In the final instalment of SecEd’s current series on supply teaching, we look at CPD for teachers not regularly in the chalkface as a full-time teacher

Supply teachers have a duty to keep their professional knowledge up-to-date and, as such, access regular CPD. It may be possible to join in with school-based CPD such as INSET days and twilight training while you’re on a placement but you should not limit yourself to these ad hoc opportunities. Your CPD is your responsibility. And there are plenty of opportunities for you to engage in more informal, personalised professional development.

Judith Little, an American educational researcher at the University of California, believes there are four pillars of effective CPD. These are:

**Teachers talk about learning**
Teachers take every opportunity to talk to each other about their lessons, about their pupils, and about teaching and learning in general.

**Teachers observe each other**
Wherever possible, teachers engage in peer observations which are followed by constructive, focused discussions about how they can improve and about how they can share good practice and celebrate each other’s skills and talents.

Peer observations, far from being high-stakes assessments of performance, allow colleagues to take genuine snapshots of what happens every day – snapshots which can provide helpful suggestions for improvement as well as recognition and then reward genuine success.

**Teachers plan together**
Teachers should write lesson plans together, teaching the same lessons, then discussing them. Many schools do not require detailed lesson plans – and perhaps no longer require them – so perhaps “teachers plan together” could be interpreted as teachers talking to each other about their medium and long-term planning: and about their marking and pupils’ work. This process might involve teachers routinely scrutinising each other’s work and moderating each other’s assessments, perhaps engaging in a process of peer review of each other’s mark-books and pupils’ work.

**Teachers teach each other**
Finally, teachers lead and participate in professional learning communities which provide opportunities for them to share best practice and comment on what they’ve tried and what worked and what didn’t. These communities work best when they are staff-led, collaborative enterprises not opportunities for senior leaders to stand and deliver.

The four pillars
One logical conclusion of Little’s four pillars is that CPD should perform two functions: innovation and mastery. In other words, CPD should not just be about learning new ways of working – or CPD for innovation – although this is undoubtedly important. Rather, CPD should also be about helping teachers to get better at something they already do – or CPD for mastery. CPD for mastery is about recognising what works well now and what should therefore be embedded, added to, and shared.

**TeachMeets are a great way to meet people, as well as to learn stimulating new teaching ideas and share your own ideas and strategies**

**Nice to TeachMeet you**
The best way for supply teachers to access CPD which is supported by these four pillars and performs the two functions of innovation and mastery is to attend TeachMeets, which are informal meetings of teachers – often in the evenings or at weekends – in which teachers are encouraged to share their practical experience of teaching.

TeachMeets take place across the country and throughout the year. They are advertised widely through Twitter and other social media. There is no obligation to participate so supply teachers – no matter their experience and context – should not be afraid to go along and soak up some inspiring ideas from others.

Having attended a TeachMeet or training course, it is important that – rather than attempting to put into practice every new strategy you encounter at once – you introduce one or two tweaks and make directed efforts to sustain and develop these.

You could, perhaps, make a note for yourself to follow-up on certain strategies you’ve learnt at CPD events at regular intervals – say, after one week, one month, three months and six months. At these regular intervals, you could return to your notes and review what impact the new ideas have on your teaching.

**CPD libraries give us power**
As well as TeachMeets and other CPD events, there’s no shortage of books and research papers on teaching and learning which can inform and inspire you. The school you’re working in might have a staff CPD library but, failing this, your local library is likely to have a healthy stack of reading materials for you to dip into.

As well as books, you may wish to subscribe to a research newsletter in order to access regular evidence-based academic information. Many are free of charge or offer evaluation articles for free.

When looking at research, try to find summaries (or “meta-analyses”) rather than reading full, single papers. This will ensure that you get a more rounded view that covers a full range of opinion.

Social media is another great source of CPD. Twitter, in particular, can be a useful tool for teachers. Following the Twitter accounts of some of the top bloggers and thinkers can really stimulate you to reflect on your own practice. There are also dedicated chat groups (find the hashtags) for supply teachers, a safe and supportive environment in which to share stories and ask for advice.

Finally, you might want to subscribe to some teacher blogs and sign up to regular emails from, say, the Guardian Teacher Network, TES, and other education publications – at the top of which list should sit SecEd magazine of course, which has the added bonus of being completely free (online, ebulletin or in-school).

**Coach trip**
As a supply teacher, you may wish to find a coach or mentor, someone with whom to talk about your latest placement and from whom to seek advice.

Remember that a coach or mentor is not there to judge you; instead, yours should be a safe relationship within which you can discuss your practice openly and frankly. You should use conversations with your coach or mentor to be honest about the things you think you are doing well as well as the things you feel you need to develop further. Do not be afraid to ask for their support and advice.

CUREE’s (the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education) national framework for coaching identifies 10 principles which are worth upholding in power and accountability.

A coach must:** establish high levels of trust, be consistent over time, offer genuine respect, be honest, frank and open; and challenge without threat.**

A coach must not: give answers or advice; make judgments; offer counselling, create dependency; impose agendas or initiatives; or change long-held prejudices.

The benefits of coaching and mentoring are perhaps obvious: as a supply teacher, you will become more motivated and your confidence will grow, your knowledge and skills will be enhanced and your experience will be enriched – because you will learn more about yourself and more about your job as a result of the process.

What’s more, you will develop a strong professional relationship with a colleague and have a sounding board against which to bounce ideas, concerns and theories.

Matt Bromley is an education journalist and author with more than 18 years’ experience in teaching and leadership. To read Matt’s archive of best practice articles for SecEd, visit http://bit.ly/2j3JbqA

**Supply Teaching: SecEd Series**
This is the final edition of SecEd’s current series of best practice articles for supply teachers. See below for links to specific previous articles:

- **Classroom advice:** The element of surprise, November 2: http://bit.ly/2D40QJ
- **Preparing for a placement**, November 2: http://bit.ly/2z0um8
- **Safeguarding:** A shared duty, November 9: http://bit.ly/2a5zX6
- **TeachMeets are a great way to meet people, as well as to learn stimulating new teaching ideas and share your own ideas and strategies**
- **Nice to TeachMeet you**
- **CPD libraries give us power**
- **Coach trip**
- **Supply Teaching: SecEd Series**
Interview in Progress

Going back full-time

By Ben Solly

Supply teachers provide the education sector with a valuable service and are an essential resource at a time of severe teacher shortages within a profession that is plagued with retention and recruitment problems.

Sadly, for many professionals who work in the supply teaching sector of the education industry, they are often faced with questionable attitudes, inaccurate perceptions and outdated opinions on what it means to be a supply teacher. Sadder still is the fact that these attitudes, perceptions and opinions frequently emanate from teachers employed in permanent positions in schools.

Teachers work in the supply sector for a variety of reasons. Many individuals choose to and enjoy the benefits of not being tied down to a particular school, avoiding many of the administrative and time-consuming burdens that accompany permanent school employment as a teacher. Indeed, making this conscious decision to work as a supply teacher can bring with it a great deal excitement, a huge variety of experiences and the benefits of not being tied down to a particular single organisation, to become once again part of a single teaching faculty.

For a variety of reasons, however, supply teachers will sometimes make the decision to return to teaching full-time. It might be that after trying supply work, they crave the opportunity to return to working in a single organisation, to become once again part of a teaching team or community and perhaps to regain the security and consistency of permanent employment.

Making the step from supply to permanent employment can be challenging and so I have tried to provide a credible back story within your letter of application that outlines your context clearly.

Find the right school

If you are seeking the opportunity to join a school on a permanent basis, you have to make sure it is the right one for you. Your experiences as a supply teacher will have taught you some stark lessons on the huge differences that exist in how schools operate; it is important you use this as a way of finding your next permanent role.

Be proactive

Use your placements to your advantage. You might be in a position where you are completing a medium-term contract for a term or two for an absent member of staff. If you are enjoying the placement and your lessons are good first impression and clarify your situation and why you have applied.

Be flexible – could you retrain?

The more variety you can offer a school, the better. If you can teach several subjects then you become a more attractive proposition for a school. The nature of supply teaching means that you will have, at some point, taught subjects that are different to the ones in which you qualified. Use this to your advantage and ensure you make this flexibility obvious in your application form.

