



## WALLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

### COVER POLICY

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#### **REVIEW**

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## **COVER POLICY**

### INTRODUCTION

Wallington High School for Girls is aware of the need to continue to reduce the amount of cover for absent teachers provided by its teaching staff to fulfill the objective that teachers should only ever 'rarely cover' for absent colleagues. This policy has been developed in accordance with the conditions outlined in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) 2021 and following consultation with staff and Governors. This policy applies to all teaching staff in the school that are not wholly or mainly employed to provide cover.

The Governors have agreed that cover is a budgetary priority and that no teacher will be expected to cover for financial expediency. One of the benefits will be that this policy will broaden professional development and career pathway opportunities for support staff.

#### **1. AIMS**

This policy will provide a strategy to:

- Address the issue of 'rarely cover' whilst ensuring that the quality of teaching will be such as to cause minimum disruption to students' learning.
- Ensure that teachers suffer 'no detriment' to their current conditions of service including non-contact time, PPA time and leadership and management time.
- Ensure that the school supports the drive to achieve better work-life balance for teachers.

#### **2. 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. It could be short-term or long-term; it could be planned or unplanned. Examples may include teachers accompanying school organized educational visits, teachers undertaking professional development, maternity leave, jury service, pre-agreed leave of absence or illness. All types of absence will be managed to minimize the impact on teaching and learning for the student.

#### **3. SCHOOL CALENDAR**

To ensure that the system for managing cover is robust, a calendar for each school year, including the school's annual teaching timetable, will be produced. Teaching timetables are not frozen in time and there

may be in-year variations in timetabled teaching arrangements and variations from year to year.

In-year variations will only occur in the light of significant changes (e.g. a long-term absence or other significant educational development) and should do so in consultation with staff and their union representatives. Changes to the calendar should not be a frequent occurrence and will only happen to support the teaching and learning of the students.

#### **4. SPECIFIC CONDITIONS OF COVER**

- Our school recognizes that providing cover is not an effective use of a teacher's time.
- Our school is committed to exhausting all other reasonable strategies for providing cover before having to ask a member of teaching staff.
- The school will maintain a record of cover undertaken by teachers to inform planning and monitor.
- The guaranteed PPA time of teachers at a school forms part of the legal conditions of employment so cannot and will not be used for cover unless there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances.
- Where the need for cover is identified, the school will deploy the following resources:
  - Cover supervisors;
  - Supply teachers;
  - Employment of fixed-term teacher;
  - Only when all other reasonable strategies have been exhausted will teachers provide cover during their non-contact time with no detriment to their overall PPA time.
- Reasonable strategies will depend on whether the absence is planned or unplanned.
- For planned absence, this will include contacting all cover supervisors, making additional arrangements with part-time teachers and a minimum of 4 supply agencies.
- For unplanned absence this will include contacting as many cover supervisors as possible before the school day begins.
- The member of the School Leadership Team responsible for Cover will take account of the following key factors when deciding to use cover supervision:
  - 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 area over the course of the term.
- Where members of the support staff are so deployed, they will always do so following training and will be subject to the regulations made under section 133 of the 2002 Education Act, and will be supported by the member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for cover arrangements and the Subject Leader.

## **5. PRACTICALITIES**

- The Cover **Co-Coordinator** will have the responsibility of organizing cover for classes on a day-to-day basis.(This work will be overseen by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.)
- In the case of planned absence, it will be the responsibility of the classroom teacher to set appropriate workfor the classes affected.
- In the case of unplanned absence it will be the responsibility of the classroom teacher to set appropriate work for the affected classes unless there is good reason where this is not possible when it will be the responsibility of the Subject Leader, or in the case of the Subject Leader being absent the next most experienced member of that subject area or the line manager of that subject.
- Work can be set in a variety of ways, e.g. on the relevant area of the MLE, e-mailed to an appropriate member of the department or the Cover **Coordinator**, written on paper and left either in the room or with the Cover **Coordinator**. The Cover **Coordinator** must be informed as to where the work can be accessed.
- Cover Supervisors will be provided with IT facilities where work is left on the MLE (Training will be given in its use.).
- In the case of the absence of the Cover **Coordinator**, their Line-Manager will be responsible for the organization of the cover.

## **6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The **Cover Coordinator** will keep a record of the amount of cover undertaken by each teacher and the cover undertaken by other staff whose contract and job description specifies that they are available for cover supervision.

Patterns of absence, both planned and unplanned, will be monitored and analysed by the Senior Leadership Team and HR and reported to the HR committee on a weekly basis. Monitoring will include the impact on individual classes.