

Oaks Park High School

Title of Policy: Rarely Cover

Person responsible: J Hamill

Date for review: Termly

Background

The objective of progressive movement towards a position where teachers may rarely be asked to cover for absent colleagues is clearly set out in the National Agreement 'Raising Standards and Tackling Workloads', which was signed in January 2003. Following the decision in 2007 to implement this objective from 1 September 2009, an advance notice was provided in both the 2007 and the 2008 editions of the STPCD. The aim of the National Agreement is to raise standards and to reduce teacher workload. It is not good use of a teacher's time to cover lessons.

Definitions

Unforeseeable events

These may be defined as follows:

1. Staff leaving the premises during the school day due to illness, family emergency or any other reason.
2. Staff phoning in sick after 7:30am.
3. Where a member of staff is required to leave their lesson to deal with an emergency involving a student.
4. Where more than **5** staff are absent on any one day due to illness.
5. Major disruption to transport.
6. A major outbreak of flu or other such illness.
7. Extreme weather conditions.

In cases 1 – 4 listed above staff would be asked to cover until alternative arrangements can be made.

Resources

In order to implement 'Rarely Cover' the school has put in place the following:

1. Employ 4 full time cover supervisors to cover for short term absences.
2. Employ the equivalent of between 0.5 and 1 full time member of staff to cover lessons.
3. Actively try to recruit casual cover supervisors and parent volunteers to assist with school visits and investigate other means of covering lessons, e.g. flexible use of support staff.
4. Continue to use subject specialists to cover staff who are absent on a long term basis.

Reducing Cover

Cover arises from the following:

1. Illness
2. Educational visits
3. Medical appointments
4. Personal reasons
5. INSET
6. Meetings
7. Dependant sickness
8. In school activities

To implement the policy it will be essential to reduce the amount of cover necessary. This will be done in the following ways:

1. Illness

The school will continue to look at ways in which the wellbeing of staff can be developed. In addition, levels of absence will be monitored. Absences will be carefully recorded and interviews will take place with Dave Dutch, Deputy Headteacher, once staff reach a trigger point of a total of 6 days absence, in line with the agreed Schools Absence Management Procedure.

2. Educational Visits

All educational visits need to be included in the calendar where possible. Care should be taken to avoid times where staff absence is likely to be high, eg. December/January.

3. Medical Appointments

As per our Leave of Absence Policy, these should be arranged outside of lesson time where possible. If a medical or dental appointment needs to be arranged during the school day, please speak to Dave Dutch.

4. Personal Reasons

As per our Leave of Absence Policy, requests of this nature, if granted, will be unpaid. It may be that departments or staff make their own arrangements to provide cover in these circumstances.

5. Inset

Departments have been allocated inset funding and will wish to ensure good value for money. In attempting to make provision for absence, it seems logical that only **one** member of staff per day attends Inset. If the school receives funding for the training, this may allow further staff to participate.

6. Meetings

It is essential meetings are arranged so that cover is avoided wherever possible.

7. Dependent Sickness / Appointments

Reference to this is made in our Leave of Absence policy.

8. In-School Activities

When planning in-school activities, it is essential that Dave Dutch is consulted and cover is kept to a minimum.

Monitoring

Fortnightly statistics

1. The number of periods of cover required under the following headings:
 1. Illness
 2. Educational visits
 3. Personal
 4. Medical appointments
 5. Meetings
 6. Inset
 7. Dependent sickness/appointment
 8. In school activities
2. How the lessons were covered:
 - a) Cover supervisor
 - b) Agency teacher
 - c) School staff
 - d) Other
3. Cost of cover:

- a) Illness
- b) Educational visits
- c) Personal
- d) Medical appointments
- e) Meetings
- f) Inset
- g) Dependent sickness/appointment
- h) In school activities

Review

This policy will be reviewed at the end of each term.