



# **Kent County Council**

## **Best Practice Guidance for Schools on the Use of Reduced Timetable (RTT)**

Revised: September 2017

## Overview

Kent County Council issued a local guidance on the use of reduced timetable in 2013. The guidance has been revised to ensure that it reflects the current statutory framework so that all Kent schools follow the best practice and meet the legal and safeguarding requirements.

This revised guidance is intended to support all schools, including Academy and Independent Schools, Special Schools, Pupil Referral Units and alternative provision settings, hereafter referred to as schools. Reduced timetable sometimes are referred to as “part-time timetable” or “reduced educational provision”. The term reduced timetable (RTT) is used in this guidance.

This guidance should be followed in conjunction with [Kent County Council’s Health \(Medical\) Needs guidance](#) should the RTT arrangement is being made for those deemed not fit to attend school due to a medical reason.

For children with Special Educational Needs, the national and local SEN legislations, regulation and guidance should also be followed. Local Authority online support website KELSI provides the updated information on SEN statutory requirements and local procedures:

<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/special-education-needs/special-educational-needs/sen-forms>

While working to achieve continuous improvement in educational attainment, schools should also take account of and act upon the DfE school safeguarding guidance - [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (DfE, 2016) in order to safeguard the well-being of all children and young people and to reduce the likely risk to the school of charges being made in respect of a failure to educate.

For the purposes of this guidance, a reduced timetable means an agreement made with the pupil, parent or carer, and in some circumstances the Local Authority that the number of hours spent in education is reduced for a time-limited period of generally no more than six-eight weeks.

This guidance is not intended to be applied to those pupils where a flexible learning programme has been put in place.

## Legal Position

All schools have a statutory duty to provide full time education for all pupils according to their age, aptitude and ability, taking into account any special needs. 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 and a reduced package is considered as part of a reintegration programme. It is illegal for schools to discriminate against children on the basis of their SEN and/or disability, including those with social, emotional and mental health needs.

A reduced educational provision must not be treated as a long-term solution.

## **Safeguarding**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016) identifies schools as part of the wider safeguarding system for children and recognises that all school staff are in a position to identify concerns early, to provide help for children and to prevent concerns from escalating.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Clearly, in relation to safeguarding, where a child is not in school, their vulnerability is increased. When deciding whether a reduced educational provision is appropriate, consideration must always be given to the welfare and safety of the child/young person. This must be part of the risk assessment process.

Particular consideration should be given to the increased risk to the pupil to 'child sexual exploitation' (CSE), substance misuse, self-harming, radicalisation and other potential abuse or criminal activity.

### **When might a reduced educational provision be considered?**

A reduced timetable should only occur in exceptional circumstances, where every other avenue to ensure a pupil receives their full-time education has been exhausted. The exceptional circumstances are likely to be:

1. As part of a planned re-integration into school following an extended period out of school due to exclusion, non-attendance, school refusal or to facilitate a managed transfer between schools.
2. As a temporary fixed-term, closely monitored intervention to address and manage the impact of significantly challenging behaviour or emotional or social needs, whilst alternative arrangements are being made to meet the individual needs or to coordinate with therapeutic intervention or other services.
3. In limited circumstances reduced timetable may also be used as a method of managing pupils at risk of exclusion. Kent County Council regards reduced educational provision as the last resort and least desirable method of managing pupils at risk of exclusion. This 'intervention' is viewed as highly intrusive and may only be chosen – if at all – after other strategies have been implemented and exhausted and the Best Practice Guidance is adhered to.
4. Children with SEN or HNF must not be placed with a reduced timetable unless such an arrangement is agreed to by Kent County Council's SEN Service.
5. Without an agreement from the Specialist Children's Service, Children who are looked-after must not be placed with a reduced timetable.

6. The agreement has a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. A reduced timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution to a problem.

