

UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

BA(HONS) EARLY YEARS AND CHILDHOOD
STUDIES

SEMESTER 1 2024/25

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

MODULE NO: EYC5008

Date: Monday 13th January 2025

Time: 10am-12pm

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

There is a case study to read and 3 questions to answer in this section. All questions must be answered. You may bring in a reference list to your exam. Candidates are advised that the examiners attach importance to legibility of writing and clarity of expression. **YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO PLAN YOUR ANSWERS**

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Please read the following case study and answer ALL questions in this section. All questions carry equal marks.

Case Study:

The Brown family consists of Claire Brown (aged 28) and her four-year-old son, Tommy. Claire has been a single parent since Tommy's father left shortly after his birth. The family lives in a small apartment in a suburban area. Claire works part-time at a local supermarket, but her hours have recently been reduced due to performance issues, leading to financial strain. Claire has a history of alcohol misuse, which has worsened over the past year following the loss of her mother, who was a key support figure in her life. Tommy is enrolled in a local preschool, in a private nursery, where he attends three days a week. Nursery staff have observed that Tommy often arrives at school with dirty clothes, unbrushed hair, and an overall unkempt appearance. On several occasions, he has come to school without appropriate clothing for the weather, such as wearing a thin t-shirt on a cold day. The nursery practitioners have also noticed that Tommy frequently appears tired, and he sometimes falls asleep during activities.

Tommy's behaviour has become increasingly withdrawn at nursery. He often plays alone and does not engage much with other children. During snack times, Tommy tends to eat very quickly and asks for more food, indicating that he may not be getting enough to eat at home. His speech and language skills also seem to be below the expected level for his age, and he struggles to concentrate during learning activities. The nursery manager has tried to reach out to Claire several times to discuss their concerns. However, she has been difficult to contact, often missing scheduled meetings or arriving late to pick up Tommy, sometimes appearing dishevelled and smelling of alcohol. On one occasion, a staff member observed that Claire seemed to be slurring her words and had difficulty standing steadily.

Preschool staff, increasingly worried about Tommy's well-being, decided to document their observations and report the situation to the local safeguarding team. The staff expressed concerns about potential neglect due to Claire's apparent alcohol misuse and the impact it was having on Tommy's health and development.

The safeguarding team conducted an unannounced home visit to assess the situation. Upon arrival, they found the apartment to be in a state of disarray, with clutter and dirty dishes piled up in the kitchen. The smell of alcohol was noticeable, and several empty bottles were scattered around the living room. Claire appeared disoriented and was initially resistant to allowing the officers inside. Tommy was found playing alone in his bedroom, which had minimal toys or activities suitable for his age. His bed was unmade, and there were no signs of recent cleaning. The officers noted that Tommy's clothes were dirty, and he had an unpleasant odour, suggesting a lack of regular bathing.

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When questioned, Claire admitted to struggling with her alcohol use, particularly since the death of her mother. She broke down in tears, expressing feelings of hopelessness and guilt about her inability to care for Tommy properly. She acknowledged that she had been drinking heavily in the evenings and sometimes found it difficult to wake up in the mornings, which affected her ability to prepare meals, maintain the household, and care for Tommy.

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1. Explore the four categories of abuse, identifying any safeguarding concerns within the case study. **(10 Marks)**

2. Analyse how current UK legislation, such as the Children Act 1989 and the Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) guidelines, would influence the decision-making process in Tommy's case. What legal obligations do the safeguarding team have in this scenario? **(20 Marks)**

3. Reflect on the importance of communication between agencies in the context of the Brown family case study. What challenges might arise in maintaining effective communication, and how can these be addressed to improve multi-agency collaboration? **(20 Marks)**

END OF QUESTIONS