measures set out | Effectiveness in supporting the child | Impact on risk |
| Agreed proactive interventions to reduce barriers to positive engagement in education |  |  |
| Early interventions and support offered to limit barriers to positive engagement in education |  |  |
| Interventions to respond to challenges that arise as a result of the intervention |  |  |

**Review**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Do the barriers to positive engagement in education plan need to continue: | Yes/No |
| Are there any additions/alterations to the Plan: | Yes/No  If ‘Yes’, list these here: |
| Name |  |
| Signature | Date |
| Name |  |
| Signature | Date |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Is a further review required? | Yes/No |
| Has this been agreed by all parties? | Yes/No |
| Agreed review date |  |

**5. A Matrix of Concern**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Green** | **Amber** | **Red** |
| The school / AP/ PRU have followed this guidance  The child is scheduled to be on a reduced timetable for no more than 6-8 weeks  Parents/carers involved in decision | The school have extended the reduced timetable beyond the 8 weeks.  Parents notified of decision | The school have used a reduced timetable inappropriately based on the evidence obtained.  There is concern from the information presented as to why this action has been taken and there is no effective‘ exit strategy’ or long-term plan |
| **Indicators** | | |
| Satisfied that appropriate agreement from parent / carer and any other relevant agency is in place   * Social Care for LAC, CIN, or CP case * SEND where child has an EHC Plan   SMART Action plan for increasing time on site  Barriers to positive engagement in education assessment completed | There is little evidence of progress  There has been no increase in the time in school  Parental dissatisfaction or concerns expressed by another agency | The child is known to be at significant risk from harm due to   * Criminal Exploitation * Child Sexual Exploitation * Radicalisation * Other abusive situations * The child is looked after, subject to a CP or CIN plan   The child has not been attending regularly for some time |
| What to do next |  |  |
| School inform the Inclusion Service, allocated EWO, SEND 0-25 officer, or Virtual School. Where children have a S/W the relevant S/W, as soon as changes are proposed | Inform the Inclusion Service, allocated EWO, Virtual School and where children have a S/W the relevant S/W of this practice  Talk to colleagues who may also visit the school (School Effectiveness etc.) | Inform Head of Inclusion and Virtual school headteacher |

1. Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absence. Feb 2022 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Please note this policy is under review [↑](#footnote-ref-2)