

# CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE’S SOCIAL CARE & LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

**DATE OF MEETING**  
**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

**Prevention and Partnerships Stronger Families – The Work Readiness Team**

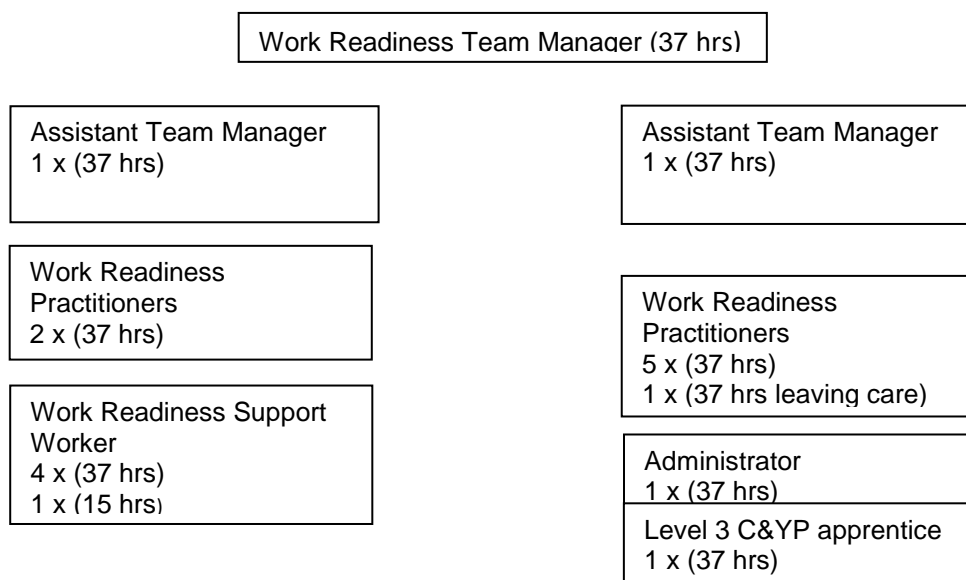
**Director of Prevention and Partnerships - Rob Brown**

**Head of Prevention – Gail Earl**

**Work Readiness Manager Hazel Clark**

**Introduction**

- Outline the remit of the Work Readiness Team (including staffing numbers, staff roles, and work of the Work Readiness Team, aims and objectives of the Team)**



The Work Readiness Team in Prevention and Partnerships was formed in November 2016 following a service review.

The aim of the Work Readiness team is to:

- Ensure all year 11 and year 12 young people have an appropriate offer of learning – September Guarantee
- Support young people leaving year 11 to ensure they start in learning and sustain this destination
- To track and follow up all those in the cohort and ensure that young people are supported into education, employment and training and therefore reducing the number of NEET (not in education, employment or training) young people in Middlesbrough

The team offer:

- Impartial careers information, advice and guidance for Year 12 and Year 13 young people and for Year 11s excluded from school. All practitioners are qualified in Information, Advice and Guidance to either level 4 or level 6 which is graduate level.
- To ensure Year 11s and Year 12s have an offer of learning for September - September Guarantee
- To track and follow up all 16 and 17 year olds and those in a targeted vulnerable group
- To target support to young people who do not have a September Guarantee
- Support to teenage parents into education, employment or training
- Support to young people with special educational needs or disabilities into education, employment or training
- A dedicated worker to support care leavers into education, employment or training and sustain their placement
- Support to the Youth Employment Initiative
- A My Family Plan where appropriate to support the needs of the young person and their family members
- Early identification of those young people who are at risk of dropping out of education, employment or training
- To work with partners including MAP (Middlesbrough Achievement Partnership) to reduce the number of young people in Middlesbrough who are not in education, employment and training (NEET)

The Work Readiness Team provides a statutory function for Middlesbrough Council as the Department for Education (DfE) Statutory Guidance for local authorities' states that whilst the DfE provides the framework to increase participation and reduce the proportion of young people who are NEET, the responsibility and accountability for this lies with local authorities.

