Reference list

Parents Guide to Rights and Responsibilities

In this booklet, the writer will be discussing the rights every child has, what policies and legislations protect every child and what practitioners can do to pro-

What is a right?

According to Jones,P and Walker, G 2011, the definition of a right is 'something you should always be able to do, have, to know, to say or to be protected from'.

What is a responsibility?

A responsibility is ' Something you should do for other people for society or environment'. Jones, P and Walker, G 2011.

Why are Children's rights important?

Children's rights are important because having the same rights means there is equal opportunities for every individual. For practitioners to successfully implement equal opportunities, there must be strategies for every individual child to meet their needs and rights. (Jones, P and Walker, G 2011)

How do we support children's needs?

It is important that as practitioners we need to understand how to manage and support children's needs because by supporting children's needs, we are one step closer to exercising their rights. This could be meeting their social, emotional and physical rights.

One way we can support a child's rights is by carrying out supportive interaction strategies. This can be done by listening attentively and we can show we are listening by making eye-contact and asking open questions in response to what they are telling the adult. By using this strategy, it ensures the child feels you are interested and engaged with the conversation. (Kaplan, 2020)

Another way to show interest is to give praise to a child. By using praise amongst children it teaches good and bad behaviours and praise promotes good behaviours. (West Lothian, 2014)

As suggested by West Lothian , 2014, praise should be used as often as possible and practitioners should make a big effort to give out praise for good behaviour . This encourages children to recognise the differences between acceptable behaviour and encourages children to continue good behaviours as they believe that they will be rewarded and praised again.

Top tips for effective praise.

- Concentrate on positivity rather than criticism.
- Be enthusiastic and genuine
- Make it clear what the praise is for
- Use adjectives such as, 'wonderful', or 'great'. (West Lothian, 2014)

How are rights and praise linked?

Praise can be linked with Article 12 of the UN Convention of the rights of the child, which states that views of the child must be respected. By using praise, you are encouraging the child to continue with their positive behaviour or work. Praise can be used to express your interest in a child's interests, thoughts or ideas which encourages them to express their thoughts and ideas in the future. Praise is also used to make a child feel valued and appreciated, which covers article 12. (Unicef, 2019)

Introduction to the UN Convention of the rights of the child

In 1989, the UNCRC was adopted and ratified by the General Assembly Resolution. The UNCRC is one of the widest ratified human rights treaty in the world. All UN members apart from the United States are involved in the convention. The United Kingdom ratified the convention in 1992.

The UN Convention of the rights of the child have adopted four core principles when creating articles for the rights of the child. One principle is that children's views must be respected. That includes a child's beliefs, ideas, religion, cultural etc. Children should also have a right to life, survival and development. In child care settings, this can include safeguarding policies and procedures. Another core principle of the UNCRC is the best interest of the child. This can be implemented by practice such as the voice of the child and considering children's thoughts and feelings. Non-discriminating practice is another core principle of the UNCRC. In the United Kingdom, legislation has been introduced to tackle discrimination such as the Equality Act 2010. (Unicef, 2019)

Everyone including children should know and understand their rights. Rights are universal which means that rights belong to everyone and rights are incunable which means that rights cannot be taken away. Rights are also indivisible which means that people cannot be treated in isolation and have the right to understand their rights. Rights are also non-discriminatory which means that rights should be respected regardless of ethnicity, colour, race, sex, culture, religion or any other characteristics. It is essential that children can understand their rights and what they are entitled to, including meeting basic needs such as food, housing and education and should feel confident to take full advantage of all opportunities that are given to them by their rights.

(AdvocatesForHumanRights, 2019)

Services that support children and their families.

