# ECEY5011 Safeguarding Group Assignment

## Individual scripts:

### Social Worker (Julie)

Good afternoon, my name is Julie MacDonald, and I am the social worker working with Ronnie and his family. We are meeting today to discuss the recent changes in Ronnie and look for ways we can help the family. As there were recent concerns from the school regarding Ronnie's well-being and after Ronnie's uncle Phil dropped him at school smelling of alcohol the decision to make a referral was made which supports the best interests of the child in line with Article 3 of the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child, (UNCRC) UNICEF (2019) which affirms the best interest are the top priority. My colleagues and I carefully considered the case and within 24 hours the decision was made to instigate *section 47* as part of the *Children Act 1989*, and as of *section 3 part 2 of the Children Act 1989* this case is being held within 15 days of the referral. Following Social Care Wales (no date) advice it is our responsibility to be objective while analysing all relevant information from this committee.

The family unit is comprised of Mrs. Smith, Ronnie and Roxy's mum, who unfortunately lost her partner and the children's father 10 months ago, and according to the *Children Act 1989, chapter 41 section 3* Mrs. Smith has parental responsibility which means, including others, she has the responsibilities and duties in relation to the child. She has no other family for support, but recently the father's brother, Phil, has become more involved. They are both still grieving and are trying to support each other. Phil is struggling with the loss of his only brother and, also having no other family support, has turned to alcohol as a way of coping. As discussed by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2011) there is clear evidence that adverse life events can lead to excessive drinking and potentially predispose individuals to alcohol dependence. This is especially noticeable in cases where alcohol dependence develops after stressful life situations, such as bereavement. As a committee we need to be mindful of the impact of Phil's drinking on Ronnie's future, while considering the support Phil also needs.

As we know, abuse takes many forms and as highlighted by NSPCC Learning (2020), includes emotional abuse, and can involve neglect. It is evident that there are occasions where Ronnie's fundamental physical needs have not been met as highlighted by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954) , which raises the question if support for his psychological needs is also lacking which contrasts with article 19, to be protected from violence, abuse and neglect, of the UNCRC (NSPCC Learning 2020; UNICEF 2019). It is important to address this to limit Ronnie's Adverse Childhood Experiences with the hope to reduce future illness and counteract the negative adult experiences, particularly mental health as discussed by Hughes *et al* (2018) for Public Health Wales. It is known that witnessing the aggression and verbal abuse of his uncle will add to the already experienced ACE of losing his father. As Hughes, Ford and Bellis (2018) share, the need to support individuals who have experienced adversity and limit further experiences is crucial for enhancing overall health. Helping to develop resilience may help mitigate the elevated health and social risks associated with ACEs.

As of *section 47 part 5 of the Children Act 1989* and article 12, to respect the views of the child, of the UNCRC (UNICEF 2019), I have spoken to Ronnie about how he feels about the current situation, this is also in line with the child centred approach of the *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, part 2.6. Ronnie* obviously loves his mother and uncle but did admit he is often scared and worries about what will happen when there is shouting, this is contradictory to article 19 of the UNCRC. As illustrated by the *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014* allowing Ronnie to have a voice and early intervention will help him to maintain control over his daily life and accomplish what is important to him.

When considering the Well-Being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015 we as an official body have the obligation to ensure the safety of Ronnie and his sibling to be resilient, healthy, and prosperous in the future, to do this we need to be acting now. Not all conferences end in a protection plan but if that is what we decide to do it must support Ronnie and assist in raising his level of care. After this conference, there will be core group meetings within 10 days. A Core Group as defined by Denbighshire County

Council (No date) consists of all relevant practitioners and family members collaborating to develop, implement, and review a Care and Support Protection plan. Each member is responsible for monitoring the plan to ensure it addresses the child's needs.

I would now like to hand over to Mrs Thomas, Ronnie's class teacher, thank you.

**Classroom Teacher (Liz)**

Hello, my name is Mrs. Liz Thomas, and I appreciate this opportunity to discuss the critical role of a classroom teacher in an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC), particularly regarding Ronnie and his sister Roxi. As teachers, our responsibilities extend beyond education; we also safeguard our students' well-being and rights. Over the past month, I have observed significant changes in Ronnie's behavior. He has become quieter, playing alone, and often appears sad. He frequently arrives in dirty clothes with unwashed hair, is consistently late, and often complains of hunger, sometimes indicating he hasn't had breakfast. Recently, he was brought to school by an unfamiliar male with a strong smell of alcohol, whom we later identified as his uncle. The headteacher has asked me to document all these observations.

