

BEBINGTON HIGH SPORTS COLLEGE



Rarely Cover & Leave of Absence **Policy**

Agreed/Reviewed by Governors – see reverse

Rarely Cover Policy Thoughts

Rarely Cover Implementation

The purpose of this guidance is to set out the process we will follow to implement rarely cover from September 2009.

Background:

The objective of progressive movement towards a position where teachers may only be asked to cover rarely for absent colleagues was clearly set out in the National Agreement 'Raising Standards and Tackling Workload', which was signed in January 2003. Following the decision in 2007 to implement this objective from 1 September 2009, advance notice was provided in both the 2007 and the 2008 editions of the STPCD.

What the policy contains:

We are required to have robust systems in place to ensure that from 1 September 2009 teachers cover for absent colleagues only rarely. A 'robust system' is one which delivers this contractual entitlement and will be expected to deal with all foreseeable events, but will not be expected to deal with unforeseeable events. When devising strategies to implement 'rarely cover' we will bear in mind that 'rarely' does not mean 'never'.

We have made good progress towards the achievement of this objective and have already reached a position where teachers only cover rarely, In 2007 we set a target of all staff being under 38 hours of cover, In 2008 we set a target of 19 hours of cover.

Current analysis is (**this academic year**)

Absence

Reason	Number of days	Percentage of the total
sickness	455	35.9
domestic	1	0.1
internally unavailable	10	0.8
interview pupils	7	0.6
interview job	13	1.0
INSET	87	6.9
late to school	16	1.3
agreed unavailability	168	13.2
lesson observation	4	0.3
diploma	5	0.4
exam related	79	6.2
school trip	58	4.6
performance management	24	1.9
specialism	18	1.4
unpaid leave	1	0.1
unpaid wedding/funeral	1	0.1
absence	10	0.8
special leave	8	0.6
compassionate leave	92	7.3
paternity	1	0.1
parental leave	12	0.9
family friendly	5	0.4
medical appointment	116	9.1
Holiday	5	0.4
Curriculum development	72	5.7
Total	1268	

(it does count part days as whole days)

Cover

External cover & SLT has provided **1861** hours of cover

Internal cover has provided **139.5** hours of cover

Teaching staff Maximum cover is **6.5** hours

Teaching staff Average cover is **2.84** hours

Cover definitions:

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. It could be short-term or long-term. All types of absence will be carefully managed to minimise the impact on teaching and learning for the pupil.

Cover strategy:

In 2009/10 we will employ the equivalent of 3 full time members of staff to cover for short term absence, these will either be 'floating teachers' employed for the purposes of cover, or TAs/higher level teaching assistants, who will act as cover supervisors (when not required for cover, they could be assigned, e.g., to provide additional support to teachers in class or to carry out administrative tasks).

Where the capacity of this provision is exceeded or absence becomes long term, supply teachers will be employed on a day by day basis or where appropriate employ a teacher on a short-term contract.

The Headteacher will exercise their professional judgment in determining what should be regarded as a 'short term' absence for these purposes. There will be a number of considerations which the headteacher will need to take into account when deciding whether the use of cover supervision is appropriate or not. The key factors are:

- a) the extent to which continuity of learning can be maintained;
- b) the length of time a particular group of pupils would be working without a teacher;
- c) the proportion of the total curriculum time affected in a specific subject over the course of the term.

The Headteacher will allocate support staff to cover responsibilities having clear regard as to whether the work to be undertaken is specified work or cover supervision.

Cover supervision occurs where no active teaching (i.e. specified work) is taking place and, under the supervision of a member of support staff, pupils undertake pre-prepared work. Cover supervision can be used for short-term absence but it is not an appropriate way of covering medium to long-term absence or of dealing with a class when a teacher is not timetabled to teach them.

