



Little Ilford School Cover Policy

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1. Principles

The staff and governing body recognise that at times, teaching staff will not be able to fulfil their teaching responsibilities due to absence. To ensure we remain committed to students' progress, achievement and overall academic experience at all times, this policy sets out the following:-

- Rarely cover expectations for teaching staff
- When cover work should be set
- Quality of cover work expectations
- Practical processes for setting cover work

1.1 Statutory Guidance

According to the Teachers Responsibilities outlined in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD 2025), teachers should expect to:-

50.7. Subject to paragraph 52.7 supervise and so far as practicable teach any students where the person timetabled to take the class is not available to do so.

52.7. Teachers should be required to provide cover in accordance with paragraph 50.7 only rarely, and only in circumstances that are not foreseeable (this does not apply to teachers who are employed wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing such cover).

These same principles will be extended to all teaching staff who work at Little Ilford School. Furthermore, the principles of the Cover Arrangements Policy Newham 2016 document will also be adopted alongside the specifics for Little Ilford School outlined in this policy. At times there may be appropriate variations from the Cover Arrangements Policy Newham 2016 document. For example, the document states "Accordingly schools will make efforts, subject to available resources, to employ cover staff to cover the timetables of teachers absent for longer than 5 days". At LIS we have a two week timetable so this point will be adjusted to 10 days if it is not possible to employ a suitable replacement member of cover staff after 5 days. LIS will endeavour to ensure that students experience no more than one timetable cycle with different cover teachers or cover supervisors.

2. Aims of the Policy:

As part of its **commitment** to delivering high quality education at all times, Little Ilford School aims to clearly outline cover and cover work expectations.

- This policy aims to reduce staff absence and minimise the impact of absent staff
- Rarely cover expectations for teaching staff aim to ensure clarity and transparency, as well as reduce the impact of rarely cover on staff in line with the most recent School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document (STPCD 2025)
- When teaching staff should set cover work instructions aim to support staff workload and time management, and ensure stability and continuity for students
- Quality of cover work expectations aim to ensure staff at LIS maintain a high quality of education for all students
- Practical processes for setting cover work aim to support staff workload, time management and efficiency

3. Rarely Cover Expectations

As previously stated, according to the Teachers Responsibilities outlined in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD 2025), teachers should expect to:

50.7. Subject to paragraph 52.7 supervise and so far as practicable teach any students where the person timetabled to take the class is not available to do so.

52.7. Teachers should be required to provide cover in accordance with paragraph 50.7 only rarely, and only in circumstances that are not foreseeable (this does not apply to teachers who are employed wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing such cover).

These same principles will be extended to all teaching staff who work at Little Ilford Schools. Rarely cover applies to all teachers, cover teachers employed via external agencies, HLTAs and in some cases TAs where the TA is already attached to a particular, and smaller than average class.

The Cover Officer, with the support of the SLT line manager for cover, will endeavour to:-

- Pre-book agency cover staff where it is known internal covers supervisors will not have capacity to cover all periods where a cover supervisor or teacher is required
- Book agency cover staff on the day where cover is required and where internal covers supervisors/teachers will not have capacity to manage all periods where cover is required
- Assign internal cover supervisors and agency cover supervisors/staff to cover all periods requiring cover where possible
- Cover absent teaching assistants and student support staff in liaison with the SENCO, the SLT line manager for SEND and behaviour support, and the SLT line manager for cover
- Where it is known a member of staff will be absent for more than two weeks or 10 days, liaise with cover agencies to employ a subject specialist and qualified teacher with QTS to cover the timetable. Only in extreme circumstances would an unqualified teacher be appointed for a longer period of time.
- Maintain up to date rarely cover records to ensure fairness and parity by the end of the academic year.

