

Safeguarding: practice, legislation and the multi-disciplinary team

Group Script Presentation

I have used generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in this work, Grammarly (2025) to assist grammatically, and Google Translate (2025) to support this work as an English as a Second Language.

Chairperson Introduction:

Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for attending this Initial Child Protection Conference. My name is Cristiane Ribeiro de Freitas, and I will be chairing today's meeting. This conference concerns Emma, a single parent, and her two children, Cian (aged three) and Luna (aged nine months). I am also the Health Visitor currently supporting the family under the Healthy Child Wales Programme (Welsh Government, 2022).

As Chairperson, I am responsible for ensuring the meeting is conducted respectfully, impartially, and in a clear, structured manner, with a focus on identifying and addressing the protection and support needs of Cian and Luna (Welsh Safeguarding Procedures, no date).

This conference has been convened under *Section 47 of the Children Act 1989* due to concerns of potential significant harm. In line with *Working Together to Safeguard People* (Welsh Government, 2018), this multi-agency forum allows professionals to share relevant information, evaluate current risks, and agree on coordinated actions to safeguard children and support their development and long-term well-being.

I would also like to remind everyone that all information shared today is subject to the *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, 2016)* and the *Data Protection Act 2018*. Under Article 6(1)(e), data may be processed for tasks carried out in the public interest. Article 9(2)(h) permits the sharing of special category data when necessary for the purpose of safeguarding or health and social care provision. All information must be treated with the utmost confidentiality and shared strictly on a need-to-know basis. It is also important to note that Emma, the children's mother, was invited to attend but has chosen not to be present. Her views will still be considered through the reports shared by professionals involved with the family.

We will now begin with the practitioner reports.

Thank you, Amira.

Can we move now to you, Kaitlin, please?

Thank you, Kaitlin.

Health visitor script

As previously introduced, I am the Health Visitor, and I will now share my professional observations.

As a Health Visitor, I provide early intervention and public health support across child development, family wellbeing, nutrition, and safeguarding, in line with NHS Wales (2018a). I assess when a child requires additional support due to unmet health or developmental needs under *Section 17 of the Children Act 1989*, and initiate action under *Section 47* where there are concerns of significant harm. This process relies on multi-agency collaboration and is underpinned by Working Together to Safeguard People (Welsh Government, 2018), which sets out statutory procedures and professional responsibilities in managing individual safeguarding cases.

These responsibilities are further supported by *Section 28 of the Children Act 2004* and the *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014*, both of which promote preventative, person-centred support for families. My practice is also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), particularly Articles 3 and 19, which ensure children's best interests and protection from harm remain central to all decisions.

Applying these frameworks, I can identify concerns early, initiate timely referrals, and contribute to coordinated safeguarding that promotes long-term wellbeing (Welsh Government, 2022), highlighting the importance of nurturing care and stable environments in supporting healthy development and emotional resilience in the early years, as acknowledged by the Department for Education (2015).

At my initial involvement following Cian's birth, no concerns were identified. Despite being a single parent, Emma breastfed, demonstrated confidence in caregiving, and maintained a clean and organised home. Cian appeared content and was meeting expected developmental milestones, and his immunisations were up to date in line with NHS (2024), reflecting a positive foundation for healthy development during the first 1,000 days (HM Government, 2021).

However, during Emma's second pregnancy, I observed early signs of emotional strain and low mood, typical indicators of antenatal depression, as outlined by the NHS (2021). I offered enhanced support in line with the Healthy Child Wales Programme (Welsh Government, 2022), advised Emma to contact her GP, and signposted her to community mental health services.

Despite this, Emma declined to engage. Following Luna's birth, I observed a further decline in her emotional well-being and the hygiene of the home environment. When questioned, she became tearful and disengaged, reflecting signs of postnatal depression (NHS, 2021b). I emphasised the need to contact her GP and made a referral for early intervention, including talking therapies, in line with NHS (2021a) guidance and the preventative duties set out in the *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014*.

Following a referral from the school's safeguarding officer, I carried out a home visit to assess the concerns raised. Upon entering the property, I observed that conditions had significantly deteriorated. There were clear signs of alcohol misuse, including a

strong odour throughout the home and bottles visible in both the kitchen and bedroom. When I attempted to engage with Cian, he showed no response, avoided eye contact, and remained withdrawn, reflecting the concerns raised by the school. Kaitlin, can you please confirm that? Thank you. Although he did not speak, I noted visible tooth decay and strong oral odour, both signs of poor dental hygiene and unmet health needs (Public Health Wales, 2017). Luna, aged just nine months, had a visible nappy rash, clung to a dirty blanket, and was seated on the bare floor. Additionally, Cian has missed his 4-in-1 pre-school booster, and Luna has not received her 16-week vaccinations due to Emma missing the scheduled appointment (NHS, 2024). Emma remained vague and defensive, stating only, 'She's just going through a phase,' showing limited insight into the children's needs.

Based on these observations, I submitted a formal safeguarding referral to Social Services for further investigation, in line with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2025b).

To conclude, the evidence presented raises serious safeguarding concerns consistent with environmental and child neglect (NSPCC, 2020). Cian's lack of responsiveness may indicate early signs of emotional distress (NICE, 2017), and both children appear to have experienced adverse childhood experiences, placing their health and development at significant risk (NHS, 2018b). Based on my ongoing involvement and professional judgement, I believe there is reasonable cause to suspect that Cian and Luna are at risk of significant harm, as defined under *Section 47 of the Children Act 1989*. Emma's persistent lack of engagement, alongside the cumulative concerns identified, suggests that the children's basic needs are not being adequately met, indicating a failure to uphold parental responsibility under *Section 3* of the same Act.

I therefore recommend implementing a Child Protection Plan to coordinate a structured, multi-agency response that mitigates risk and supports the welfare of both Cian and Luna. This recommendation aligns with statutory safeguarding duties and reflects the preventative, person-centred principles outlined in the *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014* and Working Together to Safeguard People (Welsh Government, 2018), promoting long-term safety, healthy development, and emotional resilience.

Thank you for listening.

We will move to you, Jordan, please?

Thank you, Jordan.

We will now move to you, Lauren, please?

Thank you, Lauren.

Chairperson Conclusion:

In my role as Chairperson, I would like to thank all professionals for their valuable contributions throughout this Initial Child Protection Conference.

Following the information presented and the professional discussions held, the conference has collectively concluded that the threshold for significant harm, as outlined in *Section 47 of the Children Act 1989*, has been met. In light of this, I confirm that a Child Protection Plan will be initiated for both Cian and Luna, as set out in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2025a). The category of concern is neglect, including emotional abuse (NSPCC, 2020), and this decision aligns with the guidance provided in *Working Together to Safeguard People* (Welsh Government, 2018).

Although the mother did not attend today's conference, she will be supported and encouraged to engage with the safeguarding process. This will be overseen by the core group, a multi-agency team that must meet within 10 working days to implement the agreed actions, monitor progress, and ensure that safeguarding objectives are achieved (Wales Safeguarding Procedures, 2024).

This outcome upholds our statutory responsibilities under *Section 1(1) of the Children Act 1989*, which places the child's welfare as the paramount consideration in all decisions. It also reflects the preventative, person-centred principles of the *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014* and aligns with the collaborative and sustainable aims set out in *Part 2, Section 5 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*, ensuring both children will have the support to fulfil their potential and grow up in a safe environment. Furthermore, it reinforces our commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), affirming that the best interests of Cian and Luna remain central to all safeguarding actions.

Thank you.

We will now proceed with the individual self-reflections, beginning with Amira.

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