Young children are valued, and full development is presented if the environment children are learning in or living in respects and reflects their individual identity. Every child is entitled to an identity according to the UNCRC, article 7, every child should have protection and preservation of identity. Parents are primarily responsible for nurturing their child. According to article 18, parents should both share responsibility to bring up their child and if the parents are struggling, the government must support parents by creating services for children and parents so that they are all supported and every child has the best outcome with their parents. (Hobart and Frankel, 2009)

There are many services in the UK that provide help and support for those families that need it. It is believed that early intervention is key to guaranteeing every child has a bright future and will have the same advantages as everyone else. Regardless of if they have been considered as disadvantaged. This could be a family who is living in poverty, has a child or sibling with a disability, or a child or family member who has learning difficulties. One service that supports children who may be disadvantaged at the start of their life is Flying Start. Flying Start is a Welsh Government funded programme, targeted at those who may live in areas considered poverty. Flying Start is for children aged 0-3 years old and their families which promotes language, cognitive, social and emotional development. The programme aims to identify those who have high needs such as children who have autism or may struggle with key development areas such as language. (Caerphilly.gov, 2014)

Another service for families is Family Lives. This service is a charity organisation that provides help and support to those families who are struggling. Family lives provide targeted early intervention which will get to any problems a child or family member may have early. Family Lives work with other organisations to support families and to ensure that families can access support when needed. The service believes that every family should have access to support and understanding when they need it. (Familylives, 2019)

(The School Run.com)

Other legislation protecting children's rights

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act protects minorities and those who feel they are treated unfairly in a work, school or public environment. People could be treated differently based on their race, gender, disability, religion or beliefs. There can be many ways which you are effected by discrimination. The following are they types of discrimination you can face which are viewed as unlawful according to the Equality act:

- Direct discrimination- Treating someone less favourably than others.
- Indirect discrimination– This can be putting rules or arrangements in place for the majority but does not comply to everyone's needs.
- Harassment– Unnecessary behaviour which can be related to someone's characteristics which violates the person's dignity
- Victimisation– Treating a person unfairly after they have made a complaint about discrimination and harassment. (Gov, 2015)

The relevance of Equality Act 2010 to Children's rights.

The Equality Act can relate to Article 2 of the UNCRC which states that the convention applies to every child regardless of 'ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities, or any other status'. (Unicef, 2019)

The Act furthermore impowers people who may be classed as a minority and ensures that people can get equal opportunities and not be discriminated against regarding their characteristics. (Gov, 2015)

Children Act 1989

The Children's Act 1989 highlights the importance of child protection and how important their well–being is. The Act states that children should be in an environment where their physical, emotional and educational needs are met. (legislation.gov, 1989)

In the UN Convention on the rights of the child, article 6 can relate to educational, physical and emotional needs as article 6 says that every child has the right to life, survival and development. (Unicef, 2019)

The Children Act states that every child should be harm free which links to article 19. This is protection from violence, neglect and abuse which every child is entitled to. (Unicef, 2019)

The feelings and wishes of the child should be taken into consideration according to the Children Act 1989. This can relate to Article 3 which is every decision that Is made, should be in the bets interest of the child. (legislation.gov,1989)

Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

This act was put in force in 2016 and protects those who are vulnerable. It also ensures that authorities are adhering to acts and have policies in place to ensure constant professional practice. The act states that authorities must care and support vulnerable groups such as those with disabilities and young people. Authorities must register those who are visually and hearing impaired and those with disabilities (Legislation.gov,2016)

How the Social Services and well-being act implements children's rights

The Social Services and well-being act impowers several acts of the UN convention on the rights of the child. One article that can relate to the Act is the following ;

- Article 6– Life, survival and development
- Article 8 - Protection and preservation of identity

Article 19– Protection from violence, abuse and neglect.

These articles all come under one category which is the right to live, survive and develop. This is a key element to every child's happiness and well-being. (Unicef, 2019)

However, how do we ensure that every child is safe as a practitioner?

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is protecting children from maltreatment and preventing impairment of children's health. (SafeGuardingInSchools, 2019)

How to safeguard effectively

The first stage to effective safeguarding is to understand the ethnos of who you are safeguarding. The practitioner needs to be understand how to be respectful, supportive and open towards those who may differ in their cultural backgrounds, religion or any other characteristics.

