



**Doncaster
Council**

Part-Time Timetable Guidance for Schools and Academies

ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023



1. SUMMARY

Doncaster Council have a requirement to collect part-time timetable information from all schools.

Part-time timetable guidance has been revised to help clarify the definition of part-time timetables and re-emphasise that parental consent, agency involvement and a robust multi-agency plan are an essential requirement, prior to a part-time timetable commencing. This is of particular significance for both Children in Care and children and young people with an Education and Health Care Plan.

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance is clear that all pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances and where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary reduced timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a reduced timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

“A reduced timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour”
[Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, September 2022](#) .

The Department for Education statutory guidance on the use of modified timetables is explicit:

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 modified timetable to meet a pupil's individual need. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and part time package is considered as part of a reintegration package. A modified 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.

[Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, September 2022](#) .



2. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE

This guidance is to assist schools in ensuring they comply with statutory obligations and that they do not inadvertently exclude a pupil through the imposition of a reduced timetable.

The guidance ensures that there is a clear understanding of the law within all Doncaster schools and that every child's right to a full-time education is robustly supported.

This guidance has been devised for schools and other education settings regarding the use of reduced timetables. The guidance sets out Doncaster Council's position on the use of reduced timetables and provides a framework for school practice and other professionals working with schools.

A reduced timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution and must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. There should be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents

Please address queries regarding the part-time timetables guidance to the following email: ptt@doncaster.gov.uk

KEY POINTS:

- A modified timetable should be a response to a specific need identified via a Pastoral Support Plan, My Support Plan, Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting or another multi-agency meeting.
- A parent/carer must consent to modified timetable by signing the consent form
- The timetable should be for a limited period. The suggested maximum length of a modified timetable is half a term, unless advised differently by a medical or health practitioner, or by an officer from Doncaster Council.
- Any modified timetable arrangements should be regularly reviewed
- The objectives of any modified timetable should be clearly understood
- A parent/carer must sign the Part Time Timetable Reporting Form to be 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
- A copy of Part Time Timetable Reporting Form must be submitted to Doncaster Council's Inclusion Team each time a modified timetable is agreed with a family.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDANCE:

School refers to any state funded education provision, including Schools, Academies, Alternative Provision, Special School etc.

Pupil refers to any child of statutory school age.



3. DEFINITION OF A PART-TIME TIMETABLE

The Department for Education statutory guidance on the use of part-time timetables and exclusions is very clear:

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 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 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. (Pg19, School Attendance, Department for Education, August 2020)

In agreeing to a reduced 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. This is a safeguarding matter as every child is legally entitled to a full-time education and the law requires that children are kept safe in school. The Local Authority (LA) needs to be assured that schools are not placing children on reduced or re-integration timetables for longer than is necessary.

4. FULL-TIME EDUCATION

All pupils of compulsory schools age are entitled to a full-time education.

Legally, full-time education is defined in statute as:

- 21 hours at Key Stage 1
- 23.5 hours at Key Stage 2
- 24 hours at Key Stage 3
- 24 hours at Key Stage 4 (Year 10)
- 25 hours at Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

Any pupil accessing fewer hours than the defined minimum for their key stage should be reported as accessing a part-time timetable or their hours should be increased to bring them in line with the required hours.

Schools are not required to report a part-time timetable for pupils that are accessing fewer hours than their peers if they are accessing at least the minimum hours stated above.

5. ILLEGAL/INFORMAL EXCLUSIONS

The Office of the Children's Commissioner has investigated illegal exclusions and its report found that:

- *There is a profound and troubling lack of awareness of the law. This can lead to illegal exclusions taking place by accident.*
- *Head teachers and governing bodies have a shared statutory duty to ensure their schools act within the law at all times. (p38, Always Someone Else's Problem)*



In addition, the Statutory Guidance on School Exclusion from the DfE states that:
“Informal” or “unofficial” exclusions, such as sending a pupil home to “cool off”, are unlawful. ALL exclusions of a pupil must be formally recorded.
(Paragraph 13, Exclusion from maintained school, Academies and pupil referral units in England, DfE).

If it is necessary for a pupil to attend for fewer hours than their peers, this agreement must be formalised in a part-time timetable agreement and must follow the guidelines in regard to consent and timescales.

6. LEGITIMATE AND LAWFUL PART-TIME TIMETABLES

Part-time timetables should only be used in very limited circumstances.

For example:

- Where a pupil has a short-term **medical condition** that prevents full-time attendance for a time limited period.
- As part of a **staged reintegration** following an extended period of absence.

Advice about alternative interventions can be sought by contacting:

bits@doncaster.gov.uk

Any professional who is made aware of the use of a reduced timetable should check that the school has notified the Inclusion Team. If a professional believes that the Team has not been notified of the reduced timetable and/or they are concerned about the plan in place, they should contact the Inclusion Team on 01302 737293 or email ptt@doncaster.gov.uk

7. PRINCIPLES OF A PART-TIME TIMETABLE

The following principles should underpin requests for part-time timetables.

A reduced timetable should be:

- A response to an assessment of need.
- Should be for limited period (suggested maximum length 8 weeks).
- Reviewed regularly and amendments agreed.
- Clearly understood by all parties including support agencies as appropriate.
- Risk assessed to evaluate the impact on the pupil.
- One that allows work to be completed at home and school, which equates to their full-time school hours (providing they are medically fit).
- Recorded with the local authority using the correct reporting form.

