



South Tees  
Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019 / 2020



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

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# FOREWORD

Safeguarding the children and young people across South Tees is our collective priority to which we are all committed to and will be treated with the gravity it deserves. In this document, we refer to the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that were adopted from September 2019. The annual report explains how, as the Safeguarding Partners, we fulfil our duties under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) and adhere to the guidance in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Our multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are known as the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership and are built on the solid foundation of the substantial improvements already made to the function, structure and effectiveness of both the Middlesbrough and the Redcar and Cleveland Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

The Safeguarding Statutory Partners are:

- Middlesbrough Council
- Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
- Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group
- Cleveland Police.

As the Safeguarding Statutory Partners, we share equal responsibility for execution and oversight of the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership, enabling a common purpose and agreed behavioural values to reinforce shared priorities. We recognise that to be strong and effective, the Partnership must engage the right people and work collaboratively across South Tees to identify the organisations and agencies which need to be involved to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people across the South Tees.

The South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership promotes appropriate support and challenge between partners; ensuring that leaders and staff within every organisation are held to account. We also create the conditions to develop a transparent learning culture, driving best collaborative practice for good and outstanding outcomes for children and young people.

All our work is underpinned by a consideration of the views and experiences of the children and young people across South Tees. We acknowledge that the new arrangements are only effective if they make a difference to the wellbeing of children and young people.

The STSCP Annual report fits within the annual reports cycle completed by the previous Middlesbrough Children's Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB.) and the Redcar & Cleveland Safeguarding Children Board (RCSCB) whose annual reports were published on or around the 30<sup>th</sup> of October each year. This report, which covers the first 12 months of the work of the Board's replacement the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP).

This report reviews the operation of the STSCP. It shows the progress made and points out emerging areas for development as the partnership begins to mature. It concludes that early signs are that this new way of working enables leaders at service delivery and quality assurance levels to maintain ownership of the safeguarding agenda.

A culture of self-evaluation, and an associated mutuality of ownership of what is working and what needs to improve are the clear intentions of all concerned. The areas for continued development outlined later in this report are not surprises to the organisations and agencies concerned and will

be addressed. As this report is presented, the Councils and their many partners working with children are, like all partnerships, dealing with an unprecedented public health crisis presented by the spread, and the many layered effects, of the Covid-19 Corona Virus.

The report is a view of the work to date. The early signs are that services, key partners and communities are working well together in an unprecedented, uncertain and deeply concerning circumstances.

Ongoing work will keep under review the STSCP's structure, that seeks to embed a shared ownership culture where all concerned can and will improve outcomes and impact in children's lives. There will also be a need for the STSCP Executive to open itself to questioning and constructive critiques from relevant agencies, as well as holding those agencies to account.

It is already evident that this new partnership will need to be solution focused, honest and transparent on key issues, so that no issue should come as a surprise.

# Shared Vision and Values

Partners across South Tees have agreed the following vision:

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

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

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



## 2. THE FUNCTION OF LOCAL SAFEGUARDING

### Arrangements

A government Review in 2016 led to reform in the 2017 Children and Social Work Act and to requirements in statutory Working Together guidance in 2018. LSCBs were replaced by locally driven Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASAs).

The South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership is one, led by an Executive of leadership representatives of key statutory partners (Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Council, Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group and Cleveland Police), the wider Partnership encompasses all relevant agencies whose work serves children and young people’s wellbeing, education, physical and mental health. The STSCP’s full model, all terms of reference and meetings schedules of the partnership and the subgroups that feed into and account to that STSCP Executive and each other.

### National requirements

Multi Agency Safeguarding Partnerships are bound by statutory guidance for partners, from universal services through preventive and early intervention work, to more complex statutory services in health, social care, Special Education Needs and Disabilities, the Police and the justice system. All voluntary and community bodies and faith sector organisations are all relevant agencies. Working Together 2018 is clear that the STSCP does not work in isolation but is part of the locality’s broader means of ensuring citizens’ wellbeing.

### From “Working Together” 2018, Chapter 3:

The purpose of local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together.

### Independent scrutiny in “Working Together” 2018

Independent scrutiny will provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases. It is part of a wider system which includes the independent inspectorates’ single assessment of individual safeguarding partners and the Joint Targeted Area Inspections.

Whilst the decision on how best to implement a robust system of independent scrutiny is made locally, safeguarding partners should ensure scrutiny is objective, acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement.

Safeguarding partners should also agree arrangements for independent scrutiny of the report they must publish at least once a year. There are plans to have this in place.



### 3. SOUTH TEES SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP

#### The South Tees Arrangements

The four partners created, and the agencies' governance bodies agreed the arrangements which would best serve both Middlesbrough and the Redcar & Cleveland areas, which have complex and varied communities across their footprint. The new arrangements were launched in September 2019 reflecting the commitments of all concerned to a new way of working that they own and work within.

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>.

