

Part-Time/Reduced Timetables

Guidance

The primary and most recent guidance is from Working together to improve school attendance (May 2022). Schools **must** adhere to this guidance if putting in place a part-time timetable, which must only be in **very exceptional circumstances** and can only be **temporary** and **must be in the pupil's best interests** and schools

- “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. 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 should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.**”
- “A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.”

Other Relevant Guidance and Law

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
- Equality Act 2010
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Guidance 2022
- Behaviour in Schools Guidance 2022
- SEND Code of Practice 2014 (updated 2020)

Defining part-time timetables

“Full-Time” is not defined in law but for recording purposes, is defined as the time that a pupil would normally have in their school. For a full-time KS4 pupil this would normally be expected to be 25 teaching hours.

- A pupil who spends part of their week in school and part in alternative provision is not on a part-time timetable
- A pupil who is attending individual tuition only (approved by the Social Inclusion Panel or Fair Access Panel) but dual registered with school is not on a part-time timetable

When can Schools use part-time time timetables for pupils?

There must be exceptional circumstances

Because pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education, reduced or part-time timetables are **only** allowed in **exceptional circumstances**, where:

- There's a **specific need** for a pupil – for example, a medical condition prevents them from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is part of a planned re-integration
- It's in the pupil's **best interests**
- It's on a **temporary** basis, stating when they're expected to return to school full time. (It must not be a long-term solution).

What counts as exceptional circumstances?

It's up to the headteacher to decide what counts as exceptional circumstances but should be prepared to justify why the pupil is not receiving full-time education. **A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour on an ongoing basis.**

Examples might include where:

- A family bereavement prevents a pupil from attending full-time education
- A medical condition like anxiety has become a barrier to attendance
- A pupil joining the school has significant needs and a reduced timetable would help them get used to the school and its routines
- Re-integration after a fixed term suspension in order to ensure that a robust support package is in place to reduce the risk of further suspensions

Current Situation

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to suitable full-time education and every effort must be made to avoid part time timetables.

The Equalities Act 2010 makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- in relation to admissions,
- in the way it provides education for pupils,
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

This means that schools must make every effort to provide a full-time education for all children and young people.

Part-time timetables should only be used in **exceptional circumstances**. Their use is inappropriate without parental/carer consent or for indeterminate periods of time or, where relevant, without multi-agency input.

Every effort should be made to avoid part-time timetables and no young person with SEND or a LAC should have a part-time timetable unless it is in **very exceptional circumstances**. For a young person with an EHCP, **the EHCP caseworker must be informed** and child should have an emergency annual review **before** commencing a part-time timetable.

Part-time timetable can raise safeguarding issues for all children but particularly those already known to Social Care. **Schools must inform a child or young person's social worker if they are on a part-time timetable**, in most cases this should be part of a planned multi-agency approach through TAC/TAF, CIN or CP review. **For pupils who are LAC, head of virtual school must be informed** and there should be a PEP meeting **before** considering a part-time timetable.

Good Practice

- A part-time timetable should only be considered after all other assessments and support options have been exhausted.
- Appropriate multi-agency referrals (eEHA, SIP) have been made, and all agencies working with the child are involved in decision.
- The decision around part-time timetable should take account of any existing or potential safeguarding issue.
- Informed parental consent must be gained before start of part-time timetable and parents should receive a written copy of the timetable and plan for reintegration.
- A risk assessment should be completed before the start of part-time timetable.
- A clear and detailed plan for re-integration with appropriate strategies and additional support as required.
- There should be a set end date for part-time timetable and regular review points.
- **The local authority should be informed when every part-time timetable starts, if it is modified or extended and when it ends.**

Looked After Children

As Corporate Parents, Tower Hamlets Council requires that looked after children receive a full-time education. Any short term and time limited alterations to this should first be discussed with the child's social worker and Virtual School Head before progressing with altering a looked after child's provision. A PEP meeting should be held **before** part-time timetable starts.

Children with EHCPs

The pupils SEN caseworker must be informed of any decision to implement a part-time timetable. Pupils with EHCPs should have an interim review of their plan **prior** to a part-time timetable commencing. As for all children, should a part-time timetable be agreed at this review, it should be time limited with an end date by which full time attendance is expected.

Informing Local Authority, Monitoring and Recording Part-Time Timetables

All schools **must** inform the local authority of any pupils are on a part-time timetable by sending the appropriate form to xxxx@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

- The form must be returned by first day of part-time timetable's start
- The plan for re-integration should accompany the notification.
- The school must inform the local authority if the part-time timetable is modified or extended
- The school must inform the local authority when the part-time timetable ends.

In addition, for:

- Pupils with social worker, school must inform the social worker/should be involved in planning through appropriate meeting
- Pupils with EHCP, SEN caseworker should be informed/emergency review should take place
- Looked after children, head of virtual school should be informed/PEP review should take place

Attendance recording Advice

For statutory school aged children " " will be automatically recorded as the pupil's attendance code for each session they are not expected to attend.

For non-statutory school aged children 'X' will be automatically recorded as the pupil's attendance code for each session they are not expected to attend.