

Waterthorpe
Nursery Infant School



Cover Supervision Policy
February 2018

Approved by: Steering Committee

Date: 6th February 2018

Next Review Date: Spring 2021

Waterthorpe NI School has adopted the CYPF Policy

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COVER SUPERVISION POLICY FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF “RARELY COVER”

Note:

This model policy is not intended to detract from guidance issued from WAMG (attached in Appendices B & C) or the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document 2009 section 4 paragraphs 47 to 90 (attached in Appendix D) which refers to cover arrangements, but instead is a model for schools to amend in order to facilitate the implementation of Rarely Cover with effect from 1 September 2009.

Further changes as a result of additional guidance from WAMG, if applicable, will need to be reflected in this document. This model policy has been produced following consultation with trade unions at local authority level, however, it is essential that each school's local context and circumstances are reflected and the model policy amended accordingly giving sufficient time for consultation at school level. This policy may be amended, subject to local consultation provided that it still provides for the contractual entitlement. However, the sections in *italic* indicate a need for amendment to suit each individual school's circumstances.

Please note, whilst the responsibility for implementing the policy lies with the headteacher, s/he may delegate the day to day responsibility to another member of staff. In some cases therefore, “Headteacher” may be replaced with the member of staff with the delegated responsibility.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The National Agreement, signed 15 January 2003, agreed contractual changes to teachers' pay and conditions. These included conditions under which support staff may undertake short term cover and specified work (under section 133 of the Education Act 2002). The changes with regard to cover took effect in two stages. From 1 September 2004, a maximum limit of 38 hours per year cover was implemented, and from 1st September 2009 teachers would be required only to cover rarely.
- 1.2 These provisions apply to all teachers, including Headteachers and other teachers on the leadership spine and Advanced Skills Teachers whether on permanent, fixed term or temporary contracts and for teachers on part-time contracts. For the purposes of brevity, the term “teacher” is used in this document, but it applies to all of the above. The only exceptions to the application of rarely cover are teachers employed wholly or mainly to undertake cover.
- 1.3 The School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document 2009 defines absence as “when the person(s) who has been timetabled to take a particular class or group is absent.” (Section 4 paragraph 57). Arranging cover is a key element of the school's whole approach to providing high quality education for all students in the absence of teaching staff.

- 1.4 One of the aims of the National Agreement 'Raising Standards and Tackling Workload' is to reduce the amount of cover for absent colleagues so that teachers only cover rarely, as this is not an effective use of their time.

From September 2009:

- Teachers will only be required to provide cover rarely.
- A robust system must be in place to eliminate foreseeable events, but is not expected to provide for events which are unforeseeable.
- The headteacher will ensure that when cover by a teacher is required under the rarely cover conditions, that it is shared equitably among all teachers (including the headteacher), taking account of their teaching and other duties and of the desirability of not using a teacher at the school until all other reasonable means of providing cover have been exhausted.
- The guaranteed PPA time which has formed part of legal conditions of employment from September 2005 will not be used for cover.

2 Commitment statement - Rarely Cover

2.1 *The Governors of Waterthorpe NI School wish to assert the commitment to complying with the National Agreement requirement that from 1st September 2009 Teachers should "rarely cover" classes they are not timetabled to teach and accordingly The Governors wish to ensure that a robust system is in place to deliver this.*

2.2 *It is noted that the guidance from national WAMG arrived late in the Spring Term 2009. The governors commit to all that is reasonably practical to implement this legal requirement of rarely cover from 1st September 2009 in the light of available guidance.*

3 Examples

"Rarely" for the purposes of this policy does not mean "never". Examples of circumstances that could arise in a rarely cover situation might include:

- providing lesson cover in an emergency situation where without doing so, the health, safety and well-being of students and/or staff are at risk
- exceptional absence of staff that cannot be pre-determined (outside the normal provision that should be in place for covering staff absence based on resourcing for historical patterns of absence and planned absence)
- when all the school's strategies for providing cover for absent teachers have been exhausted (all cover supervisor staff deployed, including other adults approved by the headteacher, regular cover teacher deployed and no agency supply teachers available).

