

THE COMMON ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR
SUPPORTING FAMILIES:

AN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

By

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ABSTRACT

In the early 1990s the Common Assessment Framework came into being. Its purpose was to assist agencies to work together to provide early support for children and their families with an increasing range of needs. After examining how this framework evolved, this thesis explores how it is utilized in education. Through interviews with Lead Professionals in schools, policy makers and those in Local Authority roles, it finds that schools are responsible for complex decisions relating to what, and if, support is provided. This is because other agencies are placing the onus on them, some even charging the school if they attend meetings or support children in their care. For schools, the ability to provide early help is now increasingly about cost and the resources available in a community in which cuts are having significant impacts.

The insights gained challenges the model stating that all agencies are obliged to support children through the CAF. It highlights strengths and weaknesses of the CAF process, together with sources of support available to schools. Through this, it provides a new model from an educational perspective, illustrating challenges that school leaders face, and explores ways in which the CAF process may be improved.

DEDICATION

For my husband

CHRISTOPHER BROWNING

for believing in, and challenging me.

Also for my daughter

ABIGAIL BROWNING

my inspiration and drive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my many thanks to my husband who supported my transition from decisive manager to considerate and thoughtful researcher. Thanks are also sent to my tutor, Tom Bisschoff, for his guidance and support.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations

ARC	Area Review Committee
BERA	British Educational Research Association
CA	Children's Act
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CWDC	Children's Workforce Development Council
DCSF	Department of Children, Schools and Families
DES	Department of Education and Schools
DfE	Department for Education
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DHSS	Department of Health and Social Security
DoH	Department of Health
E	Education (based interviewee)
ECM	Every Child Matters
EdA	Education Act
EIS	Early Intervention Service
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
ISA	Integrated Support Agency
LA	Local Authority
LCSB	Local Children's Safeguarding Board
LP	Lead Professional
LSAT	Learning Support Advisory Teacher
MAT	Multi-Agency Team
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
NSDU	National Safeguarding Development Unit
Ofsted	Office of Standards in Education
P	Policy Advisor (interviewee)

SIS	Social Information Systems
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
TAC	Team Around the Child

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Providing early help has been viewed as a key strategy to supporting children's safeguarding needs particularly since the development of the Every Child Matters Agenda in the 1990s. The subsequent Common Assessment Framework (CAF) enabled schools and other agencies working with children to support families whose needs were below social care thresholds. Despite significant costs in terms of staffing, time and resources the commitment of schools voluntarily engaging with the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) has been recognised since pilot work began (Dagley *et al.*, 2007). Yet there is little academic research providing a purely educational view on the Common Assessment Framework (Carpenter *et al.*, 2010: 169; Gasper, 2010). This thesis therefore seeks to provide a picture of safeguarding from a grant maintained primary school perspective, examining how current understandings and practices have evolved as well as discussing some of the perceived benefits and issues within this area.

The thesis therefore strives to address this gap in knowledge through examining one aspect of safeguarding children; that of the Common Assessment Framework, in which any organisation can work with parents to call a meeting, to which other services may be invited, so that all can work together on addressing an individual child or family's safeguarding needs. These needs may include drug addiction, mental health issues within the home, housing issues, or lack of parental support and boundaries (Children's Workforce and Development Council, 2009c).

On a personal note, the thesis is driven by professional experience. As a Senior Manager/Deputy with the role of Designated Person for Child Protection for over a decade I was often incredibly frustrated at my lack of power to help children and families should their needs not meet the threshold for social care support. Then, upon embarking on my first headship I was introduced to CAFs. First day in headship, a child's parents were arrested and he had no carer/home to go to. A much younger family member gave up her college course, moved in to the house, and took on the role of the parent. Social Care checked her ability in this new role, and once satisfied she met their criteria withdrew their support. He was left with anger, frustration and loss. Through the CAF process I was able to access support, which he found invaluable, (e.g. counselling), and so did I (e.g. the psychology team telling me to treat the event as loss and read 'Granpa'¹ (Burningham, 1984) to the children, thereby opening up discussion with the children on how we can all support each other after different types of loss). It was successful, and I wanted to use my research time learning more about something that I had experienced in a very positive way.

Although I clearly had a viewpoint/bias at the beginning of the research, I tried to remove myself and look at the data rather than my feelings. However, I do comment on how the experience of researching this area affected my beliefs about the CAF at the end through an autobiographical appendix.

Whilst embarking on the literature review additional validation for the importance of detailed accounts of the Common Assessment Framework in schools emerged. First, some evidence suggests that schools are now 'Lead Professionals' in over half of all cases, that is, they are taking the responsibility for organising work with other

¹ A predominantly picture book which tells of a girl's relationship with her granpa, then his chair is empty.

agencies (Jones, 2007). Taking responsibility for cases involves leadership issues for the school (for example, releasing teachers, time spent on administration, funding resources). Second, the number of cases schools are responsible for is likely to continue to rise as the definition of safeguarding expands (Walker, 2008). Finally, working with other agencies involves developing joint identities, cultures, definitions and ways of working, whilst simultaneously being able to hold other agencies to account in their area of expertise, thereby highlighting the need to understand this from a leadership skills perspective.

Possibly one of the clearest examples for the need to examine the role of safeguarding children in schools are the findings of the Lauren Wright serious case review in relation to the action her school took and the lack of multi-agency working. In 2010, aged just 6, she was killed by her mother, despite many agencies having concerns regarding her bruises and drastic loss of weight. It was found that the school did not have a designated teacher for child protection, the teacher (who had noted concerns about the child) had not received any safeguarding training, and that the school had not reported their concerns to Social Care. Other agencies (e.g. the paediatrician) had noted concerns regarding bruises, but had accepted the mother's allegation of bullying at the school rather than checking it out. The report finds that if the agencies had come together, and shared their concerns, the misinformation from the mother may have been exposed (Norfolk Area Child Protection Committee, 2001).

The value of research providing a purely educational perspective is also clearly shown in the work of Thomas (2013) and Biesta (2007). Thomas argues that teachers taking collective knowledge, provided by narratives and research, and reflecting upon it and

deciding how they may apply it to their own situation so they may improve their own practice forge advancements in education:

‘exemplary knowledge’ as the key, and I am talking about example viewed and heard potentially in the context of another’s experience – another’s horizon – but used in the context of one’s own, where the horizon changes. (Thomas, 2013:43).

He argues that this can lead to shifts in what is done at a practical level, also known as phronesis. Therefore, he argues, educational research should be based on local studies as, ‘such a study can offer a series of ways of proceeding based in exemplary knowledge’ (p43). Biesta (2007, 19) agrees that the focus of educational research should be on enabling them to reflect on their own practice. However, he continues to challenge researchers to also question what is considered to constitute evidence that something works, and to also look at the power plays in an initiative.

The thesis discusses the development of safeguarding from a Foucauldian perspective, arguing that it is a fluid concept influenced by different power sources (e.g. cultural understandings of the time, government priorities and the media). It then relates current understanding to the Coalition’s pledge that ‘early help’ will be increased to the views expressed in interviews with policy advisors, as well as local authority and school practitioners. It finds that professionals perceive that there is a reduction in scope for safeguarding support provided in this way, due to the neoliberal ‘buy back’ of services once free for schools, the raising of thresholds for access and the effects of a plethora of cuts the operation of agencies that they work with. It also finds that the role of schools is expanding, as there is an increased expectation on schools to be the ‘Lead Professional’; that some agencies are now charging schools for their support; and finally some schools are now being asked to support children previously falling

into the lower end of social care's spectrum for support. The thesis therefore concludes by introducing a new model of safeguarding through the Common Assessment Framework for primary aged children.

1.2 Research Questions

Definitions of safeguarding have evolved over time and continue to do so (Munro, 2011). However, many schools work with the definition provided by Ofsted in 2011, which provides a very broad understanding of what is at stake. It is:

- Protecting children and learners from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's and learners' health or development;
- Ensuring that children and learners are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children and learners to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

(Ofsted, 2011: 5)

This definition both implicitly and explicitly created responsibilities for a broader range of actors and agencies for addressing children's needs, in terms of ensuring they are protected from abuse, but also for ensuring their welfare. Amongst these agencies is education. Whilst the definition changed in 2012, (Department for Education, 2012g) and the change and its implications, are discussed in this document, it is upon the Ofsted (2011) definition that the work focuses, as it is the one embedded in schools at the time of the research. The thesis, *The Common Assessment Framework for Supporting Families: An Educational Perspective* is addressed through three research questions:

- 1 Why have schools come to play an increasing role in the safeguarding of children?
- 2 How have schools come to understand the Common Assessment Framework through their experience of using it to work with other agencies to support children?
- 3 How do Lead Professionals working in a multi-agency context view the support provided by government/local authority practices, processes and strategies for overcoming established issues?

The first research question discusses the development of government ideology and policy, and will be addressed primarily through a literature review. It suggests that safeguarding is a transient concept, which has evolved over time and that changing political ideologies underlying understandings of the term accounts for the emergence of education as a key agency in its provision. Yet, despite this, to date, very little research has been undertaken on what this means for education.

The second question then looks specifically at school practice. First, it tries to determine what is understood by safeguarding through CAFs in educational institutions, before discussing their experiences. The supposition here is that there is a dichotomy between perceived priority and practice. That is to say, safeguarding appears high on the agenda as it had a section in its own right in Ofsted inspections until 2012 (when it became part of the Leadership and Management element of inspections (Ofsted, 2012)), yet training is often limited and the role is often integrated into a teacher's responsibility rather than being a separate area of responsibility. Instead, it is often an additional duty of a member of staff in the leadership or management team. Looking at practice will also enable critical reflection on how Ofsted's current definition of safeguarding has been interpreted by schools, particularly the phrase '... enter adulthood successfully,' (DCSF, 2010a: 34). Is the focus, for example, on happy, rounded individuals; or is it on economically productive workers?

The third research question explores contemporary governing ideologies and broader practices. For example, what strategic decisions are being made by the local authorities to respond to previously highlighted issues of safeguarding, such as the need for training and multi-agency working? These issues will be identified through the literature review, observing training and seeking the views of Policy Advisors and those in Local Authority roles. Then Lead Professionals opinions on regional and national practices will be voiced through interviews.

It is by examining the questions in this order that a layered understanding evolves. By looking at the governmental level first, an appreciation of the overall direction is mapped out. This is achieved through documentary analysis as well as interviews with two people that each has over two decades worth of experience in the safeguarding arena ranging from direct front line practice through to advising successive governments on law, policy and practice. Then, it examines how Lead Professionals based in primary schools have understood messages concerning the CAF and what their experiences in this field are. It then looks at how Lead Professionals view local authority and governmental perspectives on, and support for, their role. Therefore, the emerging picture of safeguarding in schools can be related to wider strategic underpinnings.

