



Sharley, V. (2022). Responding to Child Neglect in Schools: factors which scaffold safeguarding practice for staff in mainstream education in Wales. *Research Papers in Education*, 1-21.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2022.2089211>

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

License (if available):
CC BY-NC-ND

Link to published version (if available):
[10.1080/02671522.2022.2089211](https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2022.2089211)

[Link to publication record in Explore Bristol Research](#)
PDF-document

This is the final published version of the article (version of record). It first appeared online via Taylor & Francis at <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2022.2089211>. Please refer to any applicable terms of use of the publisher

University of Bristol - Explore Bristol Research

General rights

This document is made available in accordance with publisher policies. Please cite only the published version using the reference above. Full terms of use are available:
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/red/research-policy/pure/user-guides/ebr-terms/>



Responding to Child Neglect in Schools: factors which scaffold safeguarding practice for staff in mainstream education in Wales

Victoria Sharley

To cite this article: Victoria Sharley (2022): Responding to Child Neglect in Schools: factors which scaffold safeguarding practice for staff in mainstream education in Wales, Research Papers in Education, DOI: [10.1080/02671522.2022.2089211](https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2022.2089211)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2022.2089211>



© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 16 Jun 2022.



[Submit your article to this journal](#)



Article views: 313



[View related articles](#)



[View Crossmark data](#)

Responding to Child Neglect in Schools: factors which scaffold safeguarding practice for staff in mainstream education in Wales

Victoria Sharley

School for Policy Studies University of Bristol, Clifton Bristol

ABSTRACT

Child neglect is a problem that presents many challenges to learning and teaching in schools. Children are unable to learn if their basic needs are not met. Neglect is the second most common reason for a child to be on a child protection plan in Wales. Given the universal nature of their provision within the community, and the prevalence of neglect, schools are well-placed to notice and intervene early and provide support to children that promotes their health and well-being. In fact, staff in schools have the opportunity to observe children's behaviours, and their interactions with other pupils and family members up to five days a week over an extended period of time. However, little is known about the specific ways in which staff in schools respond to neglect and what factors help them to provide effective school-based support to families. This paper presents findings from thirty interviews with staff in six mainstream primary and secondary schools in Wales. Findings identify three factors that support neglect-practice within the school-setting (i) a whole-school proactive approach to child neglect; (ii) a positive learning and development environment for staff members; and (iii) relationships between staff and the child(ren)'s family.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 2 October 2021

Accepted 24 April 2022

KEYWORDS

Child neglect; schools; social work; teachers; communities of practice

1. Introduction

Child neglect is acknowledged as one of many problems that presents challenges to effective learning and teaching (Adelman, 2014). In 2019, 1014 children were placed upon the child protection register for neglect or neglect and physical or sexual abuse as a secondary category (StatsWales 2019). This figure accounts for more than a third (36%) of all child protection registrations in Wales. It is widely acknowledged that children are unable to learn successfully if their basic needs have not been fully met (Baginsky 2008; Perry 2001). This introduces a responsibility for pastoral care upon staff in schools, alongside the delivery of education, to ensure the overall well-being and safety of pupils is maintained (Llywodraeth Cymru/Welsh Government 2021). Under Section 130(1) of The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 everyone has a duty to report to the local authority when they have concerns that a child might be at risk of experiencing neglect or any other kinds of harm, or has needs for care and support.

CONTACT Victoria Sharley  vicky.sharley@bristol.ac.uk  School for Policy Studies University of Bristol 8 Priory Road Clifton Bristol BS8 1TZ

© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

Teachers and other staff in schools are acknowledged as being some of the most significant adults in a child's life, cognitively, socially and developmentally (Baginsky 2007 & 2008; Daniel 2008). In some circumstances they may be the *only* professional who has contact with a child and their family. School staff as a holistic group play a central role in children's individual worlds (Baginsky 2008), being in a unique position to notice neglect and contribute to its successful prevention (Sharley 2019 & 2021; Baginsky 2003). They can detect early changes in a child's behaviour, observe the child's interactions with their parents, or their failure to progress in accordance with expected developmental and educational milestones – all of which can provide early indicators of a child living with neglect who is in need of support (Crosson-Tower 2003).

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 defines neglect as 'a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, which is likely to result in an impairment of the person's wellbeing (for example, an impairment of the person's health or, in the case of a child, an impairment of the child's development' (Llywodraeth Cymru/Welsh Government 2021, 64). The policy document 'Keeping Learners Safe in Education' (Welsh Government 2021) focuses upon the role of the local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002. The policy relates directly to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019) and duties under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, setting out guidance for all those working in an education setting, or related agency about safeguarding children, emphasising the importance of working closely with other agencies to share information to promote the welfare of children (Author's Own, 2019). Specifically, it places a responsibility upon staff in schools to protect children from neglect, prevent any impairment of children's health or development, and to take action to ensure 'that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care' (Welsh Government 2021, 4).

Children and young people who are vulnerable or experiencing neglectful parenting may often not have strong adult support, placing Teachers and school staff in some circumstances – in the foreground as the only trusted adult or advocate in their lives (Berridge et al. 2021). The purpose of this study was to understand the way in which school staff respond to children who are living with neglect. This paper reports the findings of the second phase of a two-phase mixed methods study completed in 2018 (Sharley, 2018). Phase one comprised the quantitative analysis of 119 children's social work case files (from three local authorities in Wales) to understand the level of involvement of school staff in responding to neglect at the acute end of statutory intervention, when children had been placed upon the child protection register for the category of neglect (Sharley 2021). Phase two of the study, presented here, explores the ways in which school staff respond to neglect in their roles, and the specific factors they perceive as valuable in supporting their safeguarding practice within the school-setting.

2. The school's response to child neglect

In 2013 the Welsh Government commissioned the Welsh Neglect Project which was a collaboration between NSPCC Cymru/Wales and Action for Children-Gweithredu dros Blant (Stevens and Laing 2015). The study explored the current evidence base and existing practice on neglect in Wales making recommendations to improve multi-agency

services for child neglect. Of note, findings identified schools as crucial partners in the effective identification of child neglect and specifically, that communication between child protection services and schools was a particular obstacle for practice (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) 2015).

Two small qualitative studies recently undertaken in England have explored the experiences of primary school teachers, family support workers and designated safeguarding leads in relation to concerns of child abuse and neglect. Bullock et al.'s (2019) investigation into the experiences of teachers and family support workers (n = 10) focuses specifically on identifying and responding to child neglect within the school context. Findings report that professionals often consider neglect 'not serious enough' to report to child protection services, requiring a larger picture of evidence to be collated within the school. This was alongside acknowledgement of the challenge of policies and funding upon school-based practice, interprofessional difficulties, and perceived confidence in their roles and how other professionals viewed their work (Bullock et al. 2019).

Richards's (2017) study into the experiences of 6 designated safeguarding professionals (DSPs) interviewed participants from primary schools in one county in the south of England to explore experiences of multi-agency working when safeguarding children through the delivery of early help services. Although the study investigated experiences of responding to child protection concerns in general (as opposed to neglect specifically as a distinct form of maltreatment), findings draw particular attention to neglect-specific practice. Staff reported experiencing a high level of complexity in constructing meaning and making decisions based upon a child's presentation or their verbal accounts of neglect. In the study, DSPs reported difficulties in 'representing harm that is cumulative', and not knowing how to intervene when children are not adequately cared for (Richards 2017, 10). Findings call for further research on this topic with a view to informing training and professional development of school staff when identifying and assessing child neglect which provides a fitting platform for the dissemination of this study's findings.