These active inter-service connections include those with:

- Middlesbrough Council is the host for the partnership;
- both local authorities one of whose Chief Executives plays a key role as chair of the STSCP Executive;
- The Tees's Adult Safeguarding Board, with which active discussion of inter-generational themes and joint issues is continuous;
- Health and Wellbeing Board;
- Decision-making bodies and governance mechanisms working in both commissioning and provider organisations across:
  - Education across all ages and in all settings, whether publicly funded or not, and including Further Education provision.
  - Youth organisations in the public, private or voluntary sectors, including sporting and other citizenship organisations.
  - Both commissioner and provider bodies in health, in both physical and mental health settings. (The Clinical Commissioning Group are a Statutory Partner, providers being Relevant Agencies.)
  - All levels of social care provision, including early help and multi-agency safeguarding teams, those working with children in need, on child protection plans, involved in care proceedings or already in care, care experienced and care leaving. This inter-service and multi-agency block includes those making commissioning decisions.
  - Faith and other community bodies.
  - The criminal and civil justice system (the police service as a statutory partner is represented on the Partnership Executive.)



Governance covers how the STSCP Executive operates, what the wider partnership entails and what it will require of members, how subgroups are constructed and what they cover, and where risk, liability, accountability and ownership lie. Governance also covers the structure diagram at Appendix 1 and on the STSCP website <https://stscp.co.uk> gives an overview of the partnership and details the Executive's and its sub-groups'.

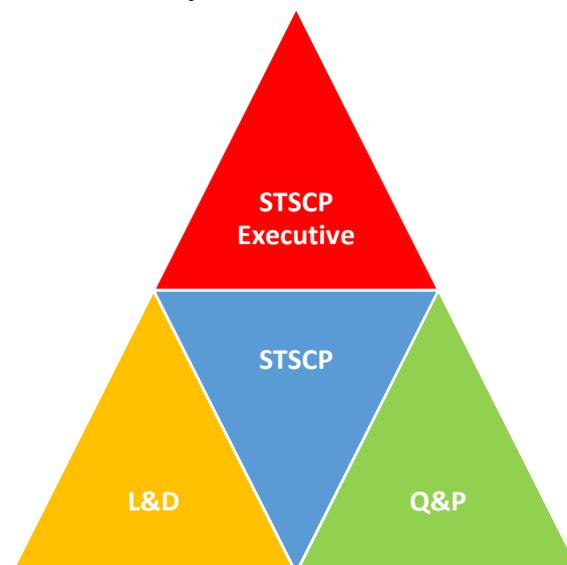
The governance framework captures the business of the new partnership, how audit and data analyses captures progress and areas for development or renewed focus, and how the partnership relates to Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland's other governance structures. This means that the partnership is clear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

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

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

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

### The STSCP Structural Hierarchy



## 4. LOCAL CONTEXT ACROSS SOUTH TEES

At the early stages of the STSCP a development day was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020 the context of the area was shared using the following data.

Although Middlesbrough Local Authority and Cleveland Police have had challenging outcomes from inspections there is a strong commitment to improve and make progress. Both Middlesbrough and the Redcar & Cleveland areas have high aspirations for its children and young people.

It is an acknowledged fact that those affected by domestic abuse, poverty, neglect, substance misuse and/or poor parental mental health are much less likely to arrive at school ready to learn. Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland have significant challenge in all these category areas.

### South Tees Key facts

#### Middlesbrough:

- Ranked 1st out of 152 LA's for the highest teenage pregnancy rate
- Ranked 1st out of 152 LA's for children deemed not to be school ready
- Ranked 2nd worst out of 152 LA's for children living in low income families
- Ranked 2nd worst out of 152 LA's for breastfeeding initiation
- Ranked 3rd worst out of 152 LA's for childhood obesity
- Ranked 3rd out of 152 LA's for the highest rate of children in care – high ratio removed at birth.
- MMR immunisation coverage no longer meets the recommended 95%

#### Redcar & Cleveland:

- Ranked 27th out of 152 LA's for the highest teenage pregnancy rate
- Ranked 78th out of 152 LA's for children deemed not to be school ready
- Ranked 21st worst out of 152 LA's for children living in low income families
- Ranked 5th worst out of 152 LA's for breastfeeding initiation
- Ranked 8th worst out of 152 LA's for childhood obesity
- Ranked 18th out of 152 LA's for the highest rate of children in care
- MMR immunisation coverage no longer meets the recommended 95%

#### Cleveland Police Data

- Child sexual abuse represents over half (54%) of sexual offences
- 71% of the almost 6,000 reported Missing from Home incidents in are children
- 41% of CSE offending is on line
- Over a three month period (Apr – Jun 19) over a 1000 children were present during a DA incident
- 13,407 incidents recorded as alcohol related, (year to Sept 19)
- 10,466 incidents recorded as drugs related (year to Sept 19)
- The Tees has the highest homicide rate in the country – double the national rate per population.
- The Tees is in top 10 of knife crime rate in the country

# Local Safeguarding Data April 2019 – March 2020

## Middlesbrough

**1,644** Children in Need in Middlesbrough

**379** children were subject to a Child Protection Plan, an increase of 31% from previous year's figures.

**61%** of children who were made subject of a Child Protection Plan were made so due to neglect. This is a similar proportion compared to the previous year.

**619** Children are in the Looked After system. An increase of 16% compared the previous year.

**4** children were in Private Fostering arrangements during this period.

**65** children and young people were reported missing from home in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland more than once.

