

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

<p><b>Date:</b> Monday 24th October, 2022 <b>Time:</b> 10.30 am <b>Venue:</b> Mandela Room</p>
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### AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Children & Young People's Social Care & Services Scrutiny Panel, held on 27 September 2022 3 - 10
4. South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership - Annual Report 2021/22 11 - 62  
  
The Partnership Manager will be in attendance to present the STSCP's Annual Report 2021/22.
5. Date and Time of Next Meeting - 14 November 2022 at 10.30am
6. Any other urgent items which in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered.

Charlotte Benjamin  
Director of Legal and Governance Services

Town Hall  
Middlesbrough,  
Friday, 14 October 2022

## MEMBERSHIP

Councillors D Davison (Chair), T Mawston (Vice-Chair), T Higgins, M Nugent, R Sands, Z Uddin, J Walker and G Wilson

### **Assistance in accessing information**

**Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Joanne Dixon, 01642 729713, [joanne\\_dixon@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:joanne_dixon@middlesbrough.gov.uk)**

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

**A meeting of the Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel was held on 27 September 2022.**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Davison (Chair); Councillors: Higgins, Nugent and Wilson.

**OFFICERS:** S Bonner, S Butcher, J Dixon, R Farnham and P Jemson.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mawston, Uddin and J Walker.

### **\*\* DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no Declarations of Interest made by Members at this point in the meeting.

### **MINUTES – 26 JULY 2022**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel held on 26 July 2022 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

### **SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD – FURTHER INFORMATION**

P Jemson, Head of Looked After Children and Corporate Parenting, and R Farnham, Director of Children's Care, were in attendance at the meeting to provide the Panel with further information in relation to its current scrutiny topic, specifically in relation to the support provided to young people by the Pathways (Leaving Care) Service.

The Panel was informed that the Pathways (Leaving Care) Service supported care leavers, including young people with disabilities, to live successful, independent lives. A care leaver was defined as a young person who had been in the care of the local authority for a period of 13 weeks or more, spanning their sixteenth birthday.

In Middlesbrough, the Pathways Service consisted of two teams – each with a Team Managers and Assistant Team Manager – six Social Workers assigned to young people aged 15 years and three months, and nine Personal Advisors working with young people aged 16-25.

In accordance with Section 3 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, local authorities were required to provide Personal Advisors to care leavers up to the age of 25. Their role was to help young people to positively transition to adulthood by:-

- Providing advice (including practical advice) and support to the young person.
- Participating in reviews of the young person's case.
- Liaising with the responsible authority in the implementation of the pathway plan.
- Co-ordinating the provision of services.
- Keeping informed about the young person's progress and well-being.
- Maintaining full, accurate, up to date records of contacts with the young person and services provided.
- Providing information about financial capability and how to manage daily finances.
- Providing housing options available to the care leaver.
- Supporting the young person to find further education, employment or training.
- Keeping in touch with the young person.

In accordance with the national minimum standard, Personal Advisors kept in touch with the young person (from age 18 onwards) every eight weeks. If a young person had more complex needs or needed additional support, contact was more frequent and could be daily in some cases.

Every eligible care leaver had the right to a Needs Assessment. This assessment was completed by a Social Worker when the young person was 16 years old and included consideration of their independent living skills and ability to manage their own finances. The aim of the assessment was to ensure they left care at a time that was right for them. Relevant children had a Pathway Plan, setting out the support that would be provided to them once they had left care and the Plan must be based on the completed Needs Assessment. The plan was reviewed every six months.

Pathway Plans included the following:-

- The nature and level of contact and personal support to be provided.
- The young person's health needs and how they should be met.
- Arrangements to support the young person in further education or employment. (Support to engage and/or maintain engagement).
- Arrangements to support the young person in sustaining and developing family relationships. (Helping young people to maintain focus on keeping in touch with people who were important to them, such as parents, siblings, friends, etc).
- Arrangements to ensure the young person was properly equipped for taking greater responsibility towards independence.
- As assessment of the young person's financial needs and capacity and any financial assistance to be provided. (A financial assessment was undertaken and guidance to ensure the young person was aware of their entitlements).
- Arrangements to ensure the young person was living in suitable accommodation.
- Any 'Staying Put' arrangements. (Once young people in foster care reached the age of 18, discussions would take place with their carers regarding 'staying put'. There were currently 25 young people living in 'staying put' arrangements).

The Panel was advised that in October 2020, following consultation with young people, the 'Local Offer for Care Leavers in Middlesbrough' was created. The Local Offer provided information for Middlesbrough's care experienced young people in relation to entitlements and support available to them to help in all aspects of their adult lives. The document was in the process of being reviewed and updated to ensure it remained relevant to the needs of Middlesbrough's young people.

The areas of support within the Local Offer included:-

- Relationships
- Education and Training
- Employment
- Emotional Wellbeing
- Health and Wellbeing
- Accommodation
- Finances
- Participation

In terms of supporting young people to become independent, Pathways Plans were developed for each care leaver – setting out their needs, views, goals and what support they would receive.

It was highlighted that Pathway planning was key to identifying the individual's needs together with the local offer, and the Pathways Service supported young people to become independent, particularly in the following areas:-

Becoming Independent:-

- Access to financial support, depending on need.
- Computer and internet access.
- Support to open a bank account.
- Support to be provided with a form of ID, such as passport, birth certificate or driving licence.
- Access to money management support in order to develop budgeting skills.

- Personal allowance. (Young people aged over 16 living in supported accommodation were not entitled to benefits so were provided with a personal allowance).
- Financial assistance for university students.
- Invitations to social groups. (A weekly social group met at the Pathways Service building offering support and a range of activities such as movie nights and cooking classes).
- Care Leavers Forum to provide an arena for young people's views to be heard, supporting service development.

It was highlighted that the Pathways (Leaving Care) Service was based at a dedicated building in Park Road North and welcomed care leavers at any time. The building had a fully equipped kitchen and shower room and staff were always on hand to spend time with young people and to help them.

#### Employment, Education and Training:-

- A 'NEET Panel' (not in employment, education and training) had been established and was Chaired by the Head of the Virtual School. The Panel brought together partners to provide guidance to staff on how best to support young people with employment, education and training opportunities and also considered each young person identified as being 'NEET' and explored ways to support them into employment, education or training.
- Work Readiness Support. One to one support was provided by the Work Readiness Team.
- Guaranteed interview for jobs and apprenticeships. Middlesbrough Council guaranteed interviews into apprenticeships and jobs for those with care experience.
- Support to: access bursaries, purchase college equipment, produce CVs, purchase clothing for interviews.
- Help to understand rights and entitlements.
- Work Experience opportunities. (The Council's 50 Futures Team offered work experience in certain areas).
- Additional financial support to ensure that there was a financial benefit to working.
- Support with travel to interviews. (Young people would be transported to and from interviews where required or helped to obtain a suitable bus pass).
- Support to attend local job fairs and college open days.
- Work with Adult Care Social Workers to access services for young people with disabilities.

#### Health:-

- A dedicated CAMHS Worker (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service) was based within the Pathways Team, offering additional emotional wellbeing support. (This was recognised as good practice nationally).
- Support with referrals to other agencies.
- Support to attend medical appointments and speak to the doctor. (Can advocate with health professionals on behalf of young person with their consent).
- Free access to Middlesbrough leisure services.
- A health passport with key information about the young person's health. (Once the young person reached 18 years, the Children Looked After Health Service provided them with their health document containing their medical history, family history, etc)
- Access to C Cards.
- Support to register with a doctor, dentist and optician.
- Advice and guidance regarding LGBT issues and signposting to support services.
- Work with allocated Adult Care Social Worker or Health Lead Professional if young adult with disabilities.

#### Housing:-

- 'Staying Put' allowed young people to remain with their foster carers beyond the age of 18.
- Access to Supported Lodgings provision. (If deemed appropriate for the young person. A Young Person's Housing Panel comprising of housing providers met with Pathways staff to

consider referrals once a young person was approaching the age of 18 so that the most appropriate route could be discussed and considered).

- Council tax exemption up to the age of 25. (This currently applied to care leavers living independently in Middlesbrough, however, work was ongoing to explore the possibility of extending this provision into neighbouring local authorities).
- Setting up home allowance. (Help to buy equipment such as white goods and furniture up to £2,000 with responsible spending advice provided).
- Support with removal costs.
- An in-house unregulated support accommodation provision - Daniel Court - for young people over the age of 16, comprising of self-contained flats for up to nine young people.
- A regulated in-house care provision – Rosecroft - for young people over the age of 16 to support a gradual transition to an independent flat where they would be supported to be responsible for the tenancy and live with floating support at a pace meeting their needs. (Rosecroft was able to support up to five young people and was designed for those whose independence skills were less developed. Once the young person felt comfortable they were supported to move into a flat to live independently but with continued support. Positive outcomes had been achieved for young people through both provisions at Daniel Court and Rosecroft).

#### Finances:-

- As previously mentioned there was a local Council Tax exemption up to the age of 25, a setting up home allowance of up to £2,000 and support with removal costs.
- A personal allowance of £66.66 per week for young people aged over 16 years living in supported accommodation. (This was in lieu of benefit entitlement. There was a structured programme of independence support for young people living in Daniel Court and Rosecroft which included budgeting skills and one to one advice from Personal Advisors).
- Financial assistance for university students, higher education bursary including a tuition free loan and maintenance loan from student finance departments. An additional bursary was provided by the local authority three times per year.
- A weekly allowance of £66.66 for university students living away from home.
- A further £40 housing support grant to assist with the purchase of groceries.

During the course of discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- A Panel Member commented that there appeared to be a comprehensive package of support provided to care leavers in Middlesbrough and felt that the Pathways Service was doing a good job.
- Reference was made to contact every eight weeks between the Personal Advisors and young people allocated to them and it was queried whether contact was ever more frequent. The Panel was advised that at 18 years and over, contact every eight weeks was the national minimum standard, however, depending on need, some young people would have contact more frequently.
- In response to a query regarding caseloads of the Personal Advisors, it was stated that on average Personal Advisors had between 18 and 23 young people assigned to them. Their caseloads were monitored by the Improvement Board and the target was to not exceed 23, therefore, this target was currently being met.
- The Panel asked for an example of how young people are helped with budgeting their own finances. It was explained that the ideal time to start supporting young people with budgeting skills was around 12-14 years, starting with saving pocket money into a bank account. For young people living in supported accommodation, such as Daniel Court or Rosecroft, they contributed towards household bills (such as fuel and food) and this was deducted from their benefit allowance. These budgeting skills were developed with their Key Worker on a weekly basis so that at age 18 they understood and were prepared for independence.

- It was queried whether Daniel Court was designed for single young people and whether the local authority ever supported couples to move to independent living. The Panel was advised that up to nine young people were able to live within Daniel Court at any one time, each living in a single-person flat. It was unlikely that young people would be supported to live together and the local authority would also avoid moving a single young person in to a two bedroomed flat.
- A Panel Member queried whether care leavers were guaranteed suitable, secure accommodation with the opportunity to develop. In response, the Panel was advised that the Pathways Service worked closely with housing providers to ensure that appropriate accommodation was identified and this was considered by the Young People's Housing Panel. There were some challenges including a small cohort of young people with very complex needs following traumatic experiences, who found it difficult to hold down a tenancy, however, there were performance measures in place around this to ensure that those young people were well-supported. It could be difficult for housing providers to identify suitable accommodation in such cases where young people displayed risky behaviours.
- In response to a query as to which agencies the service worked with, it was confirmed that Middlesbrough's preferred and regional providers included Single Key, Community Campus, Erimus Housing and Thirteen.
- It was queried how many young people attended the social groups previously mentioned. The Panel was informed that the weekly social group at the Pathways building operated on a 'drop in' basis so the numbers could vary at different times. The cook and eat sessions were particularly popular. 12 young people recently visited Flamingo Land with the social group and a barbeque held in the summer was attended by around 12 young people. One of the participation groups had recently held a picnic. There were currently four young people who were permanent members of the Care Leavers Forum. This was working well and they were helping to look at alternative ways of engaging other young people such as by text or social media. Recruitment to the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum remained ongoing but was a challenge.
- It was highlighted that Pathways staff had provided a Christmas lunch on Christmas Day at the Pathways building and had transported the young people there. This was very well received and was important for those young people who might otherwise have spent Christmas Day alone.
- It was further highlighted that the Pathways service worked with some of the most challenged and/or challenging young people and were dedicated to safeguarding them. Those young people with significant issues would have an Adult Care Social Worker allocated to them once they reached 18 and a Transition Panel oversaw the move from Children to Adult Social Care, as they still remained a care leaver.
- An annual care leavers celebration event was also held with awards and gifts to which all care leavers were invited and each individual would be recognised for at least one of their achievements. The Chair requested that Panel Members be invited to attend the next event.

The Chair thanked the Officer for attending and providing a very informative presentation.

**AGREED** that the information provided be noted and considered in the context of the Panel's current scrutiny topic 'Supporting Young People in the Transition to Adulthood'.

#### **UPDATE – OFSTED MONITORING VISIT**

The Executive Director of Children's Services was in attendance to provide the Panel with an update in relation to the most recent Ofsted monitoring visit carried out on 13 and 14 July 2022.

A copy of Ofsted's findings, in its letter published 17 August 2022, was attached to the agenda for Members' information.

The visit was the fourth Monitoring Visit (plus a focused assurance visit in July 2021) to Middlesbrough's Children's Services, with two Inspectors reviewing progress made since the last full inspection in relation to:-

- The 'front door' of the service where contacts and referrals are received.
- Child Protection enquiries.
- Early Help assessments.
- Step-up and Step-down to Early Help.

A number of positive headline findings were identified as follows:-

- Front door services had continued to develop and improve (overseen by the multi-agency Improvement Board that met every six weeks).
- Robust and comprehensive quality assurance programme ensuring leaders had an accurate understanding of practice and its impact on children and families, with expansion of the offer of Early Help support to vulnerable children.
- Stronger and wider partnerships within the MACH (Multi-Agency Children's Hub). This had led to:-
  - Improved quality of information.
  - Richness of information-sharing.
  - Better informed decision making.

The areas identified as needing more focus included:-

- Workforce instability and increased demand in the assessment service which had slowed down throughput.
- Additional pressure on some Social Workers' caseloads and quality of practice.
- Unfinished assessments and incomplete records had led to delays and risks being fully assessed for some children.

The Executive Director advised that in terms of workforce stability, it remained a challenge to recruit to permanent posts and to recruit agency staff at the present moment, however, best efforts to do so were continuing. This situation was not unique to Middlesbrough.

The findings and evaluation of progress in relation to Early Help were as follows:-

Positives included:-

- Audits demonstrated the majority of practice was rated as good.
- Interventions were preventing risks escalating and reducing the need for statutory intervention and families' circumstances were improving.
- Managers had robust oversight of work (through auditing and performance data).
- Prompt 'step-up' and 'step-down' were aligned with children's needs.
- Additional teams and team managers had been created and recruitment was ongoing.
- In the sample seen, assessments were thorough and completed with families.
- 'My Family Plans' included family goals and were a shared plan for families to actively engage in.

