

Easthampstead Park Community School



Cover Policy

Introduction

This policy should be read alongside the School Pay Policy, which details the employment terms and conditions of all employees at the school. The governing body recognises the importance of developing a whole school cover policy, to ensure the effective deployment of staff providing cover.

SECTION A – COVER

A.1 Context

From September 2009 it has been agreed as part of the workforce agreement that teachers should 'rarely cover'. The contractual provision applies to all teachers and the Headteacher of the school, including teachers on the leadership spine whether on permanent, fixed-term or temporary contracts and pro-rata to teachers on part-time contracts. This requirement does not apply to teachers employed specifically for the purposes of providing cover.

A.2 Definition of rarely cover

'Rarely cover' is interpreted as meaning a teacher will only be asked to cover in circumstances that are not foreseeable. '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 are expected as part of the evolving pattern of provision. Teachers PPA time is part of their contractual entitlement and cannot be used for cover. Emergency cover will be shared equitably among all teaching staff having regard to their own commitments.

A.3 Definition of 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 and may be short-term or long-term.

A.4 Definitions of short-term absence

Short term absence will normally be no longer than five working days but the definition for the purposes of determining cover arrangements may vary according to:

- the extent to which continuity of learning can be maintained.
- the length of time a particular group would be working without a teacher.
- the proportion of the total curriculum time affected in a specific subject over the course of the term.

A.5 Gained time and Educational visits

Where teachers are released from timetable as a result of pupils undertaking examinations, or a teacher's class or group are absent on an educational visit, such time is known as 'gained time'.

Teachers may be directed to use gained time to undertake the following activities, directly relevant to teaching and learning:

- developing/revising departmental/subject curriculum materials,
- schemes of work, lesson plans and policies in preparation for the new academic year.
- assisting colleagues in appropriate, planned team teaching activities.
- taking groups of pupils to provide additional learning support.
- supporting selected pupils with coursework.

In circumstances where pupils are undertaking educational visits for an extended period of time, timetables may be altered for that week to ensure the learning of other pupils still in school is not detrimentally impacted upon.

A. 6 Staff under capacity

Staff under timetable capacity will receive 'Intervention' lessons on their timetable. They will be deployed during this time, as directed by Senior Leaders and Heads of Departments, to complete activities to support teaching and learning such as those detailed in A.5.

In rare circumstances where a member of teaching staff is significantly under timetable allocation, they may be invited to sign a temporary contract amendment, specifying that they agree to be used for cover for an agreed number of lessons per timetable cycle, for an agreed period of time.

SECTION B – COVERING ABSENCE

All types of absence will be carefully managed to minimise the impact on teaching and learning for pupils.

A teacher's absence from their timetabled teaching commitments may be planned (e.g. CPD) or unexpected though the principles apply equally to both types of cover, the management of them may differ.

Cover will be undertaken only by staff:

- who have been assessed as competent to undertake the role.
- for whom all relevant employment safeguarding checks have been undertaken.
- who have been inducted into the school's policies and procedures, particularly child protection, behaviour management and health and safety.

Cover will be provided in the following ways:

- **Cover Supervisors** - The schools will employ Cover Supervisors who will provide short term cover for absent teachers. Should the school employ cover supervisors who are qualified teachers, these cover supervisors will be used first and foremost to cover solely for teachers with longer absences.
- **Supply teachers/cover teachers** - The school will engage the services of a Supply/cover teachers to cover for teachers whose absence exceeds 5 working days. A supply/cover teacher may be engaged to cover for certain subjects, lessons or teachers sooner than 5 working days as deemed appropriate by the school management. The school will seek always to engage the service of a qualified teacher.
- **Other support staff** - Support staff with specialist skills and knowledge (e.g. HLTAs) may provide cover for absent teachers on a short-term basis.

SECTION C - MANAGING COVER

All covered lessons will be managed in such a way that all pupils continue their learning. It is expected that where the absence is planned, teachers will provide details of the work to be undertaken by pupils during cover lessons. In the absence of this, and in the cases of unplanned absence, such information will be provided by the relevant Head of Department.

The school will expect supply/cover teachers, wherever possible, to engage in active teaching during cover lessons.

In the case of short-term cover this will include delivering provided lesson plans and recording and feedback to the teacher/Head of Department as appropriate.

In the case of medium/long term cover, the supply/cover teachers will be expected to undertake 'specified work' i.e. planning, preparation, delivery, assessment, recording and reporting.

Cover Supervisors and other support staff providing cover will be expected to:

- supervise whole classes or groups during lesson time.
- give instructions for the lesson as provided.
- maintain good order and keep pupils on task.
- respond to general questions and provide general feedback to the teacher.
- work under the professional direction of teachers.

Cover Supervisors will not be expected to undertake 'specified work.'

SECTION D – DEPLOYMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF

Where support staff are deployed to provide cover, the Headteacher will:

- have regard to the suitability of the task to the member of staff's current role.
- the impact on their workload and whether sufficient time is available or could be freed up.
- consider any additional training needs.
- ensure that if additional paid working hours are required this is agreed with the member of staff.
- ensure job descriptions are revised to reflect agreed changes and additional responsibilities.
- ensure pay and grading reflects any revised roles and responsibilities.

SECTION E – MONITORING

A whole school timetable will be published at the start of the academic year. The School may need to review/revise its timetable during the year. Any such revisions will be planned well in advance, in consultation with staff and will not be a frequent occurrence.

To fulfil its commitment to ensure the short, medium and long term quality of teaching and learning for all its pupils, the school will record, monitor and evaluate cover as follows:

- the overall amount of cover required (planned and unplanned)
- the number of individual teacher's lessons requiring cover
- the number of lessons covered in each year/subject group
- the number and quality of lessons covered by each qualified teacher and other staff
- all those providing regular and/or medium/long term cover will be observed on a termly basis

Policy monitoring and evaluation

The Deputy Headteacher will monitor the effectiveness of these strategies for providing cover on a termly basis to ensure that the quality of supervision and student progress and behaviour are as required.

Revised:

January 2021

**Responsibility for Implementation and Review: Deputy Headteacher
Personnel Committee**

Date of Next Review:

January 2022