



**South Tees**  
**Safeguarding**  
**Children Partnership**



SOUTH TEES SAFEGUARDING  
CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (STSCP)

**2022/2023**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**



# CONTENTS

Foreword	
<b>1.</b> Introduction	<b>3</b>
<b>2.</b> Scrutineer View of Last Year	<b>5</b>
<b>3.</b> Evidence of Impact on 2020-2023 Priorities	<b>10</b>
<b>4.</b> Local Context	<b>16</b>
<b>5.</b> Local Safeguarding	<b>20</b>
<b>6.</b> How We Impact on our Priorities	<b>23</b>
<b>7.</b> Working with Partners	<b>27</b>
<b>8.</b> Learning & Development	<b>28</b>
<b>9.</b> Quality Assurance and Performance	<b>34</b>
<b>10.</b> Key Priority Themes	<b>36</b>
<b>11.</b> Response to the National Agenda	<b>37</b>
<b>Appendix 1:</b> Membership	<b>38</b>
<b>Appendix 2:</b> STSCP Plan on a Page	<b>39</b>
<b>Appendix 3:</b> Budget	<b>40</b>



# Foreword by the STSCP Chair Kathryn Boulton

**Yet another year on and as South Tees Children's Safeguarding Executive, we are pleased to share the progress made across our Partnership.**

This Annual Report covering the year 2022-2023 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 children and young people.

Effective joint working has continued and has been further strengthened, in this report the statutory partners set out critical areas of development to further improve the effectiveness of the statutory partnership arrangements including the need for a robust multi-agency quality assurance framework and using the learning from serious safeguarding incidents and auditing to make a difference to practice and service provision.

During this period the STSCP has completed 3 rapid reviews, initiated 2 Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and signed off a further CSPR from early 2022. The partnership also completed a number of multi-agency audits including the Section 11 audit of key partners.

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.

We are in a strong position to implement any revisions to national guidance as outlined in the consultation on Working Together 2023. Our current partnership arrangement reflects that which is proposed, as does our use of Independent Scrutiny which is separate to the role of Chair. Schools have been represented on the Executive at strategic level, and through events run in partnership with schools. The annual school safeguarding survey (Section 175) has a high rate of completion and the questions are adjusted annually to take into account local issues which have been identified.

On behalf of the four statutory safeguarding partners, I would like to again thank everyone involved across our Partnership for their work, dedication, care and passion over the last year and for 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.

During the past year we have reviewed our priorities, our vision and values and this is what we are working towards.



**Kathryn Boulton**  
Chair of the STSCP  
Executive Director of Children Services/Redcar & Cleveland Council

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





# 1. Introduction

**This report summarises and reflects on the work of the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership, this covers the third full financial year of operation by the STSCP. 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, North East, North Cumbria Integrated Care Board formerly 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 South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership 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.

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 32.7% (third highest of all LA – ADAC 2022) 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 early help, school places, early years 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 webpages. The area's Early Help Partnerships 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 Multi Agency Children's Hub (MACH) one for Middlesbrough and one for Redcar & Cleveland ensure that children's and family's needs are responded to appropriately. Data evidences that 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 STSCP Independent Scrutineer.

This year has seen a refocus on Exploitation, including a number of multi-agency development sessions supported by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner. In September 2022 the then 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. This strategic group is now known as the Tees Strategic Exploitation Group.

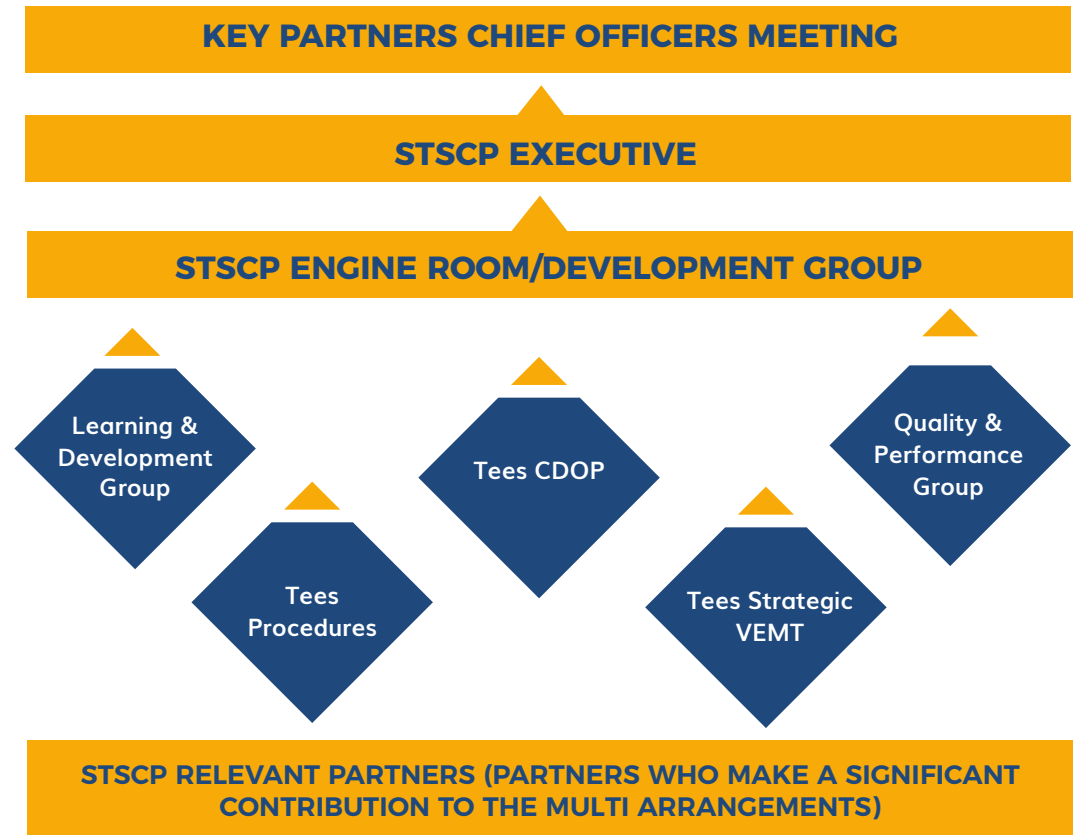


The understanding of neglect and the importance of prevention and early help has been increased, with training available to professionals and staff working across South Tees. The Tees Safeguarding Procedures website is recognised by the inspectorate as a reliable and useful source of information and 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.

As a result of the multi-agency Domestic Abuse audit the various domestic abuse assessment tools such as DASH have been promoted. 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.

## STSCP GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



### LINKS TO RELEVANT STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| R&C Children & Young Peoples Partnership (R & C) | Middlesbrough Children’s Trust            |
| Middlesbrough Corporate Parenting Boards         | R&C Corporate Parenting Boards            |
| Tees Strategic MARAC                             | Tees Strategic MAPP                       |
| South Tees Youth Justice Board                   | South Tees Health & Well Being Board      |
| Middlesbrough Community Safety Partnerships      | R&C Community Safety Partnerships         |
| Tees Safeguarding Adults Board                   | Middlesbrough Strategic Improvement Board |
| Middlesbrough Scrutiny Panel                     | R&C Scrutiny Panel                        |
| Middlesbrough DASP                               | R&C DASP                                  |

## 2. STSCP – Scrutineer view of Last Year

### SUMMARY OF 2022-23

**Each Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) is required to provide independent scrutiny although it is up to each area to decide with whatever is felt appropriate for the arrangements. In South Tees it has been agreed that independent scrutineers will be appointed with specific skills and experience for the area of focus. During 2022-23, I undertook the following independent scrutiny work and reported in to the STSCP Executive as requested.**

### Review of the 2022-2023 Annual report

#### What was the issue?

It is a requirement in Working Together 2018 that there is Independent Scrutiny of the LSCP Annual Report.

#### What was the role of independent scrutiny

I read the report, agreed that it was an accurate representation of the arrangements for multi-agency safeguarding work and made a number of recommendations during the process.

#### Impact

One of the recommendations was that children should be more involved.

There has been progress in obtaining the views of children so that they can inform the work of STSCP. In September 2022, an event for schools highlighted that for some children violence has become normalised, particularly for children

who are being exploited. This performance also focussed on the routine carrying of knives.

As a result, the importance of the relationship between the STSCP Executive members and the Violence Reduction Unit (the Curve) and the Youth Justice Board was recognised and strengthened.

### Review of the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) arrangements

#### What was the issue?

The incoming Chair of the meeting in 2022 queried whether the VEMT arrangements were fulfilling their objectives in identifying and protecting children across the key agencies as well as disrupting perpetrators. The specific focus of this piece of work was the effectiveness of the Strategic VEMT meeting rather than the local arrangements for identification and protection.

#### What was the role of independent scrutiny?

Working with the Chair of the VEMT and the STSCP Business Unit I provided challenge and scrutiny of the current arrangements through a workshop which was attended by representatives of agencies across the Tees. The session appeared to go well, with thoughtful contributions and a critical but positive approach to the proposals.

This meeting is intended to provide a process for strategic oversight across the Tees, with links to

the process for the identification of individual children and what action is being taken to protect them and to disrupt criminals.

A number of recommendations arose from the workshop.

#### Impact

Since then the report from the Tees Exploitation Group (formerly the VEMT) has been on each agenda of the STSCP Executive, which enables action to be taken if issues are highlighted. As part of a review into two cases of exploitation, the NSPCC has been commissioned to work with a group of children who are being exploited or are on the edge of exploitation to obtain their views. Since the development session in September 2022 there has been a further change of Chair.

Recognising that exploitation continues to be a significant issue, a review of the arrangements for identifying and protecting individual children in each area will take place in autumn 2023. This will be done jointly between HSSCP and STSCP.

### Workshop on the West Lane review

#### What was the issue?

This review is of national interest and local relevance as it concerned the suicides of three young women in the Tier 4 provision (now Acklam Road) One of the young women was from Middlesbrough.



## 2. STSCP – Scrutineer view of Last Year



### What was the role of Independent Scrutiny?

The purpose of the workshop was to consider the findings of the review, and to ensure that all Executive members had identified any issues for their agency if appropriate.

Representatives from the three key partners (the two local authorities, Cleveland Police and the Integrated Care Board) attended the meeting and took part in the discussion. It was agreed to identify the relevant points from all three reports and to construct an action plan which would be monitored throughout the year by the Learning and Development group. It was also agreed to make contact with the safeguarding partners in the other area so that they were aware of the work taking place in South Tees.

My role was to offer constructive challenge, and to ensure that there was a process in place for monitoring the agreed action to reduce the potential for a recurrence.

