



Rarely Cover Policy

Date agreed by Governors: July 2016

Date of Review: June 2016

Member of Staff Responsible for the Policy: RG

Date of next review: June 2018

Dissemination of the Policy: All staff and Governors

Purpose and aim of the policy and procedures

Meet the statutory requirements of the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Documents (STPCD) 2009 and subsequent revisions and amendments.

Support the drive to achieve better work-life balance, and to drive down workload.

Staff carrying out a cover role are appropriately qualified and trained, including in behaviour management.

Definitions

Absence:

absence occurs when the person who has been timetabled to take a particular class or group is absent. The type of absence could be for a variety of reasons, including internal and external activities as well as sickness.

Foreseeable circumstances – foreseeable circumstances for the school include events:

that are foreseeable on the basis of historic experience; events that are foreseeable in the normal local experience; and events that may be expected as part of the evolving pattern of provision.

Short-term cover :

no longer than the first 3 days of any absence in secondary schools and no longer than the first day of any absence in primary schools.

Appropriately Qualified Support Staff:

HLTA; Cover Supervisors, TA Level 3 and 4; this should not include the use of support staff during times when allocated to support specific pupils.

Cover :

the need for cover arises when a teacher is absent from lessons they are timetabled to teach. This definition of cover includes the teaching of additional children from split classes due to teacher absence.

Objectives

Develop procedures for covering long-term, medium-term and short-term absences, in which teachers on the staff, including SLT, are not called upon to cover for absent colleagues, other than in the case of unforeseeable circumstances.

Develop procedures for short-term cover.

Develop procedures to cover for medium and long-term absence, which recognise the imperative to have pupils taught by qualified teachers with appropriate specialist knowledge and experience of the relevant subject(s), wherever possible.

Schools must now analyse their historical patterns of absence to ascertain both the main causes of absence, which have triggered the need to cover and the impact of such absence on pupil learning.

To ensure the system for managing cover is robust, every school should publish a calendar for each school year, in accordance with provisions of para 179 of the section 3 Guidance to the STPCD (2009), following consultation with staff and their union representatives, and at branch level if no school representative. This will ensure there is no detriment to teachers' workload.

Where a teacher's class teaching timetable falls short of the agreed allocation the Head will have a professional discussion with that teacher and their TU representative (where appropriate) to agree how the time will be allocated.

Arrangements for Cover

The role of the member of staff with responsibility for cover.

- a) The headteacher receives notice (in writing), of arrangements where cover has been agreed.
- b) In the case of sickness/sudden absence, the Cover Administrator (the headteacher) must be informed of a staff absence by 7.30am (the system for staff notifying absence has been published separately and forms an appendix to this document).
- c) Where possible the Cover Administrator will take into account year groups, subject areas and location, and match staff appropriately. This will be more difficult with sudden absences.
- d) Staff will be notified by notice in the staff room by 8am, and by a written slip if cover is added later. This will include notice of any room changes and this should ensure prompt arrival at cover lessons.
- e) Heads of Faculty (HOF) and Heads of House should also check routinely for absent members of faculty or form tutors. The Cover Administrator will confirm work is required.
- f) The management, training and monitoring and evaluation for this role will be provided by the Headteacher working with the nominated line manager for the cover supervisors.

Policy for covering for teacher absence

- a) Teachers on the staff, including SLT, will not be called upon to cover for absent colleagues, other than in the case of unforeseeable circumstances.
- b) Medium and long-term absences will be covered through the use of the school's cover supervisors or, where appropriate, interim appointments on fixed-term contracts.
- c) Where short-term absences are to be covered using appropriately qualified support staff this will be carried out by the staff appointed to posts at the appropriate level.
- d) Appropriate work will be set by an appropriate person for any class whose teacher is unable to take it as normal, whatever the reason. In the case of absences known in advance, this will normally be the teacher of the class. In the case of absences not known in advance, this will normally be the relevant Head of Faculty or subject leader in secondary.

Cover for illness and emergency situations

- a) Staff should contact the school as agreed, i.e.
 - I. Telephone the Cover Administrator before 7.30am (on the published phone number) to inform them of the need for cover arrangements, and giving a reason for absence
 - II. Heads of Faculty and subject leaders should also be contacted if possible, so that they can pick up their responsibilities for setting work more easily
 - III. If staff are sent home by a senior member of staff during the day, they should follow the procedure for leaving the school building and ensure that appropriated staff in their department are aware of their departure.

- b) In these circumstances, cover work is the responsibility of the head of faculty/subject leader.
- c) All HOFs should ensure banks of work (age/ability related) are available and accessible for use (HOF job description). Departmental Line Managers on the Leadership Team will monitor this.
- d) Absence which goes beyond a two week cycle or 3 lesson (depending on subject), will require different monitoring and planning but will remain the responsibility of the department.
- e) On those occasions when external agency staff have to be used, faculties will also be responsible for ensuring they have all that they need to meet cover expectations, e.g. class lists, seating plans and equipment.
- f) Staff will endeavour to give accurate information about the date of return, but agree to err on the side of caution. It is better to arrange cover and cancel, than the other way round.

Other Information

- The Leadership Team will endeavour to pay particular attention with cover supervisors whilst 'on call.'
- The Headteacher will monitor that all communication necessary actually takes place, e.g. trip lists, room changes, etc. to the Attendance Officer and Reception.
- The Leadership Team will agree and communicate arrangements that would be made in the unlikely event of any staff reaching 39 hours of cover before the end of the year.

Complaints

- Complaints related to the implementation of this policy should be addressed to the Headteacher and Governors if required.
- The policy will be reviewed every two years and any amendments notified to the Governors if required.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate to ensure compliance but no less than every two years. This policy review will be undertaken by the Headteacher or nominated representative.

Linked Policies

Personnel