

ECEY5011 – Part 2

A) Recognising and Recording

It is a practitioner's duty to safeguard all children within a setting. According to Hobart and Frankel (2009), it is not a practitioner's role to decide whether abuse has taken place, but it is their responsibility to be aware of the current child procedures and to report any concerns. Concerns can be identified by observations on the children which are recorded, allegations which are made by the child and disclosure of the abuse by the child.

In Ben's case, the type of abuse shown is neglect and this should be identified by practitioners from the moment they have a concern. There are four different types of neglect which are physical, educational, emotional and medical. All of these can link with Ben and the way he has been. This is due to the practitioners recognising that he is attending school in dirty clothes, unwashed and without brushing his hair or teeth. Along with this, he also seems to be very hungry. NSPCC (2023) name some signs which practitioners in Ben's school have picked up on. should look out for when safeguarding children. These are issues such as living in unsuitable home environments, being left alone for long periods of time, being dirty, wearing clothes that have not been washed and being particularly hungry. The Safeguarding Network (2024) describes neglect as 'the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs'. This can result in major damage of a child's health or development.

Within settings and between colleagues, communicating is labelled as 'essential'. Recording information for the case can be done through individual log books, shift reports and sharing information to build a clear picture (Ann Craft Trust, 2021). The Trust also says that recording information should be accurate and precise. This includes ensuring that the practitioner has recorded the right kind of information and have written down exactly what you see and what the child says.

In Ben's educational section, which is a school, the class teacher would begin to gather information on Ben's situation and make other members of staff aware of the concerns regarding Ben. The Education People (2018), who have a link with Kent County Council, name a few different reasons as to why practitioners would need to keep records. They say that recording can help settings identify child protection concerns from an early stage, it allows practitioners to note down any minor issues they pick up on which will help to build a bigger picture of the child's life and it helps settings monitor and manage safeguarding within the setting along with proceeding with decision making, further actions to the case and when making joint decisions with outside agencies.

As practitioners in Ben and his brother's school, it is their duty to follow The Children Act 2004 when starting off the process of recognising the issues that the brothers are experiencing and when they begin to record them. The guidelines of the act set out how a child should be looked after in the eyes of the law. An area of the act that the teachers of Ben should focus on is how they make their recordings of the maltreatment of both

children known to the relevant authorities who need to be involved in the safeguarding case (Johnson, 2019).

A journal article backs up the findings from above on recognising and recording by stating that safeguarding issues are best achieved when professionals are trained in recognising the areas of concern and are clear of their roles and responsibilities. The article mentions that it is paramount that professionals have an understanding of the referral process when suspected safeguarding issues are present. Other areas that the article touches on which backs up information mentioned earlier in the section is that trained professionals should be in a position to recognise child abuse and it creates a link with the Children Act 1989 by saying that professionals are expected to act in the best interests of the child (Mansoor, T., Mansoor, N. and Ahmed, M., 2019).

Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, local authorities have a duty to make enquiries if they suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Within a day of a referral, a social worker should acknowledge the need for a referral and make a clear decision of the next steps. Records made by the assigned social worker should be recorded in writing, kept confidential and stored securely.

For Ben and his older brother in school, the class teacher will have recognised some concerns about the types of clothes Ben is attending school in, being overall unhygienic and the levels of hunger he is experiencing due to not eating substantial food. The teacher should then have recorded what she has witnessed down and passed all information on to the school safeguarding officer who will then have got in contact with the local authorities who can help monitor the situation and provide extra support for the family.

B) Reporting and Referring

Any practitioners that work within an education setting has a duty to protect children, this includes reporting any concerns about the child. Each school will have a designated safeguarding lead who will be responsible for enforcing the safeguarding policy, recognising issues, being the first point of call for any staff members to report safeguarding concerns, making referrals to social services where necessary and working with families (Collier, 2021).

For Ben, it is his class teacher's duty to report the issues they have noticed within the school setting such as wearing dirty clothes and being very unhygienic and hungry to the safeguarding lead. The teacher will already be aware of who the designated safeguarding lead is in their school.

