

24th November 2020

To Whom it May Concern,

I write this reference to attest to the professional manner and leadership of Christopher Waugh. For context, I have known Chris as a colleague for four years and have worked alongside him as classroom teachers, and reported to him as my acting Head of Learning Area.

When I first met Chris in 2017, I was a second year teacher. For the first two terms of that year, Chris and I worked together as classroom teacher colleagues. During this time, I found our professional relationship stimulating. Chris engaged with me in a way that encouraged me to think critically about my teaching and see myself as much more than a beginning teacher. As the year progressed, Chris took up the position of acting Head of Learning Area (HOLA) and this added a new dimension to our working relationship. Not only was Chris someone I could go to and discuss my ideas with but he now stood as the guardian for our department. In this role, he pursued high standards in all areas, with a focus on the development and delivery of strong, engaging teaching programs. It was in this role that Chris kindled my interest in a genre based approach to English teaching and supported me to implement new curriculum schemes with new texts. His unending enthusiasm, innovative thinking and genuine interest in the students and staff in his department were his greatest assets.

Systems run smoothly with Chris at the helm. He thrives in the digital world, ensuring that the administration aspect of being a classroom teacher is streamlined and user friendly. During his time as acting HOLA, Chris implemented a shared department spreadsheet to track NCEA data which has made monitoring students in class and year level groups a simple and transparent task. This spreadsheet is still part of our current department system and it sparks constructive conversations about the achievement of our students. It ensures that teachers from all stages of a students learning journey can contribute to the support or extension offered to them. The introduction of his digital platform, Edutronic, encourages collaboration and engagement across the department. As colleagues, we can all follow each other's classroom blogs, providing a unique window into the work we do. This fosters conversations about the teaching we are so passionate about and facilitates the easy sharing of resources. Chris has high standards and works with a solutions focused mindset to ensure his staff are equipped to meet these standards. Over the past four years, I have been part of and watched as Chris has modelled teaching practice, spent hours supporting colleagues with their planning and cultivation of ideas, and shared his resources via the online platforms he creates.

Chris has an immeasurably positive impact on his students and the wider whanau groups. Year after year, students select his English classes and they continually experience individual success. When they speak of him as their teacher, they talk of his passion, expertise and unfailing belief that English is for everyone. He has established the triathlon club and every Friday when they meet for their group bike ride, I watch with admiration the camaraderie and team spirit that the students and their parents unite around. Chris has created this culture within this team that has seen them successfully perform on a national

level. This ability also shows itself when Chris works with his colleagues. Under the banner of the micro-credentials project which is funded by a Bright Spots award, he has brought together a team of teachers from across the school to work in their respective areas of expertise. Not only has he been a leader with the vision and drive to get this scheme off the ground, he has delegated various sub-areas to teachers and empowered them to develop aspects of the project. In my own experience as one of these sub-leaders, Chris has supported me to craft my own ideas and continually offers guidance. He has ensured that I have had room to experiment with the project and make my own mark on it, but also supplied the overarching direction that these projects need to succeed.

Chris has been, to put it simply, the best mentor that any teacher could ask for. He has supported, pushed, collaborated and celebrated with me. He approaches teaching, with both students and colleagues, with an unmatched ardour and I know that any teacher under his care will feel professionally stimulated and inspired to innovate. Chris exudes an aura that makes you believe you can step outside your comfort zone and challenge yourself.

Though it saddens me to think of not working with Chris, I know he has so much to offer a new team. His work ethic, unique ideas and zeal for the profession will inspire his colleagues. His core philosophy of knowing students as people with stories and experiences of their own will undoubtedly ensure that students experience the very best that the subject of English has to offer.

Please reach out if you wish to discuss any of the points I have raised in this reference. My contact information can be found at the bottom of this letter.

Kind Regards,

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