Our first responsibility is to carefully observe and document any significant changes in a child's behavior, appearance, or interactions (OECD, 2021). For Ronnie, I observed marked changes in his behavior, declining hygiene, and concerning incidents, such as arriving with an unfamiliar male who smelled of alcohol. These observations need to be accurately recorded as they form the basis for any referral and subsequent ICPC discussions. According to the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and UNCRC Article 3 (UNICEF, NoDate), the child's best interests must be a top priority. Documenting these changes ensures Ronnie's experiences and concerns are taken seriously, advocating for his safety and well-being.

The next step is the referral process. It is our duty to report our concerns to the headteacher and collaborate on referring to child protection services (ThoughtCo, 2020). Providing detailed accounts of our observations and interactions with Ronnie and

his family facilitates timely intervention, ensuring the children's rights to safety and protection are prioritized.

Participation in the ICPC is another critical responsibility. As teachers, attending the conference allows us to share insights into Ronnie's behavior and family situation. Collaborating with other professionals, we develop a comprehensive protection plan, discuss potential interventions, and support needed for the family (NEA, 2023). It is essential that Ronnie's educational and emotional needs are considered in the protection plan. We must advocate for a comprehensive approach that addresses both immediate risks and long-term well-being (COBIS, NoDate).

Understanding our legal and ethical obligations is essential:

- **Children Act 1989 and 2004**: These acts establish the legal framework for child protection in the UK, emphasizing that the welfare of the child is paramount and mandating professionals to act on concerns about a child's safety.
- **Education Act 2002**: This act places a duty on schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, requiring teachers to identify at-risk children and take appropriate action.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018**: This guidance outlines the responsibilities of professionals, including teachers, in safeguarding children, emphasizing inter-agency cooperation and information sharing.

Possible outcomes of the ICPC include developing a Child Protection Plan if Ronnie and Roxi are at significant risk. This plan ensures their safety and well-being, and the family may receive support services like counseling or financial assistance (TeachKloud, 2023). Regular monitoring of the protection plan is crucial to assess intervention effectiveness. In severe cases, temporary removal and placement in alternative care may be considered (Naeyc, 2020).

To ensure the best outcomes, we must adhere to good practices and appropriate procedures:

- **Child-Centered Approach**: Focus on Ronnie and Roxi's needs and rights, ensuring their voices are central to the assessment and planning process.
- **Confidentiality and Sensitivity**: Handle all information confidentially and sensitively, respecting the family's privacy while ensuring the children's safety (Teaching Agency, 2013).
- **Collaboration and Communication**: Work collaboratively with professionals like social workers, health professionals, and police to build a comprehensive understanding of the situation. Maintain open communication with the family to engage them in the process and address their concerns (Early Education, 2021).

By fulfilling these roles and responsibilities, adhering to legal and ethical obligations, and following good practices, teachers like myself can play a crucial role in protecting children like Ronnie and Roxi and promoting their long-term well-being and development.

I have spoken and raised concern with our safeguard officer (DSO), the headteacher, in line with Wales safeguarding procedure 2019. (NSPCC Learning, 2020).

**Headteacher (Debbie)**

Hello, I am Debbie Fear, Headteacher and designated Safeguarding Officer.

The class teacher, Mrs Elizabeth Thomas, raised a concern over Ronnie's recent behaviour in that he seems withdrawn, his punctuality and coming into school in a dirty uniform. I advised her to observe and record his behaviour during class time, log punctuality concerns, and who was bringing him to school on the days he was late. Baginsky (2022) suggests observations help to provide a holistic view of the child, helping us to understand their needs and vulnerabilities. They also allow identification of safeguarding issues. Reid and Burton (2017) agree that recording observations are essential as it provides evidence, informs decision making, and supports case management. It was during these observations, that Ronnies' behaviour started to

change. Mrs Thomas noted that he often appeared to be withdrawn, arriving at school in dirty clothes, unwashed and hair not brushed. He arrived at school with a male who was unknown to staff at that time, however they have since established that the male is in fact his uncle. The male was smelling strongly of alcohol, so the class teacher notified me, as the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately. Safeguarding Wales Procedures (2019) states that if a practitioner becomes concerned that a child may be at risk of or experiencing harm, neglect, or abuse they have a duty to report it to their designated safeguarding officer. The *Education Act 2002* section 157 explains that schools have a duty of care to the health, welfare, and safety of all pupils and all staff are aware of, and up to date with training on safeguarding practice, in line with Welsh Governments, Keeping Learners Safe (2022) and The Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019).