Have a credible back-story

When you apply for a teaching vacancy in a school, red flags will be raised in your employment history if it is littered with short-term supply contracts. A headteacher will ask themselves “why hasn’t this individual ever worked for longer than a year in a school?” or “why is this person working as a supply teacher; if they were any good then surely they would be in permanent employment already?”.

Whether you like it or not, negative perceptions will exist and you will have to counter these by providing a credible back story within your letter of application that outlines your context clearly.

Whether you like it or not, negative perceptions will exist and you will have to counter these by providing a credible back story

However, these things are often best explained in person so take the opportunity to meet with the head of department or a member of the senior leadership team in advance of your application so that you can make a good first impression and clarify your situation and why you are attracted to the vacancy.

Pick your references carefully

From the various supply placements you will have accrued, there will be a number of people who can provide you with a reference. Pick these individuals carefully and ensure they can provide details of why you would be a strong candidate for this permanent role.

As a professional courtesy always ask them in advance if they are prepared to act as a referee for you and if you have a good relationship with them you could ask them to read through a draft of your letter of application.

Staying on your toes, professionally

The most important thing for you to be able to demonstrate at interview is that you are an effective teacher. It sounds obvious but it is the most critical aspect of a recruitment process.

This is where you can use your supply experiences to your advantage. You will be used to turning up in an unfamiliar environment, not knowing the students and delivering a lesson in unpredictable circumstances.

Equally though, while working on supply contracts it can be very easy to slip into bad habits. When you don’t have ownership of a class or a classroom your planning can be compromised and it is quite normal for you to not be able to teach as effectively as you are capable of because of the challenging circumstances you face.

Additionally, as a supply teacher you might not have had the professional development opportunities that you are afforded to teachers in permanent roles. Therefore, when the right vacancy in the right school presents itself, you need to be in a position to do yourself justice if you are called for an interview.

You will need to have kept up with the latest research in teaching and learning so it is important to continue to read books, blogs and articles on pedagogy; you will be expected to demonstrate high levels of skill and classroom craft during your observation but you may also be asked during the formal interview about your CPD.

By Ben Solly

Principal of Uppingham Community College

supplies and their reliability.

In conclusion, the recruitment problems.

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By Ben Solly

Principal of Uppingham Community

College in Rutland
Difficult placements

By John Dabell

Supply teachers are worth their weight in gold. Brave, resilient and professional, being “a supply” is not for everyone because you often find yourself walking into the Lion’s den – and frequently without back-up.

You are expected to get on with it and deliver the goods, but the odds are stacked against you before you have even been parachuted into the school grounds.

You have to adapt to ever-changing terrains, fly solo, fill gaps, make big decisions, stay calm under pressure, motivate yourself and come out the other end smiling.

However, while supply has many rewards it inevitably includes various challenges that make the job extra demanding and we have all experienced difficult placements.

So, what are some of the common problems we might face and what can we do to overcome them? You might recognise some of the following:

Courteous, or rather lack of it

You don’t always get a friendly hello from established staff because everyone is busy, overworked and flitting from place to place getting ready for the day ahead. They might be used to seeing lots of supply teachers and you are just another one and you can be largely ignored.

What to do

It is easy to feel invisible, be anonymous and feel like you are sitting in the second-class chair in the staffroom, but don’t compromise your own standards of professionalism. You are a teacher, a good one and that demands respect from your colleagues. Say hello to staff, make yourself known, be visible and be confident. If you get the opportunity to network even by sharing information about pupils’ academic abilities or behaviour procedures, get noticed.

SOS

No-one can hear a supply teacher scream. It is remarkable to think that you can be felt high and dry, but a great many supply teachers are let down by their schools because schools fail to share appropriate information about pupils’ academic abilities or behaviour procedures.

What to do

On a difficult placement it can be hard to get the attention or help of colleagues as they are wrapped up in their own world and problems. Get to the school first thing and establish your support network early doors. Make sure you know who the names of the senior leadership team. Introduce yourself if you can, make yourself known to teaching assistants, neighbouring staff, your group staff or departmental staff – not everyone but someone, someone who can help if you need it.

No school should expect a supply to just turn up with little or no input and expect success. Make a nuisance of yourself by getting the information you need – don’t be fobbed off and if necessary go straight to the top. You are a valuable asset and it won’t hurt schools to remember that they have an obligation to you as well.

A great many supply teachers are let down by their schools because schools fail to share appropriate information about pupils’ academic abilities or behaviour procedures

Emptiness

Instructions for the class you are covering are woefully thin, lesson plans are in the back of the class teacher’s car or on their kitchen table and if you are really unlucky then you might find some uninspiring and unstructured worksheets left under a brick on their desk.

What to do

Supply teachers are famed for having big sleeves and they always have plenty up their sleeves. A supply teacher has to be prepared for the worst because, believe it or not, the permanent teachers you are covering for don’t always like you doing their work so leave you to do your own thing.

So, always have an arsenal of “stand-bys” – tried and tested winners, time-fillers, golden nuggets and fun things to do that have educational value, impact and you can get you out of jail fast. If the cupboards are bare then you have got to stock them with but quality items and lessons that challenge and stretch. Have an emergency bag full of ready-to-go back-up activities for all ages and ability levels and start the day with something fun to get a rapport going.

Connections

The biggest problem encountered in schools on a daily basis is the attitude of pupils to supply teachers. Children mistrust you as a starting point because they don’t know you and you are a stranger to them so there is no relationship and frequently little or no respect. Don’t treat this personally. None of this should come as a surprise because connections can be hard-won and relationships are built up over time. Many children find a change in routine confusing and this can make them feel uncertain and uncomfortable.

What to do

Be realistic. There is no way that you can establish deep, meaningful and insightful relationships with a class you have never had before. Smile and greet students as they come into the room – start the day with a positive greeting and an introduction. Remember, relationships first and lessons second.

Get to learn names as quickly as possible. Making a personal connection has to start with names and if that means having children wear name tags or name cards for desks then do so if you can hit the ground running. Take an interest, interact, strike up conversations – don’t keep your distance, step forward and be part of the class community and don’t waste a second getting to know who’s who, what’s what, interests, hobbies and so on. The number one secret to classroom management is positive teacher-student relationships.

Draw the line

Boundaries, expectations and routines are someone else’s and you have either got to second-guess what these are or implement your own.

What to do

Where possible it is always advisable to work within the system but if you are new to a school and you have less than an hour to get to know what’s in place then remember that you are the captain of the ship and what you say goes – say what you mean and mean what you say.

Have your own positive behaviour and no-excuses discipline plan ready to put into action and know it inside-out. Be a model of confidence and positivity, be consistent, fair, calm and stick to your.

Tough nuts to crack

Every supply teacher will encounter students who are going to test them out and try to make the day difficult. Many supply teachers believe they are often given tough classes to cover. While drawing the lines and communicating your expectations is vital, it is important to be on top from the outset.

What to do

Avoid power struggles and turn the tables early on by getting children who might be out to cause disruption working for you where possible. Refine the class clown or ringleaders and engaging them in jobs that “I need your help with”.

Give them responsibility and praise their efforts every inch of the way so that they see messing about is worth less than helping and cooperating. By asking ring-leaders for their help you give them the attention they long for while quickly developing mutual trust and respect. Catch them doing things well and praise effort rather than performance. Set up some quick wins and early successes to boost their confidence.

Presence

A common problem is not setting the right tone and our non-verbal behaviour makes a huge difference to how successful our day will be. If we fail to establish immediate presence in the classroom then this will communicate a lack of confidence and children will soon notice. What we don’t say sets the tone and atmosphere of the class. Physical presence snowballs into classroom presence in so many ways.

What to do

Some psychologists argue that we need to power pose in the classroom and stand like astatfish in order to send out the message “I’m in charge” and “I’m in control”. If we can tweet our body language and behaviour to make us appear confident then we can become confident, and students will pick this up as a display of a positive mindset. Stand tall, be expressive, command the class and make an impression so the message is clear. I’m a safe pair of hands and no-one walks all over me.

Conclusion

Supply teachers have long, exhausting and frustrating days but there are always strategies and options to make even the most demanding placements manageable and enjoyable. If we have a plan and prepare well then we can at least control some parts of the day and stack things more in our favour. If you can adapt, plan, react, create, inspire and motivate at split second’s notice then you can manage any placement.

