

Following an initial child case conference, I am going to use the information shared by the group as well as my individual research to reflect on all matters surrounding safeguarding and link with the binding legislation that outlines the protocol when making a referral. This assignment allowed me to gain a better understanding of my role as a health visitor along with the police officer's jurisdictions and obligations when dealing with cases involving children, the policies and procedures a nursery leader must follow and a social worker's responsibilities and their engagement with the families in need surrounding the referral process to protect a child's health and well-being.

As Clybiau plant Cymru (2018) and the NSPCC (2018) states, safeguarding is paramount in early years settings as it ensures that all children's human rights are protected as obligated by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) and promotes the child voice, therefore, this experience of mimicking an initial child case conference was very beneficial for my personal professional development as a nursery leader because it could be something I will have to deal with in the future. By carrying out this role play scenario it extended my knowledge on the legislative framework that surrounds safeguarding such as the All Wales Child Protection Procedure (AWCPP) (2008) and made me recognise that there are four different types of abuse: Sexual, Physical, emotional and the most unknown to myself, neglect. Research stated that neglect is described as the failure to protect children from any form of danger and provide basic care which has significant impact on a child's health and well-being. Maslow (1943) and Bronfenbrenner (1979) are both theorists that agree that a child's basic need must be met for a child to develop further and thrive to their best ability which places an emphasis on the importance of a child case conference, as support plans can be put in place to ensure each child is cared and nurtured for as they should. Bandura (1977) is also another theorist who supports this and believes that children learn better whilst being within a safe and nurturing environment. 'Doing the basic things well keeps children safe' was also said by Lord Lamming following the Victoria Climbié Inquiry (2003: 190).

As a result of the Lamming Inquiry, The Children Act 2004 also required all Local Authorities across England and Wales to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (2004) which specified the importance of a case conference main objective is

to assess the severity of risk and harm a child is in, following this the professional surrounding the family will all have the opportunity to determine whether it is in the best interest of the child to be placed on the Child Protection Register (CPR). Furthermore, from research gathered, the professionals involved in the case conference, they will then each provide an action plan report centred around the child and family needs so that the potential risk is minimised and the well-being and level of care the child receives is increased. By carrying out the ICCC and prior research it was found out that the parents or carers of the child will be given a copy of each professional's report 48 hours before the conference and be given the opportunity to voice their opinions on the statements within the reports in compliance with the AWCPP (2008).

As a result of this assignment, it has made me as an individual gain a better insight on the importance of sharing information and working with other multi-agency networks such as a police officer, health visitor and a social worker in conjunction with the Working Together Act 1991 to provide a better understanding of a child's holistic development and be able to provide a specific and personalised plan to support the child and family's needs, along with combined care and education as recognised by the McMillan sisters. (cited in Stacey, 2009: 109). Working within a multi-agency is apart of my role as a nursery leader as it provides uniformity and allows us to improve continuously in line with new legislations and good practice and diversity shared by other agencies.

I adopted the role of the health visitor as I wanted to expand on my knowledge on the working professional. As a nursery leader, I liaise with health visitors on a frequent basis but felt I would benefit from expanding my knowledge on all the services a flying start health visitors have at their discretion. The Children Care Act 1999 agree with the Department of Health (2009) and emphasises a Health Visitor's duty is to reduce health inequalities and protect children from risk and support the family to do so through delivering the healthy child programme. By developing my understanding, I will now be more willing to adapt my setting to work closer with health visitors to support a child's personal plan. Based on research gathered, it was also interesting to note the importance of health visitors building a positive relationship with parents so that the parents engage and respect the health visitor support. Communication between myself as a nursery setting and parents plays a

vital role in building relationships with parents to ensure the child development is continued outside the nursery setting. The Department of Health (2012) acknowledges that good communication skills lead to better listening skills as people feel heard and valued. Focusing on communication in difficult situations is very relevant to Health visiting practice as there are frequent barriers which can affect delivering the public health messages. (IHV.org, 2014). By a health visitor having regular contact with the family and build positive relationships along with practitioners like myself, it allows us to work together and spot any signs and symptoms that could affect a child's well-being, within this scenario the nursery and health visitor worked together to safeguard the child by identifying concerns, such as Alfie becoming withdrawn, decrease in the level of personal hygiene and a lack of engagement and socialisation with his peers which all indicated a change within the home environment. The benefits of this is that it prevents Adverse Childhood Experience forming and ensures each child has equal opportunities to develop by placing early interventions at the soonest convenience. (NSPCC, 2018). McLachan et al 2010 agree with NSPCC (2018) and emphasis that early intervention is key for a child's development. The WELCOMM assessment carried out at 15 and 27 months are used to assess a child's development as well as their needs and resilience also provides opportunity to spot any concerns (NHS, 2015). As this framework is new and replaces the original SOGS assessment, this research along with my own knowledge has helped develop my understanding of the traffic light system they use when carrying out the assessment. This research was extremely beneficial as the assessment are received the same time as the referral from the health visitor of a child into a flying start setting. (Flying Start 2015).