Aside from the two aforementioned studies, literature primarily focuses upon the role of a specific professional group (i.e. teachers or counsellors or DSPs or support workers) rather than how the school responds as a whole system. Studies also tend to focus upon the broader concept of child abuse and neglect (CAN) as opposed to investigating neglect as a distinct form of maltreatment. Baginsky et al (2019) do offer whole school perspectives on safeguarding and child protection in English schools, however their primary focus is upon understanding the nature of the educational landscape, rather than professionals' experiences of direct practice with children and families when responding to concerns within the school context. Given the dearth of research into 'whole-school' or 'all-staff' responses specifically to child neglect (Bullock et al. 2019; Richards 2017), three broad themes are now presented from the international literature on child abuse and neglect (CAN) in the school context: (i) Lack of Adequate Teacher Training in CAN, (ii) Identification and Intervention of CAN in Schools, and (iii) interdisciplinary responses to CAN involving schools.

2.1 Lack of adequate teacher training in child abuse and neglect

Teacher training in child abuse and neglect plays a crucial role in teachers' awareness and identification of potential indicators of maltreatment (Karadag, Sonmez, and Dereobali 2015). Walsh and Farrell (2008) suggest that an expanding awareness of child neglect

raises questions about the level of safeguarding training which is currently received by teachers. Particularly so, with enquiries into child deaths continuing to emphasise the importance of ensuring suitable responses to concerns within education settings (Burnett and Greenwald O'Brien 2007) and the pivotal role of education in multiagency practice (Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, 2020). The most common challenges for teaching professionals reporting concerns of abuse or neglect within schools are the lack of training in or ability to recognise maltreatment, or not being familiar with the reporting procedures that govern safeguarding practice (Naregal et al. 2015), or the necessary understanding of detailed information on identifying signs of abuse and neglect within the school (Wonnacott and Watts 2018).

Research into teacher training in child abuse and neglect, although rather limited in the United Kingdom, primarily explores in-service or post-qualification child protection training for staff, highlighting a paucity of pre-service training for students or recently qualified teachers (McKee and Dillenburger 2009; Hodgkinson and Baginsky 2000). Whilst training is vital, it is important to recognise the reality of teacher training where courses are under pressure to deliver substantial content in little time (Walsh et al. 2008), and perhaps wider elements such as child protection and pastoral support are squeezed in favour of educational priorities (Baginsky and Macpherson 2005). This presents questions about how prepared teachers may be and how confident they feel about responding to safeguarding concerns in their roles (McKee and Dillenburger 2009; Hodgkinson and Baginsky 2000).

2.2 Identification and intervention of child abuse and neglect in schools

All staff in schools require specific knowledge about CAN as well as a sound awareness and understanding of the reporting procedures if they are to undertake their safeguarding responsibilities effectively. Keeping Learners Safe in Education states that everyone working in education is responsible for 'creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for children' and 'identifying child well-being concerns and taking action to address them, where appropriate, in partnership with other agencies' (Llywodraeth Cymru/Welsh Government 2021, 4). That said, the education profession has been said to have been unhurried in establishing a discipline-specific knowledge base for teachers (Sinclair Taylor and Hodgkinson 2001), with teaching professionals not receiving adequate information to identify and intervene appropriately in cases of suspected child maltreatment (Walsh and Farrell 2008), nor guidance on the application of or movement between local authority thresholds for intervention (Richards 2017).

Lack of knowledge may be associated with poor pre and post-service training, and may limit teachers' ability to recognise and report cases of neglect to child protection services through the correct reporting procedures (Karadag, Sonmez, and Dereobali 2015; Gilbert et al. 2009;). The under-reporting of abuse and neglect has in the past been acknowledged, particularly in primary schools (Schols, de Ruiter, and Ory 2013; Goebbels et al. 2008) where suspected neglect is not always reported to statutory agencies as early as it could be – this perhaps could be due to its perceived lack of severity (Bullock et al. 2019)- or the complexities staff experience in recognising cumulative harm and substantiating their concerns (Richards 2017). Despite the literature on under-reporting in this context, schools are acknowledged as responsible for

almost one in five of all referrals to statutory services (Department for Education 2019), emphasised by the recent substantial drop in referral rates to following the closure of schools during the Covid19 pandemic (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) 2020).

Schols, de Ruiter, and Ory (2013) qualitative study into how child healthcare professionals and primary school teachers identify child abuse, employed focus groups to explore Dutch frontline professionals' recognition and reporting behaviours. The study found that both groups of professionals were aware of the signs and risk of child abuse but had a deficiency in specific knowledge of the subject, rates of abuse, and reporting processes. In the study, teachers expressed their reluctance to fully admit the severity of a child's circumstances and provided justifications as to why they could not respond to the concerns they held, also acknowledging parents' situations as a priority and the impact of limited income *'the parents themselves might not perceived it as abuse, because they are doing their best and maybe they just cannot do better'* (2013:6). The study also found that teachers were inclined to 'hide behind' different social norms and standards which they construct for different parents, applying subjectivity to different groups as a reason for not responding to signs of maltreatment which risks the misjudgement of harm experienced by the child.

2.3 Interdisciplinary responses to child abuse and neglect that involve schools

Although the prompt recognition of child neglect is largely dependent upon the relationship between schools and child protection services, literature continues to acknowledge inter-agency communication as one of the most problematic and challenging aspects of neglect-practice (Stevens and Laing 2015; Holland, Crowley, and Noaks 2013; Webster et al. 2005). Teachers identify a number of barriers to reporting concerns to child protection services (Goebbels et al. 2008) which include feelings of guilt when a child is removed from the family as a result of the referral they have made, the inability to report concerns with anonymity from the parents, anxiety about the potential reactions parents may have, and the need to obtain parental consent (Schols, de Ruiter, and Ory 2013).

Aside from individual barriers, organisational barriers are also acknowledged. Schools report long waiting times for responses from statutory agencies following referrals (Baginsky 2000), whilst statutory agencies report the often-inappropriate nature of referrals they receive from schools. Commonly, referrals from schools are considered not 'serious enough' to meet statutory thresholds for intervention, nor reported until a bigger picture of evidence has been internally gathered (Bullock et al. 2019). Furthermore, there are much higher rates of 'unsubstantiated' referrals received from the field of education than any other agency (King and Scott 2012).

The consistent unsubstantiation of child maltreatment reports from school-based staff could pertain to the fact that teacher reports are often drawn from child disclosures, compared to referrals from other health and social care agencies that are based on observation or parental reporting. This could raise questions about the manner in which teachers interact with children and also the limited training teaching staff receive about identifying CAN with the school context (Kesner and Robinson 2002). Moreover, teachers' beliefs about the attitudes and potential responses of Social Services inform the decision to report, suggesting that a referral for physical abuse may be more likely to receive attention than for concerns in relation to neglect alone Bullock et al. (2019).