• John Dabell is a teacher, teacher trainer and writer. He has taught English for 20 years and is the author of 10 books. He also trained as an Ofsted inspector. Visit www.johnsabell.co.uk and read his previous best practice articles for SecEd via http://bit.ly/2IZY8V.

Supply Teaching: SecEd Series

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• Classrooms advice: The element of surprise, November 2: http://bit.ly/2iW5dQG
• Preparing for a placement, November 2: http://bit.ly/2zO8Q8
• Know your rights, November 9: http://bit.ly/2zO8Q8
• Safeguarding: A shared duty, November 9: http://bit.ly/2zO8Q8
• Keeping an eye on your CPD, November 16: http://bit.ly/2zO8Q8
• Managing classroom behaviour, November 16: http://bit.ly/2WZsVZJ
• The SEND challenge, November 23: http://bit.ly/2WZsVZJ
• Time for a different approach, November 23: http://bit.ly/2WZsVZJ
• CDP advice (January 11)
• Moving from supply to full-time (January 11)

All articles in this series are available as a free pdf at www.seced.org.uk/supplements/supply-teaching-advice-and-best-practice/
Classroom

Tips for a successful placement

By Matt Bromley

Being a supply teacher is tough. At times it can feel like you’re living a life of uncertainty and, if you’re not careful, it starts to resemble a Greek wedding.

One trick to keeping all those plates spinning is to break down what can be a complex, multi-faceted job into each of its constituent parts, to deconstruct the whole and what can be a complex, multi-faceted job into each other.

Urgent attention is the one on safeguarding and child protection. If you’re likely to be working in the school for more than a day or two, then it pays to make the effort to get to know the office staff as well as the caretaking team – they can prove invaluable allies.

Just say no

Your new colleagues may regard you as an outsider and the new kid on the block and therefore assume you’ll be a “yes person”, always willing to volunteer (or at least not cause a scene) for additional duties. But you need to manage your workload and strike some balance if you are to be effective and survive. You must not spread yourself too thinly or try to conquer the whole world, no matter how much you wish to please or impress your new colleagues and ensure you get good feedback for the agency. It is not a sign of weakness to say no.

Get to know the staffroom – with caution

The staffroom should be a place of solace and success but, a word of warning, approach it with caution initially and be careful where you sit. Although staffrooms are becoming less territorial than they used to be, some teachers can still be precious about their favourite chairs. Before you take a seat, ask “is it okay to sit here?”

Although staffrooms are becoming less territorial than they used to be, some teachers can still be precious about their favourite chairs. Before you take a seat, ask ‘is it okay to sit here?’

If you commit the cardinal sin of taking someone else’s mug, be prepared for the backlash. It has been known for an entire morning break to be taken up with staff deep in conversation over missing cups, detecting clues like amateur sleuths!

If you do have to borrow someone else’s cup, at least have the decency of washing it up afterwards. Leave it in a pristine condition and put it back in its rightful place.

Some further advice

Here are a few other tips to help you succeed as a supply teacher:

• Make a note of the general work ethic in the school. Arrive on time and leave when the majority of staff do.
• Discuss your role with your head of department and/or staffing officer. Make sure you know what’s expected of you.
• Be courteous and attentive to others, and always listen to advice from colleagues who know their school and its pupils better than you.

The designated lead for child protection. You should also identify a couple of senior managers in case you need to refer a pupil.

If you’re likely to be working in the school for more than a day or two, then it pays to make the effort to get to know the office staff as well as the caretaking team – they can prove invaluable allies!

What’s more, clerical and support staff know a lot about the way the school is run, and they can make your life much easier.

Marking is time well spent. Whether getting to grips with your latest supply job, you should be careful not to overwork yourself or become stressed. Supply teaching might be an important job but it is still only a job. You must not allow it to take over your life, certainly not at the expense of your health and wellbeing. Rather, you should strive to strike a healthy work/life balance. Here are some tips to help you do just that.

Manage your marking

If you are on supply for more than a few days, it is likely – especially if you are paid by the terms of the STPCD – that you will be expected to do marking. If so, remember that, although written feedback is important and it does make a difference, it is not a panacea and must not take over your life. As with all things, moderation is the key. Try to keep your written feedback succinct and meaningful – perhaps establish some form of shorthand, maybe symbols, and consider using stamps or stickers for this.

If the amount of work you mark – perhaps marking one piece of work every five lessons with pupils engaging in self and peer assessment in-between. You could set tasks for pupils to respond to your feedback so that the time you do spend marking is time well spent.

Please see page 10 for more information on...
When you think of a teacher’s legal obligations, you tend to think in terms of child protection and safeguarding. Of course, although a supply teacher’s legal duties extend beyond this realm, it is a good place to start.

What is child protection?

Ofsted adopts the definition of child protection that’s used in the Children Act 2004 and in the Department for Education’s (DfE) guidance document, Working together to safeguard children, which focuses on safeguarding and promoting children and learners’ welfare.

For the purposes of this article and to achieve consistency and clarity, I will adopt the same definition, which can be summarised as:

- Protecting children and learners from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children’s and learners’ health or development.
- Ensuring that children and learners are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children and learners to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Supply teachers should ensure they familiarise themselves – and swiftly at the start of a new placement – with their school’s behaviour policy.

The DfE guidance, Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education, meanwhile, makes it clear that schools must provide a safe environment and take action to identify and protect any children or young people who are at risk of significant harm.

As far as an individual supply teacher is concerned, there are a number of statutory provisions which state they must work with their school in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

In particular, supply teachers:

- Should be familiar with the procedures in the school, academy or college for dealing with suspected child abuse. Concerns or suspicions should be reported.
- Should receive appropriate training on child protection issues.
- In practical terms, it is important that a supply teacher knows the designated child protection lead. If ever a child discloses a child protection matter, the supply teacher’s first action must be to inform the child protection lead.
- Each school will also have its own safeguarding policy. Supply teachers should locate and read this policy in order to understand precisely what is expected of them.

Other legal duties

In addition to the duties associated with child protection and safeguarding, supply teachers have a number of legal duties, such as their duty of care towards pupils.

Supply teachers – like all the staff working in a school – are required to do all that is reasonable in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of pupils. A supply teacher’s legal responsibilities derive from three sources:

- The common law duty of care.
- The duty arising from the contract of employment (which might be twofold: both the contract they have with their supply agency and the contract they sign with the school at which they are working).

The common law duty of care

Supply teachers have a duty of care to pupils which derives from the common law. The common law is law developed through the decisions of the courts as opposed to law which has been determined by Parliament and set down in statute.

A supply teacher’s duty of care will depend upon what is reasonable and what can be expected of a competent professional acting within the constraints of the circumstances.

As long as supply teachers apply their professional judgement, training and experience to situations in a reasonable manner, seeking to promote the best interests and is revised annually, the new provisions becoming effective in September of each year.

Among the list of contractual duties, supply teachers might be required to:

- Plan and teach lessons to the classes they are assigned to teach within the context of the school’s plans, curriculum and standards of work.
- Assess, monitor, record and report on the learning needs, progress and achievements of assigned pupils.
- Promote the safety and wellbeing of pupils and maintain good order and discipline among pupils.

Health and safety

In addition to these legal duties, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, supply teachers are also obliged to take reasonable care for the health and safety of the pupils in their care.

In practice, this means that supply teachers should comply with any school and/or local authority guidance on health and safety issues and make sure that they are familiar with any such guidance.

Out-of-school activities

It is not uncommon for a supply teacher to be required to supervise out-of-school events such as school trips. It is important, therefore, to understand the legal liabilities that accompany such trips.

A supply teacher’s legal liability for an injury which is sustained by a pupil on a school journey or excursion depends on whether or not the injury to the pupil is a direct result of some negligence or breach of the duty of care on the part of that teacher. There is no legal liability for any injury sustained by pupils unless there is proven negligence.

The standard of care required of supply teachers is that which, from an objective point of view, can reasonably be expected from teachers generally applying skill and awareness of children’s problems, needs and susceptibilities.

In practice, reasonable steps must be taken to avoid exposing pupils to dangers which are foreseeable and beyond those with which the particular pupils can reasonably be expected to cope.

This does not imply constant 24-hour direct supervision. The need for direct supervision has to be judged by reference to the risks involved in the activity being undertaken.

Supply teachers should not participate in journeys or visits which they believe are not being adequately prepared and organised. Any concerns should be raised with the headteacher or trip organiser and, if the response is unsatisfactory or concerns remain, with the supply agency and, if relevant, the supply teacher’s professional association.