Some of the areas needing focus within Early Help included:-

- High caseloads impacted on practitioners' capacity for intensive work. (Recruitment for additional staff had commenced).
- For some children, actions in the My Family Plan did not address all the presenting risks. (This issue was addressed whilst inspectors were on site to their satisfaction).

Inspection of the MACH identified the following positives:-

- Audits demonstrated that the majority of practice was rated as good.
- Increased partner presence and Social Worker management posts to ensure capacity for increased remit and responsibilities.
- Work with partner agencies to improve the quality of contacts and referrals - well co-ordinated response for children in line with their needs.
- Triage ensured timely responses to Police contacts.
- Managers made appropriate and timely decisions and oversight.
- Concerns were RAG rated ensuring safeguarding was in line with initial risk rating.
- Screenings of contacts and referrals – comprehensive included past history and contact with parents.
- Strategy meetings were held promptly and improved partnership presence assisted information sharing. The meetings provided appropriate decision making and children had a plan in place to protect them from escalating harm.

Inspectors identified the following positives within the Assessment Service:-

- Child Protection enquiries and Child in Need assessments were thorough and mostly completed in timescales
- The voice of the child was consistently clear and parents were consulted.
- Analysis of risk and need were clear and led to appropriate next steps.
- Legacy of poor practice resulted in some children being referred back to the Service as their sustained needs had not been met. A monthly Panel to look at re-referrals had been introduced to address this.
- Consent withdrawn on transfer from one service to another – strengthened senior manager oversight of decisions to close due to lack of consent.

The areas needing focus were as follows:-

- 25% of audits were inadequate.
- In the last three months, challenges in managing demand and throughput due to increased volume of demand and complexity of children's circumstances were causing additional workload pressures and higher caseloads.
- Some gaps in case recording and case records not finalised leading to children's records being incomplete. Could lead to delay in identifying and responding to children's needs.
- Social Workers had left the service before finishing assessments and reallocating work had led to delay.
- Workforce issues remained a challenge and had contributed to difficulties in the assessment service. Significant number of agency staff and teams, however, a substantial workforce development offer was in place.

The Panel was informed that the next Monitoring Visit would take place in November and would focus on Care Experienced Young People. The Ofsted Annual Engagement Conversation, across Children's Services, was set to take place in December. It was anticipated that the next full judgement inspection was likely to take place in February 2023.

The Executive Director wished to place on record her thanks to all staff across the service, and to Members, for their dedication to evidencing that 'Middlesbrough Children Matter'.

A discussion ensued and the following issues were raised:-

- A Panel Member praised the staff within Children's Services and acknowledged that whilst there were still some big challenges to overcome, there had been significant improvement across the service to improve the lives of children in Middlesbrough.
- The Director of Children's Care referred to the challenges with workforce stability and considered it to be an issue across the whole of the social care sector. Colleagues within the Tees Valley were experiencing similar challenges. In the context of Middlesbrough, the

challenge to retain and recruit staff was exacerbated by having the highest demand for children's social care in the country, the extreme challenges facing some of Middlesbrough's families, and an increase in the complexity of cases. Social Workers continued to work hard to meet demand.

- The Panel was advised that in terms of the number of referrals received by the MACH, or front door, August was traditionally a quieter time, however, during August 2022 around 1,340 contacts came into the service, and around 500 families per month requiring an assessment from the Assessment Service. This evidenced the high levels of demand in the town.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their attendance and the information provided.

**AGREED** that the update information in relation to the most recent Ofsted Monitoring Visit, for July 2022, be noted.

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD UPDATE**

The Chair provided the Panel with a verbal update in relation to the business conducted by the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its meetings on 21 September 2022, namely:-

- Mayor in attendance – to provide details of his work and portfolio.
- Executive Forward Work Programme.
- Corporate Performance Update – Quarter one 2022/23.
- Revenue & Capital Budget - Projected Outturn at Quarter one 2022/23.
- Scrutiny Chairs' Updates.
- Next OSB meeting: Tuesday, 25 October at 10am.

### **NOTED**

### **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel was scheduled to take place on Monday, 24 October 2022 at 10.30am, Mandela Room, Town Hall.

<b>MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL</b>	
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<b>Report of:</b>	South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership – Annual Report
<b>Submitted to:</b>	Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel
<b>Date:</b>	24 October 2022
<b>Title:</b>	STSCP Annual Report – 2021-2022
<b>Report for:</b>	Information
<b>Status:</b>	Public
<b>Strategic priority:</b>	Children and young people
<b>Key decision:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Why:</b>	Choose an item.
<b>Urgent:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Why:</b>	

**Executive summary**

The South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP) was set up in 2019 in response to the changes to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements which were introduced in the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This formal partnership is between the two South Tees Local Authorities (Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland), Cleveland Police and North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board. The partners share the ambition to improve the lives of the most vulnerable children in their area, many of whom face multiple disadvantage.

## **Purpose**

1. The report is a statutory requirement and therefore members should be made aware of the contents and work of the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership

## **Background and relevant information**

Working Together 2018 describes the features of effective multi-agency safeguarding partnerships:

This local arrangement supports and enables local organisations and agencies to work together in a system which places the child at the heart of the process and aims to ensure that:

- Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
- Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice, which informs our local approach to prevention
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families

## **What is the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership?**

Throughout the period covered by this report the arrangements included:

- Meetings with Key Partners Chief Officers, chaired by the Chief Executive Middlesbrough Council
- Meetings at Executive level to set the strategic direction for the partnership
- Partnership meetings attended by the executive leads of the four statutory partners and the broader partnership and chaired by an Independent Chair
- Sub groups and task and finish groups

Middlesbrough Council is the host for the STSCP, as outlined in the legal agreement which established the partnership. The STSCP Executive is the key decision-making body and consists of the executive leads of the four statutory partners.

The published arrangements, which were reviewed in 2021, can be found through the website link below:

[Key documents | South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership \(stscp.co.uk\)](https://stscp.co.uk)

**What decision(s) are being recommended?**

That the Council

- Acknowledges the STSCP Annual Report

**Rationale for the recommended decision(s)**

For information

**Other potential decision(s) and why these have not been recommended**

N/A

**Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)**

***Legal***

N/A

***Strategic priorities and risks***

N/A

***Human Rights, Equality and Data Protection***

N/A

***Financial***

N/A

### Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
N/A		

### Appendices

1	None
2	
3	

### Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
None		

**Contact:** Gary Watson STSCP Manager  
**Email:** gary\_watson@middlesbrough.gov.uk



South Tees  
Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

Page 15

SOUTH TEES SAFEGUARDING  
CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (STSCP)

**2021/2022**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

# CONTENTS

Foreword	2
1. Introduction	3
2. Executive Summary	5
3. Scrutineer View of Last Year	8
4. Impact on Strategic Priorities	11
5. Local Context	16
6. Local Safeguarding Context Across South Tees	20
7. Work of the STSCP Sub Groups	22
8. Working with Other Partnerships - Impact of Leaders	27
9. Learning and Development	29
10. Performance Monitoring and Quality Assurance	39
11. Key Practice Themes and Messages	40
12. Responding to the National Agenda	41
<b>Appendix 1: Membership</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Appendix 2: STSCP Plan on a Page 2020 - 2023</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Budget</b>	<b>46</b>



## Foreword by the STSCP Chair Kathryn Boulton

Another year on and as the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive, we are pleased to share the progress made across our Partnership, despite the ongoing impact and challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This Annual Report covering the year 2021-2022 is published by the four statutory partners (Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Council, Cleveland Police and North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board) who are responsible for putting in place effective arrangements to support the co-ordination, quality assurance and continuous improvement of activity to safeguard the children and young people who need our support. The pandemic has tested and continues to test local services. However, the strength of relationships between practitioners and leaders at all levels has been built upon, allowing multi-agency working to adapt through a dynamic response to the rapidly shifting requirements of the world we find ourselves in.

Effective joint working has continued and been further strengthened, and we look forward to fully understanding the full impact of the new models of working. In this report, the statutory partners set out critical areas of development to further improve the effectiveness of the statutory partnership arrangements. This includes the need to review the multi-agency quality assurance framework and demonstrate that the learning from serious safeguarding incidents is making a positive difference to practice and service provision.

This report also sets out the achievements and the work that has progressed at time of unprecedented pressures on services. These achievements are a reflection of the committed individuals who either work directly with children, young people and their families or those with a specialist role in safeguarding in partner agencies.

On behalf of the four statutory safeguarding partners, I would like to thank everyone involved across our Partnership for their work, dedication, care and passion over the last year and their continued commitment to ongoing learning and improvement. Our success is through the strengths of our partners, working together to create a place where all children and young people across Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland are safe, free from abuse, neglect and supported to live happy and healthy lives.



**Kathryn Boulton**  
Chair of the STSCP  
Corporate Director for Children and Families  
Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

Our vision and values  
- this is what we are  
working towards

**A partnership committed to keeping  
children safe and working together to  
achieve the best possible outcomes for  
children and families.**



# 1. Introduction

Working Together 2018 describes the features of effective multi-agency safeguarding partnerships:

**This local arrangement supports and enables local organisations and agencies to work together in a system which places the child at the heart of the process and aims to ensure that:**

- Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
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- Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice, which informs our local approach to prevention
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families

What is the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership?

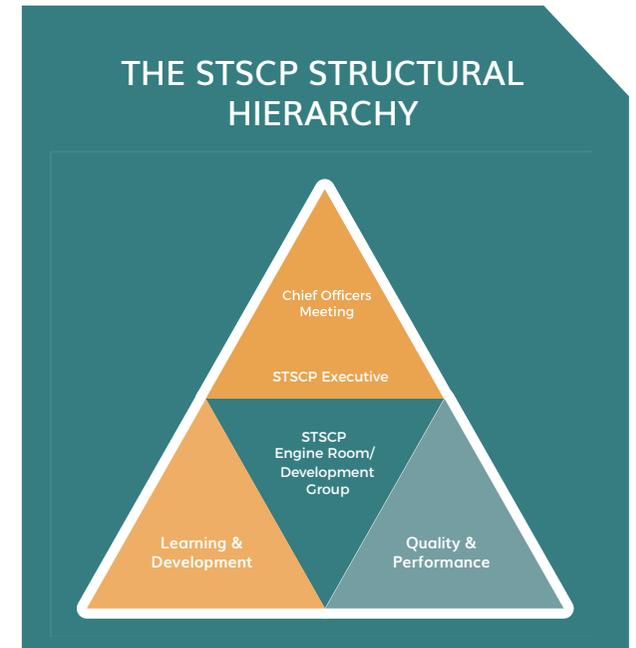
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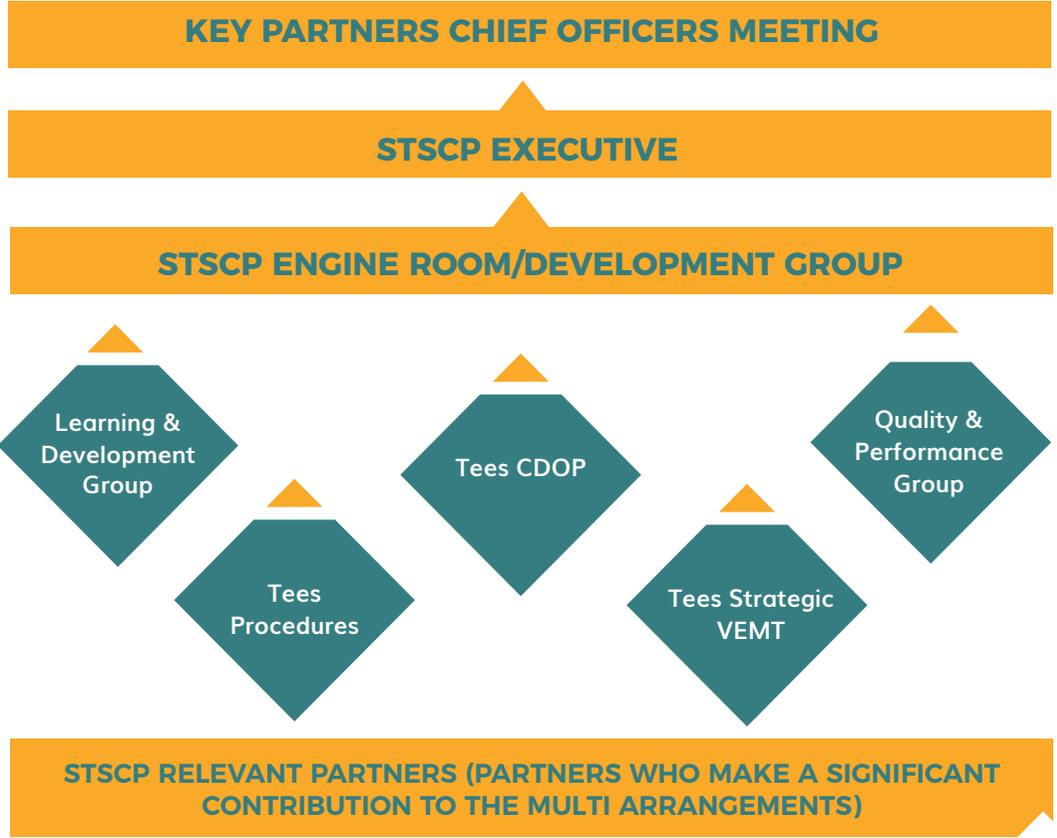
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# STSCP GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



- LINKS TO RELEVANT STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**
- R&C Children & Young Peoples Partnership (R & C)
  - Middlesbrough Corporate Parenting Boards
  - Tees Strategic MARAC
  - South Tees Youth Justice Board
  - Middlesbrough Community Safety Partnerships
  - Tees Safeguarding Adults Board
  - Middlesbrough Scrutiny Panel
  - Middlesbrough DASP
  - Middlesbrough Children's Trust
  - R&C Corporate Parenting Boards
  - Tees Strategic MAPPa
  - South Tees Health & Well Being Board
  - R&C Community Safety Partnerships
  - Middlesbrough Strategic Improvement Board
  - R&C Scrutiny Panel
  - R&C DASP

## 2. Executive Summary

This report summarises and reflects on the work of the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP) between 01 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. This covers the second full financial year of operation by the STSCP, which succeeded the Middlesbrough Local Safeguarding Children board and the Redcar & Cleveland Safeguarding Children Board (LSCBs) from September 2019. All details about the work of the Partnership and the materials it presents to professionals, children and young people, their parents carers and communities, and the comprehensive and complex network of services that work with them, are available on the STSCP website: <https://stscp.co.uk>

The Partnership is a statutory body, led by an Executive. The Executive is made up of representatives from Redcar & Cleveland Council, Middlesbrough Council, Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group and Cleveland Police, each represented by staff sufficiently senior as to be able speak with authority for and approve decisions on behalf of their organisations.

The STSCP carries coordination and accountability responsibilities which were previously covered by both the LSCB. The STSCP is the accountable and report-receiving and approving body for work under all 4 Priorities of the STSCP.