As a school, we are aware of the Smith family history with dads passing and that support was put in place with the family initially, although it does appear that mum has recently stopped engaging with staff at school.

Looking at Ronnies attendance of late, there are periods of absence which have not been explained and his punctuality has been erratic, arriving late on most days he has been in school. Mum has explained these as generally running late and has not indicated any specific problems.

Although Ronnie is not at the statutory age for school, all three-year-olds in Wales are entitled to Early Years Foundation education. According to Welsh Governments All Wales Attendance Framework (2012) a child's enjoyment of school and academic achievement is likely to be affected by poor attendance and in early years this can hinder their foundational learning and social and emotional development. The *Human Rights Act 1998* Article 2 states that no person should be denied the right to an education, this is also enforced in Welsh law by way of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in which Article 28 states every child has the right to an education (UNICEF, no date).

Having visited the classroom and seen Ronnie for myself within the classroom setting during lessons and at playtimes, I observed him to be a solitary character. Although his class teacher has advised this is not his usual behaviour and that he had always been a happy, sociable, and polite little boy who engaged in class activities and would often play with a mix of other children. Play Wales (no date) emphasises how important play is for children's holistic development and wellbeing, developing friendships and social skills which are essential for their future. The Welsh Government's (2024) early childhood play, learning and care initiative also places children's wellbeing and development at the heart of early childhood education. I also noticed his uniform looked grubby and his overall appearance seemed unkept. This is failing to meet his basic needs as outlined in Maslows Hierarchy of Needs (Pichère and Cadiat, 2015) and The UNCRC article 19, being protected from neglect and bad treatment (UNICEF, no date).

I have spoken with the Family Engagement Officer to see how we can work together to encourage mum to re-engage with support and if there are any other local initiatives that may benefit the family.

As the designated Safeguarding Officer, I followed The *Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014* section 30, which outlines the duty for relevant partners, including practitioners to report concerns about children, if there is any reasonable cause to suspect they are at risk of harm. As the headteacher and DSO, based on the information I was able to collate, I believe there is sufficient cause for concern to suspect that Ronnie is likely to suffer significant harm so under section 47 of the *Children Act 1989,* I made a referral to social services. This was done in line with the *Data Protection Act 2018* (GDPR) section 2 referrals, being mindful of how personal data is collated and shared.

I will now hand you over to our Family Engagement Officer Miss Caitlin Colwill.

**Family Engagement Officer (Caitlin)**

Thank you, Debbie, Good afternoon, I would like to take this opportunity to firstly introduce myself and my role in supporting the Smith family.

My name is Caitlin Colwill the designated Family Engagement Officer (FEO) at Baglan Primary School.

Morgan, (2016), p.196 gives an outline of the role which is to work in partnership with pupils, schools, and their families to overcome barriers to accessing support. In line with United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNCRC Article 3 (UNICEF, No Date) and the So*cial Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) part 2 section 6* I have spent the time in my role fostering a positive relationship with the Smith family and have been receiving active engagement until recently.

According to NSPCC, (2023) in any educational environment, children's welfare is paramount. Early identification and action in situations with possible child protection concerns can have a profound impact on the lives of young children.

This child protection meeting outlines the diverse approach necessary in such challenging cases, I will be demonstrating how a Family Engagement Officer would have assisted the family of Ronnie and Roxi from the outset of the defined issues.

According to Welsh Government, (2023) A Family Engagement Officer plays a crucial role in supporting families in supporting and implementing these three approaches. *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, part 2 section 6* states rights of the child are paramount and their views, wishes, and feelings are considered, by providing a person-centred approach, the FEO can ensure that families feel heard and valued, fostering trust and cooperation. Utilising a strengths-based approach, they help families recognise and enhance their existing abilities, empowering them to overcome challenges (Estyn, 2019). Additionally, through a trauma-informed approach,

they address the profound effects of trauma, offering guidance and support to facilitate healing and resilience (Centre on Child Wellbeing and Trauma, n.d.)

