

POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS ON THE USE OF REDUCED TIMETABLES

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Purpose

This guidance is intended to support all maintained Blaenau Gwent schools, and specialist provision settings, hereafter referred to as 'schools', in the appropriate use of reduced timetables (sometimes referred to as 'partial' or 'part-time' timetables), within the current legal and safeguarding framework for pupils deemed medically fit to attend school.

This guidance does not refer to the 'staggered' introduction of reception-aged pupil.

Summary

All of the following guidance must be considered in light of the fact that there is no statutory basis upon which to establish a reduced timetable.

To ensure that the application of a reduced timetable is time-limited and that re-integration to full-time education occurs swiftly and is appropriate to the pupil's personal needs, abilities and circumstances, BGCBC is sharing this guidance with all schools in respect of all pupils of statutory school age.

Schools and education settings have a statutory responsibility to ensure that all pupils on their roll receive a full educational entitlement and achieve good outcomes.

In very exceptional circumstances, where the needs of a pupil require it, (for reasons outlined below), it may be reasonable for schools to consider placing a pupil on a reduced timetable for a short period. As the pupil's ability to cope improves, unmet needs are addressed and the offer is adapted, the pupil would be re-integrated quickly into full-time education.

For the purposes of this guidance, a reduced timetable means by agreement with the parent/carer, school and the Senior Education Welfare Officer, that the number of hours spent in education is reduced for a time-limited period of usually no more than six weeks. Schools should consult with all appropriate agencies involved with a pupil when considering a reduced timetable.

Schools should take account and act upon the following guidance to continue to improve standards of educational attainment, safeguard the well-being of all children and young people and reduce the likelihood to the school of charges being made in respect of a failure to educate.

What is a reduced timetable?

All pupils are entitled to a full-time education consistent with their Key Stage.

The WG recommendations are that the school offer for the taught curriculum on a weekly basis should be:

- Reception and Years 1 to 2 (children aged 5 to 7): 21 hours
- Years 3 to 6 (children aged 7 to 11): 23.5 hours
- Years 7 to 10 (children aged 11 to 15): 24 hours
- Year 11 (children aged 15 to 16): 25 hours

However [s19](#) of the Education Act 1996 permits a Local Authority to not provide full time education if it is considered in the best interests of the child.

If a school decides to implement a reduced timetable, then there must be a suitable reason to take such an approach as they could be found to have discriminated against a pupil (contrary to s15 of the Equality Act 2010) by a tribunal because the pupil has been denied full time education.

A reduced timetable is one which restricts a pupil's access to a full-time curriculum. Careful consideration must be given by schools to the impact that reduced timetables will have on a pupil's entitlement, academic progression and any safeguarding issues that may arise because of a reduced timetable being implemented.

General Principles of a Reduced Timetable

In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary reduced / part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual need. For example, where a medical condition prevents full-time attendance in education and reduced / part time timetable is considered appropriate to support the pupil's medical needs currently. This package should form part of a planned reintegration package. A reduced timetable should be supported by a timetable comprising blended learning led by and monitored by the school and that it is suitable for the individual pupil.

The Local Authority advice is that schools should keep detailed records of the learning programmes provided to the pupil and identify a teacher who will be responsible for marking completed work and providing feedback to the pupil.

A reduced / part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution and any agreement must have a time-limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend the school on a full-time basis. If despite a robust reintegration plan a child/young person does not respond positively to school, consideration may need to be given to reviewing the current provision. If this is the case the school should call a meeting with parents, Senior Education Welfare Officer and other relevant LA Officers, e.g. Family First to discuss if other agencies can provide advice and support to address underlying need or Outreach Support to discuss strategies to support the pupil.

Where a pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or an Individual Development Plan then a reduced / part-time timetable should only be used in exceptional circumstances and agreement must be obtained from the ALN Manager.

A pupil should not be considered for a part-time timetable because of their additional learning need as this may constitute discrimination.

