

Warwickshire County Council

Schools Considering Part-time Timetables Guidance

Sept 2024

Context

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. In some circumstances their education may be provided partially at school and partially at another educational setting or through education otherwise than at a school in line with section 19 of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 or 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Time away from school to receive education in other ways must be recorded in the attendance register using the appropriate codes (see chapter 8 of DfE's [Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance](#)).

WCC are being proactive in gaining a robust overview of the use of part-time timetables, to provide and signpost support to schools and pupils and to assure that those pupils are safe.

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interest, 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 medical condition might include a mental health condition; however, schools should keep in mind the nature of the challenge, and whether it can instead be managed by implementing reasonable adjustments to support attendance.

Where a pupil has an on-going diagnosed medical condition, for advice, please contact WCC's Specialist Teaching Service or WCC's Flexible Learning Team <https://www.warwickshire-flt.org.uk/index.shtml>.

Any part-time timetable should seek to maximise face-to-face school time as much as possible. Any remote education should only be considered if the pupil is well enough and able to learn and should be given in-line with the DfE's guidance on providing remote education.

Schools may decide to implement a part-time timetable for a **time-limited** period to meet a pupil's individual needs, but this should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour. The children's needs must always come first.

Schools need to be aware they may be judged for their implementation of a part-time timetable and could be challenged by external bodies.

Any pupil on a part-time table who fails to attend an agreed session must be contacted by the school to ensure they are safe. This must be recorded.

If the school has any concerns about the safety of any pupil on a part-time timetable, they must follow their safeguarding policy and procedures.

A part-time timetable should:

- Have the agreement of both the school and the parent/carer the pupil normally lives with. This could include a 'Positive Intervention Plan' and a 'Pastoral Support Plan' and that advice will have been sought from an appropriate specialist such as a Specialist Teacher or Educational Psychologist.
- Have a clear ambition and be part of the pupil's wider support, health care or reintegration. The **Assess/Plan/Do/Review** will have been followed.
- Have regular review dates which include the pupil and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
- A part-time timetable must **not** be treated as a long-term solution and must have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the pupil, after which the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or an alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a pupil with a long-term health condition may require a part-time timetable for a prolonged period.
- If regular progress is not being made (measured by increased time in school and demands) a different intervention must be considered.
- A part-time timetable should have **clearly defined objectives and achievable targets**.
- Good practice would suggest that part-time timetable arrangements should be reviewed regularly (e.g. at least every fortnight) as part of a phased reintegration plan. The review should include a parent/carer and other external specialists or agencies as and when appropriate.
- <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send-inclusion-guidance>

A Part-time timetable should not:

- Be something a parent/carer is pressured into agreeing, eg: the threat of exclusion must not be used to influence parents/carers to engage with a part-time timetable.
- Be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.
- Be used for schools to prepare themselves for a full-time admission to their school roll for compulsory school aged children.
- Discriminate against pupils on the basis of their special educational needs and/or disability, including those with social emotional and mental health difficulties.

Prior to placing a child on a part-time timetable

- Seek **free advice and guidance** from the Specialist Teaching Service Area Manager.
- It is good practice for schools to conduct an assessment for example using Early Help to establish whether there are wider needs and identify the support needed from external agencies.

- Schools must consider the safety and wellbeing of the pupil and whether a reduced educational offer would increase the pupils vulnerability and place them more at risk of potential harm.
- Undertake a **risk assessment** and if there are safeguarding concerns, advice must be sought via the Front Door.
- **Risk assessments** must be regularly reviewed.
- Schools should clarify with parents/carers that they will take full responsibility for their child if they are expected to be at home as part of the part-time timetable.
- Schools should be engaging with all agencies involved in supporting the pupil and family.
- Complete [Notification of a Temporary Part Time Timetable](#) and submit to the LA,
- Set a review date to take place within two weeks of the start of the reduced timetable and record the planned end date.

Pupils with an EHC Plan

- If the pupil has an Education, health and Care plan, the school should have the agreement of the part-time timetable with the pupils allocated Plan Co-ordinator (WCC SENDAR) so that any support package that is in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.
- In some cases, a special educational need may also be a disability and therefore constitute a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Pupils with a Youth Justice Worker

- If a pupil is known to the Youth Justice Team, the school should consult the Youth Justice worker about any proposals to implement a part-time timetable.

Children in Care

- The pupil's Virtual School must be consulted about any proposals to implement a part-time timetable for a child in care, (for children in Warwickshire's care contact virtualschool@warwickshire.gov.uk).
- In addition, a part-time timetable must not be used without the consent of the pupil's Social Worker.

Pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) or who are a Child in Need (CiN)

- Any school considering a part-time timetable for a child that is subject to a CPP or who is CiN must first consult with the pupil's Social Worker.
- Any part-time timetable must only be implemented following a Core Group or CiN Meeting.
- A part-time timetable should not be implemented without written parental/carer agreement and the consent of the Social Worker responsible.

Marking the Attendance Register

- All schools are bound by the DfE attendance coding guidance, this guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>.

- 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**.
- From September 2024, schools must use the **C2** code for the sessions the pupil is not required in school. The school must code in line with the DfE coding guidance for the sessions required in school i.e. present mark, illness' mark, authorised or unauthorised etc.

Effective Practice Examples: [Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance: effective practice examples \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/123456/Support_for_pupils_where_a_mental_health_issue_is_affecting_attendance_effective_practice_examples.pdf)