



Moate Community School Reduced Timetable Policy

This policy is rooted in the Mission Statement and aims of the school, fostering partnership between parents, teachers and the community in the interest of children's learning. All parents and students will be treated with respect and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, colour and ethnic group or nationality.

Formation of Policy:

Formatted in conjunction with Circular 0047/2021 Guidelines for the Use of Reduced School Days in Schools and the Guidelines formulated but Dept. of Education and Tusla. All of these documents can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/f49bd-0047-2021/> .

The guidelines come into effect on January 1, 2022.

Reduced school days are defined as:

- ✓ a reduced day in school where, by arrangement with the school authorities, a student arrives to school after the usual starting time or leaves before the end of the school day, and/or
- ✓ a reduced week where, by arrangement with the school authorities, a student may not attend the full five days each week.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- ✓ Outline clearly the use of reduced school days in accordance with Circular 0047/2021
- ✓ Ensure that where such usage occurs the school follow best practice with the interests of the student to the fore.

Implementation of Policy:

From January 1, 2022, schools must:

1. Comply with the guidelines with respect to the process preceding the implementation of a reduced school day.
2. Notify Tusla Education Support Service of the use of a reduced school day arrangement for any student for whom a reduced school day is in place.
3. Circulate the policy to the school's BOM
4. Bring the policy to the attention of the relevant teacher- Yearhead/SEN co ordinator
5. The Year head or SEN coordinator will return the notification form to Tusla and maintain a copy for their own files and give one to the Principal

From January 1, 2022, Tusla must be notified of any new or existing reduced school day arrangements; this includes arrangements which, having commenced prior to January 1, 2022 are in operation on or from that date.

General information:

Where a reduced school day is used:

- ✓ It will be applied proportionately
- ✓ It will last only as long as is necessary to facilitate a return to school on a full-time basis.
- ✓ Signed parental/guardian consent (or consent of the student if over 18) will be received prior to implementation of a reduced school day.

Process to introduce a Reduced School day:

- a) Engagement with parents in the spirit of the Guidelines & Circular
- b) The written consent of the parents/guardians of the student (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student), and must also document if parental (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, student) consent is subsequently withdrawn will be sought.
- c) Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) will be notified of the decision to place a student on a reduced school day no later than the first day of the commencement of each episode of a reduced school day.
- d) The NCSE (Local SENO) will be notified of the decision to place the student on a reduced school day where the student has special educational needs (SEN).
- e) A plan of action for the reduced school day intervention will be formulated but Year head of SEN coordinator which will specify the following:
 - Start
 - Review – extension may be considered in exceptional circumstances but reduced timetable cannot run to the next academic year.
 - End dates
 - Any educational supports or interventions
 - The actions required to support the student’s return to school and reintegration to a full-time school day.
 - A graduated regime of school attendance
 - Name of a contact person in the school eg Yearhead, SEN coordinator
- f) A new notification form to TESS will be submitted when the period during which the student has been on a reduced school day is extended no later than the first day of renewal of the plan.
- g) The School will keep a record of all instances of students being placed on a reduced school day and access to this list should be made available to TESS educational welfare officers and the Department of Education Inspectorate if requested.
- h) The School will inform the parents/guardians (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student), of their right to withdraw consent at any time.
- i) The school will inform the parents/guardians (or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student) that TESS educational welfare officer can provide assistance and advice if required.

Appeals Mechanism:

Where parental/guardian (or in the case of a student over 18, student) consent is not given or subsequently withdrawn and the school proceeds or continues with a reduced school day, this is effectively a suspension and, in accordance with Tusla’s *Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (2008)*, the relevant procedures in relation to a suspension apply.

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