3. Methods

This paper presents the qualitative findings from Phase 2 of an explanatory two-phase mixed methods study. Phase 1 of the study comprised quantitative analysis of children's social work case files [$n = 119$] (Sharley, 2018 2021) from three local authorities in Wales where the school was the referring agency to Social Services and the child had been registered on the Child Protection Register under the category of neglect. In phase two of the study, 30 semi-structured interviews were conducted with a range of staff in six primary and secondary schools to explore the approaches taken when staff were concerned that a child was living with neglect. The discussion in this paper focuses upon Phase 2 of the study and gives attention to the factors that staff reported as particularly valuable in supporting their safeguarding practice, answering the research question: *'What are the experiences of a range of school staff in responding to children and their parents when they are concerned that a child is experiencing neglect?'*

3.1 Selection of schools

At the inception of the mixed methods study all 22 local authorities in Wales were contacted about their involvement in the project. Of 22, eight authorities expressed an interest in participation. Three local authorities were chosen in accordance with the following selection principles (i) their geographical position, (ii) a low, average, or high rate of children registered on the child protection register (CPR), (iii) a low or high rate of children registered under the category of neglect, and (iv) a low, average or high rate of deprivation on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) (StatsWales 2019)' (Author's Own, 2021).

Given Wales's small population, each authority was allocated a pseudonym ('Urban authority', 'Rural authority', and 'Valley's authority') for the purposes of anonymity and confidentiality. The urban authority was a geographically small region with a high population, culturally diverse, and positioned in the south of Wales. The rural authority covers a large geographic area in mid Wales. Mainly agricultural, with a lower population, with less than 2% of people identifying as being from a BAME background (Stats Wales 2016). The Valleys authority is a small local authority in the Valleys of south Wales. It is positioned within Wales's former principal industrialised region, which until the early twentieth century was a hub for Britain's coal mining and ironwork manufacturing. Since the decline of the area's active productions in the 1980s, unemployment rates in the region have been reported amongst the highest in the United Kingdom.

Ethical approval for Phase 2 of the study was obtained from Cardiff University's Research Ethics Committee in October 2015, with data collection commencing in 2016. Two mainstream schools, a primary and a secondary school from each local authority were selected for participation in the study ($n = 6$), underpinned by inferential statistics drawn from the Phase 1 of the study: schools in the sample which had the highest level of referral rates to Social Services for concerns which resulted in a child receiving statutory support for neglect were identified. Head Teachers were contacted in these schools to explore the potential for their involvement in the study. Access approval from the schools wishing to participate was then sought and obtained.

3.2 The Schools

3.2.1 Urban primary school

The first school is a small urban primary with approximately 250 to 300 pupils, offering provision for nursery, infants and juniors. The percentage of pupils that meet the criterion for free school meals is between 40–50%, which is significantly higher than the national average (19%) (Welsh Government 2017). The school is positioned within a pocket of social and economic deprivation within the city. As with all the case studies participating in the research, the school is classed as an English-medium school.

3.2.2 Urban secondary school

The second school is a medium-sized urban secondary with 800–1000 pupils. The school supports a transient community whilst many families await their first choice of school and the long-term settlement in other areas. The school has significantly more students who meet the criterion for free school meals (in the range of 30–40%) than the Local Authority (20%) and national averages (17%) (Welsh Government 2017).

3.2.3 Rural primary school

The third school is a small rural primary school with approximately 250–270 pupils. The primary school is situated in a small town on the coast within one of the most economically and socially deprived areas in Wales (Stats Wales 2011a). More than a quarter of the school's pupils meet the criteria for free school meals, which is higher than the Local Authority (18%) and national average (19%) (Welsh Government 2017). All pupils at the school come from a White British background and speak English as their first language.

3.2.4 Rural secondary school

The fourth school is a small rural secondary with approximately 450–500 pupils. The school is in a small harbour town within a former coal mining region of Wales. A significant number of pupils experience social and financial disadvantage due to high rates of unemployment (Stats Wales 2017c), with nearly a third of the school's pupils meeting the criteria for free school meals (10% higher than the national average). Between 30–40% of pupils are categorised as having additional or complex learning needs, which is higher than the Local Authority (33%) and national averages (25%).

3.2.5 Valleys primary school

The fifth school is a small primary with approximately 150–200 pupils, situated within an isolated Valleys community within one of the country's most socially and economically deprived areas (Stats Wales 2011a & 2017b; Welsh Government 2017). The school is located near to a former mining village and serves a close local community. Few pupils attend from outside the locality. All pupils have English as their first language, and only a very small proportion are of non-Welsh White backgrounds. The number of pupils that meet the criterion for free school meals (in the range of 30–40%) is slightly above the Local Authority average (27%), and significantly higher than the national average (19%).

3.2.6 Valleys secondary school

The sixth and final school is a large all-age (3–16 years) school with approximately 1200–1400 pupils. The secondary campus is situated within a Valleys community within a former industrial region of Wales in one of the country's most severely deprived areas (Stats Wales 2011a). Near to a quarter of the school's pupils meet the criteria for free school meals (in the range of 20–30%), which although similar to the Local Authority average, is higher than the national average in Wales for secondary schools (19%). At the time of the research, the secondary school was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspections and categorised as 'inadequate', highlighting a lack of focus on pupils' well-being.

3.3 Sample characteristics

Given the predominance of literature on the experiences of teachers, participants were sought and identified from across a range of different roles within the schools. All staff gave informed consent and participated voluntarily. Staff were selected from five categories (i) management and strategic staff, (ii) teaching staff, (iii) pastoral staff, (iv) education support staff, and (v) support and administrative staff (Author's Own, 2019). The use of categories was designed to generate a broad range of staff knowledge, experience, and perceptions from the school as a whole system, to reduce bias and promote diversity within the sample.

Thirty interviews were undertaken, half in primary schools and half in secondary schools. Fifteen of the participants were qualified teachers who were currently in teaching, specialist, or managerial roles. Eight were in learning assistant roles (LSA), with the remaining seven participants holding administrative or supporting roles such as office administrators, lunchtime supervisors, or school crossing patrol (Author's Own, 2019:557). Twenty-three of the participants were female, six were male. Eight held a child protection designation as part of their role responsibility (all schools in Wales are required to appoint a Designated Senior Person (DSP) with lead responsibility for managing all child protection issues).

3.4 Data collection & analysis

Data was collected over a two-week period in each school, during the second term of the academic year. This time was chosen in partnership with Head Teachers who believed it to offer (i) the least competing priorities for staff, and (ii) sufficient time for staff to have become familiar with new pupils. Five interviews were conducted in each school ($n = 30$), each lasting no more than one hour in duration. Interviews were undertaken in a private room. All interviews were audio-recorded, aside from one which was handwritten at the request of the participant.

Four vignettes were constructed for use within the interview process which detailed realistic scenarios that staff may likely encounter within the school setting. The vignettes were drawn from string data collected during Phase 1 of the study, taken from referral documents (held on Social Services' children's case files) compiled by school staff. The purpose of the vignettes was to provide a platform for dialogue that offered situations to deepen discussion, whilst ensuring consistency and reducing bias in the data. The data collection process for phase 2 of the study completed at the end of 2016. Interviews were

transcribed and thematically analysed. Findings from Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the study were triangulated and recurrent themes of interest and those felt significant in answering the study's research questions were identified and then coded by topic. Analytic memorandums were produced by the author, themes were then refined, memos reproduced, and the cyclical process repeated to draw out the themes presented here.

