



The WHA Approach to Workload

We aim to be different...

Why is Wymondham High a good place to work?

Teaching is a highly skilled, highly valued, professional career. We're not clocking on and off in some soulless call centre: staff here work hard and are totally committed to stepping into their greatness, so our students can step into theirs. But we all know the demands of teaching can be both mentally and physically taxing, so it's important to continually try to create a working environment that builds staff up rather than grinds them down.

What follows are 23 ways we try to create a sustainable approach to work. They've been shared, debated and amended with our teachers to ensure that what we say we do is what we actually do. And we're always looking for ways to streamline our approach even further.

Our strategy on workload comes from five main principles:

1. *Staff are our most precious resource.* Happy and successful staff make for happy and successful students. We aim for Zero burnout. Ever.
2. *Too many schools have too much "squit"**. Please excuse the frankness, but it's an appropriate expression! We aim to have none.

**Squit is a Norfolk thing, it means rubbish or pointless*

3. *There is too much faffing about in too many schools.* We will support colleagues to work hard, smart and fast, not longer.
4. *Create and maintain slick systems that allow leaders to lead, teachers to teach and students to learn.* Make the behaviour system the slickest of all. Our behaviour system is slick. We'll not allow pupil behaviour to dictate your teaching. No way.
5. *Building a positive working environment is crucial.* We aim to have the exact opposite of a toxic workplace.

23 ways we manage staff workload

1. A sensible 'feedback policy', bespoke to department. We have burned the old-fashioned 'marking policy'. No more countless hours pointlessly marking hundreds of books 'just because'.

2. Centralised detentions for nearly all behaviour issues, including lates. These are done by the Inclusion Team allowing teachers to teach and not waste time.
3. No lunch duties. If staff really want to do one, we will pay you for this.
4. Flexible working and part-time working supported, especially for staff with young children.
5. No after school duties and a reduction in break duties of 50% since 2017-18.
6. Sensible performance management done with you not to you, and an assumption that all staff will go up the pay scale unless there is a serious issue.
7. Lesson observations based on professional curiosity with no gradings as part of a teacher-led enquiry
8. While we try to recognise and praise discretionary effort, no kudos given for working extra hours just for the sake of it. Presenteeism is daft. Staff encouraged to have a life.
9. Work scrutiny led by departments, based on professional curiosity.
10. CPD bespoke, targeted and useful. At the moment, there's still too much listening in the Hall, so we're working hard to reduce this further!
11. CPD is also planned for the term and year in advance, so everyone knows what is happening. It is reviewed every year to ensure it meets the needs of colleagues.
12. One fully-paid wellbeing day per year. Leave for funerals also fully paid.
13. Leave for unavoidable medical appointments fully paid.
14. Data capture down substantially for 2019-20 with the aim to reduce this to 3 times per year in 2020-21.
15. Only one set of written reports annually [form tutors].
16. No formal lesson plan formats or silly rules about submitting them.
17. On-call system to remove poorly behaved pupils so you can teach without having to deal with disruption.

18. Colleagues can leave school site at lunchtime if they have non-contact time P5.
19. Staff relationships are based on trust and openness, and when Ofsted visit we are a team who know our strengths and know our school (students / parents and staff).
20. All directed time is agreed with the Trade Unions. There is ALWAYS a full consultation.
21. A strong working relationship and dialogue with Trade Unions with timetabled time to support their work.
22. We've reduced the number of e-mails sent by adding a daily staff bulletin. The dreaded "all-staff" e-mail has been much reduced, but we can do more here to reduce the in-box further.
23. Fewer period 6 lessons than ever this year, which means less teachers working until 4pm in school on a regular basis.

Jonathan Rockey
Principal