According to the *Children Act 2004* collaboration between a wide range of specialists, organisations, settings, and other organisations is essential to protect children, particularly those with complex or multiple needs. The initial concerns regarding Ronnie, a three-year-old in Nursery, were raised by his teacher, Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas and Mrs Debbie Fear Head Teacher over 10 months ago. We had a meeting together to discuss the devastating news of the passing of Mr Smith and what support I could offer the family. During this meeting we discussed the family's situation and how best we could offer holistic guidance and multi-agency support In line with (NSPCC, 2019) advice.

When referring to the (Welsh Government, n.d.) FaCE the challenge together: Family and community engagement toolkit for schools in Wales guidance It was determined that the family could benefit from my support where it began with a phone call home to mum to offer support which was met with open arms.

Mum had been engaging well over the 10-month period I have worked with her. Together we had weekly catch-up meetings during our school coffee mornings that Roxi had been attending since birth and within the period mum accessed multiple agency support with great success.

I first started to notice the disengagement from Mum when Roxi and herself began sporadically attending our coffee mornings. Mental Health UK, (2024) suggests everybody experiences grief in a different way. Bereavement is an individual journey that may be confusing and uncertain. Similarly, Mind, (2019) gives an insight into what grief feels like, it is natural to think you are incapable of handling your loss. You may be concerned about how you will manage to live with your emotions if they become too much. Also, you can experience anxiety or stress over the future.

When I have reached out to mum over phone calls, it has been either going to voice mail or cut short with mum explaining she can't chat at present. I have been on the school

gate greeting parents and have noticed mum has been on the phone when dropping off and collecting Ronnie and will avoid conversation where possible. NHS, (2022) provides insights into one form of sadness that many parents encounter following childbirth is postnatal depression. Within a year of giving birth, around one in ten women have this prevalent issue.

While we understand Mum is grieving and may be experiencing some effects of post-natal depression my role to guide mum into the correct support agencies. Since collaboratively working with Mrs Fear we have identified support strategies where the focus is to re-engage mum with school (Welsh Government, n.d.)

The noticeable shift in Ronnie's demeanour over the past weeks, coupled with his deteriorating hygiene and appearance, raised a cause for concern. Despite some discussions with Mum, no clear explanation or acknowledgment of any changes in family circumstances were provided (College, 2011)

*Children Act 1989 and 2004*: These acts establish the legal framework for protecting children in the UK. They underline that a child's wellbeing comes first and require professionals to disclose and take appropriate action in response to any concerns regarding a child's safety. When Mrs Thomas and Mrs Fear made me aware of the unidentified male who is now understood to be Ronnie’s uncle who had a strong smell of alcohol is when collectively with all the observations the decision was made to make a referral.

In line with the FEO role combining multi-agency working (NSPCC, 2019) shares that effective safeguarding and child protection need multi-agency collaboration. Throughout their lives, children and their families will make use of a variety of services. In order to obtain a comprehensive picture of a child's circumstances and develop a coordinated approach, practitioners must collaborate. In line with this key element of my role I have been liaising with the health visitor who I would like to introduce to share her findings thank you.

**Health Visitor (Tiegan)**

Good afternoon, I am Tiegan Dickeson, a health visitor who still stops by Mrs. Smith's house to visit Roxi, Ronnie and his family. While I have been visiting, I have noticed things are more unkept at home. We must take urgent action and pay close attention to the circumstances involving Ronnie's family. In Ronnie and Roxie's house, I have observed several indications of chaos. UNCRC Artice 27 states that parties agree that every child has a right to the standards of living sufficient for their social, moral, spiritual, mental, and physical growth. Usually, I visit Mrs. Smith's and check up on Roxi but as of late, Ronnie has not been there.

I have had many conversations with Mrs. Smith in which she has stated she is having difficulty sleeping due to Roxi's teething. Although, it is clear from our conversations that Mrs. Smith is having difficulties. This demonstrates *The Mental Health Act of 1983*, which establishes a legal framework for the evaluation and care of people with mental health conditions, is also essential to this situation. During this difficult moment, we need to consider whether Ronnie's mother needs mental health support and what kind of help we might provide to support her loss.