For a pupil who is looked after (either through agreement under section 76 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 or a Care Order), has a care and support plan or is on the Child Protection Register, consideration of implementing a reduced timetable must be taken in the context of the significant vulnerability of the pupil and this should be discussed with relevant agencies who may have a view as to whether or not this should be agreed. In these cases, any reduced timetable must be agreed with the Corporate Parent and the Senior Education Welfare Officer.

Clearly, in relation to safeguarding, where a child is not in school, their vulnerability is increased therefore meaning reduced educational provision must always be the last consideration. When deciding whether a reduced educational provision is appropriate, consideration must always be given to the welfare, supervision, and safety of the child / young person. This must be part of the risk assessment process.

Consideration should be given to the increased risk to the pupil regarding 'child sexual exploitation' (CSE), substance misuse, self-harming, radicalisation and other potential abuse or criminal activity.

Reduced timetables.

Could be implemented due to any of the following: -

- A pupil having a short-term medical condition.
- A pupil in receipt of tuition for long term medical reasons
- A pupil who has been excluded from school and is being reintegrated back into school

When agreed by school's / education providers, Local Authority and parents/carers as part of a planned reintegration approach for a pupil who has not attended school / provision for a period due to a significant event such as illness, disability or mental health issues

Where a pupil has an on-going medical condition, which results in them being unable to attend school because of the condition, then schools can refer them to the Local Authority for tuition in line with Local Authority practice.

In limited circumstances reduced timetables are used as a method of managing a pupil at risk of exclusion. The Local Authority regards reduced timetables as a last resort and the least desirable method of managing pupils at risk of exclusion so should only be considered after other strategies have been implemented and exhausted. In this case the Local Authority advice is that these are for a maximum six-week period with regular reviews.

NB Where a reduced timetable is agreed, the offer or provision must also include blended learning through the school's hub to ensure continuity of learning. If the pupil does not have access to suitable technology to access this, the school would be expected to provide the equipment necessary to do so.

Implementing a Reduced Timetable

When considering placing a pupil on a reduced timetable, the school 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. A detailed assessment undertaken by the school with relevant evidence from an appropriate professional must be available to inform the decision in line with the rationale for a reduced timetable (e.g. if it is felt that a pupil requires tuition as they are not in a position to engage with the full curriculum due to significant medical/wellbeing concerns then this must be supported by appropriate advice from a CAMHS consultant prior to a referral being made for tuition, or if a pupil is struggling to access a full day in school then EPS advice should be sought as to appropriateness of a reduced timetable with the aim of reintegrating the pupil and enabling them to access a wider range of provision in school.
- formally notify the Senior Education Welfare Officer and where appropriate also alert the ALN Manager that this approach is being considered. Either Officer will link with relevant officers, i.e. EP, EWO, Social Worker to ensure agreement from the Local Authority
- clearly evidence all strategies that they have implemented to engage the pupil in a formal document such as a Pastoral Support Plan
- ensure ethical and informed permission has been secured from parent / carer. This will be underpinned by a written agreement with the parent / carer ensuring signed parental permission prior to the commencement of a time limited reduced timetable. If the parent does not agree, the reduced timetable arrangements cannot be implemented. In these circumstances the school must consider alternative interventions
- complete a detailed written action plan with clear objectives, agreed with the parents / carers and the pupil and involving a relevant Local Authority Officer, demonstrating a clear path of planned reintegration from part time to full time provision over a maximum of a six-week period, reviewed regularly.
- ensure that the written agreement / action plan is provided to the Local Authority within 2 days of its completion
- ensure that review information is provided to the Local Authority within 2 days of each review
- ensure the pupil has an active involvement in the process of planning, reviewing and evaluating the planned intervention
- ensure full time education is in place at the end of the agreed period or arrange a review meeting to identify the way forward. A maximum of one further period of six weeks should only be agreed in exceptional circumstances with parental and Local Authority agreement. In this case, the school should revisit the plan to reflect the need for an extension.
- ensure that where the pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs/Individual Development Plan, a copy of the reintegration plan must also be sent to the Statutory ALN Team so that it can be included in the pupil's file. The Local Authority must agree to the intervention and a reintegration (reduced) timetable must not interfere with any additional support given to a pupil due to his/her educational needs.

