

Information on Part-time/ Reduced Timetables

What is a part-time timetable?

A part-time timetable is a temporary arrangement where a student attends school for fewer hours than their peers.

When can a reduced timetable be put in place?

All children of compulsory school age are legally entitled to a full-time education which is suitable for them, including their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

As a rule, schools cannot put children of compulsory school age on a part-time timetable. Part-time timetables should only be used in very exceptional circumstances where it's in a pupil's best interests, such as to meet a pupil's medical needs and enable them to access as much education as possible (Information from IPSEA).

How is a reduced timetable put in place?

A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution and should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour. A part-time timetable must be agreed by the Parent Carer, without this agreement it cannot be put in place, and is considered an unlawful exclusion. A child can be on a reduced timetable for a maximum of six weeks in most cases, as it should be temporary and for a limited time. There must be a detailed action plan with clear objectives and a specific end date for a return to full-time education.

Should the Local Authority be notified?

Yes, the local authority must be notified when a reduced timetable is put in place for a student of compulsory school age. This is a legal requirement, as schools are expected to notify the local authority to ensure the child's full-time attendance is achieved as soon as possible.

The notification allows the local authority to monitor the situation, be aware of the child's education and welfare arrangements during their absence and potentially provide support.

Shropshire Council's Protocol for reduced timetable states:

Shropshire Council is committed to every child's right to a full-time education and makes clear the requirement that **a reduced timetable cannot be implemented** without:

- An assessment of need having taken place to ensure that it will **benefit the pupil**.

- A risk assessment and relevant plan in place.
- Written agreement from a Parent Carer.
- An interim or early annual review having been called, to which Shropshire Council's SEND team is invited, for pupils with an EHCP.
- The presence and agreement of a representative from the Virtual School of the placing local authority at any meeting where the intervention will be discussed for a child looked after.
- A supporting Individual Healthcare Plan for pupils with medical needs.
- Schools being able to still evidence educational progress for the pupil.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.shropshirelg.net/media/qrkc5ksb/shropshire-reduced-timetable-protocol-september-2022.docx>

What if I don't agree with a part-time timetable being put in place, but school have told me I have to?

If you disagree with a reduced timetable, first ask for a meeting with the school to get a written explanation and a clear reintegration plan, as a reduced timetable requires parental consent and should not be a long-term solution. If you are unable to resolve the issue with the school, you can:

- contact your Shropshire Council's SEND team-
<https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/education/education-services/ehcp-team-previously-known-as-sen-team/>
- Seek advice from independent organisations like IPSEA-
<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/>
- Seek advice from SENDIASS-
<https://www.shropshiresendiass.com/>

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