



ILL HEALTH AND COVER POLICY

Date of Last Review: September 2018

Date of Next Review: September 2020

Responsibility: Mrs C. Whiting

Advisory Body Signature:



Aims and Objectives

1. To ensure when staff are absent students have access to the best education possible
2. To enable staff to be involved in appropriate development activities on and off site
3. To ensure the smooth running of the school for the benefit of staff and students
4. To respond to national initiatives and teachers pay and conditions documents as appropriate

*The Ravensbourne School is committed to improving the quality of teaching and, as stated in the school's Staff Development Policy in accordance with school's Equal Opportunities Policy, all staff are entitled to training which empowers them to undertake their tasks and responsibilities professionally.

Implementation

- Sickness absence will be managed using the schools published procedures. Please see Appendix 1.
- Statistics from sickness absence (and lateness) are management information and are used as such
- Planned absence forms and procedures are custom and practice and must therefore be used appropriately

ABSENCE ON ACCOUNT OF ILL-HEALTH

Absences on account of ill health will fall within two categories:

- (a) Persistent short-term absence due to ill health
- (b) Long-term absence due to ill health

The Ravensbourne School staff must report ill health absence on the day of ill health absence between 07.00am and 07.30 am to The Head teacher on the absence line **tel: 0208 290 8506** stating the nature of the ill health. It is a further requirement to report ill health absence daily, to ensure the smooth running of the school. If ill health is likely to be for more than 7 days, staff must ask their doctor for a form to be sent to them to cover the first 7 days and get a doctor's certificate from the 8th day. This certificate must be sent into school immediately. Any absence immediately prior to, or following a school closure period will be required to be medically certified. If a medical certificate has been issued, the member of staff must tell The Head teacher when they call the absence line, the dates covered by the medical certificate so that provision for cover can be planned for that period of absence. Subsequently, the member of staff will need to contact The Head teacher the day the certificate expires to confirm when they are returning to work or whether an additional certificate has been issued.

A **self-certification** form (obtainable from your doctor's surgery), needs to be completed and sent into The Business Manager, when a member of staff has been absent for **more than 3 days**.

The Ravensbourne School will follow ill health absence of more than **2.5%** absence, with a one-to-one interview. It is important to note that the genuineness of the sickness is not in question under these procedures. The aim is to provide reasonable support, when appropriate, to improve attendance.

PERSISTENT SHORT-TERM ABSENCE (more than 2.5% absence due to ill health)

Informal Stage

The Business Manager, will provide the member of staff with details of his/her absence record and talk the situation over advising him/her that attendance is causing concern and ask for the staff member's opinion as to why the absences have occurred. All reasonable requests for support to improve staff attendance will be given full consideration within the school's resources. As part of this informal process the member of staff will be advised that a failure to improve attendance over a reasonable period of time is likely to result in formal action being taken.

Formal Stage

If attendance fails to improve, or where the discussion of attendance reveals possible health problems, the member of staff will be referred to the school's Occupational Health Physician, who will establish whether there is an underlying cause for the absence, which requires medical treatment and whether the absence is work related. Upon receipt of the medical report, the Business Manager will discuss with the member of staff, the implications of the report. If persisted short term absence does not improve, a warning may be issued.

LONG-TERM SICKNESS

This can be divided into two categories:

- (i) Long-term sickness not resulting in ill health retirement
- (ii) Long-term sickness resulting in ill health retirement

and will be dealt with in accordance with the recommended HR 'Model Procedure for Handling Impaired Capability on the Grounds of Ill Health'.

The Business Manager, will keep in regular contact with the member of staff, throughout a period of long term sickness, both out of concern for the individual and to ensure the senior management and The local governing body are kept informed of the reasons for absence and prognosis.

Self -certification is appropriate for the first week of incapacity. Thereafter, a doctor's certificate must be provided throughout the period of absence including during school closure.

Where the circumstances warrant a referral (e.g. stress related absences) the Business Manager will arrange for the member of staff to be referred to the Occupational Health Physician.

POLICY FOR COVER

The national conditions of service provide for teachers to cover for absent colleagues as outlined in paragraphs 50,51 and 52 of the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2013. It states:

- 50 In the past, many teachers have borne a heavy burden of cover for absent colleagues. However, in accordance with the provisions set out in the Document, teachers may cover only rarely, in circumstances which are not foreseeable.
- 51 Foreseeable circumstances for the school include events that are foreseeable on the basis of historic experience; events that are foreseeable in the normal local experience; and events that may be expected as part of the evolving pattern of provision.
- 52 Schools are required to ensure that teachers and the headteacher may be required to cover only rarely from 1st September 2009.

Further details and access to the School Teachers' pay and conditions document 2013 can be obtained from the Gov.uk website.