Physical contact with pupils

Another potentially thorny issue for supply teachers is whether or not to make physical contact with pupils. Contrary to popular opinion, it is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.

However, all teachers — but particularly supply teachers who are more likely to encounter behavioural issues and who cannot rely on long-standing relationships with pupils and senior staff and the trust this brings — should always seek to avoid physical contact with pupils.

Reasonable force to restore order

If it is unavoidable, the law states that teachers are generally permitted the use of reasonable force to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

The DfE guidance on the use of reasonable restraint provides that teachers can use reasonable force:

- To remove disruptive pupils from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so.
- To prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit.
- To prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others.
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground.

It should be noted that the use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant it. The degree of force should be as proportion to the circumstances and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent. The level and duration of the force used should be the minimum necessary to achieve the desired result, such as to restore safety.

It is always unlawful to use force as a form of punishment or discipline.

Further information

- Use of reasonable force in schools, Department for Education, July 2013: http://bit.ly/2hZOeVM

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- Preparing for a placement, November 2: http://bit.ly/2iWtZIJ
- Keeping an eye on your CPD, November 16: http://bit.ly/2ijsms6
- Managing pupils’ behaviour, November 16: http://bit.ly/2iWzZJ
- Keeping an eye on your CPD, November 16: http://bit.ly/2iWzZJ
- Preparing for a placement, November 2: http://bit.ly/2iWtZIJ

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A safeguarding update

By Helen Frostick

Section 11 of the Children Act (2004) places a number of duties on a range of organisations, including schools and individuals, to ensure that when they go about their daily business, they do so in a way that takes into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This article summarises procedures and practices in schools for the attention of supply teachers who are to be placed in school either on a short-term or long-term basis.

Section 11 outlines the need to have in place safe systems and safe processes, for example by ensuring safe recruitment of staff, providing appropriate training and by having up-to-date policies which all staff know how to access.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is protecting children from maltreatment. It is preventing impairment of children’s health or development. It is ensuring that children’s health or development. It is ensuring that maltreatment. It is preventing impairment of child protection. It is protecting children from abuse. It is protecting children from neglect.

As visitors to school, supply teachers will need to know the procedures in place in school for keeping children and young people safe. Prompt questions to ask include:

- Who is the designated safeguarding officer in the school?
- What are the procedures for evacuation in the event of an emergency?
- Who are the first-aiders and what are the procedures for sending children and young people for medical assistance?
- Which children and young people have medical needs?
- Are any of the children or young people that you will be teaching on the “at risk register” for attendance or other matters?
- If teaching younger children what are the procedures for dismissal at the start and end of the day?
- How is perimeter security managed?

In schools, current priority areas include some of the following which should be on your radar:

- Bullying, including cyber-bullying
- Racism, disability, and homophobia or transphobic abuse
- Radicalisation and extremist behaviour.
- Child sexual exploitation
- Impact of new technologies, for example sexting
- Issues that may be specific to a local community, such as gang activity and youth violence.

In schools, current priority areas include some of the following which should be on your radar:

- Domestic abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Child slavery
- Child sexual exploitation
- Impact of new technologies, for example sexting
- Issues that may be specific to a local community, such as gang activity and youth violence.

Also check the school’s mobile phone policy, both for you and for the children and young people you will be teaching.

At primary level, use of mobile phones may be allowed for children in upper junior, but perhaps just when children are walking to and from school alone; after arrival they are usually handed in at the office.

Check the policy in secondary schools too, as mobile phones can be one of the greatest challenges to children’s safety if not regulated.

Code of conduct/handbooks

In terms of general safeguarding information, check the school’s code of conduct for staff and/or the staff handbook. You will need to familiarise yourself with the whistleblowing policy, which details what to do if you suspect there is any foul play or fraudulent activity in the school. The behaviour and anti-bullying policies will also help you to navigate around the areas of welfare, personal and pastoral safety.

A focus on SEND

A new section in the DfE’s statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education specifies children with SEND as a particularly vulnerable group. It emphasises:

- That it should not be assumed that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s impairment.
- That children with SEND can be more vulnerable to bullying.
- That children with SEN can have additional communication barriers.

Conclusion

At the end of the day, supply agencies will be able to give advice in the more tricky areas if there is uncertainty as to procedures or practices to follow in order to keep children and young people safe.

It is a team responsibility, so supply teachers have their part to play. If in doubt ask the question and always refer through the school’s designated safeguarding lead.

Further information


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Supply teaching can be unpredictable, challenging yet incredibly rewarding. In this new series, between now and January SecEd will be offering wide-ranging advice and best practice support for supply teachers, ranging from your rights and legal duties to CPD, classroom practice, and placement tips.

The internet makes searching for images easy and they can slot into anything you teach. You can select unusual pictures in the news to discuss, you can select unusual pictures in the news to discuss, you can use real-life photos to knock-start learning conversations, exploit them as writing prompts or use cartoons and infographics to simplify tricky concepts. Videos that “push the envelope” or challenge stereotypical views are worth finding. They can find many great examples on sites like The Literacy Shed.

**Surprise 4: Ourselves**

The number one resource that we can use to really make a difference is a human resource – ourselves! We can choose to be present or have presence. The most effective teachers use their own teaching assets to make a difference using their voices, faces and bodies to dramatically affect. Teaching has to include statement making and amplification so our verbal and non-verbal behaviours need to be exaggerated so that children are stirred up and energised by who we are.

To make a lasting impression, read a story, give instructions and have discussions by talking “poo-h”, “cockney”, “robotic” or like a pirate. You can talk slow or fast, whisper, shout or even sing like an opera singer.

I’m not surprised

If you are a teacher that likes to do things differently and pull rabbits out of hat then surprises are your bread and butter. At the end of the day, lessons have got to stand out and it has to be sticky. If surprises can give your teaching the Velcro quality then it is worth the price of effort.

When parents ask “what happened at school today?”; they normally don’t get much of a response. But if you can be the teacher of surprises then the chances are children will mention the music you played, the unusual object you showed them or the surprising things you did.

As supply teachers we have the opportunity to shake snowglobes and take pupils by surprise right from the outset. By being different and adopting a maverick streak we can set the tone for the day and “win” the minds of learners in any placement and “supply” things they won’t forget.

By John Dabell

供应教学不是关于寻求美丽，追逐神秘感和发现美。大多数时候，它叫做“生存”和“生存者”。现在和以后，让学生们被充分地投入到你的学习中，他们的时间与你度过的快乐时光。

供应教师有一种令人羡慕的职位，他们可以设身处地地做出巨大变化。有时，他们可以是一个完全不同的轨道，让他们新奇，让他们享受学习的活力。

供应教师是“像”什么的，所以我们有很多金的机会来感动他们。

但是，如果你是供应教师，那么你就有机会将音乐赋予学生，你选择的音乐，或一个令人兴奋的背景，或一个热情的展示，或一个新奇的策略，或一个令人惊讶的事情！

音乐是一种能力，因为它表达了情感，它可以帮助理解抽象和脑力之工作，它会勾起我们的情感和想象力。

音乐可以在一个教训中引入一个主题，提供评论，思考，意见，无情地挑战儿童的想法和被理解的生物。我常常使用两个手偶作为插图和稀有或非常有创意的物体。

我的一个绝对安全的工具是“表演”这个在使用一个活的纸面具，这是一个有纸服装和稀有物体的新奇，将进入所有年龄段。我使用它们从第一个到第四个。

Puppets can be used in any subject for introducing a topic, offering commentaries, thoughts and opinions, disagreeing, challenging children’s ideas and being unpredictable. I frequently use two puppets at a time called Ant and Dec and they act as teachers in their own right by bringing a lesson to life and saying some surprising things!

**Surprise 3: Images**

Still or moving images can “press the button” in the minds of learners and act as vivid surprises to power interest, boost motivation and increase self-confidence.

As photos, pictures, illustrations, cartoons and video are “in your face” resources, they have a tattoo effect because they can grab attention, astonish, jolt and inspire wonder and leave permanent memory imprint.

Further information

Literacy Shed: www.literacyshed.com

It is like we are on the ropes as soon as the bell rings. But we also have the upper hand because we have a special ingredient: the element of surprise.