4 Findings & discussion

The discussion includes three themes which emerged from the thirty semi-structured interviews. Each theme explores factors which staff felt were particularly valuable in supporting their ability to identify and respond to neglect within the school context and are arranged for discussion as follows: (i) a proactive whole-school approach to neglect; (ii) a positive learning and development environment for staff; (iii) staff members' relationships with family members.

4.1 A proactive whole-school approach

The first theme captures the how staff felt the school to approach the issue of child neglect. It illustrates staff's perceptions of whether the school took a proactive or reactive approach when responding to child neglect. Staff in the smaller sized schools expressed that a proactive approach was embedded within the overall ethos and culture of the school. This theme illustrates staff's thoughts, feelings and experiences of the whole-school approaches taken within their institution. School staff refer to the infrastructure of the school, the level of strategic investment in the issue of neglect, and how these frameworks help and support in their daily safeguarding practice. Variation emerged within the data with some staff describing how their schools anticipated the issue of neglect occurring, taking an open approach to discussing neglect with families. Other staff described how they acted in response to specific incidents as and when they arose.

There were no clear patterns within the data that suggested either primary or secondary schools identified or responded to child neglect in a specific way. Instead, data revealed that the smaller sized schools took individual approaches to working with the complexity of the issue. Of note, many staff in the Urban primary school articulated how the school holds a clear vision and ethos around safeguarding children within its day-to-day organisation and the appointment of a 'neglect-champion' (Head Teacher) who was passionate about leading upon expertise in this area.

A Head Teacher describes the importance of having a whole-school vision for safeguarding to ensure parents know that the school takes issues of neglect very seriously:

'So the first training day ... we use it to revisit our vision; and part of that is the safeguarding ... It's on walls, its everywhere in our school. We review our procedures so that everybody is clear ... on the back of the visitor's badges is how to respond to allegations or disclosures ... our policy is on our website, and parents know that, it goes in our newsletter periodically as well, every couple of months I just remind parents that we take safeguarding really, really seriously'. (Head Teacher, Urban Authority Primary School)

Staff in the Urban secondary school speak about the school making a strong investment in inclusion and wellbeing, and the allocation of resources and support to engage families from minority groups. Emphasis is placed upon the importance of inclusion for pupils and express a motivation to ‘go further’ in the support they offer to children and their families. The Assistant Head Teacher refers to focusing resources on attempts to engage parents with staff in the school:

‘One of things that this school does differently to other schools is they put a lot of money into resources for inclusion and well-being – also [we’re] prepared to be very creative and very flexible . . . we’ve taxi-d parents in before, we’ve had meetings in people’s houses before. We would go much further than repeated phone calls or an email. Then it would be a constant monitoring after that, engaging with parents and monitoring the impact of support’ (Assistant Head Teacher, Urban Authority Secondary School).

The extract conveys the importance of persistence in practice when attempting to engage families with support when responding to child neglect is highlighted. Bandele (2009) emphasises the importance of involving parents proactively from the start and the need for an inclusive practice culture with learners who are supported to achieve their full potential. All professionals share an important role in the early identification of neglect (Horwath 2007), with education settings often responsible for consistently supporting and monitoring children at school (Baginsky 2008; Goebels et al. 2008).

Due to workloads, some staff members talked about how the social and emotional aspects of learning were receiving less focus, with teaching assistants required to support classroom-based activities rather than being able to focus upon children’s wellbeing. In the following extract, a Teaching Assistant describes how they feel that children do not receive the support necessary due to the educational pressures that staff are facing;

‘Support assistants are used so much to do the educational side of things and marking and preparing - it is taking away from the social and emotional support’. (Teaching Assistant, Valleys Authority primary school).

They go on to explain how they believe the social and emotional aspects of learning was, and should be, embodied within the culture and ethos of the school. However, in reality due to the amount of work and time constraints these broader social aspects are almost ‘forgotten’, not receiving the attention they require, nor underpinned by a preventative approach at strategic level:

‘Teachers and Heads, their workload is so unbearable at the moment, they’re so busy concentrating on data and on input and on paperwork and planning and preparation, that the actual, the soul of the child . . . it sounds an awful thing to say, it’s almost forgotten but, there isn’t really any time for it. We’ve had to now plan and have lessons for PSE, social – well that should be a huge umbrella - that should be a constant ethos throughout the school’. (Teaching Assistant, Valleys Authority primary school).

A large number of staff spoke about the level of expertise with their school as intrinsic to their own ability to respond to neglect effectively. A Teacher talks about using specific communication approaches within the classroom to draw out a child’s feelings with the aim of increasing awareness about their experience of living with neglect. They refer to the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) which is an initiative which focuses

upon the personal and social development of children in terms of their self-awareness, managing feelings, motivation, empathy and social skills (DFES 2005):

'[We] just have regular meetings; monitoring again, you know, how the child is feeling. We do a lot of 'Silver SEAL' so they get a chance to talk, you know, about their week, or we'd give them scenarios' (Teacher, primary school).

Developing effective systems of support for families was discussed by many participants. Examples of inter-professional provision and support included schools hosting specialist services onsite and chairing regular multi-agency meetings to discuss children who were of concern. The small secondary school in the rural authority described the implementation of fortnightly inter-agency meetings built upon the Teams Around the Family (TAF) model (IPC (Institute of Public Care) 2012) to involve other practitioners in a plan of support:

'The service is excellent which means support can immediately go into work and we've got a quite high number of children that we have TAF'd. In our school we have a TAF meeting once a fortnight where external agencies come in . . . we sit around a table and we make an action plan and involve people'. (Additional Learning Needs Coordinator, Rural Authority secondary school).

In the extract the Additional learning Needs Coordinator (ALENCo) talks about external agencies coming into the school to promote school-based dialogue and to agree a plan of action to support the family. Although TAF is commonly used within schools in Wales, its application can vary, depending upon the interpretation of the model. Some staff described the other specialist services hosted on the school site to make support more available to children and their family members;

' . . . we've got a counsellor within the school, if we could get hold of mum we might put a strategy in place then we can offer mum any help, unpick what some of the problems are . . . some targets for the next week or two, and . . . if we still had concerns we could look to referring it in'. (Pastoral Lead, secondary school).

Other staff talked about specific pieces of work their school was undertaking and how this would scaffold the way they responded to child neglect by engaging other professionals and services within the local area:

'We just have to rely on ourselves, and we have to develop good systems and avenues of support here in the school; as well as trying to engage with as many outside agencies as you can, we are trying to . . . create a directory of services – all the different agencies and people, as well as developing the resources within the school'. (Assistant Head Teacher, Urban Authority secondary school).

Thompson (2016, 113) emphasises the importance of sharing information to establish a full picture of a child's life, describing 'jigsaw practices' as the interconnectedness of knowledge and information held by a range of professionals to establish a child's needs. School staff can be limited in terms of the information they are party to, due to the privacy of the child's world beyond the boundaries of the school setting, but well-positioned to contribute invaluable information about behaviour and presentation, wisdom and knowledge from the community and staff members who have contact with them on a daily basis.