1.3 Key Literature

Whilst there is a lack of literature focussing upon a purely educational view of the Common Assessment Framework in action, some does exist, notably, Ofsted reports (Ofsted, 2011); and research conducted by Bandele (2009), Dagley et al, (2007) and Mary Baginsky (2003, 2007). Mary Baginsky's roles have included senior research posts at the NSPCC and the Children's Workforce Development Council, and in 2008

she edited a book focussing upon *Safeguarding and Schools* (Baginsky, 2008). This work is therefore drawn upon, together with texts focussing on multi-agency working (including Broadhurst, 2009; Children's Workforce Development Council, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c; Davis and War, 2012; Dudua, 2009; Harker et al., 2004; Horwath, 2009; Jones, 2007). It also draws upon research from work from the perspective of social work, notably that written by Nigel Parton (a respected researcher in this field); and reports on this area (including Carpenter et al., 2010 and Social Investment Systems, 2009). From these texts a picture of the Common Assessment Framework and its conception is formed, together with an understanding of inhibitors and facilitators for this process, upon which most texts are in agreement. These are the focus of *Chapter Two: Multi-Agency Working*.

Together, these texts also produce perspectives on the historical development of the concept of safeguarding. One of the central features is to examine the genealogy of safeguarding from a Foucauldian viewpoint, thereby illustrating that different sources of power have influenced how understandings and practices have been shaped (such as Kempe et al.'s (1962) paper resulting in a new category of child abuse, 'battered baby' and the subsequent acceptance that medical professions could identify this form of abuse; the power of the media in driving reform – such as changes to practice after the death of Victoria Climbié, who was failed by a plethora of agencies). Therefore the thesis also draws upon Acts of Parliament (including the Children Act 1989, which categorises child abuse into two levels of concern); Agendas (such as the *Every Child Matters Agenda* (Department for Education and Skills, 2004a, 2004b) and initiatives (for example, *Troubled Families* (Communities and Local Government 2012a, 2012b) which require significant changes in what constitutes a safeguarding concern and/or how it is to be addressed. By placing these seminal pieces in a

historical context an understanding of how understandings have been shaped and influenced is provided in separate chapter, *The Emergence of Safeguarding*.

These two chapters therefore provide an external view of safeguarding – a picture formed from documentary analysis. It provides the platform upon which the voice of the participants can be heard and compared. How this will be achieved is documented in the following section, *Research Design*.

1.4 Research Design

One of the foci of this research is to determine perceptions of safeguarding from an educational perspective, the need for which has been identified (Carpenter *et al.*, 2010: 169; Gasper, 2010). It therefore has what Habermas would describe as a predominantly ‘practical’ cognitive interest as it seeks to form shared understandings, with elements of ‘technical’ interest as findings may include the success or failure of training in supporting Lead Professionals in their role (see Outhwaite, 1996:97-100). This search for understanding places the research in the interpretivist mode of enquiry.

The enquiry is then situated in the researcher’s ontological and epistemological viewpoint. Ontology is the theory of what exists, and epistemology is concerned with how we know it exists (Sayer, 1992). As it is a search for understanding rather than a ‘universal truth’ this research lies in a post-positivist camp (Hollis, 1994; Robson, 2002). The ontological view is that the nature of social reality is not objectively given or independent of the individuals that comprise society, but is rather constructed through their interactions and the subsequent emergence of intersubjectively shared understandings (Searle, 1995). Epistemologically, it seeks to understand the world

through studying participants in situ (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). That is to say, there is an interest in how groups or individuals understand the reality of the social world. Whilst recognising that both qualitative and quantitative data may be used in this form of research, the goal of developing a full narrative and therefore a deeper understanding places a focus on qualitative rather than quantitative research.

The study focuses upon a range of Lead Professionals in schools in two English counties, which remain anonymous. Ten Lead Professionals in each of the two counties were interviewed. Schools were selected by putting the range of the beginning of the postcodes for the region in a hat and randomly selecting one at a time. Schools beginning with this postcode prefix were then telephoned and the interview request was discussed with the headteacher when s/he was available. If s/he was not available, the research was discussed with the secretary, and permission requested to send an email to them sought (so they may pass it on to the head) as well as a mutually convenient day to call back to ascertain the school's decision. If the school decided they would like to participate, any questions were answered, a date and time for the interview agreed, and a copy of the request for interview and other associated documents were sent in the post for formal agreement. If all schools with the postcode selected were exhausted, and not enough schools wished to participate, the next postcode was pulled out of the hat. Talking to people first enabled them to ask questions, and also provided some human contact rather than just sending an email out of the blue. Selecting schools in this way enabled comparison of viewpoints within the same geographical area.

Upon beginning each individual interview, the ethical agreement was restated and interviewees were reminded that they did not have to answer any question that they

did not wish to. This process was also used for interviews with those involved in policy development, and those in local authority positions.

The interviews were semi-structured. As such, they included questions eliciting information. With regard to lead professionals in schools, this sought to establish the reality of safeguarding with a specific focus on what support and training those in education have for this role; whether the team have a common understanding and language; how agencies work together (or don't); and if they believe it is successful in ensuring children and families are helped. This will be discussed in detail in the *Research Methods* chapter.

Interviews and field notes were transcribed, and then analysed through Miles and Huberman's (1984) strategy of data reduction and display. Common themes were identified and grouped, through the use of a table. The themes were then related to the three interview questions, to ensure focus.

In addition to this, broader practices were considered. The priority placed on addressing a lack of a common language and shared understandings (Dudua, 2009; Laming; 2003, 2009) were considered in relation to training. To this end, training sessions were observed where possible, with an observation schedule focussing upon these areas. It was considered alongside evidence gathered in interviews to inform any conclusions made. Again, this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

1.5 Ethics

In accordance with BERA (2011) guidelines:

- Voluntary informed consent will be gained, in writing, prior to research commencing;

- An ethics protocol outlining research and the right to withdraw (and the point at which respondents can no longer withdraw) will be agreed; and
- Trust will be developed with respondents and confidentiality will be kept at all times.

There are also additional ethical considerations in this study, including ‘situated ethics’. This is to say, the consideration of issues pertinent to the individual research project, from the researcher’s, professionals’ and the public viewpoints (Piper and Simmons, 2005: 58). Here situated ethics included the issue of discussing cases without parental permission (Baginsky, 2007). This is discussed in detail in the later chapter titled *Research Design*.

Due to the sensitive nature of the research area, appropriate post holders in the local authorities were contacted to gain access and permission for the research. In one of the two counties their research ethics committee had to be satisfied before the study commenced.

The structure of the research now explained, this chapter proceeds to provide a brief overview of the remaining chapters.

1.6 Structure

This thesis consists of six further chapters. Chapter Two, *Literature Review: Multi-Agency Working*, discusses academic literature on multi-agency working in relation to the Common Assessment Framework. It illustrates that ‘safeguarding’ through multi-agency working has been a focus since the Seebohm Report in the 1960s, and it explores why this has not yet been realised whilst also focussing on suggesting why education’s role in this area has increased.

Chapter Three: *Research Design* justifies the use of multiple interviews and establishes how creditworthiness and trustworthiness were achieved. It includes the rationale of interviews, observations, and how the data will be analysed.

Chapter Four: The Emergence of Safeguarding explains why the work will be related to Foucault's philosophy on governmentality. It then explores key drivers in determining the understandings and practices of 'safeguarding' at different times. These include the neoliberal 'buy back' agenda, reactions to media coverage of child deaths and the desire to reduce costs. It finds that there is an increasing focus reducing costs to the public purse through the rhetoric of safeguarding, achieved by sharpening the focus of what is to be addressed, whilst simultaneously reducing the budgets of Local Authorities.

Chapter Five: Findings, restates the research questions then themes responses from interviews to each area of foci in turn. Where appropriate, it states the evidence from each level (Policy, Local Authority or Lead Professional) separately.

Chapter Six: Discussion relates the findings to the literature and draws out the key issues and debates. A new model of safeguarding for primary aged children is formed, which illustrates that, whilst safeguarding through the Common Assessment Framework remains optional, schools are increasingly meeting the financial and staffing costs required for its realisation. It questions whether this is best practise, or, whether the 'silent power' of self governance is partially responsible for the role schools have taken, in many cases without questioning it.

Finally, *Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Recommendations* summarises the key findings and provides recommendations for improving multi-agency working to safeguard children through the Common Assessment Framework.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW
THE COMMON ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK AND MULTI – AGENCY
WORKING

2.1 Introduction

Literature is examined in two distinct chapters in this thesis. The reason for this is that the latter of the two chapters focusing upon the literature, *The Emergence of Safeguarding*, (Chapter 4), is directly related to research question one, ‘Why have schools come to play an increasing role in the safeguarding of children?’ and is therefore located after *Research Design*. This chapter will provide a brief overview of the Common Assessment Framework at the time of the thesis. It then looks specifically at one element of safeguarding work, that of multi-agency working, and discusses what may be learned from literature to date in preparation for discussions of schools experiences of this practice in later chapters.

2.2 Safeguarding and the Common Assessment Framework

‘Safeguarding’ refers to a transient concept, with no straightforward definition. Although the term was used prior to the Children Act 1989, as a result of this act it became used to describe a shift in focus from purely protection from abuse to incorporating wider welfare and societal concerns in order to improve all children’s lives (Barlow and Scott, 2010). The current Ofsted definition for safeguarding in education includes the following elements:

- Protecting children and learners from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children’s and learners’ health or development;
- Ensuring that children and learners are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and

- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children and learners to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.
(Ofsted, 2011: 5)

Understood as such, safeguarding covers a broad spectrum and is also evident from the legislation upon which this understanding of safeguarding has developed. The CA 1989 has two categories for child abuse and neglect. In the most severe cases, under Section 47 (s47) children are classed as being at risk of ‘significant harm’. These children would require social care support, a protection plan, and possibly a care order. The second category is that of ‘in need’, covered in Section 17 (s17) of the Act. These children would potentially require social care support. The law considers a child ‘in need’ if:

- (a) He is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority under this Part;
- (b) His health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services; or
- (c) He is disabled.

(Children Act 1989: 17(10))

Therefore, whilst locking a child in a cupboard and denying them food would clearly be ‘significant harm’ or a ‘Section 47’ concern, other incidents, such as a parent taking cannabis regularly and sometimes being unable to look after their eleven year old child adequately would need contextual information (medical views, child’s views, support and structures already in place) before professionals could negotiate where to place the child’s needs on the child protection/safeguarding continuum. There are, however, regional variations on what constitutes ‘significant harm’ and ‘child in need’. This is because local authorities were forced in the late 1980s and early 1990s to create their own thresholds for what constituted ‘in need’ due to a lack

of clear definitions in the legislation (Baginsky, 2008; DoH, 1995; Parton, 2009; Parton 2011) and other factors, which are discussed in Chapter 4.

