



North Tyneside Council

Family Friendly Sub- committee

13 March 2024

Thursday, 21 March 2024 0.01 Chamber – Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY commencing at 6.00 pm.

Agenda Item	Page
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1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. **Appointment of Substitute Members**

To be notified of the appointment of any Substitute Members.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

You are invited to declare any registerable and/or non-registerable interests in the matter appearing on the agenda, and the nature of that interest.

You are also invited to disclose any dispensation in relation to any registerable and/or non-registerable interests that have been granted to you in respect of any matters appearing on the agenda.

Please complete the Declarations of Interests card available at the meeting and return it to the Democratic Services Officer before leaving the meeting.

If you need us to do anything differently (reasonable adjustments) to help you access our services, including providing this information in another language or format, please contact democraticsupport@northtyneside.gov.uk.

Agenda Item	Page
4. Minutes	5 – 12
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2024	
5. Update from Corporate Parenting Board	13 – 22
The Sub-Committee will receive a report to provide an update in relation to the Corporate Parenting responsibilities held by the Council and update on planned future developments for the Corporate Parenting Forum.	
6. Best Start in Life, School Readiness and Family Hub Offer	23 – 34
Presentation attached to update the Sub Committee on the Best Start in Life and Family Hub Offer in North Tyneside.	
7. Year of Voice of the Child	
A presentation will be provided at the meeting	

Circulation overleaf ...

Members of the Family Friendly Sub-committee

Councillor Sarah Burtenshaw

Councillor Ian Grayson

Councillor Chris Johnston

Councillor Martin Murphy

Councillor Pat Oliver (Deputy Chair)

Councillor Bruce Pickard

Councillor Sarah Day

Councillor Val Jamieson

Councillor Josephine Mudzingwa

Councillor Rebecca O'Keefe

Councillor Erin Parker-Leonard (Chair)

Councillor Judith Wallace

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Family Friendly Sub-committee

Thursday, 11 January 2024

Present: Councillor E Parker-Leonard (Chair)
Councillors S Day, J Mudzingwa, M Murphy, P Oliver,
B Pickard and J Wallace

Apologies: Councillors S Burtenshaw, I Grayson, V Jamieson,
C Johnston and R O'Keefe

FF18 Appointment of Substitute Members

There were no substitute members reported.

FF19 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Martin Murphy declared a registerable personal interest in Item 5, Home to School Transport, as his wife works for North Tyneside Council in an education role.

FF20 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November be confirmed as a correct record.

FF21 Home to School Transport Consultation

The Sub-Committee received a presentation on the current consultation which is taking place with regards to Home to School Transport.

The Sub-Committee were advised that currently the authority provides transport over and above statutory requirements and that this is not financially sustainable. On 27 November 2023, Cabinet approved that the Authority consults on a draft Home to School Transport Policy and Post 16 statement proposing that the Authority revert back to providing statutory provision only.

The Home to School Transport Policy has a pressure of £2.9m due to:

- High than expected number of children with complex needs, linked to the number with EHCPs
- Inflationary pressures on transport contracts
- Provision provided over and above statutory requirements

The team has a statutory duty to provide free travel assistance to eligible students, this does not include post 16, this does include;

- Nearly 1000 children and young people (C&YP)
- 900 C&YP are transported by way of taxi or minibus
- 100 C&YP are supported with Personal Travel Budgets
- In addition, 619 bus permits are provided, of which 252 are for denominational travel.

The team so far have reviewed the current level of provision versus the statutory requirements, they have compared provision across all other NE authorities. They have evaluated the possible savings, produced a draft revised policy, produced a draft revised annual statement. A report was taken to Cabinet on 27 November 2023 to request approval to consult on the proposals and an 8 week consultation process started on 14 December 2023.

The options which have been consulted on are:

- To cease denominational bus passes (exemptions apply)
- Review to statutory mileage limits for Alternative Provision and Special Schools
- Cease post 16 assistance
- Cease post 16 50% refund
- Review travel arrangements for part time timetables

Other considerations to take account of are a budget growth of £1.5m, look to increase the number of independent travel trainers, review options for schools to support with travel arrangements, offer bus permits to those students who can travel independently rather than taxi provision, work with families to increase Personal Transport Budgets and clarify the position with regards to parental preference.