**68** young people were discussed at VPG. This figure has increased from previous years and reflects a heightened awareness. Of those discussed the majority were boys.

**1** Rapid Review was completed, and 1 Serious Case Review published.

**140** referrals to LADO in Middlesbrough.

## Redcar & Cleveland

**1,758** Children in Need in Redcar & Cleveland

**260** children were subject to a Child Protection Plan, an increase of 64% from previous year's figures.

Neglect continues to be the most frequent reason for children being placed on a Child Protection Plan in 2019/20.

**87%** of children who were made subject of a Child Protection Plan were made so due to neglect. This is an increase compared to the previous year.

**348** Children are in the Looked After system. An increase of 17% compared to the previous year.

**16** children were in Private Fostering arrangements during this period.

**101** children and young people were reported missing from home in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland more than once.

**125** young people were discussed at VPG. This figure has increased from previous years and reflects a heightened awareness. Of those discussed the majority were boys.

**4** Rapid Reviews were completed in this period.

**90** referrals to LADO in Redcar & Cleveland.

## 5. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

This report fulfils the statutory requirement contained within Working Together to Safeguard Children to produce an annual report that:

- collates relevant management information on safeguarding and child protection activity;
- reports on progress in the previous year;
- outlines priorities for the forthcoming year.

The STSCP has a three year business plan and this report addresses the progress of work under that plan to update and change any priorities based on current and/or predicted information.

The STSCP has worked to improve the Governance of its functions and maintain its independence while strengthening its links with the South Tees Health and Well Being Board, both the Middlesbrough Children's Trust and the Redcar & Cleveland Children's Partnership.

The partnership is supported by a dedicated Business Unit.

### STSCP Executive

Functional responsibility for the STSCP Executive Group is shared by the key safeguarding partners. All key safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for the arrangements and meet formally each quarter to review how the safeguarding arrangements are progressing. The Chairing arrangements have been agreed by all key partners.

Membership includes:

- Chief Executive - Middlesbrough Council - Chair
- Managing Director - Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council – Vice Chair
- DCS - Middlesbrough Council
- DCS - Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
- Police Chief Inspector – Cleveland Police
- Chief Executive Tees Valley -CCG
- Director of Nursing and Quality– Tees Valley CCG
- Partnership Manager, STSCP

The Executive will:

- Provide strategic leadership and set priorities for the partnership.
- Scrutinise quarterly reports on partnership activity.
- Demonstrate and promote professional challenge.
- Seek assurance in respect of improved practice and enhanced outcomes.
- Promote effective multi-agency working aimed at improving practice and improving outcomes for children and their families.
- Oversee the core safeguarding functions of the partnership arrangement ensuring all statutory functions and requirements are met.
- Develop and drive the priorities of the partnership.
- Publish a Tees-wide threshold document, which sets out the local criteria for action required to safeguard and promote a child's welfare in a way that is transparent, accessible and easily understood.
- Agree a programme of robust Independent Scrutiny activities.

## Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Safeguarding Children Partnership reports to the STSCP Executive.

Membership includes:

- Senior representatives from the key safeguarding partners
- Chair of Learning and Development Working Group
- Chair of Quality and Performance Working Group
- Chair of Tees Strategic VEMT
- Representative from Tees Safeguarding Adults Board
- Other representatives as may be identified by the STSCP Executive