One of the results of this disparity was the recognition that some children were falling short of the ‘in need’ category, but still required support. Subsequent to this, the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts provided the legal requirement for agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children. Prior to this, much of the safeguarding work now being organised and facilitated through schools would not have been part of their remit. As a result of these Acts, two new categories emerged: ‘Universal’ and ‘child with additional needs’ (figure 2.1, below). It shows that whilst all children have ‘universal’ needs (such as learning about sexual health), some children require individualised support but do not meet the criteria for social care support, and are therefore said to have ‘additional needs’.

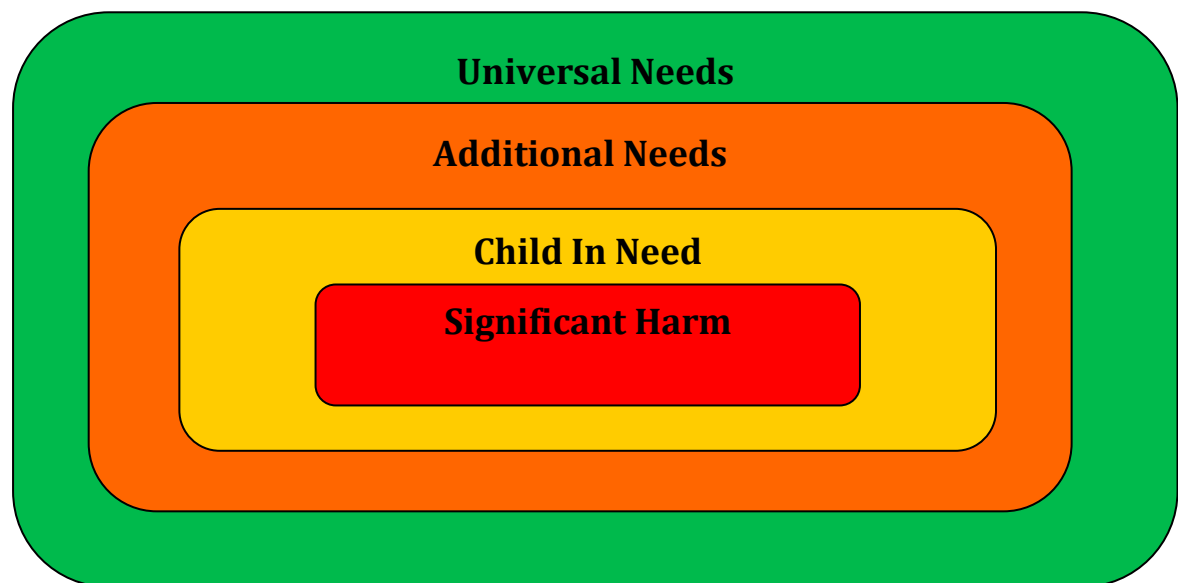


Figure 2.1: Layers of Need

The central strategy for schools to support children with additional needs (for example, those who may be involved in crime or have emotional difficulties) is to

work with families and other agencies. This may include charities such as Barnardos, or local authority agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (commonly known as CAMHS). This practice is called the Common Assessment Framework, and was devised by the Department of Education and Skills (2006), and its basic steps are illustrated in figure 2.2, below. Figure 2.2 shows that with the agreement and support of the family, a form is completed collecting information about the child's needs and other associated information (commonly called a CAF form) so that it may be shared with those involved, thereby reducing the need for families to keep repeating the same information to different bodies. Meetings, commonly called Team Around the Child (TAC) are then called where all agree targets and how they may be achieved by working together.

It was this that schools were using at the time of this thesis. The crux of this model is that agencies work together for the benefit of the child, which is the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

2.3 Multi-Agency Working

Subsequent to the changes in legislation, the scope of safeguarding has changed (as discussed later in *Language of Child Protection*) and consequently the role that schools have has expanded. Gary Walker, a Childhood and Early Years academic, urges professionals to reflect on both the rationale and practice associated with these changes:

Professionals should be cautious about being marched bright-eyed into the future, yoked to colleagues from other agencies, with the promise of better outcomes for children through what appears to be a preoccupation with the

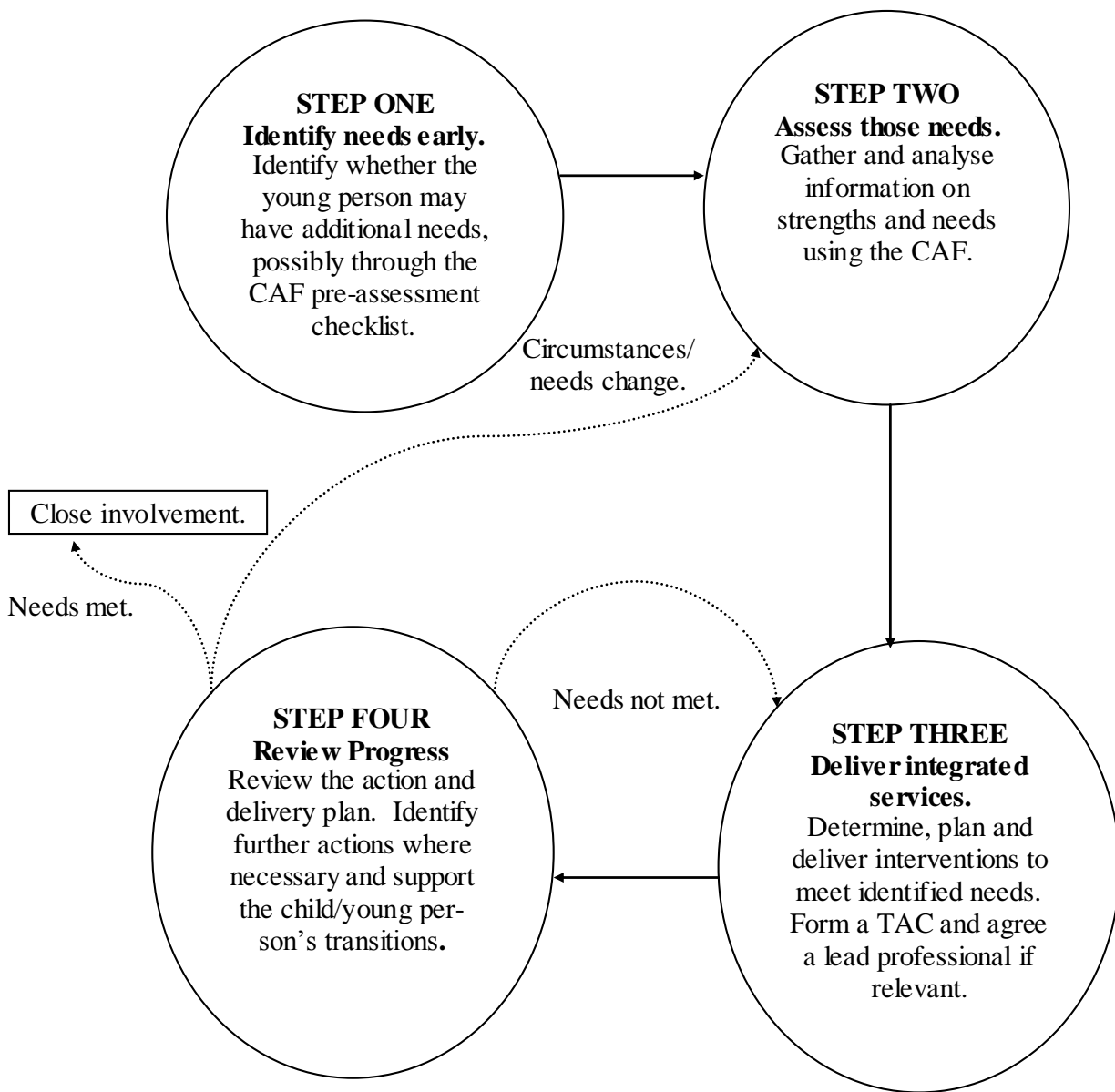


Figure 2.2: The Four-Step CAF Process (Adapted from CWDC, 2009: 43)

close surveillance, monitoring and measuring of a vast array of factors related to children's lives ...*Professionals can, and should, pause and question whether the promise of a brighter future for children is fully achievable without the full extent of the intricacies involved in multi-agency work being fully unravelled, processed and commonly distilled and understood.* Only then, and in spite of the structural barriers that persist, will professionals be able to engage in multi-agency work which really does have the potential to benefit children and families by improving their life chances in varying fields such as health, social care and education. (Walker, 2008: 175, my italics).

Although one may read Walker's comments as a call to debate whether the system in which we work is the most appropriate, this section takes a problem solving approach. It explores multi-agency working in relation to safeguarding work undertaken by schools through Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings to aid the unravelling of the intricacies of multi-agency working. The first section, *Setting the Scene*, briefly recaps how safeguarding evolved, defines terms, explores what it means for education, and looks at models for multi-agency working. The second section, *Practice and Problems*, seeks to examine perceived inhibitors and facilitators for multi-agency working, discussing the implications they may have for schools. Finally, the conclusion reaffirms that when one examines research in this area, one must be mindful of both the lack of firm definitions within which practitioners and researchers work, as well as the many influences on family life which make causal links between safeguarding practices and changes to children's lives difficult to establish. Nevertheless, it determines that different priorities and professional understandings may lead to inconsistencies between different professions towards safeguarding, and it is believed that training and the development of a shared language will help overcome this barrier. It recognises that the Children's Workforce

Development Council (CWDC) provides materials to support practitioners, but questions if these are known about or utilised by schools.

2.4 Setting the Scene

2.4.1 Introduction

With the above in mind, Ofsted evaluates safeguarding in schools against a range of issues including their ability to identify and respond to welfare concerns, and their work with other key agencies (Ofsted, 2011: 6)². This includes their ability to *intervene* in family life to benefit the welfare of children and work together to achieve this, not just act when there are suspicions of abuse as required by the Children's Act (CA) 2004. This section therefore defines 'multi-agency' for the purpose of this study before discussing an educational view on the benefits of working in this way. It finally touches upon differences between Academy Schools and Grant Maintained schools with respect to safeguarding children, so that the decision to focus upon grant maintained schools for the study can be put into context.

