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AI Statement

I have not used AI in any way for this assignment.

## 5 Rs of Safeguarding

In safeguarding, the 5 Rs refer to the five key processes of safeguarding; recognise, respond, record, report and refer (UK Government, 2024).

Recognise highlights the importance of all individuals working with children or vulnerable adults being vigilant to potential signs of abuse or neglect (Social Care Institute for Excellence, n.d). These signs can be subtle, underlining the need for ongoing training to ensure that professionals are aware of indicators and know how to act appropriately (NSPCC, n.d).

Respond refers to the necessity of responding appropriately in the face of a disclosure or concerning event. It is important to remain calm, avoid asking leading questions and to reassure the individual making the disclosure (British Council, 2014). However, it is also critical not to promise confidentiality, as this cannot be guaranteed and may damage trust moving forward (Allnock, Miller and Baker, 2019).

A vital part of this response is to record the concern or disclosure carefully and accurately (General Medical Council, 2024). Records should be made as soon as possible to avoid loss of detail and, where appropriate, use the individual's own words to avoid personal bias (Safeguarding Wales, n.d).

These records are vital to the report process, where concerns are passed on to a designated lead or local authority. Accurate records help prevent safeguarding cases from becoming reliant on memory or hearsay, supporting prompt and appropriate action (Ombudsman Wales, 2022).

Finally, the refer process ensures that concerns reach the appropriate services or agencies, enabling timely and effective support. Well-handled referrals can prevent situations from escalating, potentially avoiding severe harm or more drastic interventions such as child removal (UK Government, 2023).

Together, the 5 Rs form a clear, practical safeguarding process that protects those most at risk.

## Self-reflection script

Before beginning this module, my understanding of safeguarding was largely policy based and rooted in the procedures at my current workplace. While I had a surface level knowledge of broader safeguarding practice and frameworks such as the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of a Child (United Nation, 1989), I lacked an in-depth understanding of their breadth and practical application.

In particular, I was unaware of how they linked to the broader roles played by professionals in child protection matters or how safeguarding functions as a preventative tool beyond immediate risk. Furthermore, while I was aware of the possibility of cultural or religious differences leading to false accusations of child mistreatment, I was not fully aware that this may obfuscate genuine concerns as a result of the reporter fearing they may be perceived as bigoted or intolerant.

During the course of this module, I became aware of the wide range of safeguarding legislation informing Welsh procedures and the catalyst cases that led to their creation, amendment, or expansion. While these cases were extremely emotionally difficult to research and digest, I feel they have allowed me to fully understand the scope implied by the term safeguarding. I am better aware of the impact and implications of decisions made at all levels and by all people in cases of child protection.

While conducting this research, I was heartened to find that Wales has some of the strongest protections of children's rights globally, having not only ratified the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989)

but also strengthened them in domestic law through the Rights of Children and Young Persons Measure (Wales) 2011 (National Assembly for Wales, 2011). This places Wales as having the strongest statutory commitment to children's rights within the United Kingdom, allowing early years practitioners and other professionals strong legal backing when protecting children. This has given me the confidence to trust that if I raise a safeguarding concern in my work, it will be received in good faith and acted upon, in the child and family's best interests.

One of the most thought-provoking discoveries I made during this research was the conflict between the Laming Report and the later Munro report. The Laming report, commissioned following the tragic death of 8 year old Victoria Climbie at the hands of her great-aunt and her partner, found that her death was the result of individual negligence and a break down in communication between agencies charged with Victoria's care (Laming, 2003), The Munro report, commissioned in 2010 and published in 2011, criticised the Laming report for focusing too much on the assignation of personal responsibility and failing to consider the systemic and societal factors which influenced individual behaviour in that case (Munro, 2011).

This conflict highlighted to me that while it may be instinctual to assign blame in the face of a tragedy, it is also important to account for the external factors which may have impacted an individual's decision-making or actions. This has encouraged me to consider alternative perspectives with greater empathy and critical thought, both in my own practice and when engaging with colleagues.

As a result of this module, I now have a far deeper and more nuanced understanding of safeguarding and my role as an early year's practitioner. I feel more confident in identifying potential signs of abuse or neglect, especially in cases where cultural or religious factors may complicate perception or response. I now understand safeguarding not only as a response to harm but as a preventative and proactive responsibility, underpinned by wide-reaching legislation. My awareness of how societal structures and inter-agency communication affects outcomes has strengthened my resolve to advocate for children's welfare, even in uncertain or complex situations.

Going forward, I will continue to reflect critically on my actions and remain open to learning from wider contexts. Most importantly, I am more confident in my statutory duty to act in a child's best interests and more assured that my concerns will be supported by law.

## Self-reflection and 5 Rs Reference List

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