4.2 A positive learning & development environment for staff

The second theme discusses staff's perceptions of the learning and development environment within their schools, and the influence this has upon their knowledge about and understanding of child neglect. Nearly all of the participants talked about the informal learning spaces in terms of their value in supporting the development of their neglect-practice and expertise. The environments for professional learning and development offered opportunities where they could connect with other colleagues, discuss approaches, reflect on practice, and be able to access emotional support.

In the rural primary school, school-based structured learning opportunities were made available to staff. There were in the form of awareness training which was obtained from the School Social Worker (employed by statutory services) and delivered by the Head Teacher. Here the Head Teacher expresses the importance of all staff, not just teaching staff, attending the session:

'She goes out and does advice and guidance for schools . . . she does twilight sessions, or in-service training session for staff. So that's very good as well, in giving you know . . . I've got a PowerPoint that's come from County, that I need to give to the staff . . . I've got the dinner ladies coming in to do it, so they might pick something up you know'. (Head Teacher, primary school).

Many participants referred to an informal learning culture which existing within their school as enabling them to connect with local pockets of context-specific expertise and share knowledge on neglect. In schools which had support from School Social Workers (SSWs), SSWs joined team meetings or had informal discussion with staff members. In the following extract a Head Teacher expresses the use of reflective group discussion with the purpose of promoting staff members' understandings around neglect:

'Again, the experience and the staff, the staff being together and again in a small school it works well, us then talking about these difficult situations where things, do we go with this or not? Those kind of meetings where we have to decide what to do next – that gives them a deeper understanding. But they definitely have enough to begin to identify [neglect] and at the beginning they are more likely to refer things to me'. (Head Teacher, primary school).

The Head Teacher emphasises the small size of the school as a positive factor in the quality of the school's practice. The environment facilitates reflective discussion amongst staff and the Head Teacher talks about the exchange of ideas on the most appropriate responses to the situation, whilst simultaneously supporting staff to develop wider knowledge. This perspective is further echoed where a teacher talks about the positive culture of learning in their school, experienced when they seek one-to-one confidential advice from the designated child protection lead:

'I think some- maybe some places are more . . . you know . . . 'closed off' than others, but here, if you have a question – If you want to know more – you can go to the child protection officer in confidence and they will speak to you about it if they can, you know?' (Class Teacher & Governor, primary school).

In the extract the teacher highlights the positive culture of learning within the school and speaks about being able to approach the designated safeguarding person, expressing that any questions will be treated with care and responded to in a confidential

manner. Hendry and Baginsky (2008) state that for school staff to provide timely and suitable safeguarding action, appropriate knowledge and professional confidence are required.

Learning from more experienced colleagues through informal group discussion was talked about by staff in terms of how they improved their knowledge of and response to neglect. Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2004, 4) describe ‘communities of practice’ as groups of people who share information, vision and advice about a specific topic, to deepen their knowledge and understanding by interacting on a regularly basis. In the following extract a Pastoral Manager talks about how they draw upon the wider expertise of more experienced colleagues to develop their own practice around child neglect in this way:

‘I’m the youngest of the team- and I am the newest on the team – and the other ladies have been doing similar roles for years and years so they are very good to speak to . . . and they sort of know things a lot quicker than me . . . if I need help with something . . . I’ve also got a Leader in Learning that I work in partnership with . . . basically I can approach him and he’s very good for ideas’ (Pastoral Manager, secondary school).

Communities of practice can provide a platform to focus upon professional identity and knowledge development by bringing practice and community together (Crawford 2012; Wenger 1998). They can offer spaces for staff to discuss scenarios with colleagues, draw upon the knowledge of specialist professionals, and opportunities to match newly qualified staff with more experienced mentors. These communities informally manifested in many of the schools and were perceived by staff members as working particularly well within the smaller-sized schools.

Aside from opportunities to learn and develop knowledge, staff also talked about the nature of school-based professional support that was important when responding to children living with neglect. Many participants expressed that help and emotional support was something that they drew upon from colleagues regularly. In the following extract two school administrators reflect upon the friendly nature of the team and the helpfulness and approachability of colleagues:

‘I find the staff very supportive here, and I could 100% approach people here for support. We are like a family here. We all get on really well and talk to each other and if we have concerns the Chair of Governors is very good here and I know I would be supported with anything 100%’. (Administrator, primary school).

‘We’ve got a really good admin team, and I’m friendly with a couple more than others, so I’d probably mention it to one of them and say “oh you know this is really upsetting me” or I’d talk to them . . . so I wouldn’t hesitate if something was really niggling or really bothering me I’d just go up and knock on the door’. (Administrator, secondary school).

As with the learning and development environments, the spaces that staff identify are both formal and informal, confidential in nature and characterised by their ability to provide individuals with a safe and supportive setting. Guest (2008) suggests that designated safeguarding persons need to promote a culture of schools as safe and secure organisations which offer staff sound training and supervision. This is illustrated in an extract from a teacher who describes using relationships with colleagues for the unburdening of worries about children living with neglect, and how they seek informal opportunities to do this:

I'm fortunate because I liaise with the manager there ... I will when I'm talking about the children I'm referring to her – then you know sometimes I will off-load to her; and that's helpful – its informal – It's not formalised because I am fortunate because I've got a relationship with her, ... and just talking to each other perhaps, but yeah you do hold stuff. (Class Teacher, primary school).

Although staff knowledge and understanding of child neglect is important, staff can often lack the time or resources to keep up to date with specialised training in demanding educational roles. However, training alone is not necessarily the solution to achieving a more effective and preventative response to neglect within schools. There is value in intimate and informal learning environments or communities which aid communication, foster development of context-specific expertise, promote shared knowledge, and create spaces for emotional support.

4.3 Existing relationships between staff and family members

The third and final theme acknowledges the quality and nature of relationships staff members have with families. School staff talk about their ability to positively engage families when they had existing relationships, and felt more able to discuss and challenge what they perceived as inadequate levels of care for children. The majority of staff expressed that the quality of their relationships with parents was significant to their practice and improved the way they were able to respond to children suspected of living with neglect. Many felt that their interactions with family members, and their knowledge of family functioning and family history contributed to the success of interactions within the school-setting. In the following extract a participant reflects upon their length of time in the school and how there are benefits to knowing and understanding the broader needs and challenges experienced in their communities;

I've been here 20 years now so I've got my pupils coming back as parents ... we have got quite a number of staff that have been here for twenty, thirty years now ... so parents know the staff you know, with children you know'. (Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator, secondary school)

In the extract a teaching assistant describes how her knowledge of children outside of the school is pivotal in providing a more comprehensive picture about a child. She talks about her physical position within the community as enabling her to offer a more balanced viewpoint:

'So I know a lot of families outside of school ... and that really comes in handy I think sometimes. Because when the children come into school you don't always get a full reflection of maybe what's happening ... I think my role is good in that way, because I can sometimes give a more balanced argument ... you can look at it from both sides ... from outside school and inside school, so I think it's pretty good'. (Teaching Assistant, secondary school).

