Transform Trust Reduced Timetable Policy 2026

Policy Number	Author	Publication Date	Review Cycle
207	Director of Inclusion	V4 September 2026	Every 2 years

Introduction

This Policy outlines the Trust's guidance when Headteachers are considering implementing the use of a reduced timetable for a child. Only in exceptional circumstances may it be possible to secure the agreement from the Trust to use a reduced timetable and only when appropriate support strategies and interventions have been implemented or carefully considered. Where and when used, these must be short-term; have a clear structure for increasing hours; and an end date for a return to full-time education.

This Policy sets out the process that must be followed to secure:

- Communication – school, parent/carer, pupil and any appropriate agencies;
- safeguarding – how this will be maintained during a reduced timetable;
- educational entitlement – a plan for ensuring equivalent learning hours;
- monitoring and recording; and
- a plan for returning to full-time education.

All schools are expected to have regard to this Policy in order to ensure statutory compliance and the safeguarding of children across the Trust.

Legal Position

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, where it is in the pupil's 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, using code C2.**

All schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all pupils according to their age and ability, paying due regard to any special educational needs and disability (SEND). The Department for Education (DfE) guidance states that in very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary reduction in educational provision to meet a pupil's individual need. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education or a reduced timetable is considered as part of a reintegration programme.

It is illegal for schools to discriminate against children based on their SEND, including those with social, emotional and mental health needs. A reduced educational provision must not be treated as a long-term solution.

All children of compulsory school age are legally entitled to receive a suitable full-time education. The number of hours of teaching per week which is considered to represent full-time education is:

- Reception and Key Stage 1 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) is 21 hours per week.
- Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) is 23.5 hours per week.

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. It is important to highlight that there is no statutory basis upon which to establish a reduced timetable. However, in exceptional circumstances, schools may need to implement one, in order to support a pupil who cannot attend school full-time for a short, agreed period.

Safeguarding

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) is statutory guidance that identifies schools as part of the wider safeguarding system for children and recognises that all school staff can identify concerns early, to provide help for children and to prevent concerns from escalating KCSIE 2026.

When a child is not in school, their vulnerability is significantly increased and when deciding whether a reduced educational provision is appropriate, consideration must always be given to the welfare and safety of the child. This must be part of the risk assessment process.

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.

Consideration should be given to the increased risk to the pupil to any form of abuse including neglect, physical, emotional and other child exploitation such as sexual or criminal activity including County Lines as well as abuse from potentially online or other social media platforms which are outside the school's control when the child is not in school.

Current guidance from Ofsted states that information about children missing from education is essential and all schools should notify the Trust and their Local Authority (LA) of any child on a reduced timetable. The LA has a statutory responsibility to identify and track any pupil missing from education. Any pupil on a reduced timetable is deemed to be at risk of missing education and therefore needs to be identified and tracked. We expect our schools to have clear monitoring and contact arrangements in place for any child on a reduced timetable.

Schools must record a child with a reduced timetable on MyConcern using the local profile flag TT – part time timetable. A concern log should be created, and any relevant paperwork should be uploaded to MyConcern. The concern should remain open and be updated for the duration the child is on the reduced timetable. The Trust will monitor the progress of the reduce timetable on MyConcern and provide support regarding provision.

Vulnerable Groups - additional considerations

Pupils with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)

- It is illegal for schools to discriminate against pupils based on their special educational needs and/or disability.
- A reduced timetable should only be used for a pupil with an EHCP in very limited circumstances.

- A pupil should not be put on a reduced timetable because of their SEND 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 EHCP is delivered in order to meet the child's needs and secure their statutory entitlement.

Children in Care (Looked after children)

A reduced timetable, for a looked after child should only be implemented in very limited circumstances and not before all other interventions have been tried. Before proceeding, the following steps are required:

- a formal review of the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP);
- written parent/guardian agreement; and
- the consent of both the child's social worker and the Virtual School (or their representative).