Specified Work is defined as:

- a) planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
- b) delivering lessons to pupils. This includes delivery via distance learning or computer aided techniques;
- c) assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and
- d) reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

Support staff may carry out specified work subject to a number of conditions. These are that:

- the support staff member must carry out the 'specified work' in order to assist or support the work of a qualified teacher in the school;
- the support staff member must be subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher in accordance with arrangements made by the headteacher of the school; and
- the headteacher must be satisfied that the support staff member has the skills, expertise and experience required to carry out the 'specified work'.

Leave of Absence Policy for Reasons Other Than Sickness:

Wirral CODE OF PRACTICE

FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS FROM TEACHERS

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Appeal Procedure
3. Responsibility of the Headteacher/Chair of Governors and School's Governing Body
4. Paid Leave of Absence
5. Unpaid Leave of Absence
6. Contractual Leave of Absence
7. Procedure for Requesting Leave of Absence

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Conditions of Service for Schoolteachers in England and Wales (The Burgundy Book) requires LAs to produce a local agreement in respect of non-contractual Leave of Absence for teachers.

A Recommended Practice was last produced and agreed by Professional Associations in January 1986. Following further consultation with Professional Associations this revised Code of Practice is commended to Governing Bodies for adoption.

In respect of Voluntary Aided Schools, where the Governing Body is the employer, the Code is recommended as good practice.

The Code allows both Governing Bodies and the LEA to adopt a fair and consistent approach when receiving requests from teachers for leave of absence.

The Director of Education, following consultation with Professional Associations, has delegated the authority to grant leave of absence with or without pay to Governing Bodies. It is recommended that the Governing Body delegates this responsibility to either the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors.

The Diocesan Director of Education for the Diocese of Chester and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Shrewsbury Education Service have recommended that in Aided Schools the Governing Body should delegate this responsibility to a Staffing or Personnel Committee who would decide requests for leave of absence.

To allow the Code to be easily followed, non-contractual Paid Leave of Absence has been split into the following categories:

- a) Personal or Professional Reasons
- b) Public Service Reasons

A category on Unpaid Leave of Absence and contractual leave of absence is also included.

It is suggested that all requests for leave of absence are submitted on a standard form – see Annex A.

2. **APPEAL PROCEDURE**

In the case of an Appeal against a decision of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors (see 1 - Introduction) to grant leave of absence with or without pay, the Director of Education retains his right to hear such an Appeal.

This Appeal Procedure will not apply to aided schools where teachers are the employees of the School's Governing Body.

The Diocesan Director of Education and for the Diocese of Chester and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Shrewsbury Education Service have recommended that in Aided schools independent governors should sit on an Appeal Panel if necessary.

3. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEADTEACHER/CHAIR OF GOVERNORS AND SCHOOL'S GOVERNING BODY

The Headteacher/Chair of Governors may grant Leave of Absence with pay for **up to 5** school days in any one academic year in respect of absences outlined in Section 4. In making a decision the Headteacher/Chair of Governors will take into consideration both the difficulty and cost of obtaining supply cover.

In applying a maximum approval, the academic year will commence on 1 September and finish on 31 August.

In exceptional circumstances the Headteacher/Chair of Governors can grant leave of absence with pay in excess of 5 days.

Applications (using the standard form – see Annex A) from teachers for leave of absence for reasons other than those outlined in Section 4 should be referred in writing to the Headteacher/Chair of Governors (see Section 7 – Procedure for Requesting Leave of Absence).

Teachers should give as much notice as possible bearing in mind that some reasons cannot be forecast. In these circumstances applications should be submitted retrospectively, as soon as possible after the event.

4. PAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The Governing Body is only able to grant up to 5 days leave of absence with pay in any one academic year, which covers all the reasons listed below (see previous paragraph 2 – Responsibility of the Headteacher/Chair of Governors and School's Governing Body).

a) <u>Personal/Professional Reasons</u>	<u>No of Paid School Days</u>
Serious Illness of a dependent person/relative (eg parent, spouse/partner, son/daughter brother or sister). Supporting letter from GP required.	Up to 5 days
Bereavement including the funeral of a dependent person (eg parent, spouse/partner, son/daughter, brother or sister) or if acting in a capacity of personal representative of a deceased close relative.	Up to 5 days
Attending the funeral of a relative/dependent person.	Actual time required but up to a maximum of ½ day plus travel time if local, or 1 day if out of the Borough.
Attending funeral in a professional education capacity.	½ day plus travel time
Wedding of a son/daughter, sister, brother, parent, grandparent.	1 day

To move house.	1 day
To attend one's own Degree Ceremony or where spouse/partner, son/daughter is an actual participant, to attend Degree Ceremony/Passing Out Parade.	1 day

In addition the Governing Body delegates to the Headteacher/Chair of Governors the power to grant paid leave of absence for the following reasons. In each individual case paid leave is as indicated in any one academic year and will be in addition to the above mentioned 5 school days only if the said days have already been exhausted.

To take examinations approved by the Headteacher.

For examinations scheduled during a teaching day ½ day for each particular examination and ½ day may be available for associated course revision.

Interviews for teaching appointments.

As required.

Emergency Doctor and Dental appointments
Evidence of Appointment required

Appointment time plus travel. Teacher to attend school otherwise they should be outside school hours before and after appointment wherever possible.

Hospital appointments and medical screening, eg Breast/Cervical.
Evidence of appointment required

Appointment time plus travel. Teacher to attend school before and after appointment wherever possible.

In exceptional circumstances (Hospital and Doctor appointments) to support a relative.

Appointment time plus travel. Teacher to attend school before and after appointment wherever possible.

b) Public Service Reasons

Jury Service (loss of earnings must be claimed).

As required.

Court Witness when called by the Police (loss of earnings must be claimed).

As required.

Court Witness when called by private individual.

As required but **without** pay

Magisterial Duties.	To be carried out during school holidays.
School Governors Meetings.	Whenever possible outside school hours
Commitments to HM Services, eg TA, Royal Navy Reserve (minus attendance payments).	To be carried out during school holidays.

5. UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Note: This is the maximum entitlement in any one academic year.

Major Religious Holidays (other than statutory holidays).	Up to 3 days.
Fertility Treatment. Evidence of appointment required and GP's recommendations if treatment is not available locally.	Appointment time plus travel.
Funeral of a close friend.	Actual time required but up to a maximum of ½ day plus travel time if local, or 1 day if out of Borough.

6. CONTRACTUAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE (use standard form – see Annex A)

Sickness	}	As per national or local agreement
Maternity Leave	}	
Paternity Leave	}	
Adoption Leave	}	

7. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Give as much notice as possible



A written request, using the standard Leave of Absence form, stating the reason to be submitted to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors (as appropriate).



Then as appropriate, either:

A Paid Leave of Absence Outlined in Section 4

Action: The Headteacher/Chair of Governors (as appropriate) to approve.

B Unpaid Leave of Absence Outlined in Section 5

Action: The Headteacher/Chair of Governors (as appropriate) to approve.

C Leave of Absence Requests not covered in Section 4 or 5

Action: The Headteacher/Chair of Governors (as appropriate) to approve or reject indicating whether this would be with or without pay.

D Unforeseen or Sudden Causes of Absence

A written request, stating the reason, to be submitted to the Headteacher/Chair of Governors (as appropriate) retrospectively but as soon as possible after the event.



The Headteacher/Chair of Governors (as appropriate) to write to the teacher either approving or rejecting the request - sending a copy for information to the Director of Education



Appeal against a decision to the Director of Education. (This is not applicable to Voluntary Aided Schools.)

Reminder

All should be aware that this policy reflects the fact that teachers and headteachers have fixed term times and cannot book annual leave throughout the year in the same way as many other workers.

Issues that will have to be addressed:

Establish a clear system of supervision and

support for staff delivering cover
supervision or specified work