



### School Policies

|              |                     |             |                 |                  |          |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------|----------|
| Policy title | Rarely Cover Policy |             |                 |                  |          |
| Written on   |                     | Reviewed on | May 2018        | Next review due: | May 2019 |
| SLT link     | C BAILEY            |             | Governor link   | I Ismail         |          |
| Copies in    | Policies folder ✓   | Handbook ✓  | Student planner | Website ✓        |          |

**This policy has been written in conjunction with the College's Equality policy (Equality Act 2010).**

#### **Preamble**

*FAD to add.*

#### **Background**

The National Agreement on 'Raising Standards and Tackling Workload' signed in January, 2003 provided the basis for creating time for teachers and head teachers to focus more of their time on teaching and leading teaching and learning. The agreement included an objective that teachers should only rarely cover and, in 2007, schools were advised that they should expect to achieve the position in which teachers only rarely covered for absence from September 2009. A new provision was included in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and an individual contractual right of every teacher to cover 'only rarely' for absent colleagues.

The changes in relation to 'rarely cover' include the requirement that every school has in place a clear policy and robust system that does not require teachers or the head teacher to provide cover for absence other than rarely and only 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 may be expected as part of the evolving pattern of provision. Educational visits are planned activities.

The guaranteed PPA time of teachers forms part of the legal conditions of employment and will not be used for cover and only in exceptional circumstances will the Principal consider postponing a teacher's planned CPD activity to undertake cover for an absent colleague.

The following policy recognises that a number of teachers have a specific contract to provide cover similar to Cover Supervisors so, in these circumstances, this rarely cover policy does not apply.

Guidance on this matter was issued by the National Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Further guidance in terms of interpreting and implementing the earlier guidance came in the form of an advice sheet from the ATL and a model policy from the NUT on which this policy relies.

#### **Aims of Policy**

1. The Governing Body of CROWN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE will operate within this policy to ensure teachers provide cover for absent colleagues only rarely and only in circumstances that are not foreseeable as detailed in the STPCD.

#### **Absence**

2. Absence occurs when the person who has been timetabled to take a particular class or group is absent and is the trigger for cover. The type of absence could be for a variety of reasons, including internal and external activities as well as sickness. It could be short-term or long-term. All types of absence should be carefully managed to minimise the impact on teaching and learning for the



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students. Teachers, including the Principal, should cover only rarely and only for absences which are not foreseeable.

3. The college will analyse its historical patterns of absence to ascertain both the main causes of absence, which have triggered the need for cover and the impact of such absence on students' learning. This will be used to ascertain events that are foreseeable and therefore do not require the provision of cover by a teacher.
4. The college will monitor and analyse patterns of absence (planned and unplanned) and levels of cover and manage these appropriately.
5. No fixed hours cover limit will be set as this is incompatible with the requirement to cover being linked to exceptional and emergency situations. Rarely cover is not about number of hours or frequency. It will only take place in rare circumstances that historically have never arisen in the school before, and could not reasonably have been predicted.

## **Cover Strategies**

6. The Governing Body of CROWN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE will ensure that teachers cover only rarely by utilising the following options taking into account appropriate guidance:
  - engage supply teachers;
  - employ teachers specifically for cover (directly or in collaboration with local schools);
  - use agency staff;
  - employ a teacher on a short-term contract

N.B. It should be noted that we have removed the possibility of rarely covering lessons from support staff (formerly part (b) of the policy) except if we define (as the guidance does) Cover Supervisors as support staff. CROWN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE also undertakes not to request that teaching assistants work beyond their proper role. However, where a cover supervisor or supply teacher is genuinely unavailable, HLTA trained teaching assistants may be used but only for the shortest possible time until a qualified teacher is available.

7. Supervision is not a good use of the time of a teacher and teachers providing cover should normally expect to teach rather than to supervise students. High standards of teaching and learning are paramount.
8. Short-term absences (3 consecutive days) may be covered by a supply or cover qualified teacher; in the case of medium and long-term absences (4 or more consecutive days), we will always endeavour to cover them with a qualified teacher. With the deployment of a supply teacher in the case of a long-term absence the agreed timetable may be revised if there are good educational grounds for doing so. Where other staff are impacted, such revisions will be subject to consultation with staff (and their union representatives if appropriate).
9. The Principal will determine what should be regarded as a 'short-term' absence for these purposes (see Leicester Amplification). The accepted local definition of short term absence is 3 days for Secondary and 1 day in Primary/Special where the Principal will be clear when allocating support staff to cover responsibilities whether the work to be undertaken is specified work or cover supervision. Cover supervision occurs where no active teaching (i.e. specified work) is taking place and pupils undertake pre-pared work under supervision.
10. When deciding whether the use of cover supervision is appropriate or not, the Principal will take into account:



