

Reflection

Reflecting on my current knowledge on Safeguarding, it is something we do every day to ensure that we keep all children and young people safe from any danger and harm (Welsh Government, 2022).

I have developed a strong understanding of safeguarding and child protection, including how to follow the appropriate safeguarding protocols in line with my school's policies and procedures. Attending monthly core group meetings and working closely with school staff, social services, parents/carers, and other external agencies has broadened my knowledge and strengthened my understanding of effective safeguarding practice. These experiences have enhanced my ability to work collaboratively to support the safety and wellbeing of children.

Before doing research for this module, I understood that safeguarding was about protecting children from any sort of harm. However, I now see that safeguarding is much broader. It includes, promoting children and young people's welfare, recognising concerns early and taking the appropriate action to ensure that the children are safe and secure and can learn and develop to their best possible outcomes and ensuring we are protecting the children's rights (Welsh Government, 2014).

The Children Act (1989) states that the wellbeing of the child should always come first, while the Children Act (2004) made organisations and professionals more responsible for working together to protect children. The Children Act (2004) was put in place after the inquiry of Victoria Climbié took place after her death, after the lack of cooperation and failings with outside agencies. These legislations have further helped me understand why us as practitioners must always place the children's needs at the centre of every decision.

As a practitioner, I have learned that trusting my professional instincts is an essential part of safeguarding, particularly when something does not feel right. It is always better to raise a concern by making a referral, recording it on MyConcern, or reporting it to the appropriate safeguarding lead, even if it later proves to be unfounded. As practitioners, we have a duty of care to act on any concerns to help ensure every child feels safe, secure, and protected. Prompt reporting and accurate record-keeping are fundamental aspects of effective safeguarding practice.

Following the Data Protection Act (2018) in my setting we ensure that all data recorded is stored correctly and accurately. We must protect the information of the children and the families and ensure that all information is up to date. MyConcern is something we use often to report our concerns; this is to protect us as staff and to ensure that all children are safe and secure.

After researching on Safeguarding Wales (2019) for the script, my knowledge has increased regarding the different forms of abuse and how to recognise not just the physical injuries but the changes in the children's behaviour which could indicate emotional abuse, neglect or sexual abuse, and the signs are more often behavioural rather than physical.

Prior to this assignment, I have worked closely with multi-agencies. I understand that safeguarding children requires effective teamwork and communication between professionals, that includes the school, social care, health and the police when appropriate. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014) ensures that everyone works together to improve outcomes for families and children. Reflecting on my own experiences, safeguarding is most effective when all professionals work together.

In my setting we have the rights of the child hanging on our walls. My knowledge on the children's rights have developed significantly. The Welsh Government (2024) passed the new legislation Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure (2011) which places the duty of ministers to have regard to the rights and obligations of the United Nations Rights of the Child which come into practice in 1989. When this measure was passed by the National Assembly of Wales, we became the first county to integrate the UNCRC into a domestic law. The Welsh Government places children's rights at the centre of the safeguarding guidance, they show the importance of ensuring that every child has a voice and feels safe, and it is our duty of care to ensure that happens.

Reflecting on my learning, I recognise safeguarding is always evolving. New policies, procedures, legislation and guidance are emerging, and I have the professional responsibility to continue to develop my knowledge through training, reflect on my practice and keep up to date with the Welsh Government guidance.

To conclude, I feel that this module has highlighted the importance on knowledge of safeguarding. How important it is to know your legal responsibilities, safeguarding procedures in your setting, children's rights and the importance of early intervention. Moving forward, I will continue to have more training, keep up to date with the latest policies and procedures, recognise concerns and create a safe environment where every child can be themselves and thrive.

Thank you for listening

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