4 School Strategies

In order to ensure effective strategies are in place to support "rarely cover" the school will consider the following:

- a. A clear strategy to ensure all teaching staff make arrangements so that appropriate work can be set for students who are being supervised in the event of their absence. Whilst this does not extend to the requirement for teachers on sick leave sending in work, there should be a system in place so that as a minimum, medium term planning is available in their absence (*insert schools' strategies eg planning accessible on IT systems*)
- b. The school calendar will be scrutinised in order to minimise the need for cover eg collapsed timetable for whole school enrichment days. Provision will be made for re-allocation of PPA time as a result of a collapsed timetable where PPA time has been affected.
- c. Ensure that the application of the Local Authority's Model Leave of Absence Policy (as a minimum) or the schools own leave of absence policy is implemented fairly and equitably.
- d. Consideration for alternative timetables for staff released from their normal teaching timetable ("gained time") for example due to post 16 end of term or examinations. Where a member of staff is absent long term, individual timetables may be reviewed and following consultation with the relevant teacher(s) trade union(s) changed where there is capacity in a teacher's timetable to do so.
- e. Where appropriate the governors will consider the appointment of teachers wholly or mainly for the purposes of cover.
- f. Where appropriate the governors will consider the appointment of Cover Supervisors / Senior Teaching Assistants level 3.
- g. Where appropriate the governors will consider the appointment of Higher Level Teaching Assistants or Curriculum specialists who may also be expected to carry out "Specified Work" in accordance with Section 133 of the Education Act 2002.
- h. Where possible the school will seek to have a "bank" of Cover Supervisors, HLTAs, Curriculum Specialists and Qualified teachers* who can be contacted to work on a supply basis in event of an urgent cover need. (**this list is in no particular order of priority, although a priority may be illustrated on an individual school basis and amendments made as necessary*).
- i. The school will annually examine historic patterns of absence and consider whether there should be increased temporary provision of, e, f or g in order to support any peaks in demand for cover eg winter months.
- j. When other strategies have been exhausted, the school will contact a range of preferred supply agencies to seek cover from a *qualified teacher or HLTA* (**amend or delete and prioritise as necessary*).
- k. When all of the above have been fully exhausted, a "rarely cover" circumstance may arise. (***Please see appendix A for flow chart.***) Rarely

cover will be monitored and the school will ensure that it is shared equitably between all teaching staff, including senior leaders and headteachers.

- i. A log will be maintained of the hours a teacher provides cover under “rarely cover”. The *headteacher / Business Manager** has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of provision and reporting annually to governors.

5 Medium and long-term absence

- 5.1 Medium and long-term absences, for example maternity leave or long-term illness, are more predictable and therefore more manageable. Student standards are paramount and such absence will be covered by a qualified teacher. (See exemplar flow chart appendix A) or, where it is deemed in the best interests of the children by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors, an Unqualified teacher with relevant qualifications leading to qualified teacher status within 6 months of appointment.
- 5.2 If a teacher on *direct* supply (i.e. casually paid through the school and not from an agency) works 4 consecutive weeks or more, the school will seek the advice of OD/HR regarding the suitability of a temporary fixed term contract.

6 Short term absence

The school defines ‘short’ term absence as being, for example:

- *Absences known in advance e.g. professional development/ medical appointment (if this cannot be arranged outside of the working day)*
- *Students only timetabled for occasional lessons which are affected by teacher absence and therefore the use of cover supervision over a longer period of time is appropriate. The headteacher will use professional judgement when deciding the length of time, a particular class could continue with cover supervision. It is anticipated that the maximum time will be 3 days.*

NB: WAMG Guidance for schools on cover supervision states that where a class is predominantly led by one teacher for the majority of the day, it is likely that cover supervision will very quickly become specified work. It would clearly be inappropriate in such settings for a class to be supervised for more than three consecutive days.

7 Cover Supervision

- 7.1 Cover Supervision is one of a range of strategies which will be considered by the headteacher when effectively dealing with short term absence. It allows him/her to deal with teacher absence in a way which is compatible with the standards agenda and the efficient use of resources. Our key considerations will be:

- the extent to which continuity of learning can be maintained,
- the length of time students would be working without a teacher,

- the particular needs of the classes concerned,
- the skills and experience of the cover supervisor,
- the workload of the teacher providing cover preparation work for the cover supervisors.