A Head Teacher recognises that different staff have different relationships with children, with staff who come from within the community being well-placed to connect with children:

'I think it's because they have a different relationship with the children; and because they are our midday supervisors – are part of the community: they come from within the community'. (Head Teacher, primary school)

This perspective is emphasised by a Head Teacher at a primary school who talks about the advantage of the school being able to draw upon wider knowledge that staff members have about specific children and their families. Staff who live within the community are able to verify the accuracy of information and provide wider contextual knowledge that can help ensure the child's need are met appropriately.

'We do have a lot of the LSAs within the school that live in the community so that helps, they kind of come in with a feel of a family. After a weekend if you get, some referral from somebody you can often get a feel from the staff – they will know things about a family its maybe three doors away . . . they will say "the Police raided the house last night, he was arrested, there was definitely violence in the family".' (**Head Teacher, primary school**).

Relationships with family members were not always beneficial to practice and some staff felt that the relationship could create additional barriers in their roles with parents and carers. This was predominantly the case when staff were asked to challenge parents around the care and welfare of children. In the following extract, the teaching assistant describes her role as a 'messenger' when she is charged with the duty of questioning a child's ongoing unauthorised absence from school. In the extract she recognises the existing relationship she has with the parent, individual personalities, as well as her knowledge about the child – all of which influence the nature of the exchange:

'it's not come from me, but I'm kind of the messenger – so it's quite hard; you don't want to breakdown that relationship with the parent . . . and you kind of get the brunt of it. So sometimes . . . it can build relationships because they understand that you're doing it because you care about the child. But it really does depend on the parent and different personalities, and the child as well'. (**Teaching Assistant, secondary school**)

Tanner and Turney (2003) highlight the importance of families having long-term relationships with organisations which allow practitioners to understand children's daily experiences. It is important for staff feel able to develop quality relationships with family members which may help ameliorate the difficult task of challenging parenting which may not be perceived by staff members as 'good enough' to meet the child's needs (Horwath 2007). Although building good relationships with parents and carers can encourage engagement, participation (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2017), whilst reinforcing links between schools and communities (Webb and Vulliamy 2001), relationships can also be weakened by a mismatch between parents'/carers' and teachers' perceptions which can impact parental engagement with the school and introduce further barriers to communication (Schneider and Arnot 2018). Relationships with parents can benefit by avoiding blame, being open and honest about what they are doing well, whilst inviting and discussing worries about proposed interventions (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2017).

5 Discussion & conclusion

This paper has presented three themes that staff in schools perceive as being valuable and supportive when identifying and responding to issues of child neglect: a proactive whole-school approach to neglect; a positive learning and development environment for professional expertise; and staff's existing relationships with family members. The staff

in the smaller-sized schools in the sample demonstrated good practice when identifying and responding to neglect in their everyday roles; evident in the nature and consistency of the practice and the manner in which it was embedded in the school's infrastructure.

The findings indicate that school staff feel well supported when schools embed a safeguarding strategy or ethos throughout the institution, and when open, regular communications are supported with families around the issue of child neglect congruent with NICE guidelines and quality standards (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2017 & National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2019). Staff appeared to feel that the presence of overarching strategies and cultures positively framed the way they could work proactively with other professionals. This is consistent with findings from Widmark et al.'s (2011) study into collaborative barriers between health care, social services and schools, which identifies the lack of clarity around agencies' culture and structures as impacting upon professional interactions.

In particular, staff seem to appreciate opportunities to develop their professional knowledge around child neglect *informally* with the purpose of guiding the way they respond to situations of concern within the context of the school. Schools where a strategic member of staff possessed a strong professional interest in child neglect and who championed development of expertise within the school, created a broader awareness of the issue and concern amongst the whole staff team which was felt to be beneficial to practice. For this reason it is recommended that schools should recruit strategic staff who demonstrate a commitment to developing expertise in child neglect and the promotion of children's wellbeing and sharing expertise informally with staff within the whole school system.

This was also seen in the emergence and formation of informal learning and development systems in a number of the schools within the study, where staff in a variety of roles drew upon networks and communities which offered expertise from more experienced colleagues and practitioners from other professions such as school social workers and school-based counsellors. These 'communities of practice' (Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder 2004) encouraged staff to develop a deeper knowledge whilst 'in the field' as opposed to drawing learning from formal training non-specific to the school-context. Although the communities varied in size, shape and format, the spaces were commonly used for discussion about situations where staff suspected children were living with neglect, and provided space for staff to reflect upon decision-making practice and access emotional support.

Whilst pre and post-qualifying training can provide staff with the knowledge to recognise the signs and symptoms of neglect and understand the impact upon a child's development (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2017), possessing the ability to confidently articulate concerns successfully to other practitioners and within your specific practice setting can be more of a challenge. It is recommended that Head Teachers should be supported to develop effective learning communities within their schools for staff to develop context-specific neglect expertise. These communities will build upon formal training courses, either in person, or via digital platforms and should encourage attendance from all school-based staff. Particular those in support roles or from differing professions to support knowledge exchange, reflection, strengthen inter-professional relationships, and offer opportunities for continued professional development (Berridge et al. 2021).

In addition to support from the expertise of colleagues, staff who had existing relationships with families also appeared to feel in a stronger position for opening conversations with parents or carers where neglect was a concern. Perhaps not surprisingly, staff with established relationships appear more able to initiate sensitive conversations to discuss children's basic care needs, particularly when parenting may not be perceived to be 'good enough' (Horwath 2005 & 2013). Staff who are less experienced or new to their roles, seem to find this more challenging, where conversations with parents about appropriate levels of care or parenting were often felt to be damaging and not of benefit to the child (Richards 2017). Congruent with Bullock et al.'s (2019) suggestion, staff's ability to confidently and sensitively discuss parental care of children is an important and challenging area that requires open, honest and clear communication (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2017).

The importance of staff-family relationships was further emphasised by many staff who lived within the local communities. Staff who were born or lived within the community the school served drew upon knowledge outside of the school setting to keep children safe from harm. They were able to contribute wider information about children's lived experiences outside of the school, which would typically be invisible to staff within the confines of the school and the remit of their professional roles. Staff who lived within the community however, could offer knowledge and insights about children and families' lives outside of the school day building stronger school-family relations and informed professional decision making. It is important to note however, there is risk that this contextual knowledge could also represent individual or cultural level biases within the community.

Opportunities such as the supervision of breakfast or after-school clubs or activities also enabled staff to develop relationships with parents over a period of time away from the focus of academic attainment (Tanner and Turney 2003). A recommendation of this study is that *all* staff members should be provided with regular opportunities to share insights into children's lives, outside of the school setting, with the purpose of building a more comprehensive picture of the child's lived experiences and needs (Thompson 2016). These could be formal opportunities such as multi-agency or team meetings, or informal opportunities such as check-ins at team meetings, or pairing up of less experienced staff with more experienced colleague mentors, or regular participation in a school-based community of practice.