### **Recommended good practice**

Schools wishing to establish a reduced timetable need to consider their position within the context of the legal requirements and the considerations outlined above. The LA expectation will be that all occurrences of reduced educational provisions are signed off by the school's head teacher having completed the check list - see Appendix 1. For pupils supported with the High Needs Funding (HNF) or an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)/SEN Statement, a reduced timetable must also be signed off by the Area SEN Manager. The Head Teacher will ensure that the decision is taken as part of a planned strategy which is legally compliant:

- It is taken in the best interests of the child and attracts the understanding, approval and written agreement of parents/carers or in the case of a Looked After Child, Virtual School Kent (VSK) or the allocated Social Worker;
- It has the principal purpose of the successful reinstatement of the pupil's full-time school attendance, re-integration and inclusion;
- It is undertaken within the context of person centred planning; or a separate document. Plans should include liaison with the child and take into account the facilities to support the re-integration process, and outreach support where available.
- It complies with the health and safety needs of the pupil, i.e. the school is satisfied that suitable arrangements are in place to meet the pupil's care needs when not at school;
- It complies with the statutory responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils;
- The school provides appropriate work for the pupil when not in school which is then marked and relevant feedback provided;
- It is time limited, with a clear target of resuming full-time attendance within a period no longer than eight weeks, preferably over a period in which the time in school increases steadily and incrementally in order to prevent further disaffection;
- The school ensures reviews are held at the appropriate time for all pupils with a HNF, Statement of SEN or EHCPs;
- For Looked-after Children, a reduced timetable should be discussed and agreed through a Personal Education Plan meeting or Pastoral Support Plan meeting. This should involve the school's Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, VSK and the allocated Social Worker;
- All efforts should be made to ensure children receive full-time education as their entitlement.

There is a [Digital Front Door](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/pru-inclusion-and-attendance-service-pias/access-to-the-service) for schools to notify the status of a child who has attended part-time to the Local Authority's PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service (PIAS). This is the link to the Digital Front Door: <http://www.kelsi.org.uk/pru-inclusion-and-attendance-service-pias/access-to-the-service>

## **Local Authority monitoring and action**

Local Authorities are required to maintain a central record of all pupils not accessing a full time education in the usual way and schools have a responsibility to record and submit that information via the [Digital Front Door](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/pru-inclusion-and-attendance-service-pias/access-to-the-service) so that it can be monitored centrally.

Part of the monitoring is also to record those schools that do not have reduced timetable information as at census time for the current census term. For example, on 19 January (census day) your school may declare nil return for the Spring Term collection period January 2017 - March 2017.

In order to collect this information Kent County Council's Management Information Unit will send an email out from [school.census@kent.gov.uk](mailto:school.census@kent.gov.uk) on census week asking that if you have a nil return of pupils on RTT for the current school term. If you do not have a nil return for the current term, then you should record the information via the [Digital Front Door](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/pru-inclusion-and-attendance-service-pias/access-to-the-service) online form as soon as you have the information.

Area Inclusion and Attendance Advisers scrutinise the RTT arrangements. Where appropriate, they will provide advice and challenge to ensure that RTT is used in compliant with the statutory requirements.

## **Register Coding**

If in the circumstances the last resort means that there is an agreement with the parent for a reduced timetable then the 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. For further information on coding a pupil absence see Appendix 2.

## **Assessing the Risk**

Completing a risk assessment which addresses any actual or potential safeguarding, welfare, offending or harmful behaviour concerns that may result from a change in the pattern of school attendance is essential. An exemplar risk assessment is included as Appendix 3. This is not prescriptive and schools will want to develop their own risk assessment to meet the needs and risk of their school community.

Risk assessments should follow the five steps identified by the Health and Safety Executive:

Step 1: Identify possible hazards

Step 2: Decide who may be harmed and how

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide on precaution

Step 4: Record your findings and implement them

Step 5: Regularly review your assessment and update if necessary

The risk assessment should include the safety and wellbeing of the pupil as well as the risk of the pupil engaging in criminal activity or substance misuse whilst not in receipt of education during the school day.

Consideration must be given to the safety and wellbeing of the child as well as the entitlement to full-time education – the welfare of the child is paramount.

These factors must be taken into account when undertaking a risk assessment:

- The child is 'looked after' by the local authority (Social Care must be consulted)
- The child is subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan – or concerns (Social Care must be consulted)
- The risk of the child / young person to CSE as this will increase their vulnerability.
- The risk of the pupil engaging in criminal activity (Youth Offending Team should be consulted in the case of known offenders)
- The risk of substance misuse (Substance Misuse Service should be consulted in the case of known substance misusers) while not in receipt of education during the school day.
- The risk of radicalisation is something schools should always consider – vulnerability to this is increased as the child / young person may become more accessible, but also isolated and disengaged and therefore susceptible to being groomed.

