

Reference for Christopher Waugh – September 2016

I have collaborated closely with Chris as a parent since my sons Alex and Barnaby (aged 18 and 16) entered London Nautical School. Chris has been English teacher to both boys and also Form Tutor to my younger son, Barnaby for the last 5 years.

Chris as an English teacher

With a degree in literature myself (though French and German not English!) I was keen for my boys to be enthused by language and literature. Chris's teaching has brought out the best in them and under his guidance they have achieved amazing results both in creative writing and analysis of texts. Chris has encouraged and challenged them to improve constantly through his methods of teaching and feedback. He has made English lessons enjoyable by encouraging active participation.

His innovative techniques using film and drama to explore literature have left a lasting impression. I still remember the enthusiastic group of Year 8 students who improvised and filmed a stabbing scene from Romeo and Juliet in the stairwell of my block – this was homework and they will always remember it. Likewise, London's South Bank has never quite recovered from the various enactments of the Ancient Mariner performed in dramatic style by a bunch of London Nautical teenagers. Chris has a knack of understanding the buttons to press on a teenager though his use of technology that supports rather than hinders the learning. Film Club was an amazing experience for my younger son – the weekly meetings where they developed their scripts, acted and filmed their stories were sacrosanct and culminated in two fabulous trips to international film festivals in Edinburgh and Paris, which were learning experiences in themselves.

Both boys achieved an A* grade in English Literature GCSE exams (age 16) and impressed me with their commitment to perfecting their course work under Chris's guidance. He set them tough challenges and they rose to it.

Chris as a form tutor /mentor /role model

As a widowed parent bringing up two boys I wanted to ensure they had good strong male role models and a mentor to support them through their school years. Chris has done this brilliantly. Over the last 5 years he has guided Barnaby through the potential pitfalls of the teenage years, helping him to develop into a mature and confident young man. He has been particularly close to Barnaby's friendship group who have benefited hugely from activities generated together such as the Equalities group, which has developed their sense of justice, encouraged them to question their values and given them a forum to tackle challenging social issues. The culmination of this was when we represented the school in the annual Pride march – parents, teachers and pupils together.

Chris has steered both boys through difficult decisions, helped them set priorities and always supported them emotionally when needed. From the start he encouraged close parental co-operation which has been a great support to me too. They have been lucky to have such a great role model in him.

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