

**Name** Sarah Studholme

**Role** Benfield School Local Governing Committee

Sarah is one of two parent governors on Benfield School's Local Governing Committee. She also works at the school as a Learning Support Assistant, supporting children with special education needs and additional needs. Outside of the trust, Sarah has a voluntary role in supporting vulnerable families within local communities in the east of Newcastle.



### Why did you become a governor?

I've always been a 'school mam'. My children attend Benfield School and I wanted to give my opinion as a parent and be a voice for parents and families living in the East End of Newcastle. As a parent, I can see what needs to improve and my role as a governor allows me to contribute to making changes that benefit all of our young people.

### What do you enjoy about being a governor?

I enjoy being able to share different perspectives with the rest of the school's local governing committee. As a parent and as a member of staff, I can see different sides of how the school functions and remember that when we look at data about how the school is performing that they aren't just figures and numbers, they are the young people of our community. I really enjoy celebrating the school's successes.

### How does the local governing committee work together as a team?

I've been a part of Benfield's local governing committee since NEAT was formed and I think over time tactical recruitment has really strengthened the range of skill sets that we have as everyone brings their own individual strengths.

### What do you feel you contribute to the trust?

Outside of work, I do a lot of work around supporting the most vulnerable in our community who have fallen through the net and provide rapid help to those who need it. I helped the trust organise Christmas hampers for pupils across the trust, which brought together the skills and knowledge from my role as a community organiser, as a governor and as a member of staff, and I would like to do more work around this to support our vulnerable people.

### Why is community representation on the local governing committee important?

It's important to have community representation on the local governing committee so everyone develops their understanding of the local area and the opportunities and barriers that our pupils encounter. It's also important not to assume every pupil and family is the same; as someone from the local area, I feel I can share that insight with the other committee members.

### What makes NEAT a great place to be a local governing committee member?

There has been a transformation across the trust. The trust is forward thinking and can be proactive in enabling everyone to work across our local communities.