The school also needs to

- Ensure that where pupils have a Statement for special educational needs or an EHCP, the Local Authority SEN Service is involved to ensure that the RTT arrangement is in line with the Statement, EHCP or HNF requirements or they are reviewed and amended where appropriate. A meeting with the Area SEN Officer should be convened to make the proposal known. The Local Authority must agree to the intervention and a reduced timetable must not interfere with additional support given to a student due to his/her educational needs.
- Take action to ensure that the impact of a reduced educational provision on travelling and transport arrangements does not discriminate against the pupil or impede their access to education.
- Ensure that arrangements for a reduced timetable do not discriminate against a pupil's access to free school meals.

The school must be totally satisfied that suitable arrangements are in place to ensure the safeguarding and care of the pupil during the period when they would otherwise have been expected to be in school and secure a written agreement from the parents or carers about who is responsible for the welfare of the student for the sessions in question.

### **Monitoring and reviewing a reduced educational provision**

The school is required to:

- Notify the LA's PIAS, via the [Digital Front Door](#) of a reduced educational provision immediately. A completed and signed off checklist (Appendix 1) needs to be attached to the notification.
- Record the pupil's attendance, using the appropriate registration code; in order that both the school and Kent County Council can monitor when the pupil began and ended their reduced educational provision (see Appendix 2)
- Establish robust arrangements for monitoring and regular review of the plan by a named member of senior staff.
- Ensure effective communication with parents or carers and key professionals with regard to progress towards the pupil's full re-integration to school.
- The Area Team of PIAS Service will monitor the reduced timetable as part of Inclusion and Attendance Strategy.

### **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/carer and school, the number of hours spent in education are reduced for a time limited period probably of no more than eight weeks.
- The head teacher must agree a reduced timetable.
- The child's parents/carers must agree a reduced timetable.
- The LA SEN Service must agree a reduced timetable for children with SEN.
- The Specialist Children Service must agree a reduced timetable for looked-after children.
- The arrangement for pupils with medical needs must follow Kent Health Needs guidance
- A risk assessment must be completed.
- A clear action plan for improving education must be in place.
- Kent PIAS must be notified via the [Digital Front Door](#) of any pupil on a reduced educational provision.

## Appendix 1

# Checklist for Reducing Educational Provision

It is expected practice for the head teacher to oversee the completion of this 'Checklist' to show evidence that the necessary decisions have taken place to ensure the child is safe.

<b>Name of child</b>			
<b>Date of Birth</b>		<b>Year Group</b>	
<b>School</b>			

<b>Decision/Action</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Is taken in the best interests of the child and attracts the understanding, approval and written agreement of parents/carers and in the case of a Looked After Child or child subject to a CIN or CP Plan, the allocated Social Worker or VSK.	
Risk assessment completed and any risks are managed.	
Complies with the health and safety needs of the pupil, i.e. the school is satisfied that suitable arrangements are in place to meet the pupil's care needs when not at school.	
Complies with Safeguarding best practice- i.e. statutory responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils.	
The reduced educational provision is time limited with reviews set.	
If child has an EHCP, Statement or HNF the LA Area SEN team is informed and the latter agree to the RTT arrangement.	
If the child has health and or medical needs, Kent Health Needs Service is consulted and individual healthcare plan (IHP) is considered.	

<b>Signature of Head teacher</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Printed</b>	

**This form needs to be attached to the  
[Digital Front Door's notification of a Reduced Timetable](#)**



## **Appendix 2**

### **Recording attendance**

It is important that schools act to ensure that the DfE regulations in respect of attendance are correctly observed for pupils on a reduced educational provision

The registration codes applied will depend on the precise arrangements for providing education.

### **Registration codes**

#### **C Code**

To be used when a pupil has a reduced educational provision that includes sessions which have been mutually agreed not to involve attendance at any other institution or supervised activity.

The sessions agreed not to involve attendance should be recorded as authorised absence.

The school should be satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place for the care and welfare of the pupil during the time when they would otherwise be at school. This is particularly important for pupils in the Primary phase.

#### **B Code**

To be used if the pupil is receiving off-site provision, approved by the school, including any work experience forming part of the aforementioned alternative provision.

A pupil marked 'B' should be present at another institution or appropriately supervised activity agreed by the school.