- amend / undertake a risk assessment of the pupil's needs to assess the impact that a reduced timetable would have on the child / young person. It is essential that the pupil's welfare during any absence from school is considered.
- amend any other existing documentation as appropriate to reflect the reduced timetable
- ensure the blended learning offer is in place and that the pupil has the necessary equipment, IT infrastructure and skills to access the school's learning platform
- ensure parents / carers are clear they are taking responsibility for the pupil when he/she is not in school and guarantee that the pupil will be supervised off site and that this is recorded on the agreement
- provide termly returns to the Senior Education Welfare Officer indicating the numbers and names of learners who are accessing reduced timetables (in line with Local Authority practice for monitoring)

Roles and Responsibilities

The school must:

- Notify the Senior Education Welfare Officer (and where necessary also notify the ALN Manager) that a reduced timetable is in place.
- Meet with parent / carer to consider proposals.
- Provide the pupil with sufficient and appropriately differentiated work to do for those hours they are not in school. Arrangements should be made to ensure that the work is marked; assessed and constructive feedback is given to the pupil.
- Establish robust arrangements for monitoring and regular review of the plan by a named member of senior staff.
- Ensure the written agreement and action plan is completed and shared with the Local Authority.
- Ensure effective communication with parents or carers and key professionals about progress towards the pupil's full re-integration to school.
- Record the pupil's attendance, using the appropriate registration codes, any sessions where the pupils are undertaking blended learning from home whilst not directly supervised by a school member of staff would be coded "C" i.e. an authorised absence.
- Consult with Local Authority and provide appropriate information as outlined above to enable Local Authority to make an informed decision and consider the need for officer involvement (if not already in place) if an extension to the initial 6-week period is being sought.
- Providing information to governors about any children placed on reduced timetables, so that governors can fulfil their responsibilities to monitor the school's provision.

The Local Authority must:

- ensure appropriate monitoring and challenge by collecting termly returns
- agree to any request for a further extension to a part time timetable for it to continue beyond 6 weeks.
- undertake quality assurance with schools to audit arrangements where part time timetables are in operation.

Appendix 1

Reintegration (Reduced) / Part-time Timetable Process Flow chart

- Step 1:** School informs Senior Education Welfare Officer that it is considering implementing a reduced timetable and inform relevant LA Officers, e.g. ALN Manager, Social Worker as required. Consultation with ALN Manager would be required if a pupil has a statement/IDP
- Step 2:** School gathers clear evidence in the form of robust assessment information to support the rationale for a reduced timetable.
- Step 3:** Local Authority discuss request and give agreement if pupil in receipt of additional funding/provision or is known to Social Services
- Step 4:** School meets with parents / carers.
- Step 5:** School completes written agreement and personal support plan and provides copy for Local Authority
- Step 6:** Named senior member of school staff to monitor and review at agreed periods and at the end of the 6-week period. Review information to be shared with Senior Education Officer and where appropriate ALN Manager.
- Step 7:** Meeting arranged to agree way forward
- Step 8:** A further period of 6 weeks may be considered in exceptional circumstances with agreement from the Local Authority. *

* If the Local Authority do not give agreement further discussion would be required with relevant officers before extending the reduced timetable period.

Appendix 2

Pastoral Support Plan form, review and cessation record

This Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) aims to re-integrate or maintain the pupil in full time education through providing additional support. The PSP may include dis-applying the curriculum to free up the time necessary for specific learning activities or may include a reduced curriculum (timetable) for a specific period. This document is to be reviewed every six weeks as minimum with a view to increasing the learning to a full-time programme. When not in school the learner's attendance will be recorded as an authorised absence or as receiving off site provision when this is the case.