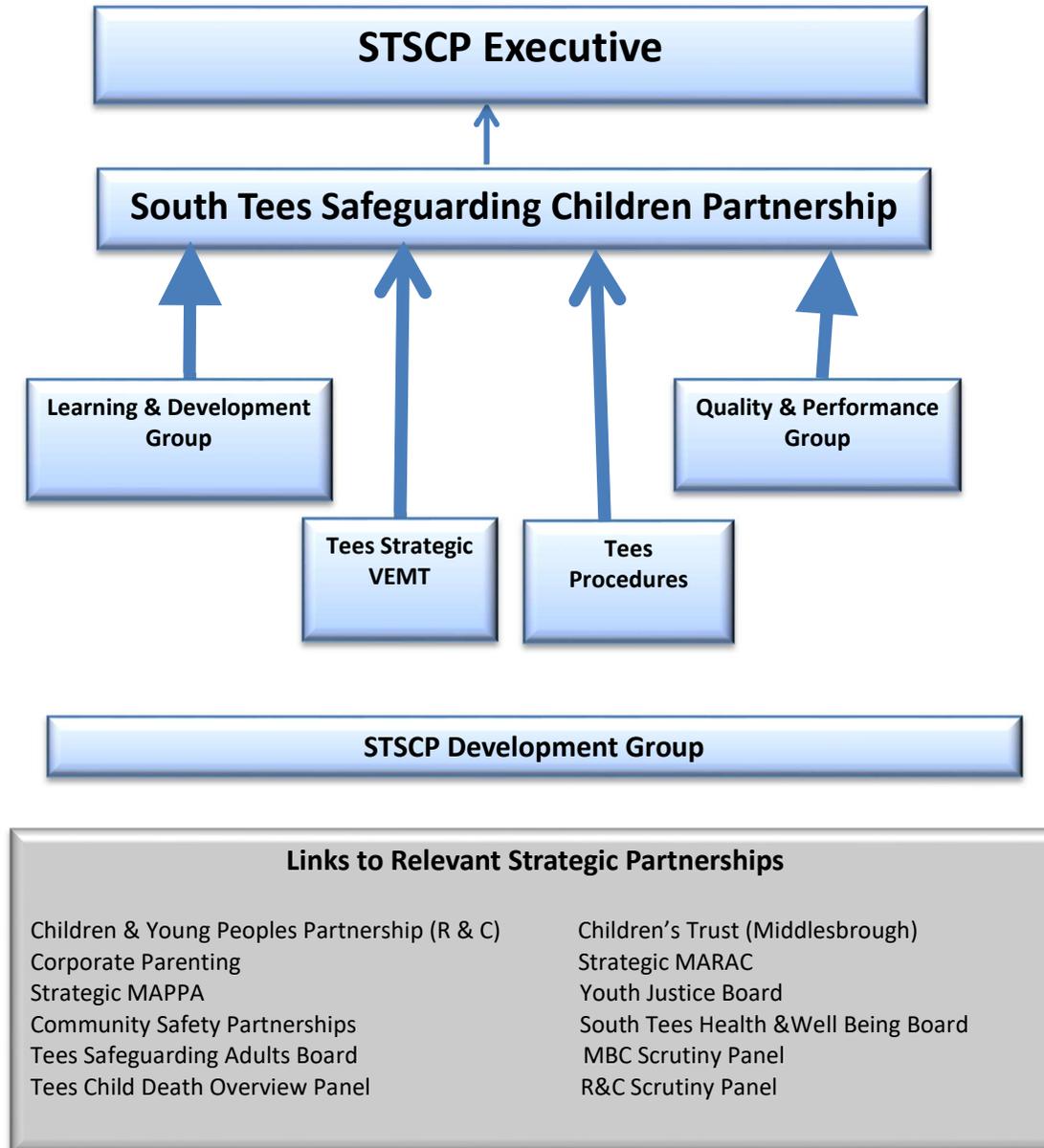
The Safeguarding Children Partnership has received:

- Receive reports from the Tees Strategic VEMT, Tees Procedures Group and the Partnership task and finish groups.
- Monitor partnership activity.
- Identify themes for learning and development activities.
- Identify themes for quality and performance activities.
- Establish and implement a Communication Strategy across both the public and wider safeguarding partners.
- Report to the STSCP Executive on the effectiveness of the arrangements highlighting both areas of good practice and areas for improvement.
- Develop and monitor a Partnership Challenge Register.
- Monitors and reports on activity in respect of independent scrutiny.

The work of the partnership is supported by both the South Tees Specific Groups and the Tees wide Sub Groups.



## STSCP GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



## STSCP SUB GROUPS

The work of the STSCP is supported by a number of sub groups.

### **Learning & Development Group (L&D)**

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

#### **Work to date:**

- The STSCP has commissioned 6 reviews over this reporting period and the L&D has had an overview of the process from initial decision making to implementation of review recommendations.
- L&D is monitoring the multi-agency action plans pursuant to the reviews and reviewing single agency action plans progress.
- Monitored the outcomes of national reviews of relevance to Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland

### **Training**

Under the new arrangements the training function of the partnership is situated under the L&D group

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

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

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

#### **Work to date:**

In total from April 2019 to February 2020, **568** candidates attended 23 face to face training sessions. The elearning product was reviewed and a new product introduced this has enhanced the online training experience for professionals to date over **15,000** online courses have been completed.

### **Quality & Performance Group (Q&P)**

The group monitors child protection and safeguarding activity on an inter-agency basis on behalf of the MSCB 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.

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

The Q&P group has presided over and participated in the following audits over the period:

- Middlesbrough JTAI Themed Exploitation Audit May 2020
- Section 11 audit commenced

The group will monitor the action plans for the above audits and has taken responsibility oversight of the Tees Section 11 Audit 2020.

### **Tees-wide Groups**

#### **Tees-wide Policy & Procedures Group**

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.

#### **Work to date:**

Procedures agreed during 2019/20 so far are as follows:

- Bruising on non-mobile Baby
- Early Help
- Transfer In / Out
- North East Regional Transfer Protocol for CIN Modern Slavery / Human Trafficking Assessment
- Child Living at Home Subject of Interim or Final Supervision Orders
- Philomena Risk Assessment (Forms)
- National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Guidance
- Tees-wide Child Exploitation Screening Tool
- Tees Child Death Review Process
- Neglect
- Child Protection Plan & Core Group
- Think Family Guidance (from TSAB)
- Child's Chronology - Policy, Procedure and Practice Guidance on Single-Agency and Multi-Agency
- Partnership Information Form (Police)
- Safer Referral Form
- Accessing Help and Services page
- Tees Multi-agency Information Sharing Protocol
- Professional Challenge and Resolution of Professional Disagreement
- Cross Boundary Procedure for North of England LSCB's - CIN
- Dangerous Dogs and Safeguarding
- Safeguarding the Unborn Baby Procedure

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

#### **Current Position**

There is a clear and effective structure and process in place which has resulted in a productive year. The website moved to a new host in April 2019 with a revised look and feel.