### Impact

An action plan was constructed which includes the recommendations from the three reports. This is being monitored by the Learning and Development group.

As a result of this event it was agreed to invite representatives of TEVW and CNTW to participate in the Section 11 event in February. The invitation was accepted and both agencies participated and are now part of the STSCP sub groups.

### Development sessions for the STSCP Exec (October 2022 and February 2023)

These sessions provided an opportunity to review the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and to critically examine whether they are having the desired impact. They also provide the opportunities to re-examine the priorities and to look at whether they are the right ones, or whether they need to be changed.

### What was the role of Independent scrutiny?

Apart from my usual role as “critical friend”, I provided external national context from recently published reports to assist with developing a learning culture.

### What was the impact?

It was agreed to make some minor amendments to the priorities, and that there needed to be a further focus on the performance framework as it had not been reviewed for some time.

### TEES WIDE SECTION 11 (Challenge event 8th and 9th Feb 2023)

### What was the issue?

Section 11(2004 Children Act as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) is a statutory requirement which reminds agencies that “safeguarding is everyone’s business”. The process across the Tees is that a comprehensive self-assessment document is completed by the key partners. HSSCP and STSCP agreed to set up an



## 2. STSCP – Scrutineer view of Last Year

event in person to give them the opportunity to provide evidence of their self-assessment.

### What was the role of independent scrutiny?

The Independent Chair/Scrutineer of HSSCP and I chaired the event and provided constructive challenge.

Two issues were of particular significance. The first was the ongoing impact of austerity, both in terms of resources and on the ability of families to cope, thus affecting demand. The second was the difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff across the multi-agency workforce and the challenge of maintaining services with temporary and agency teams.

### Impact

The self-assessment and scoring was considered generally accurate. We felt that these key agencies understood their own strengths and areas of development. Where there were elements which were not as accurate, we asked for an action plan, and these plans will be reviewed in July 2023.

### Chief Officers meetings (August 2022 and Feb 2023)

#### What was the issue

Responsibility for the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements lies with the Chief Executives of the Local Authority, the Chief Constable and the Chief Operating Officer of the CCG (now the ICB).

### What is the role of independent scrutiny?

My role in these meetings is to provide an independent view of the arrangements to the Chief Executives and Chief Officers. This is in addition to that which is provided by the senior leaders who are managing the services.

On both occasions, I provided presentations which highlighted areas of good practice and of challenge. The meetings were chaired by the Chief Executive of Redcar and Cleveland. They were attended by senior level representatives and the Lead member for Children for Redcar and Cleveland.

### Impact

The meeting ensures that the agencies are fulfilling their statutory role and that at senior level there is an understanding of the impact of the local safeguarding arrangements.

I understand that although the Legal Agreement has been in place since 2019 the updated version has not yet been signed by representatives of the key partners. This issue will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

### Review of the CDOP Annual report

#### What was the issue?

As I had reviewed the STSCP Annual Report, I was also asked to review the Child Death Overview Panel report.

### What was the role of independent scrutiny?

In my report to the Exec following my review of the CDOP Annual report I made this recommendation

‘STSCP Executive to establish a mechanism for obtaining assurance that any action which is identified by the CDOP which could reduce the risks of further deaths is implemented, either by individual agencies or by the relevant partnership board.’

### Impact

Since then the Chair of the CDOP has become a member of the STSCP Executive, which has increased the understanding of issues at area level. The CDOP Coordinator has joined the Learning & Development group. This has increased the focus on the learning between the two boards on individual cases.

### Broader partnership working

#### What is the issue?

Whilst the child safeguarding partnership arrangements cover the south (STSCP) and north (HSSCP) of the area, other significant partnerships work to different geographical boundaries. This can lead to differences in understanding of accountability. One example is domestic abuse, which is an issue for both adult and child safeguarding.

## 2. STSCP – Scrutineer view of Last Year

### What is the role for independent scrutiny?

During the year there have been meetings between the Independent Chair of the TSAB to improve joint working on domestic abuse, exploitation and transition to adulthood.

A strong working relationship has been developed with the Independent Chair/Scrutineer of HSSCP to develop opportunities for shared learning and to reduce the potential for duplication.

### Impact

A working protocol has been developed which will go to the STSCP and HSSCP Executives for approval.

### Learning which has been implemented

As you can read in the report, in 2020/2022 STSCP commissioned a number of reports in response to serious incidents. Previously, at the conclusion of the report each agency was asked to complete an action plan and expected to undertake the action. In 2021 a different model was introduced as a pilot in two cases. This model places more emphasis on demonstrating that the actions have taken place and that the desired impact on children and families has been understood. Each agency presents the information to a panel of peers, and the session is chaired by an independent scrutineer.

In 2022-23 this model has continued to be used and continues to be well received by the practitioners and managers who have attended the events.

In March 2022 it was agreed to separate the role of Chair and Scrutineer and the Director of Redcar and Cleveland took on the role of Chair of STSCP. Kathryn has provided leadership and stability throughout the period. In the consultation on Working Together 2023 this model, where Independent Scrutiny is separate from the role of Chair is recommended and it has been agreed that this model will be retained with each key statutory partner taking the role in turn for an agreed period of time.

Ensuring that appropriate training and development is provided for the multi-agency workforce is one of the main roles for any safeguarding partnership. STSCP and HSSCP have been providing access to training opportunities separately, whilst working together on specific events. It has been recognised that as some key agencies (eg Cleveland Police and the ICB) work across the Tees it could be more effective to develop a joint programme.

This has not been a straightforward process as both areas have good reasons for their current training offer. The Independent Chair/Scrutineer for HSSCP and I have worked closely together to provide the constructive challenge and to maintain a focus on providing a workable solution. Throughout the process it has been noticeable that despite the complexities of the situation the meetings have taken place in an atmosphere of professionalism and commitment to a high quality training offer.

These meetings have been part of the continued intention to ensure that the two children's

safeguarding partnerships are as aligned as possible, whilst retaining the focus on any specific local issues.

### Ongoing challenges

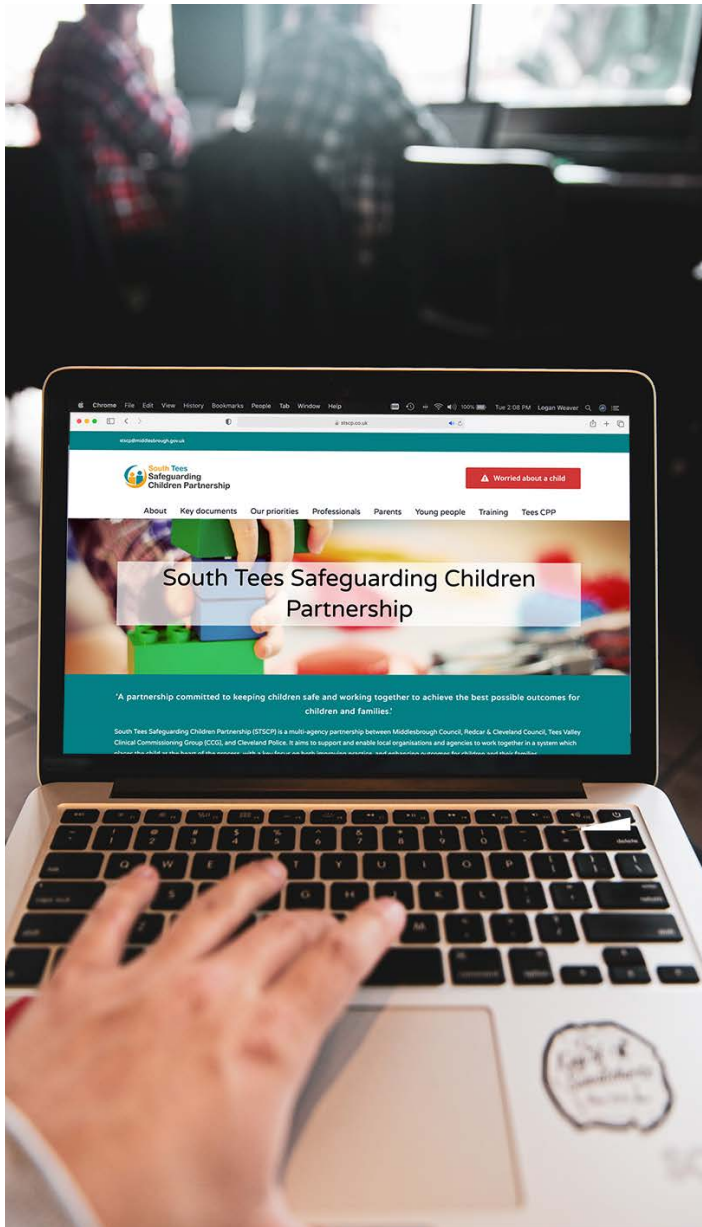
The Section 11 event identified that managing the level of vacancies is a significant challenge for all safeguarding partners. Although each agency is working on the issue, it is unlikely that there will be a resolution in the near future so there will have to be processes in place to continue to manage the risks which are inherent in the situation.

During this year there have been changes at senior level within the key partners as a result of organisational and individual changes. Inevitably, it takes time for those who are new to the area to understand the complexities of the partnership infrastructure and where STSCP fits in.

The role of the Designated Nurse Safeguarding is a crucial role within the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. In the Tees Valley there have been interim arrangements since the new arrangements in 2020. Recruitment for substantive post holder is underway. The Director of Nursing from the ICB will provide updates to the partnership. The representative of the ICB on the STSCP Exec has been asked to provide regular updates on the recruitment and assurance that arrangements are in place in the meantime.

**Edwina Harrison**  
Independent Scrutineer, July 2023

## 2. STSCP – Scrutineer view of Last Year



### James Parkes Annual Independent Scrutiny report 2023

During the period of focus for this report I have had the opportunity to provide Independent Scrutiny for the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP) with regards to their Data and Performance Information. I undertook a desktop analysis of the STSCP Scorecard and Performance Management Framework and conducted interviews with members of the STSCP to assist with the formulation of my review and recommendations to strengthen this area of work. This was then shared with the STSCP Executive for their consideration for implementation.

The main conclusion from this review was that there is a high percentage of data and performance information available to the STSCP Quality and Performance Subgroup, however the STSCP need to identify the priorities and determine the indicators that most demonstrate progress against these to ensure robust oversight and accountability can be achieved at both Subgroup and Executive levels. Recommendations included the need to allocate adequate time to have full and engaging discussions, the need to provide appropriate decision making within the STSCP, and the need to scope the viability of creating additional resource within the STSCP Business Unit to support the data and performance work.