Supply Teaching

Still to come in this series

• Safeguarding and child protection & your rights as a supply teacher (November 9)

• Managing behaviour & CPD (November 16)

• Your legal obligations as a supply teacher (November 23)

• Dealing with other staff & handling difficult placements (January 4)

• CPD & moving from supply to full-time

Still to come in this series

• Dealing with other staff & handling difficult placements (January 4)

• CPD & moving from supply to full-time (January 11)

All articles in this series will also appear online at www.sec-ed.co.uk/best-practice/
How to prepare for a placement

By Helen Frostick

The trend in recruitment is currently that there is an increasing shortage of teachers at both primary and secondary school levels. As a result, schools in both sectors are turning increasingly to supply agencies to address this shortage and to bridge the employment gap. In many instances, in spite of heavy agency fees, many short-term placements can result in substantive job offers if both parties are flexible and adaptable. This makes it doubly important that both schools and supply teachers work together to ensure a positive placement.

School budgets are tight and expectations are high, so supply teachers have to be able to perform in any given situation, even if teaching a year group unfamiliar to them. Feedback is scarce so for the vast majority of supply teachers the beginning of a placement is like starting a new job every day.

In order to get the most out of a placement there are many lines of enquiry to take before the placement commences, but there are differences between primary and secondary school placements.

Schools are very different. Some schools will be highly organised with everything supply teachers need when they arrive. However, some will give a supply teacher, for example, just a slip of paper with a few lines written on the back which are tricky to understand.

This article sets out lines of enquiry for supply teachers to take when preparing for a placement and also offers general advice on the legislation and practices that supply teachers should be familiar with.

Preparing for a placement

The first line of enquiry is as to whether there is a Supply Teacher file. Many schools will have such a file set out. If there is no such file one of the first questions to ask, beyond the year group to be taught, is for the timetable of the day including start, finish and break times.

In primary schools, you will also need to know the location of first aid rooms and procedures for dismissal at the close of the day. Most schools will have different times for key stage 1 and 2.

Behaviour management is arguably the biggest challenge for supply teachers. Find out quickly the rewards and sanctions used at the school to promote a positive behaviour management strategy. How is behaviour managed, who is the person to whom you can refer pupils who display behaviour that compromises the learning of the class?

As you will be teaching children with many diverse medical needs, ensure that you know the names of the pupils who require asthma inhalers, epipens, etc. What are the procedures for first aid in the school? Is there a medical room and is there a timetable of first-aiders to refer children with injuries to?

On a longer term placement, supply teachers may be asked to plan lessons. Before the placement starts find out if specific schemes of works are used and make sure that you are given access passwords from the school. Many schools use generic plans – find out so that you can be prepared well in advance.

Safeguarding is at the core of school practice and procedure. Establish who the safeguarding leads in the school are, and the key policies and procedures around keeping children safe.

Safeguarding is at the core of school practice and procedure. Establish who the safeguarding leads in the school are, and the key policies and procedures around keeping children safe.

You will need to have a realistic and honest view of the make-up of the class or classes you will be required to teach. What are the methods of behaviour management and who can you call upon in an emergency? Is there a particular method for namely race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. All schools (and teachers) should consider each aspect of the duty having due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination. This duty helps to actively promote equality of opportunity.

The Equality Duty supports good education as it helps to identify priorities such as underperformance, poor progression and bullying. Schools are required to collate evidence such as submitting Racial Incidents Reporting Forms to their local authority which helps to collate evidence and what has been done as a result of the duty. Make sure that you report any such incidents to a senior manager.

Conclusion

It can be daunting starting a placement at a school but the guidance outlined above hopefully will act as a useful aide memoire. All school communities vary in terms of ethos and welcome but the best course of action if in any doubt about practice or procedure is to go to the named person for supply teacher induction.

Teachers are not taught to be supply teachers during their teacher training and it really is a different job from a regular class teacher. The key to a successful placement lies in communication on both sides.

Helen Frostick is a National Leader of Education and a headteacher in south London. She advises and writes regularly for SecEd’s sister publication, Headteacher Update.

Further information

For safeguarding guidance and policy documents from the DfE, including Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children and What to do if You’re Worried a Child is Being Abused (all March 2015), visit http://bit.ly/10VHE9Y

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SUPPLY TEACHING

SecEd’s supply teaching series continues. This week, we offer advice on your rights, entitlements and responsibilities as a supply teacher. We also offer safeguarding advice for supply staff, including practical advice about fulfilling your child protection duties and responsibilities.

In other words, because the STPCD does not differentiate between supply teachers and permanent teachers, schools can reasonably expect that, if a supply teacher is being paid under the STPCD, they will carry out all of the duties of a teacher.

For example, the STPCD sets out a series of teachers’ duties in addition to their key duties in the STPCD – which covers teachers working in local authority-controlled and most voluntary-aided and faith schools, as well as many academies – must also be considered by the teacher and thereby significantly reduce their pay.

Health and safety

Finally, schools are expected to give the same level of attention to the health and safety of supply teachers as they do to permanent members of staff.

Schools must take specific steps to ensure that supply teachers are adequately prepared for work at the school.

• Schools are required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA) to ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, the health and safety of all employees and non-employees – including supply teachers – in their workplace. This includes assessing risks to health and safety and taking steps to reduce or eliminate these risks.

• As the school’s duties cover non-employees as well as employees, the fact that a supply teacher is employed by an agency does not remove the school’s responsibility for their health and safety. Rather, agency supply staff must be afforded the same rights as teachers permanently employed by the school.

And this works both ways, of course: supply teachers are required by HASAWA to ensure the health and safety of all other employees and non-employees they work with.

By Matt Bromley

There’s no doubting the fact that being a supply teacher can be tough. You never know what tomorrow will bring and, as an unfamiliar face at the front of class, personification of the fact the regular teacher is absent, you may sometimes find it difficult to establish rapport with students and may struggle to control their behaviour by means of positive reinforcement rather than hard sanctions.

However, for all its challenges, supply teaching can also be hugely rewarding. After all, variety – as they say – is the spice of life and as a supply teacher you are afforded the privilege of working in a range of different schools and with a variety of staff and students.

But, for all its uncertainties, there are some constants you can rely on as a supply teacher. Your rights, for example, are written in stone and you can rely on as a supply teacher.

Your rights are written in stone and you must ensure that, no matter where you’re posted and for how long, you are supported by both your agency and by the school in which you’re teaching to do the best you can.

Employment rights

From the very first day, your school (legally known as “the hirer”) must provide you with equal access to collective facilities and amenities. In other words, you are entitled to access those facilities which are provided for permanent members of staff.

This might include access to physical facilities such as the canteen and the staffroom, as well as access to transport facilities and car parking. But it might also include access to a permanent job as and when this is advertised internally or externally.

After 12 weeks in a school, your entitlement increases. At this stage, for example, your supply agency is responsible for providing you with the same basic pay and conditions you would have received if you had been employed directly by the school. This includes the same basic pay rate (in other words, the same rate paid to teachers in similar roles in the same school), the same hours of work, rest breaks, lunch breaks, etc. and the same holiday entitlement (included in the daily pay rate payable by schools which are covered by the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document – STPCD).

This also includes paid time off for ante-natal appointments, and alternative work should a risk assessment require this.

What’s more, after 12 weeks in the same role and with the same “hirer”, that school has responsibilities towards you under health and safety legislation.

The 12-week period is calculated from the first day of your placement with a school. Crucially, you do not have to work full-time in order for the week to count towards the qualifying period. What’s more, any school closures – such as school holidays – are not counted when calculating the 12-week period. A week is counted from Monday to Sunday.

In other words, because the STPCD does not differentiate between supply teachers and permanent teachers, schools can reasonably expect that, if a supply teacher is being paid under the STPCD, they will carry out all of the duties of a teacher.

For example, the STPCD sets out a series of teachers’ duties in addition to their key duties in the STPCD – which covers teachers working in local authority-controlled and most voluntary-aided and faith schools, as well as many academies – must also be considered by the teacher and thereby significantly reduce their pay.

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Finally, schools are expected to give the same level of attention to the health and safety of supply teachers as they do to permanent members of staff.

Schools must take specific steps to ensure that supply teachers are adequately prepared for work, at the school.

• Schools are required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA) to ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, the health and safety of all employees and non-employees – including supply teachers – in their workplace. This includes assessing risks to health and safety and taking steps to reduce or eliminate these risks.