A clear understanding of what working with other agencies means is therefore required. Different people understand this term in different ways, their definitions entailing contrasting levels of working together (along the spectrum of superficial or fully integrated). This is one of the issues of research in this area. The primary source of guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children*, (DCSF, 2010) uses the terms 'inter-agency' and 'multi-agency' without assigning different meanings

² **New frameworks for Ofsted inspections were created in 2012 and 2013, and safeguarding was examined as an aspect of Leadership and Management as a result.**

to each term, whereas, Horwath (2009) argues that ‘inter-agency’ denotes strategic working: ‘... laying down the framework for multi-disciplinary practice,’ (p16), implying a managerial and structural approach; and Walker (2008: 13) argues that the term ‘multi-agency’ relates to agencies working together for a common purpose – more of the actual practitioners involved in the day to day workings of safeguarding; yet the DCSF (2010) does not make this distinction. In contrast, Oliver *et al.*’s (2010) review of the literature primarily uses the term ‘integrated working’ whilst emphasising that one of the challenges of researching this area is that, ‘Integrated working/multi-agency collaboration covers a range of organisational forms and practices and there is huge variation in terms of structures, implementation and in their [sic] development,’ and, there is a, ‘...lack of clarity in the meaning,’ of the terms. (p5). Harker *et al.* (2004) draw upon the work of Leathard (1994) and purport that this is because the etymology of the terminology builds on three concepts, notably:

- Association: inter / multi / trans;
- Grouping: agency / sectoral / disciplinary / occupational / professional;
and
- Focus of operations: integration / cooperation / collaboration /
teamwork

(Harker *et al.*, 2004: 180)

For the purpose of this thesis though, the term multi-agency is used as it is widely used in practice. An all-encompassing definition can be determined through Walker (2008) and Cameron *et al.* (2009), that of three or more agencies (including professional, voluntary or other groups) working together to address concerns relating a particular child or family. However, when referring to a specific text, the terminology the author(s) use will be utilised so that any nuance of meaning, as explored by Leathard, is not lost.

2.4.2 *Benefits of Multi-Agency Working*

With this understanding of multi-agency working, and returning to Walker's call to 'be cautious,'; the '... promise of a brighter future for children,' (p175) is examined through exploring the rationale for, and perceived benefits of, multi-agency working.

It is argued that multi-agency working has many benefits. Munro (2011) places them in three categories: the moral obligation to help children, endorsed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Children Act 1989; the 'now or never' argument which centres on the need to act swiftly, to reduce the long term effects that the issue (for example, drug use by the parent) may have on the child's mental health; and finally the cost saving model – acting sooner is cheaper than addressing long term needs later (p69). From a strategic level, dealing with issues in a holistic way not only has benefits for families, financial savings could also be made through sharing resources, joint funding of projects and reducing waste through, for example, ensuring professionals do not duplicate visits (Atkinson *et al.*, 2002; Walker, 2008). Allen (2011) takes this further, arguing that through early intervention there is the opportunity to, 'make massive savings in public expenditure,' and 'reduce the costs of educational underachievement,' and consequently reduce the benefits bill (p *xiv*).

With regard to evidence of the claims being upheld, Oliver *et al.* (2010), in their document (funded by the CWDC) *Integrated Working: A Review of the Evidence*, clearly state, 'There is little evidence on *Team Around the Child* or its outcomes,' (p7, their italics) and that, 'Integrated working is but one of many influences that include individual child and family characteristics and contextual factors, such as related programmes and policy initiatives, making it difficult to establish a causal link,' (p6).

However, they go on to list benefits for multi-agency working based on professional perceptions. These include a better understanding of the needs of families, and local resources available to support them leading to better co-ordination of services and earlier identification of need. For practitioners personally, they also argue that there is increased enjoyment in their working and increased opportunities for career development (p30). From a purely school based perspective, they argue that there are some measurable benefits including improvements in school attitudes, academic attainment, and engagement with learning (although they make clear that evidence is limited); and that perceived benefits include improvements in children's behaviour, well being and family relationships (p5).

With a definition of 'multi-agency' established, and the perceived benefits of working in this way noted, the final section goes on to explore an important element of the context in which this research took place. This section has explored the benefits of multi-agency working, and the following section now moves to explaining the differences between grant maintained schools and academies.

2.4.3 Safeguarding and Academies

It is also worth noting some issues regarding the role of different types of schools. Academies, which are semi-private state funded schools, may be seen to have the same legal obligations to safeguard children as grant maintained, but the requirements are detailed in different legislation (see Table 2.1, below).

The table clearly illustrates that there are laws designed for each aspect for both the grant maintained and academy schools. However, there are differences in aspects

such as Ofsted reporting safeguarding concerns (in grant maintained schools it is part of the Ofsted report, available in the public arena; whereas in Academies only the proprietor of the Academy and the Secretary of State are to be informed); and teaching staff (teachers in Academies do not have to hold QTS (Qualified Teacher Status) unless they are the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) or the DP (Designated Person for Child Protection)). It may be argued that it is unclear whether all schools (including academies and independent schools, which are not grant maintained) are expected to work in the same way. Potentially this raises questions about current government policy seeming to promote academies – for example, the Schools White Paper seeks to increase the number of academies and free schools, indeed the government will be able to force some schools to become academies (DfE, 2010: 7.18) – what will the role of these schools be in safeguarding? In a time of austerity when budgets for services for families have been cut (Harrison, 2011) one may question what the government’s vision for schools is in relation to multi-agency working to promote welfare. Will it become mandatory and will different types of schools have different responsibilities?

2.5 Models of Multi-Agency Working

Despite the Common Assessment Framework not being mandatory, the current legal position is that schools need to work with other agencies and many schools opt to use it. There are different models for this. For example, in order to facilitate multi-agency working, and address some of the barriers to this type of working (such as different professional identities and priorities), co-location of different agencies, that is to say, all agencies working in one building, is one of the models of multi-agency working. It may even be argued that this is the government’s preferred model as their

	Grant Maintained Schools	Academies
Running of school		Financing Agreement and Articles
Designated person for children in care	Children and Young Persons Act 2008 20(3)	Single Model Funding Agreement s17
Duty to Co-operate	Education Act 2002 s175	Amendment made to Act
Promote children's welfare	Education Act 2002 s175	EdA 2002 s157 - regulations will prescribe standards for the welfare of children at independent schools.
QTS (which includes the standard 'having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being')	All teachers must have QTS	Designated person for child protection and SENCo are only staff required to have QTS
Who finds out if Ofsted find that safeguarding in schools is of concern?	Parents, Local Authority, Published on Internet.	Education Act 2005 (13(3)) states that the Proprietor of the Academy and the Secretary of State should be told.

Table 2.1: Differences Between Grant Maintained Schools and Academies in Respect to Safeguarding

Policies, reports and guidance seem to promote this (Walker, 2008). Some argue that co-location of schools, children's centres and health and social care will be the dominant model (Baginsky, 2008: 19). However, the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC)³ together with established research are clear that there are many models for multi-agency working for safeguarding children. This section examines some of the models for multi-agency working, and raises questions regarding the ideology behind co-location of services.

Whilst it is held that multi-agency working is an important tool for achieving the priorities related to the ECM agenda, definitions of what this means and how it may be achieved is unclear in government documentation (Frost and Robinson, 2007; Baginsky, 2008). This means that local authorities, and even individual groups of schools, need to decide how it will work for them (Brandon *et al.*, 2006). Take for example, Bandele's (2009) exploration of the approach in Sheffield, in which the Yewland family of schools have appointed a safeguarding officer between them rather than incorporate safeguarding into the role of an existing member of staff (Bandele, 2009: 28). However, there are broadly speaking three primary models for multi-agency working. Drawing upon Atkinson *et al.* (2002), Baginsky (2008), CWDC (2010a), Horwath (2009) and Walker (2008) they may be described as:

- Multi-Agency Panel. Here meetings are held with a range of agencies present. The perceived benefit is that each agency has an equal voice in the team, and that they may deal with issues at a strategic level. (Atkinson *et al.*, 2002).
- Multi-Agency Team. Here there is a Team Leader, but members of the panel, whilst remaining with their home agency (for example, health or education) have some links with the team. Here, one agency determines or champions a need. This agency may then take the lead role, and work with other agencies towards goals the lead team determine, or goals that agencies determine together. (Atkinson *et al.*, 2002).

³ The remit of the CWDC was to support multi-agency working, and they produced several documents on the CAF (see CWDC, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c).

- One-stop shops. Here all agencies are located within one building, and professionals either work together under the same manager, or with different managers for each home agency, so that communication is facilitated and families find all agencies in one location. It is believed to support communication with parents by providing one place to contact for all agencies, as well as improving communication between agencies, as they will become aware of each other's roles, professional culture and ways of working thus facilitating a more coordinated approach (Walker, 2008).

One stop shops, therefore arguably address the researchers' agreement that a lack of understanding of the priorities, cultures and professional practices of other agencies can cause issues when trying to work together (Atkinson et al., 2002; Brandon et al, 2006; CDWC, 2010a; and Dudua, 2009). Through communication, and the opportunity to learn more about each other's roles by all being in one building is one way to overcome this. However, it may be countered that placing people in the same building is not enough – there needs to be opportunities to work together, share ideas and develop a sense of common purpose (White and Featherstone, 2005). For example, if we consider a hospital, placing different specialists together in one building does not necessarily mean that patients receive a more 'joined up' approach to treatment – each work, and advise, only on their own area. Indeed, even when tasked with working together, status and power issues may result if the work of some professionals is not taken seriously by others – as evidenced by a social worker recounting her experiences of referrals to her being blocked by consultants who did not place any value on the work that she did (Frost and Robinson, 2007:189). Cameron *et al.* (2009:2) also argue that co-location is not enough, and we need to remodel, re-order and re-conceptualise in order to achieve the aims determined by Every Child Matters. The following section, *Practice and Problems*, therefore explores the inhibitors and facilitators to multi-agency working which schools may need to address when working with other agencies in teams around the child so that they may be discussed as appropriate in *Findings and Discussion*.

2.6 Practice and Problems

This section is sub-divided. In the first sub-section inhibitors to multi-agency working are explored through agency and organisational factors as well as political issues such as policy discord. It argues that whilst there are strategies to overcome inhibitors, practitioners may benefit knowing of them, and taking time to try to address them, when working with other agencies. The second sub-section explores ways to facilitate multi-agency working, including evidence related to the development of a common language through the use of a Common Assessment Form (CAF) and evidence regarding multi-agency training. It draws on three pieces of empirical evidence in detail, recognising that there is a limited evidence base, and that there are recognized issues when researching this field, such as language and difficulties establishing causal effects. It therefore concludes that perceptions of training and CAFs on practice will need to be sought through interviews to speak to this debate.

