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COVER POLICY FOR SHORT TERM ABSENCE

25 period week

Objectives:

1. To share 'cover' fairly and equitably.
2. Offer guidance to help the system work more easily for everyone.

Practice:

If no one was ill or had to attend an important appointment in the middle of the day, there would be no need for cover. However, we do not live in a 'perfect' world and staff absences are part of every profession and this policy is intended to explain and help the process, so it is fair to all.

1. A planned absence.

Any planned absence (INSET, Hospital appointment, and meeting with a parent or visit to another school for example) must be approved by Sarah Quenault (INSET) or Rob Allsopp (everything else!) **at least 7 working days in advance of the absence.** This includes any event that does not require cover.

The notice period gives time for all involved to review the absences already in the diary and organise 'supply cover' if needed. To get the OK, an Absence Request Form is available in SharePoint: Haute Vallée Home > School Policies > HV, on the school network: T:\SCHOOL MANAGEMENT\COVER, or from the school office.

2. An unplanned absence - sickness.

Because of the short notice involved with unplanned absences, this type of cover event causes the most difficulty if communication is not clear. The following procedure is intended to make the process easier for the absent person and for staff in school:

- Make the decision to be off work in good time, but text **07797 724914 (Emma Pichon on the School Cover Phone) between 7.00am and 7.30am.** It would be helpful if the text could be sent as near to 7.00am as possible. Emma will text you back to confirm receipt of the text. If you do not receive a confirmation text, please ring Emma directly at school 736524.
- Make contact with your HOD / designated colleague to organise work for the period of the absence.
- Giving everyone as much notice as possible really helps.
- Leaving a message after 8.00am with the school switchboard is not helpful, but please contact Emma on **07797 724914** or the office on 736524 if an unforeseen event makes you late.

HOD's coordinate organisation of departmental cover communications such that each member of the department has a working procedure in place which is understood by all department staff, including what happens when the HOD is absent. Have this contact with the HOD / designated colleague organised so you know what time to phone or e-mail to ensure contact is made. Give them plenty of time to organise your arrangements **and themselves** for the day.



3. An unplanned absence during the school day.

If you are taken ill or called to leave during the day to collect a sick son or daughter for example, please talk directly with Rob Allsopp in the first instance, and then speak with Emma Pichon (Office Manager) about any classes that require covering so that adequate cover is arranged.

- 4. Special Leave and Childcare/Care of dependant** - (Dependants are defined as the employee's partner, child or parent (normally close relatives) or someone living in the same house as the employee who is not a lodger, tenant, boarder or employee) An employee can have Special Leave only if their child or dependant is taken seriously ill (Carer's Leave). Special Leave does not cover ordinary childhood illnesses such as tummy upsets and colds which can be treated by their GP. In these circumstances non-teaching term - time only staff in schools are expected to make up any time taken or take unpaid leave. For teaching staff any time taken up to 5 days will be redirected to undirected hours, however, time in excess of 5 days is expected to be taken as unpaid leave. "Seriously ill" is a condition defined as serious by a medical practitioner, which may or may not require hospitalisation.

5. Other points.

- Please help keep absences down by arranging personal appointments including medical appointments during lunch or after work.
- Non-contact time is not 'free time' but part of teachers contracted hours and should be used for the benefit of students.
- Department Meetings should be arranged after 2.50 pm.
- Always use the signing out book and inform the office team when leaving site to avoid a long search for you when that last-minute cover has to be arranged.
- There are many States Policies covering staff absences, know what you are reasonably entitled to and what the school can expect from you. Appendix 1 of this policy holds a copy of the absence types which can be requested.

6. How is 'Cover' fairly divided up?

Government of Jersey Teachers terms and conditions of employment contain reference to "38 hours of cover a year". This means that a teacher can be used for 38 hours of cover in any academic year. Staff with more than 10% non contact time can be used for more cover. Please see below. The Haute Vallée curriculum design and the Haute Vallée Cover Policy seeks to work well within the limit and not to it, while fairly distributing cover. Please note that the 10% non-contact time is calculated from the actual contact time. There may be occasions when you are required to undertake more than one cover in a week, when this happens, every effort will be taken to avoid using you the following week if this is possible – cover will still not exceed 38 hours of cover in a year.

Not everyone has a full timetable and we are overstaffed in certain areas. Staff with lighter timetables will be used for cover first (wherever possible) to even up varying contact time across staff timetables, these staff will also do more cover. This will also recognise staff on heavy timetables and see them do proportionally less cover, if any, which is fair. An "on call" lesson although on occasion can be extremely busy, will not be classed the same as a normal teaching lesson but will still count.