Pastoral Support Plan	
1. Personal Details	
Name of young person	
Date of birth	
Age	
Year group	
Address	
Designated Teacher	
Designated Parent/Carer	
Date of next full review	
Looked after Child	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <i>If yes, name of social worker NB he/she must be involved in PSP process:</i>
2. Reason for PSP	
SEMPH panel referral	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Anxiety/ Mental Health need preventing or restricting attendance at school	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Physical medical Condition / Need preventing or restricting attendance at school	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
To allow/agree disapplication of the curriculum and/or work experience placement /risk of school failure through disaffection	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	

3. Triggers	
Subject (s)	
Staff	
SEN/ALN	
Times of the day	
Other (please specify)	
4. Any other comments or relevant information e.g. current concerns / what are the ALN of the pupil?	
5. What does the young person need to support them currently?	Person (s) Responsible
Any referrals to other agencies required?	
Amendment to timetable/school day/curriculum (or other)	
Aims/objectives of identified action (s)	
Success criteria – how will we know that the provision is making a difference?	

How will we know when the provision is no longer needed or can be adapted – increased hours alternative venue etc?	
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6. Individualised times of school attendance and EOTAS provision			
DAY	In School Please state start / finish times	At Home Please state start / finish times	Provision outside of school (e.g. work experience, EOTAS provision, off-site education provision organised by the school) Please state start / finish times
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Where a learner is attending provision outside of school, is full reintegration back into mainstream school feasible?			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Where feasible, what is the timescales required for this to happen?			
7. Transport			
DAY	To school	To home	To provision other than at school (e.g. work experience, EOTAS, off-site education provided by school)
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
8. Learners' Individual Targets / Aims to achieve from this PSP provision			
1.			
2.			

3.		
9. Parents/Carer and School Obligations		
10	Parent/Carer – Pupil	School
	To attend a full review of the Pastoral Support Plan on the date stated in Section 1.	To attend a full review of the Pastoral Support Plan on the date stated in Section 1. School to provide access to online learning resources and account details for this. School to provide all necessary exam registrations, and support for any formal exam entries.
11	To support the school in efforts towards re-integration into School on full time basis as an end goal. consider whether full reintegration to mainstream schooling is feasible	To support the parents and pupil in efforts towards re-integration into school on full-time basis as an end goal. consider whether full reintegration to mainstream schooling is feasible and the timescale required for this to happen.

Reference should be made to any additional resource issues such as:

Access to online learning resources and account details for this. Exam registrations, and support for any formal exam entries.

Please sign and date in the correct boxes below:

Pupil's name (print):			
Signature:		Date:	
Parent's name (print):			
Signature:		Date:	
Teacher's name (print):			
Signature:		Date:	
Other professionals:			
Name and role (print):			
Signature:		Date:	

Pastoral Support Plan Review

Date	School View on PSP	Parent View on PSP	Other professionals' views on PSP	Comment
	Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Modify <input type="checkbox"/> Cessation <input type="checkbox"/>	Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Modify <input type="checkbox"/> Cessation <input type="checkbox"/>	Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Modify <input type="checkbox"/> Cessation <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Modify <input type="checkbox"/> Cessation <input type="checkbox"/>	Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Modify <input type="checkbox"/> Cessation <input type="checkbox"/>	Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Modify <input type="checkbox"/> Cessation <input type="checkbox"/>	
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	Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Modify <input type="checkbox"/> Cessation <input type="checkbox"/>	Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Modify <input type="checkbox"/> Cessation <input type="checkbox"/>	Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Modify <input type="checkbox"/> Cessation <input type="checkbox"/>	

PSP Cessation Record

Name of pupil	
School and NC Year	
Reason for ceasing (e.g.) Parental choice Non engagement End of statutory schooling Return to full time schooling Targets met Please supply details	
Timescale for cessation	Phased <input type="checkbox"/> Immediate <input type="checkbox"/>

What will the future provision be?	
Who will be responsible and main contact from now on?	
Who will be professionally involved to support the pupil now that the PSP has ceased or when it will cease?	
Are any further measure needed – signposting/ referrals e.g. Careers Wales for Yr. 11 NEET prevention etc.	

Please sign and date in the correct boxes below:

Pupil's name (print):			
Signature:		Date:	
Parent's name (print):			
Signature:		Date:	
Teacher's name (print):			
Signature:		Date:	
Other professionals:			
Name and role (print):			
Signature:		Date:	

Appendix 3

Recording attendance

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

Registration codes

Code C: Other authorised absence

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.

Code B: 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.

Code W: 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.