

Guidance on the Use of Reduced Timetable for Pupils with Medical Needs - Based on School Attendance, Guidance for Maintained Schools, Academies, Independent Schools and Local Authorities (DfE, September 2018)

DfE statutory guidance on the use of part-time timetables is very clear:

"In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual need. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full time education and a part-time package is considered as part of a reintegration programme. 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

Part-time timetables are routinely used for pupils with medical and mental health needs. This allows education to be planned to meet their individual health needs and promote recovery. In line with the statutory guidance, the part-time timetable should be regularly reviewed and as soon as their health permits, the number of hours should be increased, moving towards full time.

Key Points:

- A part-time timetable should be put in place in response to medical evidence from a medical practitioner.
- Plans for the timetable should be shared with parents/carers at the outset, along with details about how the number of hours provided will increase.
- The objectives for the part-time timetable should be shared with all stakeholders.
- The part-time timetable arrangements should be regularly reviewed.
- Parents/carers should be made aware that they are responsible for the safety of their child when he/she is not engaged in education.

For children of compulsory school age, parents are required under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, their children receive full time education. The minimum number of hours that constitutes full time education is not defined in law.

Where a pupil has an ongoing medical or mental health condition which necessitates them missing significant amounts of school (more than 15 school days) as a result of their condition, advice and guidance should be taken from Hospital and Outreach Education, who may also be able to provide educational support packages.

Schools should take care to ensure that a part-time timetable is not deemed to be an illegal exclusion. To that end, all part-time timetables should:

- Have clearly defined objectives
- Be for a specified and limited period of time

- Be kept under regular review
- Not be implemented without parental agreement.

Pupils can be provided with appropriate additional work to do in the hours they are not being educated if their health allows. Arrangements should be made by the school to ensure that the work is marked, assessed and constructive feedback is given to the pupil.

All arrangements will be recorded on an individual learning plan (ILP) or an individual healthcare plan (IHCP).

Marking the Attendance Register

Schools can approve educational activities that take place away from the school providing they meet the requirements set out in the regulations and guidance.

According to the DfE School Attendance guidance:

“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.”

Use of the B Code

The DfE guidance also provides specific guidance about the use of the B code. It states:

“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 the B code, 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. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by the individual pupils. The schools should record the pupil’s absence using the relevant absence code.”

In respect of part-time timetables, it states:

“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 record it as an authorised absence.”

Therefore, in most cases, it is NOT appropriate to use the B code to record the period when a pupil on a part-time timetable is not attending school. The C code would be more appropriate in most situations.

If a pupil is dual-registered with HOE, then the D Code is used for this purpose (see below).

Use of the D Code

“This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when a pupil is known to be registered at another school during the sessions in question.

Each school should only record the pupil’s attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.”

If a pupil is being supported by HOE, and is dual-registered with HOE, then the D code can be used to signify that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in school because they were scheduled to attend HOE at which they are also registered.

It is HOE’s responsibility to follow up any unexplained and unexpected absences for the scheduled teaching sessions with HOE. If HOE have safeguarding concerns, the Attendance and Welfare Officer would contact the DSL at the school.

It is the school’s responsibility to monitor attendance whilst their pupil is dual-registered with HOE.

For further advice on the use of part-time timetable (generally), please contact the Education and Inclusion Partnership Team.

Part-Time Timetable Agreement Form

Name of pupil: _____

Name of School: _____

Year group: _____

Name of parents/carers	
Name of lead person in school	
Name of medical practitioner giving advice for the timetable	
Name(s) of other professionals involved	

Reason for the part-time timetable

Date of meeting agreeing part-time timetable arrangements	
Start date	
Number of hours of education per week	
Date of next review	
Plans for increasing hours and estimated date of end of part-time arrangements	

Objectives of the part-time timetable

Timetable	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time in education					

Any additional comments

For parents:

I understand that my child has been placed on a part-time timetable for a limited period of time. I have discussed this matter with the school and agree, during the period of the part-time timetable to:

- Take full responsibility for my child during the hours when not attending school;
- Ensure that there is supervision of school work during those hours;
- Ensure that there is a flow of work between school and home for marking and guidance;
- Take full responsibility for the health and safety of my child when they are not in school.

Parent signature: _____

For school:

During the period of part-time timetable, the school will:

- Monitor the effectiveness of the part-time timetable
- Regularly review the part-time timetable and plan to increase hours when relevant
- Provide work for the child to do whilst at home and mark al work complete

Signed on behalf of the school by : _____

Name of person: _____