



**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: Rebecca Goldsmith

Email address:

RGoldsmith@Carmarthenshire.gov.uk

**Learner's University Registration Number:
2431781**

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).

Having worked in adult social care for over 20 years, I have developed a strong understanding of the legislation that underpins adult safeguarding. However, as part of my continuing professional development, it is equally important to demonstrate a clear and confident understanding of the legal framework that safeguards children. This is essential, as safeguarding is a shared responsibility across the whole workforce, and many adults receiving care also have contact with or responsibility for children. Developing this knowledge strengthens my practice and ensures that I can recognise and respond appropriately to concerns relating to children's wellbeing.

Safeguarding children in England and Wales is fundamentally underpinned by the Children Act 1989 (CA 1989). This Act introduced the key principle that the child's welfare is the paramount consideration (Section 1). It also emphasises the importance of listening to the child, ensuring that their wishes and feelings are considered when making decisions that affect them. The Act provides the basis for child-centred practice, recognising that every child has unique needs, experiences and vulnerabilities. Contemporary safeguarding guidance in Wales further reinforces that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and must remain firmly centred on the child's rights, voice and lived experience (Welsh Government, 2019).

In Wales, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBWA 2014) provides the overarching framework for social care. Implemented in 2016, it significantly reformed safeguarding arrangements by introducing a consistent, national approach. Part 7 of the Act focuses specifically on safeguarding children and adults at risk. Section 130 places a statutory duty on local authorities to make enquiries where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is at risk. This removes reliance on professional judgement alone and strengthens accountability by ensuring concerns are always investigated. The Act also promotes early intervention, prevention, and multi-agency working—recognising that timely, coordinated support reduces the likelihood of harm.

The SSWBWA aligns closely with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989), particularly Article 19, which requires governments to protect children from

all forms of physical or emotional harm, neglect and exploitation. Wales has embedded the UNCRC into national policy, helping to create a rights-based foundation for all safeguarding practice. This commitment has led to the development of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (CWMPAS), which provide clear guidance for identifying, reporting and responding to concerns. The Procedures ensure consistency across Wales and support professionals in applying legislation in practice.

Regional Safeguarding Children Boards also play a key role in safeguarding governance. In my area, the CYSUR (Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board) brings together agencies such as health, police, education, probation and youth offending services. This partnership approach ensures shared responsibility, improved information-sharing and coordinated responses to safeguarding concerns, ultimately improving outcomes for children.

In addition, Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 requires local authorities to investigate where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where necessary, protective court orders can be sought, always with the child's welfare as the paramount concern. Statutory guidance, such as Working Together to Safeguard People (Welsh Government, 2018), supports consistent multi-agency practice and helps ensure that children receive timely and appropriate protection. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 complements this by embedding prevention, collaboration and long-term wellbeing across public services.

[550]

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).

The key difference between adult and children's safeguarding lies in how the law balances protection, autonomy, and vulnerability. Children are legally and developmentally considered unable to fully protect themselves. Therefore, safeguarding legislation such as the Children Act 1989 (CA 1989) and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB(W)A 2014) places a clear statutory duty on local authorities, professionals, and partner agencies to intervene where a child is at risk of harm, regardless of parental consent. The guiding principle is that the child's welfare is paramount (CA 1989, s.1), meaning professionals must act decisively to prevent abuse or neglect. Under both the CA 1989 and the SSWBWA 2014, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

In contrast, adult safeguarding operates within a framework that presumes capacity and promotes autonomy. Under the Care Act 2014 (England) and the SSWBW()A 2014 (Wales), safeguarding focuses on protecting adults while respecting their right to make their own decisions. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA 2005) underpins this approach by establishing that adults are presumed to have capacity unless proven otherwise. An "adult at risk," under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014 and Section 126 of the SSWBWA 2014, is a person aged 18

or over who has care and support needs and, because of those needs, is unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect.

In practice, children's safeguarding is protection-focused and interventionist. Professionals are required to act proactively where there is reasonable cause to suspect significant harm (CA 1989, s.47). This can become complex when working with adolescents who may perceive themselves as capable of making independent decisions. The MCA 2005 applies from age 16 in relation to decision-making capacity, and Gillick competence (Gillick v West Norfolk, 1985) may be used to assess a young person's maturity and understanding in specific contexts such as medical treatment. However, in safeguarding matters, the welfare principle under the CA 1989 remains paramount and can override a young person's wishes if there is a risk of significant harm.

Adult safeguarding, by contrast, is rights-focused and seeks to balance protection with self-determination. Adults are entitled to make unwise decisions (MCA 2005), provided they have capacity and are not subject to coercion or undue influence. Intervention must therefore be proportionate and the least restrictive option.

Ultimately, the distinction reflects differing legal assumptions about vulnerability: children require protective intervention because they are inherently dependent, whereas adults are afforded autonomy unless their care and support needs prevent them from safeguarding themselves.

[416]