

Jack Benney

ECEY5011

Safeguarding: practice, legislation and the multi-disciplinary team

(AI was not used in this assignment)

Reflection

Completing this safeguarding task has really helped me to develop a deeper understanding of the police's role in protecting vulnerable children. While I already had a basic awareness of multi-agency working, this scenario brought to life just how important communication and collaboration are when it comes to early intervention. The scenario of three-year-old Harry Jones showed how safeguarding relies not only on identifying risk, but also on responding to subtle concerns before they escalate.

Before writing the script, I hadn't fully appreciated how seemingly small signs, like a child being withdrawn, not dressed properly, or suddenly becoming anxious, can be early indicators of neglect or abuse. In the scenario, these were picked up by nursery staff, which reminded me how vital the professionals who are present are when it comes to spotting these early and small concerns. Their referral was the first step in getting the right support in place, and it really highlighted the value of inter-agency communication. As I explored the legal side of things, I became more familiar with key legislation that underpins police involvement in safeguarding. Section 17 and Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 stood out for me, in particular. I now have a much better understanding of how these sections guide police decision-making. Section 17 supports children who are in need, while Section 47 gives us a duty to act if we suspect a child is at risk of significant harm. Before this, I hadn't realised how much our role is shaped by law and how often we rely on these frameworks in practice.

This task also gave me a clear picture of how formal processes like the Public Protection Notice (PPN) fit into safeguarding. Prior to this, I wasn't fully aware of the way PPNs work or how they trigger involvement from social care and other agencies. I also learned about Clare's Law and Operation Encompass, which provide further

support in situations where domestic abuse may be a factor. In Harry's case, it was the PPN that helped get the ball rolling and ensured the right services were involved quickly. Something that really stuck with me was the balance between enforcement and protection. As police, it's easy to think of safeguarding purely in terms of risk or crime. However, this task reminded me that safeguarding is also about promoting wellbeing, not just stepping in when something has already gone wrong. The definition from NHS England (2025) that safeguarding is about protecting individuals' right to live free from abuse and neglect, had put that into perspective for me. Most of all, this reflection has shown me just how essential multi-agency working is. Every professional involved in Harry's case had a unique perspective, and only by bringing those together, was having a full picture of the situation possible. Nursery staff, social workers, health visitors, and the police all had a part to play. This has taught me to value the contributions of others and to recognise that safeguarding is never a solo effort. It requires clear communication, professional respect, and a shared commitment to the child's welfare. It is important to remember that everyone is on the same team with the same goal in mind, making sure that the individuals under our care are physically and mentally safe from harm.

I've come away from this task with a stronger understanding of mine and other responsibilities and will not take these situations lightly. I am now fully confident about being able to tackle these concerns head on. I will be proactive instead of reactive. I've seen how early signs are just as important as the more obvious indicators can be, and I now have greater confidence in applying legislation and working with others to safeguard children. Going forward, I am going to continue to approach safeguarding with a proactive mindset and always consider the wider context when assessing a child's safety, whilst also listening to other's perspectives and experiences

I learnt that there are 5 principles of safeguarding. Hoare (2022) states that the 5 principles, commonly known as the 5 R's, are Recognise, respond, report, record and refer. Prospero Learning (2025) explains that recognise means to identify potential signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation. This involves being aware of the different types of harm and knowing what to look for. Respond means that once we have recognised a potential issue, it is important to respond appropriately, this

means potentially talking to the person involved, offering support or seeking advice. Report means to report any concerns one might have of a child's safety, this could mean reporting to safeguarding leads, social services or even the police. Record means to accurately record details about the situation, which is crucial. This includes noticing what happens, who was involved and what actions were or have been taken. Refer means potentially referring the individual to specialist services if or when necessary. This could involve contacting mental health services, domestic abuse support or other organisations that are relevant to their situation. Prospero Learning (2025) continues by stating that keeping the 5 R's in mind can help to protect vulnerable individuals and make a positive difference. NSPCC (2025) supports this by stating that setting up, following and remembering these principles and procedures means children are safe from adults and other children who might be a risk. NSPCC (2025) also explains that abuse is usually hidden from view, so it is the job of those who safeguard the children to recognise any signs and act upon them appropriately and carefully.

Thank you.

Reference list

Hoare, A. (2022) *What are the 5 Rs of safeguarding?* Available at:

<https://www.ideagen.com/thought-leadership/blog/what-are-the-5-rs-of-safeguarding>

(Accessed: 5 July 2025).

NSPCC (2025) *Safeguarding and child protection*. Available at:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection> (Accessed: 7 July 2025).

Prospero Learning (2025) *What are the 5 Rs of safeguarding?* Available at:

<https://www.prospero-learning.com/safeguardingthe-5rs> (Accessed: 6 July 2025).