#### **Tees Child Death Overview Panel**

The purpose of the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is to review and/or analyse in order to identify any matters relating to the death, or deaths, that are relevant to the welfare of children/young people in Tees Valley or to public health and safety, and to consider whether action should be taken in relation to any matters identified.

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

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

### **Work this year:**

- Membership and terms of reference reviewed and refreshed.
- The VEMT Strategy and Action Plan are currently being reviewed and updated.
- Reviewed and update VPG Screening Tool
- Refresh the Tees Missing from Home and Care Protocol.
- Tees Performance Management Framework data in relation to VEMT has been reviewed to ensure consistency across Tees and enable improved analysis.
  
- Voice of the Child increased focus with Barnardo's "Tees Youth Take action project" and the Blossom Project questionnaires, changes to the audit tool to include voice of the child, obtaining the views of those exiting the VEMT process.
  
- An audit regime of VEMT cases in place to inform best practice and learning.
  
- CSE training events were held with attendance of **126** people from a wide range of agencies, whilst **504** professionals completed e-learning courses across the Tees.

## **Tees Performance Management Framework**

In 2016 the Tees Performance Management Framework (Tees PMF) was introduced across the Tees LSCB's and the LSCB's were able to review a much broader range of data on a quarterly basis.

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

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

The data is divided into the following sub sections:

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

The dataset enables the STSCP to assure itself on four fundamental questions:

The dataset is shared with partners via updates at Board and Performance and Quality Assurance group meetings and is used to:

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

### **Other task-limited working groups**

The STSCP may appoint working groups for specific tasks. The terms of reference and membership of such groups will be agreed by the Partnership.

## Working across Partnerships

The STSCP has worked with a wide range of partnerships. Together they form the overarching Partnership structure.

The following partnerships have a specific focus:

***The Children and Young Peoples Partnership for Redcar & Cleveland and the Children 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.

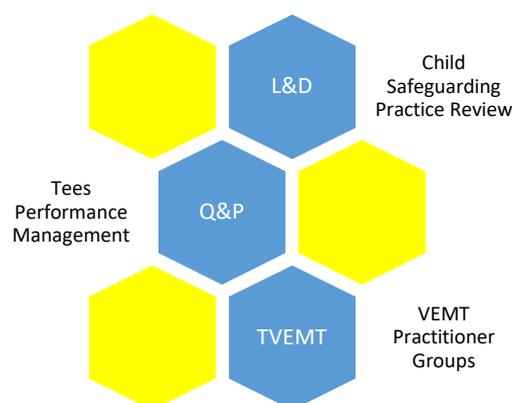
***The Health and Wellbeing Board*** – Promotes integrated working between commissioners of health services, public health and social care services, to improve health and wellbeing.

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

The STSCP will continue to engage and challenge these partnerships where appropriate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland.

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

- 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.
- 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.
- 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



## Professional Challenge

The STSCP recognises the professional challenge and critical reflection within safeguarding is a professional responsibility. It is seen as a sign of good professional practice, a healthy organisation and effective multi-agency working.

Challenging decisions, practice or actions when concerns arise may alter the professional response when ensuring the safety or well-being of a child or young person or their family.

There are established processes and procedures for providing professional challenge and escalating when required.

## Examples of Professional Challenge

The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) challenges agencies if agreed actions are not progressed within timescales and escalation processes are in place. Similarly, the STSCP monitors actions for learning following a Serious Case Review/Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews to ensure actions are progressed and implemented. During 2019 a review of SCR's identified recurring themes which required strategic and operational intervention around Adolescent Neglect and management oversight.

The STSCP will monitor and challenge agencies following section 11 audits which gave assurance that they were complying with their safeguarding responsibilities.

The last Middlesbrough Inspection in November 2019 challenged how agencies worked together at the front door. It highlighted areas of improvement, the resulting improvement plan identified a number of actions to improve professional practice.

Professional challenge also takes place at a senior level through the Key Partners group. This forum allows the opportunity to challenge and share information on safeguarding issues including:

- Learning and recurring themes from Serious Case Reviews/Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Child Death Reviews
- Quality, impact and development of frontline practice
- Outcomes of multi-agency audits and action plans
- Emerging safeguarding concerns or trends
- Development of new Safeguarding Arrangements



## 6. STSCP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

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

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

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

What has been done?

- *The STSCP is effectively represented on key partnerships, such as the South Tees Health & Well Being Board, the Middlesbrough Children's Trust and the Redcar & Cleveland Children Partnership;*
- *The STSCP has improved communication with the general public regarding key aspects of the work of the partnership through the new stand-alone STSCP website: <https://stscp.co.uk> which will be monitored and reviewed regularly by the dedicated partnership officer;*
- *Increased **intelligence around Missing From Education**/ Permanent Exclusions / Home Educated;*
- *National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day;*
- *Awareness sessions held on County Lines; exploitation involved sex working; and how CSE affects boys and men;*
- *Philomena Protocol launched. Its aim is to protect children who go missing from care homes;*
- *Cleveland Police have commissioned a review on how Cleveland Police respond to Child Exploitation;*
- *STSCP have commissioned a Tees-wide Child Exploitation Problem Profile.*

### Impact

This year has seen a refocus on Criminal Exploitation, with a number of multi-agency development sessions supported by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner. The Tees VEMT has sponsored a development session 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.