The consultation on the proposed changes closes on 8 February 2024. A report will be taken to Cabinet in March 2024. Implementation of the changes will be from September 2025 and there will be protection in places for the current phase of education.

It was queried whether the changes for Post 16 included children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It was noted that there would be exemptions in place and each case would be looked at on an individual basis.

It was questioned whether there was some unconscious bias in the suggested changes if someone post 16 were to chose a provider outside of North Tyneside then they may not get the assistance with travel. It was noted that there are bursaries available based on a national criteria.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED:** 1) to note the Draft Revised Home to School Transport Policy and the Draft Revised Annual Post 16 Transport Statement and 2) agreed to receive a further report on the outcome of the public consultation and to receive the final Home to School Transport Policy and Annual Post 16 Transport Statement when presented to Cabinet.

FF22 Childrens Services Safeguarding Update

The Committee received a report to provide an update on the current position in relation to children open to children's social care over Quarter 1 and Quarter 2.

It was noted that Quarter 1 saw an increase in the number of referrals received month on month and reached 210 in June. There was a slight reduction in referrals in the middle part of Quart 2 to 142 in August, this is normal in school summer holidays, the numbers picked up again in September to 200. North Tyneside's rate of referrals per 10,000 in Quarter 2 is below the North East average at 523.4 per 10,000 and has reduced by 3.9% on 22/23 numbers.

The number of children on a child protection plan has remained consistently lower than in 2022/23. In Quarter 2 North Tyneside has the lowest rate of children on a child protection plan at 40.6 per 10,000 in region and there was a 20.9% reduction on the rate at the same time in 22/23. The main reasons for children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan remain emotional abuse and

neglect.

A number of inspections and monitoring visits have taken place to our internal residential children's homes provisions in Quarter 1 and 2. Riverdale and Sycamore were both rated Good. Beech had a monitoring visit as a result of a previous inspection finding of "requires improvement" and was deemed to be making appropriate progress.

A key area for development continues to be the recruitment and retention of staff in key service areas in social care, primarily social workers, early help staff and residential workers. This is a regional and national challenge with all local authorities. Officers are working with the recruitment and communications teams to develop approaches to make us stand out from other authorities and are reviewing our current wellbeing offer to staff to ensure it continues to meet needs.

A range of management development support is being provided to managers across the service through a number of different ways recognising the important role that our first line managers play in ensuring the quality of practice with children and families.

Monitoring of the amount and types of homes needed for the children in our care is continuing. North Tyneside is also part of a Regional Fostering Pilot which has been developed as part of the 'Stable Homes Built on Love'. Work is also ongoing to review and develop our own internal group living accommodation. Positively our support accommodation provision for 16/17 year olds, Starting Point, is now registered with Ofsted.

North Tyneside have led on a DfE funded piece of work 'Childrens Voices' which has involved jointly working with Northumberland Professors Eileen Munro and Andrew Turnell to test out way in which practitioners can use different approaches to gathering childrens' voices and using feedback to inform their work.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** – that the information contained within the report be noted.

FF23 Ambition for Education Refresh 2024-2028

The Sub-committee received a report and presentation on the proposals for the re-fresh of the Ambition for Education Strategy.

The strategy was first launched in March 2020. The dynamically changing needs both in the borough and nationally shaped the development and delivery of this strategy with Covid recovery. The refresh will allow for the refinement of approaches as we strive to improve outcomes for children and young people in North Tyneside.

The Sub-committee were advised that the changing landscape for education nationally has required a new approach for Local authorities to address local priorities with support and challenge from school improvement officers.

Education North Tyneside has changed its offer to schools working closely with Ofsted and the DfE to maximise opportunities for support and challenge. Officers have worked with settings and schools collaboratively to tackle the barriers to learning which were exacerbated by the pandemic.

