

The 5 R's and Reflection (Script)

In safeguarding practice, professionals rely on the Five R's to guide recognition and response to concerns about a child's safety. The Five R's align with the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018).

RECOGNISE

Professionals must identify signs, symptoms, and indicators of abuse or neglect, as outlined in *Working Together* and the Children Act 1989. This also aligns with Article 19 of the UNCRC (1989), which guarantees every child protection from all forms of harm. *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2024) reinforces that all educational staff must recognise abuse indicators, including neglect, peer-on-peer abuse, and other safeguarding risk.

Respond

Once concerns are identified, professionals must take immediate, proportionate action, reflecting duties under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Children and Families Act 2014, which emphasised timely intervention. The Munro Review (2011) highlights the importance of professional judgement, focusing on the child's needs rather than strict procedures.

Report

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Concerns must be reported to the designated safeguarding lead or directly to children's social care if a child is at risk of significant harm (*Working Together*, 2018). NICE Guideline NG76 (2017) advises sharing concerns with children's social care, supported by the Information Sharing Guidance (2018) to ensure lawful sharing in the child's best interests.

Record

Accurate, factual, and timely recording ensures accountability and supports multiagency working (*Working Together*, 2018; Education Act 2002). Professionals must comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, maintaining necessary, secure records that protect the child's privacy.

Refer

When a child is at risk of significant harm, referral to children's social care under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 is required. Referral fulfils legal duties and safeguards the child's right to safety, stability, and protection, as established in the UNCRC (1989) and national safeguarding legislation.

The Five R's ensure safeguarding practice is lawful, child centred, and grounded in statutory responsibilities, upholding the primary obligation to protect every child's right to a safe and nurturing environment (NSPCC, 2022; DfE, 2019).

Reflection.

Learning about the ICPC process and working through this assignment has given me a much better understanding of safeguarding and the challenges involved. Reading historical cases like Baby P and Victoria Climbié is difficult emotionally, but it also shown me how these cases have shaped current legislation, and how little there has been in the past to safeguard children.

I've learned how important multi agency working is. Everyone's observations and input matter because together they help create a clearer picture of a child's situation. Good communication and collaboration between agencies are essential, as gaps can have serious consequences.

Before starting this module, I had limited understanding of the social worker's role within safeguarding. Through the learning activities and taking on the role of the social worker myself, I have gained a much clearer appreciation of how complex the work can be particularly the need to prioritise cases, balance risk, and make decisions that keep children safe. This assignment has highlighted the importance of effective teamwork, clear communication, and ongoing professional learning in safeguarding practice. It has also been valuable to develop a stronger understanding of Sections 17 and 47 of the Children Act 1989, and to see how these processes are applied in practice when a concern is reported.

Reference List

Children Act 1989. London: HMSO. Available at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents> [Accessed 21 November 2025].

Children Act 2004. London: HMSO. Available at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents> [Accessed 21 November 2025].

Department for Education (DfE). (2018) *Working Together to Safeguard Children: Statutory guidance*. London: HM Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> [Accessed 19 November 2025].

Department for Education (DfE). (2024) *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges*. London: Department for Education. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2> [Accessed 19 November 2025].

Human Rights Act 1998. London: HMSO. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents> [Accessed 17 November 2025].

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). (2017) *Child abuse and neglect (NG76)*. London: NICE. Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng76> [Accessed 17 November 2025].

Munro, E. (2011) *The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report – A Child-Centred System*. London: Department for Education. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175391/Munro-Review.pdf [Accessed 22 November 2025].

Children and Families Act 2014. London: HMSO. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted> [Accessed 21 November 2025].

HM Government (2018) *Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners*. London: HM Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice> [Accessed 21 November 2025].

Education Act 2002. London: HMSO. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents> [Accessed 21 November 2025].

UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. (2018) *UK Data Protection Legislation*.

Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection> [Accessed 21 November 2025].