



SCHOOL TEACHER COVER POLICY

September 2017

School Teacher Cover Policy

INTRODUCTION

Radius Trust is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils and students. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that high levels of quality teaching that support learning are consistently maintained across the Trust.

This policy applies to all Radius Trust employees and should be read in conjunction with the Pay Policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

In order to meet the objective of recruiting a high quality workforce, Radius Trust will generally seek not to recruit unqualified teachers.

Radius Trust will make efforts to employ high quality supply teachers to cover planned and unplanned absence. The Trust recognises there may be some circumstances where it is not appropriate to bring in a supply teacher.

In schools, Senior TAs (STAs) can take on higher level tasks and responsibilities that reflect their level of expertise which can include working with individual pupils, small groups and whole classes. There may be occasions where it is in the best interests of the pupils for some activities or lessons to be led by a Teaching Assistant (TA). TAs receive additional ongoing training from the school's Senior Leadership Team as part of a rolling programme of CPD that ensures they can carry out these duties effectively. Senior Teaching Assistants (STAs) should have cover supervision built into their job descriptions and can discharge such duties as a result of this. Where this is the case, those individuals will have these duties monitored through formal appraisal.

In all instances where TAs lead teaching and learning activity, such activity will be subject to regular monitoring by the school Senior Leadership Team.

Responsibility for enforcement

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2004 Section 4 sets out the provisions for cover.

Cover for planned or unplanned short term absences (cover supervision) may be provided by persons who are not qualified teachers. The Head/Principal needs to ensure that any persons used to provide teacher cover have been appropriately trained, particularly in pupil behaviour support and management. Such training is important to ensure the best outcomes for the pupils.

Cover supervision is particularly valid where work has been set, or where pupils are able to undertake effective self-directed learning. Strategies should be devised to

ensure that the arrangements for providing appropriate work for pupils who are being supervised do not place excessive additional burdens of planning, preparations and assessment on teachers or Teaching Assistants.

When deciding whether cover supervision is appropriate or not, the Head/Principal will consider:

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

Senior Teaching Assistants (STAs)

Radius Trust supports the use of STAs to support pupil learning.

The primary function of the STA is to support and assist teachers. They may be deployed as one of the strategies schools choose to release teachers for guaranteed PPA time, provided that they carry out work specified in the regulations made under Section 133 of the 2002 Education Act under the direction and supervision of a teacher.

In addition they may be used for short-term cover, but Heads/Principals would need to balance their use in this way against the educational desirability of regularly removing them from planned activities with the teachers to whom they are normally assigned.

A STA can be directed to undertake “specified work” which is defined in the Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2003 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.

STAs must only undertake specified work:

- To support and assist a qualified teacher;
- Under the supervision of a qualified teacher.

STAs may have HLTA status. HLTA assessment includes confirmation of Level 2 in Maths and English, participation in a 3 day preparation course, a training needs analysis, completion of a preparation for assessment and a half day workplace assessment.

Maintaining a record of cover

Heads/Principals are required to record the amount of cover undertaken by staff other than teachers whose contract and job description specifies that a proportion of their time is/will be available to provide cover supervision.

Ideally, cover supervisors should not be used for more than the first 3 days of absence and Radius Trust will take all reasonable endeavours to ensure this is the case. The intention of the policy is to allow flexibility in covering one-off or short blocks of sessions, largely to cover for planned or un-planned absence and PPA.

Cover supervision should only be used for short term absences and Heads/Principals will use their professional judgement in determining what should be regarded as a short term absence.

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Pay Policy