Through my involvement with the STSCP I have witnessed their strong commitment to drive

service improvement that ensures children are safeguarded appropriately. Throughout the course of my work I have seen an openness, honesty and passion across all multi-agency safeguarding partners who have informed the work I have undertaken. I look forward to seeing how the STSCP strengthen their Data and Performance workstream over the coming months.





# 3. Impact on Strategic Priorities

## **PRIORITY 1: Exploitation formerly 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.**

The TSEG (Tees Strategic Exploitation Group) takes a strategic overview of this key area of work and directs the implementation of complementary strategies across the local operational groups.

### **What has been done?**

- The Tees Exploitation Annual Report was presented to the STSCP in January 2023 highlighting the progress with the multi-agency action plan and redeveloping the exploitation 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;

- Tees-wide Child Exploitation toolkit has been developed and can be downloaded from Tees Child Protection Procedures - <http://www.teescpp.org.uk/>;
- There have 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 Exploitation Transitions task and finish group have developed a pathway for transition to adult services;
- Tees Exploitation Training task and finish group have completed a training analysis and have developed an exploitation training framework;
- Tees Communications task and finish group is planning a campaign to raise the profile of exploitation;

- Tees Vulnerable Adult Exploitation task and finish group is planning to raise the profile of vulnerable adults in the work of the Tees strategic group;
- CSE virtual training has been held with the attendance of 62 people from a wide range of agencies, whilst 504 professionals completed e-learning courses across the Tees.

### **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 Exploitation Strategic Group continues to review processes and understanding of exploitation issues across the Tees region. There has been a review and update of the Tees Exploitation Strategy and action plan.

### **Next Steps**

- Embed and strengthen the understanding and impact of Exploitation across Tees. An Independent Tees observational audit of MACE/VPG is planned October 2023;
- Continue to promote the Tees Exploitation Strategy;
- Continue to raise the profile of and promote the understanding of child exploitation.

### 3. Impact on Strategic Priorities

#### 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 produced and rolled out across the Tees footprint in 2022; the aim is to reduce the number of children who are subject to neglect and therefore improve their life chances;
- 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;
- The STSCP have helped to embed and strengthen the understanding of Neglect including Adolescent Neglect since the launch of the Adolescent Neglect Framework in June 2021;
- Fully support the review of how key partners are dealing with Neglect;
- Tees Procedures Group have developed a Dental Access Referral Pathway which was uploaded to the website in Jan 2023.

#### Children Services in Redcar & Cleveland:

- Are supporting the workforce to use skills and tools to develop relationships with families;
- All frontline 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 the model of practice and training is delivered throughout the year- this is now in its 5th year;
- In Summer of 2022 Trauma Informed Practice training was rolled out to the workforce on a 2 year programme;
- A programme of training on Strengthening Family Relationships has been delivered this year;
- Increased focus on Family Networks (including Training) in Redcar and Cleveland.

#### Children Services in Middlesbrough:

- 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;
- 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;
- The 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;
- Have refreshed our Threshold Document, which is available on the STSCP website.



### 3. Impact on Strategic Priorities

#### A recent thematic review of two cases 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 II, 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 multi-agency 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;

#### Impact

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

Recently published CSPR Kingfisher identified the "the risk and impact of drug using parents" and is 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 and continue to promote the Framework for Neglect and the Adolescent Neglect Framework which were launched in 2021;
- Fully support the development of how key partners are dealing with Neglect;
- Promote the use of the Tees Neglect Framework;
- Set up a STSCP Neglect subgroup and develop a STSCP Neglect Strategy and implementation plan.





### 3. Impact on Strategic Priorities

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

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

Last year we recognised that we needed to do more to understand the lived experience of children in our area. The aim is to create a clear focus on the needs and experience of young people.

#### **What has been done?**

- When child/young people go missing from home, 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;
- A Voice of the Child section is now included in all multi-agency audits and findings fed back to the STSCP and partner agencies and their agencies;
- Philomena Protocol continues to be embedded, which includes collecting the views of young people in care;
- Tees Procedures have developed Child's Voice & Lived Experience Toolkits: Jan-23 uploaded to the Tees Procedures website January 2023.

#### **We have also looked at what a recent young peoples' survey tells us about safeguarding online:**

- 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.

Smartphone accounts for 72% of internet access for all age groups 5 - 15, smartphones also account for a massive 94% of internet access in the 12 - 15 age group with 41% using a games console. According to the same report, around 60% of 8 - 11 year olds

have an active social media profile with that rising to 89% of 12-15 year olds with the average 12-15 year old spending 20 hours per week online.

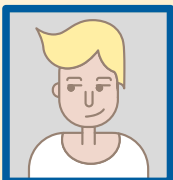
#### **We identified that our young people wanted to access the Internet for a whole host of reasons,**

- Socialising 91%;
- Entertainment (You Tube) 74%;
- Gaming 57%;
- TV on demand (Netflix/BBC I player etc) 49%;
- Employment, Education and Training opportunities (CV writing, careers search) 43%;
- Other (Research, shopping and just general browsing) 20%.

It is apparent from the data that young people primarily used the internet for social media and communication as their main activity. Snapchat was by far the most popular social media app used by our young people with Instagram and TikTok also proving very popular. Facebook was also popular but seemed to have a declining popularity among young people.

### 3. Impact on Strategic Priorities

**CASE STUDY:** Katie is a 17 year old female, currently in private residential home.



**EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING:** Currently attends college studying Catering, Mathematics and English functional skills with aspirations to work in the restaurant industry.

**HOBBIES AND INTEREST:** Katie like to keep herself busy and enjoys the outdoors and being around dogs and animals. Katie enjoys social activities with staff and peers, going to places like jump 360 and bowling and enjoys being around children.

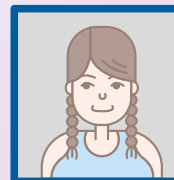
**DEVICES:** Katie owns a smartphone, a tablet, a laptop computer and a PlayStation. Katie's screen time is around 6 hours per day with an additional 2 hours split between her other devices, occasionally plays games titles such as Sims 4, Grand Theft Auto v and fortnight. Katie mainly uses her 4G data plan to access her social media on her smartphone.

**APPS:** Katie enjoys using Tiktok, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp and Facebook, mainly using these apps to stay in touch with family and friends, and see what they are up to.

**ONLINE ACCESS AND EDUCATION:** Katie enjoys watching YouTube my favourite channel is Daddies Girl they do family vlogs and challenges where they have to stay in a room for 24 hours or last to leave, they just joke around. Katie also likes to watch Netflix on the houses account, she explains it has a restriction pin but the home shares it with us when they think we are responsible enough. She has had lot of education on online safety from staff covering risks such as Sexual exploitation, Cyberbullying, Keeping safe such as not sharing person information or location and discussions and guidance around not sending nude photos and has signed an acceptable use agreement to access the internet and fully understood what the expectations were when signing this.

**ONLINE RISKS:** Katie while she hasn't been exposed to risks herself directly, she thinks "social media accounts should be made more secure on apps for everyone" as default because "a lot of young people use them" and "it can be dangerous for people who don't know how to use them safely".

**CASE STUDY:** Dahna is a 13 year old female, she is currently living in a private residential home.



**EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING:** Dahna currently attends a local school in year 8 and has determined aspirations to join the armed forces.

**HOBBIES AND INTEREST:** Dahna enjoys art and drawing and gaming on her console as her main activities and interests, although she explains she doesn't chat to others across online games and also doesn't chat VOIP, (voice chat headsets) due to her particular console not being usually enabled for voice chat.

**DEVICES:** Dahna has not been allowed to have any devices due to her age and the policy for her current home. Currently she just uses her Nintendo Switch using it for internet and gaming both for around 6 hours per day, she manages quite well with using her Switch as a tablet. She explains that during lockdown she did not have a device to go online.

**APPS:** Dahna enjoys watching You Tube as her main form of on demand entertainment, her favourite you tuber is Mr. Beast.

**ONLINE ACCESS AND EDUCATION:** Dahna rated her internet connection in her residential home as extremely poor, stating "there's no point in having it". Dahna explains that staff have discussed online safety issues with her and that she "probably" signed an acceptable use agreement but didn't pay much attention to the content and she didn't understand why she had to sign something anyway. Dahna felt very confident about her online safety, adding that "I'm not 3, I know how to" (sic - keep myself safe)

**ONLINE RISKS:** Dahna had not experienced any adversity in online spaces.

### 3. Impact on Strategic Priorities

#### What does this mean for STSCP?

We need to look at how we communicate with children to get the safeguarding messages out to them. Our website is well used but it isn't child or family focussed, it is for professionals. When we want to get in touch we still tend to write letters as we always have done, this probably isn't the best way.

#### Impact

As a result of the multi-agency audit's the voice of the child/young person is collected routinely, for example 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 for them to take action on. Services are reportedly all actively collecting the Voice of the Child we need to engage and co-ordinate this better.

#### 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.

#### 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 "A Framework for Need" was reviewed in 2022 to reflect the new Partnership arrangements. Due to the findings in the Middlesbrough inspection in 2020 and the improvement journey, Middlesbrough agreed to stay with an addendum document;
- The eLearning training programme has seen a substantial uptake from professionals working within children's and adult safeguarding;
- The STSCP continues to oversee the progress 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 and a report has been produced;
- The review of CDOP arrangements has been completed and the chair of CDOP now sits on the STSCP executive;

- 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. This can be seen by the level of compliance with the action plans and shared learning.

#### 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).

#### Next Steps

- Embed and strengthen the application of 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;
- Monitor the use of thresholds in referrals and the use of the Philomena protocol.