The presentation highlighted the following areas which are working well:

- School improvement services have been refocussed to meet need and budget
- Attainment is above or in line with the national average
- Innovative approach to supporting Careers Education Information and Guidance
- Healthy Schools award, support for Mental Health in Schools and increasing levels of physical activity
- Support for school leaders
- Early years multi agency approach, targeting Language development, SEND and closing the disadvantaged gap

The following areas have been identified as needing some work:

- Challenge and support schools and settings to improve outcomes and close the attainment gap for different groups of children and young people
- Improve Post 16 pathways and the quality of Careers Education

Information and Guidance

- Improve the quality of Early childhood education and care and increase effective early intervention
- Inspire school leaders to raise standards via high quality professional engagements
- Tackle the health inequalities for children and young people in North Tyneside
- Address the national issues of Attendance and Inclusion

Five key priorities have been identified for the focus of the 2024-2028 refresh.

1. Early Childhood Education and Childcare
2. Achievement for All
3. Careers and Employability
4. Health and Wellbeing
5. Leadership and Retention

The Local Authority has delivered many significant achievements in recent years there remain many challenges that the Authority continues to be focused on. Alongside the changing need and demand, including the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Authority's understanding on its challenges and what is important to children and young people have informed the priorities and actions set out in the strategy to meet those different needs and help all children and young people thrive.

Delivery against the priorities and objectives and data will be tracked and will allow us to evidence the outcomes achieved for children and young people in North Tyneside.

As well as this Sub-committee consultation has taken place with the Senior Management Team in Children and Young People, the Education Partnership Board and the Youth Forum.

It was queried whether there had been an impact in relation to speech and language due to children having a lack of exposure to their peers during the pandemic. It was noted that we do very well in this regard. It was also noted that

we do commission a language and communication team to work in schools.

It was queried whether the early years situation has improved or are we seeing more children coming into school setting in need of additional support. It was noted that there had been an improvement, however, the pandemic did set this work back but in April / May there will be the launch of the Early Years Inclusion Service, this will be for every child under 5 who may have any Special Educational Need and or Disability to be identified and make sure the right support is in place.

It was suggested that the 0-19 service be invited to update the Sub-Committee on the current position in the borough from the Health Visitors and School Nurses perspective including information how parents are supported who don't necessarily have skills and information on a programme which is being piloted to work with nursery children and their families on readiness for school.

The Sub-committee **RESOLVED** – 1) that the proposals for the refresh be noted and that consultation with young people is planned as part of the next steps to further shape and inform the priorities, 2) that the final version of the refreshed Plan will be submitted to Cabinet for approval in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules contained with the Authority's constitution.

FF24 Work Programme Update

Following the discussion on the Ambition for Education the sub-committee requested that the receive a presentation from the 0-19 service on

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Meeting: Family Friendly Sub-Committee

Date: 21 March 2024

Title: Annual Report for the Corporate Parenting Forum 2023-24

Author: Cllr Peter Earley

Service: Children's Services

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

- To provide Family Friendly Sub Committee with an update in relation to the corporate parenting responsibilities held by the council.
- To provide the sub committee with a reminder of the purpose and membership of Corporate Parenting Forum (CPF)
- To provide the sub committee with a reminder of the current priorities of the CPF and actions taken against these.
- To provide the sub committee with an update on planned future developments for CPF

2. Recommendations

It is recommended the member of the sub committee take note of the report and ask for a further update through an annual report into 2024/25 activity of the committee.

3. Introduction

See attached report.

4. Background Information

See attached report.

5. Appendices

Corporate Parenting Forum Annual Report 23/24

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Corporate Parenting Forum Annual Report 2023/24

Children's Social Care



North
Tyneside
Council

Background and Context

Every local authority has responsibility for the children and young people in its care and those who have been in its care (care experienced). These responsibilities are set out in the 2018 Statutory Guidance 'Applying Corporate Parenting Principles to Looked After Children and Care Leavers'.

This guidance states that:

'A strong corporate parenting ethos means that everyone from the Chief Executive down to front line staff, as well as elected council members, are concerned about those children and care leavers as if they were their own. This is evidenced by an embedded culture where council officers do all that is reasonably possible to ensure the council is the best 'parent' it can be to the child or young person.'