5.1 Limitations and implications for research

Although this was a small study it does provide insights into school staff's experiences of identifying and responding to child neglect within six mainstream schools in Wales. Although these findings are not generalisable they do offer rich qualitative data about a number of factors which school staff feel are valuable in scaffolding their practice when they are worried a child is living with neglect. The two-phase mixed methods study could be expanded to investigate a large number of case study local authorities in Wales. However, the most significant limitation of this study is the omission of children and young people's voices. Children in need (CIN) have received little focus in education circles (Berridge et al. 2021) and future research to investigate their experiences to understand how and in what they feel they have been supported and by whom within school-based services would be of great value.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This project was funded by Welsh Government through Health and Care Research Wales (Ymchwil Iechyd a Gofal Cymru).

Notes on contributor

Victoria Sharley is a Senior Lecturer in Social Work with Children and Families in the School for Policy Studies at the University of Bristol. She is a registered Social Worker with Social Work England and has a background in child protection and care. Her research interests include children's health, welfare and protection, and interprofessional practice within the context of educational settings.

References

- Adelman, H. S., and L. Taylor. 2014. "Addressing Student and Schooling Problems: Not Another Project!" *Child Abuse & Neglect* 38 (2): 160–169. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2014.01.005.
- Baginsky, M. 2000. *Child Protection and Education*. London: NSPCC.
- Baginsky, M. 2003. "Newly Qualified Teachers and Child Protection." *Child Abuse Review* 12 (2): 119–127. doi:10.1002/car.783.
- Baginsky, M., and P. Macpherson. 2005. "Training Teachers to Safeguard Children: Developing a Consistent Approach." *Child Abuse Review* 14 (5): 317–330. doi:10.1002/car.905.
- Baginsky, M. 2007. *Schools, Social Services and Safeguarding Children: Past Practice and Future Challenges*. London: NSPCC.
- Baginsky, M. 2008. *Safeguarding Children and Schools*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Baginsky, M., J. Driscoll, J. Manthorpe, and Carl Purcell. 2019. "Perspectives on Safeguarding and Child Protection in English Schools: The New Educational Landscape Explored." *Educational Research* 61 (4): 469–481. doi:10.1080/00131881.2019.1677167.
- Bande, F. 2009. "The Contribution of Schools to Safeguarding Children." In *Good Practice in Safeguarding Children: Working Effectively in Child Protection* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.), edited by L. Hughes and H. Owen, 25–46.
- Berridge, D., J. Sebba, M. Cartwright, and E. Staples. 2021. "School Experiences of Children in Need: Learning and Support." *British Educational Research Journal* 47 (6): 1700–1716. doi:10.1002/berj.3750.
- Bullock, L., M. Stanyon, D. Glaser, and S. Chou. 2019. "Identifying and Responding to Child Neglect: Exploring the Professional Experiences of Primary School Teachers and Family Support Workers." *Child Abuse Review* 28: 209–224.
- Burnett, L., and J. Greenwald O'Brien. 2007. *Exploring District Wide Strategies for Creating Trauma Sensitive Schools*. Worcester, MA: Education Department Conference on Implementing Trauma Sensitive Schools.
- The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: Annual Report 2020. "Available At: The Child Safeguarding Annual Report 2020." (publishing.service.gov.uk) [Accessed 17 March 2020].
- Crawford, K. 2012. *Interprofessional Collaboration in Social Work Practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Crosson-Tower, C. 2003. "The Role of Educators in Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect." US Department of Health and Human Sciences: Administration for Children and Families." Children's Bureau. Available at: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/educator.pdf> [Accessed 23 August 2017].

- Daniel, B. 2008. "Forward." In *Safeguarding in Schools*, edited by M. Baginsky, 7–8. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Department for Education. (2019). "Characteristics of Children in Need: 2018 to 2019, England." Available online at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843046/Characteristics_of_children_in_need_2018_to_2019_main_text.pdf (accessed 22 March 2022).
- DFES. 2005. "Primary national strategy - excellence and enjoyment: social emotional aspects of learning, guidance." [Online]. Available at: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFES0110200MIG2122.pdf> [Accessed 13 March 2017].
- Gilbert, R., A. Kemp, J. Thouburn, P. Sidebotham, L. Radford, D. Glaser, and H. MacMillan. 2009. "Recognizing and Responding to Child Maltreatment." *The Lancet* 373 (9658): 167–180. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(08)61707-9.
- Goebbels, A. F. G., J. M. Nicholson, K. Walsh, and H. De Vries. 2008. "Teachers' Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect: Behaviour and Determinants." *Health Education Research* 23 (6): 941–951. doi:10.1093/her/cyn030.
- Government, W. 2017. *My local school*. [Online]. Available at: <http://mylocalschool.gov.wales/?lang=en> [Accessed on 21 December 2017].
- Government, W. 2021. "Keeping Learners Safe: The Role of Local Authorities, Governing Bodies, and Proprietors of Independent Schools under the Education Act 2002." Available at: 210419-kls-the-role-of-local-authorities-governing-bodies-and-proprietors-of-independent-schools-under-the-education-act.pdf [Accessed 7 July 2021].
- Guest, J. 2008. "The Role of the Local Authority in Safeguarding Children." In *Safeguarding Children and Schools*, edited by M. Baginsky, 22–41. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Hodgkinson, K., and M. Baginsky. 2000. "Child Protection Training in school-based Initial Training: A Survey of school-centred Initial Teacher Training Courses and Their Trainees." *Educational Studies* 26 (3): 269–279. doi:10.1080/03055690050137105.
- Holland, S., A. Crowley, and L. Noaks. 2013. *An Investigation into Current Responses to Child Neglect in Wales. Prepared for Action for Children – Gweithredu Dros Blant and NSPCC Cymru/Wales as Part of the Welsh Neglect Project*. Unpublished.: Welsh Government/Cardiff University.
- Horwath, J. 2005. "Is This Child Neglect? the Influence of Differences in Perceptions of Child Neglect on Social Work Practice." In *Child Neglect: Practice Issues for Health and Social Care*, edited by J. In: Taylor and B. Daniel, 73–96. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Horwath, J. 2007. *Child Neglect: Identification and Assessment*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Horwath, J. 2013. *Child Neglect: Planning and Intervention*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- IPC (Institute of Public Care) 2012, "Guidance for Team around the Family Panels." Available at: basw_103645-8_0.pdf [Accessed 21 June 2021].
- Jonson-Reid, M., Kim, J., Barolak, M., Citerman, B., Laudel, C., Essma, A, Fezzi, N, Green, D, Kontak, D, Mueller, N., Thomas, C. Maltreated Children in Schools: the interface of school social work and child welfare Children and Schools 29 3 182–191 ,
- Karadag, S. C., S. Sonmez, and N. Dereobali. 2015. "An Investigation of Preschool Teachers' Recognition of Possible Child Abuse and Neglect in Izmir, Turkey." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 30 (5): 873–891. doi:10.1177/0886260514536274.
- Kesner JE., and Robinson M. (2002 Teachers as Mandated Reporters of Child Maltreatment: comparison with legal, medical and social services reporters. Children and Schools 24 4 222–231)
- King, C. B., and K. L. Scott. 2012. "Why are Suspected Cases of Child Maltreatment Referred by Educators so Often Unsubstantiated?" *Child Abuse & Neglect* 38 (1): 1–10. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2013.06.002.
- Llywodraeth Cymru/Welsh Government. 2021. *Keeping Learners Safe: The Role of Local Authorities, Governing Bodies and Proprietors of Independent Schools under the Education Act 2002*. Cardiff.: Welsh Government.