First, let me direct attention to *Section 17* of the *Children Act 1989*, which forms the basic framework of child protection laws in the United Kingdom. This law describes local authorities' responsibilities to protect children in need and puts emphasis on the welfare of the child. In Ronnie's case, we must put his welfare first. In addition to this legislation the UNCRC Article 3 states that in every decision involving children, the child's best interests must always come first, whether it comes from either private or public social welfare organizations', legal authorities, administrative agencies, or legislative bodies.

Second, local authorities can help and support underprivileged children and their families through the Adoption and *Children Act of 2002*. This law emphasizes the value

of maintaining connections with family while guaranteeing the child's welfare and safety. We need to determine if Mrs. Smith can get the help, she needs to support her tragedies and difficulties. Additionally, I have found an article discussing support and self-care which could help support Mrs. Smith (Mind, 2023).
Moving forward, a structure for multi-agency collaboration in child protection situations is provided by the Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance (2018). To guarantee the best possible outcomes for children, this advice places a strong emphasis on the value of information exchange, collaborative decision-making, and coordinated efforts. This is what this conference is about. When it comes to how we handle Ronnie's situation, we are required to follow this advice.

Furthermore, the *Mental Capacity Act 2005* is a vital resource for protecting vulnerable individuals who might not be able to make decisions for themselves. We need to determine if Ronnie's uncle can give him a safe and appropriate environment given his past alcoholism. In addition, the importance of treating the effects of domestic abuse on children is emphasized by the *Domestic abuse, Crime, and Victims Act 2004*. We must take the necessary precautions to keep Ronnie and Roxie safe if there is proof of domestic abuse in his family throughout this case. Furthermore, if there is indication of criminal activity, such as dependency on alcohol or domestic violence. *The Criminal Justice Act 1988* came into effect. To make sure Ronnie is shielded from any illegal activity, we need to collaborate with the relevant law enforcement agencies. Moreover, Children and young people embrace their basic human right to dignity the UNCRC Article 19 states that this implies that, just as everyone else, they have a right to be shielded from harm.

Furthermore, the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*, which requires that those who interact with children complete the required background checks to guarantee their eligibility, is what brought us all together today. Ronnie's uncle Phil must be evaluated to

ensure that he provides a secure environment and must be assessed considering this regulation.

Additionally, the *Data Protection Act 2018* regulates the gathering, storage, and utilization of personal information. We are required by law to maintain the highest level of confidentiality of Ronnie's personal information, this law ensures that his personal information is secure and protected.

Children of compulsory age to attend school must get an education, according to the *Education Act 1996*, which places responsibility for this duty on local authorities. Ronnie's education cannot be compromised because of the present situation. We might think that Ronnie's education is compromised. The school staff have said that he has been missing days of school and coming in late. In addition to this, missing school could have a negative effect on Ronnie as Ellison and Hutchinson (2018) states that missing education can affect academic achievement and can additionally affect socialization.

The *Human Rights Act 1998*, in its definitive version, grants fundamental freedoms and rights to every individual.  Ronnie has rights, and we must ensure these are respected during this process, including the rights of security, safety, and life with his family.

**Police Officer (Rhydian)**

Good afternoon, my name is Rhydian Davies and I am the police officer that will be providing support to the school and ensuring the best outcome for Ronnie and Roxi in this case. I am aware of the difficult situation this family is in, with the loss of Ronnie and Roxi’s father and the obstacles the family are facing whilst trying to provide the best upbringing for the children. The *Children Act 1989* is a crucial factor of consideration in this case as it provides the legal framework for child Protection in the UK. It emphasizes

the welfare of a child as paramount and outlines the importance of local authorities and law enforcement in safeguarding children. *Part III, section 17* of the article (1989) defines children in need and the duty of local authorities to safeguard and promote their welfare. It also includes section 20 that notes voluntary accommodation should be provided to children by local authorities.

