



Highfields Inclusion Partnership

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Policy Title:	Reduced Timetables Policy		
Last Reviewed & Updated:	Oct 2019	Due for Review:	June 2020

Highfields Reduced Timetables Policy

1. Introduction

Statutory Context

What is the legal basis for reduced timetables?

All education should be suited to a child's age, ability and aptitude, taking into account any special educational need and any medical need (including mental health needs). The starting point for every student is that they should receive full-time education consistent with their key stage and the norms of the type of provision they are on roll with.

It is illegal for schools to discriminate against students on the basis of their SEN, disability or ongoing medical needs.

A timetable is considered reduced when it consists of something less than that which is provided to the majority of the student's peers in that setting.

Department for Education Advice on Reduced Timetables states the following:

'All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's 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 must not be treated as 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. 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.' - 'Advice on School Attendance' November 2013 page 14

It is important to highlight that there is no statutory basis upon which to establish a reduced timetable. However, national guidance does permit in **exceptional circumstances** for schools to implement – on the condition of full agreement from parent/carer – a reduced timetable for a time-limited period in order to support a student who cannot attend school full-time to reintegrate into full-time provision.

It is important also to note that it is illegal to place students on reduced timetables based on behaviour alone – as this is in practice an illegal exclusion.

SEMH Context

What is the therapeutic basis for reduced timetables?

Tracking of additional needs at Highfields indicates the following:

- High incidence of anxiety - varying between 30 – 50%
- High incidence of agitated behaviours that present a high risk to the wider community – varying between 30 – 50%

- High incidence of attachment / relationship management issues – approx. 30% of the cohort, in turn resulting in a history of conflict in school in terms of relationships with adults and peers
- High incidence of non-attendance – attendance for long periods of 65% or less
- High incidence of specific learning difficulties – averaging at approx. 65% of the cohort, commonly unidentified until admission to Highfields, in turn resulting in low self-esteem / anxiety around the school situation

In managing these social, emotional and mental health needs of the student population, reduced timetables may provide a constructive response on a case-by-case basis, under close supervision from professionals – and with consent and commitment of both student and parent/carer.

This is based on a combination of the following therapeutic approaches:

- **Routine Building** – Where a person feels overwhelmed by social situations and withdraws from them completely, they may then experience inactive daytimes (with the ‘spare time’ filled potentially by rumination, substance misuse etc) and subsequent sleep reversal. This is a factor, in the school situation, specifically with non-attenders. Where this occurs, a therapeutic approach may be to proactively rebuild a routine with incremental steps so that the person does not become overwhelmed and resort back to withdrawal.¹
- **Chunking** – Where a ‘big situation’ causes a person to feel overwhelmed, such as the idea of ‘the school day’, a therapeutic approach is to break it into smaller steps. The person may need to build up over time the completion of these steps to re-find a sense of perspective about the scale of challenge and confidence in dealing with the ‘big situation’ ahead.^{2 3}
- **Graded Exposure** – Where a situation causes high anxiety, a natural position of the person experiencing it is to avoid the situation. This can happen with school. In exposure therapy, the anxiety-causing trigger / situation is identified and the person is slowly re-introduced to the trigger / situation under controlled conditions, with guidance given on coping strategies.⁴

2. Exceptional Circumstances

When might a reduced timetable be used?

It is likely that a student being considered for a reduced timetable will fall within one of these three categories:

1) Part of an SEMH Support Package - School, parent/carer and other professionals agree that a short-term reduced timetable would support a student who has become anxious and/or agitated about school to regain success.

¹ The Power of Routines in Mental Health - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/the-gen-y-psy/201810/the-power-routines-in-your-mental-health>

² How do you eat an elephant? The process of chunking <https://nlp4kids.org/how-do-you-eat-an-elephant/>

³ Chunking the Bigger Picture <https://www.chantryhealth.com/nlp-chunking/>

⁴ Exposure Therapy for Anxiety Disorders - <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/anxiety/exposure-therapy-anxiety-disorders>

2) Part of a Reintegration Support Package - As part of a planned reintegration into school following an extended period out of school e.g. following exclusion, nonattendance, school refusal etc.

3) Part of a Medical Support Package - A student 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.

