



GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS, (WHEN A PART TIME TIMETABLE INTERVENTION IS REQUIRED TO SUPPORT CHILDREN)

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CONTENTS

	Page No
1. Introduction	3
2. Informal Exclusions	3
3. Part-time Timetables	3
4. Medical Conditions	4
5. Pupils with Education, Health & Care Plans	5
6. Looked After Children	5
7. Pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) or who are a Child in Need (CiN)	5
8. Illegal Exclusions	6
9. Marking the Attendance Register	6
10. Virtual/Distant Learning	7
11. Further advice	8
Part-time Timetable Consent Form	9
Timetable	10

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This guidance sets out the legal framework in relation to the rights of all statutory school aged children to receive full time education appropriate to their age and irrespective of their needs. It is intended to assist schools in ensuring compliance with statutory guidance and to ensure that they do not inadvertently exclude a pupil illegally.
- 1.2 As well as the potential impact on educational standards a part-time timetable can present a significant safeguarding risk if not managed appropriately. Evidence shows that children and young people from vulnerable groups are more likely to be in receipt of a part time timetable than their peers and in turn are more likely to be subject of safeguarding concerns. This document sets out to ensure that the child is safe if a part-time timetable is necessary.
- 1.3 Statutory Guidance on the use of part-time timetable and exclusions 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 timetable is considered as part of a reintegration package. A part-time timetable must not be 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.

(p16 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>)

2. Informal Exclusions

- 2.1 'Informal' or 'unofficial' exclusions, such as sending pupils home 'to cool off', are not legal, regardless of whether parents or carers agree. Any exclusion of a pupil (even for short periods of time) must be formally recorded.
- 2.2 The Office of the Children's Commissioner's considered illegal exclusions in their report; 'Always Someone Else's Problem'. Which found that:

There is a profound and troubling lack of awareness of the law on these matters, among school leaders including governors, and a school's parents and children alike. This can lead to illegal exclusions taking place by accident. Although this illegal activity may be inadvertent, it is nonetheless unacceptable. Headteachers and governing bodies have a shared statutory duty to ensure their schools act within the law at all times. (Para 13, Exclusion from maintained school, Academies and pupil referral units in England, DfE)

3. Part-time Timetables

- 3.1 Guidance suggests weekly lesson times for pupils as:

Age	Hours
5-7	21
8-11	23.5
12-14	24
14-16	25

- 3.2 The application of a part-time timetable must be discussed with and agreed by parent/carers before commencing. An Engagement Plan or Personalised Support Plan utilising your Education Welfare/Inclusion Service or an emergency EHCP review are the routes to engage with parents/carers and the child. Parents who won't or don't engage appropriately, or in a reasonable period, may not be supporting their child suitably. This may need escalating as a cause for concern or even a safeguarding issue.
- 3.3 A model consent form that parents/carers must sign can be found as Appendix 1 to this Guidance. The consent form can be added to other assessments and kept on the pupil's school file.
- 3.4 Part-time timetables must only be used in very limited circumstances for pupils not allowed or not able to attend either mainstream or special schools on a full-time basis, for example:
- 3.4.1 Where there are behaviour difficulties and the school is using a part-time timetable as an intervention to avoid exclusion forming part of an Engagement Plan/ pastoral support plan (PSP) or a planned reintegration package.
- 3.4.2 Where a pupil has a short-term medical condition that prevents full time attendance for a time limited period and referral to the Medical Needs Service is not appropriate.
- 3.5 It does not refer to pupils whose curriculum has been modified but are still attending school, training, college, an alternative education provider etc, full time.
- 3.6 Key points:
- 3.6.1 A part-time timetable should be part of an outcome of an overall support plan including a safeguarding risk assessment, with the objectives clearly understood and recorded at the outset.
- 3.6.2 A parent/carer must consent to the application of a part-time timetable and be clear that they are taking responsibility for the pupil when s/he is not in school and guarantee they are supervised off site (see consent form).
- 3.6.3 The timetable should be for the least time possible.
- 3.6.4 The part-time timetable arrangements must be reviewed every fortnight to assess progress towards being able to return to school on a full time basis and to review the effectiveness of any support being provided. If the part-time timetable is to be extended, the reasons for this must be clearly evidenced.
- 3.6.5 Once tried as an intervention it will only be appropriate on rare occasions to have a further period with a part-time timetable since it shows that the strategy was not working and a different intervention should be considered.
- 4. Medical Conditions**
- 4.1 Where a pupil has an on-going diagnosed medical condition, which necessitates them missing more than 15 continuous school days (30 am/pm attendance sessions) because of the condition, consideration should be given to referral to the Medical Needs Provision. The condition must be supported by the medical evidence required & not just on the parent's explanation.