Teaching staff will be assigned rarely cover lessons in the following cases:

- The Cover Officer has not received information regarding any absence communicated in line with the Staff Code of Conduct Policy. This includes absences related to sickness, dependents, CPD and LOA
- A member of teaching staff requires emergency cover due to a member of staff being unable to fulfil their teaching duties

Rarely cover is not:

- Being reassigned during a timetabled period such as in the BIR or ISR to undertake rarely cover
- Being assigned to cover a different class during a school event at the time a member of staff would have been teaching the affected year group or during another period but not exceeding contact time for that day
- Covering a member of staff for less than 25 minutes due to an unforeseen and unknown absence
- Informally covering a member of staff which has not been authorised in line with school protocols and policies
- Supporting a member of staff with their teaching and learning practice such as behaviour for learning strategies and pedagogy.

No fixed hours cover limit will be set as this is incompatible with the requirement to cover being linked to exceptional and emergency situations.

ITT and ECT colleagues will **not** be subject to carrying out rarely cover requests unless they have a timetabled period in the BIR or ISR, or in extreme cases.

4. When to set cover work

In the case of all absences, it is the responsibility of the class teacher to inform their CTL, line manager (if different to the CTL) and PAL of their absence. This should be communicated to the relevant colleagues by 7.15am.

If there is a known absence, such as an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) or a CPD (continuing professional development) course, it is the class teacher's responsibility to set appropriate cover work in advance, and to ensure the cover work is ready to be accessed by the students and the supervising member of staff. This includes all instructions and resources.

If there is an unplanned absence, such as sickness absence, it is the class teacher's responsibility to set appropriate cover work and where necessary, liaise with their CTL/KS Coordinator and where relevant, the PAL. The CTL/KS Coordinator or PAL will then ensure the cover work is ready to be used by the students and the supervising teacher. For example, this will include instructions, and it may include ensuring that a particular set of textbooks have been placed in the classroom, or if essential, relevant worksheets have been printed. This also includes cover work for registration time and RPSHE

If the class teacher is too unwell or otherwise unable to set cover work they should inform their CTL and PAL by 7.15am. It is then the responsibility of the CTL/KS Coordinator and PAL to ensure the cover work is appropriate for the class and ready to be used by the students and the supervising teacher.

For all absences, it is the teacher's responsibility to follow absence procedures outlined in the most recent professional expectations.

This process is to ensure the wellbeing of all staff

5. Quality of cover work

The responsibility for students' progress lies with the class teacher even when absent and, therefore, they should choose tasks that they feel support this outcome. All work should be purposeful and be in line with the department assessment precis.

The following guidelines should support good learning during a cover lesson:

- Students should be able to complete the work with success independently.

- Therefore, it should be challenging and accessible
- Ideally, the work will be based on prior learning / prior knowledge, rather than students tackling new content. Consider where students are within the curriculum and what spaced/interleaved-retrieval practice might be beneficial to them. It should link to the SOL or appropriate year team registration programme
 - There could be an opportunity for self-assessment, either by providing answers to the cover teacher, or by providing answers/live-modelling during your next lesson. Therefore, where possible and relevant, provide answers
 - Do not expect a subject specialist to be covering your lesson; therefore, ensure the students can access the work without support or intervention.
 - Please make sure the instructions for the students are as explicit as possible.
 - Cover work could be “completed for homework” but avoid doing this for the sake of it. This is best when the work will either directly link to the next lesson or be used in the next lesson (e.g. self-assessed or live-modelled). If you do decide to do this, ensure the instructions and expectations/follow up is shared with students. This will set a tone of high expectations even in your absence.
 - Consider using textbooks when available rather than relying on lots of printing. If you are asking your CTL or PAL to print for you, please ensure you give very clear instructions such as the number of copies and the format of the printing required.
 - If you are providing cover work for a known absence, consider the use of a Screencastify video resource (or using another piece of software if Screencastify is not available), created by you, to set the students up for success at the beginning of the cover lesson.
 - If students do not use their usual exercise books, ensure the reason for this is communicated so students still value their work, rather than writing on paper which is then thrown away.

