



NORTH BIRMINGHAM ACADEMY

ACADEMY COVER POLICY

Introduction

This policy applies to **all** employees of the Academy, and has been agreed by the governing body following consultation with the staff and union representatives at the Academy. The Personnel Committee of the governing body, through the principal, will ensure that the policy is implemented. The membership and terms of reference of the committee are attached at Appendix 1.

This policy should be read alongside the Academy Pay Policy, which details the employment terms and conditions of all employees at the Academy, and the Academy Development Plan.

'Cover Supervision' occurs when there is no active teaching taking place. Students will continue their learning by carrying out a pre-prepared exercise under supervision. Cover supervision does not involve carrying out specified work as outlined in the Education (Specified Work and Registration) (England) Regulations 2003 and accompanying guidance.

The governing body recognises the importance of developing a whole Academy cover policy, to ensure the effective deployment of staff providing cover. It outlines:

- The circumstances in which cover supervision will be appropriate;
- What the role of the staff providing cover supervision will be; and
- The skills and knowledge required to carry out that role effectively.

Context

The term 'cover' refers to any occasion when the teacher normally responsible for teaching a particular class is absent from the classroom during the time they have been timetabled to teach. One of the requirements of the National Agreement on '*Raising Standards and Tackling Workload*' is to reduce significantly the amount of cover for absent colleagues which teacher at an Academy are required to carry out. Providing cover is not an effective use of their time. An initial contractual limit of a maximum of 38 hours a year was introduced from September 2004, with an exception that, in the longer term, teachers will rarely cover at all.

Principles for the deployment of cover supervision

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The principal will use her professional judgment to determine the precise responsibilities of staff carrying out cover supervision duties. Needs may differ depending on particular classes, and the principal will need to take individual circumstances into account. In all situations, cover supervision will include some core elements:

- Supervising work that has been set in accordance with the Academy policy; managing the behaviour of students whilst they are undertaking this work to ensure a constructive environment;
- Responding to any questions from students about process and procedures;
- Dealing with any immediate problems or emergencies according to the Academy's policies and procedures;
- Collecting any completed work after the lesson and returning it to the appropriate teacher;
- Reporting back as appropriate using the Academy's agreed referral procedures on the behaviour of students during the class and any issues arising.

Cover supervision will only be used for short term absences. These might be known in advance (for example where a teacher has a medical appointment or is undergoing professional development) or unexpected (for example absence due to illness). Longer term absence e.g. due to long term sick or maternity leave will be covered by a teacher.

The use of cover supervision over a longer period of time may be appropriate where students are only timetabled for occasional lessons which are affected by teacher absence.

The principal will take the following will take the following factors into account when deciding whether the use of cover supervision is appropriate or not. The key factors are the:

- Extent to which continuity of learning can be maintained;
- Length of time a particular group of students would be working without a teacher;
- Proportion of the total curriculum time affected in a specific subject over the course of a term.

Cover Supervisors

Cover Supervisors will be employed and might be attached to particular subjects, departments or year groups. Cover Supervisors can be can be required to spend all of their contracted hours providing cover, although there may be occasions where they are asked to undertake other teaching assistant or administrative duties.

Cover supervision is a responsible role involving as it does sole charge of a group of students. The governing body, through the principal, will ensure that any staff deployed to undertake cover supervision will have the necessary skills and knowledge before being given charge of a class. The principal will ensure that staff undertaking cover supervision:

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- Are familiar with the full range of Academy policies, particularly those regarding health and safety, equal opportunities issues and special educational needs (SEN);
- Will have undertaken specific behaviour management and classroom management training to be able to:
 - Have the necessary skills to manage safely classroom activities, the physical learning space and resources for which they are responsible.
 - Understand and are able to use a range of strategies to deal with classroom behaviour as a whole and also individual behavioural needs.

Work to be undertaken during periods of cover supervision

Work will be set in accordance with the Academy's procedures and will include the development of a bank of suitable material that can be drawn upon. Heads of Department/Subject Leaders will be required to ensure that such banks of material are readily available. It is not intended to place additional burdens of planning, preparation and assessment on teachers. Work set will be relevant to the age group and the point the students have reached in the curriculum to assist with continuity.

Accountability

The principal will retain responsibility for the effective use of cover supervision in respect of outcomes and impact on standards.

Policy adopted by NBA Governing Body on: _____

Senior Leader with policy responsibility: _____

Date of next review: _____