7.2 The headteacher will use professional judgment to determine the precise duties of staff carrying out cover supervision. This has been agreed with the whole school staff and supports the fact that whenever possible, students will be supervised by staff known to them, staff who are familiar with school's policies and procedures who can provide continuity until the teacher returns.

Core principles will be:

- short term supervision of work that has been set in accordance with school policy,
- managing the behaviour of students in line with school policies whilst they are undertaking this work to ensure a constructive learning environment,
- whilst there is no active teaching taking place, responding to students' questions for example about process and procedures,
- dealing with any problems or emergencies according to the school's policies and procedures,
- collecting any completed work after the lesson and returning it to the appropriate teacher,
- reporting back as appropriate using the school's agreed referral procedures on the behaviour of students during the class and any issues arising,
- the strategies for setting work do not place excessive burdens on a teacher's planning, preparation and assessment.

8 Who will undertake cover supervision?

8.1 Cover supervision can be undertaken by cover supervisors, Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), Senior Teaching Assistants (level 3), Curriculum Specialists and qualified teachers contracted to the school provided it is only "rarely" or if they are employed wholly or mainly for the purposes of cover. Alternatively, qualified teachers can cover on either a direct supply basis or through a supply agency.

8.2 Cover supervision by effectively deployed cover supervisors or curriculum specialists with appropriate skills and training is a fundamental part of the school cover strategy. Job descriptions and pay and grading structure (at time of writing a new structure is under consultation) are in line with LA guidelines.

8.3 It is a highly responsible role and the school will ensure that staff undertaking such cover should:

- have an enhanced disclosure from Criminal Records Bureau,
- be familiar with the full range of school policies, particularly those regarding health & safety, equal opportunities, special needs and safeguarding,

- have the necessary skills to manage safely classroom activities,
- understand and be able to use a range of strategies to deal with classroom behaviour as a whole and also individual behavioural needs.

8.4 In addition to cover supervision duties:

- Higher Level Teaching Assistants and curriculum specialists can also be required to deliver “specified work” as defined under Section 133 of the Education Act and
- Qualified teachers will be expected to undertake the professional duties of a qualified teacher, in accordance with Part 12 of the Teachers Pay and Conditions Document.

8.5 School’s cover supervision structure: suggest inclusion of:

- *how cover supervisors are deployed,*
- *line management responsibility,*
- *support systems in operation, including professional supervision,*
- *performance management.*

8.6 These members of staff, both currently employed and future recruits, will be an integral part of all staff development and receive specific training as needed.

Training: available sources:

- Training materials include those used to assist teaching assistants meet Occupational Standards.
- Teaching Assistant: Induction Training.
- Support Staff introductory training.
- LA/private organisation training.
- School’s own training.
- Some staff may have received HLTA (Higher Level Teaching Assistant) training.

8.7 Training will form part of a developmental career structure for the staff concerned. *The school will seek the advice of the LA to ensure posts are of an appropriate grade and that job descriptions are in line with LA guidelines, reflecting role and responsibility. New job descriptions must be subject to OD/HR advice and Pay and Grading allocations panel**. Teachers pay and conditions will be subject to the provisions of the teachers pay and conditions document, which is statutory.

* Arrangements for voluntary aided and foundation schools may differ.

8.8 Parents will be informed of cover arrangements, *as outlined in the school prospectus.*

9 Gained Time

Gained time is when teachers are released from some of their timetabled teaching commitment as a result of students being on a school trip, study or examination leave. A teacher's gained time is not exempt from the rarely cover provisions. The headteacher will direct teachers to devote this time to activities from the nationally agreed list:

- 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 students to provide additional learning support,
- supporting selected students with coursework.

10 Educational Visits

10.1 Educational visits are planned activities where a teacher:

- may be absent due to participating in such activities. Such absence will be covered by a range of strategies including Cover Supervisors, Supply Teachers, other adults approved by the headteacher, HLTAs and Level 3 Teaching Assistants in accordance with this policy,
- may acquire non-contact time as a result of a class they would normally have taught being absent on an educational visit. On such occasions, the guidance for gained time will apply.