Within North Tyneside the Senior Leadership Team, the elected mayor and the lead members for children and young people take their corporate parenting responsibilities extremely seriously. They are committed to ensuring that all parts of the council, not just those officers working in children's services, understand the role of a corporate parent.



Applying_corporate_
parenting_principles_1

Corporate Parenting Forum

One of the ways in which elected members assure themselves that the council's corporate parenting responsibilities are being fulfilled is through Corporate Parenting Forum. Corporate Parenting Forum meets quarterly and is chaired by the Lead Member for children's social care, Councillor Peter Earley. Other elected members who are part of the forum are:

- Cllr Steven Phillips
- Cllr Pat Oliver
- Cllr John Harrison
- Cllr John O'Shea
- Cllr Steven Cox
- Cllr Tommy Mulvenna

Norma Redfearn is also a member of the forum along with a number of council officers from children's social care including the head of the Virtual School and the Head of Service for Participation and engagement. Colleagues from health with lead responsibility for cared for children are members as well.

The following are key functions of the Corporate Parenting Forum: -

- I. To receive statutory reports in relation to the adoption, fostering, commissioning, cared for children services, children's homes, and the virtual school with a view to recommending any changes.
- II. Ensure that the profile of the corporate parenting agenda is incorporated into key plans, policies and strategies throughout the Council overseeing interagency working arrangements.
- III. Review reports relating to complaints from children in our care to ensure officers have dealt with these appropriately and made any recommendations for change.
- IV. Raise awareness in North Tyneside Council and the wider community by promoting the role of members as corporate parents and the Council as a large corporate family with key responsibilities.
- V. Raise the profile of the needs of children in our care and care leavers through a range of actions including through the organising of celebratory events for the recognition of achievement.
- VI. Ensure that leisure, cultural, further education and employment opportunities are offered and taken up by children in our care and care leavers.
- VII. Promote the development of participation and ensure that the view of children and young people are regularly heard through the Corporate Parenting Panel to improve educational, health and social outcomes to raise aspiration and attainments.
- VIII. Undertake meetings with children and young people in care, frontline staff and foster carers to inform the panel of the standards of care and improvement outcomes for children in our care.

- IX. Monitor the on-going commitment to providing support, training and clarity of expectations to foster carers to achieve excellent and high quality care.
- X. To appoint elected members to undertake visits to residential children's homes alongside the appointed regulation 44 visitor where appropriate.

Progression against current Corporate Parenting Forum Priorities

1. **Review of the Fostering Strategy** This was completed in October 2022 and launched with revised fostering allowances to keep North Tyneside in line with minimum government recommended levels. It was further agreed that we would tie the allowances to the recommended levels which have inflationary, and cost of living rises, to future proof in order that North Tyneside maintains appropriate financial commitment to foster carers and children in care.
2. **Implementation of the Mockingbird Fostering model with the first constellation live in September 2022.** The first Mockingbird constellation went live in October 2022. This has been a successful constellation, although not without its difficulties and some learning for us along the way. The hub carer has changed but the feedback from members of the constellation is that they feel well supported with the care of the children. We launched our second constellation in November 2023, and we are planning our third constellation in March 2024.
3. **Review of the staffing and work force within our children's residential service to future proof and ensure we provide outstanding care for our most vulnerable children.** We have evaluated the current staffing structures throughout the Children's homes and are expanding the establishment to reduce spend on overtime costs and ensure we are able to meet working time directives. We have benchmarked our costs and salaries regionally to ensure we remain competitive in the market. We have seven children's homes and four houses offering supported accommodation to young people aged 16+ years. Our supported accommodation, Starting Point, is now registered with Ofsted, with

inspections due to start nationally in September 2024. We have 6 homes inspected as Good and one home which Requires Improvement to be good.

4. **Progression of the MALAP action plan priorities with our Children in Care Council.** We completed a You Said, We Did event in February 2024 to showcase the actions we have taken in response to the Malap (Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership) action plan and the priorities identified by the Children in Care Council. This included a full revision of our Local Offer to our Care leavers, the creation of a new Life Story coordinator post and revised Life Story model, promotion of Family Seeing Bootcamps, expansion of Mockingbird and the registration of Maple and Oak, two new Children's homes to keep our children in borough wherever possible.
5. **Evaluation of the New Belongings Coram survey.** This was evaluated and incorporated into the Malap action plan. In response, the Local offer was fully revised and launched online.