• As the school’s duties cover non-employees as well as employees, the fact that a supply teacher is employed by an agency does not remove the school’s responsibility for their health and safety. Rather, agency supply staff must be afforded the same rights as teachers permanently employed by the school.

And this works both ways, of course: supply teachers are required by HASAWA to ensure the health and safety of all other employees and non-employees they work with.

Supply Teaching: SecEd Series

SecEd’s current series of best practice articles for supply teachers will run until January. See below for links to specific previous articles and the list of forthcoming pieces:

• Classroom advice: The element of surprise, SecEd, November 2: http://bit.ly/2iZ249Q
• Preparing for a placement, SecEd, November 2: http://bit.ly/2ZnOmt8
• Managing behaviour & CPD (November 16)
• SEND (November 23)
• Dealing with other staff & handling difficult procedures.

Your legal obligations as a supply teacher & safeguarding and child protection (December 7)

• Your responsibilities

With rights some responsibilities, of course, and supply teachers who are paid by the terms set out in the STPCD – which covers teachers working in local authority-controlled and most voluntary-aided and faith schools, as well as many academies – must also assume the contractual duties that are attached.

If you have a break of more than six weeks, however, you will need to re-stock the clock and accruing qualifying service. Any school closures are not counted when calculating the six-week break.

However, if you are unable to work because of sickness or injury then the qualifying period is paused rather than restarted and will resume when you return to work. The time you take off for sickness or injury will not count towards the 12-week qualifying period or towards the six-week break.

If you are on maternity leave then any leave taken for maternity reasons for up to 26 weeks after childbirth will count towards your qualifying period for equal treatment. If your contract with the school ends during your maternity leave, you will stop accruing qualifying service.

If you are on paternity leave then any paternity leave counts towards your qualifying period for equal treatment. If your contract with the school ends during your paternity leave, you will stop accruing qualifying service.

Pay and conditions

What else do you need to know about your rights as a supply teacher?

First, if you crossed the threshold before you started working as a supply teacher, you will not automatically receive payment from the upper pay scale.

Rather, schools have the discretion to place newly appointed teachers on the main or upper pay scale.

Ideally, the school’s pay policy should articulate how they will calculate the pay of a newly appointed teacher and the same method should be used for supply teachers when they become entitled to equal treatment after 12 weeks.

Once you qualify for equal treatment, you are not entitled to back pay for the qualifying period.

If you are pregnant, once you have qualified for equal treatment, your school must offer you paid time off to attend antenatal appointments. Your school must also complete a full risk assessment as soon as you notify them, and they must offer you an alternative role if this is deemed necessary. If no suitable alternative role is available you are entitled to be suspended on full pay.

However, you should note that supply teachers are not entitled to maternity or paternity pay while employed by an agency.

If you have qualified for equal treatment you are, however, entitled to holiday pay. This may be paid to you at the end of your contract if you have been unable to take your entitlement to holiday during your placement.

Your responsibilities

With rights some responsibilities, of course, and supply teachers who are paid by the terms set out in the STPCD – which covers teachers working in local authority-controlled and most voluntary-aided and faith schools, as well as many academies – must also assume the contractual duties that are attached.

It is wise to exercise caution before agreeing to accept a supply contract from schools which vary the number of hours worked per day. In some of these circumstances, teachers may only be paid for actual lessons taught, taking no account of the other duties undertaken by the teacher and thereby significantly reducing their pay.

As the school’s duties cover non-employees as well as employees, the fact that a supply teacher is employed by an agency does not remove the school’s responsibility for their health and safety. Rather, agency supply staff must be afforded the same rights as teachers permanently employed by the school.

And this works both ways, of course: supply teachers are required by HASAWA to ensure the health and safety of all other employees and non-employees they work with.

Matt Bromley is an education journalist and author with more than 18 years experience in teaching and leadership. He is the author of books for teachers including Making Key Stage 3 Count and Teach It! His latest book, The New Teacher Survival Kit, is available in paperback and e-book formats. Visit www.bromleyeducation.co.uk or follow @mbromley.

To read Matt’s previous articles in SecEd, visit http://bit.ly/1Uobmsl
As a supply teacher, it is your responsibility to ensure you are kept up-to-date with the latest safeguarding knowledge.

Spotting the signs

There are a number of key signs to look out for when working with students. Understandably, progressive changes in behaviour might be difficult to spot without deeper knowledge of a child. However, there are many signs you would be well advised to be on the lookout for:

- Behavioural: changes in eating habits, shrinking or that something just isn’t right, just as proficiently as a teacher working in a permanent position.
- Verbal: using words or phrases that are “too adult” for their age, unexplained silences, withdrawal, or inappropriate sexual behaviours, sudden unexplained and set students, never underestimate the vital role that you play in their protection. Your safeguarding training and expertise can enable you to spot the signs of abuse, or that something just isn’t right, just as proficiently as a teacher working in a permanent position.
- Physical: cuts and bruises (especially those presenting without deeper knowledge of a child, however, progressive changes in behaviour might be difficult to spot when working with students. Understandably, progressive changes in behaviour might be difficult to spot without deeper knowledge of a child. However, there are many signs you would be well advised to be on the lookout for:

Concerned about a student?

You have spotted something you’re concerned about, so what should you do now? While every school will have its own in-house policy and procedures to follow, it is imperative that you refer your concerns to the school’s DSL. The DSL should lead as a starting point. If they’re unavailable, make sure you tell someone employed by the school, fill out the appropriate paperwork and detail your concerns while fresh in your mind.

If a student disclose abuse to you

So, what should you do if a child chooses to disclose to you? If a child proactively opens a conversation with you, then it is imperative that you record your discussion in line with the school’s safeguarding procedures. Here are some tips to help you during discussion:

- Be an empathetic listener. Remind the student that it is not their fault. They did whatever they needed to, to cope.
- Be receptive and understanding of their view on the situation despite your potentially differing opinion. It might be tempting to “rail road” in with a suggested solution or your personal perception of the situation, however, it is imperative to allow the student to air their thoughts in an open and trusting environment.
- Honour their boundaries, ask for permission before any reassuring appropriate touch. It is important that they feel in control of their body at all times.
- Let the student know you’re going to report it – otherwise they may feel like you’re going behind their back and they should never have told you in the first place. If a student says they want to speak to you but don’t want you to tell anyone, you must make it clear that information may be shared. A good way of achieving this is to positively reinforce fact, e.g. “I’m really glad you feel able to approach/speak to me and I am here to listen/help. I want you to know that if I think you are at risk I will share information.
- As an accompanying adult, you are responsible for minimising the risk of harm by identifying and managing potential risks and having a positive and open relationship with the children in your care. If you do have any child protection concerns, you should report them to the DSL lead with you on the day.
- As you will be out with students at an unfamiliar location, occurrences may arise where they need personal assistance from you, e.g. chaperoned to the toilet, or for physical activities, maybe strapping into a harness or help with a scabbard. In these situations, it is important that you avoid situations where you are completely unknown when physical touching is required.
- Seek permission from the student before helping, and do it openly – ideally with other staff present.

Protect yourself

So, how do you ensure that your behaviour is always appropriate and professional? With the rise of social media, for example, how are you to deal with student communication? Here are some top pieces of advice:

- Always adhere to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance and school’s procedures and guidance at all times.
- Avoid contact and contact with children, as this could be misinterpreted. Avoid being alone with a child in confined and secluded areas.
- Where possible, make sure that classroom doors are open and that the child is visible to other people.
- Do not arrange to meet a student on their own outside of school hours.
- Never take photographs of students, add them to your social media accounts, exchange emails or text messages, or give out your own personal details.
- Be mindful of what you post online. Expect private social media posts to be viewed by a wider public audience and use responsibly.

Stay up-to-date with legislation/guidance

The world of legislative protection for young people is continuously evolving in line with case learnings and outcomes. For example, the DfE has released updates to its Working Together to Safeguard Children (September 2016) statutory guidance and Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and guide for practitioners (February 2017). It is essential that any frontline professional trained before these dates understands the latest requirements they are required to embed in everyday safeguarding practice. Check with your employer under the latest statutory guidance they must provide you with regular safeguarding updates throughout the year. As a supply teacher, it is your responsibility to ensure you keep up-to-date with the latest safeguarding knowledge and how to adhered to the latest safeguarding guidance documents.