## **Evidence and Discussion**

### **2. Information on the Work Readiness model used in Middlesbrough including how young people are identified and monitored.**

All young people attending Middlesbrough schools are added to Capita One IYSS from year 10, which is the database the team use to make all the statutory returns required by DfE. The department monitors the performance of local authorities in delivering their duties, and specifically in their tracking and supporting of 16 and 17 year olds, using data collected by authorities and submitted to the National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS).

Once a young person is in year 11 the Work Readiness Team collect data from schools to identify which young people do not have an offer of learning, this enables the team to target support to young people to make the transition from year 11 to year 12. Once a young person has left year 11 the Work Readiness are then responsible for tracking the destinations of young people who reside in Middlesbrough regardless of where they learn.

### **3. Which agencies/organisations the Work Readiness Team works with and how information is shared and recorded.**

The Work Readiness Team work with a wide range of agencies and organisations.

These include schools, colleges, training providers, YEI (Youth Employment Initiative), Job Centre and the National Careers Service. The team also work closely with other internal teams such as Middlesbrough Achievement Partnership and the School Readiness Team (to support teenage parents), Youth Offending Service, Pathways Team, Virtual School, Ethnic Minority Achievement Team, SEND Team and Elective Home Education. The team also work closely with other local authorities in the region as the NCCIS system allows for tracking of young people moving from one local authority to another.

Data sharing agreements are in place to allow for the transfer of information. All data is recorded on Capita One IYSS.

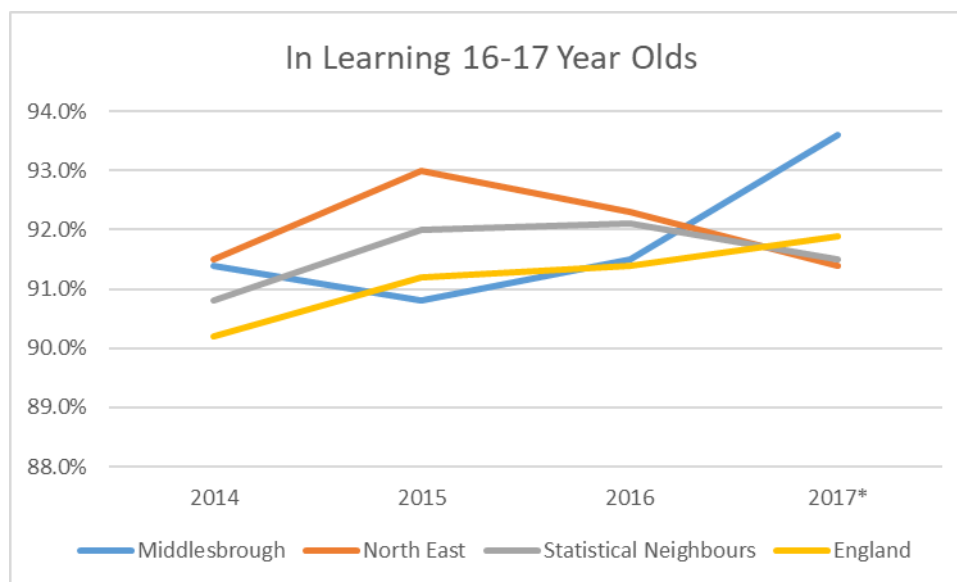
### **4. Current data;**

#### **a) How many young people the team works with currently**

<b>Number of young people</b>	
10	Pre 16 (Permanently Excluded and Elective Home Educated)
3026	Yr 12-13 All Post 16
146	Y14 Vulnerable SEN Support
38	Y14 Vulnerable Teenage Parents/Pregnant Teenagers
188	Y14 - Y20 Vulnerable Education Health Care Plan 25 years old.
167	Y14 - Y20 Vulnerable Looked After Children /Care Leavers

**b) Number of young people who successfully enter further education, employment or training and those who remain NEET.**

See the below In Learning figures and also Proportional NEETs in 4d.