### Next Steps

- Embed and strengthen the understanding of VEMT across Tees;
- Revise and promote the Tees VEMT Strategy;
- The Tees VEMT will raise and promote the understanding of child exploitation.



## **PRIORITY 2: Neglect**

The aim is to reduce neglect, reduce the impact of neglect and ensure help & 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 Neglect Strategy has been reviewed and updated for 2018-2020 with the Signs of Safegey approach being rolled out across service areas;
- Multi-agency task and finish groups are making progress around child exploitation and Adolescent Neglect;
- Participated in the Oxford Brookes University survey, whether the STSCP has implemented a Neglect Strategy or not; what type of tools, if any, are advocated by the partnership in the assessment and/or identification of child neglect;
- Cleveland Police have commissioned a review on how Cleveland Police response to how they deal with Neglect.

### **Impact**

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

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

### **Next Steps**

- Embed and strengthen the understanding of Neglect including Adolescent Neglect by launching the Adolescent Neglect Framework in 2021;
- Fully support the review of how key partners are dealing with Neglect;
- The STSCP will review the Neglect Strategy on a South Tees basis.



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

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

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

What has been done?

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

#### **Impact**

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

#### **Next Steps**

- Embed and strengthen the collection of children and young people views to inform planning and practice;
- Fully utilize the views already collected by agencies to fully inform the partnership;
- 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

### **What we will do:**

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

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

- The Tees Thresholds Document was reviewed in late 2019 to reflect the new Partnership arrangements for both South Tees Safeguarding Partnership and the Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees Safeguarding Partnership. The Thresholds are being reviewed again in 2020;
- The elearning training program has seen a substantial uptake from professionals working within children's and adults safeguarding
- The STSCP is overseeing the development of the MACH arrangements for both the Middlesbrough MACH and the Redcar & Cleveland MACH;
- The domestic abuse project SafeLives supports the development of the response to domestic abuse across Tees;
- Philomena Protocol implemented with all residential homes;
- The review of CDOP arrangements has been completed;
- A number of multi-agency audits have been completed and learning shared with the partnership;
- A number of rapid reviews and CSPR have been completed confirming the growing strength in partnership working across South Tees Children Partnership.

### **Impact**

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

However to note since the COVID restrictions the face to face training since March 2020 has been replaced with remote training and the range of courses reduced.

### **Next Steps**

- Embed and strengthen the application of the revised thresholds across the partnership, 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.



## 7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING & QUALITY ASSURANCE

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

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

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

### Ongoing Quality Assurance

- 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 **multi-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. There is currently one published Serious Case Review on the website. Outcomes and findings feed into our performance structures to promote a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the partner agencies of the STSCP.

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

### Multi-agency Audits

The Section 11 audit conducted in 2019/20 took the form of a self-assessment format with the key partner returns to be reviewed by the Q&P group.

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

Other multi-agency audits undertaken in 2019/20

- JTAI prep Exploitation Audit
- CP Meeting Audit
- VPG Meeting Audit

## **Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews**

STSCP have inherited two Serious Case Reviews from the Middlesbrough LSCB which are yet to be published pending the Coronial process.

The introduction of “7 minute briefings”, short documents available on the STSCP website outlining key aspects of specific issues, provided an opportunity for professional and critical reflection of key messages from published Serious Case Reviews any future CSCR’s.

This year the STSCP have developed in line with other Tees partnerships new guidance and supporting materials to comply with the new arrangements as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

The STSCP has continued to implement the recommendations from the legacy Serious Case Reviews. Action plans are monitored by the STSCP Business Unit and reviewed by the STSCP through the bi-monthly L&D update report.

Recurrent themes of published SCRs

- Bruising / Injuries to non-mobile babies
- Sexually Harmful Behaviour
- Methadone Ingestion
- Non-compliance with Child Protection Procedures
- Communication and Information Sharing
- Lack of Holistic and Robust Assessments
- Lack of Professional Curiosity and Challenge

## **Policy and Procedures**

The online Tees Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures provides a web based solution that is fully searchable and allows the user to access content from a wide range of devices. We undertake reoccurring six-monthly reviews to keep the procedures up-to-date with local and national changes.

Access to Tees Child Protection Procedures - <http://www.teescpp.org.uk/>

The Child Death Overview Panel has been reviewed and is compliant with new Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance 2018. Membership has been reviewed to include a GP at each meeting, and lay member engagement during thematic reviews. To ensure robust scrutiny and challenge, Public Health England has agreed to work across four CDOPs in the north East of England, undertaking thematic reviews of: suicide and deliberate self-harm; sudden unexpected deaths; trauma and neonatal deaths. Also, Tees Valley CDOP will share joint learning with County Durham and Darlington CDOPs via twice yearly challenge review meetings.