## 4. Local Context



### MIDDLESBROUGH

- **Total Population of the town - 143,900 - ONS Census 2021**
- **Number of Households - 60,300 - ONS Census 2021**
- **Size of the town in square miles - 21 Square miles**
- **Number of Children under 18 - 33,499 - Mid Year population estimates 2021**
- **% in poverty - 32.7% of children living in poverty the 3rd highest of all local authorities - IDACI 2022**
- **% of schools judged to be good - 91% (of which 7% were outstanding)**

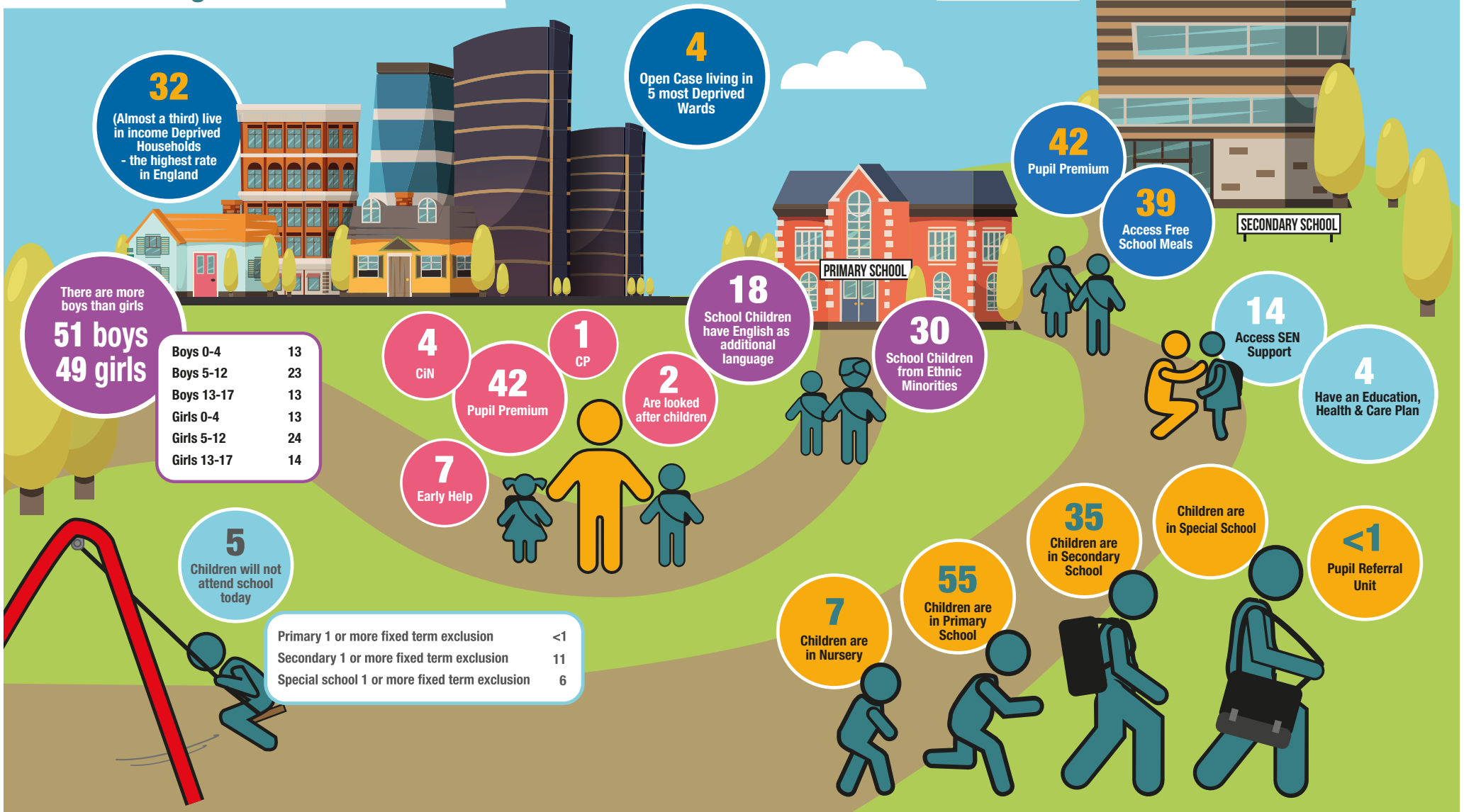
#### Contextual characteristics of Middlesbrough:

There are **55** schools in Middlesbrough, **8** secondary schools, **41** primary schools, **1** AP academy and **5** special schools. With **91%** of Middlesbrough schools judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted. The number of children who are home educated is **140** 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.

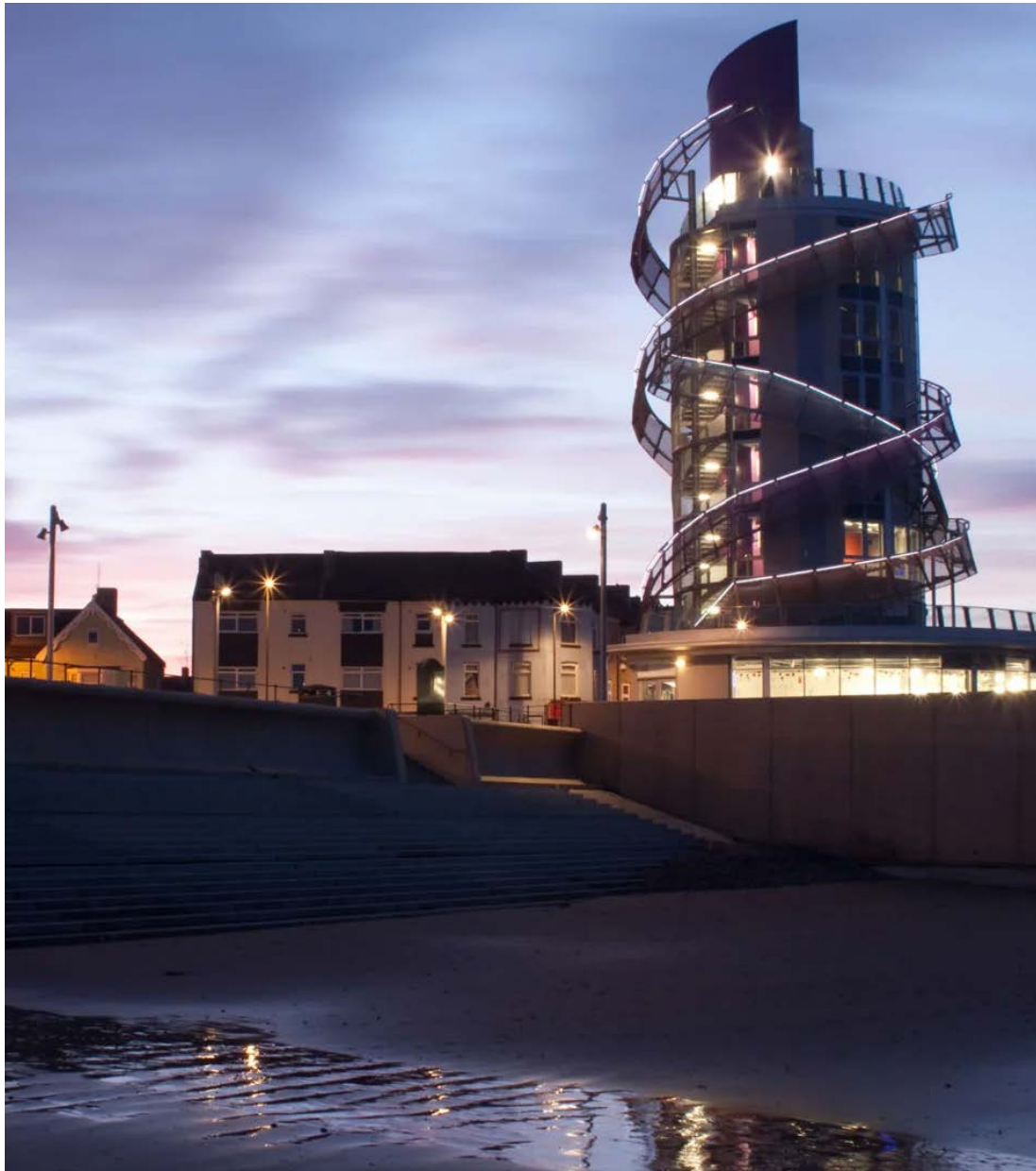
Based on the 2022 January School census **19.5%** of the school population were SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), this includes both EHCP & SEN Support. The number of children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans or Statements of SEN in Middlesbrough is **1370** (**50** nursery, **434** primary age children, **494** secondary, **392** post 16). This figure that had an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) was 5.4% and 14.1% have SEN support.

#### 4. Local Context - Middlesbrough

### If Middlesbrough were a village of 100 children



## 4. Local Context - Redcar & Cleveland



## REDCAR & CLEVELAND

- **Total Population of the town 136,500 - Census 2021**
- **Number of Households - 61,600 - Census 2021**
- **Size of the town in square miles - 94.5 square miles**
- **Number of Children under 18 - 28,992**
- **% in poverty - 25.6% - IDACI 2022**
- **% of schools judged to be good - 89.95% outstanding or better**

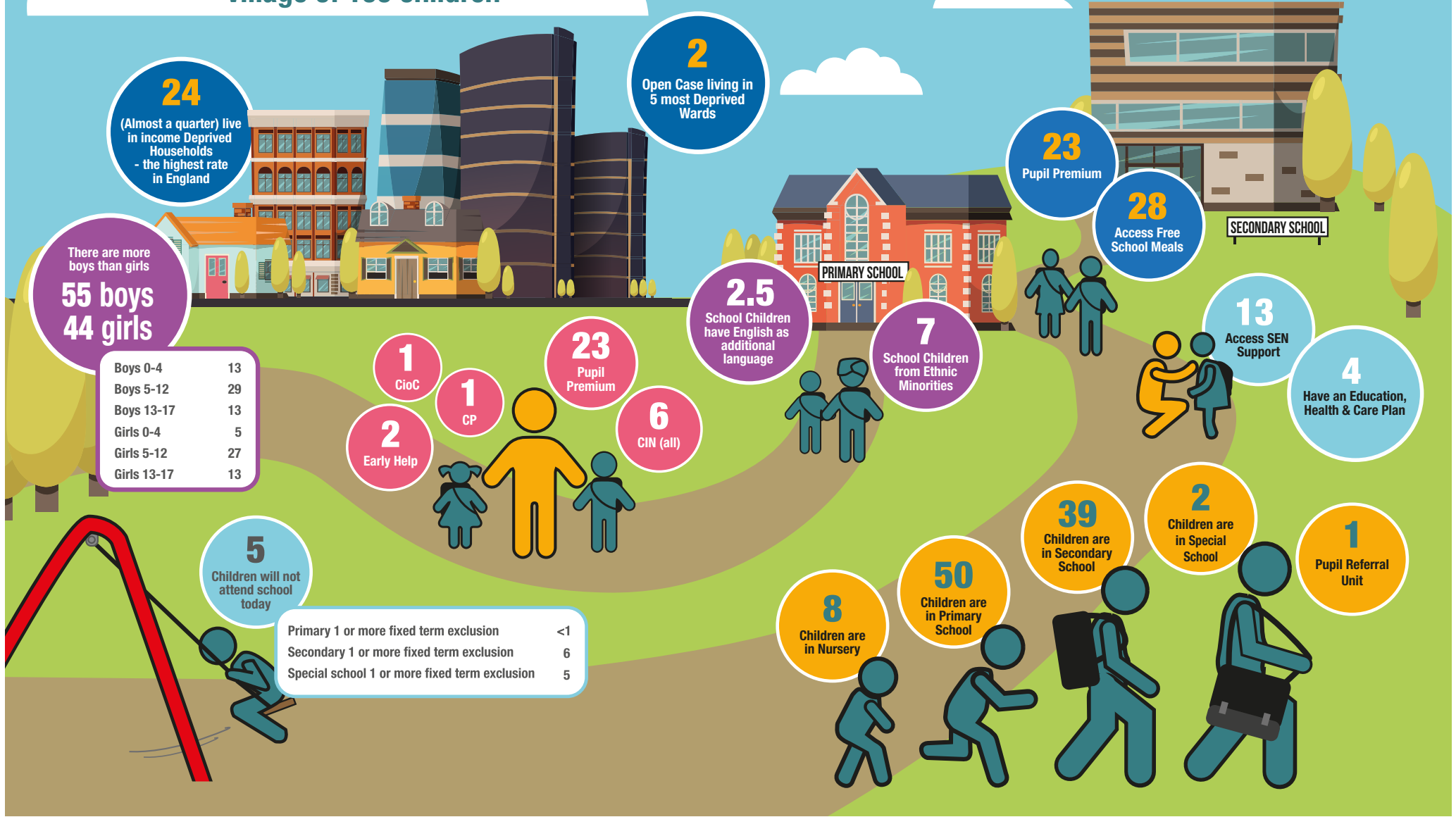
### Contextual characteristics of Redcar & Cleveland