In this case the uncle of Ronnie and Roxi is well known to the police due to past encounters due to alcohol-based incidents. According to The *Protection of Children Act 1999*, Phil is deemed unsuitable to work with children, which could be harmful to Ronnie and Roxi. Phil is listed, which means he is known to the police but has not yet been convicted of any wrongdoing. The *Protection of Children Act 1999* is a list in which the Secretary of State has a duty to record the names of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. Due to Phil being on the PoCA list social services will most likely be informed and this may initiate an assessment to ensure the safety and welfare of the children. This could involve:

- **Home visits** to assess the living conditions and the child's well-being.
- **Interviews** with the child, the parent, and other family members.
- **Multi-agency meetings** to discuss the case and decide on appropriate actions

This case is a safeguarding concern which means the first measure we will take is to evaluate the situation and the immediate risk to the child’s safety. If we conclude that the child is in immediate danger urgent action will be enforced to protect them. The *Children Act 1989, Section 46* provides police with the power to take a child into protective custody for up to 72 hours if we believe the child is at risk of significant harm. As noted in the *children act 1989, section 47* as a police officer my duty is to investigate when there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm. Due to Ronnie’s uncle bringing him to school with a strong scent of

alcohol coming from him, the *Children act 1989, section 47* applies. This is a sensitive case and there are many factors to take into consideration, but our main priority is to ensure the children's safety and hopefully provide support to the family. It's also very important we provide support to uncle Phil and ensure he receives referrals to support services for alcohol issues, such as counselling and rehabilitation programs. According to the NHS (2024) there are a range of different help hubs provided to support people like Phil including Alcoholics Anonymous, We are with you, Adfam and many more. Along with this, we will facilitate access to family support services to help the family.

According to Velleman and Orford (1999) having a parent or guardian with alcohol issues can have a huge impact on a child with lifelong effects. It is very important that this issue is resolved immediately as this is a very difficult situation for the children to be in and it could have negative effects on the child's emotional, psychological, physical and social well-being. Phil tends to be verbally aggressive when drinking and that's how he is known to police so it's our duty to step in and prevent any harm towards the children. *The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 19* states that governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them. To comply with *HM Government guidance* (2015) we will hold information about the children who are suffering. To ensure long lasting support for the children we will always share this information with other organizations and agencies where this is necessary to protect Ronnie and Roxi. To align with the needs of the children we will use the guidance from the *Children and Social Work Act 2017 c16*. It is intended to improve support for the welfare and safeguarding of children and make provisions about the regulation of social workers. UNCRC article 3 states that in all cases concerning a child the best interest of the child must be the most important factor. It is important to consider the data protection act (2018) in this case aswell as this would be in the best interests of the children and Uncle Phil.

## Reflections

### Social Worker (Julie)

That brings our conference to a close. We will now share our personal reflections.

I believed my knowledge of safeguarding was well rounded before because, as a school, we receive regular training and refresher sessions. However, as I have had the unfortunate experience of reporting a case my awareness of the policies and procedures that needed to be followed was tested. I took advice, where possible, and followed the procedure through to conclude my involvement. The fact that as practitioners we are often not involved in, or made aware of, the final decision does not facilitate reflection on our part of the process, which can be frustrating.

I have learned that changing or updating legislation takes time, sadly, as a result of one or more cases that have ended in tragedy, consequently there are new recommendations and reports on what went wrong and why, and how to improve, this is then considered by the government and new or updated Acts are introduced. My knowledge of statutory requirements has improved also and the need to remain updated on them.

Overall, my practice is likely to be unchanged due to the yearly Safeguarding and Child Protection Training undertaken as part of my current role. I think the need to take advantage of training on the signs to look out for will be necessary in my practice, however, as my experience was in disclosures that had needed to be addressed. My awareness of the cause and effect of where the guidelines and procedures have resulted from will always stay with me, this helps me to think that something positive has come from such sadness.

**Class teacher (Liz)**

Before researching this assignment, I thought I was knowledgeable about safeguarding and recognising signs of neglect or abuse. Having read this case study and researching the acts and legislations regarding safeguarding, I have realized that there is much more in-depth information to be learnt and to be aware of.

I have learnt that there are many more people or practitioners involved and it takes time to conclude any case to seek a satisfactory end and not necessary on the part of the families involved. However, the children are the main priority and safeguarding them is the aim.

Although my practice is unlikely to change as I have up to date safeguarding training and refreshers, In the future I would like to broaden my knowledge further in order to recognise earlier signs of abuse or neglect and be able to act on it thoroughly and accordingly. I am now much more confident in recognising signs and have benefited from exploring and researching this assignment.

