



# MARISH



## Academy Trust

# Rarely Cover Policy Version 7.0

**Date:** January 2024

### **Summary**

This document summarises the procedures in place at the Trust with regard to short term cover for unforeseeable teacher absence. It has been created in accordance with School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document 2023 and guidance on school teachers' pay and conditions.

## 1 Context

Every school is statutorily obliged to have a Rarely Cover Policy to ensure that teachers are not being routinely used to cover for absent teaching colleagues.

At Marish Academy Trust schools class teachers will only be asked to cover for an absent colleague in exceptional circumstances. For example: in an emergency with no notice, and this would only happen until an additional teacher could be arranged to take the class.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the conditions outlined in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document 2023 and guidance on school teachers' pay and conditions (paragraph 50.7 and 52.7). The paragraphs state:

50.7. Subject to paragraph 52.7 supervise and so far as is practicable, teach any pupils 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).

## 2 Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the high quality of teaching and learning delivered and received at the schools within Marish Academy Trust is not jeopardised by teaching staff absence, whether long or short term, planned or unforeseeable.

## 3 Short Term Absence

For the purpose of this policy this is taken to mean any time up to no more than two working days.

## 4 Long Term absence

For the purpose of this policy this is taken to mean any time more than two days and may include known long term absence; e.g. severe illness.

## 5 Specific Conditions of Cover

- Marish Academy Trust recognises that providing cover is not an effective use of a teacher's time.
- Marish Academy Trust is committed to exhausting all other reasonable strategies for providing cover before asking a member of staff.
- Marish Academy Trust recognises that teachers/Headteacher/SLT on release time should only be asked to cover rarely, in circumstances which are unforeseeable.
- Where teachers are rarely required to cover, the senior leadership will ensure that cover is shared equitably among all teachers in the school, including, where feasible, the Headteacher.
- Both schools will maintain a record of cover undertaken by teachers to inform planning and monitoring.
- The guaranteed PPA time of teachers at any school forms part of the legal conditions of employment and cannot be used for cover. However, if occasions arise when so many staff are

absent, that to give PPA might compromise our duty of care or safe staffing level - PPA will be rearranged for another date.

- Where the need for at least half a day's cover is identified, we will deploy the following resources in the first instance:
  - Higher Level Teaching Assistants
  - Leadership Team
  - School Supply Staff
  - Non-class based teaching staff
  - Agency Supply Staff

## **6 Cover Decisions**

The senior leadership team will take account of the following key factors when deciding to use cover supervision:

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

## **7 Support Staff**

Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) and trainees will be asked to cover for a teacher who is on a course (planned) or is unforeseeably absent (unplanned).

## **8 Cover Arrangements**

The senior leadership team will, under normal circumstances, arrange cover for an unforeseeable absence that falls before the school day begins and the Trust Office Manager will arrange all cover for planned absence. Long term arrangements will be decided by the Leadership Team.

## **9 Monitoring and Review**

The Executive Headteacher, with the Executive Finance Lead will monitor the effectiveness of these strategies for providing cover on a term by term basis to ensure the quality of supervision and pupil progress and behaviour are as required. Patterns of absence are recorded following Schools HR Co-operative procedures and regular reports are made to the strategic Board of the Trust's Governing Body.

The Executive Headteacher and Governing Body will carry out a biannual review of this policy.