The main purpose of a Social worker role as said by Think Care Careers (2018) is to focus on a child's care and well-being by providing support to the whole family. This is beneficial as a social worker can gather back ground information on the family history and build relationships with relevant people within the family network, which helps the social worker to gain a holistic perspective of the family needs and provide support in the correct areas it is needed. This good practice was shown in the case conference by the social worker engaging with Alfie and promoting his voice by sharing his opinions on the discussed matter and therefore upholding the child rights specified in the UNCRC (1989) and the Children Act (1999) which states that a

child's voice is paramount. Prior to the case conference, a social worker profession was one I felt I knew the least about as I as an individual have not had many dealings with them directly, it was interesting, similarly to the Health visiting assessment method, that a social worker assesses a child's vulnerability and need based on three tiers. Research showed that, Tier 3 being the most significant and which means an action plan must be placed immediately to minimise the child encountering any future harm. Harm is defined by section 31 of the Children Act 1989 as the 'ill treatment or impairment of development'.

The role of the police officer was the one that I found most interesting as it was the role I felt I lacked knowledge in. Following the research gathered and discussions with the group I learnt that in accordance to the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) (2014) and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014) a child will automatically be placed on the CPR if one of the parents of the child has served time for a criminal offence. Police are also able to check their Police National Computer (PNC) (2014) immediately following an incident in order to gain prior criminal information on the individual's character, this effectively allows police officers to deal with situations accordingly as they have immediate information that gives them a holistic insight into the individual, by doing so they are protecting themselves and the public from any foreseeable harm. This research was of value to my career as it made me aware that the police have a duty of care and can control situations in the best interest of a child by taking perspective the full details of the individual involved. For example, Alfie's dad was escorted away immediately which helped support the nursery as it diffuses the situation following the police officer discovering his previous convictions and volatile behaviour throughout the incident and safeguarding Alfie and the other children and staff in the nursery.

The role of the nursery leader was one I knew the most about prior to the case conference as it is my current job role, however by carrying out further research on a leader of a nursery I now feel more confident when making decisions surrounding safeguarding and feel I will recognise signs of neglect as well as physical, emotional and sexual abuse more readily. Care Inspector Wales (CIW) regulate nurseries and state it is mandatory for all staff to have a safeguarding policies and procedure training along with an updated DBS. The importance of adhering to policies and

procedures is vital when safeguarding children and the use of a password system as used by Little stars day nurseries which ensures that children are always released to appropriate adults known to the nursery. Every Child Matters (ECM) (DfES, 2003) and the Early Years Foundation Phase (2008) places a legal obligation for professionals to provide a child-centred approach that protects a child's health and well-being using integrated services such a flying start. Flying Start (2015) along with the Welsh government aim to eradicate child poverty by 2020 in line with the implementation of ECM Agenda (2003) (Cited in Stacey, 2009:101). Following research surrounding nurseries it enhanced my knowledge of the 30 hour free childcare offer that is coming into force in January 2019, whereby working families will be eligible to receive 10 hours of education along with an additional 20 hours of care free per week, which in hand will mean that more children will attend nurseries and ensure that they are seen by practitioners who have a duty of care to safeguard children. (GOV, 2018).

As supported by Burns and Sinfield (2012) group work is beneficial in helping to expend on personal skills and development surrounding safeguarding as it involves multi agency working. This was demonstrated as everyone developed each other's ideas by sharing personal research which built on our internal knowledge and experience of working with children and coming to an agreement on what action plan would best benefit the family and support the child's health and wellbeing. Working as a team allowed myself to develop my socialising skills, communication skills and listening skills, whilst being mindful when sharing good practice to remain professional and ensure not to disclose any confidential information as this was a sensitive topic which I have had first hand experiencing before. Cotton (2011) and Exley and Dennick (2004) believes that by professional scrutinizing their personal experiences it allows professionals to rationalise the information and make better sense of complex and sensitive issues, such as details surrounding the case conference. By working as a group, it allowed us to remain objective and consider the details of the scenario and considerate that we were not stereo-typing a family, (Bedford and Wilson (2013), which allowed myself to develop my values and empathy skills and enhance my professional practice by continuous improvement.

To Conclude, the basis of this assignment was very beneficial as it helped deepen my personal knowledge and understanding of the working professional's role and

responsibilities whilst highlighting the importance of safeguarding to prevent harm or risk. Following this assignment, within my role as a practitioner I will now be carrying out a staff meeting to ensure that all my staff are up to date with the current GDPR (2018) and the importance of confidentiality when referring and recording sensitive information which is supported by the ACWPP (2008). The initial child case conference provided a real-life situation under pressure which was beneficial to experience first-hand as this scenario could become a reality within my role as a practitioner.

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