2.6.1 Inhibitors to Multi-Agency Working

Although all relevant professions are tasked with a duty to co-operate through the CA 1989 and CA 2004, different interpretations of that duty exist. Some have decided that they will participate in safeguarding, but not take the lead role – for example the police will not instigate Common Assessment Forms (CAFs) but will provide information should another agency wish to complete one (Owen, 2009: 19); and evidence suggests that Health, (particularly GPs), is one of the most difficult agencies to engage in safeguarding (Laming, 2009; Oliver, 2010:30). Whilst some argue that ‘schools have taken the greater role in safeguarding children,’ (Baginsky, 2008:16) and there is ‘a growing ownership of the Lead Professional role, especially in schools,’ (Gilbert *et al.*, 2008: 313) there is also opposing evidence that schools have also been historically difficult to engage, (Department of Health,

2002:6.49). Though this is now improving (Gilbert *et al.*, 2008: 277; Oliver *et al.*, 2010:31), schools do not have a legal obligation to complete CAFs, nor to take the role of Lead Professional in meetings (Oliver, 2009). Indeed, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) acknowledges the increased workload of Lead Professionals, and urges its members to only take this role when the main concern for the child is educational (ATL, 2010). The National Union of Teachers (NUT) states that the Lead Professional should be a post in its own right, either at a school or local authority level, and it should not be tagged on to other duties of teachers due to the workload and complexity of the role (NUT, 2005: 6). Therefore, as the CA 1989 does not assign the role to a particular agency, all agencies may choose not to take the responsibility of being a Lead Professional.

That said, some teachers are Lead Professionals and as such have three key functions:

- Act as a single point of contact for the child, young person or family;
- Co-ordinate the delivery of the actions agreed; and
- Reduce overlap and inconsistency in the services received.

(CWDC, 2009c: 7)

Their ‘core tasks’ therefore include building robust relationships with families (including when specialist assessments need to be carried out) and other agencies, and being a point of contact for all; convening TAC meetings; co-ordinating the delivery of support and ensuring a smooth handover to a different Lead Professional if required (p9-10) – therefore if the role is taken by a teacher they must be available outside term time (p28). They are not responsible for the work of other agencies, and are answerable only to their home agency. That is to say, a teacher would be accountable to their Headteacher, and a Barnardos worker would be accountable to their manager. This means that the Lead Professional is deprived of

authority and is reliant on the good will of others. However, Laming (2003: 382) identified the need to equip all agencies to be able to hold others to account, which raises questions about what this would mean in practice and whether any progress been made on this front?

According to the literature on this area (which includes Baginsky, 2008; CWDC, 2010b; Horwath, 2009; Oliver *et al.*, 2009; SIS, 2009; and Walker, 2008) recognised reasons behind agencies and individuals being reluctant to instigate Team Around the Child meetings and take on the role of Lead Professional include:

- Lack of resources;
- Agencies not placing a priority on this area of their work (for example, not including it in staff targets or appraisals);
- Staff shortages (including lack of cover for teachers to be released from classes to go to meetings);
- Increase in workload; feelings that there is a lack of skill or knowledge regarding, for example, how to complete a CAF and the thresholds for intervention and responsibilities of other agencies (that is to say, knowledge regarding who may be able to help and does this family fit their criteria for support);
- Potential damage to working relationships with families;
- A lack of support for those taking a Lead Professional role, particularly when there are high levels of responsibility;
- A fear that those taking the Lead Professional role will be blamed for errors, and
- The line between what should be dealt with by agencies other than social care and what may warrant social care intervention is unclear at times.

Despite these issues, many schools take on the responsibility of calling TAC meetings and taking the role of the Lead Professional, getting other agencies to attend (Dagley *et al.*, 2007; Gilbert *et al.*, 2008). Indeed, some feel that schools are the appropriate agencies to take on this role (Social Investment Systems (SIS), 2009a:5). There are then perceived and established inhibitors regarding working with other agencies, the most notable being that of different identities and cultures between agencies. Frost and Robinson (2007), for instance,

ask the reader to consider how different agencies would respond to a youth committing crimes. Some may respond with a ‘social- causative model’ – such as social workers trying to identify reasons for the behaviour and ways to help the individual overcome this - whereas law enforcement officers are more likely to focus on a ‘public safety model’, therefore prioritising victims, in meetings (p191). This not only relates to the professional identity and sense of ontological security, of the different actors embedded in the practices and values through which the different agencies work, but also the definitions, thresholds for intervention and resource priorities that these involve (Daniels et al., 2007; Horwath, 2009; Laming, 2009; Walker, 2008).

Walker (2008) takes this argument further by exploring not only issues regarding the value judgements made through the ECM agenda (discussed previously), but also the discord between the policies within which different agencies work. He exemplifies this, stating that whilst the ECM agenda states that children should be placed at the centre of social action, this is not always the case. For example, ECM states that children should ‘be healthy’ yet some authorities do not provide sanitation for travellers (p161). In addition to this, housing is allocated on a points system, and points can be awarded for living conditions, medical conditions, threats of violence, and the need to avoid hardship. However, issues relating specifically to the child, such as a lack of play areas or overcrowding (ECM outcome: *Enjoy and Achieve*), even a child protection order (ECM outcome: *Stay Safe*), will not enable families to obtain points for alternate housing (p42), leading him to conclude that, ‘Despite the mantra of *Every Child Matters*, certain children in fact matter less than others,’ (p171).

In addition to policy priorities and differing identities between professions and agencies, there are issues relating specifically to working with others. These include lack of ownership which multi-agency working entails; mistrust of others; differing status between professions

(consider, for example, a nursery nurse questioning the views and actions of a GP); lack of clarity in roles and positions of authority and historical or current jealousies or rivalries between agencies (Atkinson et al, 2005; Behan *et al.*, 2005; DoH, 2002; Horwath, 2009; Hymans, 2008; Walker, 2008).

Taking a problem solving approach, it may therefore be argued that agencies and authorities need to be mindful of these issues, and address them in a way which seeks to overcome them and facilitate multi-agency working for the benefit of the child(ren). Examples of strategies include multi-agency training, co-location and improved communication, which are discussed below both in terms of what they may entail and their perceived effectiveness.

2.6.2 Facilitators for Multi-Agency Working

First, multi-agency training is discussed in relation to its perceived purpose, and whether, as Charles and Horwath (2009) question, it is a practice grounded in faith or reason. Second, the importance of a shared language will include an examination of the Common Assessment Framework Form (CAF) as a tool to achieve this.

2.6.2a Training

Seebomh *et al.*, (1968) proposed that part of teachers initial training should include working with social services in order to develop understanding of their role, and also to help teachers identify children with welfare needs. This has developed over the decades to prioritising multi-agency training. The first *Joint Chief Inspectors Report On Arrangements to Safeguard Children* (DoH, 2002) noted that agencies had a better understanding of thresholds for social service involvement after regular joint training had taken place. There is a wealth of literature supporting the view that joint training for professions enables staff to understand each other's roles and facilitate multi-agency working through developing shared goals and a

consistent approach (Frost, 2005; Hendry and Baginsky, 2008; Oliver *et al.*, 2010; SIS, 2009a; Sloper, 2004). In contrast, when looking specifically at outcomes of training, a recent report, entitled *Outcomes Of Multi-Agency Training To Safeguard Children*, (Carpenter *et al.*, 2010), which sought to provide an evidence base for training relating to safeguarding children (pi) found that the evidence base for multi-agency training was ‘decidedly thin,’ (p4) and that, it is not possible to conclude that inter-agency training to safeguard children ‘works’ due to the complexity of the issue (p51). These complexities include the range and scope of training offered. But the need for a coherent approach was recognised in the first *Joint Chief Inspectors Report* (DoH, 2002) as it called for national standards and guidelines for joint training.

In the 2005 *Joint Chief Inspectors Report* it was stated that co-ordinating multi-agency training was a key role of the Local Children’s Safeguarding Boards. These have been disbanded by the government), and the government has published additional guidance on the *Common Core* of skills and knowledge for adults working with children to assist with training (Behan *et al.*, 2005:88). The *Common Core* (CDWC, 2010c), includes skills and knowledge related to multi-agency working, which professionals should develop throughout their career. Multi- Agency Skills cover two areas: *Communication And Teamwork*, and *Assertiveness*; and Knowledge relates to *Your Role And Remit*, *How To Make Inquires* and *Procedures And Working Methods* (p19-21). Carpenter *et al.* did find that the skills and attitudes were developed in the course content of training they observed, along materials related to *Working Together* (pi). However, if just two of the skills are considered: ‘Have a general knowledge and understanding of the range of organisations and individuals working with children, young people, their families and carers. Be aware of the roles and responsibilities of other professionals’ (5.20); and ‘Know what to do when there are

insufficient responses from other organisations or agencies...’ (5.26) one may question how this depth of knowledge may be achieved in a day, particularly as the agencies that may be involved include charities and voluntary organisations (White and Featherstone, 2005: 215).

The value of multi-agency training is consequently under discussion. Oliver *et al.* (2010) echoes Carpenter *et al.*’s (2010) view that there is limited evidence indicating that interprofessional education is beneficial to professional practice or outcomes for families. There is also limited material discussing safeguarding training specifically from an educational perspective, despite the prominent role schools have in identifying children that may benefit from support. A literature search for articles relating to this field found only one: Baginsky’s (2005) review of NSPCC training materials for initial teacher training⁴. Therefore much of the material discussed below is from a broader base of professionals, predominantly those in the health profession.

Before discussing findings relating to safeguarding training, it is important to note first what the training is trying to achieve. Like the definition of safeguarding, its remit has expanded through the various revisions of the key document *Working Together*, (see DoH et al., 1999: 9.7; DfES, 2006: 4.3 and DCSF, 2010: 4.4). For example, in 1999 one purpose was to promote, ‘effective working relationships, based on respect and an understanding of the role and contribution of different disciplines;’ (DoH et al, 1999.9.7), whereas in 2010 it became developing, ‘... effective working relationships, including an ability to work in multi-disciplinary groups or teams,’ (DCSF, 2010: 4.4), with a focus upon a collaborative ethos, recognising the wishes and feelings of the child (4.25, 4.26). This arguably illustrates the shift

⁴ Please note that Baginsky (2008) also edited a book entitled *Safeguarding Children and Schools*, which is used in this thesis.

in models and focus of practice resulting from ECM and the CA 2004 from focussing upon child abuse to the wider remit of safeguarding and promoting welfare. The 2010 guidance also includes five other purposes, notably, achieving ‘better outcomes ... by fostering’:

- A shared understanding of the tasks, processes, principles, roles and responsibilities outlined in national guidance and local arrangements for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare;
- More effective and integrated services at both the strategic and individual case level;
- Improved communication and information sharing between professionals, including a common understanding of key terms, definitions and thresholds for action;
- Sound child focused assessments and decision-making; and
- Learning from Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) and reviews of child deaths.
(DCSF, 2010: 4.4)

Baginsky (2005) reviewed NSPCC training materials for initial teacher training on safeguarding children. Here evidence is gathered from training providers through a questionnaire. The focus of the questions appears to be on abuse, rather than promoting welfare, (perhaps because of the historical focus on ‘significant harm’ from the CA 1989, and that the legal changes in the CA 2004 with its focus on safeguarding and promoting children’s welfare had not yet had time to become embedded). Main findings included that this element of students’ training comprised of three hours at most, and that the element of ‘other agency’ training focused on who could be contacted for support (e.g. social care) rather than how to work with other agencies (such as Barnardos, or CAMHS) in order to support families – which providers recognised to be a need to be addressed. However, the feeling was that there was not enough time to deal with the wider implications of the CA 2004 on the course, and therefore training providers felt that mentors and schools should take the primary responsibility for developing students’ knowledge in this field.