Key Performance Information (23/24 up to the end of December 2023 - Quarter 3)

- **Children in Care** The rate Children in Care has decreased to 89 per 10k in quarter 3. Lower than the North East rate of 117.1, but above the England rate at 71. The number of Children in Care stands 371 at the end of quarter 3, down from 385 at the end of the previous quarter. Over the first three quarters there have been **490** children in our care accounting for admissions and discharges during that period
- **Placement Stability** –Improvements have been seen in our short-term stability rates this year. **9%** of children in care have been subject to three or more placements. There has been a slight downturn in performance in Long Term stability. **54%** children have been in the same placement for 2 years or more. This has now recovered back up to **71%** as of the start of March 2024
- **Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training** –At the end of Quarter 3, 47% 17–18 year olds and 51.2% 19–21 year olds were in EET. The virtual school now has a post looking at post 16 EET who is

spending time with the leaving care service to reinforce and support the importance of EET opportunities for young people. We would expect this will support performance to improve over the coming year.

- **Missing Episodes** – overall missing episodes decreased in 2023/24. 837 episodes for all children with Social Work involvement, compared to 873 during the same period last year. 276 episodes related to children in our care, with 170 of these being less than 24 hours.
- **Life Story** – Ofsted recommendation in March 2020, and work has continued to improve this across the Service. We have recently introduced ways to measure the activity around this and will be able to report more fully in future papers.
- **Demographics** – a snapshot of the Children in our Care in December 2023 shows that **58%** are **male**, and **42%** are **female**.
- **10% (35 children)** of the group are recorded as having a disability,
- **92%** are recorded as being of white British ethnicity.
- The majority, **(38%)** are aged between **10** and **16** years old, and **15** children **(5%)** are aged under 1 year.
- **22** of the Children in our Care and **20** Care Leavers were UASC at the end of Quarter 3.

Health Assessments and Dental Checks:

- **91%** of CiC who have been looked after for at least 12 months have an up to date review Health Assessment, carried out within the last 6 month for those aged under 5, and in the last 12 months for those 5 years old and over.
- **63%** of CiC who have been looked after for at least 12 months have had a dental check in the last 12 months. We have already identified that some of the missed checks are for older young people and we are doing further work to investigate what else we can do to support their carers to help them to engage in the checks.

Future Development Plans

The corporate parenting forum has discussed how it can be more meaningfully engaged with children and young people in our care or have experienced being in our care. An event was held for children and young people in February half term where young people were asked to feedback on the priorities, they had identified last year. Some elected members who are part of the forum came along to that. Unfortunately, there was limited attendance especially by children in foster care so further consideration needs to be given to how we capture their views. A more structured approach to council officers and elected members meeting with our children in care council is now in place to support a more robust 'You said we did' approach. As part of this we need to review the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Forum to ensure they reflect this approach.

Following the elections in May further training on the corporate parenting responsibilities for elected members as delivered by the Head of the Virtual School will be offered to new councillors which will include an ask for new members for the forum.

As we have completed the priorities set previously Corporate Parenting Forum needs to set new priorities which should be informed by the Children in Care and Careleavers Strategy which is currently being reviewed and refreshed.

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North
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Family Friendly Committee Best Start in Life

Lesley Davies & Joann Connolly
13th March 2024

What we'll cover

01 Best Start in Life offer

02 Universal Offer

03 Targeted Offer

04 Digital Offer

05 Partnership approach to deliver the offer

06 Footfall to the Family Hub Model

07 0 – 19 Q3 Performance data

08 Strategic Partnership Commitment

Best Start in Life

A **system-wide model** of providing high-quality, whole-family, joined up, family support services. Family Hubs deliver these non-stigmatising family support services **from pregnancy, through the child's early years and later childhood, and into early adulthood** until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) **with a great Start for Life offer at their core.**

The offer itself is not a single building – instead, it is a **network** of different **physical locations** in the community, as well as **outreach** and **online** services and support.