Other procedures and guidance updated in 2019/20

- New Tackling Neglect Strategy
- Updated Neglect Practice Guidance
- Updated Thresholds Document
- New Children's Services Referral Form
- Updated Home Environment Risk Assessment Tool (HEAT) and Guidance
- New HEAT Analysis and Action Plan
- Updated Children and Families Outcomes Framework and Practice Toolkit

## 8. TRAINING & COMMUNICATION

The STSCP delivered 10 core 3 safeguarding courses and 12 Core 3 update courses and 2 CSE courses in 2019/20 as part of the multi-agency training program before COVID19 lockdown.

- A total of 23 courses were delivered in 2019/20. The courses were attended by a total of 568 staff and volunteers.
- The training courses received very positive feedback with 93% of attendees marking the training as good or excellent.

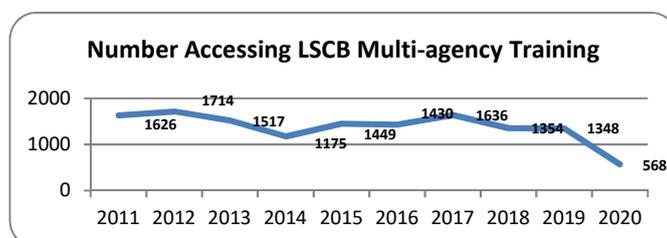
### E-learning Courses

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

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

In January 2020 a review of the eLearning package led to a procurement process to look at other packages and the contract was awarded to MeLearning, the package has been in place since May 2020, feedback to date has been very positive with a high take up across the Tees, a detailed report will be included in next year's STSCP annual report

**Chart 1: Training Access 2011-2020**



Note Covid impact on face to face training only delivered for approx. 6 months.



## 9. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD DIES?

Nationally, responsibility for the Child Death process has transferred from the Department of Health to the Department of Education which is an acknowledgement that the overwhelming majority of child deaths nationally (approx. 80%) have a medical cause. Working Together 2018 moves responsibility for Child Death Review arrangements away from Local Safeguarding Children Boards and to the 'Child Death Review Partners' i.e. the Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Groups. Revised statutory guidance in relation to child death reviews was also published during the year. This passed responsibility for the review of child deaths from the LSCB to the 'Child Death Review Partners'.

The Child Death Overview Panel has been reviewed and is compliant with new Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance 2018. Membership has been reviewed to include a GP at each meeting, and lay member engagement during thematic reviews. To ensure robust scrutiny and challenge, Public Health England has agreed to work across four CDOPs in the north East of England, undertaking thematic reviews of: suicide and deliberate self-harm; sudden unexpected deaths; trauma and neonatal deaths. In addition, Tees Valley CDOP will share joint learning with County Durham and Darlington CDOPs via twice yearly challenge review meetings.

### CASES REVIEWED BY CDOP 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

During 2019/2020 Tees CDOP reviewed 5 Middlesbrough child deaths and 4 Redcar & Cleveland child deaths, the Tees Panel met 6 times during the year

The table below shows the respective ages of the children who were reviewed by CDOP when they died.

| STSCP              | Neonatal<br><4 Weeks | 4- 52<br>Weeks | 1 - 4<br>Years | 5 - 9<br>Years | 10 - 14<br>Years | 15 up to<br>17 Years | Total |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Middlesbrough      | 1                    | 1              | 0              | 1              | 2                | 0                    | 5     |
| Redcar & Cleveland | 2                    | 1              | 0              | 0              | 1                | 0                    | 4     |

### TOTAL CHILD DEATHS 2016 to 2020

The table below shows comparative numbers of **total child deaths** for the current and previous 3 years.

|                    | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Middlesbrough      | 13(2)   | 14 (8)  | 9 (5)   | 10 (3)  |
| Redcar & Cleveland | 9(4)    | 7(3)    | 13(7)   | 5(3)    |

(\*) Numbers in brackets denote unexpected deaths

### Joint Agency Response (JAR) Meetings

A Joint Agency Response meeting is held following unexpected deaths (with the exception of Neo-natal Deaths), formerly known as Rapid Response meetings.

A total of 6 multi-agency response meetings were undertaken in 2019/20, 4 in Middlesbrough and 2 in Redcar & Cleveland.

**CDOP have noted the following:**

- **Tees CDOP Safety Leaflet** –This leaflet provides information and guidance to help prevent childhood injuries and deaths and is given to all parents/carers at the first home visit by the Health Visitor.
- **Links with the Coroner** – improved arrangements are in place to ensure greater support and information is provided to bereaved families/carers.
- **Child Bereavement UK** - A particularly good working relationship has been formed between Child Bereavement UK and James Cook University Hospital who have been receiving Bereavement Awareness training on a regular basis.



## 10. OVERALL CONCLUSION

Evidencing impact on outcomes for children is a challenge facing all safeguarding partnerships. The emphasis is on improved practice and effective intervention, a process that cannot be measured in the short-term. The ways that this can be measured in addition to the use of the National Indicators that tend to measure processes or activity include:

- Practice audits.
- Assessing the impact on training on improved practice.
- Increased use of the Early Help Assessments for early intervention on safeguarding issues.
- Reduction in children with particular vulnerabilities requiring services.
- Improved understanding by professionals of Neglect particularly Adolescent Neglect.

These areas will continue to be considered by the Quality Performance & Sub Group.