During the same year, Lindqvist *et al.*, (2005) surveyed medical students from a range of

disciplines who voluntarily undertook a nine week interprofessional training programme. Although this was not related to safeguarding, it was deemed to be a method of developing understanding of different roles and enabling interprofessional working – a perceived benefit of multi-agency training in relation to safeguarding. When surveyed, 94% of voluntary participants felt that it aided interprofessional work, although some felt it reinforced negative stereotypes regarding other professions; 64% felt it should be compulsory and yet only 33% felt this training and subsequent interprofessional work may benefit future patients. Taking into account the perceived influencing factors in this study – including that people volunteered, indicating a potential predisposition towards this type of work, and that this was additional work to their studies, this draws into question whether the results are due to the training, or a predisposition. If a predisposition, one may argue that one would expect the number of respondents indicating that multi-agency training would be beneficial to patients to be higher.

These two reports exemplify the view that multi-agency working does not automatically mean better outcomes for families, a view supported by Walker (2008) and Charles and Horwath (2009). Indeed, it was recognised that, ‘interagency working is not self evidently useful. It is certainly not easy and must be energetically and strategically pursued,’ (Department of Health 1991:111, cited in Charles and Howarth 2009: 368). Each of the three Chief Inspectors joint reports (Department of Health, 2002; Behan *et al.*, 2005; Gilbert *et al.*, 2008) also acknowledge issues with multi-agency training ranging from a lack of accreditation and poor support from some agencies – for example most teaching staff only received school based training (DoH, 2002: 430-440); when attended, the quality and consistency of training varied considerably (Behan *et al.*, 2005: 4.48-4.51) and even in 2008 there were still issues regarding training school staff due to staffing and finance issues

(Gilbert *et al.*, 2008: 330).

The question is therefore raised as to what constitutes ‘good’ training and how agencies can be persuaded to participate fully, particularly when there are no accreditations or minimum standards for trainers (Carpenter *et al.*: 2010: 168), just guidance from *Working Together* and *Piat* (Promoting Inter-Agency Training) – an organisation founded in 1992 by the NSPCC, Sheffield University and Nottingham University (NSPCC, 2011), as well as lessons from inquiries into child deaths. Here, despite the lack of research, there generally appears to be agreement on the focus of the training in the literature, both in regard to the core dimensions and also how they should be achieved.

In relation to the core dimensions, these relate to developing knowledge, skills and attitudes – areas Carpenter *et al.* (2010:44) reviewed in their examination of the outcomes of interprofessional learning. Charles and Horwath, (2009:373) and Glennie (2007:181) support this view (Table 2.2, below).

Professionals have knowledge about:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Clarity regarding own role •Clarity regarding joint professional purpose •Clarity regarding role co-ordination and meshing within whole system •Recognition of range of professional and organisational perspectives •Formal and informal inter-agency communication channels
Professionals have skills that enable:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Emotional intelligence •Assertiveness •Initiative •Collaborative capacity (open to ideas, capable of joint thinking and planning) •Clear, focused, jargon-free interpersonal communication (including recording)
Professionals have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Respect and appreciation for others contributions

attitudes promote	that	•Empathy
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Table 2.2: Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of Interprofessional Learning
(From Glennie, 2007: 181. Table 2: Core Dimensions of Effective Inter-Agency Relationship)

These three papers also agree in how this should be achieved in training: through a focus upon process, that is to say, the opportunity to work and learn together. Carpenter *et al.* exemplify this by explaining that participants are asked to rate scenarios out of 10 in regard to their perceived potential harm for the child. They are then put into multi-agency groups so that the dangers of assuming a shared understanding are exposed, and then this leads into discussion on this happening in child death reports. It is unclear whether discussions then develop into multi-agency groups agreeing what they would want to achieve, and how they may do so; formulating a plan and discussing observations regarding the dynamics of the group as they do so. That is to say, are there opportunities to explore ‘collaborative behaviour’ – which Horwath (2009: 121) argues may aid effective working.

Carpenter *et al.* (2010) surveyed nearly 1500 participants from 139 courses (of one or two days duration) held in 4 different parts of the country and found, ‘substantial, observable change,’ and commented that, ‘effect sizes of this magnitude are rarely found in “real world” studies.’(p166). These participants perceived changes at the end of the course with regard to a number of areas, including increased skills which would lead to better outcomes for service users, increased understanding of others’ roles, and increased comfort with working with other agencies which included a marked increase in the ease of communicating with each other. However, they could not be substantiated as existing three months after the course due to poor response rates to questionnaires, and Carpenter *et al.* commented there is still a research need in this area.

Therefore, the beginning of the evidence base for the effects of multi-agency training in practice suggests significant impact – suggesting it is an act of reason rather than faith, which was also the conclusion in Charles and Horwath (2009). However, with issues regarding education accessing this training due to factors such as cost and sheer numbers of people involved, it will be important to note whether those interviewed through this research have received multi-agency training, their perception of it in regard to the training itself, and how this may have influenced their practice, to provide further evidence in this debate.

2.6.2b Common Assessment Forms

The Common Assessment Framework is one of a range of initiatives relating to the implementation of the ECM agenda, and is described as:

A shared assessment and planning framework for use across all children's services and all local areas in England. It aims to help the early identification of children and young people's additional needs and promote co-ordinated service provision to meet them. (CWDC, 2009a:8)

Part of this includes a Common Assessment Framework Form, commonly called a CAF. Its purpose is twofold – collating information on a family on one form (to prevent repetition) and also to help develop a shared language for professionals, with support later being developed by the CWDC. Whilst the former arguably has cost benefits and helps develop a good relationship with families (Oliver *et al.*, 2010), the latter is grounded in findings on language, notably, the need for a 'common language' with clear communication (Laming, 2003: 373).

The CAF (Appendix 1) has four sections in which to detail strengths and needs, each then having a number of focus areas. *Health* includes physical health; physical development; speech, language and communication; emotional and social development; behavioural development; identity, self-esteem, self image and social presentation; family and social

relationships as well as self care and independence. *Learning* includes understanding, reasoning and problem solving; participation in learning, education and employment; progress and achievement in learning; and aspirations. *Parents and Carers* include basic care; emotional warmth and stability; and guidance, boundaries and stimulation. Finally, *Family and Environment* includes family history, functioning and well-being; wider family; housing, employment and financial considerations; as well as social and community elements and resources, including education. When each of these are completed, conclusions are drawn in relation to aims, changes that are wanted, and how can they happen before making a plan relating to these and detailing any support that may be offered.

It is believed that the standardised form led to improvements in information collected (Oliver et al., 2010), and belief that they would lead to better outcomes for children (Dagley et al., 2007). However, concerns include different approaches from different sectors, and the power given to those completing the form to shape the information to their bias and understanding (whether consciously or not), particularly as the format of the form does not enable practitioners to tell the ‘story’ (Brandon et al., 2006; SIS, 2009a; White et al., 2009), that is to say, it provides a snapshot of where the family is now, rather than a detailed history. In addition, schools often keep dated logs of concerns, and these cannot be included here. It is also argued that the CAF does not necessarily reduce the duplication of assessments or referrals to other agencies (Oliver et al., 2010: 33).

SIS (2009b) were commissioned by the CWDC to determine if there were any confusions related to the CAFs, and, if so, how they may be addressed. Whilst the report stresses that they are using limited evidence, and providing a snapshot, they found that, with specific relation to education, staff were comfortable with the CAF; the CAF did not necessarily deter duplications of assessments; there was confusion regarding when and how to use it when a

child had special educational needs or behavioural issues (as some authorities recommended this, so that there was holistic support for the child); and that even if a CAF was completed and a need for multi-agency involvement identified, this did not always happen (p30-32). One may question, therefore, whether there will be a move to ensure support through the Team Around the Child approach will be increasingly prevalent with children with Individual Educational Plans (designed to address learning needs) or behavioural plans. This will be questioned through the interviews.

Munro (2011) concludes that there is conflicting evidence regarding whether the form is beneficial and therefore recommends that authorities have the freedom to adapt the form to local needs. (para 8.11). This research will therefore seek to find out whether the local authority has revised the CAF, and the practitioners experience of using it.

2.7 Conclusion

This section has discussed multi-agency working to safeguard children. It reminds us that, although multi-agency working has been promoted since the Seebohm Report in the 1960s, communication and issues regarding working together are continuously raised in child death reports. It therefore calls for us to be open minded, not marching into the future without time to pause and reflect on what we are trying to achieve, and how we are trying to achieve it.

To that end, it builds on the previous section's discussion of safeguarding as a concept to safeguarding as a practice, and suggests that this is an area in which there may be a lack of consistency in its implementation by national and local government – for example through the inferred distinction between different types of schools and what they are legally obliged to do, as well as the discord between the policies of different agencies and the ECM agenda.

It also explores the support and guidance available for schools, particularly through the CWDC, in preparation for discussion against findings – are schools aware of these documents (such as the Common Core, and the Guides for Practitioners) and are they understood and utilised in their practice? For example, do Lead Professionals know that they should be available outside of term time, and are Common Cores used for performance management / staff development? The examination of the literature also demonstrated that little is specifically focussed on educational contexts, most look at a number of agencies working together, or are based in health. It is this gap in the literature – an educational voice – that this thesis seeks to address.

The discussion then moved to practice, in relation to inhibitors and facilitators for multi-agency working. It illustrates that research in this area is problematic because of the lack of firm definitions, and the difficulties in establishing causal links due to the wealth of factors that may lead to improvements for a child or family. With that in mind, it explored why some agencies / individuals may be reluctant to undertake CAF assessments or be the Lead Professional, as well as issues that may arise as different agencies work together, such as different professional values, priorities and identities. It then discussed how some of these may be addressed through training and the development of a shared language, ready for further discussion in relation to material gained through observation and interviews.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This chapter identifies the cognitive interest of this research. It explains why a post positivist stance has been taken, and the subsequent decision made to use qualitative data gained through multiple interviews. Issues regarding credibility, trustworthiness and authenticity are discussed. It also examines how data was obtained (including ethical considerations) and analysed.

3.2 Wider Frameworks

For this thesis it is important to know how we conceptualise knowledge. This section explains how concepts from both Habermas and Foucault are drawn upon, whilst acknowledging that there are debates between the two approaches.

