

Teaching staff workload at Christopher Whitehead

Statement of Intent

The staff at Christopher Whitehead are our greatest asset. They have coped with - even embraced - huge external change: introduction of A-levels, new GCSEs, new buildings and increased demand for places. Their care and conscientious professionalism are valued in what is a physically and mentally demanding, all-consuming profession.

The aim of this document has been to look at how Christopher Whitehead values and preserves its professional teaching staff. We are not working in a soulless call centre; our staff work hard and we need to preserve their greatness.

This is, therefore, an opportunity to reflect on our approach to work and the environment we have created. This is a chance to streamline and discuss: are our current procedures and policies working, do they have the impact we desire? We have created 40 ways which we hope will guide and support our staff and our work. These are areas that have been discussed widely and amended where appropriate. This is a statement of intent that the Christopher Whitehead staff are fabulous and need to work in an environment that builds them up and sustains their excellent approach for the benefit of the students, colleagues and community members who we all aim to serve: *in pursuit of excellence*.

Neil Morris, Headteacher

40 ways we manage teaching staff workload

1. A sensible marking and feedback policy, that focuses on evidence-based impact and is flexible to suit each department's needs. Whole-class feedback is encouraged; lengthy teacher comments discouraged.
2. A highly effective referral system that standardises expectations of behaviour, cuts low-level disruption, supports teachers at every level of experience and leaves lesson time for teaching. The First Response system allows departmental referrals; First Calls involve the immediate involvement of a member of SLT, DoS or Behaviour Support team. Centralised detentions are offered by DoS and SLT. Dedicated behavioural staff work to provide the backbone of this support.
3. A reduction in number of after-school meetings: we used to routinely have two per week. This has been reduced to one and is held on Wednesdays when we have no teaching commitments to maximise staff attendance. As far as is possible, any other meetings in the week do not involve all staff and attendance at them is voluntary (e.g. Mental Wealth committee) or part of their induction programme.
4. A high emphasis on teaching and learning in allocated departmental meeting time. This year, at staff request, we have given far more time over to departments with the Departmental Development (DD) meetings. This is to give staff time to co-plan and undertake CPD to help introduce the new courses / GCSEs / three-year KS4. CPD within meeting time is therefore subject-specific with a focus on collaboration, shared planning and resourcing to cut

preparation time. Department meetings are divided into 'Home' and 'Away' so that staff working in two departments do not miss out, and HoDs can plan ahead.

5. Departmental admin and information-giving is encouraged in regular newsletters or bulletins within departments to cut down on time wasted in the previous style of meetings.
6. Two new staffrooms, one on each side of school. With such a large site it has previously been impossible to create larger communal areas that staff can easily get to at breaks and lunchtimes: these rooms now mean they can socialise with colleagues from other departments.
7. Additional time-tabled management time for management responsibility.
8. A system of support, in a carousel system, for Subject Leaders who are also Learning Mentors to allow them periods off from having LM group commitments.
9. Requests for secondment leave fully considered and, where possible, granted, to allow for a variety of goals and life ambitions to be met without colleagues having to resign from their teaching posts.
10. No lunch duties for classroom teachers unless they volunteer. Free lunch offered for those that do so.
11. 25% staff discount for annual membership* of the on-site sports centre and gym which also covers the two other sports centres and swimming pool in the city. Staff are invited to take part in Friday Football after school, and there are regular competitions between staff and sixth form teams. (** The Direct Debit package*)
12. Flexible and part-time working supported right up to SLT level, and requests for flexible learning considered, for **all** staff - not just those with young children and other carer responsibilities.
13. Only one break and after-school duty per week for classroom teachers.
14. Every effort made to accommodate requests from staff to take time to attend important family events, children's concerts, graduations, etc.
15. A home learning policy that puts an emphasis on revision, retrieval or finishing class work to cut down teacher-marking and support the increased content of most courses. Homework is not set for the sake of it. Teachers are asked to consider: Why is this homework being set? How will it be marked? What impact will it have?
16. All SLT teach, including the Headteacher. This not only spreads the teaching load, it keeps SLT current with issues concerning curricula, behaviour management and classroom practice.
17. Lesson observations with no gradings and an emphasis on professional discussion and teacher-led development.
18. A developmental annual review programme designed to be led by departments that is 'done with' rather than 'done to'.

