



Poplar Adolescent Unit Education Provision

Cover and PPA Policy

Accepted by the Management Committee:	January 2019
Review Date	January 2023

Poplar Adolescent Unit – Education

Cover and PPA policy

Policy Statement

The school 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

From September 2009 schools were required to ensure that teachers are required to cover for absent colleagues only rarely. The contractual provision applies to all teachers and the Headteacher at the school, including teachers on the leadership spine and ASTs whether on permanent, fixed-term or temporary contracts and pro-rata to teachers on part-time 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. However, due to the fluctuating nature of the Education Unit PPA time may be rescheduled by agreement.

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 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.

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. timetables 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 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 and 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 course work;
- 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.
- Where Gained Time is due to fluctuating numbers, this additional Gained Time can be used to provide short term cover.

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.

2.1 How cover will be undertaken

Cover will be only undertaken 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.

2.2 Cover will be provided in the following ways:

- Team teach. The school has a team teach approach to groups of pupils where suitable. This has the advantage of continuity for pupils.
- Supply teachers/cover teachers. When appropriate the school will engage the services of supply/cover staff 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 appropriate by senior staff. The school will always seek to engage the services of qualified teachers.
- Other support staff. Support staff with specialist skills and knowledge (eg HLTAs, Senior Behaviour Support Workers) may provide cover for absent teachers on a short term basis.
- Gained Time and rescheduled PPA. Teachers will be used to cover if the Gained Time is due to pupil fluctuation and when PPA can be rescheduled appropriately.
- Revised timetables for outreach programme. Planned absences are to be built into the outreach programme each term.

2.3 Specialist lessons.

No person shall provide cover for PE or other specialist lessons unless, with reference to the Local Authority AOTT (Adults other than teachers' 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 with learning. It is expected that where the absence is planned, teachers will provide details of the work to be undertaken by pupils during cover lessons. In the absence of this, and in the cases of unplanned absence, such information will be provided by the relevant subject co-ordinator or other staff members.
- 3.2 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 key teacher or relevant other staff members.