

Case Study: Weatherhead HS Wirral

Type of School: Secondary

Category: Community

Age range: 11 – 18

Gender: Girls

Roll: 1575

Address: Breck Road, Wallasey, Wirral, CH44 3HS

Headteacher: Mr. N Dymont

Description of the school

Weatherhead High School is a large community comprehensive school for girls, with some boys in the sixth form. Formerly on three sites, the school has occupied a new building since 2003. With re-location, the school now serves a diverse area. A higher than average number of girls are entitled to free meals. The great majority of students are White British; very few are learning English as an additional language. The number of students is increasing; the sixth form is growing rapidly. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally, though lower numbers were recorded in the past. There are fewer students than usual with statements of special educational needs. Specialist School status was awarded in 2002 for media arts. The school has the Artsmark Gold and several other awards that recognise effectiveness in aspects of its work.

Assistant headteacher Geraldine Fraser describes the impact of IRIS:

Background:

We wanted to have some impact on the low level disruption in classrooms. We also wanted to have some measure of the more serious incidents in school, to ensure that matters were dealt with swiftly and consistently. We wanted a system that was reliable and that we could personalise to suit our school's needs. The system had to be rewards focussed and be able to improve communication and feedback with staff. IRIS ticked all the boxes for us. We liked the way we could tailor IRIS to suit our specific needs. The fact that it is web based really appealed to us as we could get instant feedback. Other systems we had looked at relied on software packages and there is always some concern about reliability. IRIS has proven to be reliable for us over the past 2 years.

Impact:

Using IRIS has allowed us to really get a grip of the more serious misbehaviour, which is what we wanted. We have been able to dramatically decrease in the number of 'on call' referrals for students. In the period spring term 2007 to spring term 2008, the number of 'on calls' has halved, from 125 to 62. Perhaps more significantly, the number of students with more than one on call referral has dropped by 74% in the same time period; from 27 down to 7.

It really is Simple! We had a staff who did not even use email and who were quite concerned about the technology involved. They have all taken to it brilliantly. Staff use the system consistently. Support from the IRIS team is a real strength; no long messages re-directing to various lines and recorded voices, just instant access to real people! We have had very few issues but when we've had a problem it's been resolved almost instantly. The team will do anything to help!

Using the analysis:

The analysis is great and really simple. It gives us a true perspective on behaviour across the school. I don't know how we would manage without IRIS. It is such an integral part of our school. It is a fabulous system and I would recommend it to anyone.

Summary:

IRIS has given us the tool to deal with issues swiftly and consistently. It has aided communication and in a school of 1600 students this is vital. It has supported the behaviour for learning system in classrooms and given every teacher the support they need to make teaching and learning happen. IRIS has also given us the tool to reward students. So many of our girls get it right every day; we can now make sure that these students get the recognition they deserve.

"...the school's sanctions and rewards are effective and appreciated by the girls."

"This is a good school with many outstanding features."

Ofsted 2008