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Module: Safeguarding: practice, legislation and the multi-disciplinary team (ECEY5011)

Part 2: Script for self-reflection and 5 R's

AI Cover Sheet

I also acknowledge the use of Copilot to help with finding specific research. I used the following prompts:

- *Find me articles, research of journals that links to safeguarding in nurseries.
- *Find me information on the role of a designated safeguarding person
- *Find me websites on safeguarding for children

These was used from the 30th of June 2025 - 6th of July 2025

I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

The 5 R's of Safeguarding

According to Schofield-Antoncich (2023), the 5 R's of safeguarding highlight key principles to help individuals and organisations protect vulnerable people. Safeguarding is vital for promoting well-being and preventing harm, abuse, or neglect. Everyone must understand their role in maintaining a safe environment.

The five safeguarding principles are:

- Recognise – Identify signs of abuse or neglect
- Respond – Take appropriate action when concerns arise
- Report – Share concerns with the appropriate authority
- Record – Document information clearly and accurately
- Review – Regularly evaluate procedures for effectiveness

Legislation and statutory guidance highlight the importance of applying the 5 R's in safeguarding practice. These principles serve as a framework for professionals and volunteers with a duty of care to implement safeguarding processes consistently and effectively (Children Act 1989; Welsh Government, 2022).

The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 place a legal duty on professionals to safeguard and promote children's welfare. Early recognition of potential harm is essential. This includes identifying physical indicators (e.g. bruises or marks) and behavioural changes (e.g. withdrawal, anxiety, poor hygiene or inadequate nutrition) (Welsh Government, 2014).

According to the NSPCC (2023) and Department for Education (2024), offering a timely and supportive response is key. This involves staying calm, listening actively and providing reassurance.

Reporting involves communicating any disclosures or observations to the appropriate authority typically the Designated Safeguarding Officer while adhering to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Key details (what was seen, heard or said) should be reported promptly and only shared with relevant personnel (Children Act 1989; Children Act, 2004).

Recording involves factually documenting all relevant information. This must be clear, accurate and free from opinion or assumption. Timely communication of concerns is vital for appropriate support (NCVO, 2021; Safeguarding Wales, 2015).

Finally, safeguarding is a collective responsibility. The NSPCC (2023) emphasises that everyone plays a role in ensuring children's safety. This responsibility aligns with children's rights as outlined by UNICEF (2022) to live in safe conditions and have their needs met. Collaboration with multiple agencies enhances efforts to prevent neglect and protect from harm.

Self-Reflection.

This module was challenging but provided valuable insight into the importance of safeguarding.

As a nursery teacher, I began with a solid understanding of the procedures used to protect children how to identify concerns, report them, and help create a safe environment. However, this training deepened my awareness of the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) role and the wider safeguarding network.

I previously assumed that once a concern was raised, the DSP would contact social services directly. I hadn't realised a specific form needed to be complete, this form in each local authority, I learned it was called a Multi-agency referral form (MARF) in some local authorities where as Blaenau Gwent county uses a Duty to report form (DTR) Learning about the DSP's responsibilities managing disclosures, keeping records, and liaising with external agencies gave me a clearer picture of how safeguarding is structured. It reassured me that I'm not alone, and that there is a clear pathway for escalating concerns.

What truly struck me were the real-life cases of safeguarding failures Dennis O'Neill, Maria Colwell, and Jasmine Beckford. These tragic stories are powerful reminders of what can happen when signs are missed, communication breaks down, or procedures aren't followed promptly.

These cases helped shape the legislation and protocols we now follow and highlight the value of serious case reviews in improving future practice. The module enhanced my appreciation of the multi-agency approach needed how schools, social services, healthcare and law enforcement must act swiftly and collaboratively.

Before this safeguarding module, I wasn't aware of initiatives like Project Encompass, but I now clearly understand how it helps schools support children affected by domestic abuse through timely police communication. I also discovered the Wales Safeguarding App, which I now recognise as a valuable tool to inform and strengthen my future practice.

This training didn't just reinforce what I knew it transformed my perspective. Safeguarding is more than policy; it's a moral and professional duty grounded in real lives. I now feel more empowered, better informed, and fully committed to ensuring that no child in my care is ever overlooked.

Reference List

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