



## Policy for Cover Arrangements

Created: September 2019

Reviewed: January 2023

Review by: Spring 2025



### Statement of Intent

St Mary's Catholic High School that teaching is always delivered by appropriately trained and qualified staff.

The school will manage absences effectively and in accordance with its policies, in a way that provides appropriate support to staff while minimising the impact of teacher absence on pupil progress and wellbeing.

This policy will outline the school's arrangements for providing cover in the event of teacher absence, whether planned or unplanned. This includes:

- Unexpected absence due to illness.
- Unplanned absence due to other factors.
- Planned absence, e.g. to attend training courses.
- PPA time.

### 1. [Updated] Legal framework

**[Updated]** This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- **[Updated]** DfE (2022) 'School teachers' pay and conditions document 2022 and guidance on school teachers' pay and conditions'
- **[New]** DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'

- DfE (2018) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'
- The Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2003

**[Updated]** This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Staff Attendance and Absence Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Grievance Policy
- **[New]** Strike Action Policy
- **[New]** Safer Recruitment Policy

## 2. **[Updated]** Roles and responsibilities

The governing body will be responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy.
- handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy and Grievance Policy.
- Ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place regarding the organisation and provision of cover work, in accordance with the DfE's 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'.

**[Updated]** The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- Managing resources and cover for absence and PPA time.
- **[New]** Ensuring cover arrangements in the event of industrial action are compliant with the law and staff members' employment contracts.

Teachers will be responsible for providing detailed handovers where cover is required for planned absence or PPA time.

TAs, HLTAs, supply teachers and cover supervisors will be responsible for undertaking absence and PPA cover, as directed by the headteacher.

## 3. **[Updated]** Cover for teacher absence

The arrangements in this section will be conducted in line with the Staff Attendance and Absence Policy and will cover both planned absences, e.g. training courses, and unplanned or unexpected absences, e.g. illness.

Cover will be managed in a way that minimises disruption to pupils' education and achievement.

**[New]** Cover arrangements in the event of industrial action will be handled in line with the Strike Action Policy.

A short-term absence is defined as a maximum of five consecutive days. Longer-term absences (over five days) will be covered by a qualified teacher.

**[Updated]** Teachers employed by the school will be required to provide cover 'only rarely', in accordance with the DfE's 'School teachers' pay and conditions document' (STPCD), and only in circumstances that are not foreseeable, excluding teachers who are employed wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing such cover.

Cover for lessons will be carried out by one or more of the following:

- Supply teachers
- Cover supervisors
- TAs or HLTAs

Cover will be undertaken by qualified teaching staff wherever possible.

Cover supervision will involve the supervision of pre-set learning activities in the absence of a teacher and no active teaching will take place.

Cover supervisors will only cover whole classes either:

- On a short-term basis, which is defined as a maximum of five consecutive days.
- Over an extended period, which is defined as one lesson per week across one half term.

HLTAs will only cover whole classes on a short-term basis, which is defined as a maximum of five consecutive days.

HLTAs will cover an absent teacher's lessons as 'specified work' for a maximum of three consecutive days, and only where a qualified teacher cannot be secured.

Specified work is defined in The Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2003 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.
- Reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

In accordance with the regulations, specified work will only be carried out by an HLTA to support and assist a qualified teacher or under the supervision of a qualified teacher.

Where absence is planned, the absent teacher will provide detailed handovers to cover teachers.

Where absence is unplanned, the head of department will provide detailed handovers to cover teachers. Teachers absent due to unexpected illness will not be expected to work, which includes the provision of cover work.

#### 4. [Updated] PPA

**[Updated]** A teacher employed full-time must be available to perform such duties at such times and places as may be specified by the employer or headteacher for 1265 hours (1252 hours for the 2022/20223 academic year).

All teachers are entitled to reasonable periods of PPA time. At least 10 percent of a teacher's timetabled teaching time will be provided for PPA which will be allocated in units of at least 30 minutes duration.

PPA time must be clearly shown in every teacher's timetable and should not be moved or cancelled. PPA time cannot be used for cover.

Teachers cannot be directed to undertake any duty during their PPA time, other than in emergency situations.

PPA may be undertaken away from school premises.

#### 5. Cover for PPA

PPA will be managed in a way that allows pupils' active learning to continue.

Cover will be arranged to allow teachers to take their required PPA time.

Cover for lessons will be carried out by one or more of the following:

- Supply teachers
- TAs or HLTAs (HLTAs only where a qualified teacher cannot be secured)
- Cover supervisors

HLTAs will have one additional TA in the classroom with them when providing whole class cover for PPA.

The teacher undertaking PPA will provide cover teachers with detailed handovers for any single class requiring PPA cover.

#### 6. Cover for break and lunchtime duties

Cover for lunchtime duties will be carried out by one or more of the following:

- TAs or HLTAs
- Support staff

Teachers will not be required to cover break and lunchtime duties unless they request to do so as overtime, as set out in their terms and conditions.

The school will bear in mind the STPCD when making cover arrangements for break- and lunchtime duties.

## **7. [Updated] Safeguarding and management**

**[Updated]** Individuals providing cover will have undergone all necessary safer recruitment checks and completed a full induction into the school's policies and procedures before they undertake any cover, in line with the Safer Recruitment Policy.

**[Updated]** The school will obtain written confirmation from supply agencies and third parties that the appropriate safer recruitment checks have been conducted and appropriate certificates obtained for any agency staff before they undertake any cover – these checks must be the same as the school would otherwise perform for an individual employed by the school.

Individuals covering lessons will be closely managed by the Curriculum Leader and will undergo regular meetings to ensure the agreed standards are being met.

Where there is long-term absence, the headteacher will undertake regular observations to ensure the achievements of pupils meet the required standard.