

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR NEW PRINCIPALS AND CRT CO-ORDINATORS

New Principals or CRT Coordinators

We look forward to impressing you with the most reliable teacher- replacement system you can imagine, however such efficiency is largely dependent on the support we get from our Principals and Coordinators.

On rare occasions we may need to ring you after hours to get your opinion/permission on a booking issue so please contact us as soon as possible and give us your after hours contact details. Your Office Manager will already have plenty of our business cards. Please keep one for yourself. If your teachers plan to ring us direct, you should ensure that they all have a card. Anyone ringing to make a booking should note that the order of information required is on the back of the card. We are gradually building our website with information for schools and teachers and it would be wise for new coordinators to spend the time to read the information therein. To find us, type southernteaching.alphalink.com.au note: there is no "www". If you have any queries, concerns, suggestions don't hesitate to ring us.

Russell visits schools 2 or 3 times each year, hoping to briefly meet you personally. These are flying visits and it's very hard to make appointment times. Please instruct your office staff to let you know if he arrives. He will be happy to come down to where you are working rather than drag you away from a classroom or from the other side of the oval.

Teachers

We look forward to removing the problem of doubling-up when teachers are away. I trust your Principal or Coordinator will have made you familiar with our company and our booking procedures, along with any specific requirements of your school. If you are away you can ask us (or ask your Coordinator) for a particular CRT and we will do our very best to get that person (but there's no guarantee). If not, we will chase up others who are familiar with your school.

Our priority of choice for each booking is in the following order:

1. Whoever the school asks for.
2. Someone else who is familiar with the grade.
3. Someone else who is familiar with the school.
4. Introduce a new face.

Booking Procedures

Note: Our Office hours are :

Mon to Thurs 6.30 am - 10.00 am..... and 1.00 pm - 9.00 pm.

Fri. 6.30 am. till 1.00 pm. **Sun.** 5pm - 9 pm

Outside these times (whether it be 11pm at night or 2 am in the morning) you can leave booking details on our answering machines and be confident that they will be attended to. It is an outstandingly reliable system. Please leave details exactly in the order shown on the back of our business card as this pattern increases our efficiency.

Note:

We close at 10 am for 3 hours. It becomes a waste of time trying to find CRTs after 10 am as those not already working will have made other plans for the day, anyway.

If your staff plan to run down slippery corridors, climb wobbly ladders or simply throw up they should do so well before 10 am.... or you will most likely have to double-up to cover their absence.

Part-Day Bookings

Most of you realise that part-day bookings are not filled until the morning of the job no matter how long ago you made the booking. We ask schools NOT to ask our CRTs directly if they can fill future part-days. Even if you do, there is no guarantee they will turn up. Ring the agency right from the start and leave it to us to arrange. Our company reserves the right to use our teachers in full-day bookings when necessary.

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Recesses/ Lunchtime/ Other Breaks

New Principals/ Coordinators may not be aware that:

Under current regulations CRTs can be employed for no more than 6 hours in a given day. In most schools that will be 9 am till 3.30 pm, less half an hour for a luncheon break (for which they are NOT paid). You cannot legally require them to perform any duties outside their paid hours. This means that before or after school they cannot be required to teach, conduct Yard Duty, attend meetings or assemblies. Regardless of the length of your school's lunch break, CRTs are required to be given a full 1/2 hr. uninterrupted by any of the above duties..... includes watching or supervising children eating their lunch.

We have noticed that some schools' timetables are creeping below this figure, because of shortened lunchtimes. It is still unlawful to offer them less. Our CRTs are already donating 1/2 an hour of their own time preparing before school and 15 mins of their own time after school tidying up and making notes for the returning teacher. Regardless of our opinion and even if the CRT volunteers to do it, performance duties outside the recommended time could leave the school and the CRT in a highly vulnerable legal position should anything go wrong. Solicitors sniffing around to blame the School Council or the Principal in the event of any lawsuit will quickly pick up on this. Your insurances may not cover you in the event of accident or lawsuit if the school is found in breach of workplace law or even the Education Department's own regulations. Is it worth putting your house on the line? Any queries on this issue, ring Russell.

We suggest the following, to be safe:

Before school - no yard duty, no assemblies..... let them go and prepare for their day.

Recess - 15mins Yard Duty, 15 mins Break

Lunch - 30 mins Yard Duty, 30 mins Break

After School- no Yard Duty, no Meetings

Two Notable Exceptions to the Above Rule:

1) If a CRT commences work on or after 12.00 noon, you do NOT have to offer any lunch break and can expect them to work right through till 3.30

2) If the vacancy is for 5 consecutive days or more, then the CRT will be the teacher they are replacing..... required to do the exact same Yard Duty, attend Meetings, Assemblies, write Reports, work the same hours, etc. but must also be given the teacher's Preparation Time.

Note: If the Government paid CRTs a full 7.6 hrs per day (same as they pay full-time teachers) you would have full flexibility to use your CRTs the same as your full-time staff and extra money in your budget to cover the difference.

Why Not? Much less hassle.

Contracts

When the school needs to fill a contract or on-going position it is always a good idea to let us know. We are likely to have someone who perfectly fits the bill. Most unemployed teachers in the Southern Region are registered with us as CRT's. We need to keep our availability list as accurate as possible so if you fill a position from open advertising we really appreciate you informing us. It is highly likely to be one of our CRT's.

Children At Risk at Recess.

Some schools have a prepared list of names with clear photos of all children who:

1. Have a medical history of allergic shock, epilepsy, asthma or other serious health issues.

OR

2. Have a history of social issues be it violent behaviour, bullying, using inappropriate language, fits of temper, prone to distress or depression, prone to running off home.

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If such a trauma was overlooked or misinterpreted by a CRT on Yard Duty, litigation is likely. To protect the CRT and the School and of course, the child..... we suggest a list with photos should be given to CRTs before they commence Yard Duty supervision.

Work Programs Kept on Laptops.

It is becoming increasingly common for teachers to keep their work program on a laptop. If there is no hard copy available to a CRT who comes to work there, it can be very difficult knowing what to do. Some teachers may not want CRTs opening their computers and in any case, some software requires a password. All of this is very time-consuming to a CRT who is rushing to prepare a program for the day at 8.30 am., sometimes with no available help. Schools wishing to ensure some level of curriculum continuity should ensure that the teacher's work program is easily accessible.

New Documents

Office Managers should remind CRTs to provide your school with a current VIT and Police Check. It should be a clear photocopy, certified at a police station, signed by the policeman with a **blue** pen. Many such documents expire each Christmas holiday. Don't get caught short when the auditors arrive. We remind CRTs from our end but have no way of policing it at yours.

Thank you to all our schools

It is not easy placing 8,000 jobs across more than 60 schools each year, keeping in mind the individual needs of each school as well as the skills and wishes of 250 CRTs. As often as possible we find the person of your choice and sometimes it leads to an on-going position at one of your schools. Sometimes we are frustrated by lack of CRTs (flu season) or when a school let's us down (employing one of our CRTs without notifying us) but generally the system operates with amazing efficiency and that is due largely to the conscientious effort by your Principals, Office Staff and Classroom Teachers to help keep us on track. No doubt it will be another big year and we thank you all in anticipation of another great team effort.

Have a Good One!