



North Essex Multi-Academy Trust

Cover and PPA Policy

**Trust Board Finance and
HR Committee**

Ratified by Governors: 15 November 2016

UPDATE – APRIL 2016

Model Policy reviewed for relevancy. Minor updates to reflect current terminology. Workload and Equality Impact Assessment also available for this Policy.

Cover & PPA Policy

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MODEL COVER & PPA POLICY

Policy Statement

The Trust is committed to providing the highest quality of teaching and learning for all its pupils and will ensure at all times that teaching and learning is delivered by appropriately trained and competent staff.

The school will manage sickness and other absences effectively, and in accordance with its Policies, in such a way that provides appropriate support to staff but also ensures minimal impact of teacher absence on pupil progress and wellbeing.

Section A – Cover

1. Statutory Position

Teachers should cover for absent colleagues only rarely. This provision applies to all teachers, including the headteacher and to staff on permanent, fixed-term or temporary contracts.

This requirement does not apply to teachers employed specifically for the purposes of providing cover.

1.1. Definition of rarely cover

'Rarely cover' is interpreted as meaning a teacher will only be asked to cover 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.

Teachers PPA time is part of their contractual entitlement and cannot be used for cover.

Emergency cover will be shared equitably among all teaching staff having regard to their other commitments.

1.2. Definition of Absence

Absence occurs when the teacher normally responsible for teaching a particular class/lesson is absent from the classroom during the time they have been timetabled to teach. Absence may be due to internal or external activities as well as sickness and may be long or short term.

Absence which requires cover as defined in this Section, does not include periods where a teacher is timetabled to be absent from their normal teaching duties e.g. timetabled PPA or Leadership and Management time. See Section B – PPA policy.

1.3. Definitions of Short Term Absence

Short term absence will normally be no longer than two weeks 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 of pupils would be working without a teacher;
- the proportion of the total curriculum time affected in a specific subject over the course of the term.

1.4. Gained time & Educational Visits

Where teachers are released from their timetable as a result of pupils undertaking examinations, or a teacher's class or group are absent on an education visit, such time is known as "Gained time".

Teachers may be directed to use gained time to undertake the following activities, directly relevant to teaching and learning,

- 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 teaching 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 to release staff for CPD during school sessions, Gained Time may be used for such activities.

2. **Covering Absence**

All types of absence will be carefully managed to minimise the impact on teaching and learning for the pupil.

A teacher's absence from their timetabled teaching commitments may be planned (e.g. training course) or unexpected (e.g. sickness). Although the principles apply equally to both types of cover, the management of them may differ. NB cover in this context does not apply to timetabled absence (see 1.2 above).

2.1 How cover will be undertaken

Cover will be undertaken only by staff:

2.1.1 who have been assessed as competent to undertake the role;

- 2.1.2 for whom all relevant employment safeguarding checks have been undertaken;
- 2.1.3 who have been inducted into the school's policies and procedures, particularly child protection, behaviour management and health and safety.

2.2 How cover will be provided

Cover will be provided in the following ways:

2.2.1 Cover Supervisors

The school may employ Cover Supervisors who will provide short term cover for absent teachers.

2.2.3 Supply teachers/cover teachers

The school may engage the services of a Supply/cover teachers to cover for teachers whose absence exceeds 2 weeks. A supply/cover teacher may be engaged to cover for certain subjects, lessons or teachers sooner than 2 weeks as deemed appropriate by the school management. The school will seek always to engage the service of a qualified teacher.

2.2.4 Other support staff

Support staff with specialist skills and knowledge (e.g. HLTAs, Subject Technicians) may provide cover for absent teachers on a short term basis.

2.3 Specialist lessons

No person shall provide cover for PE or other specialist lessons unless, with reference to Adults Supporting Learning Guidance;

- they hold the relevant qualifications/training; and,
- a risk assessment has been carried out by a qualified teacher

2.4 School Calendar

To ensure the system for managing cover is robust, the school will publish a calendar for each school year following consultation with staff and their union representatives. 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 be planned well in advance and in consultation with staff and their union representatives and will not be a frequent occurrence. Pupil standards are paramount.

3. **Managing Cover**

- 3.1 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, details of the work to be undertaken by pupils during cover lessons will be available. In the absence of this, and in the cases of unplanned absence, relevant information and guidance will be provided by the relevant Head of Department.

- 3.2 The school will expect supply/cover teachers, wherever possible, to engage in active teaching during cover lessons and to undertake such assessment, recording and feedback as may be required.

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.

- 3.3 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.

Cover Supervisors will not be expected to undertake 'specified work'.