4.2 Where possible and appropriate for pupils not referred to the Medical Needs Provision, pupils should be provided with sufficient and differentiated work for those hours they are not in school. Arrangements should be made to ensure that the work is marked and assessed with constructive feedback given to the pupil. If the education provider has a staff member with the child at the home or a remote learning facility/package in place, then this would be a supervised activity and could be recorded in the attendance register as educated off site; 'B'. If not, then the school's register should record the absence as authorised; 'C' code.

5. Pupils with Education, Health & Care Plans

5.1 A part-time timetable should only be used for a pupil with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) in very limited circumstances and in liaison with SEN Case Officer. A pupil should not be put on a part-time 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.

5.2 A part-time timetable must only be used following an interim or annual review of a EHC plan with:

5.2.1 Clearly defined objectives.

5.2.2 Be for a specified and limited period.

5.2.3 Be kept under regular review.

5.2.4 Have written parental agreement and the consent of the SEN Casework Officer.

5.3 An Individual Education Plan (IEP) should be agreed that clearly lays out the use of any extra provision in the EHCP.

5.4 Where possible and appropriate pupils should be provided with sufficient and appropriately differentiated work to do for those hours they are not in school. Arrangements should be made to ensure that the work is regularly marked; assessed and constructive feedback is given to the pupil.

5.5 Schools should ensure that the provision made in the EHC plan is used to meet the child's needs.

6. Looked after Children

6.1 Looked after children are amongst our most vulnerable pupils and a part-time timetable should only be used in very limited circumstances when all other interventions have been tried. The Head of Virtual School must be consulted – contact details can be found at: vsb@bexley.gov.uk.

6.2 A part-time timetable should only be used after reviewing the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) and must:

6.2.1 Have clearly defined objectives.

6.2.2 Be for a specified and limited period.

6.2.3 Be kept under regular review.

6.2.4 Not be used without written parent/carer agreement and consent of the child's Social Worker and the Virtual School of the Local Authority responsible for the child.

6.3 Where possible and appropriate pupils should be provided with sufficient and appropriately differentiated work to do for those hours they are not in school. Arrangements should be made to ensure that the work is regularly marked; assessed and constructive feedback is given to the pupil.

6.4 Any Locked after Children on a part-time table must be contacted daily by the school to ensure they are safe. This must be recorded. If the school has any concerns about the safety of a child on a part-time table they must follow their safeguarding policy and procedures and contact the relevant social worker.

7. Pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) or who are a Child in Need (CIN)

7.1 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 child's Social Worker. Any part-time timetable must only be implemented following a Core Group or CIN Meeting.

7.2 A part-time timetable should:

7.2.1 Have clear defined objectives.

7.2.2 Be for a specified and limited period of time.

7.2.3 Be kept under regular review.

7.2.4 Not be implemented without written parental/carer agreement and the consent of the Social Worker responsible.

7.3 Where possible and appropriate pupils should be provided with sufficient differentiated work to do for those hours they are not in school. Arrangements should be made to ensure that the work is regularly marked; assessed and constructive feedback is given to the pupil.