### **VEMT (Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked)**

The aim is for children/young people to be free from the risk and harm of exploitation, going missing or being trafficked

### **Neglect**

The aim is to reduce neglect, reduce the impact of neglect and ensure help & support is provided at the earliest opportunity

### **Empowering Young People**

The aim is to create a clear focus on the needs and experience of young people

### **Working Together**

The aim is to achieve excellent partnership working across all areas



## 2. Executive Summary Continued

The South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership covers both Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland and oversees some of the most deprived areas in the country. The latest population estimate for South Tees is **278,513**, the population of children and young people aged 0-18 is approximately **60,736**.

The South Tees is a very diverse area, with a large number of nationalities included in a minority ethnic population of **20%**. The largest minority ethnic groups in the area are the Indian and Pakistani communities, but more recently there has also been a significant increase in economic migration, mainly from Eastern Europe.

Page 21  
The area includes some rural communities as well as densely populated areas where people can face multiple challenges. In 2021, the End Child Poverty data classified areas of South Tees as being within the top **5%** of the most deprived areas in the country. The proportion of children living in poverty being **38%** (2020) compared to **37%** across Teesside and **31%** nationally. Living in an area of high deprivation, the children and young people of South Tees, their families and the professionals who work to support them, therefore face many challenges. There is a large body of evidence and research to show that children who live in poverty are more likely to face additional traumatic experiences or be exposed to a range of risks that can have a serious impact on their mental health and life chances.

The changing child population seen across the South Tees has implications for the demand for services, whether that is for school places, early year's provision, complex needs services, or an increase in the number of vulnerable families requiring support.

The number of children requiring statutory intervention has increased which is in line with increases seen across the country. New early help assessment and planning documents and practice guidance have been developed and are available on the respective local authority webpage. The area's Early Help Partnership are developing stronger governance and multi-agency strategic oversight and challenge to support their ambitious early help strategies.

Child protection systems remain strong with continued support and commitment from agencies across the South Tees. Effective Front Door arrangements known as MACH's ensure that children's and families needs are responded to appropriately. Data evidences that the timeliness of statutory safeguarding functions is improving. Qualitative assurance is also explored through a range of multi-agency audits which brings together joint learning experiences.

The STSCP Learning and Improvement Framework aims to ensure that learning from practice, audits, local and national research is embedded through improvements to safeguarding systems and training and development opportunities for practitioners across the South Tees.

There is a consistency of approach in responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns by partners across the South Tees and the Tees Valley. The Tees Multi-agency policy and procedures provide professionals with clear guidance on how to protect children and when to report any concerns about their welfare to the appropriate authorities. These policies and procedures are developed and agreed at the Tees Procedures Group by a range of multi-agency professionals which are then integrated into practice.

The safeguarding partnership across South Tees is improving and this in turn ensures practice and leadership is committed to continuous improvement across the area and is based on a culture of 'high support, high challenge' with independent scrutiny though the employment of the Independent STSCP Chair/ scrutineer.

## 2. Executive Summary Continued

This STSCP Annual Report highlights key areas that will require focus during the year. We acknowledge how improvements to the safeguarding system are continually evolving. The following are key areas being addressed with the intention of taking them forward this year:

This year has seen a refocus on Criminal Exploitation, including a number of multi-agency development sessions supported by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner. The Tees Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) Strategic Group sponsored a workshop to review processes and understanding of VEMT issues across the Tees region. This has led to a review of the Tees VEMT Strategy and action plan.

The understanding of neglect and the importance of prevention and early help has been increased, with training available to professionals and staff working across South Tees. The Tees Safeguarding Procedures website is recognised by the inspectorate as a reliable and useful source of information and is well accessed by a diverse variety of people. The Tees Procedures group has reviewed and updated the Neglect section on the website as a result of the recent work undertaken.

Recently published serious case reviews have identified that “the risk of drug using parents actively giving drugs to their children” should be covered in all relevant multi-agency training. Public Health have co-ordinated and delivered multi-agency training which includes the signs and symptoms in children of drug ingestion, and clarity about what professionals should do if they suspect this is happening.

As a result of the multi-agency VEMT audit, the voice of the child/young person is collected via the VEMT Practitioner Group referral process. The Voice of the child is now part of all STSCP multi-agency audits and is reported directly back to partner agencies. Services are actively collecting the Voice of the Child.

The STSCP training programme reflects the safeguarding priorities. This includes training around child sexual abuse, domestic abuse, neglect including adolescent neglect. ELearning is now accessible to professionals working in both adults and children’s services as well as the voluntary and community sector. Learning from audits and reviews is impacting on planning and service delivery by changing procedure and practice.

### 3. STSCP - Scrutineer view of Last Year

#### Summary of 2021-2022

South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP) appointed an Independent Chair on a temporary basis in March 2021 to assist with the process of transition from the LSCB to the new arrangements. This was a more challenging task than in most partnerships because STSCP covers the two geographical areas of Middlesbrough and Redcar/ Cleveland. Of the 137 Local Safeguarding Children arrangements nationally the overwhelming majority continue to refer to only one area.

It is a measure of the increasing confidence of the Executive that since March 2022 the role of Chair has now been assumed by the Corporate Director of Children and Families, Redcar and Cleveland. This creates the opportunity for the appointment of Independent Scrutineer/s who will be able to undertake focussed work as identified by the Executive.

South Tees is an area which presents many complex challenges in keeping children safe. Throughout my year in post as Independent Chair I have encountered nothing but a positive attitude to that task and an honest determination to make the changes which are needed.

#### Statutory Partners-strategic level arrangements

Working Together 2018 (ref) outlines the importance of the oversight of the most senior representatives of the three statutory safeguarding partners on the local arrangements.

During the past year two meetings have been held which were chaired by the Chief Executives of the two Local Authorities and attended by the Chief Operating Officer of the CCG, Senior representatives of Cleveland Police and the two Directors of Children Services. The meetings have considered the reports which I have provided and received updates from the Exec members on relevant matters. These reports have outlined both the progress made and the challenges of the new arrangements. The meetings have also updated and reaffirmed the written commitment to the partnership across the two geographical areas, including the financial arrangements which underpin the work.

They have also discussed the implications of the introduction of the transition of the CCG to the Integrated Care System (ICS) These meetings contribute to ensuring that that the arrangements are compliant with legislation and guidance. Also, that safeguarding issues are heard at the highest level. One comment in the meeting which I noted was "I have had several meetings at which that issue was discussed but I have looked at it quite differently through the lens of safeguarding in this meeting"

### 3. STSCP - Scrutineer view of Last Year

#### The contribution of schools

In March 2021 the membership of the STSCP Executive was extended to include the two Directors of Education. The impact of this change has been that the significant role of schools in safeguarding children is recognised in the arrangements. It was timely that this change took place just prior to the DfE Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges. Each LSCP subsequently received a Tri ministerial letter (29.07.2021) which said that multi-agency partners should:

- work to improve engagement with schools of all types in their local area, tailoring their approach to what their analysis (produced in partnership with schools/colleges and wider safeguarding partners) indicates are the risks to children and young people in their local area

In response to this recommendation the Section 175 (Safeguarding in Schools survey) was amended to include a question on peer on peer abuse. The result of the survey (which had a 100% response) was reported to the Executive and it was agreed that there would be a termly report to the meeting on current safeguarding issues in schools. An event with schools which will address a range of issues is being held in July 2022. It is intended that the Section 175 will be repeated annually.

#### Section 11

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 established the statutory duty of partners to safeguard children. A comprehensive self-assessment framework has been established within South Tees which has previously been a paper based exercise. In 2021 the representatives of the three statutory partners on the STSCP executive agreed that they would be challenged in person to provide evidence of the compliance of their agency with the requirements of Section 11.

This provided an important opportunity for the Exec members, along with their senior teams, to present their evidence to colleagues, the Lead Members for Children and to me. The sessions were very successful in obtaining confirmation of the level of awareness from the leadership to the front line practitioners. The process will be repeated in autumn 2022 and in the meantime it is expected that any gaps which were identified will be addressed.

#### Learning from serious cases

One of the most challenging aspects of the work of any safeguarding partnership is the decision making about serious cases. STSCP has a clear process in place which involves the statutory partners and during the year decisions have been made within the required (and challenging) timescales. The constructive relationship with the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel which had been established previously has continued with regular dialogue throughout the year.

At the start of 2021 there were a number of ongoing serious cases (Historic Serious Case Reviews and (Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews/CSPRs) which involved complex and sensitive work. This included working alongside families and the Coroner as well as other key agencies to reach a conclusion and, where possible to publish the reports. These cases have all now concluded and during the year under review there have not been any new CSPRs.

### 3. STSCP - Scrutineer view of Last Year

The CSPR process is intended to capture learning which could help to prevent a reoccurrence in future. This learning is encapsulated in a series of recommendations and an action plan at the completion of every report. Recognising the importance of implementing the recommendations, a new process has been established which is intended to make sure that the learning is embedded in practice. The process involves all the agencies who were involved in the case presenting the changes which have been made since the report, explaining what impact this has had on children and families and any learning which can be shared.

The model has been tested twice and will be used in future at the conclusion of an action plan. The positive response from the agencies and the quality of the information which they provided was impressive. The sessions were chaired by the chair of the L&D sub group, and observed by me, and we agreed that the sessions had been robust and had provided the required assurance.

#### **Effective infrastructure**

Multi-agency safeguarding partnerships require effective infrastructure in order to undertake the work which is required. In STSCP this has been an area which has taken some time to resolve but I am pleased to report that progress has been made in the past few months with new appointments in place or underway.

The north of the Tees (Hartlepool and Stockton), like the south of the area has a joint safeguarding partnership. Discussions are underway about aligning some aspects of the work, specifically around performance and learning/ development. The discussions have proceeded at pace to date and if the proposals are successful they will enable the two partnerships areas to create a synergy between them whilst maintaining the local focus.

#### **Learning and development**

In this report you will read about the partnership events which have taken place as part of the STSCP commitment to Learning and Development. The themes of these events reflect the priorities of STSCP as well as local and national reports, including the impact of neglect

#### **Priorities for 2022-2023**

The Executive recognises that although there is evidence of agencies involving children the voice of children is not yet making an impact on the priorities of the partnership.

It is also recognised that the performance framework requires review to reflect the changing nature of vulnerability and risk. This is one of the drivers for the discussions with HSSCP and should be resolved if the proposed arrangements go ahead. In the event that these discussions are not successful it will remain a priority to be resolved.

#### **Assurance statement**

I have read the contents of this report and can provide assurance that it accurately reflects the work of the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership during the period under review.

#### **Edwina Harrison**

INDEPENDENT CHAIR/SCRUTINEER - MARCH 2021 - MARCH 2022

# 4. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## PRIORITY 1: Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked (VEMT)

The aim is for children/young people to be free from the risk and harm of exploitation, from going missing and/or being trafficked

**The STSCP will promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people with a particular focus on those suspected of being at risk.**

### What has been done?

- The Tees VEMT Annual Report was presented to the STSCP in January 2022 highlighting the progress with the multi-agency action plan and redeveloping VEMT processes
- The STSCP is effectively represented on key partnerships, including the South Tees Health & Well Being Board, the Middlesbrough Children's Trust and the Redcar & Cleveland Children Partnership
- The STSCP continues to improve communication with the general public regarding key aspects of the work of the partnership through the stand-alone STSCP website: <https://stscp.co.uk> which is monitored by the STSCP business unit, the Tees VEMT Communications task and finish group are overseeing this
- There is increased intelligence around Missing From Education/ Permanent Exclusions / Elective Home Educated
- Tees-wide Child Exploitation toolkit has been developed and can be downloaded from Tees Child Protection Procedures - <http://www.teescpp.org.uk/>
- The Tees Missing Protocol has been reviewed and updated and can be found on the Tees Child Protection Procedures - <http://www.teescpp.org.uk/>
- There has been campaigns around National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day
- Awareness sessions have continued on County Lines; exploitation involved sex working; and how CSE affects boys and men
- Philomena Protocol has been launched. Its aim is to protect children who go missing from care homes
- Tees VEMT Transitions task and finish group have developed a proposed pathway for transition to adult services
- Tees VEMT Training task and finish group have completed a training analysis and developed a VEMT training framework
- Tees VEMT Contextual Safeguarding task and finish group have completed a survey around the knowledge of Contextual Safeguarding and the report presented to the Tees VEMT
- Barnardo's Tees Valley video about how they will support children and young people who have been subject to exploitation continues to be supported. A copy of the video can be seen at <https://vimeo.com/user140651615>

### Impact

This year has seen a refocus on Criminal Exploitation, including a number of multi-agency development sessions supported by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner. The Tees Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) Strategic Group sponsored a workshop to review processes and understanding of VEMT issues across the Tees region. This has led to a review of the Tees VEMT Strategy and action plan. Refer to recent event and multiagency engagement.

### Next Steps

- Embed and strengthen the understanding and impact of VEMT across Tees;
- Continue to promote the Tees VEMT Strategy;
- Continue to raise the profile of and promote the understanding of child exploitation.

## 4. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONTINUED

### PRIORITY 2: Neglect

The aim is to reduce neglect, reduce the impact of neglect and ensure help and support is provided at the earliest opportunity.

**The STSCP will work with partner agencies to promote early help and recognise and respond to the neglect of children and young people.**

#### What has been done?

- The Tees Neglect Framework has been developed and there are plans to launch and be rolled out across the Tees footprint in summer of 2022
- Multi-agency task and finish groups are making progress around child exploitation and Adolescent Neglect, for example a transitions to adult services model has been developed and an Adolescent Neglect Framework has been produced
- Multi-agency Neglect Audit completed across both Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, using JTAI (Joint Thematic Area Inspection) format in audit forms
- The STSCP have helped to embed and strengthen the understanding of Neglect including Adolescent Neglect by launching the Adolescent Neglect Framework in June 2021
- Fully support the review of how key partners are dealing with Neglect
- Reviewed the existing Neglect Strategies for Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland and developed a Tees Strategy approach with Stockton and Hartlepool

#### In Redcar:

- We have supported the workforce to use skills and tools to develop relationships with families
- All front line practitioners in Redcar & Cleveland have access to Community Care Inform
- All Practitioners have access to the Signs of Safety knowledge bank
- Signs of Safety continues to be our model of practice and training is delivered throughout the year- this is now in its 4th year
- In Summer of 2022 Trauma Informed training is being rolled out to the workforce on a 2 year programme
- Strengthening Family Relationships is a programme of training this year- additionally to the 2 previous years
- A programme of training on Strengthening Family Relationships is being delivered this year

#### In Middlesbrough:

- We have a dedicated practice champion for Neglect, who has produced a Neglect Toolkit, this has been promoted and is available on both the Council intranet and the Tees Procedures;
- We have a Graded Care Profile train the trainer model and have over 100 staff trained;
- The Audit to Excellence based in Middlesbrough's Centre for Practice Excellence are auditing the impact of Graded Care Profile training to ensure it is used effectively in practice to strengthen practice around neglect;
- Our Practice Model is Children & Relationships First, we have a Core Offer of training which has been designed to support relational and strengths based practice, supported the practice standards;
- Strengthening Practice projects have delivered 3 workshops over the past 18 months focusing on quality of Assessments, Plans and Parenting. There is a suite of tools available for staff in Early Help and Social Workers when working with neglect;
- All staff in Children's Services have access to Community Care Inform;
- We have refreshed our Threshold Document, which is available on the STSCP website.