Habermas, a German sociologist and philosopher determined that there are three forms of knowledge: instrumental, practical and emancipatory, in his books, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (Habermas, 1971) and *Theory and Practice* (1974). These are summarised in Table 3.1, below.

Interest	Knowledge	Medium	Science
Technical	Instrumental (causal explanation)	Work	Empirical- analytical or natural sciences
Practical	Practical (understanding)	Language	Hermeneutic or 'interpretive' sciences.
Emancipatory	Emancipatory (reflection)	Power	Critical sciences

Table 3.1: Forms of Knowledge (Carr and Kemmis, 1986: 136)

Technical interest is predominantly concerned with solutions, which can be repeated as knowledge can be standardised and controlled (Joldersma, 2004).

Practical knowledge, ‘as a rule has the form of interpretations of traditional complexes of meaning,’ (Habermas, 1974: 8) and lies at the heart of hermeneutic approaches and what he terms the ‘interpretive sciences’. Here, understandings and actions are examined, and the possible reasons behind why people behave and interrelate in the way that they do highlighted.

Emancipatory knowledge in contrast is the focus of critical approaches and is based upon the ability to self reflect, then determine if things may be changed for the better, particularly in relation to the power that is being exerted on a particular course of action. Habermas (1974: 10) states:

...theories of the critical type themselves reflect on their (structural) constitutive context and their (potential) context of application results a changed relation to empirical practice, as a kind of methodological inner view in relation of theory to practice.

In part this thesis has elements of all three forms of knowledge. Instrumental knowledge is provided through technical reports that outline processes and sanctioned forms of conduct. For practitioners this is filtered into a form of practical knowledge insofar as teachers gain a sense of the roles they are performing and why. While practitioners/academics/government are sometimes provoked into moments of critical reflection – often by tragedies that bring the whole system into question, thereby invoking emancipatory knowledge.

It has been argued that this form of study, one which seeks to provide understandings of the policies in place in education, rather than seek to find ‘what works’ through the gold standard of Random Control Trials and experiments offer limited value (Hillage, 1998). Yet Biesta (2007) and Thomas (2012) argue that there are many factors that can affect education (e.g. home life, context of the school, etc.) so effects are not always clearly linked to one single action. Therefore, experience – both personal and collective need to be reflected upon to

shape future action. Biesta (2007) argues that it is by developing a pool of knowledge, looking at strategies that have been successful and unsuccessful for others, we can use that information and consider it in our own context to provide a basis for our own problem solving:

...research can also play a valuable role in helping educational practitioners to acquire a different understanding of their practice, in helping them to see and imagine their practice differently... As a result, we may be able to envisage opportunities for action where we did not envisage them before. (Biesta, 2007:19).

However, this leads us to consider another account of knowledge, one that explicitly ties knowledge to power. Therefore the thesis also examines the history of the concept of 'safeguarding'. To do this it draws upon Foucault's concepts of power, genealogy, knowledge and truth. He argues that power, including hidden power, together with understandings of the time, shape knowledge and 'truths' (these will be explained further in Chapter Four), therefore definitions of a concept, and those that have power within it, are fluid and influenced by the time in history within which they are examined. It is important to acknowledge that there are debates between the approaches taken between the two philosophers, but addressing these is outside the remit of this thesis.⁵

Through looking at safeguarding through the Common Assessment Framework in terms of its implementation in a school context and historical development, then relating the findings to Foucauldian concepts there is 'sensitising platform' upon which to discuss the research. For example, the negotiation of power is explored in relation to the government's response to academic recommendations. For example, Munro (2011) wrote recommendations for developing Early Help at the bequest of the government at that time, but they then selected

⁵ For example, Habermas believes that one can examine a subject from a neutral standpoint, and find the truth; whereas Foucault argues that one's own experiences can bias how data is analysed, therefore more than one conclusion may be reached. For more on this, see Ashenden and Owen, (1999); and Kelly, (1998).

which they wished to act upon. Consequently, the recommendation that providing early help should be mandatory for all agencies was rejected, the argument being that the ‘duty to cooperate’ in the Children Act 2004 was sufficient.⁶

Therefore, whilst this thesis has a practical interest, findings are related to the work of Foucault, particularly in relation to genealogy, power, knowledge and truth (these concepts will be discussed in the *Literature Review*). This established, the following section discusses the philosophical approach taken.

3.3 Philosophical Approach

Social science has broadly been divided into two paradigms – positivist and post-positivist, and there are debates regarding the validity of each. Broadly speaking, positivists often use quantitative data, although this is not a firm rule. Post-positivists (also called interpretivist) focus upon qualitative data. This section briefly outlines both positions, particularly the claims they are making concerning the nature of social reality, before indicating which paradigm this research is situated within.

Positivism in its broadest terms: ‘embraces any approach which applies scientific method to human affairs conceived as belonging to a natural order open to objective enquiry,’ (Hollis, 1994: 41). Positivists believe in an objective understanding of social science – that the researcher can attain a neutral position in relation to their research subject and that the quest is to discover pre-existing truths or patterns of behaviour, which can help develop our understanding of the social world, and therefore enable us to discover what can be improved through creating cause and effect models. Ontologically, therefore, a positivist approach to

⁶ This is discussed in further detail in Chapter Four, *The Emergence of Safeguarding*.

social science holds that the social world can be observed without any impact from the researcher – that's to say it is possible for researchers to be completely objective and to avoid letting their bias impact on their findings in any way. This is known as realism (Searle, 1995). Epistemologically, researchers form hypotheses, which they then test through using a range of scientific methods such as observations or cause-effect models. Frequently this will involve the collection of data/evidence to provide empirical proof, in the face of which hypotheses may be altered to address any anomalies that are found. These findings inform our understanding of the social world, and consequently inform possible ways in which it may be changed. The emphasis is upon defining cause and effect models (Winch, 1990), and problem solving (Cohen *et al.*, 2007), which some argue may be valuable to social science research (Blunkett, 2000; Hargreaves, 1997).

One of the primary concerns that post-positivist researchers have with positivism is that theories are not neutral as they claim. The point being that our 'scientific' theories of the social world often seem to be constitutive of it, just as in how racialised theories came to justify slavery or how economic theories depicting individuals as cost-benefit maximisers have come to inform much of social policy. In addition to this, understandings are interconnected with the culture within which the researcher is working (Crotty, 1998; Scott and Usher, 1996) therefore the researcher cannot be entirely objective, but becomes complicit in the findings as their scientific and cultural understandings impact on what is seen and on what we take the truth to be.

This relationship between the researcher and their research is explored in post-positivist research, which Cohen *et al.*, (2007) use as a collective term for all forms of research rejecting the positivist stance. Other terms are used for this form of research, such as interpretivist (Tuli, 2010). These researchers reject the view that people are governed by

universal laws, and believe that they are individuals to be studied and understood within their own frame of reference. Their ontological view is that the world does not exist independently of individuals – that individuals shape the world and our understanding of it (Searle, 1995). This has implications for the researcher, who is now viewed as subjective – as their bias, understandings of concepts / theories relating to their research and their broader views form part of the research itself, or are likely to impact on their understandings of the world. Epistemologically, post-positivist researchers seek to understand the world through studying participants in situ. That is to say, they are interested in how groups or individuals understand the reality of the social world. Therefore, whilst positivists are looking to identify causal links and regularities (implying that the specific identity and context of individuals is irrelevant), post-positivists argue that such a search is misguided. They focus upon how particular individuals and groups are being constituted in context of defined environments.

The position of this research is interpretivist, as understandings were developed through the experiences and views of those studied, producing a negotiated ‘knowledge’ of reality between the researcher and researched. Findings will not be held to be universal truths, but understandings of specific situations, which in turn, feed in to a larger body of knowledge from which additional understandings may be gained.

3.4 Research Strategy

This research takes an interpretivist stance as it seeks to look for patterns from stories of first hand experiences gained from interviews (Tuli, 2010). It recognises that there are multiple ‘realities’ for multi-agency working, as there are a myriad of different ways that it may be shaped by the people not only in the school interviewed, but those in strategic positions within the local authority (in, for example, the decisions made regarding support and training)

and agencies with which they work. The focus is therefore on a shared reality, whilst considering and acknowledging alternatives to it (and reasons for them). It therefore falls into what Trochim (2002) describes as the ‘constructionist’ camp of interpretive research. Burr (1999:162) explains that it has action and change as one of its core aims:

Many social constructionist researchers believe that the aims of research should not become the discovery of ‘facts’, but the mobilisation of the research process towards a different goal. The goal becomes a pragmatic and political one, a search not for the truth but for any usefulness that the researcher’s ‘reading’ of a phenomena might have in bringing about change for those that need it.

Therefore, the researcher recognises that we cannot get it ‘right about reality’ as the scope of the research is not large enough, and there are many influencing factors on the information gained and the way in which it may be interpreted. The goal is to gain understandings from the research material which, together with information gained from other studies, may tentatively suggest areas of good practice which can then be disseminated to other educational establishments, and also put forward recommendations to improve multi-agency working for safeguarding children.

3.5 Research Design

An interpretive stance now established, this section briefly revisits the information that it is being sought before discussing whether the focus will be upon qualitative or quantitative data; and the design for obtaining it. Qualitative data relies on language, whereas quantitative data focuses upon what can be measured. The design is the blueprint for obtaining the data.

The research questions examine the place safeguarding children has in education through three research questions. These are:

1. Why have schools come to play an increasing role in the safeguarding of children?

2. How have schools come to understand the Common Assessment Framework through their experience of using it to work with other agencies to support children?
3. How do Lead Professionals working in a multi-agency context view the support provided by government/local authority practices, processes and strategies for overcoming established issues?

In order to address these research questions, data needs to facilitate ‘readings of the phenomena’ in order to form theories, whilst recognising there is no ‘fixed’ reality (Bryman, 2008). This speaks for a focus on qualitative data; which provides:

... a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts. ... [They] are more likely to lead to serendipitous findings and to new theoretical integrations; they help researchers go beyond initial preconceptions and frameworks. Finally, the findings from qualitative studies have a quality of “undeniability”. (Miles and Huberman, 1984:15)

Qualitative data can be obtained through many research designs, for example phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory and case study. This study is based on multiple interviews as it seeks to develop a clear picture of educational experiences of how the policies are being implemented in situ, and how it is achieved in a multi-agency framework.

There are three strands to how this research was undertaken: literature and policy discussion, interviews and observation. The literature was used primarily to address the first research question, and form a background to the development of safeguarding children through early intervention. This is supported with interviews of two senior members of quangos whose work relates to safeguarding children, and their work includes providing advice for policy development. Interviews were also conducted with those responsible for safeguarding at a strategic level within the counties as well as lead professionals in schools.

As training is recognised as a key component of multi-agency work (Baginsky, 2008; Seebohm *et al.*, 1968) observing training sessions formed part of the research to help gather ‘the richest possible data,’ (Lofland and Lofland; 1983: 16).