*\*provisional figures*

	2014	2015	2016	2017*
Middlesbrough	91.4%	90.8%	91.5%	93.6%
North East	91.5%	93.0%	92.3%	91.4%
Statistical Neighbours	90.8%	92.0%	92.1%	91.5%
England	90.2%	91.2%	91.4%	91.9%

**c) How are those young people monitored and followed up, how often?**

All NEET young people have an allocated Work Readiness Practitioner or Support Worker. There is a designated Practitioner from the team who supports young people who are care leavers along with practitioners who support teenage parents. All Practitioners and Support Workers have been allocated specific themes. For example, a Practitioner links directly with Youth Offending Service and two Practitioners support young people with SEND along with a named practitioner linked to post 16 providers. This approach allows close monitoring and follow up of young people in vulnerable groups.

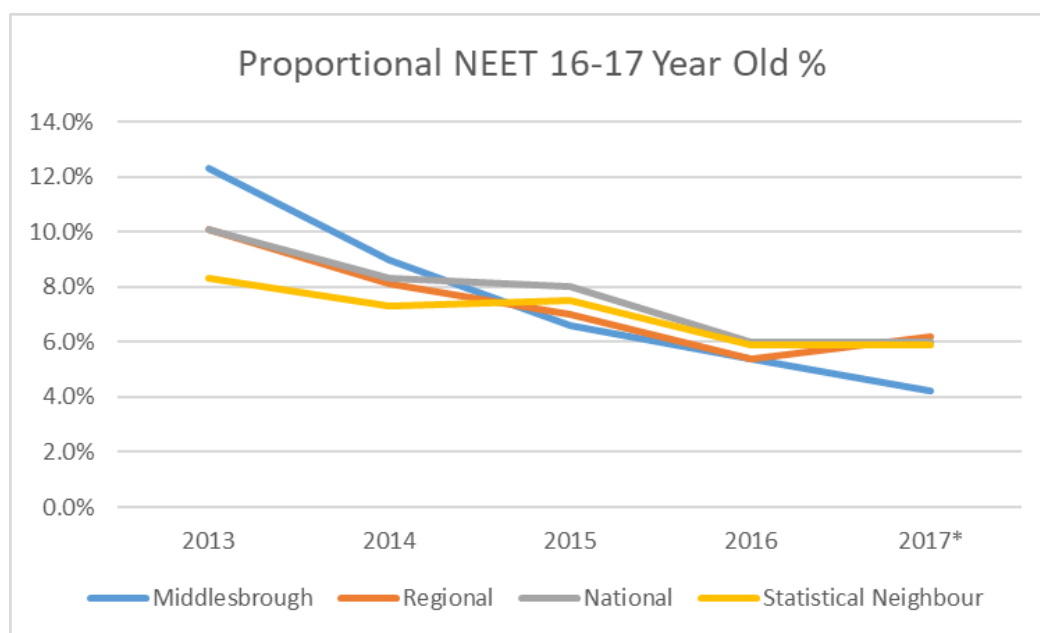
The minimum statutory contact for each young person is once every three months however, most young people who are NEET are contacted much more frequently than this. For example, depending on need, if a young person requires taking to a few providers for interviews or visits we may see them twice in the same week.

Assistant Team Managers carry out caseload supervision with staff and we monitor data weekly through the Work Readiness Dashboard. The database can also inform staff when a young person's destination is going to expire which is part of

the follow up process. When tracking a young person, where we have a phone number available the staff will make three phone calls at morning, afternoon and evening. If they are still unable to speak to a young person or family member they will carry out a home visit again on a morning, afternoon and evening and this is to maximise the potential to make contact with young people.

**d) How do Middlesbrough NEET figures compare locally and nationally?**

The figures below show the progress Middlesbrough has made over the last 5 years. The figure is a combination of the number of NEET young people added to the number of young people who are Not Known. This is taken over what is termed the 'stretch period' which the average performance is taken over the months of December, January and February. In 2017, Middlesbrough performed better than the national, regional and statistical neighbour averages for NEET.



