



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

**LEARNER PORTFOLIO
(PORTH AGORED and UNIVERSITY OF WALES
TRINITY SAINT DAVID)**

Learner's name: Chloe Coleman

**Email address: Chloe.Coleman@swansea.gov.uk
2417771@student.uwtsd.ac.uk**

**Learner's University Registration Number:
2417771**

Cohort: 21onwards

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.

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

Safeguarding children is a fundamental responsibility in social work, ensuring protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. In Wales, this duty is underpinned by a robust legal and procedural framework, encompassing national legislation, local authority procedures, and organisational policies. Key national laws include the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Children Act 1989, Equality Act 2010, and Human Rights Act 1998. These underpin practice by requiring timely intervention when a child is at risk of harm and by promoting a child-centred, rights-based approach (Welsh Government, 2014; UK Government, 1998).

The key legislative framework in Wales in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, particularly Part 7, places a statutory duty on professionals and the public to report if a child is at risk of abuse, neglect or harm. Local authorities must then undertake a proportionate assessment, working collaboratively with multi-agency partners. The Children Act 1989, still central across the UK, mandates child protection enquiries under Section 47 if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm which must begin within 24 hours, and completed within 15 working days, leading to a child protection conference if needed (HM Government, 2018).

Significant harm is the threshold for statutory intervention and includes ill-treatment, serious impairment of health or development, or exposure to serious risk factors such as child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation and witnessing domestic violence. Indicators of abuse can include: unexplained bruises or burns, withdrawal or fearfulness, knowledge of sexual acts inappropriate for age, and persistent hunger, poor hygiene or absenteeism (NSPCC, 2023).

At the local level, the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019) guide professional responses, outlining clear referral pathways and timescales. These procedures promote consistency across all 22 Welsh local authorities. Organisationally, all agencies must have internal safeguarding policies that reflect national guidance, including staff training, whistleblowing procedures, and designated safeguarding leads. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) enable timely information sharing and collaborative decision-making.

Regional Safeguarding Boards oversee practice, provide workforce training, and conduct Child Practice Reviews following serious incidents (Welsh Government, 2014). At a national level, the Equality Act 2010 ensures children are protected without discrimination, while the Human Rights Act 1998 upholds rights to safety and protection from inhumane treatment (Article 3) (UK Government, 1998). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), embedded in Welsh policy, ensures children's rights to protection and participation are upheld (UNICEF, 1989).

Understanding the child's and family's preferred outcomes is vital in safeguarding. It supports meaningful intervention by respecting the child's voice and engaging families in planning. This leads to improved trust, reduced resistance, and outcomes that are both protective and empowering (Munro, 2011). Social workers have a statutory and ethical duty to identify, assess, and respond to safeguarding concerns. This includes applying professional curiosity, working within multi-agency frameworks, and promoting the child's rights and well-being at all times.

In conclusion, safeguarding children in Wales relies on an interplay of law, policy, and professional practice. Effective safeguarding is built on strong legal duties, coordinated procedures, early identification of risks, and meaningful engagement with children and families.

Words: 491.

Question b:

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

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

Safeguarding children and safeguarding adults at risk are governed by different legal frameworks and principles, reflecting on the distinct needs and rights of each age group. While both aim to prevent harm, the paramountcy principle under section 1 of the Children Act states that "the welfare of the child is paramount" (UK Government, 1989). This means that professionals must always prioritise a child's best interests, even if it conflicts with their expressed wishes.

Children are generally seen as more vulnerable due to their developmental stage and dependence on adults. Although the Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines allow children under 16 to make decisions if deemed mature enough to understand the implications. However, there are clear thresholds for when safeguarding overrides a child's wishes. For instance, if a child discloses abuse or is at risk of significant harm, professionals have a duty to intervene, regardless of the child's competency (NSPCC, 2023). Parental consent and advocacy are also key features in children's safeguarding, with parents often acting on the child's behalf unless they are the source of harm.

Children are also affected differently by certain types of harm than adults. For example, witnessing domestic abuse is recognised as a form of emotional abuse to children under UK law, while it is not classified the same was for adults (Welsh Government, 2019). Likewise, self-neglect, although a safeguarding concern or adults, is not applicable to children, as they are not seen as fully responsible for their own care or well-being.

In contrast, safeguarding adults is guided by the Mental Capacity Act 2005 which presumes that all adults have capacity unless proven otherwise (UK Government, 2005). Adults at risk have a legal right to self-determination, meaning they can choose not to engage with safeguarding-processes even if they are at risk of harm. Professionals must respect this decision unless the adult lacks capacity, is subject to coercion, or others are at risk (Social Care Wales, 2023). The Wales Safeguarding Procedures states that consent is central to adult safeguarding, though exceptions apply where public interest overrides individual autonomy.

In summary, while both frameworks seek to protect individuals from harm, safeguarding children is more proactive and protective, driven by the child's welfare. Adult safeguarding on the other hand requires a balance between protection and autonomy, recognising adult's rights to make unwise decisions unless their capacity is impaired or others are affected.

Words: 378.