## 4. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONTINUED

### Impact

The understanding of neglect and the importance of prevention and early help has been increased, with training available to professionals and staff working in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland. The Tees Safeguarding Procedures website is recognised by the inspectorate as a reliable and useful source of information and is well accessed by a diverse variety of people. The Tees Procedures group has reviewed and updated the Neglect section on the website as a result of the recent work undertaken.

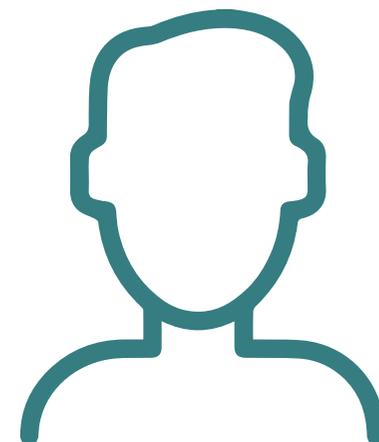
Recently published serious case reviews have identified that “the risk of drug using parents actively giving drugs to their children” should be covered in all relevant multi-agency training. Public Health have co-ordinated and delivered multi-agency training which includes the signs and symptoms in children of drug ingestion, and clarity about what professionals should do if they suspect this is happening.

### Next Steps

- Continue to Embed and strengthen the understanding of Neglect including Adolescent Neglect by promoting the Adolescent Neglect Framework which was launched in June 2021;
- Fully support the development of how key partners are dealing with Neglect;
- Launch the Tees Neglect Framework in the autumn of 2022.

### The thematic review identified the following regarding Neglect:

- Professionals need to use specific neglect tools and ensure that they understand the root causes of neglect and the impact on a child over time
- The use of a specialist neglect assessment, like the Graded Care Profile, should be undertaken after neglect concerns emerge, and certainly after a child is made the subject of a child protection plan in this category
- There were missed opportunities in identifying indicators of neglect, dealing with incidents in isolation and not recognising the cumulative picture or contextual risk factors
- In neglect cases, professionals may become reactive to incidents rather than considering the child’s lived experience over time. Neglect is damaging to children as its impact is cumulative. This should also be clearly explained to parents;
- Children’s voices must be clearly sought and stated. Professionals both individually and in multiagency meetings should consider and analyse the child’s lived experience
- Emotional abuse and neglect of adolescents tends to be less readily recognised by practitioners than for younger children
- There is a need for professionals to robustly challenge themselves, each other and parents/carers when it comes to managing cases of neglect
- Good quality plans and reflective supervision is key to effectively recognising and challenging neglect



## 4. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONTINUED

### PRIORITY 3: The Voice of the Child/Young Person

The aim is to create a clear focus on the needs and experience of young people.

**The STSCP will develop and implement effective communication strategies with a focus on the participation of children and young people.**

#### What has been done?

- Return home interviews collect and collate the views of the child/young person which is fed back via the quarterly reports to managers and professionals
- The recently updated Tees VEMT referral forms now collect the views of the child/young person
- A Voice of the Child section is now included in all multi-agency audits and findings fed back to the STSCP and partner agencies
- Operation Encompass - relaunched internally and renamed Cherish
- Philomena Protocol has been implemented, which includes collecting the views of young people in care.

#### Early indications from the young peoples' survey shows:

- 100% are accessing the internet
- 93% access 1 or more social media account as their main activity
- 60% of the young people surveyed are going online for more than 8 hours per week
- 87% are using their smartphone as the main device to access the internet, but choosing their own data plans over the residential home internet connection, this is because they have unlimited access data plans (this potentially poses a risk if there are no filters or controls enabled)
- 60% of young people surveyed reported that they had seen the sale of drugs on their social media
- 33% had requests to send youth produced sexual imagery (Indecent images)
- 73% had seen fake news reports

#### Impact

As a result of the multi-agency VEMT audit, the voice of the child/young person is collected via the VEMT Practitioner Group referral process. The Voice of the Child is now part of all STSCP multi-agency audits and is reported directly back to partner agencies. Services are actively collecting the Voice of the Child.

#### Next Steps

- Embed and strengthen the collection of children and young people views to inform planning and practice
- Fully use the views already collected by agencies to fully inform the partnership about what it is like to be a child growing up in South Tees
- The STSCP will increase engagement with children and young people via events both virtual and in person

## 4. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONTINUED

### PRIORITY 4: Working Together

The aim is to achieve excellent partnership working across all areas.

**The STSCP will work with partner agencies to improve the link with other services in particular those services working with domestic abuse, parental mental health and substance misuse.**

#### What has been done?

- The Tees Thresholds Document was reviewed in late 2019 to reflect the new Partnership arrangements for both South Tees Safeguarding Partnership and the Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees Safeguarding Partnership. The Thresholds document was reviewed in 2021 and due to the findings in the Middlesbrough inspection in 2020 and the improvement journey Middlesbrough agreed an addendum document
- The eLearning training programme has seen a substantial uptake from professionals working within children's and adult safeguarding
- The STSCP has overseen the development of the Multi-agency Children's Hub (MACH) arrangements for both the Middlesbrough MACH and the Redcar & Cleveland MACH
- The domestic abuse project SafeLives supports the development of the response to domestic abuse across Tees
- Philomena Protocol has been implemented with all residential homes
- The review of CDOP arrangements has been completed
- A number of multi-agency audits have been completed and learning shared with the partnership
- A number of rapid reviews and CSPR have been completed, confirming the growing strength in partnership working across the South Tees

### Impact

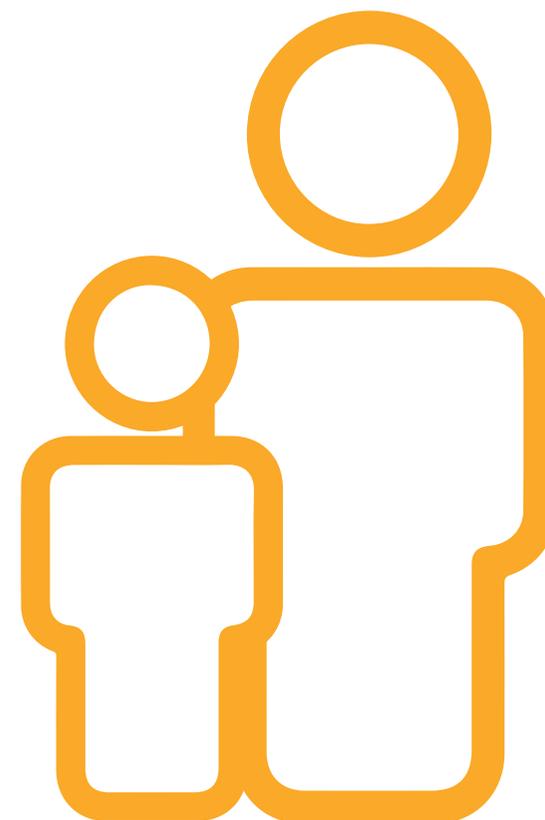
The STSCP training programme reflects the safeguarding priorities. This includes training around child sexual abuse, domestic abuse, neglect including adolescent neglect. ELearning is now accessible to professionals working in both adults and children's services as well as the voluntary and community sector. Learning from audits and reviews is impacting on planning and service delivery by changing procedure and practice (see Section 7 below).

It should be noted that, since the COVID restrictions from March 2020, the range of courses offered has reduced and face to face training has been replaced with remote learning.

### Next Steps

Embed and strengthen the application of the revised thresholds across the partnership, to provide assurance that children receiving support as a child in need, receive focused intervention in a time appropriate to the child.

Further improve Information Sharing, understanding the barriers to local information sharing and mitigating issues.



## 5. LOCAL CONTEXT

### MIDDLESBROUGH

- **Total Population of the town is 141,285 – Mid Year Population Estimates 2020**
- **Number of Households is 40,300 – Annual Population Survey**
- **Size of the town in square miles is 21 Square miles**
- **The Number of Children under 18 – 33,129 – Mid Year population estimates 2020**
- **39.4% of children are living in poverty 2019/20 (End Child Poverty Coalition)**
- **78% of schools were judged to be good – (in addition 7% were judged as outstanding)**

Page 31

#### Contextual characteristics of Middlesbrough:

There are **57** schools in Middlesbrough, **8** secondary schools, **44** primary schools, **1** AP academy and **4** special schools. With **78%** of Middlesbrough schools judged to be good and an additional **7%** outstanding by Ofsted, the potential for children achieving positive outcomes is high. The number of children who are home educated is **116** which, although small when compared to all children accessing school, is monitored and reviewed by the Partnership annually to ensure oversight of this cohort of children and young people.

Based on the 2021 January School census **17.5%** of the school population were SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), this includes both EHCP & SEN Support. The number of children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans or Statements of SEN in Middlesbrough is **926** (**460** primary age children, **400** secondary, **66** post-16. The figure that had an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) was **3.7%** and **13.8%** have SEN support.

In 2021, the End Child Poverty data classified Middlesbrough as being **within the top 5% of the most deprived areas in the country**. The proportion of **children living in poverty being 38%** (2020) compared to **37%** across Teesside and **31%** nationally. Living in an area of high deprivation, the children and young people of Middlesbrough, their families and the professionals who work to support them, therefore face many challenges. There is a large body of evidence and research to show that **children who live in poverty are more likely to face additional traumatic experiences** or be exposed to a range of risks that can have a serious impact on their mental health and life chances. The University College London (UCL, July 2020) found that poverty was strongly associated with an increased odds of a child reporting ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) such as being sexually abused, coping with parental separation, or their parents experiencing issues with mental health, drug or alcohol abuse. With Middlesbrough's deprivation being higher than the national average for children already living in poverty and many families experiencing uncertain employment prospects as a result of COVID-19, the research suggests that the impact is only likely to increase; putting further pressure on families.

It is therefore important for the Safeguarding Partnership to be fully aware of this cohort of children and young people and ensure that these are considered within aspects of the partnerships work programme.

## 5. LOCAL CONTEXT CONTINUED

### 5.1 If Middlesbrough were a village of 100 children

Page 32



# REDCAR & CLEVELAND

- **The total Population of the town is 137,228**
- **The number of Households is 63,000**
- **The size of the town in square miles – 94.5 square miles**
- **The number of Children under 18 is 27,607**
- **26.2% of children are living in poverty 2019/20**
- **79% of schools were judged to be good or better**

### Contextual characteristics of Redcar & Cleveland:

There are **58** schools in Redcar & Cleveland, **10** secondary schools, **44** primary schools, **1** AP academy and **3** special schools. With **65%** of Redcar & Cleveland schools judged to be good and an additional **17%** outstanding by Ofsted, the potential for children achieving positive outcomes is high. The number of children who are home educated is **221** which, although small when compared to all children accessing school, is monitored and reviewed by the Partnership annually to ensure oversight of this cohort of children and young people.

Based on the 2022 January School census **17%** of the school population were SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). The number of children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans or Statements of SEN in Redcar & Cleveland is **1,340** (**429** primary age children, **549** secondary, **362** post-16. The figure that had an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) was **4%** and **13%** have SEN support.

In 2021, the End Child Poverty data classified Redcar & Cleveland as being **within the top 5% of the most deprived areas in the country**. The proportion of **children living in poverty being 26.2%** (2020) compared to 37% across Teesside

and 31% nationally. Living in an area of high deprivation, the children and young people of Redcar & Cleveland, their families and the professionals who work to support them, therefore face many challenges. There is a large body of evidence and research to show that **children who live in poverty are more likely to face additional traumatic experiences** or be exposed to a range of risks that can have a serious impact on their mental health and life chances. The University College London (UCL, July 2020) found that poverty was strongly associated with an increased odds of a child reporting ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) such as being sexually abused, coping with parental separation, or their parents experiencing issues with mental health, drug or alcohol abuse. With Redcar & Cleveland's deprivation being higher than the national average for children already living in poverty and many families experiencing uncertain employment prospects as a result of COVID-19, the research suggests that the impact is only likely to increase; putting further pressure on families.

It is therefore important for the Safeguarding Partnership to be fully aware of this cohort of children and young people and ensure that these are considered within aspects of the partnerships work programme.

## 5. LOCAL CONTEXT CONTINUED

### 5.2 If Redcar & Cleveland were a village of 100 children

Page 34



## 6. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CONTEXT ACROSS SOUTH TEES

Although Middlesbrough Local Authority and Cleveland Police have had challenging outcomes from inspections, there is a strong commitment to improve and make progress. Both Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland local authorities have high aspirations for their children and young people. Equally, both areas have significant challenges to address, as can be seen from the following information.

### The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)

The Middlesbrough IDACI score for 2019 was 32.7% of children living in income deprived households, **highest in England**

The Redcar & Cleveland IDACI score for 2019 was 29% of children living in income deprived households, **13<sup>th</sup> (highest) in England**

### Demand on Social Care

Demand for Children's Social Care is closely associated with key drivers which include deprivation, poor housing, high levels of unemployment, which are prevalent in the North East, and particularly Teesside.

- The North East has the highest rate of social care demand in the country, for instance the Child Protection rate for the North East is 67.20 per 10,000 compared to an England rate of 41.40 per 10,000
- Within the North East, Teesside has the highest rate of demand, and within Teesside, Both Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland have a high rate of demand for social care. For instance, taking the example of child protection, Middlesbrough has the highest rate per 10,000 in the country at **171.10**, with Redcar & Cleveland at **92.4**
- **The DfE Children In Need census shows Middlesbrough has the highest level of need for social care in the country and Redcar & Cleveland are ranked 5<sup>th</sup>**
- Within the most deprived parts of South Tees, for instance North Ormesby, 1 in every 18 children living in that ward are brought into care. Locality working teams are in place however significant work is required to target support to this area

- Incidents of children being taken into care in the North East have doubled over the past 8 years according to the Nuffield Family Justice Study, Born into Care (2021). The rates are higher in Teesside and particularly South Tees

Poor practice and a challenging partnership environment also results in increased levels of demand for social care, as Middlesbrough's Children's Service was judged as Inadequate December 2019 and Cleveland Police were judged Inadequate in September 2019. However both have embarked on strong improvement journeys as evidenced by HMI inspection reports and Children's Services demand is being driven down by effective management of through-put (ensuring interventions do not drift and work is purposeful) and the continued development and investment of the Early Help offer which is support more families receiving interventions instead of escalating to social care. However demand remains disproportionately high.

The Safeguarding Partnerships across Teesside are required to understand better the 'steady state' in Middlesbrough and in Redcar & Cleveland, i.e. what should demand be given the Town's and Regions demography and forecasted population trends. This will support a better narrative to understand demand and provide an additional sophisticated layer to forecasting demand, strategy development and financial management.