In making a decision to implement a reduced timetable, lead professionals at the school must have substantial evidence of one or more of the following:

- I. The young person, family or an external agency (specifically HYMs) raises concerns about their mental health in relation to school attendance – commenting that school is overwhelming as a whole or that particular aspects of the school day are overwhelming.
- II. Medical professionals report the young person has a specific mental health issue that are acting as a substantial barrier to school and/or are exacerbated by the school situation.
- III. Medical professionals report the young person has a medical condition that is acting as a substantial barrier to school and/or are exacerbated by the school situation.
- IV. The young person is a longstanding non-attender – they are attending sporadically (below 65%) or not at all, there is no routine or structure to their attendance.
- V. The young person is new to the provision – the young person, family or an external agency express concern over their resilience to change, introduction and integration - and there is prior attendance issues or other trends that support this.
- VI. The young person is involved in an ongoing, not easily resolvable conflict with a peer / peers within the Centre which presents a serious risk in terms of their own well-being (physical, emotional) and that of others.
- VII. The young person has made specific threats to a member of the community and/or is observed to be perpetually targeting them with aggression / abuse – and is not responding to support put in place which would enable their full-time attendance and others to have a safe, productive school day.
- VIII. The young person is perpetually behaving in an anxious and agitated way that is significantly detrimental to the safe and orderly running of the Centre – and is not responding to support put in place which would enable their full-time attendance and others to have a safe, productive school day.

3. Safeguarding considerations

Highfields has a safeguarding responsibility for all students on roll and therefore must be aware that even with parent/carer agreement to any reduced timetable arrangement they make, they are responsible for the risk assessment, and subsequent safeguarding and welfare, of all students on roll who are off-site during school hours. Where a risk assessment suggests a child will be exposed to significant, immitigable ‘red’ risk if not in school (as per Appendix 1), then a reduced timetable should not be considered an option.

4. Good Practice

Only lead pastoral professionals within Highfields can initiate a reduced timetable. These are listed in Appendix 3.

When placing a student on a reduced timetable, lead professionals must adhere to the following protocol:

Consultation Stage

- 1) An initial consultation must be undertaken with the Deputy Headteacher / DDSL to agree in principle this is a constructive way forward. If young person is 'PARE', their dual-registered school must be consulted.
- 2) The family – parent / carer – are consulted and formally agree to a reduced timetable. The lead professional must gain signed parent /carer consent (Appendix 2), evidenced on the student 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.
- 3) Where the student is within a multi-agency review process (TAC, PEP), the lead professional must ensure that a multi-agency meeting is held before reduced timetables are implemented. Where the student is under single services - such as YOS, Mosaic, HYMs - key workers from these services must be consulted.
- 4) The lead professional must ensure that where the student is a looked after child, a reduced timetable is only considered when all other interventions have been tried. It must never be implemented without the written agreement of the relevant Virtual School.
- 5) If the child is on a Child Protection Plan, the child's social worker must have given written agreement
- 6) The lead professional must ensure that the impact of a reduced timetable on travelling and transport arrangements or the student's access to Free School Meals does not discriminate against the student or impede their access to education.

Risk Assessment Stage

Via the Part-Time Provision Risk Assessment Form

The Lead Professional must undertake a thorough risk assessment (Appendix 1) before implementation and give consideration to safeguarding measures for the duration. There must be written agreement about who is responsible for keeping the child safe for the time they would normally be in school. Risk assessments should follow the 5 steps identified by HSE:

- Identify possible hazards
- Decide who may be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precaution
- Record your findings and implement them

- Regularly review your assessment and update if necessary

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

It must also consider how parents/carers will be supported during the time when their child is not in school considering the pressures this may place on home life.

Planning & Implementation Stage

Via the Part-Time Provision Form

- 7) A written assessment of the young person's needs should be produced – this should be a description of their presentation in terms of why a reduced timetable is being considered.
- 8) The written assessment will also include how all parties will know the reduced timetable is being successful.
- 9) A formal summary of provision / interventions / support already put in place before this measure was undertaken should be written.
- 10) A detailed action plan which stipulates clearly the timetable arrangements should be put together. Highfields holds to a principle of 'every student in regular education' – a standard reduced timetable will continue to provide education everyday (Outreach students are an exception)
- 11) A timely and agreed date for review of the timetable (under 30 calendar days), with a schedule mapping out progression from part-time to full time provision.