The Partnership

Universal Start for Life services:

1. Communities, families and their network
2. NHS Partners
3. 0 – 19 Children's Public Health Service
4. Early Help and Prevention
5. Early Years Inclusion team
6. Voluntary Sector

This offer is part of the Family Hub Model

The building blocks for lifelong emotional and physical health are laid down in the period from conception to the age of two. What happens to an infant in the 1,001 critical days is all about prevention

Universal Offer..



Family Hubs

Maternity offer

Family Hub and community activities

Digital offer



Forest School

Healthy Start vitamins

ChatHealth

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Family Healthy weight and nutrition

ParentLine

Solihull online



VCS

Infant feeding peer support

Healthy Child Programme



Targeted Offer...

Baby Box

Supported Housing Offer

Ready For School & Ready For Learning Offer

Parenting Offer

Sleep Offer

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Healthy Start Scheme

Specialist Infant Feeding support

Forest School

Public Health Specialist Health Visitor roles

Chatterbox

Family Health Wellbeing Partners

Two Matters



Digital Offer

- Solihull online
- Reducing parental conflict workshops
- Dadpad
- Kooth
- ChatHealth
- ParentLine
- Local Offer
- NHS/ NTC Website and Social Media platforms

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Our most popular online courses are

Understanding your baby

Understanding your child with additional needs

Understanding your child from toddler to teenage

Understanding your teenager's brain

With over 1800 people having signed up to the courses!



Footfall to the Family Hub Model



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- To date 2186 visitors have accessed the activities we run from the hubs
- This doesn't include groups ran by partner activities.




- Over 3500 visitors have accessed the Forest school provision including:
 - Emotional wellbeing groups
 - Elected Home educated children and Young people
 - SEND provision



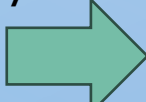
- Registered 779 babies in our hubs this year.
- Stopping them from having to go out of borough

0 – 19 Q3 Performance Data

New Born Visits (face to face achieved) in North Tyneside was 89.2%

- This remains consistent with the same period in the previous year (89.8%). 

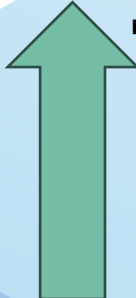
6-8 week Visits (face to face achieved) in North Tyneside was 94.6%

- Consistent in the same period in the previous year (94.3%). 

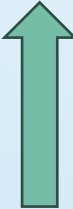
15 Month Contacts (face to face achieved) in North Tyneside

92.8%

- This is an increase of over 2% from the same period in the previous year (90.5%).

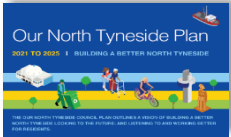
- This is largely due to the figures for the South West area improving by 8%. 

2 ½ Year Contacts (face to face achieved) in North Tyneside was 86.8%

- The % This is an increase of over 5.5% from the same period in the previous year (81.2%). 
 - Each locality area has seen an improvement of between 2.4%, in the South West, to 8.5% in the Coast.

154 conversations opened with the 0-5 ParentLine service, similar to Q3 2022/23.

- This involved 501 messages received, and 977 sent.



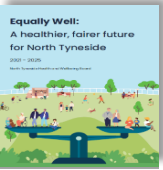
Our North Tyneside Plan



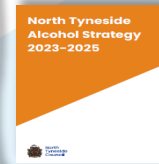
NTC / NHS Joint Forward Plan



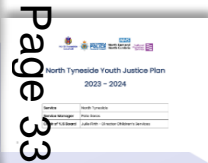
Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy



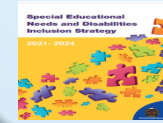
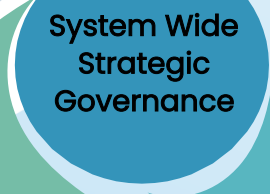
Equally Well



North Tyneside Alcohol Strategy



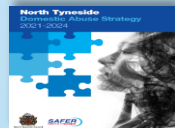
North Tyneside Youth Justice Plan



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Inclusion Strategy



North Tyneside Children and Young People's Plan



North Tyneside Domestic Abuse Strategy



North Tyneside Autism Strategy

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