10.2 Residential visits: as these are voluntary and outside the statutory 1265 hours, the hours, beyond the school day, do not count as cover

11 Qualified Teachers: employed on a supply basis

11.1 When a supply teacher is employed to provide cover, we will ensure that, he/she will be actively teaching and not mainly supervising students.

12 Adoption

12.1 Staff and local trade unions have had an opportunity to comment on the school's adoption of this policy as part of a local consultation process. However, the main body of the policy has been consulted upon at Local Authority level with full time Trade Union representatives present and adopted as an LA Model policy.

12.2 This policy has been amended and agreed by the governors' *steering committee* following local consultation with staff and Trade Union Representatives.

Appendices

- A Flow Chart
- B WAMG Guidance for Schools on Cover Supervision
- C WAMG Guidance on “Rarely Cover”
- D Extract from Teachers Pay and Conditions Document 2009
- E Local Authority’s covering letter for model policy

Useful websites and contacts:

Guidance on the National Agreement, including a link to Teachers Pay and Conditions Document:

- www.tda.gov.uk/remodelling/nationalagreement/cover

Cover Supervision:

- www.tda.gov.uk/support/support_staff_roles/learningsupportstaff/cover_supervisors

Sheffield Local Social Partnership (Supporting the implementation of the National Agreement)

- www.sheffield.gov.uk/lsp

- School Workforce Modernisation Team:

Penny Walters, OD Business consultant penny.walters@sheffield.gov.uk
Tel 0114 293 0892

- **Your School OD / HR Business Consultant**

Jill Tingle: email jill.tingle@sheffield.gov.uk Tel 0114 293 0889

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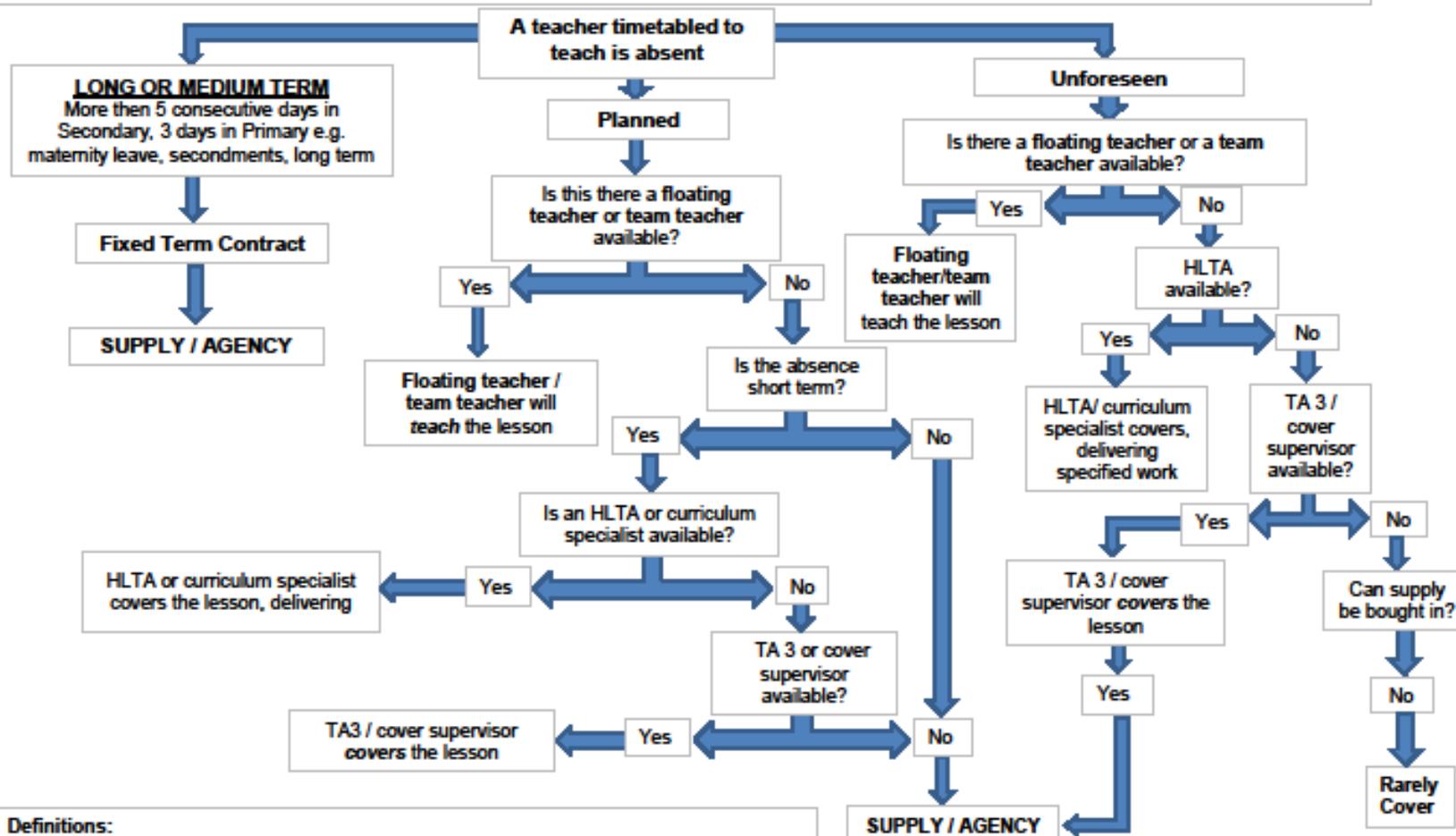
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Appendix A Exemplar flowchart for Rarely Cover