5. Monitoring and Reviewing

The school must:

- 1) Report the reduced timetable to Stockport Local Authority as soon as it becomes operational by sending a copy of the Part Time Provision Form to the Local Authority.
- 2) Regularly monitor the reduced timetable in 3 to 4 weekly blocks. In addition, report any occurring concerns via the usual channels – the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 3) Send a copy of subsequent reviews and increases of time to Stockport Local Authority.
- 4) Record the student's attendance accurately on the attendance register as follows:
 - **Code B: Off-site educational activity** - This code should be used when students 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 students educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard students. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a student is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of

any absences by individual students. The school should record the student's absence using the relevant code.

- **Code D: Dual Registered – attending another educational establishment -** This code is used to indicate that the student was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they were registered. The main examples of dual registration are students who are attending a student referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the student is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the student's attendance and absence for those sessions that the student is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained absence is followed up in a timely manner.
- **Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school -** In agreeing to a part-time timetable a school has agreed to a student being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

Governing Body Oversight

- The Headteacher should report termly to the Governing Board a summary of statistics on reduced timetables.
- A member of the Governing Board will be given the brief of 'Reduced Timetables' to provide additional scrutiny. They will be permitted access to case studies and be permitted to speak with lead professionals on a regular basis about reduced timetable provision.
- The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Highfields Reduced Timetables Risk Assessment

Student		Date of Assessment		Lead Professional	
	Known Risk (in past 12 months)	Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Actions to Mitigate Risk
1	Is reliant on a school dinner for main meal of day.				<u>Examples:</u> - Provision of substantial food on attendance outside of lunch hour. - Daily welfare phonecall with parent – not just message, but conversation - Send additional work home - Morning sessions to ensure sleep pattern maintains - Afternoon sessions to break-up day - Automatic home visit on 3 rd Day of Absence - Increased therapeutic input – Pastoral Mentor, Mosaic, FAV - Student attends Highfields but outside of normal hours - Put in place additional tuition using supplementary fund - Taxi to increase attendance using supplementary fund - Put in place vocational placement using supplementary fund
2	Known to experience 'sleep reversal' when lacking daily routine.				
3	Known to have engaged in self-harm.				
4	Known involvement in substance misuse that poses risk to health and well-being but not fatal (cannabis).				
5	Known involvement in substance misuse that has documented fatal risk ('legal highs', alcohol, Class A drugs).				
6	Known involvement in anti-social behaviour within neighbourhood ('pranking', shoplifting).				
7	Reported domestic violence in the household (Operation Encompass)				
8	Known involvement in unhealthy relationship with another peer that poses risk to health and well-being but not fatal.				
9	Known to be involved in 'missing from home' incidents.				
10	Known involvement in potentially injurious / fatal anti-social behaviour (CSE, OCG involvement, vehicle crime, knife crime).				
Other:					

Have other involved parties been consulted? Y / N

Who was consulted? _____



Reduced Timetable Agreement

Student: Parent/Carer:	Staff Present: Date:
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The student agrees to:

- Attend Highfields on [DAYS, TIMES].
- Approach the sessions positively, respecting the environment you are working in and the staff you are working with.

The family agrees to:

- Stay in daily communication with [STAFF MEMBER]
- Encourage and support your son/daughter to engage.

In addition to our existing offer to all students, the school agrees to:

- Daily welfare conversation with parent
- Send additional work home
- Provide an automatic home visit on 3rd Day of Absence
- Provide additional pastoral mentoring. Details: _____
- Put in place additional tuition using supplementary fund
- Taxi to increase attendance using supplementary fund
- Put in place vocational placement using supplementary fund

This agreement was reached on _____ and will be reviewed on _____.

Signed: _____ Student

Signed: _____ Family

Signed: _____ School

Lead Professionals for Reduced Timetables

Last Reviewed: Oct 2019

<u>Lead Professionals - Coordinators</u>	<u>Lead Professionals - Approvers</u>
Mrs Lewis – KS3 Day-to-Day Coordinator / Assistant to Director of KS3	Mr Howard – Deputy Headteacher / DDSL – Reduced Timetables Overall Lead
Mrs Haynes – Director of KS4	Mrs Cahill – Executive Headteacher / DSL
Ms Fletcher – Assistant to Director of KS4	Mr Grant – Headteacher
Mr Carter – Pastoral Manager	
Mrs Hibbert – Pastoral Manager	
Mrs France – LAC Lead	