19. A post-review system that uses coaching, mentoring and bespoke support to further develop success and to target areas of improvement swiftly and effectively.
20. An alternative to work scrutiny - Book Talks - led by departments, to replace the previous 'tick-box' book trawls, based on individual subjects' agreed policies and developed through discussion, not a one-size-fits-all punitive system of judgement.
21. A performance management / appraisal system that is collaborative and that focuses on individual development aims and needs. 'Keep in touch' fortnights, twice in the year, support the process by sharing progress with LMs / HoDs and changes have been made to make the system more personal and bespoke to individuals' support needs. A review of the paperwork and current system is underway.
22. A line management system that supports individuals and departments, working alongside HoDs to develop and improve; fortnightly line management meetings that model, advise and grow HoD and TLR-holders' capacity. All TLR-holders have regular line management meetings to 'touch base', discuss current issues and feedback about policy, to avoid a 'top-down' approach to the management of the school.
23. CPD is bespoke, targeted and useful. CPD foci remain the same for the year so all staff can work towards self-set targets, all of which will impact their practice. Many staff now choose to link their personal appraisal targets with whole-school CPD, strengthening aims and using time effectively. CPD is evidence-based and not driven by fads or trends. Twilight CPD organised to avoid extra days at the end of the summer term.
24. A Mental Wealth committee made up of volunteer staff who meet regularly and who evaluate and share across school how staff (and students) can safeguard their wellbeing.
25. We appreciate that where possible our staff try to make appointments in their own time, but leave for unavoidable medical appointments is fully paid. An entitlement of up to two consecutive weeks' paternity leave, if eligible. Shared parental leave is also considered on request, if eligible.
26. Personalised staff planners that respond to staff feedback about effectiveness and relevance of content and which reflect the school's shared ethos and aims.
27. The number of data collections has reduced considerably: **only two for each year group** down from the previous three which, in turn has been cut from six a few years ago. Data is only collected if it is going to be reported to parents as PMR; this is then also used this for internal tracking. Any additional data collections within departments are discouraged. This will allow the data collected to be accurate, not repetitive, and will create an impact for all involved.
28. From September 2018, there will be only **one full written annual report**, for year 7, rather than the five done previously for all year groups. Reports for year 7 provide an essential record of a student's start with us and a continuation of our thorough transition programme.
29. Year 13 autumn PMR reports use the same data for UCAS applications to avoid doubling sixth form tutors' workload.

30. We are reducing the number of parents' evenings and evening events per year. There will in future be only two open evenings that staff need to attend: one whole school and one sixth form; seven year-based parents' evenings; one year 7 & 12 'meet the teachers' evening (held on the same night) and the Y6 transition evening in July. We always enjoy your support in our annual celebratory events (certificate / awards evenings), but attendance at these evening events remains optional.
31. We are currently reviewing parents' evenings to introduce an online appointments system to reduce congestion and excessive time spent during these evenings by teachers, and arranging for site staff on duty at the end of the night to move furniture where necessary so teachers do not have to.
32. No formal lesson plans ever expected at any time. Flexible planning formats are only used during coaching or support in mutual agreement between teacher and coach.
33. Slimmed down departmental development plans / SEF: aims are clear, shared across school and across departments.
34. Fantastic admin support: all letters checked, addressed, printed and posted for staff centrally.
35. A team of subject-specialist Learning Support Assistants who offer bespoke support to those students that need it the most, allowing teaching staff to differentiate effectively and set appropriately challenging work for all students.
36. An experienced team of cover supervisors that supports staff absence, ensuring continuity for students and staff. Well-established cover systems result in minimal need for teaching staff to step in. Only staff on the Staff Intervention Rota (SIR) are routinely asked to cover.
37. Design, printing, photocopying and laminating all undertaken by a highly-skilled reprographics department.
38. Three librarians offering reading, research and resource-support in our fully-stocked Learning Resource Centre. This supports teaching staff in their planning of lessons and support in the promotion of reading as high profile across the school.
39. Three on-site ICT technicians offering full-time tech support so staff have the help they need, when they need it. The Every Ticket Support (ETS) system allows the logging of requests online and means these jobs are given priority by the team.
40. A site team on duty throughout the day, ensuring maintenance requests can be dealt with as promptly as possible to avoid inconvenience to teachers and lessons. The team also uses the ETS programme for reliability and prompt action.

With this document we aim to have highlighted many of the ways we support our staff so that teachers can teach and students can learn to the best of their abilities. We aim to create a positive working environment for our fabulous staff by allowing them the time, the support and the motivation to actively meet the diverse needs of all our students.

**Christopher Whitehead Language College and Sixth Form
Senior Leadership Team**