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017*
Middlesbrough	12.3%	9.0%	6.6%	5.4%	4.2%
Regional	10.1%	8.1%	7.0%	5.4%	6.2%
National	10.1%	8.3%	8.0%	6.0%	6.0%
Statistical Neighbour	8.3%	7.3%	7.5%	5.9%	5.9%

**e) How do NEET figures for young people in vulnerable groups such as care leavers and special educational needs compare with the overall NEET figures?**

	Middlesbrough	National
SEND NEET	9.6%	10.2%
SEND Proportional NEET	8.5%	35.2%
Care Leavers NEET	44.0%	40.0%

As of March 2018 (latest figures) for SEND; 10.2% National and 9.6% Middlesbrough NEET. Proportional NEET (where NEET and not known figures are added together) for SEND young people is National 35.2% and Middlesbrough 8.5%

For Care Leavers NEET (taken from the 903 birthday return which is for 18-21 year olds) in 2017; National 40% and Middlesbrough 44%. This is an area we are currently working on to improve outcomes for these young people. We have recently held a targeted NEET event for these young people hosted by Teesside University, and 48 young people attended. We are also now involved in the PEPs for year 11 young people through the virtual school and can offer earlier careers guidance to enhance what support the young person has already had from school and assist in transition post 16. The Work Readiness Team are supporting the SEND Team and involved in the Preparation for Adulthood Plan.

### 5. Please provide an explanation of the September Guarantee.

The Council has a statutory responsibility for reporting to the DfE on an annual basis, the proportion of young people aged 16 and 17 who have a suitable offer of learning such as an apprenticeship, college course or employment with training. This is known as the September Guarantee. Since the Guarantee was created, the Council has worked together with partner agencies to improve performance year on year, by tracking and engaging more young people to ensure that the maximum number receive an appropriate offer of learning.

This has led to the performance of the September Guarantee in Middlesbrough being higher than the rest of the region, national performance and our statistical neighbours.