6. Setting Cover work

Staff setting cover should follow the setting cover work procedure stated in Cover work protocols at LIS from slide 4. The cover work tile can be found on RM Unify

Line managers (this includes CTLs, KS coordinators or PALs) are expected to:

- Ensure cover work has been set inline with expectations, including setting cover work if the absent member of staff is unable to do so. The class seating plan should be included in the planned resources
- Discuss any issues relating to cover work with the relevant staff member on their return

- Discuss the quality of cover work with the department or year team where appropriate, such as during a Curriculum Team Meeting (CTM), Joint Planning Time (JPT) or a Year Team Meeting (YTM) to ensure high quality cover work is set in line with all expectations

Senior staff are expected to:

- Discuss quality of cover work in line management meetings (LMM) with CTLs and PALs
- Ensure cover work is placed on the monitoring schedule for discussion
- Address any concerns with the CTL or PAL as they arise

7. Responsibilities

Cover Supervisors

Little Ilford School employs permanent cover supervisors to maintain stability in times of staff absence. The cover supervisors employed by Little Ilford School will:-

- Follow all behaviour for learning criteria identified on learning walks
- Take responsibility for completing registers in a timely manner
- Take responsibility for following all school systems
- Deliver cover work set by the class teacher
- Liaise with teachers on their return regarding praise or behaviour concerns, or to discuss the cover work set if required
- Support external agency cover supervisors by logging relevant rewards and behaviour points on the school's current system

Agency Cover supervisors

At times LIS will employ agency cover supervisors. These staff will:-

- Take responsibility for completing registers in a timely manner
- Take responsibility for following all school systems
- Deliver cover work set by the class teacher
- Follow all [cover protocols](#) provided at the start of the day
- Be responsible for reading all relevant documentation provided by the cover officer
- Be dismissed if staff are unable to follow LIS policies and procedures

Agency cover teachers

At times LIS will employ medium to long term cover teachers. These staff will be:-

- Qualified in the subject area they are covering

- Expected to attend safeguarding training with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Expected to follow all policies teachers are expected to follow, including Professional Expectations, as would a permanent member of staff
- Expected to carry out all duties teachers are expected to such as marking, planning and duties
- Expected to take on a registration period and RPSHE teaching. It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the RPSHE SOL and lesson resources. Lessons should be amended/differentiated as required.
- Expected to attend all relevant meetings and staff training which include:-
 - a. Staff briefing - Monday morning only at 8.15am
 - b. Curriculum Team Meetings (CTM)
 - c. Year Team Meetings (YTM)
 - d. Staff meetings
 - e. Twilight training sessions
 - f. Parents' Evenings for relevant year groups

These meetings are all identified on the school calendar and in the staff bulletin.

Line managers are expected to:

- Ensure cover staff are supported where and when necessary
- Ensure behaviour concerns are investigated and dealt with in line with whole school policies
- Liaise with absent staff to address issues or concerns, or to share best practice
- Liaise regularly, when relevant, with the Cover Officer to organise cover supervisor or cover teacher trial days. It is the responsibility of the CTL to read CVs and confirm the date and expectations for any trial days or periods. This may include an observation, a task and in some cases, an interview
- Communicate all expectations with the cover staff working in their area/department

8. Links with other policies & documents

- **Code of Conduct**
[HB Code of Conduct - Staff](#)

- **Protocol slides**
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1y8ZIQo-GUBlvQWh3vBdDvx0tmtDZ2PZ1_fyn4vjUWU/edit#slide=id.g9c3bd6143b_0_62
- **Cover Protocols**
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WndvEWQKlnDmjbgCA4PORGJ_F5Gfl63m9S9ZZhDgwok/edit
- **Cover folder**
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1u7AIOsMq37npZC9ERbSNwQVpEybfkQ7>
- **School teachers' pay and conditions document 2025**
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/687a6260312ee8a5f0806bb5/School_teachers_pay_and_conditions_document_2025_and_guidance_on_school_teachers_pay_and_conditions.pdf
- **Cover Arrangements Policy Newham 2016**
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jAK6S6DaAllkU2qNybQot4CJbK6rP9lxW_avLrDRkMQ/edit