## 6. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CONTEXT ACROSS SOUTH TEES CONTINUED

### Local Safeguarding Data April 2021 – March 2022

<b>MIDDLESBROUGH</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>% CHANGE</b>
Referral's for the year	4,436	4,612	Up 3.9%
Re-referrals within the previous 12 months	32.4%	37.9%	Up by 5.5%
Children in Need in Middlesbrough	1,700	1,369	Down 19.5%
Children subject to a Child Protection Plan	570	416	Down 27%
% subject of a Child Protection Plan due to neglect	46%	50%	Up by 4%
Children in the care of the Local Authority	571	507	Down 11.2%
Children in Private Fostering arrangements	6	8	Up 33.3%
Reported missing from home more than once	65	74	Up 13.8%
Young people discussed at Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked practitioner group	106	159	Up 50%
Rapid Reviews were completed in this period	4	1	Down 75%
Referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer	128	141	Up 10.2%

<b>REDCAR &amp; CLEVELAND</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>% CHANGE</b>
Referral's for the year	1878	1802	Down 4%
% were re-referrals within the previous 12 months	20.1%	18.5%	Down by 1.6%
Children in Need in Redcar & Cleveland.	1,691	1,694	Up 0.17%
Children subject to a Child Protection Plan	261	252	Down 3.4%
% subject of a Child Protection Plan due to neglect	86%	69%	Down by 17%
Children in the care of the Local Authority	316	337	Up 6.7%
children in Private Fostering arrangements	9	12	Up 33.3%
Reported missing from home more than once.	68	103	Up 52%
Young people discussed at Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked practitioner group	159	243	Up 53%
Rapid Reviews were completed in this period	2	3	Up 50%
Referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer	88	58	Down 34%

## 6. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CONTEXT ACROSS SOUTH TEES CONTINUED

### South Tees Key Health/Police facts - as at 2021-2022

<b>MIDDLESBROUGH</b>		<b>Last Year's Figures</b>		<b>This Year's Figures</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rank</b>		
Teenage conception rate	39.4/ 100,000.	152/152	37.1/ 100,000	152/152		Highest but Rate down
Children deemed not to be school ready	63.1%	152/152	63.1%	152/152		Remains Highest
Children living in low income families	30%	148/152	33.4%	152/152		Increased
Breastfeeding 6-8 weeks	32.6%	142/152	34.4%	139/152		Improving
Childhood obesity year 6	25.2%	123/125	25.2%	122/152		Remains on par
Rate of children in care	189/10,000	150/152	172/10,000	148/152		Reducing
MMR vaccination coverage for two doses 5 years old	86.7%	97/152	84.7%	107/152		Worsen

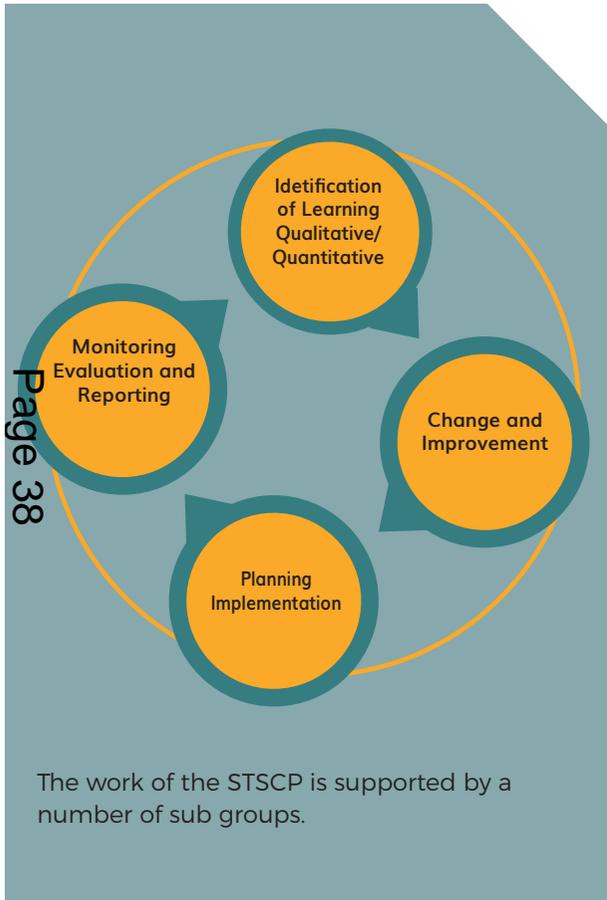
<b>REDCAR &amp; CLEVELAND</b>		<b>Last Year's Figures</b>		<b>This Year's Figures</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rank</b>		
Teenage conception rate	34.6/100,000.	146/152	37.1/100,000	148/152		Rate worsening
Children deemed not to be school ready	71.1%	61/152	71.1%	91/152		Rate remains the same
Children living in low income families	18.1%	110/152	22.2%	125/152		Rate worsening
Breastfeeding 6-8 weeks	27.6%	148/152	31%	145/152		Rate Improving
Childhood obesity year 6	24%	111/125	24%	110/152		Rate remains the same
Rate of children in care	126/10,000	130/152	115/10,000	138/152		Reducing
MMR vaccination coverage for two doses 5 years old	91.8%	113/152	92.2%	31/152		Rate Improving

<b>CLEVELAND POLICE DATA</b>		<b>Last Year's Figures</b>	<b>This Year's Figures</b>	
		<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rate</b>	
Child Sexual Abuse offences recorded		N/K*	2,002	N/K
% child sexual exploitation crimes that had a cyber-element		59%	56%	Reducing rate, Improving
The number of children who have been present during a Domestic Abuse incident		5,534	5,534	Remains static
incidents recorded as alcohol related		9,562	12,978	Increasing
The National homicide rate (12 months ending January 2022)		9th	4th	Increasing
knife crime rate in the country (12 months ending September 2021)		4th	2nd	Increasing

NB: \* donates figures not known as data is collected differently now

# 7. WORK OF THE STSCP SUB GROUPS

Page 38



## Learning & Development Group (L&D)

The L&D group oversees the quality assurance of all Serious Case Reviews/Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and other Learning Reviews to monitor and evaluate SCR/CSPR/Learning Review action plans and to advise the STSCP Key Partners if the criteria for commissioning a CSPR, as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children, may have been met.

### WORK TO DATE:

- The STSCP has not commissioned any reviews over this reporting period, but has finalised and published four CSPR and one historic Serious Case Review and the L&D group has had an overview of the process from initial decision making to implementation of the media/communication plans
- L&D group is monitoring the multi-agency action plans pursuant to the reviews and reviewing single agency action plans progress
- The L&D group have carried out 4 Rapid reviews over the period three for Redcar & Cleveland and one for Middlesbrough
- Monitored the outcomes of national reviews of relevance to Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland
- Challenge events relating to two historic serious case reviews were carried out with resulting report presented to the STSCP

## Quality & Performance Group (Q&P)

The group monitors child protection and safeguarding activity on an inter-agency basis on behalf of the STSCP in order to identify areas of concern to the Board and promote continuous improvement.

### WORK TO DATE:

The group has reviewed and responded to the Tees Performance Framework and reported to the STSCP.

- Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 data reviewed
- Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 summary reports reported to the board

**The Q&P group has coordinated the list of audits below and has provided oversight of the associated action plans developed in response to the audit findings:**

- JTAI Themed Neglect Audit Oct 2021
- Section 11 audit moderation process completed in Sept 2021
- JTAI themed Domestic Abuse in Child Protection cases Jan/Feb 2022

**The STSCP have completed three on line surveys:**

- Safeguarding the Unborn Baby Survey
- The Hidden Male/Fathers Survey
- The Contextual Safeguarding Survey

## 7. WORK OF THE STSCP SUB GROUPS CONTINUED

### Tees-wide Groups

#### TEES-WIDE POLICY & PROCEDURES GROUP

This group is responsible for reviewing and amending existing policies and procedures and for developing new ones based on experience, research findings, government and professional guidance and the recommendations of case reviews. There is a clear and effective structure and process in place which has resulted in a productive year.

**Procedures agreed or reviewed/updated/added during 2021/22 were as follows:**

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| • Child Sexual Exploitation                            | Jun-21 |
| • Safer Referral Form (familiar harm section added)    | Jul-21 |
| • VEMT - Tees-wide Child Exploitation Screening Tool   | Jun-21 |
| • Threshold Document: Framework for Assessment         | Sep-21 |
| • Online Abuse   | Sep-21 |
| • Underage Sexual Activity                             | Mar-22 |
| • Transfer In / Out ICPC                               | Mar-22 |
| • Young Carers   | Mar-22 |
| • Tees Protocol for Running Missing from Home and Care | Mar-22 |



The following safeguarding children procedures have recently been added or reviewed/updated on the Tees Safeguarding Children Procedures website.

- **Tees Protocol for Running Missing from Home / Care:**  
<https://www.teescpp.org.uk/media/1364/tees-protocol-for-children-missing-from-home-and-care-v2.pdf>
- **Transfer In / Out (Child Protection):**  
<https://www.teescpp.org.uk/procedures-for-the-safeguarding-process/13-transfer-in-out-child-protection/>
- **Underage Sexual Activity:**  
<https://www.teescpp.org.uk/procedures-and-guidance-on-specific-issues-that-affect-children/underage-sexual-activity/>
- **Young Carers:**  
<https://www.teescpp.org.uk/procedures-and-guidance-on-specific-issues-that-affect-children/young-carers/>

The Tees Safeguarding Procedures website continues to be monitored and updated as appropriate.

## 7. WORK OF THE STSCP SUB GROUPS CONTINUED

### Tees Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) Group

This is a STSCP priority area and takes a strategic overview of this key area of work and directs the implementation of complementary strategies across the local operational groups.

#### WORK THIS YEAR:

- Membership and terms of reference reviewed and refreshed
- Four task and finish groups have been set up in line with the four key areas in the strategy these are:
  - Contextual Safeguarding
  - Communication Group
  - Training Group
  - Transitions Group
- The VEMT Strategy and Action Plan has been reviewed and updated
- The VPG Screening Tool has been updated
- The Tees Missing from Home and Care Protocol has been refreshed
- Tees Performance Management Framework data in relation to VEMT has been reviewed to ensure consistency across Tees and enable improved analysis
- Voice of the Child increased focus with Barnardo's "Tees Youth Take action project" and the Blossom Project questionnaires, changes to the audit tool to include voice of the child, obtaining the views of those exiting the VEMT process
- An audit regime of VEMT cases in place to inform best practice and learning
- CSE virtual training were held with attendance of 62 people from a wide range of agencies, whilst 504 professionals completed e-learning courses across the Tees

### Tees Performance Management Framework

In 2016 the Tees Performance Management Framework (Tees PMF) was introduced across the Tees to enable the review a much broader range of data on a quarterly basis.

**The Tees PMF dataset contains a number of key indicators covering a wide range of subjects including:**

- Child Protection Activity
- Children In Care
- VEMT (Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked)
- CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health)
- Accident and Emergency
- Domestic Violence

**The data is divided into the following sub sections:**

- Enable children/young people to live healthy lives
- Providing the right support for children/young people
- Ensuring children/young people are safe

**The dataset and summaries are shared with STSCP via updates at the partnership via the Quality & Performance report and updates by the TPMF team to the Quality & Performance group meetings and is used to:**

- Identify any changes, patterns or trends that require either a single or multi-agency response
- Identify what actions agencies may need to take in relation to changes in data
- Identifying priorities for the STSCP multi-agency audit schedule

## 7. WORK OF THE STSCP SUB GROUPS CONTINUED

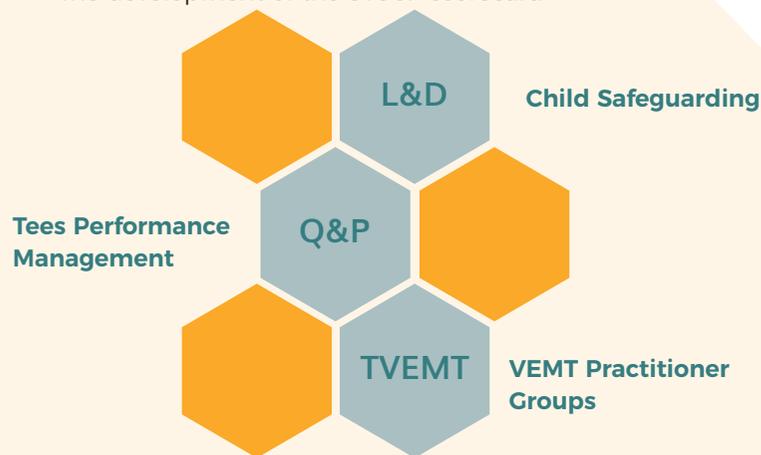
### Tees Child Death Overview Panel

The purpose of the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is to review and/or analyse in order to identify any matters relating to the death, or deaths, that are relevant to the welfare of children/ young people in Tees Valley or to public health and safety, and to consider whether action should be taken in relation to any matters identified. The CDOP Annual Report is available on the STSCP website and add the link STSCP website: <https://stscp.co.uk>.

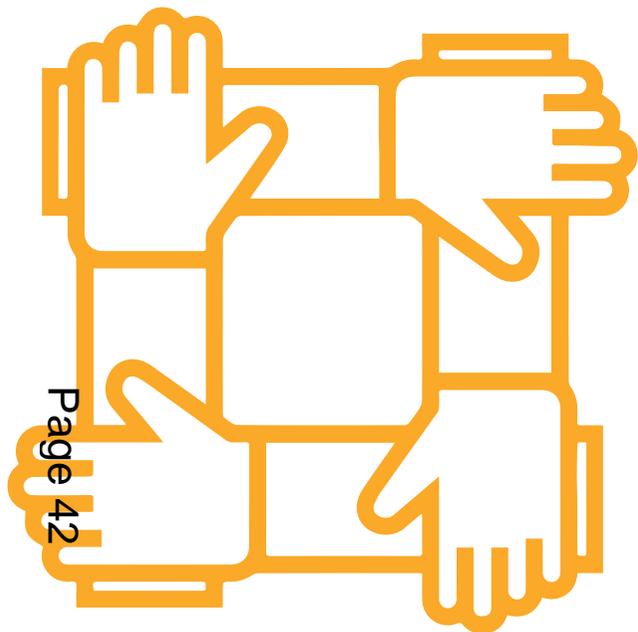
### Other Task-Limited Working Groups

The STSCP appointed task and finish groups in this period for specific tasks such as:

- Review of the Tees Threshold Document in line with the Middlesbrough threshold addendum
- Review the Governance and membership of the STSCP
- The development of the STSCP scorecard



## 8. WORKING WITH OTHER PARTNERSHIPS - Impact of leaders



### The South Tees Partnerships

The Partnership links strongly with other key bodies and the Relevant Agencies are listed in the new arrangements to be found at <https://stscp.co.uk>.

