

STAFF ABSENCE COVER POLICY

Staff procedures in cases of absence:

1. Unplanned absence

In cases of illness or unplanned, absence staff should telephone the school office as soon as possible after **8.00am but before 8.15am**. Although it is appreciated that this is not always possible, an email with instructions for your classes would be appreciated.

2. Planned absence

This should be preceded by a Leave of Absence form. These are available in the school office and are returnable to the Head Teacher as well in advance as possible. They are submitted to the Education Department for approval. For the purposes of cover arrangements, this form should also be used for trips, development and other school business. Hospital visits, medical treatment etc are sickness absence and do not require a Leave of Absence form but please let the Office Manager know the dates you are to be absent.

When absence is known in advance, work should always be left for classes. This should be recorded on the pro-forma accompanying this policy a copy of this can be put on disk if required. Additional copies may be obtained from the school office. A copy should be left on your desk and one given to the Principal Teacher or a designated member of your department. The Principal Teacher should be informed of planned absences in advance. Please leave the type of work which can be covered by a non-specialist unless you know in advance that specialist cover is available.

Cover for absent staff

The first three days of absence are covered internally. Supply teachers are brought in after this period and on occasions when there are particular problems in covering classes, for example, when a significant number of staff are absent. Ideally, a specialist supply teacher will be used but this is not always possible.

The amount of cover a teacher is asked to do will vary according to their non-contact time. The current system for cover is outlined below:

- In the first instance an effort is made to provide cover within the department.
- Staff with most non-contact time are the first to be asked to cover. In this way, teachers with only one period above the minimum are asked to cover only occasionally.
- Cover slips are given out on the morning of absence or, where possible, on the previous day. However, in order to allocate classes as appropriately as possible it is usually necessary to wait until the actual day so that there is an overall picture of the absence.
- A daily list of absence cover is posted on the staff room notice board.

Responsibilities of Principal Teachers:

- Where absence is known in advance, it would be appreciated if Principal Teachers would provide a list of any internal departmental cover which could be provided.
- A visit to the class at the start of each covered period would ensure that the teacher knows what work is to be done.
- Work for classes should be recorded on the forms provided. These will be issued to departments and additional copies may be obtained from the school office. Where possible, one copy should be left on the desk in the appropriate room and one with the Principal Teacher. Where it is the Principal Teacher who is absent, it would be appreciated if a copy could be given to another member of the department who would then be available to answer queries or to the Assistant Head Teacher responsible for cover.