8. Illegal Exclusions

8.1 Part-time 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.

8.2 Professionals who become aware of an illegal exclusion or a pupil on a part-time timetable and have concerns around the reasons for its use, the length the timetable is in place for and/or whether it has the consent of the child's parents/carers, should notify the Education Welfare Service.

9. Marking the Attendance Register

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

9.2 According to the DfE's 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 (Page 8, School Attendance, DfE, Nov 13).

9.3 The DfE guidance also provides specific guidance about the use of the “B” code:

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 code B, 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 that is not part of a set remote learning package. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil’s absence using the relevant absence code.

In agreeing to a part-time timetable a school accepts a pupil being absent from school for a part of the week or day and must record it as authorised.

9.4 Therefore, in most cases it would not be 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 must be used.

9.5 A pupil, attending alternative provision as part of their part-time timetable, may be authorised and use the “B” code for that aspect of their timetable. However, it remains the school’s responsibility to monitor attendance whilst they attend alternative provision.

10. Virtual/Distant Learning

10.1 Technology has helped in allowing some pupils to be taught while they remain at home due to illness, excluded or on a time limited part time timetable.

10.2 There are many companies on the market claiming their distant learning packages meet DfE guidelines.

10.3 The use of ‘teaching’ remotely can become questionable or a safeguarding concern for schools, plus raising other questions. For example:

10.3.1 What is the supervision expected?

10.3.2 Does supervision mean that there must be an approved adult physically with the pupil?

10.3.3 Is the pupil really logged on doing the work or is another doing the work?

10.3.4 Can supervision include a conversation link by telephone/text or must it be real time, teacher to pupil, video link?

10.3.5 How should this be recorded in the school registration process?

10.4 Statutory Guidance July 2018, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance> has not fully addressed this or qualified the term ‘supervised’. Ofsted too can offer differing interpretations.

- 10.5 Within the above statutory guidance, it seems the 'B' code is the one that could be used for when pupils are present at an approved off-site educational activity:

Code B: Off-site educational activity:

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 code B, 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 individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

- 10.6 Bexley County Council has sought direction and qualification from the DfE on this matter. Until we receive clarity from the DfE, SCC suggest schools consider the above and:

10.6.1 If the pupil is not 'physically' in the school the usual '/' or '\' should not be used. Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration.

10.6.2 If school send a member of staff, or approved adult, to the home to 'teach' the pupil this would be coded with a 'B' code. The pupil's parent or relative should not be placed in this position.

10.6.3 If school have a real time video link for a class, then this might be coded as a 'B' code.

10.6.4 SCC suggests that telephone or text does not meet the term 'supervised' and should not be used.

10.6.5 Sessions not supervised should be recorded as absence using the 'C' code.

11. Further advice

If you require further advice on the use of part-time and modified timetables please speak to the Education Welfare Service at: EducationWelfare@bexley.gov.uk

Part-time Timetable Consent Form

Child's Name:

UPN: Ethnicity:

Date of Birth: Gender: Year Group:

School:

Is the child looked after by Baxley Council or any other local authority?

If Yes, which local authority?

Is the child subject to a Child Protection Plan?

Has the pupil had a part-time timetable before?

If Yes, when?

Name of parents/carers:

Name of lead person in school:

Name of social worker (if applicable):

Name of SEN caseworker (if applicable):

Name of Virtual School rep (if applicable):

Name of EWO (if applicable):

Name of YOS worker (if applicable):

Reason for the part-time timetable/interventions tried:

Date of meeting agreeing the part-time timetable:

Start date of part-time timetable:

Number of hours in education each week:

Review date of part-time timetable:

End date of part-time timetable:

Timetable

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Objectives of the part-time timetable/interventions to support:				
Any other comments relating to this part-time timetable:				

I understand my child has been placed on a part-time timetable for a limited period.