The arrangements include connections with the following:

- The Tees Adult Safeguarding Board, with active discussion of inter-generational themes
- Decision-making bodies and governance mechanisms working in both commissioning and provider organisations across
- Education across all ages and in all settings, whether publicly funded or not, and including Further Education provision
- Youth organisations in the public, private or voluntary sectors, including sporting and other citizenship organisations
- Both commissioner and provider bodies in health, in both physical and mental health settings. (The Clinical Commissioning Group are a Statutory Partner, providers being Relevant Agencies)
- All levels of social care provision, including early help and multi-agency safeguarding teams, those working with children in need, on child protection plans, involved in care proceedings or already in care, care experienced and care leaving
- Faith and other community bodies

The Governance framework captures the business of the new partnership, how audit and data analysis captures progress and areas for development or renewed focus, and how the partnership relates to Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland's other governance structures. This means that the partnership is clear about how and with whom it communicates agendas, decisions, priorities, successes, warning signs and lessons to be learned. Its reach covers a wide landscape across South Tees, the wider North East region, and then to national bodies.

The STSCP arrangements include the Elected Members for Children's Services and Education for both Middlesbrough Council and Redcar & Cleveland Council. Partners are called on to assist the STSCP in ensuring the voice of the community is heard in the partnership.

The importance of relating to children and young people and their representative and advocacy bodies is also considered in the way the partnership operates. Children and Young People are considered integral to the work of the STSCP and as such they will feature in the STSCP business plans and annual reports. The STSCP aims to actively engage and involve children and young people in all aspects of the partnership.

The STSCP aims to engage with peer review processes to enhance practice and procedures. The STSCP will continue to undertake routine multi-agency audits, reviewed by the partnership.

## 8. WORKING WITH OTHER PARTNERSHIPS - Impact of leaders CONTINUED

The following partnerships have a specific focus:

**The Children and Young Peoples Partnership for Redcar & Cleveland and the Children's Trust for Middlesbrough -**

Both work to ensure effective services are delivered in the most efficient way to improve the lives of children, young people and families.

**The Health and Wellbeing Board** - Promotes integrated working between commissioners of health services, public health and social care services, to improve health and wellbeing.

**The Community Safety Partnerships for both Middlesbrough and the Redcar & Cleveland** - Tackles crime, disorder, substance misuse, anti-social behaviour and to reduce re-offending.

We have strengthened our joint working with a range of partnerships on shared or similar priorities. Examples include:

- Greater integration of the mental health and wellbeing agenda with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the development of a range of support aimed to reduce self-harm and suicide and to recognise the signs of adolescent neglect
- Joint working with the Children and Young Peoples Partnership/Children's Trust to increase the voice of the child through work that includes supporting and helping to capture the voice of the child/young person
- Working with the Community Safety Partnerships in respect of domestic abuse, alcohol misuse, substance misuse and counter terrorism (PREVENT duty). Aligning and improving work within sexual violence, sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation



# 9. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

## Learning from Reviews

In compiling this report we have used the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Annual Report 2019 -2020 which says:

**“Safeguarding partnerships may wish to examine their use of written agreements and assure themselves that they function in the way in which they are intended. Also, continue to focus on key themes e.g. risk assessment and decision making, information sharing, late or no escalation of concerns, over optimistic thinking, parental mental health or substance misuse.”**

In this year, STSCP has held four Rapid Reviews, we have not commissioned any C SPR or Learning Reviews (LR).

From the recent completed reviews we have published the following 7 Minute briefings/Learning: (Click on below)

C SPR STORK	<a href="#">7 minute briefing - C SPR - Stork - 2021 (stscp.co.uk)</a>
C SPR DANIEL	<a href="#">7 minute briefing - C SPR - Daniel - 2021 (stscp.co.uk)</a>
C SPR FRED	<a href="#">7 minute briefing - C SPR - Fred - 2021 (stscp.co.uk)</a>
C SPR LIAM	<a href="#">C SPR - Liam - 7 minute briefing (stscp.co.uk)</a>
C SPR KINGFISHER	<a href="#">C SPR - Kingfisher - 7 minute briefing (stscp.co.uk)</a>



### Thematic Analysis Of Serious Case Reviews & Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews In South Tees - 2017-2021

This report reviewed the learning from 5 Serious Case Reviews, 4 Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and 1 Learning Review undertaken between 2017 and 2021. The aim of the report was to identify any cross cutting themes, to maximise learning and measure the impact of any action plans that have been implemented.

- Billy Published 27th August 2018
- Alex Published 31 March 2022
- Daisy Published 1st August 2019
- Pippa Published 13th May 2022
- OT/ET - Learning Review not published
- Stork Published 31st March 2022
- Liam Published 10th September 2021
- Fred Published 4th June 2021
- Daniel Published 28th May 2021
- Kingfisher 10th September 2021

#### The themes identified were:

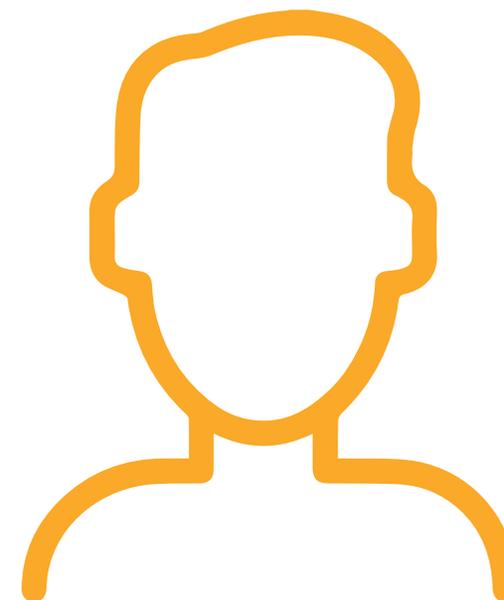
1. Understanding the child's world
2. Engaging the whole family
3. Multi-agency working
4. Safeguarding vulnerable babies
5. Substance misuse
6. Neglect
7. Risks outside of the home
8. Domestic Abuse
9. Parental Mental Health

Additional Themes not identified as formal learning points

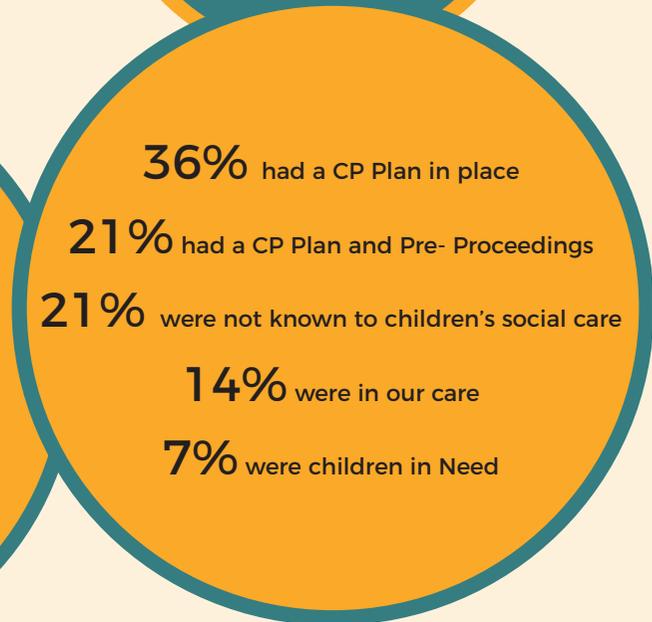
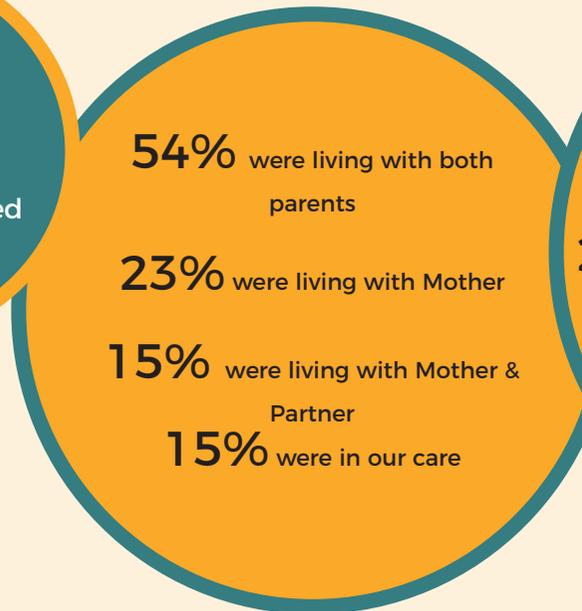
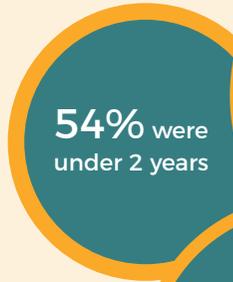
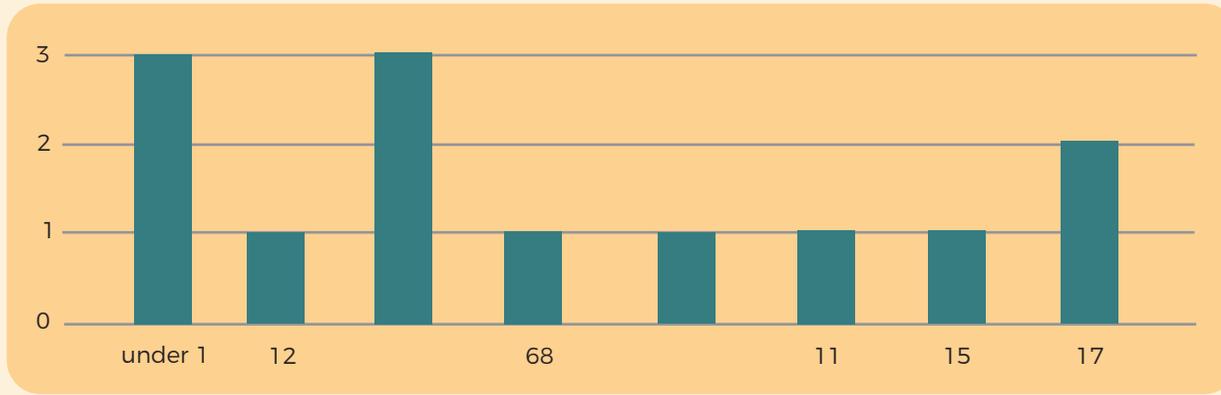
#### Recommendations from the Review:

1. The quality of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews must be consistently good so that it supports learning and developments across the partnership. All identified learning must lead to SMART recommendations so that action plans can be tracked and monitored in terms of impact and the difference they make for children and families in South Tees.
2. Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews should give more consideration to the child's lived experience, their identity, as this is not evident in all reviews.
3. South Tees Safeguarding Partnership Training offer needs to be reviewed to ensure it sufficiently considers learning from all Serious Case Reviews/Child Safeguarding Practice reviews, in particular each of the 9 themes within this report.
4. Consideration should be given to developing tool kits (supported by training for practitioners) to strengthen evidence based practice in South Tees.
5. Consideration needs to be given to how multi-agency working and information sharing can be strengthened.

The full report can be found on the STSCP website <https://stscp.co.uk>



## ABOUT OUR CHILDREN



## 9. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

### TIMELINE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS 2017-21



## 9. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

### TRAINING & COMMUNICATION

#### TRAINING

Under the new arrangements, the training function of the partnership is coordinated by the L&D group.

The L&D group must therefore ensure that appropriate high quality multi-agency training is provided for statutory agencies that reflect STSCP policy and procedure, enhances knowledge and skills and promotes joint understanding of child protection work.

Page 48

In light of the restrictions caused by the COVID19 lockdown, all taught courses were cancelled from March and resumed via a virtual model in October 2020. This is proving successful.

The new eLearning product MeLearning was launched in May 2020 and is also proving popular.

#### WORK TO DATE:

In total from April 2021 to March 2022, **847** candidates attended virtual training sessions. The new Melearning product has enhanced the online training experience for professionals and to date over **15,000** online courses have been completed.

Child Criminal Exploitation training has been delivered to **44** candidates; Child Sexual Exploitation training was delivered to **11** applicants; and **792** individuals undertook Core 3 training in this period.

The STSCP delivered 10 Core 3 safeguarding courses and 12 Core 3 update courses and 2 CSE courses in 2021/22

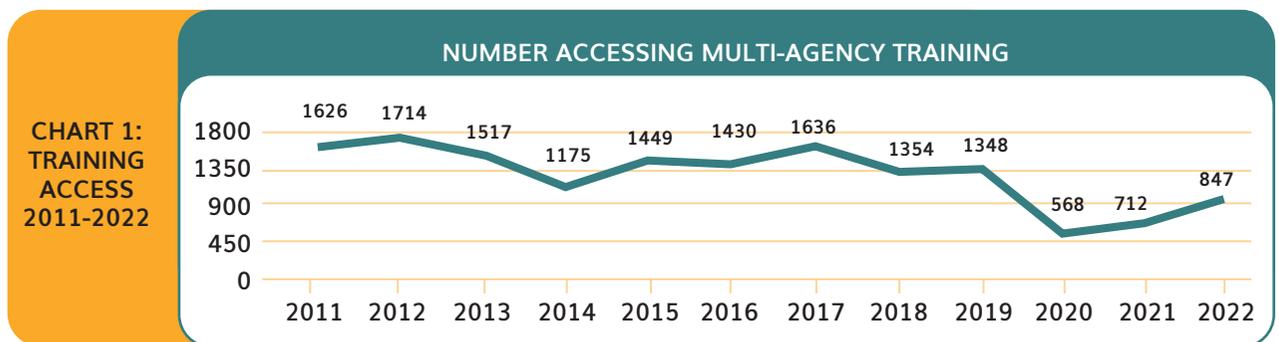
as part of the multi-agency training program before COVID19 lockdown. The training courses received very positive feedback, with 93% of attendees marking the training as good or excellent.

#### E-LEARNING COURSES

The STSCP provided access to a full range of e-learning courses this allows partners the ability to offer up-to-date safeguarding training to all staff through the unlimited licenses available for each course.

#### Courses include:

- Safeguarding Children and Young People from Abuse by Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic Abuse
- Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Collaborative Working: A Whole Family Approach



Note: Due to the impact of Covid no face to face training was delivered in this period.

### TRAINING IMPACT

Candidates were asked to list three ways that this training will influence your future practice?

#### Candidate 1

1. I know how to challenge now when I don't agree with something.
2. I know I am able to report a person in trust and where to go to do so.
3. To get the full picture when making referrals and involve as much information as possible not just simple descriptions i.e smelly, dirty include the scent and how the clothes are dirty and how long it has been happening for.

#### CANDIDATE 2

1. A reminder on the importance/ benefit/ significance of the Tees CP website for referrals and Toolkits.
2. Information around Annie in pharmacy; domestic abuse.
3. A reminder that bruises on a non-mobile baby is a pathway to CP.

#### CANDIDATE 3

1. Make me more confident discussing any concerns with other professionals.
2. Allow me to change my writing style so it doesn't "blame" the child.
3. Allow me to feel more professionally comfortable /knowledgeable on the subject.

#### CANDIDATE 4

1. Able to see signs of any harm within families more.
2. More aware of in-depth information sharing and why.
3. Able to understand when I need to step a case up or close a case more clearly now and the goal posts around this.

