

CARDINAL POLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Rarely Cover Policy

Approved by Governors

Signed:

Date:

Review due date (3 years):

Mission Statement

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a learning community for all based upon partnership and respect. It is a strong and vibrant place which recognizes the importance and individual needs of every pupil and member of staff. Praise and encouragement is vital in creating a climate of learning and high expectations supported by teaching of the highest quality. The school is full of confident, creative and fulfilled young people and staff. They are celebrated as individuals – unique creations of God –who deserve our support, love and trust as they begin the great journey of life.

The Governing Body of Cardinal Pole Catholic School adopted this policy on

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is committed to full implementation of the statutory position on cover without breaching teachers' other entitlements under the STPCD, for example to PPA time and to Management and Leadership time.

The school recognises that the intention of the new provision is to reduce teacher workload and will, therefore, respect the spirit as well as the letter of the statutory provisions. The school also undertakes not to request that teaching assistants work beyond their proper role.

We are committed to providing the highest quality of teaching and learning for all its pupils. This is best achieved with each class taught by a qualified teacher, supported by teaching assistants.

Cardinal Pole Catholic School recognises that providing cover is not an effective use of a teacher's time and is committed to exhausting all other reasonable strategies before, exceptionally, asking a member of the teaching staff to cover.

1. Definition of 'Rarely Cover'

'Rarely Cover' is interpreted as meaning a teacher will only be asked to cover in emergency or exceptional circumstances – those which are unforeseeable.

'Unforeseeable circumstances' for the school include those which are unforeseeable on the basis of historic experiences, normal local experience and the evolving pattern of provision.

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.

2. Reporting of Absence

Cardinal Pole Catholic School expects staff to report their absence by 7.30am, so that cover can be engaged. It is recognised, however, that in certain circumstances, this may not always be possible. It is recognised that staff will, however, make every effort to inform the school of absence at the earliest opportunity.

3. Particular Circumstances in which this Cover Policy will Apply

Split Classes

A class whose teacher is absent may be split and shared between other classes. As this is a form of cover, splitting of classes will now occur only 'rarely' and when other strategies for providing cover have failed.

Educational Visits

As educational visits are planned activities: Rarely cover will only be applied if an appropriate educational decision is made in the interests of students and student behaviour.

Gained Time

'Gained time' is the time during the academic year, particularly in the summer term, when teachers who take examination classes or groups are released from some of their timetabled teaching commitments as a result of pupils being on study or examination leave. Teachers may be directed to use gained time to cover for a colleague. Gained time includes time during public exams and internal assessments. A similar approach can be applied to supply staff where this is relevant, i.e. if a year group is not present.

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".

Cardinal Pole Catholic School 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;
- supporting selected pupils with coursework;
- undertaking planned activities with pupils transferring 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.

It is only where such activities are being undertaken with pupils whose teacher is on unplanned absence, that the activities will necessarily be considered to be 'cover', in which case the 'rarely cover' provision will apply.

The school will not attempt to circumvent the 'rarely cover' provisions in relation to gained time by re-timetabling teachers so that they are no longer 'covering' for an absent teacher but instead are re-designated as the teacher for that class, although where there are clear financial reasons for this decision, it will be a factor in considering the replacement of staff mid-year.

4. Strategies for Providing Cover

The strategies for providing cover in the school are rooted firmly in the principle that cover for absent teachers is most suitably provided by internal support staff.

The school will apply the following strategy in the order set out below, when an absence needs to be covered

- **Deploy a cover person or make every effort to bring in a supply teacher.** This strategy is essential for medium and long term absence, though it will be used wherever possible in the case of short-term absence too.
- **Where a cover or supply person is genuinely unavailable, support staff may be used but only for the shortest possible time until an appropriate person is available.**

The School recognises that there are restrictions on the circumstances in which support staff can be deployed to do what is known as "specified work". Specified work is defined in the Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2003 as:

- a) planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
- b) delivering lessons to pupils. This includes delivery via distance learning or computer aided techniques;
- c) assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and
- d) reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

The Regulations set out that, in addition to these duties being carried out by a trained teaching assistant who the head teacher is satisfied has the skills, expertise and experience, a teaching assistant must only undertake 'specified' work:

- to support and assist a qualified teacher;
- under the supervision of a qualified teacher.

A teaching assistant on scale 5 can be directed to undertake specified work within the restrictions set out above. If not, TA's can only undertake cover supervision.

- The School accepts that cover supervision means that when no active teaching takes place and pupils carry out, under supervision, work which has been prepared in advance.
- Only in exceptional emergency situations, where none of the above options are available will teachers be directed to cover. Any requirement to cover will be shared equitably among all staff, including the head teacher, and a log of cover will be kept by the school and be available for inspection.

5. Setting of Work

Cardinal Pole Catholic School will not place excessive burdens of planning, preparation and assessment on teachers who are absent. Where absence is planned, it is expected that the teacher will provide details of the work to be undertaken by pupils during cover lessons. In the case of unplanned absence teachers are expected to provide details of work to be undertaken by pupils. If this is not possible, such information will be provided by the Head of Department/Second in Charge of Department