

We were given the task of conducting a group discussion of around 15 minutes. We had to discuss a scenario and consider the roles of professional individuals in an initial child protection conference.

We had to refer and consider the well-being and rights of the child and consider good practice and appropriate procedures.

The scenario was regarding a 3 year old child in a nursery, whom we named Jack. He had altered significantly over the last few months. There was concern regarding the child's well-being and the matter was raised with the leader. The child was withdrawn and the leader/manager had asked the key worker to document everything as they had decided to make a referral.

When we were told this was a group task I reached out to the other three Welsh speakers on our course and asked if they would want to work together. I then set up a group WhatsApp page for the four of us for us to communicate effectively over the following month. This proved to be incredibly important as we used it very often. Logistically it was impossible to meet up to discuss the task with us living over two hours drive apart, therefore we agreed to meet up after the lectures, and when someone was unable to attend we informed them of our discussion on the WhatsApp group. In hindsight it would have been easier to be in a group where we lived closer to each other, but this could not be prevented as we are the only four Welsh speakers in the group and we had to be in groups of four. Although I do feel we overcame the issue of logistics well.

Then a few days before our discussion myself and two others submitted our work to each other so that we could read through and familiarise ourselves with what we were all going to say.

The day of the presentation I booked a room in the quad at the University, so we were able to go through our discussion and rehearse before our allocated slot.

I enjoy working as part of a team because you get an insight into how other people think and everyone can contribute their ideas. The only problem we encountered was not being able to meet up outside the lectures, however we had great communication on the phone and we were able to rehearse properly on the day of the presentation.

I learnt many things from my role as a GP, according to (Gmc UK, 2018), doctors play an important role in protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Being able to identify children that may be at risk as early as possible may help the child get the care and help they need to be healthy, safe and happy, and to achieve their potential in life. This responsibility is for every doctor. This encourages doctors to have the confidence to act if they believe that a child or baby may be being abused or neglected, or indeed if there is a safeguarding issue. Their concerns will be justified, even if it turns out that the child or young person is not at risk of, or suffering abuse or neglect, if the concerns were made genuinely and they were reasonable, and the doctor acts through appropriate channels they will always be taken seriously.

This is good to know as the doctor does not have to worry if he/she is wrong, they will always be taken seriously.

I am more confident now in knowing what the different roles entail, and I would be happy in relaying this back to people in a professional manner, particularly in terms of current legislations and the rights of the child.

The social services and wellbeing act (Wales), (GOV UK, 2018) has introduced a stronger and more realistic approach to safeguarding.

They believe it is everyone's responsibility and that every professional and organisation must do everything they can, to ensure that children at risk are protected from abuse.

A National Independent Safeguarding Board was set up to work with the safeguarding children boards across Wales.

The board's duties are to:

- Making sure that the safeguarding boards are effective and advising on ways they could improve.
- Give reports on the effectiveness of safeguarding children in Wales.
- Let the Welsh ministers know how they can improve.

The AWCP (All Wales Child Protection) are the ones responsible for safeguarding children and considering children's welfare. They inform child protection practice in each of the local and regional safeguarding children boards across Wales.

They are managed by the All-Wales Child Protection Review Group which represents all of Wales' safeguarding children boards and partner agencies.

I was not aware of the term ACEs (CDC gov, 2018) before embarking on this assignment and I found it very interesting. It made me reflect on people that I've known in my life whether it be in school or in the workplace, also neighbours that I had when I lived in London, and it made a lot of sense to me. How their upbringing had shaped them into the people they became. The valuable lesson I learnt and took from this was that children can be helped and intervention, as early as possible is paramount. Childhood experiences, albeit positive ones or negative ones, can have a major impact on the future of the children involved, and is correlated to violence and drug/alcohol abuse, and the lifelong health and opportunity of children. Therefore, early experiences are in fact a public health issue. The term used for this is Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

In April 2001, Lord Laming was asked to chair an Independent Statutory Inquiry following the death of Victoria Climbié, he was asked to make recommendations as to how that kind of event would not happen again in the future in Britain. These were some of his recommendations.

A national agency for children and families, led by a children's commissioner, should be established to ensure local services meet national standards for child protection and implement reforms.

The creation of a national children's database that keeps a record of every contact a child has with a member of staff from the police, health and local authorities.

Safeguard training is important as it helps people that are working with children to identify a safeguarding issue, and more importantly what steps need to be taken when there is a safeguarding issue, or a suspicion of one. Who to tell, what to do, the protocol that needs to be taken and the importance of logging everything exactly how you see it, not as you interpret it.

Care must be taken to be honest and thorough when making observations, putting assumptions aside and simply telling it as it is. That is why observations are so important, as quite often small subtle changes can happen over a period before anything is done, and its useful to see if a pattern emerges or when problems began to surface, it also protects the person working with the child.

When there are changes to a child's behaviour or indeed the parents or siblings it is easy to jump to conclusions.

If I had any concerns about a child at my setting I would now be confident to approach the safeguarding officer. I was told who this was when I started at the school and there is also a piece of paper up in the staff bathrooms and staffroom reminding everyone of this. I'm happy that I'd be able to relay what I'd seen and my thoughts with the safeguarding officer and that we'd be able to take the necessary steps from then on. And failing that I could go to the Head teacher or school governor, whilst also remembering the importance of confidentiality.

Every person that works with children needs to be aware of the whistle blowing policy in their practice and who they need to go to if they have any concerns regarding a child's welfare.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales is an independent children's rights institution established in 2001. The principal aim is to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales' statutory powers derive from the Care Standards Act 2000 (as amended by the Children's Commissioner for Wales Act 2001) and Children's Commissioner for Wales Regulations 2001. The legislation sets out the role and responsibilities of the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales can:

Investigate if public bodies are carrying out their obligations and responsibilities in the correct way. Review the current whistleblowing policies that these public bodies have in place and ensure that the policies are effective. Communicate with the Welsh Government on matters which directly affect the rights and welfare of all children in Wales.

Regio Emilia, (Child discovery centre, 2018) believed in the three subjects of education: children, families and teachers.

For children to learn, their well-being is of the upmost importance. their well-being is also connected with the wellbeing of their parents and teachers. Children, parents and teachers have rights; the right to safety, care and welfare, the right to be involved and the right to grow

professionally. She believed they were all connected and that you could not get one without the other.

The role of the teacher

She believed that the image of the child shapes the role of the teacher and involves four major components. Teachers are:

- **Co-constructors:** partners, guides, nurtures, solves problems, learns, hypothesizes
- **Researchers:** learns, observes, revisits
- **Documenters:** listens, records, displays, revisits
- **Advocates for children:** involved in the community, politics relating to children, speaks for children and presents work to other educators and community members.

This just shows the importance of the teacher in a child's life.

To conclude, I did enjoy working with the other members of my team and enjoyed everyone playing a different professional role as it meant I not only learnt more about the profession that was assigned to me the family doctor or G.P, but I got to learn about the other professions too. Its good to have other peoples input and insight into the assignments and learning the different legislations will help me in my career as a professional. The issue of safeguarding and neglect is a difficult one and I'm confident that this has improved my knowledge and credibility as a practitioner and will enable me to take the correct course of action if the need ever arises, and to know what channels to take.

On reflection, I'm not sure id make a good social worker as it would upset me too much and id be too involved. I now have an insight into how difficult the role is and how you are making such important decisions that will affect children and their families for the rest of their lives. However, at the same time it made me realize that as child practitioners we have a duty of care to the children within our setting and any concerns I have must always be investigated further.

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