There are **58** schools in Redcar & Cleveland, **10** secondary schools, **44** primary schools, 1 AP academy and **3** special schools. With **61.3%** of Redcar & Cleveland schools judged to be good and an additional **18.5%** outstanding by Ofsted. The number of children who are home educated is **367** 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 2023 Spring School census, **19.7%** of the school population were SEND (Special Education Needs & Disabilities). The number of children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) or Statements of SEND in Redcar & Cleveland is **1765** (**520** primary age children, **660** secondary, **585** post 16). The figure that had an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) was **4.4%** and **14.33%** have SEND support.

#### 4. Local Context - Redcar & Cleveland

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





## 5. Local Safeguarding Context Across South Tees

**Both Middlesbrough Local Authority and Cleveland Police have shown improvements after 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 2022 was 32.7% of children living in income deprived households, the 3rd highest in England;

The Redcar & Cleveland IDACI score for 2022 was 22.8% of children living in income deprived households, 18th (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 latest DfE Children In Need census shows Middlesbrough has the highest level of need for social care in the country and Redcar & Cleveland are ranked 5th;
- 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.



## 5. Local Safeguarding Context Across South Tees

### Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Data April 2022 – March 2023

<b>MIDDLESBROUGH</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>% CHANGE</b>
Referrals for the year	4,436	4,612	4,231	Down 8%
Re-referrals within the previous 12 months	32.4%	37.9%	37.6%	Static
Children in Need in Middlesbrough	1,700	1,369	1,067	Down 22%
Children subject to a Child Protection Plan	570	416	470	Up 13%
% subject of a Child Protection Plan due to neglect	46%	50%	57.6%	Up 7.6% pts
Children in the care of the Local Authority	571	507	505	Down 0.4%
Children in Private Fostering arrangements	6	8	0	Down 100%
Reported missing from home more than once	65	74	108	Up 46%
Young people discussed at Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked practitioner group	106	159	252	Up 58%
Rapid Reviews were completed in this period	4	1	1	Static
Referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer	128	141	106	Down 24.8%

<b>REDCAR &amp; CLEVELAND</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>% CHANGE</b>
Referral's for the year	1878	1802	1,824	Up 1%
% were re-referrals within the previous 12 months	20.1%	18.5%	18.06%	Static
Children in Need in Redcar & Cleveland.	1,691	1,694	1,588	Down 6%
Children subject to a Child Protection Plan	261	252	225	Down 11%
% subject of a Child Protection Plan due to neglect	86%	69%	76.9%	Up 8%
Children in the care of the Local Authority	316	337	402	Up 19%
children in Private Fostering arrangements	9	12	2	Down 83%
Reported missing from home more than once.	68	103	109	Up 6%
Young people discussed at Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked practitioner group	159	243	270	Up 11%
Rapid Reviews were completed in this period	2	3	2	Down 33%
Referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer	88	58	57	Down 1%

## 5. Local Safeguarding Context Across South Tees

### South Tees Key Health facts – as at 2022-2023

<b>MIDDLESBROUGH</b>		<b>2021-2022</b>		<b>2022-2023</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rank</b>		
Teenage conception rate	37.1/ 1,000	152/152	31.5/ 1,000	153/153		Highest but Rate down
Children deemed not to be school ready	63.1%	152/152	56.5%	152/153		Highest but Rate down
Children living in low income families	34.4%	152/152	31.8%	152/153		Rate Improving
Breastfeeding 6-8 weeks	34.4%	139/152	33.9%	143/153		Rate Reducing
Childhood obesity year 6	25.2%	110/152	30.4%	147/153		Rate Increased
Rate of children in care	172/10,000	148/152	150/10,000	148/153		Rate Reducing
MMR vaccination coverage for two doses 5 years old	84.7%	107/152	84.0%	108/153		Rate Reducing

<b>REDCAR &amp; CLEVELAND</b>		<b>2021-2022</b>		<b>2022-2023</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rank</b>		
Teenage conception rate	30.1/1,000	148/152	27.3/1,000	149/153		Rate improving
Children deemed not to be school ready	71.1%	91/152	64.8%	86/153		Rate improving
Children living in low income families	22.9%	125/152	22.2%	135/153		Rate worsening
Breastfeeding 6-8 weeks	31%	145/152	31.5%	147/153		Rate Improving
Childhood obesity year 6	24%	110/152	26.8%	110/153		Rate worsening
Rate of children in care	115/10,000	138/152	125/10,000	142/153		Rate worsening
MMR vaccination coverage for two doses 5 years old	92.2%	113/152	92.8%	97/153		Rate Improving

<b>CLEVELAND POLICE DATA</b>		<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	
	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rate</b>		
Child Sexual Abuse offences recorded	1,494	2,002	2,119		Increasing
% child sexual exploitation crimes that had a cyber-element	46%	42%	50%		Reducing rate, Improving
The number of children who have been present during a Domestic Abuse incident	7,171	7,371	7,371		Increasing
incidents recorded as alcohol related	9,562	12,978	13,414		Increasing
The National homicide rate (12 months ending January 2022)	7th	4th	8th		Improving but high
knife crime rate in the country (12 months ending September 2021)	6th	2nd	2nd		Remain static but high

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

## 6. How We Impact On Our Priorities



### COMMUNICATION

#### STSCP Events

In a bid to reach a wider audience, the STSCP joined forces with the HSSCP and TSAB for the some of our events.

#### **TEES LEARNING FROM REVIEWS EVENT: 12th MAY 2022 (in conjunction with the HSSCP, TSAB and The Community Safety Partnerships across Tees)**

The virtual event was held on Thursday 12th May 2022 with a view to sharing the learning from a range of children and adult based reviews across Tees, which have taken place in recent years. As a result practitioners were able to understand the common emerging themes; consider the impact of these reviews on their practice and increase their understanding of the legal frameworks that supports work with perpetrators of abuse.

#### **The event was hosted by Karen Rees and guest speakers included:**

- Siobhan Davies & DCI Deborah Fenny;
- Yo Dunn;
- Gloria Eveleigh.

#### **A resource pack was provided to all those who attended, which provided weblinks to the STSCPs:**

- Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews;
- The Tees Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures;
- Training resources;
- Information for Professionals;
- Key Documents and;
- Reporting a Concern.

A copy of the resource pack can be found on the STSCP website at Partner briefings - South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (stscp.co.uk)

#### **TEES PREVENTING SUICIDE IN ADOLESCENTS EVENT: 12th JULY 2022 (in conjunction with the HSSCP)**

This in-person event was held on Wednesday 12th July 2022 with two sessions held concurrently in the morning and a third session held in the afternoon. The event theme was identified as a result of a number of reviews undertaken across Tees where young people had taken their own lives.

#### **The event was hosted by DCI Deborah Fenny and guest speakers included:**

- Nicky Ayres & Vanessa Colman, North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board;
- Lads Like Us;
- Papyrus and;
- Odd Arts Drama Group.

#### **Following on from and for those attending the sessions, there were several workshops and webinars available in the following weeks. They included:**

- Young People's Mental Health & Self Harm / Suicide and The CAMHS Crisis Team – presented by CAMHS / TEWW;
- Managing and maximising our window of tolerance (increasing our toolkit for regulation) – presented by Barnardo's;
- Child Sexual Abuse, the consequences of trauma: a journey of missed opportunities – presented by The Flying Child and supported by Barnardo's;



## 6. How We Impact On Our Priorities

- Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation – presented by Sam Warner, Consultant Clinical Psychologist;
- Self-Harm & Suicide: Formulating Risk & Intervention – presented by Sam Warner, Consultant Clinical Psychologist;
- SPOT (Suicide Prevention Overview Tutorial) - presented by PAPYRUS;
- Talking About Suicide: Ten Tools - presented by Start the Conversation;
- Boys Will Be Boys: Socialised into Silence - presented by Danny & Mike, Lads Like Us and Barnardo's;
- Finding Hope: An invitation to explore how we can support young people with suicidal ideation to find hope and a life worth living - presented by Barnardo's;
- Digital Citizenship, Social Media & Mental Health - presented by Simon Finch;
- Introduction to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) - presented by CAMHS/Changing Futures NE;
- Utilising music as a therapeutic tool: a guide for beginners - presented by Barnardo's;
- SPARK (Suicide Prevention Awareness Resources Knowledge) - presented by PAPYRUS.

Some of the presentations and reports can be found on the STSCP website at Partner briefings - South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership ([stscp.co.uk](http://stscp.co.uk))

### STSCP SAFEGUARDING IN EDUCATION EVENT: 30th SEPTEMBER 2022

This in-person event was held on Friday 30th September 2022 with the aim to engage professionals from schools and colleges based in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland. The exploitation of children and young people was the theme of the event with the agenda kept deliberately short to provide opportunities for active engagement with the guest speakers.

**The event was hosted by Clare Mahoney, Assistant Director of Education for Redcar & Cleveland Council and Rob Brown Director of Education for Middlesbrough Council.**

Joe Russo & Carlus from Project Connect undertook a presentation on The Journey from Victim to Perpetrator and young people from River Tees Multi Academy Trust in association with Odd Arts presented a drama based on their own experiences.