#### CANDIDATE 5

1. The web site that was given looks very useful.
2. The work that was sent out will help.
3. In general this training has given additional ideas when looking at the families I work with.

## 9. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

### COMMUNICATION - STSCP Events

#### EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE EVENT - 11 JUNE 2021

On Friday 11th June 2021, the STSCP held a virtual event in order to share the Cleveland Police Report entitled 'The Exploitation of Children in Cleveland' with our practitioners who work under the safeguarding agenda. The event was co-hosted by Detective Chief Inspector Shaun Page, chair of the Tees Strategic VEMT Group and Sarah Pritchard from Barnardo's.

#### The guest speaker for the event was:

Kendra Houseman, Founder / Director of Out of the Shadows is a specialist in Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation and will use a real life case study to bring to life the impact of The Exploitation of Children in Cleveland Report.

The STSCP had interest from **163** delegates. On the day, the session on Microsoft Teams recorded **127** attendees, plus facilitators which totalled **139** people, which was a great response.

- I admire you taking your experience to inspire other
- Totally inspiring Thank you for sharing your story. It will impact on my practice and I won't forget this!
- Thank you for using your journey in such a powerful and inspiring way. Your honesty and realness is so refreshing unafraid to say how it is!!!!!!
- Thank you for sharing your story Kendra. I'm a nurse for children in care and have seen so many vulnerabilities in the young people that I see that could be targeted. I'm trying to work in building up relationships with these young people but want to know what more i can do in the early stages or before this exploitation
- So powerful, thank you for sharing your story
- Wow, amazing so strong
- Thank you for using your journey in such a powerful and inspiring way. Your honest and realness is so refreshing and you are unafraid to say how it is!

#### ADOLESCENT NEGLECT EVENT - 15TH JUNE 2021

On Tuesday 15th June 2021, the STSCP are hosting a virtual event by Microsoft Teams in order to launch the new Adolescent Neglect Guidance for Practitioners document.

#### The event will be hosted by Edwina Harrison, the STSCP Independent Chair and guest speakers included:

- Jenny Molloy
- Emma Cowley & Victoria Banks
- Dr Rosemary Thwaites
- Siobhan Davies

The event was attended by **145** delegates.

#### Comments from delegates:

Humbling, emotional, inspirational, devastating, everything. I remember hearing you for the first time at the Frontline Summer Institute in 2019 after I'd read your books and feeling a big weight of how to be a good Social Worker. Now I've been qualified with Middlesbrough for 9 months and I think about your messages every day when I'm with children and teenagers, especially those who are living through similar circumstances like chronic neglect. Your words really guide my practice every day.

The term "professional love" that you said today really resonated with me - there are just some children who you have a lot of involvement with who you absolutely love in that way. Thank you a million times and much love! And good luck with your Masters.

Thank you for sharing your experiences, a very powerful way to help us keep focussed on the lived experience of children, so emotional but a great reminder that what we do does matter.  
Inspirational!

So powerful and emotional. Thank you for sharing your story. Have read your books and wonderful to hear some of your story for real. So inspirational and thought provoking.

## 9. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

### STSCP Development Session with a focus on Early Help – 20th September 2021

The South Tees Safeguarding Children's Partnership (STSCP) held the virtual event in order to engage with the partnership and share new work that was being developed by partnership with a main focus of Early Help. The event was hosted by the STSCP's Independent Chair and the following colleagues and partners:

#### The schedule of the day was as follows:

- STSCP Revised Arrangements 7 responses to the survey 1,2,3 – future plans Independent Chair
- Brief intro to Early Help and the Assessment of Needs and Risk – Demand across the South Tees - Director of Children's Care Middlesbrough; Assistant Director Children's Social Care and Early Help Redcar & Cleveland
- Early Help Services South Tees- Head of Prevention Middlesbrough Borough Council; Partnerships and Prevention Service Manager (Early Help) Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
- The Junction - Chief Executive The Junction
- South Tees YOS - Head of Partnerships and South Tees YOS
- SAFER Communities - Director of Operations Safer Communities

### A question and answer Session was set up chaired the STSCP Executive:

- Middlesbrough Borough Council - Executive Director of Children's Services
- Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council - Corporate Director of Children's Services
- Cleveland Police - Detective Superintendent, Head of Safeguarding Department

This virtual event was promoted by the STSCP newsletter and other STSCP communication outlets. The STSCP session had 68 delegates attending plus 15 speakers/ facilitators which totalled 83 people.

Following this event the STSCP team sent out an online survey using the platform 1,2,3 asking for feedback from this event. Overall of the responses were very positive about the event.



## 9. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

### **SAFEGUARDING THE UNBORN BABY EVENT - 28TH FEBRUARY 2022**

The South Tees Safeguarding Children's Partnership (STSCP) held the Safeguarding Vulnerable Babies virtual event in order to help colleagues and partners understand the various perspectives to consider when dealing with families.

The event was hosted by the STSCP's Independent Chair and Principal Social Worker from Middlesbrough Council and a representative from the MACH from Redcar & Cleveland Children's Services.

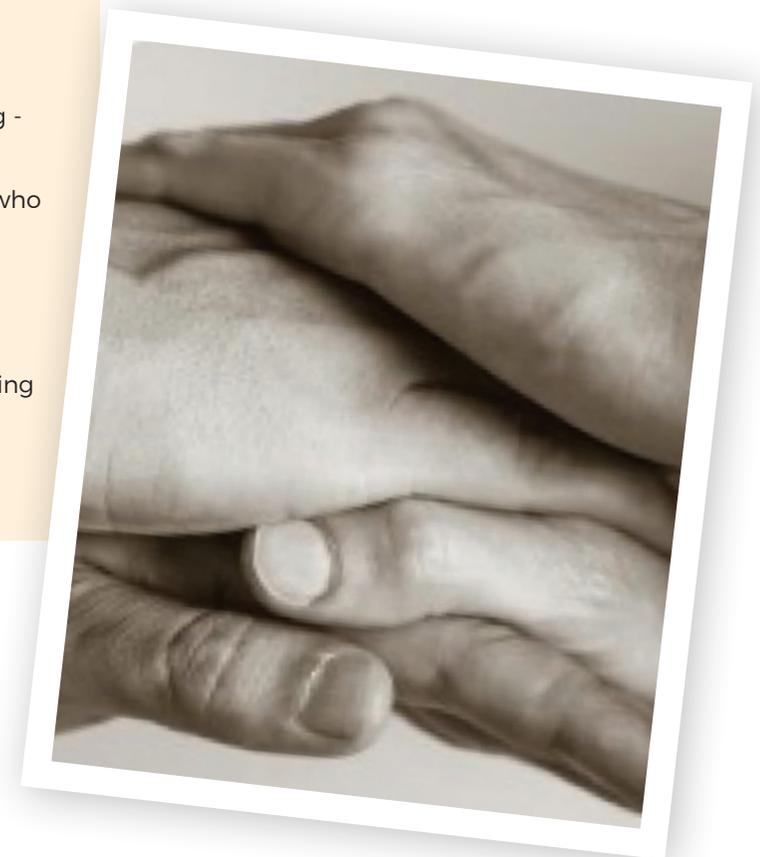
#### **The schedule for the day was as follows:**

- Concealed pregnancies
- Making a referral
- The role of Early Help before referral
- Adult issues affecting vulnerable babies
- Injuries to non-mobile babies
- 0-19 best start pathways and access to support for parents of vulnerable babies
- Hidden partners
- Working together, information sharing and being clear about the role of each agency
- Voice of the child
- Covid
- Learning from local safeguarding practice reviews

This virtual event on Microsoft Teams recorded 74 attendees, plus 12 facilitators which totalled **85** people.

#### **Feedback from the session was as follows:**

- So very informative
- Thanks great presentation
- Really great session. Thanks to everyone!
- Really useful, Thank you
- Thank you so much, this has been amazing - look forward to the information
- Really informative session thank you to all who facilitated
- Excellent presentations
- Really informative
- Thank you, Great. Looking forward to receiving the slides
- Very informative



## 9. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

### Section 11 Challenge Event

A face to face event was held with key partners to review their progress on the section 11 audit action plans. Report produced and presented to the STSCP.

### SCR Pippa Challenge Event

Virtual challenge event held with key organisations involved in the case on their progress with single agency action plans and how key changes have been progressed. Report produced and shared with key partners.

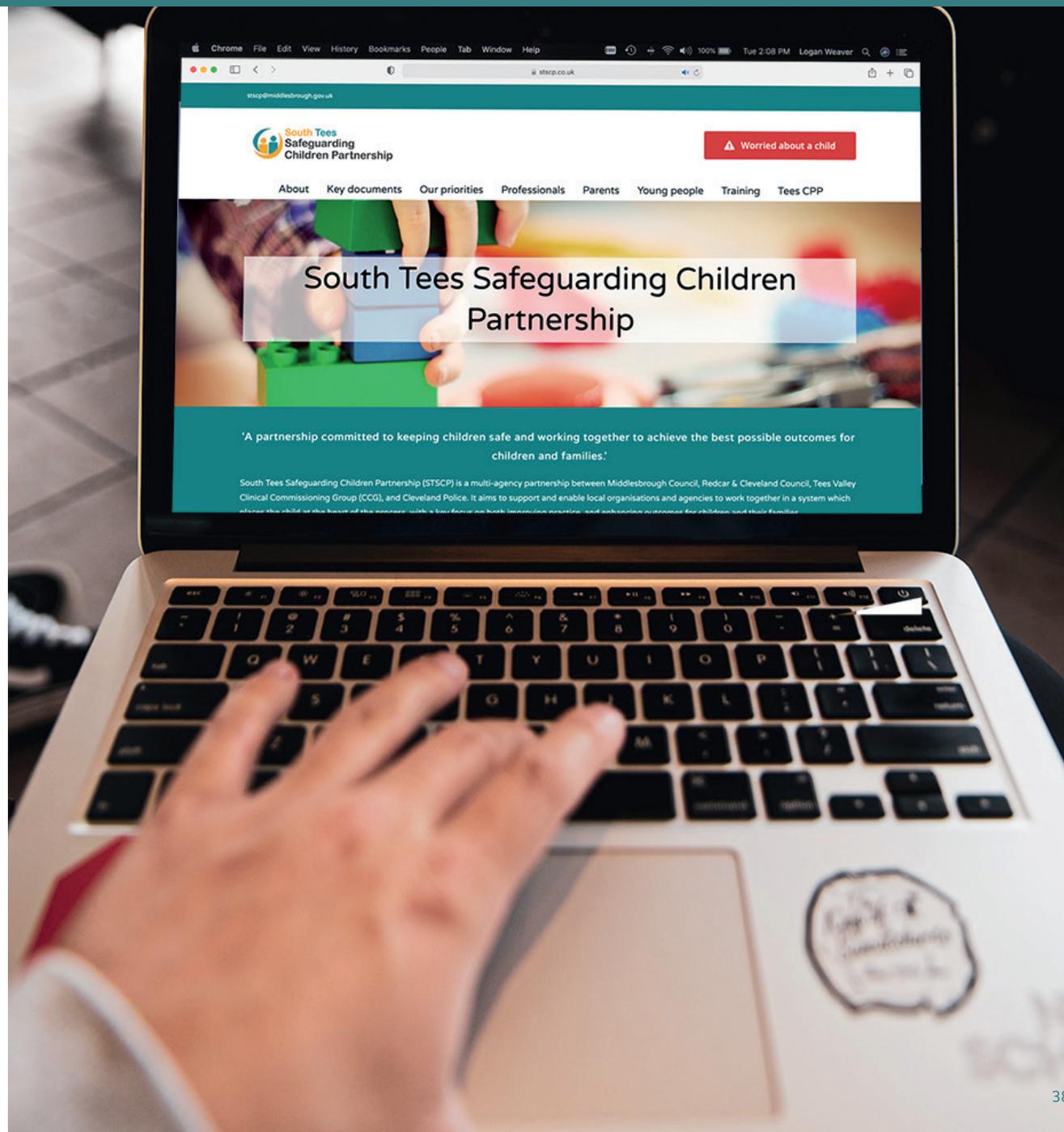
### STSCP Website Analytics

Page 53

In that time period, there have been **7,025** recorded hits on the website.

The top 10 pages during that time period were:

- Homepage
- STSCP eLearning
- Information for professionals
- Training (landing page)
- Key documents (landing page)
- CSPRs
- Report safeguarding concern
- About STSCP
- STSCP key documents
- Core level 3 training



# 10. PERFORMANCE MONITORING & QUALITY ASSURANCE

The STSCP continually monitors the quality, timeliness and effectiveness of multi-agency practice through the Tees Performance Management Framework.

Where gaps are identified, implications for the STSCP are considered and any agreed actions are monitored through the STSCP.

The STSCP Quality and Performance group (Q&P) have an agreed work program and are developing a performance scorecard. Performance and progress is reported at the Q&P group level and collated through the Q&P up to the STSCP to monitor and challenge.

## ONGOING QUALITY ASSURANCE

Page 54

- Monitor **partner compliance** with the statutory requirement to have effective safeguarding arrangements in place (Section 11)
- Carry out **multi-agency audits** and identify lessons to be learned and make recommendations for future improvement and feeding into STSCP training
- Multi-agency audit reports to inform the STSCP of the **quality of work** being undertaken and its impact on outcomes for individual children and young people
- Overview of findings and action plans from **multi-agency audits** to monitor and review practice
- The use of the STSCP **performance scorecard**

Serious Case Reviews/Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews are published on the STSCP website for a period of 12 months. At the time of writing there was two published Serious Case Reviews and three Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews on the website.

Outcomes and findings feed into our performance structures to promote a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the partner agencies of the STSCP.

The Tees Child Death Overview Panel share their key learning from child deaths. They monitor and challenge agencies for the completion of recommended identified actions and publish a separate CDOP annual report.

## MULTI-AGENCY AUDITS

The Section 11\* audit conducted in May 2020 took the form of a self-assessment format.

To free up resources to support the JTAI audits, the STSCP agreed to conduct Section 11 audits on a two-yearly cycle with the next Section 11 audit to be completed in 2022/23.