I have discussed the matter fully 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 there is supervision of school work during those hours.
- Ensure there is a flow between school and home for marking and guidance.
- Take full responsibility for the health and safety on my child when they are not in school.

Signature
(Parent/Carer) _____ Date _____

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

- Monitor the effectiveness of the part-time timetable.
- Hold a review on the agreed date.
- Provide work for the child to do whilst at home and mark all work complete.

Signature
(School) _____ Date _____

Other signatures (if required):

SEN Caseworker _____ Date _____

Social Worker _____ Date _____

Virtual School Rep _____ Date _____

Education Welfare Officer _____ Date _____

YOS Officer _____ Date _____

This form should be retained with the pupil's school records and support any EHA.

Communicating with parents and carers well

Active Listening

Listen to the parent and summarise back to them what they have said without judgement. This shows you are being attentive and most importantly value what they are saying. Try and do this regularly in the conversation, especially after a parent has explained a particular point.

After a point is explained, you could say:

It's really important for me to understand what you have shared. Let me summarise what you have said so far. Please clarify or correct anything that I might have got wrong.

Thank you for sharing this information. Can I feedback to you what I have noted, to ensure I have understood you accurately?

Seek first to understand

Take an inquisitive and curious approach to understand the parent's views and opinions. Don't be afraid to ask clarifying questions to understand fully what is being said. It's an opportunity to learn for you as well.

You could say:

You mentioned...could you tell me more about that?

Understand the goal

Clearly establish what the parent would like from the conversation. This will be helpful in directing your interaction with a parent and keep things on track when the conversation seems to be going off course.

After greetings, at the beginning of your conversation you could say:

What would you like to achieve/gain from our conversation today?

What would make this a successful conversation?

To keep the conversation on track, you could say:

Thanks for sharing, It's important to hear your thoughts and understand them. How do you feel it will help us achieve/get to the outcome you want?

Don't forget to check with the parents to see if their goals have been met at the end of the meeting.

Communicate clearly

As a professional it is easy to assume the acronyms and language we come across every day in our work are common knowledge to all people. Whatever you say be mindful that you have clearly communicated your intended message. Things can be misunderstood especially in a highly emotive atmosphere.

You could ask questions like:

Does that make sense?

Is that familiar to you?

Is there anything you would like me to go over again?

Would you like to explain anything further?

Know your boundaries

Be clear on how you can be helpful to the parent and sign post them to other relevant services when appropriate. This is to help parents manage their expectations.

Dealing with diversity

We live in a multicultural society consisting of people of different ethnicities, faiths, backgrounds and experiences. This is something to consider when interacting with parents, thinking how they might prefer to be addressed, clarification on the pronunciation of names etc. This might involve establishing language needs prior to your conversation when appropriate.

Empower the parent

You want to make sure that the parent has the information and resources needed to carry out any necessary actions. A parent might not always feel confident or comfortable in what they have to do next so clarifying this is important.

You could say:

What actions can we both do individually to start solving the problem?

Are you comfortable with what we have to do next?

What happens next?

Sometimes parents can feel unsure about what will happen next after your conversation. At the end of your conversation, it would be helpful to summarise and be clear about what actions will be taken, and if necessary, when the parent might hear from you again. You could summarise the agreed actions with the parent in an email.

This way the parent doesn't forget what they have to do and also makes you accountable to the parent.

Are you feeling stuck?

You may be yourself in a conversation you may not know exactly how to handle it or that could be quite emotional. Being calm and compassionate in these situations can help achieve a positive outcome. Here are some things you could say when feeling stuck.

If you are not quite sure:

Can I get back to you on that?

These very important points/questions and I would want to clarify with (insert name/position) that I have the right information for you.

I will have to discuss that with a colleague/supervisor and get back to you.

If the conversation is quite emotional:

I know that this is a difficult situation for you...

I understand that this is hard for you. Would it help to continue our conversation later/another time?

Would you like a break and I can call you back in 10 minutes time?

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