Further information

For safeguarding guidance and policy documents from the DfE, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (last updated September 2016), Working Together to Safeguard Children (last updated February 2017) and What to do if You’ve Worried a Child is Being Abused (last updated March 2015), visit http://bit.ly/1Vb9C91
SUPPLY TEACHING

SecEd’s supply teaching series continues. This week, we offer advice on accessing high-quality professional development as a supply teacher, as well as some behaviour management guidance for those constantly working with new classes from school to school.

Managing pupil behaviour

By Ben Solly

Managing pupil behaviour is a perennial hot topic in education – everyone seems to have a strong opinion on how to achieve a calm and purposeful learning environment.

Teaching is a demands job profession and each day brings with it a plethora of challenges, particularly in relation to pupil behaviour in class. Even for the most experienced and effective teachers, who are well established in their school, poor pupil behaviour can often derail a lesson and affect the learning of other pupils.

So, for supply teachers, it should come as no surprise that behaviour is high on the list of anxieties that a temporary member of staff might have as they enter a school for the first time.

Get the basics right

From the perspective of a headteacher, I want supply teachers to fit into their new role as seamlessly as possible and to hit the ground running from day one.

My advice to new colleagues on their first day of supply teaching is to focus on the basics – don’t try anything too flashy or ambitious and keep things simple for the first few lessons with a group while you establish yourself.

Supply teachers should aim to get to school early for a variety of reasons. You may need to familiarise yourself with key school policies or processes, or influence the chances of successful relationships being established.

Consequently, supply teachers should think strategically about how to ensure pupils’ initial perceptions of you are positive. Having your resources and materials set up in advance of the start of the lesson is ideal, hence why arriving early at the beginning of the school day is crucial. Meet students at the door, greet them positively and have an activity ready for them to complete as they enter the room.

If this is the first time you are meeting the group, strategies such as giving students stickers for them to write their names on is advisable, as it is requesting a seating plan or class profile with key information such as SEN requirements, Pupil Premium information etc.

Implementing the behaviour policy

As a supply teacher you need to understand the school’s behaviour policy so that you can respond consistently to unacceptable behaviour without a framework that pupils understand. However, a behaviour system will not get pupils to behave, it should be used to deal with pupils in a fair, consistent and transparent way if they do not meet the behaviour expectations of the school.

Most successful teachers will focus on well-planned, well-taught lessons that engage pupils in stimulating learning activities and therefore they will not often need to use the school behaviour system.

However, for supply teachers, who do not have the benefit of well-established relationships with pupils, this is not always possible. You will often be faced with a set of instructions (which aren’t always there, or aren’t always good or clear) left by the regular teacher and the ability to think on your feet is absolutely essential.

Some pupils will try and push boundaries with a new supply teacher to see what they can get away with and this is a real challenge in the first few interactions with a class. My advice is to be firm, fair and consistent – apply the policy and associated sanctions where appropriate but do your very best to find positive behaviours to praise and reward

Sometimes a pupil might need to be removed from the classroom because their behaviour has escalated, or they have done something extreme or outrageous in the lesson.

In these circumstances it is crucial that supply teachers have a point of contact who can be easily reached. This might be a head of department or a member of the leadership team, however it can be counter-productive to use this option too frequently as it can quickly disempower the teacher, as pupils will rapidly realise that the teacher cannot cope with this class and needs to be continually supported by others within the school.

However, if a class understands that poor behaviour will be dealt with in a firm, fair and consistent manner and sanctions will be followed through on a short timescale, and where appropriate more senior members of staff will be involved, then this can help a supply teacher in establishing credibility with a group of challenging pupils.

Choose your attitude

The approach and attitude of a teacher towards a class is often mirrored back in the approaches and attitudes of a class towards a teacher. My advice to everyone working with young people is to speak to them in a calm, confident and measured manner; be the adult in the conversation, regardless of how much you are provoked. If we expect a mature and calm response from young people, then everything we do as the responsible adults in the situation should model and exude these qualities and characteristics.

Supply teachers can be seen as an easy target for some challenging pupils, it is critical to exude confidence and control from day one. Body language, appearance and tone of voice are tremendously important, so dress to impress and be confident and calm at all times, even if on the inside you are feeling quite the opposite.

The swan analogy here is a good one, above the water you are a picture of calmness, elegance and serenity, but under the water your feet are kicking and flapping like crazy in order to stay afloat!

Supply teachers should also put themselves in the shoes of the students too. It might be that this class has not had their regular teacher for some time and you might be the latest in a string of short-term solutions that, as yet, have not worked out for the school.

Don’t take it personally if the class doesn’t instantly warm to you, and be resilient. It will take even the most effective teachers some time to pick up a class mid-year and hit the ground running with them, especially if the group have had a negative experience of inconsistent teaching. Be persistent and keep your cool and you will eventually win them round.

Some pupils will try and push boundaries with a new supply teacher to see what they can get away with and this is a real challenge in the first few interactions with a class. My advice is to be firm, fair and consistent.

The last decade in education has seen a change in the way schools tackle teacher absence. The introduction of “rarely cover” has meant that teachers now do not very often step in to teach a class who can provide you with this information.

Your preparation can begin before your first day, get your hands on key documentation such as the school behaviour policy as well as the procedures for rewards and sanctions.

Supply Teaching: SecEd Series

SecEd’s current series of best practice articles for supply teachers will run until January. See below for links to specific previous articles and the list of forthcoming pieces:

• Classroom advice: The element of surprise, SecEd, November 2: http://bit.ly/2ID2S4Q
• Preparing for a placement, SecEd, November 2: http://bit.ly/2zy2m08
• Know your rights, SecEd, November 9: http://bit.ly/2naGcD4
• Safeguarding: A shared duty, SecEd, November 9: http://bit.ly/2Zb7EWS
• Supply teachers’ legal obligations as a supply teacher & safeguarding child protection (December 7)
• CDPP & moving from supply to full-time (January 11)

All articles in this series are available as a free pdf at www.seced.co.uk/supplements/supply-teaching-advice-and-best-practice/
Keeping an eye on your CPD

By Bridget Clay

How can supply teachers maintain their teaching and subject-specific CPD when not based in a school?

We know that professional development is one of the most important things for schools and their staff. Supply teachers make up an important part of our workforce and directly support children’s outcomes. Yet, often their CPD is something that is neglected.

Why is CPD so important?

First, great development and a supportive environment improve morale and reduce stress. Teachers who receive great professional learning also report greater confidence and greater self-efficacy. To allow all our teachers to thrive and grow, CPD is a key factor in a successful organisation.

More importantly, staff development can be one of the most effective school improvement approaches. The recent Developing Great Teaching report (leadingbyexample) noted that “professional development opportunities that are carefully designed and have a strong focus on pupil outcomes have a significant impact on student achievement.”

In addition to specification knowledge, teachers and the whole school.

Building awareness vs changing practice

There are several stages and types of professional learning. If you are considering professional learning opportunities that are carefully designed and development had the largest impact on student outcomes. School leaders need to show how effective CPD for all staff to benefit student outcomes.

This “direct” professional learning is probably the most important, as it ultimately helps students, teachers, and the whole school.

However, to support “direct professional learning”, you need to learn new knowledge and draw on a body of knowledge and an awareness of different approaches.

“Direct professional learning” tends to happen when a teacher identifies a student learning need, selects an evidence-informed approach that should help this need, then experiments, adapts and refines this approach so that it benefits students and becomes part of the teacher’s regular practice.

This can only happen with at least some input of prior knowledge on different evidence-informed approaches.

A supply teacher who works in lots of different schools in many ways has more opportunities to build awareness and knowledge. They are in the fortunate position to see lots of different school policies, curricula and approaches. This is likely to mean that they have a wide range of experiences and a wide range of awareness and knowledge to draw upon.

However, a supply teacher that moves between schools is almost certainly going to find it harder to engage in “direct professional learning”, as they will find it harder to engage in sustained, iterative approaches to practice, to link to and evaluate your practice to benefit students and ultimately improve their practice. This is undoubtedly harder to build-in effective CPD when frequently changing classes and contexts, it is more powerful, where possible, to conduct a research review of what the most effective school leaders do to improve attainment and what it would look like if your practice was then implemented.

