

Reference for Chris Waugh

Teacher of English, London Nautical School Sept 2010-April 2013

I had the pleasure of appointing Chris Waugh to the position of teacher of English at London Nautical School fully aware that he was highly qualified and very experienced. As Head of Department, I had three ex-HoDs within the department, which might seem daunting, yet from the very beginning Chris was most supportive of the changes I wanted to make.

We moved from teaching groups based on ability setting to mixed ability groups. Although not unusual in New Zealand, in the UK we were swimming against the tide with this initiative. We also wanted to allow teachers to demonstrate their professionalism through the choices they made in their curricular design. This is also not the norm in UK schools. It was extremely useful to ask Chris for the perspective of a NZ-educated teacher in many of these matters as there have been many changes to education in the UK in recent years.

As an experienced classroom teacher, Chris was able to develop projects which were central to the strategic vision of the department in a way that I as HoD did not have the time or expertise to do. These projects included one which Chris inherited. He collaborated with a colleague from King's College, Laurie Smith, so effectively that the project Let's Think English has been huge success.

A second project with Exeter University called Grammar for Writing was something I as HoD decided would be excellent Continuing Professional Development for the whole department. As often happens, some members of staff did not make the most of this unique opportunity (funded by the Economic Social Research Council) but Chris once again committed himself fully to the year-long project and the resulting teaching materials he produced are extraordinary.

In addition Chris developed the open-access online blogging which became central to the authenticity of the learning experience in the department. He spent an inordinate amount of time resolving IT issues for the benefit of the whole department. The generosity he showed with his time, resources and support was impressive.

Chris Waugh has been a huge asset to the English Department of London Nautical School and went on to develop further the ethos we valued when he led the department after my departure. His energy, enthusiasm and intellect are second to none.

Dr Laura Ovenden

[laura.ovenden@gmail.com](mailto:laura.ovenden@gmail.com)

Head of the Faculty of English, Drama and MFL (Sept 2010 - April 2013)