

ST JAMES' RC PRIMARY SCHOOL RARELY COVER POLICY

This policy has the School's Motto at its heart.

**Faith in action,
Growing together,
Walking in the footsteps of Christ**

Rationale

At St. James' RC Primary School, we are aware of the detrimental effects both to the school and the individual when a teacher or the Head teacher is taken away from their core purpose in order to cover for absent teachers. We believe that is vital for the school to seek alternative methods of covering classes and that teachers and the Head teacher should rarely cover. The policy should also be considered in conjunction with the school's special leave policy. The policy applies to all teaching staff in the school and includes the Head teacher. The school recognises that 'rarely' does not mean that teachers should never cover for absent colleagues, but should normally only cover in circumstances that are not foreseeable.

Foreseeable circumstances include events that are: -

- foreseeable on the basis of the historic evidence of this school;
- foreseeable in normal local experience;
- may be expected as part of the evolving pattern of provision.

This policy also recognises the valuable role that support staff play at the school in providing cover.

Cover strategies

For the purpose of this policy, absence occurs when the person who has been timetabled to take a particular class or group is not available. The absence could be for a variety of reasons, including internal and external activities as well as sickness. It could be short term or long term. At St James' we manage all types of absence in a way that minimises the impact on teaching and learning. The school recognises that teachers should only be asked to cover circumstances that are unforeseeable. In situations when teachers have to provide cover then the school will ensure that cover is shared fairly and will maintain and monitor a record of cover to inform planning. PPA time forms part of the legal conditions of employment for teachers and therefore will not be used for cover unless all other options for cover have been exhausted. Where a need for cover is identified the school will, in the first instance, use one of the following options:

- Teaching Assistants
- Supply Teachers

The school will consider the following factors when deciding whether or not to use Teaching Assistants:

- The extent to which 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 area over the course of the term.

Teaching Assistants will be used for short term absences only. Long term absence will be covered by a supply teacher.

School Organisation

To ensure that the system for managing cover is robust, the school will publish the school's organisation schedule for each school year. The organisation schedule will provide every member of staff with their teaching commitment. Teaching timetables are not frozen in time and there may be a need for in year variations in timetabled teaching arrangements and variations from year to year. CPD cover arrangements are made in advance by the Deputy Head Teacher. Teachers or the Head teacher will be asked to cover for course attendance.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be updated in line with any new developments in the school and/or any new government guidance.

It was last reviewed in: summer 2023

It will next be reviewed in: summer 2026

This statement of policy was approved by the Governing Body at their meeting on:-

Date: _____

Signed:

_____ (Chairperson)

_____ (Head teacher)