The NSPCC discusses the roles of the designated safeguarding lead and how they manage referrals. They should work with the senior leadership team to ensure safeguarding is at the heart of the school ethos and that staff know how to report concerns. Another job of the safeguarding lead is to liaise with the local authority designated officer regarding the setting concern (NSPCC, 2017). The article also talks

about the safeguarding lead referring cases of suspected abuse to Children's Social Care.

In the setting that Ben is part of, the designated safeguarding lead will have a picture of the situation that Ben's teacher has reported to them. They will contact the local authority to discuss ways of liaising with them and can also get in contact with the Children's Social Care.

The local authorities that have a link with school settings can provide early help and prevention to both the children and families. Safeguarding Wales (n.d.) say that this early help can protect a child from experiencing further abuse, neglect or harm, help stop problems from escalating, reduce the need for safeguarding enquiries and interventions and have long term benefits for the child's health and well-being.

Within Cardiff, there is a provision named The Family Gateway that work with families and refer them into the Family Help, Family Help Disabilities and Support4Families teams. This provision is for families who require a short term intervention or are facing complex issues.

As part of the referral process for safeguarding concerns, Ben's mother could be supported by the local authority who will point the family in the right direction for extra support for both her and the two boys, similar to what is provided in Cardiff. They are able to receive help which will allow Ben to attend school in fresh clothing daily and substantial food in his packed lunch. For example, they could be supported by the local food bank.

C) Settings and Responsibilities

Each setting has a responsibility to ensure a holistic, open and effective approach is carried out to safeguarding. Settings should follow the Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) which is government guidance that provides a national framework for all agencies working with children to work in partnerships to safeguard children effectively. The guidance outlines practitioners protecting children from maltreatment, prevent impairment of children's health and development, ensuring children grow up in the appropriate circumstances and taking actions to allow all children to have the best outcomes (Early Years Alliance, 2015).

The National Minimum Standards were designed to ensure that provision of care is to a high standard and meets the needs of those using social care services (Department for Education, 2013).

A document published by the Welsh Government (n.d.) talks about Standard 20 of the National Minimum Standards which is safeguarding. The standard discusses how the practitioner is responsible for ensuring that the child is the first priority and that there is a written safeguarding policy in place in the setting. The policy that this is created should be based on the Wales safeguarding Procedures and practitioners should be familiar with the Government's guidance included in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Other key areas of Standard 20 includes the safeguarding policy being shared with parents and carers before a child is admitted which states staff responsibilities for reporting concerns and ensuring all staff have access to the appropriate safeguarding training which is relevant to their role.

The school in which Ben and his brother attend will have a duty to follow all safeguarding guidance which has been set out by Government and local authorities and will ensure that staff have been put through safeguarding training courses which is appropriate for their role. The school are able to take a holistic approach to how Ben has been treated by thinking about not only the family and his educational setting, but also his community, faith and social culture which he is involved in (Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership, n.d.).

In a blog post by The National College, author Rachel Bishop supports what was said by the Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership by outlining what contextual safeguarding is and how it is seen as holistic. Contextual safeguarding aims to change the cultures, systems and environments that are linked with the harm instead of looking to change the behaviour of the children (Bishop, n.d.). This type of support allows practitioners to take on a more broad, tailored and driven approach to protecting children from harm.

The school are able to look at the overall reason for why Ben has been feeling and acting in the particular manner. This can be done by speaking to Ben's mother and wider family about what has been going on at home, offering support for all areas of Ben's life. Whether this be both in school or at home and schools are able to offer intervention support to support Ben and his family.

To conclude the three sections, it can be seen how different Acts and guidelines have a positive impact on the safeguarding of children and the importance of them have being in the settings. It has looked in to practitioners responsibilities and how they should recognise symptoms, record them effectively and report incidents in a professional manner. Finally, one of the last sections was how referrals are made. This sections being linked with what happens in Cardiff. Overall, with these all coming together in Ben's setting, the school, practitioners and other multi-agencies will be able to support him and offer his family the intervention that they may need.

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