



**GRADUATE CERTIFICATE in Consolidation
of Social Work Practice
LEVEL 6 - 60 Credits
BMPPF6044**

**LEARNER PORTFOLIO
(PORTH AGORED and UNIVERSITY OF WALES
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Task 4

Safeguarding in an area which is not your main area of work

Guidance:

*Social Care Wales require newly qualified social workers to provide evidence of their understanding of safeguarding work with adults and children. The assignment below will enable you to demonstrate this. **N.B.** if your usual area of work is with children please write about adult safeguarding. If you usually work with adults, then write about child safeguarding. Ensure you meet the learning outcomes for this task (see appendix 5 of the handbook).*

Question a:

In an area **that is not your main focus of work** (see guidance above), explain the relevant legislation, and the national, local and organisational policies and procedures for safeguarding.

One of the main pieces of legislation regarding the care and welfare of children and their families is the 'Children Act 1989', which applies to England and Wales (Brayne & Carr, 2010). As well as this, the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019) and The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (SSWBA) 2014, part 7, is specific to safeguarding children. These pieces of legislation provide the legal framework, duties and powers for social workers to undertake work with children and families in the UK. The key principles within the acts being that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance (Brammer, 2010).

At a local level within XX authority, regional safeguarding children boards co-ordinate and ensure effectiveness of work to protect and promote the welfare of children. They are responsible for local child protection policy, procedure and guidance. (NSPCC Learning, 2024). Each board includes any: local authority (LA), chief officer of police, local health board (LHB), NHS trust and provider of probation services that falls within safeguarding board area.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019) sets out 5 sections for children and young people at risk of harm including pointers for practice. This framework outlines how child protection referrals, actions and plans should be made and carried out. They are based on the principle

that the protection of children is the responsibility of all individuals and agencies working with children and families and not just Social Work practitioners.

The signs of child abuse aren't always obvious, and a child might not feel able to divulge the abuse to anyone, often with children not even realising that they are being abused (NSPCC, 24). There are varying different types of child abuse and some common signs that there may be something concerning in a child's life include but is not limited to: unexplained changes in behaviour, withdrawn, anxious, uncharacteristically aggressive, knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age etc. When working with children, the SSWBA (2014) instructs us to initiate a section 47 investigation where there is concern for a child's welfare.

The XX Local Authority (LA) of which I work for has its corporate safeguarding policy that includes children and adults. It is written to protect the most vulnerable people within the community and sets out the legal duties expected by its employees. In regards to reporting concerns, the policy encourages employees to adhere to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019, whereby the essential roles and responsibilities are outlined.

Child protection practice and legislation in the UK is underpinned by the principles set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989 (UNICEF, 1990). It also considers the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 incorporates these into UK law (Brayne & Carr, 2010). The UNCRC has now been ratified by all EU member states and applies to all children 17 years of age and under. Wales was the first country within the UK to embed the principles of the UN Convention into its laws (WG, 2008a).

Words: 503

500 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).

Question b:

Reflect on the difference between safeguarding in adults' and children's work

Safeguarding is about protecting children and adults from abuse, harm or neglect.

Nonetheless, there are contrasts between safeguarding procedures for adults and children.

While both look at neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse, adult safeguarding has the added category of financial abuse, which is not recognised in children's safeguarding. Yet there are many cases where children are exploited for financial gains. Many practitioners are familiar with the term 'gut feeling' and may lean on research to support this and make enquiries.

Within both areas of safeguarding there are ethical considerations and dilemmas for the practitioner. Article 8 of the Human Rights Act (1998) provides the right for private and family life. But this must be balanced against the need to safeguard and protect adults and children from the risk of potential harm. The Children Act 1989 and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (SSWBA) overrides article 8 of the HRA, making the welfare of the child the primary concern and places a duty on practitioners to intervene and investigate harm or the likelihood of harm. With adults it is the choice of the individual, providing they have the capacity to make such a decision, even though unwise, as defined under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA 2005). This is illustrated by Braye et al (2015) through the concept of self-neglect; a lack of self-care of their person/environment and the refusal of services to alleviate the risk of harm.

In Safe Hands (WAG 2000), places a responsibility on social services departments to take the lead for adult protection safeguarding services, with multi agency committees set up to investigate and respond to allegations of abuse. However, unlike child protection policy, the guidance has no legislative power. This is summarised by Hunter (2008) who argues that adult social care law is often "inadequate, often incomprehensible and outdated".

The hope is that the introduction of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 will address these issues. Its aim is to provide a strengthened, more robust and effective partnership approach to safeguarding. The overarching principle of safeguarding is that it is everyone's

responsibility. Each professional and organisation must do everything they can, to ensure that children and adults are protected from abuse (WAG, 2016) which brings protective safeguarding practices in line with Children safeguarding practices.

Additional guidance for practitioners can be found via the Wales Safeguarding Board (2024) where there is information on self-neglect, child obesity and exploitation etc.

Words: 405

400 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).