The event ended with the opportunity for professionals to ask questions of a panel made up of the facilitators and presenters of the event, as Rob Brown, Director of Education & Partnerships, Middlesbrough Council.

In total, 51 professionals attended with 26 from Middlesbrough based schools, 23 from Redcar & Cleveland based schools and 2 from an Academy Trust spanning both local authority areas.



**Our students absolutely loved participating in the workshops and performances. Students quoted that "I didn't think I could do it and feel so proud of myself for having the confidence to perform in front of so many people". We are so proud of our students and would love the opportunity to participate in something like this in the future. Thank you so much for providing our students with the opportunity to participate in this.**

Left are some of the people who took part in the event.

## 6. How We Impact On Our Priorities

### TEES SECTION 11 AUDIT CHALLENGE EVENT - FEBRUARY 2023

Following an agreement between the STSCP and HSSCP Executives, a two day in-person challenge event was held with all key partners to review their section 11 audits and present the resulting action plans. A report was produced and presented to the STSCP with further updates to be sought in the next fiscal year.

### SCRS / CPSRS CHALLENGE EVENTS

#### Alex SCR Challenge Event - 5th April 2022

The challenge event was held virtually with all the key organisations involved in the case. Each agency was asked by the Challenge Panel to identify the progress of their single agency action plan. They were also asked to identify whether this has had the required impact on professional practice and if not, how they had addressed this. A report was produced and shared with key partners.

#### Daniel CSPR Challenge Event - 17th October 2022

The challenge event was held virtually with all the key organisations involved in the case. Each agency was asked by the Challenge Panel to identify the progress of their respective single agency action plan and whether this has had the impact on professional practice that they were seeking. If this was not the case, they were to identify if and how this had been addressed. As a result of the event, a report was produced and shared with key partners.

#### Stork CSPR Challenge Event - 28th March 2023

The challenge event was held with all the key organisations involved in the case. Each agency was asked by the Challenge Panel to identify the progress of their respective single agency action plan and whether this has had the impact on professional practice that they wanted. If not, then they would be asked to identify how they had addressed this. As a result of the event, a report has been produced and will be shared with key partners.

Following a discussion within the L&D Group, the Stork Challenge Event was the first to be held in-person. Representatives from all the agencies to be involved were present at the same time rather than as at previous events where each agency was allocated an individual timeslot with the Challenge Panel. Given the feedback received from those in attendance, who found it to be a positive and proactive experience, it has been agreed that all future CSPR Challenge events will be held in the same manner.

#### STSCP Website Analytics

Between April 2022 and March 2023, there have been **10,665** recorded views of the website with the top 10 pages being accessed noted as follows:

- Home - **1,808 views**
- CSPRs - **1,079**
- Info for professionals - **1,066**
- STSCP eLearning - **947**
- Priorities - working together - **785**
- Training (main page) - **679**
- STSCP key documents - **587**
- Report concern - **567**
- Key documents (main page) - **459**
- About STSCP - **367**

This is an increase of **3640** from the number of views in 2021/2022.



## 6. How We Impact On Our Priorities

### TEES-WIDE GROUPS

#### Tees Strategic Exploitation Group - see Priority 1

#### Tees-wide Policy & Procedures Group

Having clear and up to date policies and procedures is a key part of the work of STSCP as it ensures that practitioners know what to do in a range of safeguarding situations.

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.

The Tees Safeguarding Procedures website continues to be monitored and updated as appropriate. Access to the Tees Child Protection Procedures is at - <http://www.teescpp.org.uk/>

#### Tees Performance Management Framework

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

**The Tees PMF dataset contains several 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 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/trends that require a response;
- Identify what actions agencies may need to take in relation to changes in data;
- Identifying priorities for the STSCP multi-agency audit schedule.

#### 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 and safeguarding of children/young people in the Tees Valley or to public health and safety, and to consider whether action should be taken in relation to any matters identified.

**Issues Identified include:**

- Water Safety – drowning;
- Road Traffic Accidents involving bikes;
- Safe Sleeping.

The CDOP Annual Report is available on the STSCP website: <https://stscp.co.uk>



# 7. Working With Other Partnerships

## 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:

- Adult Safeguarding Board, with active involvement of inter-generational themes;
- Strategic planning and governance arrangements working in both commissioning and provider organisations across:
  - Health and social care provision across all ages and in all settings, whether publicly funded or not, and including Further Education provision.
  - Health and social care commissioning and provider bodies in both physical and mental health settings. (The Integrated Care Board are a statutory Partner, providers being Key Partner.)
  - Services of social care provision, including help and multi-agency safeguarding services, those working with children in care, those on child protection plans, involved in care proceedings or already in care, care leavers and care leaving.
  - Health and social care and other community bodies.

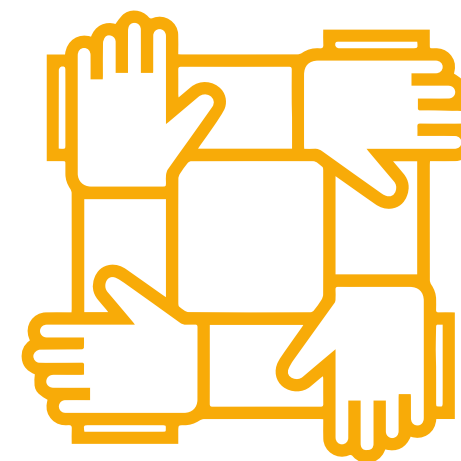
## The following partnerships have a specific focus:

- 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.





# 8. Learning & Development

## Learning & Development Group (L&D)

The L&D group provides advice to the Key Partners on whether the criteria for commissioning a Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR), as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children, may have been met. The L&D Group provides oversight and quality assures all the CSPRs and Learning Reviews commissioned, as well as monitoring and evaluating the resulting multi-agency action plans. Oversight of any single agency action plans are undertaken through the CSPR Challenge Events. The sub group is also responsible for planning the training and development programme.

### Work to date:

- The L&D group have carried out 3 Rapid reviews over the period with 2 for Redcar & Cleveland and 1 for Middlesbrough;
- As a result, the STSCP has commissioned 2 CSPRs and published the 7-minute briefing for one Learning Review, which had started in the previous fiscal year;
- The L&D has had an overview of the process from initial decision making to implementation of the media/communication plans;
- The L&D is monitoring the multi-agency action plans pursuant to the reviews and reviewing single agency action plans progress;
- The L&D Group has undertaken 3 Challenge events relating to 1 historic serious case review and 2 CSPRs with the resulting reports presented to the STSCP;

- The STSCP has monitored the outcomes of national reviews of relevance to Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, for example a process for assurance for the Star & Arthur Review was sought from key partners;
- Challenge events relating to one historic Serious Case Review and two Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews were carried out with resulting reports presented to the STSCP;
- The Tees Section 11 audit was completed in 2022 with a challenge event completed in 2023 and report produced for both Tees Partnerships.

### 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, the STSCP has held four Rapid Reviews, we have commissioned two CSPR and 2 table top Learning Reviews (LR).

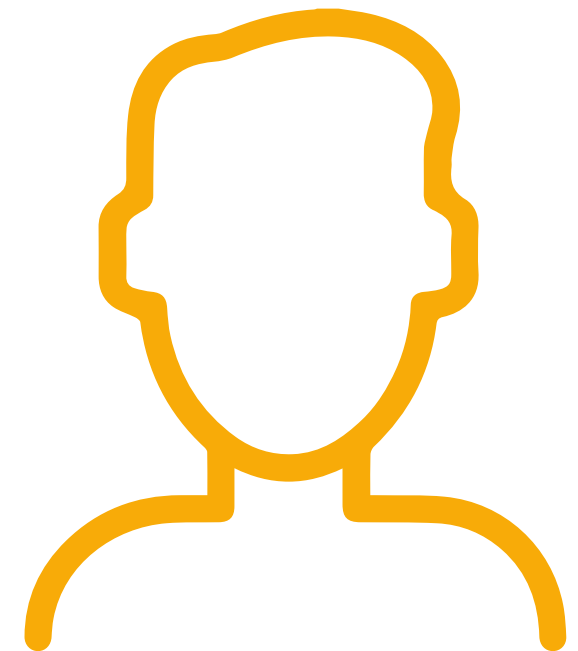
From the recent completed reviews we have published the following 7 Minute briefings/Learning:

### CHARLEY CSRP

Charley CSRP - 7 minute briefing - May 2022  
Published on NSPCC website

### LITTLE DAN LEARNING REVIEW

[CLICK HERE FOR REVIEW](#)



## 8. Learning & Development

### Thematic analysis of STSCP child safeguarding practice reviews 2020-2023

To help us to understand the safeguarding environment and any changes, we try to learn from the recent past as well as just the year under review.

This STSCP has commissioned and reviewed the learning from six Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and two Learning Reviews undertaken between 2020 the inception of the STSCP and 2023. The aim is along with our challenge events is to identify any cross cutting themes, to maximise learning and measure the impact of any action plans that have been implemented.

- 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;
- Charley – Published anon on NSPCC website 28th March 2022;
- Little Dan – Learning Review not published.