- 3.4 The school may employ Cover Supervisors and/or other Support Staff who have undergone particular training and/or who have particular skills/knowledge, such that they are judged competent to undertake specified work in the sort term (as defined previously) for specific lessons. This will include an assessment as meeting the HLTA standards. The school is committed to ensuring all such assessments are through an external assessment process where available.

In these circumstances they may undertake specified work for these lessons. They will work under the professional direction of, and under a system of supervision by, a qualified teacher.

- 3.5 All staff providing cover will be given an appropriate and proportionate allocation of paid time to undertake:
- liaison with other staff and giving feedback;
 - providing written feedback and completion of other relevant paperwork;
 - planning, preparation and assessment where appropriate.

In the case of teachers this is addressed through an allocation of directed time.

- 3.6 The Trust encourages all staff undertaking lesson cover to be a member of a relevant trade union/professional association.

4. Deployment of Support Staff

Where support staff are deployed to provide cover, the headteacher will:

- have regard to the suitability of the task to the member of staff's current role;
- the impact on their workload and whether sufficient time is available, or could be freed up;

- consider any additional training needs;
- ensure that if additional paid working hours are required this is agreed with the member of staff;
- ensure job descriptions are revised to reflect agreed changes and additional responsibilities;
- ensure pay and grading reflects any revised roles and responsibilities.

5. Monitoring

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.

Section B – PPA/NQT release time

1. Statutory Position

All teachers, including headteachers, with timetabled teaching commitments, have a contractual entitlement to guaranteed PPA time within timetabled teaching time.

Teachers in their NQT Induction year have an entitlement to additional release time.

1.2 Calculations

PPA calculation

PPA is calculated as a minimum of 10% of a teacher's timetabled teaching time. PPA must be allocated in blocks no less than 30 minutes.

NQT release time

NQTs serving their induction period must not be timetabled to teach for more than 90% of a classroom teacher's timetabled time. PPA is calculated on this reduced NQT timetabled teaching time.

1.3 Definition of 'guaranteed'

Guaranteed means that timetabled PPA time must not be encroached upon for any reason. However, there is no entitlement to compensatory PPA time where a teacher is absent.

1.4 Use of PPA time

PPA time must be used for planning preparation, and assessment. It is for each teacher to determine the particular PPA priorities for each block of timetabled PPA time, although this does not preclude them from choosing to use some of the time to support collaborative activities.

2. Provision of PPA

2.1 PPA allocation

Every teacher with timetabled teaching commitments will have PPA timetabled:

- in one block / in x times x minute blocks

Teachers may choose to spend some or all of their PPA time working collaboratively with colleagues.

PPA may not be undertaken away from school premises.

3. Covering PPA/NQT release time

3.2 PPA cover will be undertaken only by staff:

- who have been assessed as competent to undertake specified work, defined in Regulations as:
 - planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
 - delivering lessons to pupils. This includes delivery via distance learning or computer aided techniques;
 - assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and
 - reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.
- 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.

3.3 PPA time may be provided in the following ways:

3.3.1 Teachers

e.g. The school may engage additional teachers for the purpose of covering PPA time.

3.3.2 HLTAs

HLTAs may provide PPA cover for teachers.

- All HLTAs will be assessed as meeting the HLTA standards. The school is committed to ensuring all HLTAs pass through an external assessment process where available.
- HLTAs will normally have an additional Teaching Assistant in the classroom where they are providing whole class PPA cover.
- HLTAs work under the professional direction of, and under a system of supervision by, a qualified teacher.

3.3.3 Instructors/coaches

E.g. Pupils may be engaged in activities with specialist music/sports etc coaches during PPA time.

3.4 All staff providing PPA release will be given an appropriate and proportionate allocation of paid to time to undertake:

- liaison with other staff and giving feedback;
- providing written feedback and completion of other relevant paperwork;
- planning, preparation and assessment where appropriate.

In the case of teachers this is addressed through an appropriate allocation of PPA/directed time.

4. **Managing PPA**

4.1 PPA time will be managed in such a way that active learning takes place for pupils.

- 4.1.1. Activities undertaken by those covering PPA will normally be planned and prepared by the person providing the release. However, the classroom teacher will remain responsible for the overall learning of the pupils.
 - 4.1.2 Teachers are not required to undertake separate additional planning for delivery by other staff providing PPA cover.
 - 4.1.3 All those providing PPA activities will be expected to undertake such assessment and reporting as may be required by the class teacher.
- 4.3 It is the headteacher's/line manager's responsibility to monitor the quality of activity taking place during PPA time, and all those who release staff for PPA can expect to be observed.

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