Children on a child protection plan

Children on a child protection plan are very vulnerable and may be placed at greater risk if placed on a reduced timetable. Therefore, a reduced timetable, should only be implemented in the most exceptional circumstances when all other interventions have been tried. The following steps are required:

- Appropriate consultation with the child's social worker to outline reasons, discuss risks and secure agreement;
- Any reduced timetable should only be implemented following a Core Group meeting, or discussion with Social worker.

School Readiness

Children ordinarily start school in the September following their 4th birthday. However, it is acknowledged that parents can choose to defer their child's start to the beginning of the term following the 5th birthday. It is common practice for schools to stagger admission during the early part of the Autumn term to support all children in adjusting to school life, this process is not regarded as a reduced timetable. The admissions process may begin with shorter days e.g mornings for a commonly agreed period, quickly building to full-time attendance.

A school may determine, that for a small minority of children who are not 'school ready', an extended integration programme is appropriate to support their emotional and developmental needs. In this circumstance, the child would be regarded as being in receipt of a reduced timetable and an appropriate plan must be agreed in partnership with parents and signed consent recorded. The programme must focus on ensuring that full-time attendance is achieved no later than the term following the child's 5th birthday.

Children new to education in UK

Children arriving new to the UK schools, are entitled to be admitted to school without delay. If the admitting school identify that the child has SEND but the child is not subject to an EHCP, then the school must progress admission. The law specifically states that a child cannot be denied admission to a school on the grounds that they have a SEND need. It should be noted that any failure to progress

admission may be judged discriminatory under the Equality Act. If the school believe that the child's needs are severe and complex, they can make representations for a 'fast track' statutory SEND, health and care assessment' and/or seek interim support.

Fair Access Protocol

Local Authority Fair Access Protocols (FAP) seeks to secure managed moves for vulnerable children for whom a 'fresh-start' has been identified as beneficial. This includes children who have been permanently excluded or who are at risk of permanent exclusion from school. If it is determined that a child placed at a school through the FAP would benefit from reintegration on reduced timetable, the reduced timetable must follow the process set out in this guidance.

Reduced Timetables and Off rolling

Reduced timetables must always be used in the best interests of the pupil and only in exceptional circumstances. They must never be used as a means of informally excluding a pupil, improving attendance figures, managing staffing pressures, avoiding the use of suspension or exclusion procedures, or because the school feels unable to meet a pupil's needs.

Reduced timetables must be time limited, supported by a clear reintegration plan, subject to regular review and implemented only with the informed agreement of parents/carers and, where appropriate, other relevant professionals.

The Trust regards any inappropriate or prolonged use of reduced timetables as a potential safeguarding concern and schools must be able to demonstrate that the arrangement is necessary, proportionate and in the pupil's best interests.

When might a reduced timetable be appropriate?

In general, schools should not place pupils on a reduced timetable. However, in exceptional circumstances, there may situations when this may be appropriate and in the best interests of the pupil. In any circumstances, and only after everything else has been tried, this intervention should only be used a part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil. The arrangement should always specify an end-date by when it is expected that the child will return to full-time education (or when an alternative will be provided) and be reviewed regularly in the light of any changes to the child's circumstances.

A reduced timetable should provide a means of achieving reintegration to full-time education. It should never be used as a form of exclusion from school for part of the school day or as permanent provision.

It is likely that a pupil being considered for a reduced timetable would fall within one of these categories:

a. Part of a Support Plan

School, parent/carer and relevant professionals may agree that a short-term reduced timetable (normally no longer than 6 weeks) is required where significant social, emotional, mental health or behavioural needs are affecting a pupil's ability to access full-time education, and where appropriate

support strategies, reasonable adjustments and interventions have already been implemented or carefully considered.