Capacity of partner agencies in the last year has been stretched by an increasing local level of demand placed on them; by the requirements of central government, inspection regimes, by the general economic climate and the impact of COVID 19. This has led to some delay in the implementation of some actions.

The STSCP acknowledges the need to review its own capacity to undertake this work and to keep its priorities under review over the coming year



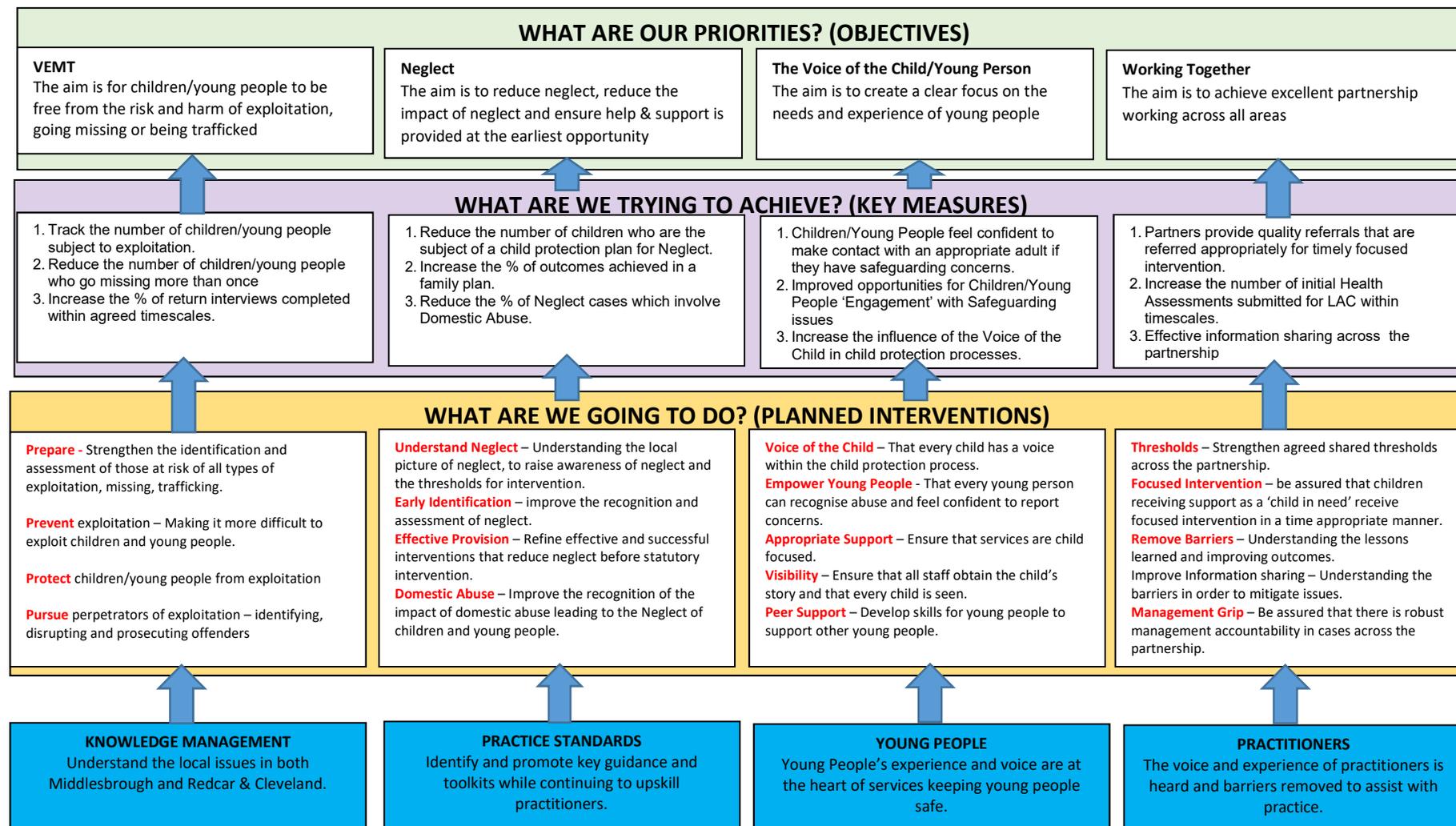
# APPENDIX 1: STSCP Membership

The Red outline indicates Safeguarding Key Partner Agency



## APPENDIX 2: STSCP PLAN ON A PAGE 2020 - 2023

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



## APPENDIX 3: Staffing and Budget

### STSCP Business Unit Staffing

| <u>Staffing</u>            |                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Partnership Manager        |                 |
| Partnership Officer        | Not in Post yet |
| Partnership Officer        | Not in Post Yet |
| Partnership Administration |                 |



### Budget for 2020/2021

The financial contributions from partner agencies are as follows:

| <b>Funding Agency</b>              | <b>2020-2021</b> |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Middlesbrough Council              | 65,000           |
| Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council | 65,000           |
| Cleveland Police                   | 65,000           |
| ST CCG                             | 65,000           |
| National Probation Service         | 1,158            |
| Durham Tees Valley CRC             | 1,000            |
| ST YOT                             | 6,239            |
| CAFCASS                            | 1650             |
|                                    | <b>270,047</b>   |