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- the extent to which continuity of learning can be maintained;
  - the length of time a particular group of students would be working without a teacher;
  - the proportion of the total curriculum time affected in a specific subject over the course of the term.
11. Cover supervision is a responsible role involving as it does taking sole charge of a group of students. College management will ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills before being given charge of a class. Staff carrying out a cover role will be appropriately trained.
12. Specified work is defined as:
- planning and preparing lessons and courses for students;
  - delivering lessons to students; this may include delivery via distance learning or computer aided techniques;
  - assessing the development, progress and attainment of students, and
  - reporting on the development, progress and attainment of students.
13. The Regulations state that HLTAs (locally, Level 4 Teaching Assistant) can carry out specified work subject to a number of conditions:
- HLTAs must only carry out the 'specified work' in order to assist or support the work of a qualified teacher in the school;
  - HLTAs must be subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher in accordance with arrangements made by the Principal of the college;
  - the Principal must be satisfied that the HLTA has the skills, expertise and experience required to carry out the 'specified work'.
14. The college will ensure there is a system of supervision in place and support for staff delivering specified work.
15. Only when all other strategies for providing cover have failed will consideration be given to split or combine classes.

## **School Calendar**

16. To ensure the system for managing cover is robust, the CROWN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE will publish a calendar for each school year, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 164 of Section 3's Guidance to the STPCD. The same or a different calendar will also provide for the college's annual teaching timetable for every teacher. When appropriate the college may need to review/revise its timetables during the year in light of significant changes (e.g. a long-term absence or other significant educational development). If any such amendments need to be made they must be made on a no-detriment basis. In such cases it will do so well in advance and in consultation with affected staff and their union representatives.
17. Work undertaken during gained time will, however, not necessarily come within the definition of cover as 'supervising and so far as practicable teaching any pupils whose teacher is not available to teach them'. CROWN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE is permitted under STPCD provisions to direct teachers to undertake the following activities during gained time:
- developing/revising departmental/subject curriculum materials, schemes of work, lesson plans and policies in preparation for the new academic year. This may include identifying appropriate materials for use by supply staff and/or cover supervisors;
  - assisting colleagues in appropriate, planned team coaching activities;
  - taking groups of pupils to provide additional learning support;



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- supporting selected pupils with coursework;
- undertaking planned activities with pupils transferring between year groups or from primary schools by which CROWN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE also means covering teachers who are involved more directly in transition activities between year groups or from primary schools;
- where the school has a policy for all staff to release them for CPD during school sessions, gained time may be used for such activities.

## **Annual Review of Policy**

18. This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body on an annual basis.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body of Crown Hills Community College

By the Chair of Governors \_\_\_\_\_

(Mr I Ismail)

On \_\_\_\_\_ (date)



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## APPENDIX

### RELATED DOCUMENTATION

- Raising Standards and Tackling Workload: a National Agreement
- The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and Guidance on School Teachers' Pay and Conditions
- The Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007
- Time for Standards: Guidance Accompanying the Section 133 Regulations Issued under the Education Act 2002
- Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) Professional Standards
- Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales (The Burgundy Book)
- School Support Staff: the Way Forward (NJC for Local Government Services 2003)
- WAMG Note 10
- WAMG Note 12 (Effective Deployment of HLTAs)
- WAMG Note 22 (The Appropriate Deployment of Support Staff in Schools)
- Guidance for Schools on Cover Supervision (WAMG Guidance)
- Time for Standards: Remodelling Cover – Resource Pack

Rarely cover – WAMG statement

[http://www.socialpartnership.org/upload/resources/pdf/w/rarely\\_cover\\_wamgstatement.pdf](http://www.socialpartnership.org/upload/resources/pdf/w/rarely_cover_wamgstatement.pdf)

Rarely cover – WAMG LA letter

[http://www.socialpartnership.org/upload/resources/pdf/w/rarelycover\\_wamgletter.pdf](http://www.socialpartnership.org/upload/resources/pdf/w/rarelycover_wamgletter.pdf)

Rarely cover – School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document

[http://www.socialpartnership.org/upload/resources/pdf/w/rarelycover\\_stpcd.pdf](http://www.socialpartnership.org/upload/resources/pdf/w/rarelycover_stpcd.pdf)

Rarely cover – Implementation process guidance

[http://www.socialpartnership.org/upload/resources/pdf/w/rarely\\_cover\\_processnote.pdf](http://www.socialpartnership.org/upload/resources/pdf/w/rarely_cover_processnote.pdf)

- The Leicester Amplification