Any reduced timetable must form part of a wider support plan and be used only where it is in the pupil's best interests. The arrangement should be closely monitored, regularly reviewed and designed to support the pupil's successful engagement with education and reintegration into full-time attendance. Reduced timetables must not be used as a long-term solution or solely as a response to behavioural difficulties

b. Medical reasons

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. Statutory guidance *"Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'* states LAs should provide suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) as soon as it is clear the child will be away from school for 15 days or more. The Trust guidance on medical needs should be adhered to in these circumstances.

c. Reintegration or Transition into Education

As part of a planned transition or reintegration into school (usually no longer than 6 weeks) following an extended period out of school e.g. following an exclusion, non-attendance, new to education, arrival from overseas, school refusal, elected home education (EHE).

Notification

The Headteacher or named Senior Leader who wishes to place a pupil on a reduced timetable should contact the Director of Inclusion prior to any decision being taken. The Director of Inclusion can offer further support and will request that the child is presented to the Enhanced Provision Panel for full discussion and to ensure that everything else has been tried before implementing a reduced timetable. The Enhanced Provision Panel will identify a member of the panel in which to act as liaison and follow up.

We acknowledge that there may be rare occasions when an extension to a reduced timetable is needed. For example, staff appointments, training or medical appointments made and attended. Any extension for a reduced timetable would also require the support of any involved agencies.

To notify the Trust of a reduced timetable please complete Reporting a Reduced Timetable

Best Practice Guidance for reduced timetables

When considering placing a pupil on a reduced timetable, a school must:

- **Be satisfied that a reduced timetable is an appropriate intervention given the needs of the pupil**. There must be a clearly evidenced and written rationale for considering a reduced timetable as a suitable intervention to supporting the needs of the pupil and the maintenance of the education placement.

- **Only pursue a reduced timetable with parental permission**. A reduced timetable can be construed as an unofficial exclusion, which is unlawful, if the parent has not requested leave for their child and/or the school could be regarded as preventing the pupil from accessing the curriculum. The school must therefore **have signed parental permission, evidenced on the pupil file 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 will have to consider alternative interventions.
- **Ensure that multi-agency review meetings are held** before reduced timetables are implemented for looked after children, children subject to Early Help support or open to social care. If the child is on a child protection plan, the child's social worker must have given agreement.
- **Ensure that where pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan, the LA SEND Officer is informed to ensure the EHCP is reviewed and amended where/if appropriate.**
- **Undertake a risk assessment of the pupil's needs to assess the impact that a reduced timetable would have on the pupil.** It is essential that the pupil's welfare during any absence from school is considered as well as any risks that may occur whist at school. The risk assessment should include the safety and wellbeing of the pupil whilst not in receipt of education during the school day (see Appendix 1).
- **Complete a reintegration plan, agreed with the parents/guardian**. The plan should demonstrate a clear path of planned reintegration from part-time to full-time provision over a limited period. Where ever possible and always in the case of integration/reintegration, within a 6-week period. The school must ensure the pupil and their parent/carers are actively involved in the process of planning, reviewing and evaluating the planned intervention (see Appendix 2).

Attendance and Remote Education

Attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age. Schools should consider providing remote education to pupils in circumstances when in-person attendance is either not possible or contrary to government advice. Remote education might therefore be considered for a pupil on a reduced timetable. The DfE has updated their guidance on how schools can maintain their capability to provide remote education when it is not possible for some to attend in person.

Marking the attendance register

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 **authorised absence,** using the code C2.

Completing the Trust Paperwork

Prior to a pupil being considered for a reduced timetable, they must be presented to the Enhanced Provision Panel to ensure that everything possible has been tried. The COO or the Director of Inclusion will inform the Board of Trustees the number of children on a reduced timetable (names will not be shared).