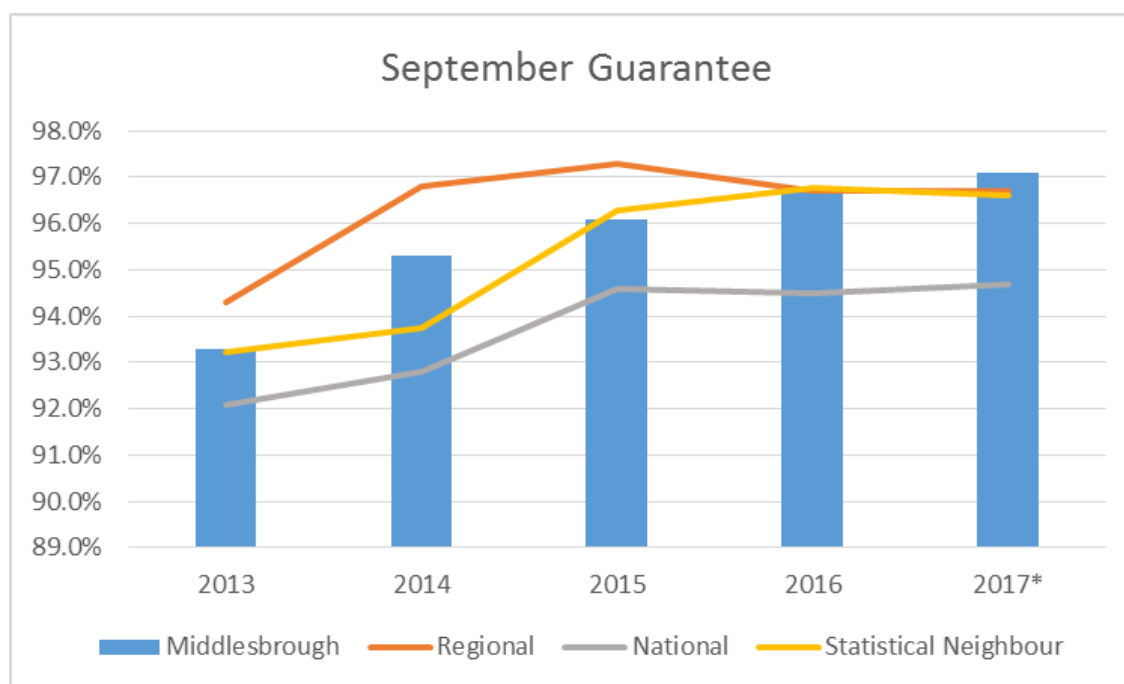


Figure 1: \* Provisional Figure

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017*
Middlesbrough	93.3%	95.3%	96.1%	96.8%	97.1%
Regional	94.3%	96.8%	97.3%	96.7%	96.7%
National	92.1%	92.8%	94.6%	94.5%	94.7%
Statistical Neighbour	93.2%	93.7%	96.3%	96.8%	96.6%

**6. What is currently working well within the team, such as initiatives to promote further education, training, employment or apprenticeships?**

Over the past three years we have worked well with Middlesbrough College and other providers to offer some joint NEET events. Staff have been heavily involved in these events, promoting them to young people and taking them on the day. These are excellent examples of partnership working.

The introduction of the Youth Employment Initiatives has also helped support young people back into education, employment and training, acting as a first step to breaking down barriers. This has now been extended until July 2022.

Since the team was formed in 2016 what has also worked well is all the team being based in the same venue and focussing on Work Readiness, which was an outcome of the service restructure within Prevention and Partnerships. This has allowed a real drive and focus on this work with dedicated staff.

**7. Are there any initiatives that have been tried and found not to work as well?**

As we introduce initiatives that are based on good practice from other high performing local authorities, we have found that the majority of initiatives do work well.

**8. Is there a referral process between other Council teams/external agencies to offer additional support for issues identified whilst working with the young person?**

The Work Readiness Team accept referrals from First Contact where the main barrier to the young person/family is NEET. Practitioners carry family cases and complete My Family Plans working with the whole family. Practitioners also co-work cases where the family are open to Childrens Care and have a Social Worker or are open to the Stronger Families Family Case Work Team. This allows the Work Readiness team to provide enhanced support for young people to move them to education employment or training.

In addition, schools will also identify young people who they think are at risk of being NEET when they leave year 11 so that the team can provide additional NEET prevention support. College and training providers also notify the team when a young person is at risk of disengaging from provision so that practitioners can quickly respond to provide careers guidance and explore other options.

## **9. Any pressure/challenges facing the team?**

Over the last 5 years the team's performance has improved year on year across all performance targets. However, there is a very transient population in Middlesbrough and once a young person is locked into our cohort we have full responsibility for tracking, following up and supporting them as required. We have a number of young people who have moved away from the area, some returning to other countries and this is becoming increasingly challenging to track and fulfil statutory returns.

In terms of data, often addresses we get from schools are out of date and this causes challenges in tracking and locating young people to check destinations. In addition, data collection from schools can also be challenging and sometimes arrive late, which puts extra pressures on the Work Readiness Team. Home visits are very time consuming however often this is required to engage with the young person. Home visits might be necessary because people don't answer the phone, have changed number or we don't have the most up to date address for the young person. When doing home visits staff need to go in pairs and they plot routes to make visits cost effective and to comply with health and safety.

## **10. Any other information you consider to be relevant.**

The Work Readiness Team is a very small team, following service reviews and associated savings and therefore need to be extremely focussed to ensure that they meet the targets and returns set by DfE. The team also relies on support from the Strategy, Information and Governance Team to ensure data and cohorts are prepared.

Recently the Team have been contact by other local authorities to look at what is working well in Middlesbrough and to provide advice on good practice.

Stockton Council have led on an ESF (European Social Fund) Tees Valley wide bid, which Middlesbrough are part of and if this is successful Middlesbrough will receive additional funding to support pre 16s who are at risk of becoming NEET.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/participation-of-young-people-education-employment-and-training>

### **AUTHOR**

**Hazel Clark – Work Readiness Manager**