Staffing structures will be resourced on the basis of historical patterns of absence and foreseeable events in accordance with the school's cover policy.
 NB This is purely an example chart the order of priority for each option must be considered in light of individual school's circumstances and may be altered accordingly and



Definitions:
 A Floating teacher is a teacher employed wholly or mainly for the purposes of cover
 A team teacher is a teacher who is regularly timetabled to teach a particular class with another teacher(s)

quality Impact Assessment Template

1.2.1.1 Name of policy or project being assessed?	Date
Cover supervision	16/11/17

1.2.1.2 Priority Level	
High	
Medium	
Low	X

Lead Officer: Helen Stokes
Members of the assessment team: Helen Stokes
Others involved in the assessment (peer review/external challenge): Steering Committee members

2 <u>What are the aims of the policy or project?</u> To ensure that local authority guidelines, for dealing with cover supervision issues, are followed
Who is the intended customer/service user of this project or policy? Governors & staff
3 <u>What are the desired outcomes from this project or policy?</u> Clear guidance for cover supervision decisions
List any other key policies, procedures, projects or strategies that this policy/project has implications on: Staffing, CPD, leave of absence, HBVD, Equal Opportunities, performance Management, whistle blowing, work life balance, capability

3.1.1.1.1.1.1.1 <i>What are the racial, disability and gender equality implications of the policy or project?</i> To ensure that the way we deal with cover supervision is not adversely affected by race, gender, or disability
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<p>Does the policy or project have any significant positive impact for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Different racial groups ▪ Disabled persons ▪ Men and women ▪ Boys and girls 	<p>NO</p>
<p>Does the policy or project have any significant adverse impact for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Different racial groups ▪ Disabled persons ▪ Men and women ▪ Boys and girls 	<p>Yes: if the capability is linked to a disability or to a racial issue. The policy does not state any allowances or other actions when the capability is questioned for either of these.</p>
<p>Do you have any evidence?</p>	<p>Text within the policy gives guidelines for the procedure and no mention of the groups above</p>
<p>Is there any way that you could reduce or eliminate the adverse impact or increase positive impact?</p>	<p>To get advice</p>

<p>Action to take : To liaise with the local authority on guidelines/changes to policy: Local authority policy template used</p>			
<p>If you have indicated there is a negative impact, can it be justified? To get advice</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If you have indicated there is a negative impact and it cannot be justified, is it discrimination? N/A</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If you have answered YES, please list all the changes that you have made to eliminate this discrimination:</p>			
<p>Please state how will you monitor the policy or project?: Policy review (by staff/governors by dates on policy)</p>			

<p>Signed (Person completing the form):</p> <p></p>	<p>Date: 16/11/17</p>
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