

AI Cover Sheet

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. 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.

Cover sheet

Five R's and Personal Reflection Script- Pages 3-5

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Five R's and Personal reflection script

According to (NSPCC, 2025) safeguarding is about protecting children and promoting their well-being, and the 4 Rs can help guide practitioners in their actions. This section of the presentation will briefly cover, recognising, reporting, recording and referring concerns, as well as the overall responsibility practitioners have to safeguard children, as outlined in (Children Act 2004) and the guidelines of Working together to safeguard children 2023 (Department for Education 2023)

Recognising abuse involves noticing signs such as unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour or emotional withdrawal and requires early years practitioners to observe carefully and understand how children communicate – as outlined in Working together to safeguard children 2023 (Department for Education 2023). Recognising signs of abuse is essential for addressing concerns and reducing the risk of further harm (Babakhanlou and Beattie, 2019). However, according to Chambers, Cantrell, and Booth (2021) A settings organisation can influence how well practitioners recognise and act on signs of abuse. In practice initial safeguarding training and regular updates supports practitioners in recognising the signs if abuse (Department for Education, 2024).

Recording is a statutory duty and requires documenting clear records of children's views and experiences (O'Keefe, 2024). Records of concerns must be written clearly and be objective (Data Protection Act 2018; Department for Education 2024; NSPCC, 2023). Failures in record keeping have been factors in serious case reviews and lead to missed safeguarding opportunities, which can negatively affect children's well-being (Hoyle et al. 2018; Shepherd et al., 2020). Under the Data Protection act 2018 must be securely stored, however allows for information to be shared if necessary (Department for Education (2023). In practice, a digital system is used to ensure that records are clear and secure and easily retrieved for information sharing.

Reporting is the act of passing on concerns or information to the appropriate person to safeguard children (NSPCC, 2025, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023). However, doubts can be a barrier, reporting concerns is the safer option, as it could protect a child (CYSUR website, 2020). This reflects article 3 of the UNCRC to act in the best interest of the child (UNICEF 2022). Reporting is important to enable

early intervention, reduce risk, and improve outcomes for children and families ((Daelmans et al., 2015; Taplin, 2017)

Refer

Referring is the process of sharing concerns about a child at risk with children's social care and this must be acknowledged within one working day (Department for Education, 2023) Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) manages referrals by sharing information between agencies to create appropriate plan for the child's well-being (Offen, 2021)

Responsibility in safeguarding means acting to protect children at risk, this is supported by the Children Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department for Education 2023, Chambers, Cantrell and Booth, 2021). All profession in paid and unpaid positions are responsible for safeguarding and must follow procedures, raise concerns promptly and work collaboratively. A shared responsibility includes multiagency working and shared decision- making (NSPCC, 2024). However, Ball, McElwee and McManus (2024) highlights the need for collective responsibility, where all professionals are actively involved and accountable in safeguarding decisions.

Moving onto my personal reflections

Before the assignment I already had a solid understanding of safeguarding due to my role as a deputy safeguarding person. I was confident in recognising signs of harm and neglect, and I knew how to respond to and report concerns in line with the Children Act, Working Together to Safeguard Children, and our setting's policy. I had experience using MyConcern to record incidents and had supported staff through safeguarding training. However, I have not taken part in an Initial Child Protection Conference before, so I was less familiar with how these meetings are structured and how professionals contribute to them.

During the assignment, I learned a lot about the ICPC process itself. I saw how important it is to share clear, accurate information about the child, including patterns

of behaviour and changes over time. One thing that stood out was how multi-agency working helps build a more complete picture of the child's situation. What may seem like a minor concern in isolation can become much more serious when viewed alongside other professionals' observations. It made me realise how essential our role is as early years practitioners in contributing to safeguarding decisions, and how the voice of the child is often represented through our observations.

After completing this assignment, I have a clearer understanding of how vital and effective information sharing is for protecting children. This has strengthened my safeguarding knowledge and confidence in acting on concerns. I will use this learning when delivering training for new staff and refreshers, as I now have stronger understanding of relevant legislation and guidance.

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