- McKee, B. E., and K. Dillenburger. 2009. "Child Abuse and Neglect: Training Needs of Student Teachers." *International Journal of Educational Research* 48 (5): 320–330. doi:10.1016/j.ijer.2010.03.002.
- Naregal, P. M., V. R. Mohite, P. Hiremath, M. Chendake, R. B. Karale, and S. Pawar. 2015. "Effectiveness of Planned Teaching Programme on Knowledge regarding Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect among Primary School Teachers." [Online]. *The Online Journal of Health and Allied Services* 14(4), pp. 1–4. Available at: <https://www.ojhas.org/issue56/2015-4-11.pdf> Accessed
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) (2017) "Child Abuse and Neglect: NICE Guideline." Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng76/resources/child-abuse-and-neglect-pdf-1837637587141> [Accessed 21 March 2022].
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) (2019) "Child Abuse and Neglect: NICE Guideline." Available at <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs179/resources/child-abuse-and-neglect-pdf-75545669305285> [Accessed 22 March 2022].
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). 2015. *Spotlight on Preventing Child Neglect*. London: NSPCC.
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) (2020) "Isolated and Struggling: Social Isolation and the Risk of Child Maltreatment in Lockdown and beyond." Available at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/2246/isolated-and-struggling-social-isolation-risk-child-maltreatment-lockdown-and-beyond.pdf> [Accessed 17 March 2022]
- Perry, B. D. 2001. "Neurodevelopment Impact of Violence in Childhood." In *Principles and Practice of Child and Adolescent Forensic Psychiatry*, edited by D. H. Schetky and E. P. Benedek, 221–238. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing .
- Richards, C. 2017. "It's a Big Ask When Your Job Is to Teach Children to Read, Write and to Count: The Experiences of School Staff in Early Help and Child Protection." *Pastoral Care in Education* 36 (1): 1–12.
- Schneider, C., and M. Arnot. 2018. "Transactional School-home-school Communication: Addressing the Mismatches between Migrant Parents' and Teachers' View of Parental Knowledge, Engagement and the Barriers to Engagement." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 75: 10–20. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2018.05.005.
- Schols, M. W., C. de Ruiter, and F. G. Ory. 2013. "How Do Public Child Health Care Professionals and Primary School Teachers Identify and Handle Child Abuse Cases? A Qualitative Study." *BMC Public Health* 13 (807): 1–16. doi:10.1186/1471-2458-13-807.
- Sharley, V. 2018. "Identifying and Responding to Child Neglect in Schools." PhD Thesis. Cardiff University.
- Sharley, V. 2019. "Identifying and Responding to Child Neglect in Schools: Differing Perspectives and Implications for inter-agency Practice." *Child Indicators Research*. Special Issue on Child Neglect 13 2: 551–571. 10.1007/s12187-019-09681-z.
- Sharley, V. 2021. "Missing Data, Complex Processes, and Differing Contexts: A Case File Analysis of School Staff's Involvement in Child Protection Cases for Concerns of Neglect *Child Abuse Review*." *Child Abuse Review* 30 (5): 444–457. doi:10.1002/car.2718.
- Sinclair Taylor, A., and K. Hodgkinson. 2001. "Subjecting the Initial Teacher Training Curriculum for England and Wales to the Test of Child Protection." *Teacher Development* 5 (1): 75–86. doi:10.1080/13664539700200146.
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. 2017b [Online]. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/contents> [Accessed 15 June 2017].
- Stats Wales. 2016. "Ethnicity by Area and Ethnic Group." [Online]. Available at: <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Ethnicity/ethnicity-by-area-ethnicgroup> [Accessed 17 May 2017].
- StatsWales. 2019 "Children on Child Protection Register by Local Authority, Category of Abuse and Age Group. Cardiff Welsh Government Available At: Children on Child Protection Register by Local Authority, Category of Abuse and Age Group (Pre 2016-17)." (gov.wales) [Accessed 3 June 2021].

- Stevens, R., and V. Laing 2015. "Summary Report of Year 2 of the Welsh Neglect Project 2014-15." Available at: <http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/170217summary-reporten.pdf> [Accessed 19 July 2017].
- Tanner, K., and D. Turney. 2003. "What Do We Know about Child Neglect? A Critical Review of the Literature and Its Application to Social Work Practice." *Child & Family Social Work* 8 (1): 25–34. doi:10.1046/j.1365-2206.2003.00267.x.
- Thompson, K. 2016. *Strengthening Child Protection: Sharing Information in multi-agency Settings*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Wales, S. 2011a. "Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation: Child Index." [Online]. Available at: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/Archive/WIMD-2011-Child-Index/WIMDChildIndex2011LocalAuthorityAnalysis> [Accessed 17 May 2017].
- Wales, S. 2017b. "Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation." [Online]. Available at: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation> [Accessed 16 May 2017].
- Wales, S. 2017c. "ILO Unemployment Rates by Welsh Local Areas and Year." [Online]. Available at: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Unemployment/ILO-Unemployment/ilounemploymentrates-by-welshlocalareas-year> [Accessed 22 December 2017].
- Walsh, K., R. Bridgstock, A. Farrell, M. Rassafiani, and R. Schweitzer. 2008. "Case, Teacher and School Characteristics Influencing Teacher's Detection and Reporting of Child Physical Abuse and Neglect: Results from an Australian Survey." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 32 (10): 983–993. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2008.03.002.
- Walsh, K., and A. Farrell. 2008. "Identifying and Evaluating Teachers' Knowledge in Relation to Child Abuse and Neglect: A Qualitative Study with Australian Early Childhood Teachers." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 24 (3): 585–600. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2007.07.003.
- Webb, R., and G. Vulliamy. 2001. "The Primary Teacher's Role in Child Protection." *British Educational Research Journal* 27 (1): 59–77. doi:10.1080/01411920124696.
- Webster, S. W., R. O'Toole, A. W. O'Toole, and B. Lucal. 2005. "Overreporting and Underreporting of Child Abuse: Teachers' Use of Professional Discretion." *Child Abuse & Neglect* 29 (11): 1281–1296. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2004.02.007.
- Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wenger, E., R. McDermott, and W. Snyder. 2004. *A Guide to Managing Knowledge: Communities of Practice*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Widmark, C., C. Sandahl, K. Piuva, and D. Bergman. 2011. "Barriers to Collaboration between Health Care, Social Services and Schools." *International Journal of Integrated Care* 11 (3): 1–9. doi:10.5334/ijic.653.
- Wonnacott, J., and D. Watts (2018) "Daniel Pelka, Retrospective Deeper Analysis and Progress on Implementation of Recommendations." Available at: <https://library.nspcc.org.uk/HeritageScripts/Hapi.dll/filetransfer/2014CoventryDanielPelka.pdf?filename=CC18C70DB7C8C3D49403BB94EB176F95207E5F66235DCA89651F5ED2BA5DA9311A353B626FC61241A3DF9A45C346BB4D1ABAD04545542F86BCD0195126CC3B3334917AAD35794D0E8F8E3FADE0C06FD655D77675035901FCA204DBD4&DataSetName=LIVEDATA> [Accessed 17 March 2022].