Cover beyond that outlined above should normally not be provided by members of the school teaching staff. It is the aim of the school to employ 'Cover Supervisors' in line with the national agreement 'Raising Standards and Tackling Workload'. Where the school cannot obtain the necessary cover, teachers may be requested to provide additional cover but only in emergency situations in order to comply with the "rarely cover" agreement.

STUDENT WORK FOR STAFF ABSENCE

If absence is due to short-term sickness or is an agreed planned absence, it is the responsibility of the teacher concerned to set the cover work. For planned absences the cover work should be given to the Head teacher at least 3 days before the planned absence. The Head teacher reserves the right to ask for cover work to be

reviewed/improved and may cancel the planned absence if cover work is considered inadequate. Copies of the cover should also be left with the Head of Department or designated person within the department. If the absence is long-term sickness, it is the responsibility of the Head of Department, or designated person within the department, to set the appropriate cover work and liaise and guide staff covering those lessons. This work should be provided in accordance with the school's guidelines on lesson planning.

PLANNED ABSENCE

(see appendix 1 'Guidelines for Cover' and appendix 2 'Cover Lesson Plan')

When a teacher has to be off timetable for any reason, e.g. a visit, trip, meeting or medical/dental appoint, it is expected that they do so at a time which is most convenient, to ensure the smooth running of the school.

ALL staff, teaching and associate: 'planned absence forms' must be handed into, the Headteacher's PA, after being signed by the line manager, at least 7 working days before the absence. Failure to do this could result in the absence being refused. Line managers must undertake due consultation before signing the planned absence forms.

TEACHING staff: must complete 'cover lesson plans', and leave these, along with a copy of all resources to be used and answer sheets, with the Headteacher's PA, at least 3 days prior to the planned absence. HoDs must nominate a staff member to ensure the lesson plans are appropriately dealt with in their absence. A copy of the lesson plan and resource sheets/answer sheets should also be given to the HoD or nominated person within the department. Planned absence may be cancelled if this is not met. Costs incurred due to cancellation of planned absences will be charged to departments/Year groups if appropriate procedures are not followed.

Blank 'planned absence forms' may be obtained the Head teacher's PA, and 'lesson plans' are available on the Intranet under Administrative Documents.

Policy to be monitored and evaluated on a tri-annual basis

Cathy Whiting

2017

GUIDELINES FOR COVER

PLANNED ABSENCE

A '**PLANNED ABSENCE REQUEST FORM**' must be completed at least **7 WORKING DAYS** before **ANY** planned absence.

- The forms, on BLUE paper, are AVAILABLE FROM Head teachers PA.
- The contents of the form **must** be agreed and signed by your line manager/team leader, then given to **the Head teacher** for consideration, at least 7 working days before the planned absence.
- **If the absence is for INSET the reverse of the form MUST also be completed.**
- At least **3 WORKING DAYS** before the planned absence, a **lesson plan** for each lesson to be covered must be submitted, along with a copy of all resources and answer sheets for each lesson for approval by **the Head teacher**. Blank plans are available on the Intranet under Administrative Documents. The lesson plan will then be placed in the cover trays on the day of the planned absence.

ILLNESS

If you are **unwell and cannot attend work** please ring **the Head teacher** **AFTER 07.00am and BEFORE 07.30am on 020 8290 8506.**

It is helpful if you can tell him the nature of your illness. **It is your responsibility to leave cover work with your HoD or designated person, NOT WITH the Head teacher.** In order to do this, please phone the main office switchboard on 020 8460 0083 after 08.00am. Do not leave messages detailing work set on the school answer-phone. It is time consuming and inappropriate.

COVERING A LESSON

Please check the cover sheets, on the notice board in the staff room, first thing each morning. You will also find when you open SIMS that any cover lesson allocated to you will be flagged up on the system. If there are any changes later in the day, you will be notified in person.

- The cover lesson plan will be in the tray next to the cover board.
- Please return any completed work/resources to the absent teacher's pigeonhole, unless directed otherwise.
- Please ensure an attendance register is taken for each lesson. If you are unable to do this on a laptop, please send a paper copy to the attendance officer in the resources room.

Appendix 2

OPTIONAL LESSON PLAN (for cover lessons)

(The Media Arts lesson Plan is available on the Intranet.)

You MUST register the group using Lesson Monitor or request a paper copy from the main office if you do not have a lap-top.

DATE	LESSON(S)	ROOM	CLASS CODE

Name of absent teacher:

TITLE:

AIMS (Learning Outcomes):

Lesson Plan and Resources

Differentiation/Extension

Homework

Context of lesson

Brief summary of last few lessons and where you are now, to include **SEN students** (names and stages on SEN Register). Please note any **relevant strategies to support** these students.