



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A

HEADTEACHER



Ross Knaggs is a Headteacher at Castle Park School, who recently joined CET. We caught up with Ross, who shares his thoughts on joining the Trust, reflects on his journey into education, and reveals what makes him most proud of his school.

Hi Ross, can you tell us a bit about your journey into education and how you became a Headteacher?

My journey into education began with a passion for helping young people grow into confident, capable individuals.

Over the years, I've been fortunate to work alongside some truly inspiring educators who shaped my belief in the power of schools to transform lives.

Becoming a Headteacher felt like a natural step — a chance to lead with purpose and create a culture where both children and staff can flourish.

What motivates you most in your role as a Headteacher?

The children. Every day, their energy, curiosity, and potential remind me why this work matters.

I'm also deeply motivated by the incredible staff I work with — people who go above and beyond to make school life meaningful, fun, and full of opportunity.

"We want to continue building a school where every child feels seen, supported, and inspired."

Seeing our school community thrive is the greatest reward.

What's a typical day like for you at your school?

No two days are ever the same, but that's part of the joy.



Mornings begin with greeting children and staff, setting a positive tone for the day. From there, it's a mix of strategic planning, supporting teaching and learning, and being present around school - listening, encouraging, and celebrating successes.

I always try to make time to visit classrooms and connect with pupils; those moments are the heartbeat of the day.



What drew you to join CET initially?

Joining Cumbria Education Trust was about ambition - for our school, our staff, and most importantly, our children.

CET offered a shared vision for excellence and a commitment to collaboration that really resonated with me. It felt like the right environment to grow and to contribute to something bigger than ourselves.

How has being part of a growing Trust benefitted you professionally?

The professional development has been outstanding. From leadership coaching to cross-school collaboration, CET has provided the tools and support to help me grow as a leader. It's also given our school access to a wider network of expertise and innovation, which has been invaluable.

What support or opportunities have made the biggest difference since joining the Trust?

The sense of shared purpose, alongside the opportunity to work collaboratively with like-

minded colleagues across the Trust has been transformative.

Whether it's through joint training, shared resources, or strategic planning, the support has helped us raise our aspirations and deliver more for our children.

Can you share a recent success or proud moment at your school?

One of the proudest moments recently was seeing our children take the lead in a community project that brought together families, local organisations, and staff.

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Their confidence, creativity, and sense of responsibility were a joy to witness - it was a real testament to the values we nurture every day.

What are your goals or ambitions for your school in the next year?

We want to continue building a school where every child feels seen, supported, and inspired. That means investing in high-quality teaching, enriching our curriculum, and strengthening our community links.

We're also focused on developing leadership at all levels so that our success is sustainable and shared.



What's the best piece of leadership advice you've received?

"Lead with integrity, and always put people first." It's simple, but it's shaped everything I do. Relationships are at the heart of great leadership - and great schools.

How do you unwind after a busy school day?

Spending time with my family is my anchor. Whether it's a quiet evening at home or a walk in the fells, those moments help me reset and reflect.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I love being outdoors - walking the fells is a favourite way to recharge. And as a treat on the weekends, when the day winds down, there's nothing quite like a single malt to end the evening well.

It was great catching up with you, Ross!