Illegal exclusions

Reduced timetables that DO NOT have clearly defined objectives, a specified end date, a review process, and/or the consent of parents/carers may constitute an illegal exclusion. The Ofsted School

Inspection Framework states: *Should inspectors find that the school has used exclusion illegally, this should be taken very seriously and considered when judging leadership and management.*

Summary:

- Schools have a statutory duty to provide full time education for all pupils.
- However, in very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary reduced timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs.
- A reduced timetable means by agreement with the pupil, parent/guardian and school, the number of hours spent in education are reduced for a time limited period usually for 6 weeks.
- The Headteacher will present the request to the Trust's Enhanced Provision Panel and/or speak to the Trust's Director of Inclusion before implementing a reduced timetable.
- The child's parents/guardian must agree a reduced timetable.
- Consideration of remote education during the reduced time spent in school.
- The arrangement for pupils with medical needs must follow the Trust guidance.
- A risk assessment to be completed and reviewed regularly.
- A clear action plan for improving education must be in place.
- Clear expectations for safeguarding and maintaining contact when not in school should be in place.
- Schools need to record a reduced timetable on MyConcern.

Monitoring and Review of this Policy

This policy may be amended at any time to take account of changes in legislation. The normal cycle of review for this policy will be 2 years.

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment – assessing the risk related to remaining full-time and moving to reduced timetable

What are the Hazards/Risks associated with the pupil	Who might be harmed and how?	Likelihood (1 – 5)	Severity (1 – 5)	Risk-Rating (L x S)	Existing Control Measures Proactive interventions to reduce/prevent risk	What further action is necessary?	Date completed

Appendix 2: Reintegration Plan - returning to full-time

Date of meeting:		**School:**	
Pupil Name:			
Looked After Child:	Yes/No	**Child protection:**	Yes/No
Child in Need/EHCP:	Yes/No	**Early help:**	Yes/No
REASONS FOR THE REDUCTION IN TIMETABLE: (please tick all that apply)			
Medical		**Integration/Reintegration**	
Pastoral			

Parents & Professionals involved with the child:			
Name	**Role and Organisation**	**Attended (y/n)**	**Have they been informed of the reduced timetable? If not, please state why?**

Start date of timetable		**End date of timetable:** **Plan should demonstrate return full-time provision**	
Has Remote Education been considered?	Yes/No Arrangements:		

Reintegration timetable											
Week beginning:	**Monday**		**Tuesday**		**Wednesday**		**Thursday**		**Friday**		**Time in education:**
	am	**pm**	**am**	**pm**	**am**	**pm**	**am**	**pm**	**am**	**pm**	

Review Meeting Date (minimum 2 weekly intervals). A record of discussions will be made at each review meeting.			
Date: **Time:** **Venue:**	**Date:** **Time:** **Venue:**	**Date:** **Time:** **Venue:**	**Date:** **Time:** **Venue:**

Record of weekly targets & Review meeting notes (fortnightly)	
w/c:	**Targets:**
w/c:	**Targets:**
Date	**Review/evaluation of progress:**
w/c:	**Targets:**
w/c:	**Targets:**
Date	**Review/evaluation of progress:**
w/c:	**Targets:**
w/c:	**Targets:**
Date	**Review/evaluation of progress:**

The undersigned confirm that this is an accurate record of the discussions and outcomes agreed within the meeting. By signing this form, the School is confirming that the use of a reduced timetable for a limited period has been judged appropriate, review arrangements have been agreed and any safeguarding issues have been fully taken into consideration.

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

- Monitor the effectiveness of the reduced timetable.
- Hold a review on the agreed date.
- Provide work the child to do whilst at home and mark all work completed – including any remote education.

School Representative:		**Date:**		**Signature:**

Other professionals that may be involved (LAC, Social worker):				
Parent/Guardian: **A reduced timetable can only proceed with parents' signed consent to the plan and cannot be enforced by a school or insisted upon.** I agree with the content of these minutes and the reintegration plan. • I understand that my child will be placed on a reduced timetable between the dates specified above and I will attend review meetings and engage with any services provided to support my child. • I am willing and able to take full responsibility for my child when he\she is not in school during school hours. • I will use the learning resources provided by school to support my child's home learning and return to the school for marking. • I understand a copy of this form may be shared with relevant professional who work with my child.				
Name of parent/guardian:		**Date**		**Signature:**
Child – this section is voluntary for the child to complete. Please delete as applicable: 1. I am happy with this plan because: 2. I am not happy with this plan because:				
Name of child:		**Date**		**Signature:**