



# Tudor Grange Academies Trust

## Cover policy

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## Contents

1. Introduction .....	2
2. Cover .....	2
3. Covering Absence.....	3
4. Managing Cover .....	4
5. Monitoring .....	4

### 1. Introduction

At Tudor Grange Academies Trust we are committed to ensuring that all staff have a reasonable workload. This policy has been developed with the purpose of ensuring an effective and consistent approach to cover arrangements at all schools within the Trust. This policy supports staff wellbeing and enables leaders to understand how to implement cover within their individual schools.

This policy does not apply to staff employed specifically for the purpose or providing cover.

### 2. Cover

#### Definition of rarely cover

The School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) states: “Teachers should be required to provide cover only 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 are expected as part of the evolving pattern of provision.

#### 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.

#### 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.

Long term sickness, maternity or parental leave etc are not short-term absences. Where reasonably practicable, leaders should make efforts to cover such absences without resorting to asking teachers.

### **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 provide cover for absent colleagues and may be required to undertake activities relevant to teaching and learning. It is only where such activities are being undertaken with pupils whose teacher is absent that they will necessarily be considered to be 'cover', in which case the 'rarely cover' provision will apply. Teachers may be directed to use gained time to develop or revise departmental/subject curriculum materials, schemes of work, lesson plans and policies in preparation for the new academic year. This may include identifying appropriate members' materials for use by supply staff and/or cover supervisors;

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. This will be clearly indicated on the timetable.

### **3. 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 (eg CPD) or unexpected (eg short term sickness).

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, where practicable, 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 if a supply teacher has not been engaged.

Supply teachers/cover teachers - The school will engage the services of a Supply/cover teachers to cover for teachers whose absence is extended. A supply/cover teacher may be engaged to cover for certain subjects, lessons or teachers 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 (eg HLTAs,) may provide cover for absent teachers on a short-term basis.

#### **4. 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 their absence.

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' ie 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.

#### **5. Monitoring**

To ensure the system for managing cover is robust, each school will publish a calendar for each school year. The school calendar will also provide for the school's annual teaching timetable for every teacher. The School may need to review/revise its timetable during the year, and from year to year, in light of significant changes (e.g. a long-term absence or other significant educational development). Any such revisions 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**

A member of the senior leadership team 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.

#### **Policy review**

The policy will be reviewed on a biennially, unless there are legislation changes which need to be considered. The review will be informed by annual monitoring.