

Middlesbrough Council
Children’s Scrutiny Panel

Report title	Out of area specialist provision – further evidence
Date of Meeting	9 March 2026
Lead Officer and contact details	Annabel Bates, Corporate Director of Children’s Services Annabel_bates@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Corporate Director	Annabel Bates, Corporate Director of Children’s Services
Wards Affected	All
Appendices (if any)	n/a

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides further evidence in relation to comparative information regarding use of Out of Area Placements in children’s social care.

1.2 For the purposes of this report we have included data in relation to: Middlesbrough, England (totals), statistical neighbours (average), North East (totals), Tees Valley (5 local authorities, average)

1.3 In order to provide comparative data we have included reference to the following published data:

- Children placed within 20 miles of home
- Children placed over 20 miles from home
- Placed within local authority boundary
- Placed outside local authority boundary

1.4 This data is verified on an annual basis at the end of the fiscal year. The data contained in this report was therefore collated on 31 March 2025.

2. Summary of data

2.1 Key comparisons that can be found in the data include:

- The percentage of children looked after placed over 20 miles from home in Middlesbrough is statistically comparable to our statistical neighbours and other local authorities in the Tees Valley – 15%, 14% and 13% respectively. Our percentage for this cohort has remained consistent over the past 4 years.
- The percentage of children looked after placed within the local authority boundary is lower than our statistical neighbours and other local authorities in the Tees Valley.
- There has been a small increase in the number of children looked after where the distance of placement from home is not known or recorded.

3. Full data set

Numbers of children looked after as at 31 March

	Middlesbrough				England				Statistical neighbours				North East				Tees Valley			
	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Placed within 20 miles of the child's home	425	426	426	401	59,200	58,390	57,770	56,670	570	555	555	524	4,960	4,980	5,000	4,920	349	358	353	331
Placed over 20 miles from the child's home	71	79	73	76	16,970	17,630	18,040	18,120	90	89	95	95	650	730	790	800	41	50	54	53
Distance from the child's home is not known or not recorded	6	8	14	16	6,000	7,810	7,830	6,990	30	25	26	34	140	270	320	320	16	19	22	26
Placed within the local authority boundary	229	231	227	214	46,810	47,190	46,110	45,420	357	348	346	331	3,510	3,620	3,600	3,490	237	243	240	219

Percentages of children looked after as at 31 March

	Middlesbrough				England				Statistical neighbours				North East				Tees Valley			
	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Placed within 20 miles of the child's home	85	83	83	81	72	70	69	69	85	84	83	81	86	83	82	81	87	84	82	80
Placed over 20 miles from the child's home	14	15	14	15	21	21	22	22	11	13	13	14	11	12	13	13	10	12	13	13
Distance from the child's home is not known or not recorded	1	2	3	3	7	9	9	9	3	4	4	5	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	7
Placed within the local authority boundary	46	45	44	43	57	56	55	56	53	53	51	51	61	60	59	58	60	58	56	53