Parents/carer and child must:

- Consent and agree to participate in part-time timetable agreement by signing the reporting form.
- Indicate within the agreed plan how they will guarantee the pupil's safety off site and undertake supervision of school work.

When a family disagree with the school's request to implement a part-time timetable, discuss:

- The benefits for the child.
- The support their child and they will receive from school.



- That use of a part-time timetable is a time-bound and regularly reviewed intervention.

8. PUPILS WITH A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS OR AN EDUCATION, HEALTH & CARE PLAN

A reduced timetable should only be used for a pupil with a Statement of Special Education Needs or an Education, Health & Care (EHCP) in very limited circumstances.

A pupil should not be put on a reduced 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.

Procedure for implementing the part-time timetable

- When a reduced timetable is being considered for a child with an EHCP or Statement, the school must first convene an interim annual review to secure the agreement of both parents/carers and the SEND caseworker and to ensure that all elements of the provision are met through the reduced timetable arrangement.
- Under the SEND Code of Practice, all parties, including parents and the young person, must be given at least two weeks' notice of the date of the Annual Review meeting (SEND Code of Practice, para 9, 176) and updated records must be shared with participants prior to the review.
- This means that no reduced timetable can be implemented with immediate effect. If it is required as an emergency measure, however, the annual review must be convened within two weeks of the start date.

9. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Looked after children are some of our most vulnerable pupils and therefore a reduced timetable should only ever be implemented in exceptional circumstances, and when all other interventions have been tried.

Procedure for implementing the part-time timetable

- A reduced timetable for a Looked after Child should never be implemented without the written agreement of the Virtual School.
- Best practice states that an interim PEP meeting should be called if a reduced timetable is being considered as an intervention.
- Use of the part-time timetable should be agreed at the appropriate multi agency meeting prior to the timetable commencing and should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting as appropriate.

10. CHILDREN ACCESSING SUPPORT FROM EARLY HELP OR SOCIAL CARE

When the child is subject to a Child in Need / Child Protection or Early Help plan, a reduced timetable should only be used in the most exceptional circumstances

Procedure for implementing the part-time timetable

- A reduced timetable for a child subject to a child protection or child in need plan should never be implemented without the written agreement of the child's social worker.



- Use of the part-time timetable should be agreed at the appropriate Team around the Child meeting prior to the timetable commencing and should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting as appropriate.

11. MARKING THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

C code: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Schools can approve educational activities that take place away from the school providing they meet the requirements set out in regulations and guidance. See DfE School Attendance guidance 2020.

In respect of part-time timetables, the guidance states:

In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for a part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence. (Pg19, School Attendance, Department for Education, August 2020).

12. REPORTING PART-TIME TIMETABLES TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Schools must notify the Inclusion Service of any reduced timetables at the point they are agreed. Schools must scan a signed copy of the 22-23 Part Time Timetable reporting form and send to the Inclusion Team via email to ptt@doncaster.gov.uk

If the child is looked after or previously looked after, the information should also be copied to the Virtual School contact. Please do not send originals. It is important that schools retain the original signed copy for their own records.

- Doncaster Council requires all schools to report any pupils who are accessing a part-time timetable to the Local Authority without delay.
- Current guidance from OFSTED states that all schools should notify the Local Authority of any part-time arrangements and this is likely to be monitored through inspections.
- Schools should complete the Doncaster Part Time Timetable Reporting Form for each pupil that is accessing a reduced timetable.
- Section one should be fully completed when the part-time timetable is implemented. The report form should be sent to ptt@doncaster.gov.uk
- Schools do not need to wait for authorisation from the LA before commencing the part-time timetable.
- Section 2 should be completed every time the part-time timetable is reviewed/adjusted. The updated reporting form should be sent to ptt@doncaster.gov.uk
- Section 3 should be completed when the part-time timetable is terminated. The updated reporting form should be sent to ptt@doncaster.gov.uk

13- FURTHER ADVICE

- If you require further advice on the use of reduced timetables please contact the Engagement & Behaviour Team at ptt@doncaster.gov.uk or on 01302 734210.
- Alternatively, you can contact Behaviour Outreach Support Service on 01302 736295.
- Please consult the checklist below for guidance before implementing a part-time timetable.



PART-TIME TIMETABLE – CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL

Doncaster Council advise all schools to complete the checklist below before implementing any part-time timetable.

	Appropriate assessment has been undertaken and confirms the need for a reduced timetable to secure improved outcomes.
	A risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure pupil safety whilst off-site.
	The objectives of the part-time timetable and the arrangements associated with its creation and review are recorded within a plan.
	The parent/guardian have consented in writing.
	If the pupil has an EHCP or Statement, the part-time timetable and plan has been agreed through an interim Annual Review, exceptional circumstances have been considered and relevant Officers informed (see guidance page 5).
	If the pupil is accessing support from Early Help or Social Care, a multi-agency meeting of professionals involved has been convened to agree the plan.
	Arrangements have been made to review the plan by the mainstream school within 8 weeks.
	The plan ensures that the pupil has sufficient (amounting to full time) education and appropriately differentiated work to complete for the hours out of school. Arrangements for marking, assessment and feedback are in place.
	Complete the part-time timetable reporting form and return to the LA at ptt@doncaster.gov.uk