**Headteacher (Debbie)**

Before undertaking this module, I thought I had a relatively good knowledge of safeguarding and child protection as it is something I do daily within my role and the regular training and refresher training that we undertake. However, in all the training we do, I personally believe, there is not enough emphasis on recognizing the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to effectively question when we have a concern or suspicion. We have lots of training on what to do if we receive a disclosure, but not so much about spotting something early and when to intervene.

Having read many articles, legislative acts, policies, and initiatives relating to children and children's services, by Welsh Government, and that of the UK, they place safeguarding and child protection at the heart of what they are aiming to achieve and always for the best outcomes to children.

Sadly though, there are always people who, for whatever reason, get through these. I did not realise the length of time it takes for changes to be made but do recognise they are often highly complex and unique cases with many influencing factors to consider.

I also learned that the system can be used very effectively and supportively to children and families who do not necessarily mean harm to their children and just need some help to get things right. So, there are positives to be taken from often upsetting scenarios.

I believe my own practice will change as I think I now have a better understanding of recognising the signs and symptoms of potential abuse, so will be more confident in questioning and reporting concerns going forward.

**Family Engagement Officer (Caitlin)**

Reflecting on my experience of this child protection meeting, I have gained a profound understanding of the complex and critical nature of safeguarding practices. This assignment has significantly enhanced my understanding of why and where specific legislations is necessary, emphasising the vital role they play in protecting vulnerable children.

Engaging in a child protection meeting provided a more in-depth learning experience than online safeguarding courses. While these courses are essential for building foundational knowledge, participating in a real world scenario revealed the intricate layers and collaborative practice involved in safeguarding. This practical engagement allowed me to appreciate the importance of safeguarding, including the legal, social, and emotional dimensions.

The assignment broadened my knowledge by highlighting the specific legislations that underpin safeguarding practices, which provide the legal framework for protecting children's welfare. Understanding and researching these laws reinforced their importance in ensuring every child's right to safety and well-being.

Additionally, this experience allowed me to understand the extensive collaboration required in child protection meetings. I witnessed firsthand the involvement of various professionals, who each bringing their expertise to the table. This multidisciplinary approach is crucial for developing comprehensive holistic approaches.

Overall, this assignment has greatly benefited my practice by providing a holistic understanding of safeguarding. It has equipped me with the knowledge and skills to navigate complex safeguarding situations, advocate effectively for children's rights, and collaborate efficiently with other professionals. This enriched perspective will undoubtedly enhance my ability to contribute to safeguarding efforts in my future career.

**Health Visitor (Tiegan)**

I previously briefly understood safeguarding and legislation before this assignment, although after doing further research into this and researching my role as a health visitor I have a deeper understanding of why legislation is put into place. Which is to ensure that all individuals and children are protected. Also, during this assignment, I learnt how important communication and multi-agency working is to support children and vulnerable individuals and how important teamwork and efficient communication are. For exchanging information, addressing issues, and reaching an agreement, open and transparent routes of communication are crucial. This assignment would support me for my future practice as I have more understanding of the importance and will ensure that this will be used for any future positions with children’s safeguarding.

All in all, this assignment has given me a strong basis on which to implement my expanded understanding of safeguards, laws, and the significance of clear communication in my future work. Through consistent application of this information, I will help provide a secure and nurturing environment for the children and vulnerable adults in my care.

**Police Officer (Rhydian)**

This assignment has given me a chance to upskill and expand my knowledge on many things. It has given me a good understanding of how to deal with a sensitive situation and hopefully the ability to put it into practice if I ever find myself in a situation like this. I understand that a case like this can be very distressing, and it is important to always prioritize the safety and well-being of the children

During this assignment I have learned that communication between all kinds of professionals including teachers, police officers, social workers are extremely important when discussing a pupil. This communication makes it easier to identify risks early and intervene appropriately. Multi-disciplinary teamwork ensures that all aspects of a child's well-being are considered, which promotes a holistic approach to safeguarding. I have also learnt that keeping practitioners up to date with appropriate training is vital because it ensures that every situation is dealt with in the right way. I have also learnt from many legislations that have been put in place to support and protect children and having knowledge of this will give me a better understanding of children's rights on my journey to become a teacher.

This assignment has made me aware that situations like this can happen and hopefully I will be able to easily identify signs that show a child is at risk of harm or is being harmed. It is also very important that I do not jump to conclusions and always look for support from other professionals.

Reference List

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