How to change and develop practice

When not based in a school, online and in-person learning is one of the most effective school improvement approaches. The recent Developing Great Teaching report (leadingbyexample) noted that “professional development opportunities that are carefully designed and development had the largest impact on student outcomes. School leaders need to show how effective CPD for all staff to benefit student outcomes.

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Supply and SEN

In each school, he was greeted by the cover-coordinator and given a list of the classes he will be working. From a teaching and learning perspective, they are undoubtedly the experts on the students you will be taking on.

If you are in a longer term supply post, take every opportunity to develop your understanding and knowledge of your students. You could see this as a personal development opportunity to gain a more detailed and practical understanding of particular kinds of SEND.

So what is it reasonable to expect?

• A clear list of your classes, the rooms they will be in, and a map of the school.
• Clear information on how to ask for help or support if the need arises and the options for whom to ask.
• At least a summary of any code of conduct and details of any reasonable adjustments the school makes to meet the needs of its SEND students.
• Clear information on the various needs of your students.

In summary

When working as a supply teacher in a school, there are those things that the school should be doing to support you in your role.

Equally, there are things you can do to help your own understanding and experience of working with young people who have a range of potentially complex needs.

What he noticed was that in none of the schools he visited did he receive any information at all about the people he would be mostly working with – the students themselves. None of the students. Not even the he would be mostly working with – the students who have a Statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). These are legal documents and, once agreed at a young person’s annual review, should be made available in a useful, purposeful format for everyone who teaches or works with the young person in question. It is, after all, their EHCP.

Additional adult support in your class

In terms of additional adult support, let’s always remember that where a lesson is covered by a supply teacher, the additional adult (teaching assistant/learning support assistant/volunteer) can be the difference between a really successful, positive experience for everyone, and a lesson where things go wrong, leaving teacher and students with negative emotions.

On most occasions, a regular supporting member of staff, the additional adult will have background knowledge and experience of the SEND students. In other cases, too (for that matter) which can be invaluable to the supply teacher.

Deploy them wisely in your classroom: ask them for tips about individual and groups of students, find out what’s worked for the class and anything they may have struggled with recently.

If you are in a longer term supply post, take every opportunity to develop your understanding and knowledge of your students. You could see this as a personal development opportunity to gain a more detailed and practical understanding of particular kinds of SEND.

So what is it reasonable to expect?

• A clear list of your classes, the rooms they will be in, and a map of the school.
• Clear unambiguous information for each lesson about the staff you could call on if you have any in-lesson queries or issues. Remember that the most disadvantaged young people with whom you will be working.

What we also need to remember of course is the issue of time: many supply colleagues will arrive at school in good time to read the materials they are given and to begin to grasp the wider issues around the school as well as any individual students.

For various reasons, however, some colleagues will not be able to do this and so you, as a supply teacher, will need if at all possible to find some time during the day to acquire some preparatory understanding of your classes.

If time really is short, try to make yourself known to key/staff in the department(s) in which you are working. From a teaching and learning perspective, they are undoubtedly the experts on the students you will be taking on.

Look for – and ask for if it does not appear to be made available – at least a summary of provision and outcomes for any of your students who have a Statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan, which can tell you:

• What works for certain students: for example, in the classroom.

Many schools will now include photos of the young people with the most complex needs as part of the bespoke information pack they can offer supply colleagues. Look for information packs which can tell you:

• What works for certain students: for example, in terms of teaching and learning approaches, style of communication, language and presentation of work. Does a particular student have a time-out pass or is there a support mechanism available to them during lessons?

• What doesn’t work for them in these areas.

• Will there be any additional adult support available in any of your classes and is this “whole-class” support or more targeted on specific individuals?

• Generic advice and guidance on a wide range of SEND and what these can mean in respect of a young person’s learning and development.

In particular, look for – and ask for if it does not appear to be made available – at least a summary of provision and outcomes for any of your students who have a Statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). These are legal documents and, once agreed at a young person’s annual review, should be made available in a useful, purposeful format for everyone who teaches or works with the young person in question. It is, after all, their EHCP.

Look for – and ask for if it does not appear to be made available – at least a summary of provision and outcomes for any of your students who have a Statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan, which can tell you:

• What works for certain students: for example, in the classroom.

Supply work can be immensely satisfying and rewarding: let’s work together and with our students to make it just that for everyone.

Oh, and that supply teacher was me!

By Garry Freeman

Garry Freeman is director of inclusion and SEN at Gachoise School in Leeds. Find him @GFS Freeman. You can read Garry’s previous SecEd articles on inclusion and best practice articles for SecEd via http://bit.ly/2QdJ5MJ
A

supply teaching

By Emma Lee-Potter

As schools across the country battle with teacher recruitment and retention, more and more heads are turning to supply teachers to fill the gap. Figures released earlier this year showed that school spending on supply teacher agencies jumped by a fifth between 2012 and 2016. But many supply teachers are growing increasingly disillusioned with their pay and conditions. One of them, Leicester-based Samina Randall, became so exasperated that she decided to set up her own “ethical” online supply agency. She now has more than 100 supply teachers (primary and secondary) and teaching assistants on her books and received 1,140 bookings during her first year.

Ms Randall, who has been a primary teacher for 20 years, became a supply teacher in 2014 to work directly for a school it would be £33,000. So you are talking about a considerable reduction in your salary for doing the same work.”

She also learned that some supply agencies move supply teachers once they have worked at the same school for 11 weeks. “The Agency Workers Regulations stipulate that agency workers are entitled to parity pay after 12 weeks of working in the same establishment,” she explained. “If they go over the 12 weeks they then have to pay you £106.84 a day instead of £120 or £130.”

Not only that, if a school had offered her a permanent job the supply agency would charge the school 20 per cent of her annual salary as a “transfer fee.” “It was a steep learning curve,” said Ms Randall. “Sometimes the traditional agencies try and make you feel professionally guilty, especially if you ask for a pay rise. When a school in a town 45 minutes away asked if I could work for another week I asked the agency to increase my daily rate by an extra £8 to compensate for my travel and extra childcare costs. I got a really short response saying: ‘If you want more money we’ll have to charge the school.’”

But now I’m running my own agency I know that’s not true.”

Most headteachers she spoke to were unaware what supply teachers were being paid. “They are paying a fair rate to the agency – typically £200 or £250 a day – so there’s no reason for them to think that supply teachers aren’t getting a fair rate,” she said.

When she decided to launch her own agency, the headteacher of the school where she was working at the time immediately expressed her support. “It all started with a caring headteacher,” said Ms Randall, who is now managing director of Transpose Supply and still works as a supply teacher herself. “We wanted something that would empower schools and empower teachers and link the two together. Because it’s an online agency we’re able to reduce our costs, keep our margins low and pass the money on to our teachers.”

If a school offers a supply teacher a permanent job, her agency charges a £500 transfer fee (as opposed to about £7,000). She also asks schools to provide CPD opportunities for supply teachers on assignments of a term or more and for those doing job shares.

Our teachers earn within the main pay scale ‘everyday’,” said Ms Randall. “It means they are happier and better motivated teachers as a result – and that’s good for the school and good for the pupils. It addresses the problem of recruitment and retention when often supply teachers get fed up and, if unable to do this, leave a note with a brief explanation. Be prepared: Take some back-up resources, just in case. I carry paper copies of poems and maths problems and also keep a library of my favourite resources on a cloud store for easy access. Have some good starters to help settle the class and get to know them. For example, call the register and get them to answer with their favourite food, book, animal, game or singer.

Leave your mark: A school wants to show consistency in the way work is marked so make sure you adhere to the marking policy.

Know your class: Ask about any specific needs of pupils and groups, such as health issues, behaviour, SEN, EAL and G&T. Get to know the pupils – you are likely to see them again as supply teachers are often asked back.

Access codes: Check you have all the access codes you need: log-in details for classroom computers, websites, door codes and the photocopier. Keep these codes securely. For regular schools, I use an encrypted password store on my phone.

Feedback: Give constructive feedback about your experience in the school. If you like the way something is done, tell them. If you think there are things that may help, politely share this too. Also, give your agency feedback so they can improve the service they provide to you and the school.

Team player: You may only be there briefly but you need to follow rules and procedures as if you were a permanent member of the team. Deal with any incidents and situations on this basis and don’t dismiss any safeguarding concerns because you are passing through.

Positive mental attitude: Be assertive and positive with other staff members and present a professional and friendly face. Always greet people on arrival and say goodbye when you leave.