- Scale point holders may attract additional non-contact time. This is on an individual basis but generally, for example, a KS Coordinator on an SA1 will attract one additional non-contact period and an HOD on a SA5 will attract 2 additional non-contact periods and so on.
- Cover is divided up as a single lesson (60 minutes) as the norm.
- Notice of cover arrangements are listed in the Staff Room by 8am each morning and should be checked regularly during the day. The list can also be viewed in SIMS.



- Duties are not included in this policy as they fall under a different area of the Teacher's Terms and Conditions.
- As with all policies, this one is constantly under review, and I would welcome constructive suggestions for improvement.

COVER LESSONS – GUIDANCE NOTES AND EXPECTATIONS

In the event of an absence from lessons, teachers should plan and resource a lesson which is absolutely 'fool proof' to the member of staff/supply teacher. The lesson should be appropriate, stimulating and manageable for students. If we all follow this policy it will reduce the disruption to learning and make covering lessons for absent colleagues less onerous for all staff.

SUPPLY STAFF

We are always grateful to supply staff for ensuring our students continue to receive a good standard of education at Haute Vallée. Supply staff will need to be made aware of the correct procedures regarding registration, classroom management, rewards and sanctions. It is the responsibility of the respective HOD to ensure the supply teacher has all that is required to enable them to cover the lesson effectively.

EXPECTATIONS FOR COVER LESSONS

Heads of Departments (or 2 i/c in event of the absence of the HOD) should:

- Be notified of staff absence in advance
- Ensure they know what work has been sent
- Know where the instructions and resources for cover lessons are
- Assist in settling the class at the start if this is felt to be necessary

Also

- Teachers should use class charts for the seating plan and register.
- Instructions for the lesson should be clearly written for the teacher
- Exercise books / textbooks and worksheets / paper and spare writing equipment needed for the lesson should be readily accessible

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PLANNING COVER LESSONS

Lessons should be self-contained i.e., 'Finish off the work you were doing last lesson...' is NOT appropriate.

- I. Pair work or discussion exercises are not suitable for cover lessons. Digital Films/DVDs are ONLY suitable for cover lessons when they are relevant, ready to play and integral to the lesson.
- II. Staff should ensure that all learning styles are catered for in their planning. For example, the instructions 'Design a poster...' will only appeal to students with a visual preference and will immediately alienate students who find drawing hard. Offering a choice of activity is guaranteed to appeal to students and involve them in the learning process e.g., reading, writing responses and some graphics.
- III. Where a creative activity such as the above is given, a supply of pencils / paper and colours should be provided. These should be issued and collected back in by the supply / cover teacher. They may be required for another lesson.
- IV. For open ended activities, it is extremely helpful to leave specific success criteria for the task so that the students are clear of the expectations and can give of their best.
- V. Establishing deadlines for the lesson is also motivational and differentiates by outcome. For example, 'By the end of this lesson all students must have completed x task / most should have completed... x task / some could complete x task...'
- VI. With lower ability students help sheets should be left and supply / cover staff need to be made aware.



- VII. Whenever possible, feedback should be given to students on the teachers return. This adds value to the cover lesson, whether this is done verbally or written.
- VIII. In the event of unforeseen and prolonged absence, obviously the task of setting cover becomes more onerous. Heads of Departments should liaise with their staff to ensure that work set is appropriate, so that the curriculum and scheme of learning can continue for our students.

EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF COVERING LESSONS

Staff are reminded that it is part of a teacher's task to 'undertake an appropriate share of all collective responsibilities including substitution for an absent colleague...' The lesson should be conducted in such a way as to ensure the students experience the minimum disruption.

- Supply / cover staff are expected to remain in the allocated classroom and are asked not to move the class and resources to their own teaching area because:

Seating plans are no longer effective

Resources get lost in transit or are not easily transferable

Learning time is wasted

In the event of need, classes and staff cannot be traced by the school office

- Registers should be taken at the beginning of the lesson using Classcharts, if Classcharts is unavailable and hard copies have been provided, the office should be made aware of students present/absent within the first 10 minutes of the lesson by telephone extension 802 or 800. Seating plans should be observed.
- Work should be issued and instructed as left by the teacher given to the class. The supply / cover teacher is expected to check the progress of the students and keep order and discipline.
- If arranging cover in a Computer room/Google Classroom, please ensure that the work is clearly defined. Open ended tasks such as 'use the internet to search for information on...' will not be adequate for a one-hour lesson. Detailed instructions should be left for the cover staff. It is not acceptable to allow students to play on games or listen to music at any time.

In the event of behavioural problems, the RTL room procedure or the 'On Call' procedure should be used. Please call Reception on 800 if you would like the 'On Call' to come to your classroom.