The school should establish robust arrangements with other providers to promote the effective and timely sharing of individual pupil attendance information, to ensure they fulfil their legal and safeguarding responsibilities and apply the correct registration codes.

#### **W Code**

To be used if a pupil, in the final two years of compulsory education, is attending an approved work experience placement and is otherwise attending sessions at school.

Attendance monitoring arrangements should reflect those applied for off-site provisions as above.

**Appendix 3 – Exemplar RTT Risk Assessment - please adapt as appropriate**

Individual Pupil Risk Assessment

Pupil Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed on: \_\_\_\_\_

Agreed with Parent(s)/Carer(s) on: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent(s)/Carer(s) agreement:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**School agreement:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed review date:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>IDENTIFICATION OF RISK</b>	
Describe the risk	
Is the risk potential or actual?	
Who is affected by the risk	
<b>ASSESSMENT OF RISK</b>	
In which situation does the risk usually occur?	
How likely is it that the risk will arise?	
If the risk arises who is likely to be injured/hurt?	
<b>RISK REDUCTION</b>	
Proactive interventions to reduce / prevent risk	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adult hover support in classroom;</li> <li>▪ Positive role modelling;</li> <li>▪ Praise/acknowledgement for positive behaviour;</li> <li>▪ Regular updates with parents;</li> <li>▪ Behaviour management plan;</li> <li>▪ Safe place &amp; trusted personnel etc.</li> </ul>
Early interventions to manage risk	<p>Identify exactly what an adult will immediately do if the risk is observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> <li>▪</li> </ul> <p>Identify exactly what an adult will do if the risk is reported to them by a child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> </ul>
Interventions to respond to adverse outcomes	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Any incidents to be logged, dated and signed according to Incident/Safeguarding protocols;</li> <li>▪ designated School adult;</li> <li>▪ Contact parents</li> <li>▪ Contact other pupils parents (if required); Etc.</li> </ul>

<b>COMMUNICATION OF RISK ASSESSMENT PLAN</b>		
<b>Plan and strategies shared with:</b>	<b>Communication method:</b>	<b>Date actioned:</b>

<b>STAFF TRAINING ISSUES</b>		
<b>Identified training needs</b>	<b>Training provided to meet needs</b>	<b>Date training completed</b>

<b>REVIEW OF RISK ASSESSMENT PLAN</b>		
<b>Measures set out</b>	<b>Effectiveness in supporting the child</b>	<b>Impact on risk</b>
Agreed proactive interventions to prevent risk		
Early interventions to manage risk		
Interventions to respond to adverse outcomes		

Does the Risk Assessment need to continue: Yes/No

Are there any additions/alterations to the Plan: Yes/No

If 'YES' list these here:

Risk Assessment reviewed on:

**Parent(s)/Carer(s) agreement:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**School agreement:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Is a further Review required: YES/NO**

**Agreed Date:**

## Research

The disruption to learning caused by poor pupil behaviour is an on-going challenge for schools. Three recent reports by the Children's Commissioner on the illegal exclusions of disruptive pupils has drawn attention to the way in which schools deal with difficult behaviour, and highlighted the need for schools to ensure they follow correct procedures and act early to intervene when problems arise.

The three reports are as follows:

**They never give up On You**, published 19 March 2012: Overview of legal and educational Issues.

[http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content\\_561](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_561)

**They Go the Extra Mile**, published 20 March 2013: a study of inequalities exclusions, with particular regard to disability, ethnicity, gender and poverty,

[http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content\\_654](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_654)

**Always Someone Else's Problem**, published 24 April 2013: illegal exclusions

[http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content\\_662](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_662)

The School Exclusions Inquiry report follows eight months of work gathering evidence from the Government, local authorities, Ofsted, Mencap and other organisations, and from visiting schools across England.

## DfE/Ofsted Statutory and Non-statutory Guidance

*Pupils Missing out on Education - issues and guidance on the use of reduced timetables within schools.* (Ofsted, 2013)

<http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/18825/1/Pupils%20missing%20out%20on%20education.pdf>

*SEN Code of Practice (DfE, 2014)*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

*Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016)*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550511/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550511/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)

*Statutory Guidance - School exclusion (DfE, 2012)*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

*Non-statutory Guidance: Attendance Advice for Schools (DfE, 2016)*

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

*Statutory Guidance - Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school (DfE, 2013)*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>