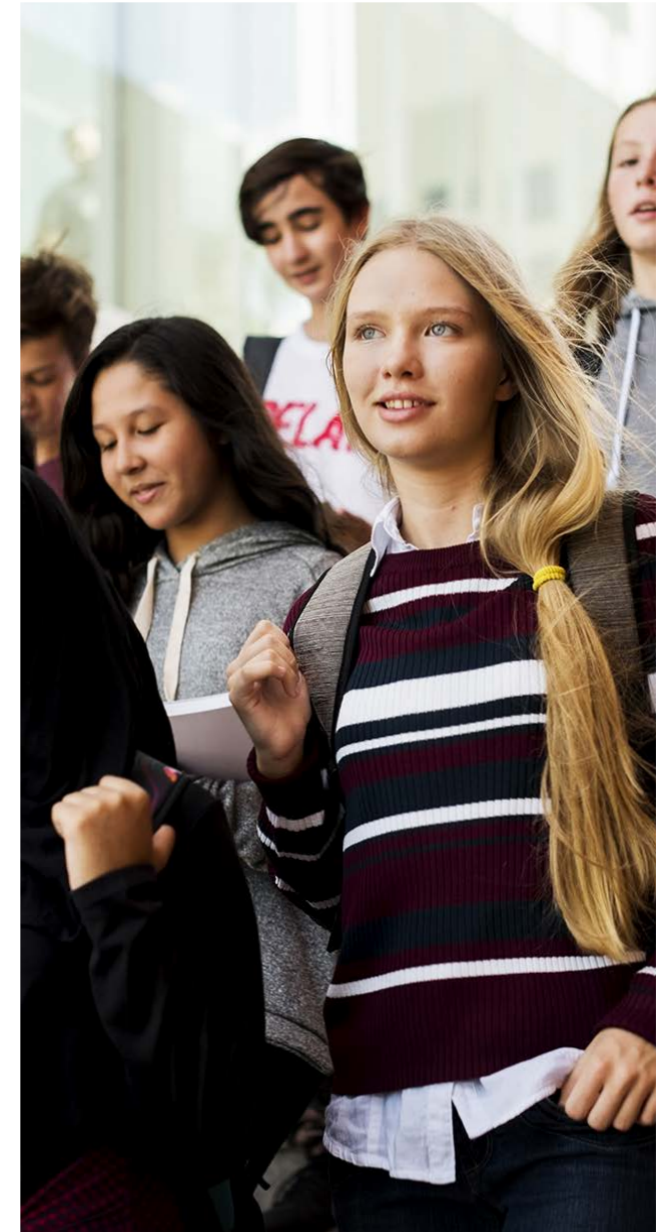
#### The themes identified were:

1. Understanding the child's world;
2. Engaging the whole family;
3. Multi-agency working;
4. Safeguarding vulnerable babies;
5. Hidden Males/Partners;
6. Substance misuse;
7. Neglect including adolescent neglect;
8. Risks outside of the home - including Criminal Exploitation;
9. Domestic Abuse;
10. Parental Mental Health.

We used these themes to inform the questions in our Section 11 event in February 2023.

#### The STSCP has the following “intents” about our CSPRs

- The quality of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews will 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;
- Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews will give more focus on the child's lived experience and their identity;
- South Tees Safeguarding Partnership Training offer will be reviewed to ensure it sufficiently considers learning from all Child Safeguarding Practice reviews;
- Consideration will be given to the development of tool kits (supported by training for practitioners) to strengthen evidence based practice in South Tees;
- Consideration will be given to how multi-agency working and information sharing can be strengthened.

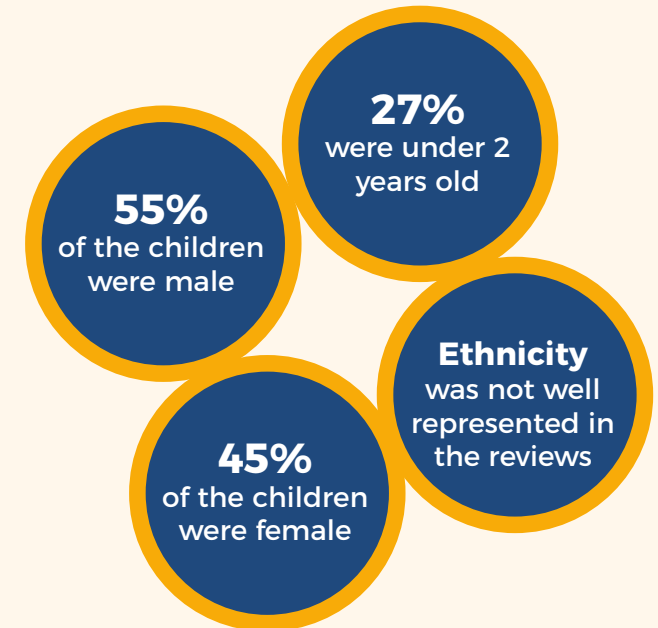
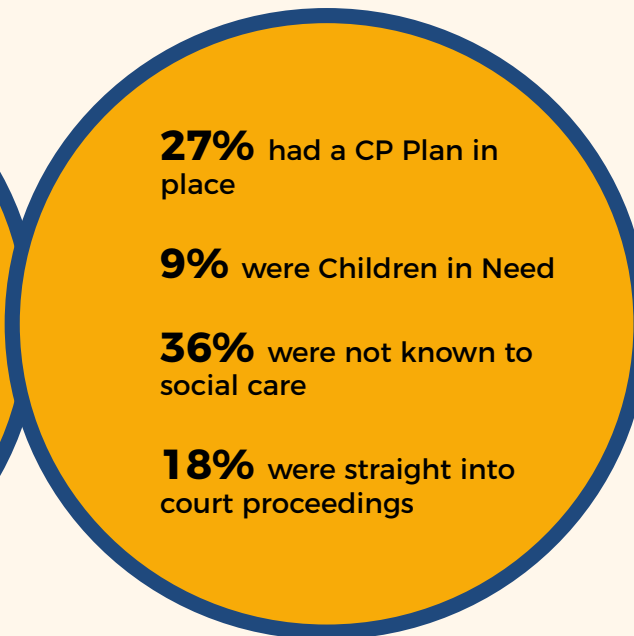
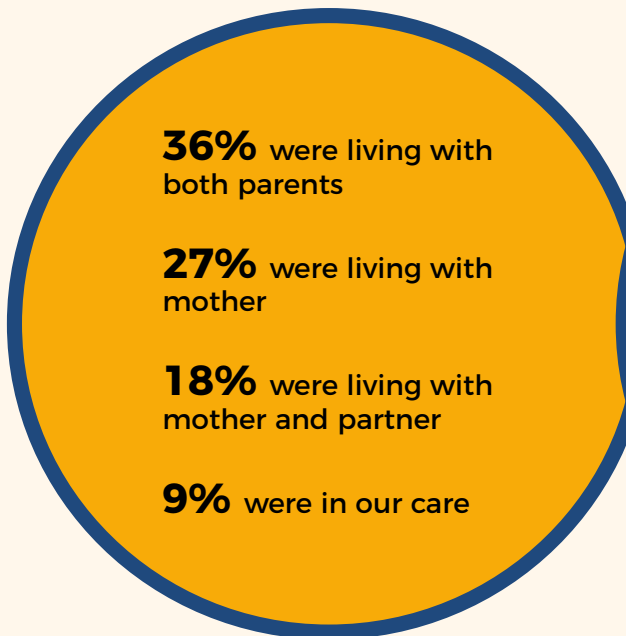
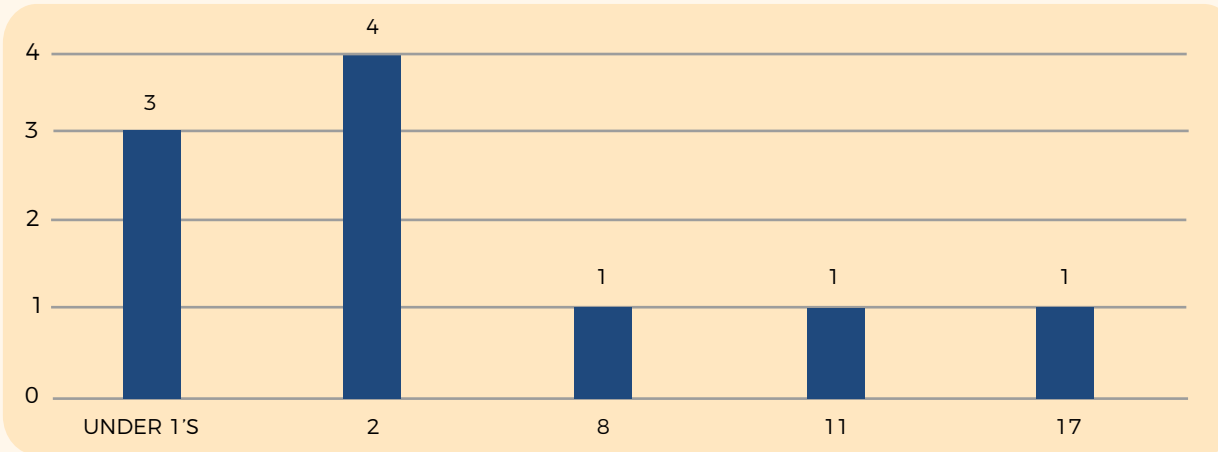


### TIMELINE OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS 2020-2023



## 8. Learning & Development

### About our children





## 8. Learning & Development

### TRAINING & COMMUNICATION

#### Training

As an STSCP, our training function continues to be coordinated by the L&D group. They must ensure that the appropriate high quality multi-agency training is provided for statutory agencies that reflects STSCP policy and procedure, enhances knowledge and skills and promotes joint understanding of child protection work.

Whilst the restrictions imposed during the COVID Pandemic have come to an end, the STSCP has continued to provide training virtually given the positive feedback received. The introduction of in-person training and continuance of virtual training is subject to constant review by the L&D Group.

The eLearning product MeLearning launched in May 2020 continues to prove popular.

#### Work to date:

From April 2022 to March 2023, **1194** candidates have accessed the STSCP training with the

Me-learning provision continuing to enhance the online training experience for professionals and to date there have been **17,865** online learners across the Tees.

On behalf of the STSCP, Skills for Safeguarding have delivered 28 Core Level 3 Safeguarding Children courses and 10 Core Level 3 Safeguarding Children Update courses to 839 candidates.

The L&D Group had identified that the exploitation of children can take many forms and that training in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation was needed. As a result Barnardo's were commissioned to facilitate 4 Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness virtual training courses. These were held bi-monthly between September 2022 and March 2023 and attended by 63 candidates.

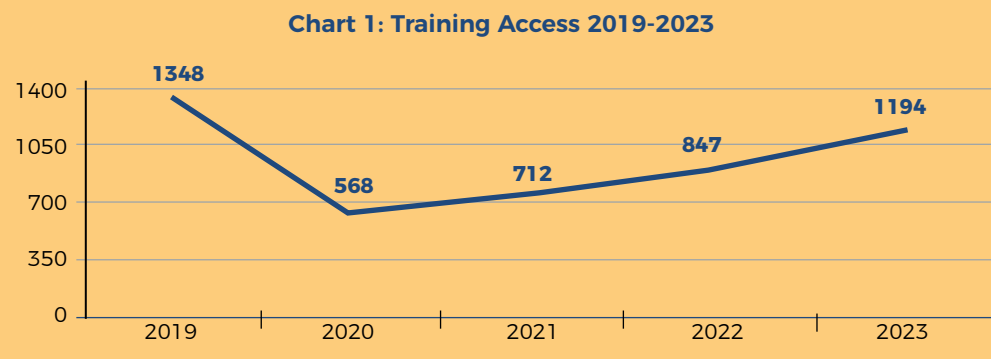
Additionally and given the awareness of the increased use of social media to exploit and abuse children and young people, the L&D Group commissioned SIMFIN UK to facilitate 5 virtual

Safeguarding in a Digital Age and 4 virtual Digital Citizenship, Social Media and Mental Health including Suicide & Self Harm courses. These were held between September 2022 and February 2023, which were accessed by 110 and 95 candidates respectively.