## Other multi-agency audits undertaken in 2021/2022

- JTAI Exploitation Audit
- CP Meeting Audit
- Child in Care Meeting Audit
- VPG Meeting Audit

\*Section 11 Audit is an audit of key partners safeguarding compliance in line with Working Together



# 11. KEY PRACTICE THEMES AND MESSAGES

## THE 'STUBBORN CHALLENGES' AND WHAT WE ARE DOING ABOUT THEM

### Recognising and Building on Good Practice

The STSCP have identified some key actions and themes for development through the CSPRs undertaken this year. For instance:

- The introduction of a quality assurance framework; although impact of COVID and capacity on audits has been an issue
- The development of a new framework/guidance to address adolescent neglect, we plan to revise the Neglect strategy with a view to a Tees approach, providing further training and guidance
- Agreed the adolescent neglect guidance
- The professional challenge and escalation guidance has been updated in response to learning from Case Reviews
- The Head Trauma in Infants procedural guidance has been reviewed and updated in response to learning from Stork Child Safeguarding Practice Review
- The Tees VEMT Strategy has been updated, bringing it in line with the latest agendas such as criminal exploitation and modern day slavery
- The STSCP has increased learning opportunities e.g. using virtual events and online briefings
- As a result of the CSPR learning the guidance on how to complete chronologies and ecograms for all agencies has been updated and provided
- The Learning & Development group led by the Principal Social Worker for Middlesbrough have reviewed the learning across all the recent Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and have presented the findings to the STSCP

- As a result of recurring themes in some reviews a challenge process is being developed to review historic reviews and how well the learning was embedded, this work will commence summer 2021
- We are also planning the establishment of a challenge process at the point at which CSPR action plans are signed off as being achieved. This will be a supportive process and will look at the impact on children and families and ensure that STSCP is compliant with Working Together 2018
- The use of the electronic Survey 123 to allow feedback and evaluation of training is planned for roll out in July 2021
- Barnardo's Tees Valley have created a video about how they will support children and young people who have been subject to exploitation
- Both MBC and RCBC LAs were challenged by Ofsted on the implementation of their shared threshold document (ILACS 2019) therefore in response we have reviewed the Threshold of Need "Providing the Right Support to Meet a Child's Needs" across Tees. Middlesbrough has now adopted an addendum to the Tees Threshold document in order to strengthen its improvement journey. Redcar & Cleveland are remaining with the Tees model as it meets their practice needs

# 12. RESPONDING TO THE NATIONAL AGENDA

## VULNERABILITY KNOWLEDGE & PRACTICE PROGRAMME'S SURVEY ON INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY

The project is a review regarding Independent Scrutiny. The work is led by Policing's Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme.

### What have we Done?

- We have circulated the documentation to the key partners
- Placed on the STSCP Exec agenda and
- Responded to the survey advised by the Independent Chair and are awaiting further instruction

## REFORM SAFEGUARDING: KANTAR PARTNERSHIPS REPORT

### What have we Done?

- We have circulated the documentation to the key partners
- Placed on the STSCP Exec agenda
- Once agreed the STSCP should/to consider report as part of a partnership development session

## KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE THIS WINTER: LETTER FROM INDRA MORRIS

### What have we Done?

- We have circulated the documentation to the key partners
- Placed on the STSCP Exec agenda and discussed by key partners
- The following was discussed by the STSCP

Replace all the text in that first bullet with the following:

The STSCP ensured that the subject of 'Keeping Children Safe In Winter' is high on the STSCP agenda and noted this as a challenge for the partnership. The STSCP confirmed that it is being recognised, however was concerned that not all professionals / agencies are aware of this issue. The STSCP agreed that a termly report is presented to the STSCP.

Peer on Peer Abuse - the Peer on Peer Sub Group has been introduced on the back of the work identified. There has been good quality SARC training on how to disclose with Police presenting scenarios. There has been the advocacy of the Brook tool but this is dependent upon schools / Trusts buying into it. If they do, it will provide consistency in decision-making.

The section 175 audit has been updated with a Peer on Peer abuse question.

## 12. RESPONDING TO THE NATIONAL AGENDA CONTINUED

### TRI MINISTERIAL LETTER TO SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS

#### What have we Done?

- We have circulated the documentation,
- Placed on the STSCP Exec agenda for information
- DCS to nominate lead from R&C
- The review commenced January 2022, the terms of reference are published here: Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

#### For Information

Contact with Mark Gurrey DfE, Local authority safeguarding facilitator appointment to the role of local authority safeguarding reform national facilitator. Mark will work alongside Lorraine Parker (police facilitator) and Helen Adams (health facilitator) to support the implementation of the safeguarding reforms in local areas.

#### What have we Done?

- We have circulated the above information to the key partners as part of the STSCP agenda
- Placed on the STSCP Exec agenda

### LETTER: RE CHILD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEW PANEL: REVIEW OF CASES AT FULLERTON HOUSE, WILSIC HALL AND WHEATLEY HOUSE SPECIALIST, INDEPENDENT RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

#### What have we Done?

- We have circulated the documentation to KB
- Placed on the STSCP Exec agenda for information
- KB to nominate lead from R&C
- The review commenced January 2022, the terms of reference are published here: Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

#### November 2022- Ofsted review into sexual abuse in schools and colleges by 26 November 2021.

All Safeguarding Partnerships were requested to complete the survey Ofsted review into sexual abuse in schools and colleges by 26 November 2021. Ofsted published its review into sexual abuse in schools and colleges on 10 June 2021. This was followed by a letter from Ministers at the Department for Education, Home Office and Department of Health and Social Care, that asked safeguarding partners to review their work to improve engagement with schools of all types in their local area, tailoring their approach to what their analysis indicates are the risks to children and young people in their local area. This survey aims to collect brief information on the progress of that request and invites safeguarding partners to one of three virtual events focusing on identifying and sharing promising or emerging practice and barriers you may have encountered.

## 12. RESPONDING TO THE NATIONAL AGENDA CONTINUED

### OUTCOME

The survey was completed jointly by the Middlesbrough education lead and the Redcar & Cleveland education lead on behalf of the STSCP and submitted by the partnership manager.

#### Q1 Have you now completed the review of your arrangements for working with all schools and colleges in your local area, as per the tri-ministerial letter of 29 July 2021? Y or N

Overall answer is **Yes**

#### Q2 How have you communicated/will communicate your plans with your relevant agencies or educational providers - (please list your top three items)

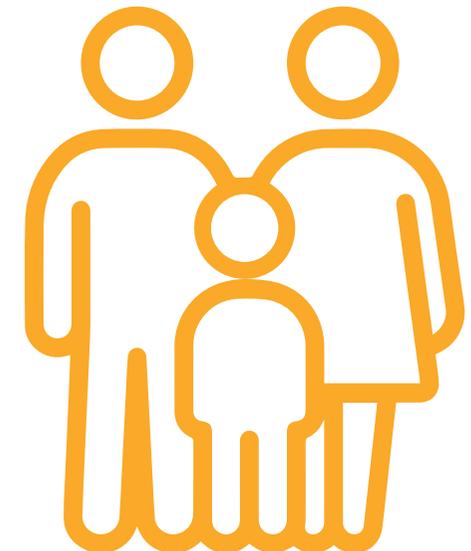
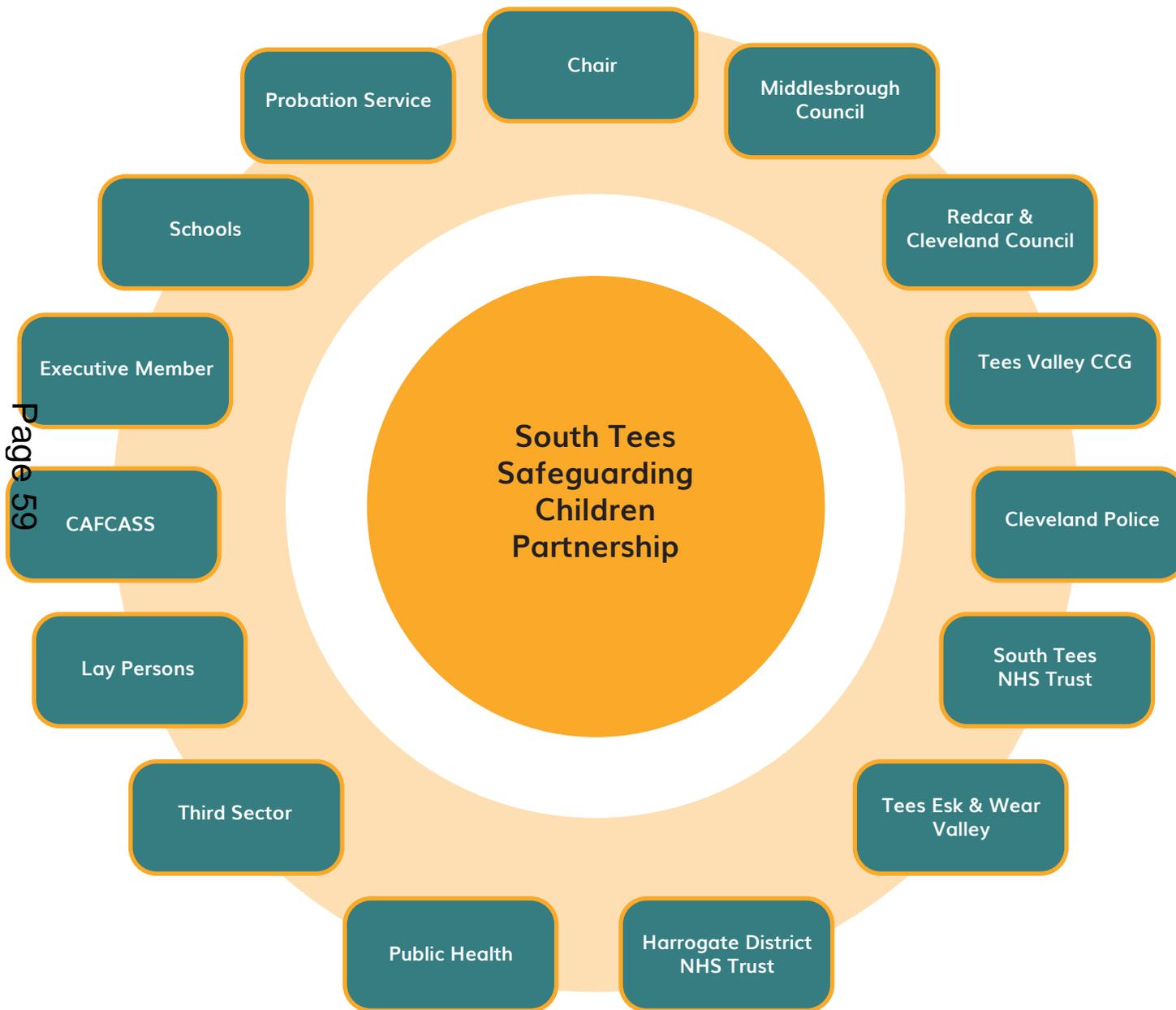
- A working party has been created through the Safeguarding in Education Networks which consists of DSL/DDSLs and other stakeholders who meet on a regular basis
- Training for this group and other school staff is being offered
- Updates from this group and the sharing of good practice will be disseminated to senior leaders via the Strategic Governance Structure
- The thematic review has been shared with all schools

#### Q3 What barriers have you identified?

- Initially safety planning in isolation can be challenging for schools until outcomes from social services or police are received and a core group meeting takes place - KCSiE - Schools and colleges should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school or college
- When staff record Incidents on CPOMS not just to record it under 'behaviour', however, to use the three categories that are highlighted in documentations which are, sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour, which will also mean if Ofsted were to visit they would have a better break down of figures of what behaviours are taking place within the school



# APPENDIX 1: STSCP EXECUTIVE MEMBERSHIP AND RELEVANT PARTNERS



# APPENDIX 2: STSCP PLAN 2020 - 2023

STSCP VISION: 'A partnership committed to working together to achieve the best possible outcomes for Children and Families.'

## WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES? (OBJECTIVES)

<p><b>VENT</b> The aim is for children/young people to be free from the risk and harm of exploitation, going missing or being trafficked</p>	<p><b>Neglect</b> The aim is to reduce neglect, reduce the impact of neglect and ensure help &amp; support is provided at the earliest opportunity</p>	<p><b>The Voice of the Child/Young Person</b> The aim is to create a clear focus on the needs and experience of young people</p>	<p><b>Working Together</b> The aim is to achieve excellent partnership working across all areas</p>
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## WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE? (KEY MEASURES)

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Track the number of children/young people subject to exploitation.</li> <li>2. Reduce the number of children/young people who go missing more than once.</li> <li>3. Increase the % of return interviews completed within agreed timescales.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduce the number of children who are the subject of a child protection plan for Neglect.</li> <li>2. Increase the % of outcomes achieved in a family plan.</li> <li>3. Reduce the % of Neglect cases which involve Domestic Abuse.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children/Young People feel confident to make contact with an appropriate adult if they have safeguarding concerns.</li> <li>2. Improved opportunities for Children/Young People 'Engagement' with Safeguarding issues.</li> <li>3. Increase the influence of the Voice of the Child in child protection processes.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partners provide quality referrals that are referred appropriately for timely focused intervention.</li> <li>2. Increase the number of initial Health Assessments submitted for LAC within timescales.</li> <li>3. Effective information sharing across the partnership.</li> </ol>
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## WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? (PLANNED INTERVENTIONS)

<p><b>Prepare</b> - Strengthen the identification and assessment of those at risk of all types of exploitation, missing, trafficking.</p> <p><b>Prevent exploitation</b> - Making it more difficult to exploit children and young people.</p> <p><b>Protect</b> children/young people from exploitation</p> <p><b>Pursue</b> perpetrators of exploitation – identifying, disrupting and prosecuting offenders</p>	<p><b>Understand Neglect</b> - Understanding the local picture of neglect, to raise awareness of neglect and the thresholds for intervention.</p> <p><b>Early Identification</b> - improve the recognition and assessment of neglect.</p> <p><b>Effective Provision</b> - Refine effective and successful interventions that reduce neglect before statutory intervention.</p> <p><b>Domestic Abuse</b> - Improve the recognition of the impact of domestic abuse leading to the Neglect of children and young people.</p>	<p><b>Voice of the Child</b> - That every child has a voice within the child protection process.</p> <p><b>Empower Young People</b> - That every young person can recognise abuse and feel confident to report concerns.</p> <p><b>Appropriate Support</b> - Ensure that services are child focused.</p> <p><b>Visibility</b> - Ensure that all staff obtain the child's story and that every child is seen.</p> <p><b>Peer Support</b> - Develop skills for young people to support other young people.</p>	<p><b>Thresholds</b> - Strengthen agreed shared thresholds across the partnership.</p> <p><b>Focused Intervention</b> - Be assured that children receiving support as a 'child in need' receive focused intervention in a time appropriate manner.</p> <p><b>Remove Barriers</b> - Understanding the lessons learned and improving outcomes. Improve Information sharing - Understanding the barriers in order to mitigate issues.</p> <p><b>Management Grip</b> - Be assured that there is robust management accountability in cases across the partnership.</p>
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### KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Understand the local issues in both Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland.

### PRACTICE STANDARDS

Identify and promote key guidance and toolkits while continuing to upskill practitioners.

### YOUNG PEOPLE

Young People's experience and voice are at the heart of services keeping young people safe.

### PRACTITIONERS

The voice and experience of practitioners is heard and barriers removed to assist with practice.

# APPENDIX 3: STSCP Budget

## BUDGET 2021/2022

The financial contributions from partner agencies are as follows:

Funding Agency	2021-2022
Middlesbrough Council	65,000
Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council	65,000
Cleveland Police	65,000
ST CCG	65,000
National Probation Service	1,158
ST YOT	6,300
	<b>267,458</b>

Page 61

The STSCP acknowledges, in addition to financial contributions, there is a significant amount of 'in kind' contributions that partners provide through the support they give to the work of the standing groups and leading on task and finish groups, other pieces of priority work and the delivery of training.



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