To continue to create effective safeguarding practice is to create policies that staff and those involved with the placement can adhere to. Policies should explain how concerns can be raised. This is to ensure staff can produce the same professionalism and consistency . Policies should be relevant to the schools. This is because each school is different in terms of environment, every school is different and some schools may have children with special needs that need attending to. A policy also sets out expectations of how staff should behave and act in certain situations. (SafeGuardingInSchools, 2019)

The next stage of effective safeguarding is continuing professional development (CPD). This is essential for good safeguarding practice because practitioners are always aiming to do better and keep up to date regularly with new policies and legislations that relates to practice. It is important that practitioners can meet deadlines to ensure information is submitted effectively at correct time slots. Practitioners should be willingly open to learn new skills and this can be done by going to workshops and training sessions to increase knowledge. Practitioners should also understand the code of conduct when facing challenges such as safeguarding so it is important to change behaviours and approaches to handle different situations.
(SafeGuardingInSchools,2019)

To protect children effectively, it is important that practitioners put actions in place to make the environment a safer place. This can be done by using a register to sign children in and out. This is essential during school times because if an incident were to happen such as the fire alarm being activated, you will know what children are present and who may be at home. Safe practice is a crucial part of safeguarding as it makes sure every child's needs are considered and if anything were to happen, the school will have procedures to adhere to and follow. One way schools are prepared for new challenges can be demonstrated through risk assessments which identify what the risk is, how serious the risk is and how the risk can be overcome. This should be reviewed by senior members of staff and followed complied by other staff.

(SafeGuardingInSchools, 2019)

Risk Assessment Template

Risk Assessment

Potential Hazard	Who is at risk?	Existing Control Measures	Risk Rating	Preventative Measures	Responsibilities

Template of a risk assessment

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According to Hobart and Frankel, 2009, everyone, including children have a right and should not be taken away from them and every child should understand that their bodies belong to them and no one else. Therefore, children should be aware that it is ok to say no to any touching they do not like.

When it comes to safeguarding, the education service should be encouraged to develop the curriculum that help develop skills and practices. This can be regarding new policies and legislation that may have changed so staff may have to change their current practice. The curriculum can also be changed to suit what the education service feels is important for children to learn and develop. The education service should be notified by social services of any child that is experiencing safeguarding issues or any problems at home. By notifying the school, staff will be aware of the issues of the child and support them when they are in school and come up with strategies when dealing with this issue.

The local authority should appoint a designated officer as the departmental child protection coordinator. This is normally a senior member of staff such as the head teacher. The child protection officer is responsible for any reported safeguarding issues and if there are any safeguarding issues, they should report to the local authorities when they are concerned. The designated child protection officer should make sure any issues are dealt with accordingly by staff and should adhere to any legal requirements. For example, when sharing information about a child, staff should adhere to the Data Protection Act 2018. To ensure that the safeguarding officer and staff are complying to laws, there should be policies and procedures to guarantee laws and regulations are being followed professionally. All policies should be up to date and workable for all members of staff. The child protection officer is also responsible for arranging training regarding safeguarding. To develop knowledge and understanding, designated teachers should consider meeting other designated teachers to share experiences, plan policies and train together. By learning from someone else, you can get new ideas which can alter better practice. (Hobart and Frankel, 2009)

Rights Respecting Schools

To encourage and promote the rights of the child, Unicef have founded a programme known as Rights Respecting Schools. This programme provides training, lesson plans and guidance on how to make a school rights respecting. It encourages schools to place the UN Convention on the rights of the child at the heart of the curriculum. The programme consists of schools participating in rights respecting practice and then being assessed so they can achieve a bronze, silver or gold reward. According to Unicef, 2019, children feel safe within a rights respecting school. This is because children feel they can express themselves and they feel confident to challenge the way they are being treated because they understand what their rights are.

Children also have better relationships with peers and with their teachers. This is based on understanding that they have mutual respect, and everyone's opinion is valued. Children are involved in decision making which would be regarding their learning and views regarding their well-being. The framework built around their rights is based on equality and fairness. As children engage with their rights, children develop a deeper understanding of not only their own rights but everyone else which results in mutual respect from teachers and pupils. (Unicef, 2019)

To conclude, it is essential for every child regardless of their ethnicity, race, sex, gender and any other characteristics to understand their rights. As practitioners, it is important that we promote and explain their rights so children can take full advantage and thrive from them. Every child deserves to live a happy life and children's rights ensure that this is possible. Parents and staff should work together to ensure that children's needs are being met and any concerns should be followed up straight away.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and hopefully it has been beneficial.