Whilst acknowledging that many agencies had commissioned Trauma Informed Practice Training on a single agency basis, this was not available to all agencies across the South Tees. Therefore, the L&D Sub Group identified a need for this training to be made available to all professionals and commissioned Dr Wendy Shepherd to facilitate 3 courses between January and March 2023. This course proved popular and given the demand a further course was commissioned in March 2023. The 4 courses were accessed by 87 candidates.

The Trauma Informed Practice training was the STSCP's first opportunity to provide in-person training.

Chart 1: Training Access 2019-2023



Note: Due to the impact of COVID all training between 2020 and 2022 was delivered virtually.

#### 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



## 8. Learning & Development

### TRAINING IMPACT

Candidates were asked which ways that this training will influence your future practice?

#### CORE LEVEL 3 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN UPDATE

Interesting updates re considering role of fathers in the family. Helpful to be reminded of 'Think Family' and of wider safeguarding responsibilities. Contextual safeguarding - I wasn't aware of the partnership information sharing form for contextual safeguarding concerns - it's helpful to know about this for future reference.

#### CORE LEVEL 3 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN UPDATE

Very valued training. Knowledgeable facilitator who keeps a great pace and encourages and promotes engagement during the virtual session. Good use of scenarios and sharing of links to documents. Lots of opportunity for reflection and discussion.

#### CORE LEVEL 3 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN UPDATE

I thought that this was an excellent presentation of a very difficult and often emotional subject matter. The facilitator was lovely. Her approach, manner and professionalism was spot on. It was beneficial to hear her discuss some past cases as this helped to understand how the processes work in practice. Her knowledge and understanding of the subject matter was very good. It was brilliant that she was able to direct us to some easy to use resources. This will be a very practical support to me.

#### CORE LEVEL 3 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN UPDATE

The case study was a very useful part of the training as it was thought provoking and helpful to hear other people's opinions.

#### CORE LEVEL 3 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Really informative training which really simplified safeguarding procedures. Particularly enjoyed how it simplified categories within social care, the difference between level CIN and CP.

# 9. Quality Assurance & Performance Monitoring

## 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:

- Tees Section 11 audit completed in October 2022;
- JTAI themed Domestic Abuse in Child Protection cases Jan/Feb 2022;
- Hidden Males audit November 2022;
- Tees Section 11 audit moderation process completed in February 2023;



## An independent review of the STSCP data was completed in November 2022, the key conclusion was as follows:

STSCP have a wealth of data available to assist the partnership in achieving their vision. However, there is a need for the partnership to identify priorities and determine the indicators that demonstrate progress against these. Better use of the data and performance information that is available to STSCP will support in holding the partnership to account and improving safeguarding services and practices in the geographical area for which the partnership is responsible.

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 to the Q&P group and presented to the STSCP to monitor and challenge.

## Ongoing Quality Assurance

- 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.

## 9. Quality Assurance & Performance Monitoring

### Multi-agency Audits

The Section 11\* audit conducted in Sept/Oct 2022 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 2023/24.

### Other multi-agency audits undertaken in 2022/2023

- Tees Section 11 audit completed in October 2022;
- JTAI themed Domestic Abuse in Child Protection cases Jan/Feb 2022;
- Hidden Males audit November 2022;
- Tees Section 11 audit moderation process completed in February 2023.

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





# 10. 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:

- Agreed the "Framework For Neglect" Guidance for Practitioners across Tees;
- The new framework/guidance to address adolescent neglect is complete, we plan to revise the Neglect strategy with a view to a South Tees approach, providing further training and 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 Exploitation 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. As a result of recurring themes in some reviews a challenge process has been implemented to review historic reviews and how well the learning was embedded;

- We have established a challenge process at the point at which CSPR action plans are signed off as being achieved. This is a supportive process and looks 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 has been implemented;
- Barnardo's Tees Valley have created a video about how they will support children and young people who have been subject to exploitation.

### Stubborn Challenges:

- 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;
- The absence of the permanent Safeguarding Nurse role in the ICB continues to cause concern particularly with health colleagues who feel this post is key to the escalation of safeguarding concerns in the health trusts. Also the attendance by the ICB representatives at the executive level meetings has been noted as a weakness to the partnership as they are the key health representative;

- Diversity continues to be a high level priority across the work of the partnership, as part of a recent CSPR Angel, interpreters were used in communication with the family and it was recognised by the review that the use of interpreters by front line staff was integral to effective communication with families. The partnership continues to monitor the recording of ethnicity as part of the audit programme and that this and disabilities are considered as part of assessments and the lived experience of the child/young person.



# 11. Responding to the National Agenda

## Tri Ministerial Letter to Safeguarding Partners

### What have we Done?

- We have circulated the documentation to the key partners;
- Placed on the STSCP Exec agenda;
- The STSCP L&D group to consider letter and ensure any Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews are completed within six months of initiation;
- The STSCP L&D group to consider Solihull JTAI report and identify implications for South Tees.

### For Information

Contact with the DfE, Local authority safeguarding facilitator appointment to the role of local authority safeguarding reform national facilitator. They will work alongside the police facilitator and health facilitator to support the implementation of the safeguarding reforms in local areas.

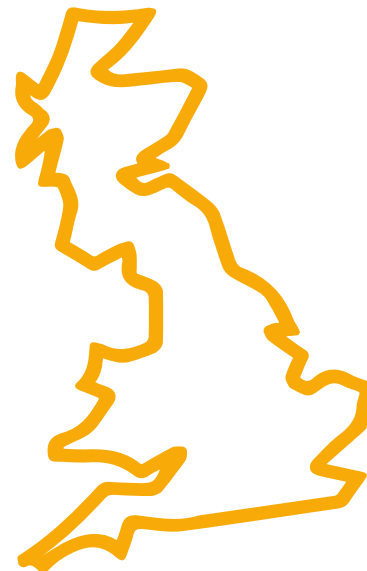
### What have we Done?

- 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;
- 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)).



## Star & Arthur Review - Report and Action Plan

### What have we done

- We have circulated the report and national action;
- We have sought reassurance from key partners that they have taken appropriate action on recommendations from the review;
- Discussed as part of the Tees Section 11 challenge event.

### Child Q CSPR

Following publication of the Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review concerning Child Q in March 2022, local Children's Partnerships are requesting reassurance that the recommendations from this review have been accepted and implemented into daily practice by Cleveland Police.

### What have we done

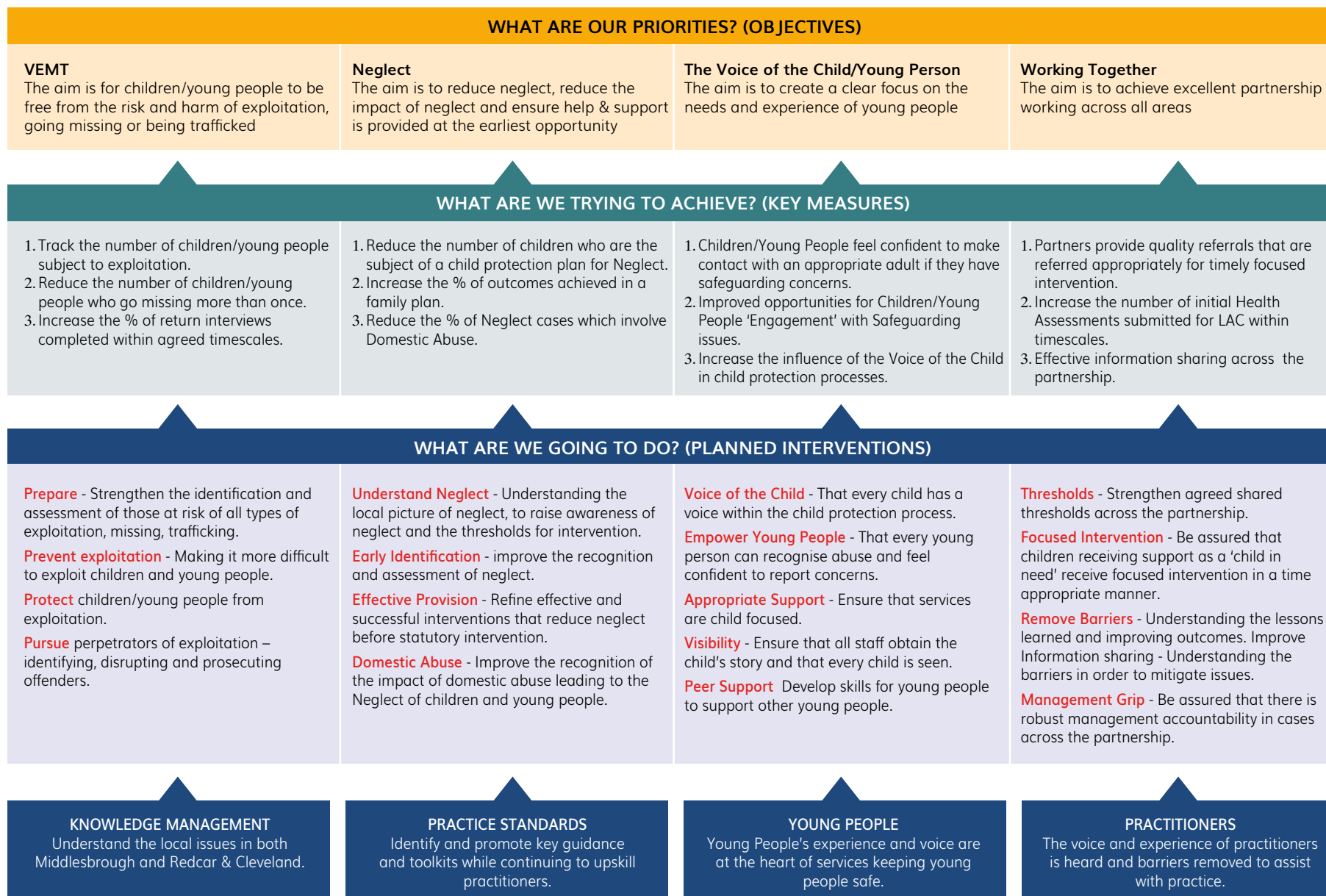
- We have circulated the report and Cleveland Police response/action to the STSCP exec;
- We have received reassurance from Cleveland Police on recommendations from the review;
- Discussed as part of the Tees Section 11 challenge event.

# 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





# 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>

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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