

SUBSTITUTE COVER

The provision of substitute cover is a matter for the Boards of Governors of schools with fully delegated budgets and for employing authorities in school with non-delegated budgets. DENI Circular 1988/40 outlined the general circumstances in which substitutes may be provided.

Teachers have a contractual obligation to provide cover (see Working Time and Professional Duties leaflet).

The teaching limit of 25 hours per week in a primary school and 23.5 hours per week in a secondary school are also relevant (see Working Time and Professional Duties leaflet). A teacher cannot be required to teach a class beyond the relevant limit.

CIRCULAR 1988/40

DENI Circular 1988/40, paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 permit the employment of substitute teachers in the circumstances of paragraph 3(9) of the Terms and Conditions of Employment of Teachers.

Paragraph 2.3 permits the employment of substitute teachers in the case of multiple absences (i.e. where more than 1 teacher absent from posts for which substitute cover has not already been provided) where this is essential to the function of the school.

Paragraph 2.4 excludes special schools and special units in primary and secondary schools from any restriction on the employment of substitute teachers.

Paragraph 3 makes clear that paragraph 2.1 to 2.4 apply also to in-service training absences.

Paragraph 4 permits the employment of substitute teachers to cover the absences of GCSE moderators.

Paragraph 5.1 permits the employment of substitute teachers, subject to limits in paragraph 5.3 to cover absences of teacher attending meetings of statutory bodies (Education and Library Boards, District councils, CCEA or their committees), non-statutory education bodies (primary, secondary, standing conferences , etc) and non-educational bodies to which a teacher may be appointed as a representative of the education service, e.g. health advisory committees.

Paragraph 5.3 permits half-day substitution but imposes an overall limit of the equivalent of 10 half-day absences in all cases covered by paragraph 5.1 with the exception of meeting of Education and Library Boards and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools where there is no restriction.

Paragraph 6 extends the provisions of paragraph 2.1 and 2.2 to cover leave of absence without pay.

Paragraph 7.3 permits the employment of teachers to release probationary teachers to participate in planned induction programmes for up to 9 days in primary schools and for up to 8 days in secondary schools.

Paragraph 8 permits the employment of substitute teachers for up to 10 days for approved EMU activities.

DENI CIRCULAR 1991/1

The level of substitute cover, which is permitted for teachers in recognised teachers' unions who are absent from school on union business is as follows:

INTO, NASUWT and UTU 400 school days each

ATL and NAHT 130 school days each

SITUATIONS NOT COVERED BY THESE CIRCULAR

Additional substitute cover may be approved from time to time by the Department of Education for specific initiatives.

COSTS

Under the current LMS arrangements the costs of the following substitute cover are accepted items and are not charged to the school budget:

Sickness Absence after the first 20 days (except in the Western and Southern Education and Library Boards where it is 10 days).

Maternity and Adoption Absence (substitute paid out of budget and permanent teacher costs met centrally).

Induction of Probationer Teachers.

Transfer Procedure Duties subject to approved limits.

GCSE Moderation and Officiation other than at home school.

Absences not specific to the school i.e. public representatives, union absences in accordance with the DENI Circular's specific initiatives, i.e. EMU.