Supply staff should complete a Cover Lesson Feedback form which can be located underneath the Cover Noticeboard in the Staff Room – once complete, please return to Rob Allsopp's tray in the Staff Room. If the absent teacher has any concerns regarding the lesson that was covered in their absence, they should complete a Cover Feedback – Absent Teacher form and return to Rob Allsopp.



COVER LESSON FEEBACK FORM - Supply Staff

Please complete this form and return to Robert Allsopp (tray located in the staff room).
Thank you.

Date of Cover: _____ Staff Covered: _____

Year: _____ Group: _____ Period: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

There was a seating plan	YES / NO
There were instructions / resources provided	YES / NO
There was enough work to keep the class engaged.	YES / NO
Work set was appropriate for the group	YES / NO

Comments:

Signed: _____ Staff Initials: _____



COVER LESSON FEEBACK FORM - Absent Teacher

If you have any concerns regarding your covered lesson, please complete this form explaining the reasons why you are concerned and return to Robert Allsopp (tray located in the staff room).

Thank you.

Date of Cover: _____

Staff Covered: _____

Year: _____

Group: _____

Period: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

Comments:

Signed: _____

Staff Initials: _____



Appendix 1.

Taken from the Terms and Conditions of Service for Teachers February 2013

Section 10: Other Leave

Introduction

In additions to the arrangements detailed in Section 2 paragraph 14, leave of absence may be granted by the Headteacher or Director of ESC under certain circumstances.

Leave of Absence is to be Granted by the Headteacher

In all normal circumstances, having regard to the merits of the individual case and the needs of the school, a Headteacher may grant leave of absence in accordance with the Schedule of Guidelines for Leave of Absence. However, the schedule does not imply an entitlement in any particular circumstances.

Schedule of Guidelines for Leave of Absence

The following schedule does not constitute an entitlement but indicates what may be granted by Headteachers subject to the needs of the service and the merit of individual cases.

REASON FOR ABSENCE	PAID	ANNUAL FLEXI UNPAID	NOTES
COMPASSIONATE			
Bereavement of close relative	√		Up to 5 days
Bereavement more distant relative	√		Up to 1 day
Funeral of close friend or colleague		√	Up to half a day
CARER'S LEAVE			
Serious illness of family member	√		Up to 10 days in any 12 month period
Continued illness of family member		√	Up to 1 month in a 12 month period
MEDICAL / DENTAL etc, APPOINTMENTS			
In Jersey GP, Dentist, Optician, Chiropractor etc. (planned appointments)		√	Duration of appointment but should be where possible at the start or end of working day
In Jersey hospital appointment	(√)		Duration of appointment
UK hospital appointment (prior to treatment)	√		1 day taken as sick leave
Accompanying persons for off island medical appointment		√	As agreed
DOMESTIC SITUATIONS			
Unforeseeable, unplanned domestic or personal circumstances which need to be addressed urgently (excludes childcare)	√		One day per occasion up to a maximum of 4 in any 12 month rolling period (at discretion of CO may be increased to 6 in any 12 month rolling period, in exceptional circumstances)
Moving house (when unable to take annual or flexi leave during employee's normal working week)		√	Unpaid
Home deliveries or repairs or personal appointments		√	
Breakdown of childcare arrangements		√	
Graduation of a close relative	√		1 day



Interviews for posts within the States of Jersey	√		Duration of Interview
Interviews for posts external to the States of Jersey		√	Duration of Interview
Unforeseen inclement weather disrupting travel or domestic arrangements		√	
Unforeseen inclement weather disrupting travel when on business for the States of Jersey	√		
PUBLIC SERVICE			
Jury	√		For duration of service
Witness at Court or professional hearing, if on behalf of States of Jersey, summoned or issued with Court Notice	√		For duration of service
Service on external committees		√	As agreed
Reservists or Territorial Army	√		Time as required
Training with the Auxiliary Armed Forces (excluding cadet forces)	√		Paid leave up to a maximum of 2 weeks and 3 days
Training with the Auxiliary Armed Forces - cadet forces		√	Up to a maximum of 2 weeks and 3 days
RNLI	√		Time as required
Retained fire fighters		√	(paid as retained fire fighters)
Honorary Police	√		Up to 5 days for training, other paid leave as required
Charitable Volunteering on Island or Overseas		√	
STUDY & EXAMINATIONS RELEVANT TO JOB			
Certificate/Diploma (excludes resits)	√		1 day per module up to a max of 4 days
Degree Level (excludes resits)	√		2 days per module up to a max of 6 days
Masters Level (excludes resits)	√		2 days per module up to a max of 6 days
Sitting examinations (excludes resits)	√		Duration of exam
SPORTING EVENT			
Island Games, Commonwealth Games, Paralympics and Olympics.	√	√	As agreed time to be divided equally between paid and unpaid leave