



# Testimonial



My journey with RTMAT spans over twelve years, beginning as a supply teacher working primarily within the community. From the outset, I was drawn to the unique and rewarding nature of supporting young people outside of mainstream settings. This early experience laid the foundation for what would become a deeply fulfilling career.

I was later given the opportunity to teach across both hospital sites, James Cook University Hospital and West Lane Hospital. This was a pivotal moment for me. Working across these settings was a truly unique experience, and it was here that I found where I belonged: supporting some of the most complex, vulnerable and acutely unwell young people. The work was challenging, but it was also incredibly meaningful and shaped my commitment to inclusive, compassionate education.

After five years of teaching across a variety of settings, I was encouraged to explore middle leadership through a pastoral role within Home and Hospital Teaching. This marked the beginning of my leadership journey. I completed both the NPQML and, the following year, the NPQSL, which provided me with the knowledge, confidence and strategic understanding to take on greater responsibility.

I was then fortunate to be appointed as the Lead for Home and Hospital Teaching. In this role, I developed my skills in senior leadership, leading a small but highly dedicated team across multiple sites. Working under the guidance of the CEO, I gained invaluable experience in both operational and strategic leadership. This experience fuelled my ambition to continue progressing, with the long-term goal of stepping into a Headship role.

In 2023, that opportunity arose, and I was proud to be appointed as Head Teacher of River Tees Hospital School. It is a privilege to lead such an exceptional team of dedicated professionals who work tirelessly to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the young people and families we serve.

RTMAT has provided me with a wealth of professional development opportunities throughout my career, and that journey continues. In September 2026, I will begin a degree in Executive Leadership, further preparing me to support the continued growth of the school and to develop the talented team around me.

Reflecting on my journey, I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities, support and trust I have been given. RTMAT has not only shaped my career but has also allowed me to contribute to a shared mission of transforming lives through education.



**Adam Burns**  
Head Teacher