3.6 Research Methods and Management

The multiple interview now established, this section discusses the methods for gathering data, and the processes for which permission was sought in two different authorities.

A systematic review of the literature was undertaken, using key words, ZETOC alerts and also through accessing NSPCC alerts on literature in this area. Some texts did not arise in these searches, but were read as a consequence of being cited in other texts, or being mentioned in interviews (particularly when interviewing Policy Advisors). For example, interviews with Policy Advisors led to the examination of several parliamentary documents in detail, looking to substantiate or refute claims that they had made as well as documents they were involved in compiling. In order to gain the ‘story’ of safeguarding from the literature, policies in particular, a chronological account was formed (see Table 6.1) from which themes emerged. Due to the way in which some themes would weave through the decades, a thematic approach was chosen for the organisation of the Literature Review. Policies and agendas also evolved during the course of the research – such as the Troubled Families Initiative and the Academy Schools Agenda. These had potential influences on safeguarding in schools, and were researched. However, strategic decisions regarding focus were made. For example, *Working Together* (DfE, 2013) was updated during the time of this research, but after all of the interviews had been held. Therefore it was not included in the literature review.

Although not originally part of the plan for the research, the opportunity arose to speak to two policy advisors whom had senior management positions in quangos. This provided the opportunity to gain a more detailed understanding of the emergence of safeguarding as a concept as it is currently understood, raise questions about disparities between policies and also gain further insight into the changes occurring in child welfare. Both interviewees were provided with an information pack, which included the proposed questions, prior to the meeting (Appendix 2). After receiving a signed agreement the interview took place in a place of their choosing.

Two counties were selected for the study, both remaining anonymous. A senior person responsible for safeguarding at a County level was contacted in each, in order to gain permission to work in that authority. In one of the two authorities, ethical clearance needed to be gained and permission formally granted by a committee before any research could commence. In the second, a meeting was organised with the person contacted to discuss the project in more detail before permission was given for schools to be contacted. In both cases plans were discussed in detail, but far more so in the County requiring formal permission from their Board. The ethical requirements for this county will be discussed more in Section 3.7.

Once permission was gained, the person responsible for training at a County level was contacted to request permission to observe training sessions, (Appendix 3). In both counties, this information was passed to a more senior person for consideration. As a result of discussions held throughout this process, both Senior Managers agreed to interviews so that points regarding safeguarding at an authority and strategic level could be clarified (Appendix 4). In Authority A it was not possible to observe training because it had ceased the previous

year so that an audit could be completed. Training did not recommence during the two years of the focussed study on this thesis. In Authority B, permission was given to observe a multi-agency training day.

In order to select schools to contact, the database for that authority was accessed online. A geographical location was chosen at random, and schools in that area contacted, before moving on to the next geographical area. This grouping of schools was chosen to try to get a contrast between towns and villages in both counties. Through this process a purposive sample was created from the list of schools willing to participate (Denscombe, 2007).

Following this, Lead Professionals in schools were contacted, using a telephone transcript to guide the call (Appendix 5). As planned, at first schools were telephoned. Secretaries would ask for a brief explanation before agreeing to pass on the call. This sometimes led to being able to talk to the Lead Professional, but not always. Therefore a great deal of time was spent chasing up schools and trying to arrange mutually convenient times to speak. One successful call led to a conversation with the Headteacher, who explained her concerns about the research – she wanted to know who I was, my background, and my motives in trying to find out about Common Assessment Framework practices in schools. This conversation was enlightening, and consequently headteachers were emailed directly, ensuring that I emphasised my ethical clearance and motives for the research before detailing the research itself (Appendix 6). This met with a much better response. Thirty schools were contacted in Authority A, of which ten agreed to be interviewed. Thirty schools were contacted in Authority B, and nine agreed to be interviewed although one declined upon arriving for the interview.

Each then received an information pack, which included an information sheet and an ethics protocol (Appendix 7), together with a covering letter thanking them for their interest. It

asked them to gain permission from the headteacher (if required), sign the ethics protocol and agree to an interview. The information pack, as well as the telephone and interview questions were trialled prior to use to ensure they were easily understood and trustworthy.

Semi-structured interviews of approximately sixty minutes duration were conducted at the respondent’s school, to try and remove a barrier to participation (travelling time) and with the hope that, as they are on their own territory, they would be at ease, thereby encouraging frank and honest responses. Interviews were selected as the appropriate method, because:

... when the interviewer needs to gain insight into things like people’s opinions, feelings... and experiences then interviews will almost certainly provide a more suitable method. (Denscombe, 2007: 174)

Table 3.2 (below) illustrates how questions for the semi-structured interviews were based on themes emerging from the literature (for example, training and

		Research Question	
	Interview Question	How have schools come to understand the Common Assessment Framework through their experience of using it to work with other agencies to support children?	How do Lead Professionals working in a multi-agency context view the support provided by government/local authority practices, processes and strategies for overcoming established issues?
1	Tell me a little about yourself and how you became a lead professional for team around the child meetings.	●	●
2	What, if any, other responsibilities do you have in the school? Do you feel that they assist you in your role as Lead Professional? If so, how?	●	●
3	Is there anything or anyone to assist you in your role as lead professional? (This may include training, documentation)	●	●

4	How would you determine which children need TAC support?	●	●
5	What issues are you currently dealing with through TAC meetings?	●	●
6	Is there anything, which is in place locally, which you think contributes to good multi agency working? (From Baginsky, 2007: 229)		●
7	What improvement, if any, do you think could be put in place to make your role as Lead Professional more effective? (Based on Baginsky, 2007: 231)		●
8	What support, if any, do you have in developing knowledge of support available for children and families in your community?		●
9	How would you describe your experiences of working with other agencies? (Please give examples).	●	●
10	Is there anything else you would like to say your experience as Lead Professional?		

Table 3.2: Interview Questions and How They Relate to Research Questions

communication issues) in specific relation to research questions two and three. Each question was designed to enable honest and open disclosure and facilitate the gathering of data for key issues. If it was felt that further information could be gained from the respondent prompts and probes were employed, as illustrated in Appendix 8.

An observation schedule was used for observing training (Appendix 9) so that findings could be located in an analytical and conceptual framework (Holloway, 1997).

3.7 Ethics

Whilst asserting that the study was grounded in BERA's (2011) ethical guidelines this does not suffice as it leaves some issues ready for consideration in relation to the specific study (Robson, 2011). Robson defines ethics as the 'general principles of what one ought to do'

(p198) and academics (Denscombe, 2007; Robson, 2011; Wellington, 1996) tend to agree on the basic principles of research ethics being:

- Commitment to participants rights and treat them with dignity;
- Commitment to knowledge, whilst ensuring this does not
- Harm participants, nor any harm come to them.

For this thesis, participants needed to be clear about the purpose of the study, give informed written consent and be assured that anonymity of names and identifying features. To ensure this information packs were sent out. They explained the focus and planning of the research, and provided a clear agreement between the researcher and interviewees regarding confidentiality and the right to withdraw. There was a separate pack for Managers (Appendix 3), Schools (Appendix 7), Headteachers (Appendix 6) and Trainers involved in multi-agency training (Appendix 4). As well as protecting the interviewees through anonymity, any possible negative comments about other professions were handled sensitively to ensure that the research would not damage working relationships.

However, there is disagreement regarding confidentiality in situations when the law has been broken. Robson (2011) is very clear that this should be reported, however Denscombe (2007: 150) discusses times when this would not be the case (e.g. researching drug dealers). As discussions regarding safeguarding children have the potential to disclose specific incidents and cases, two ethical issues were considered. First, if incidents that I felt were abusive situations are discussed, and no action had been taken by the respondent to safeguard the child, should I report it? Second, did permission need to be given by the families involved to discuss their situation?

With regard to reporting perceived abuse, it is important to note that the definition of ‘abuse’ is not definitive, and is therefore open to interpretation. Factors such as the child’s reaction to it, whether it is ongoing and context need to be taken into account (Department of Health, 1995). Therefore, reporting perceived abuse may be viewed as a moral and biased judgement, and consequently deter intervention. However, should severe cases had arisen I would have discussed them with my supervisor before taking a decision regarding what, if any, action to take.

The second consideration was the possibility that respondents may discuss specific cases that they are dealing with, or have dealt with in the past. This raised questions whether permission needed to be sought from families involved. However, Baginsky (2007) considered this issue when her research involved tagging children referred to social services and she referenced Tomison and Goddard (1999) as stating all case tracking studies to date have not involved consent from parents or families, but that great care is taken to ensure anonymity. Although this is not a tracking study, information may have been given to the researcher by the responder, which may be sensitive or enable some one to identify the family. Therefore great care was taken with anonymity, and respondents had the opportunity to request that some or all of the information that they have imparted be withdrawn from the study.

During the research a situation did arise which warranted ethical consideration. In several interviews Lead Professionals commented that past experience had made them consider which concerns they would pass on, and in one authority in particular there were examples of abuse concerns that the school(s) were trying to address themselves rather than refer, as they felt nothing happened anyway. There were also concerns of strategies to reduce workload

(such as, if a child does not repeat a disclosure during an interview with a social worker then the case is closed). After discussion with the Doctoral Supervisor it was agreed that I would contact a person within this authority to inform them of this feeling (without divulging any specific cases or naming any schools) after allowing six weeks for interviewees to withdraw permission for their interviews to be used.

To ensure full consideration of the ethical dimensions of the research, the Ethics Committee of the University of Birmingham considered the research, which included all questions and information packs being considered. Ethical approval was granted after their following recommendations were met:

- That the documentation reflected that the research would follow the University's Code of Practice (University of Birmingham, 2011);
- The title 'Ethics Protocol' (the formal agreement to the research, which both parties sign – see Appendices 1, 3, 5 and 6) was changed to 'Participant Information Sheet';
- The Information Packs clearly state who has access to information (i.e. Academic Supervisors); and
- The Scenarios sheet to be used in the interviews had a short introductory paragraph to prevent any biasing of potential responses.

After ethical approval was gained, the questions were trialled with fourteen individuals comprising of seven researchers and seven teachers involved in safeguarding children. There was a 100% response rate. Two researchers suggested a re-phrasing of questions one and two to ensure there was no overlap, which was done. Three teachers felt that the scenarios for discussion, taken from *Messages from Research* (DoH, 1995) do not truly reflect the complexity of the situations they regularly deal with. That is to say, they were far too simplistic and did not accurately represent the complicated real life situations that schools were facing. The decision was taken to keep these scenarios as they are sourced from published material should the questioning not draw out a clear understanding of what

determined 'CAF' or 'refer' concerns. However, all respondents had a clear understanding of these terms and the scenarios were not needed in any interviews.

In addition to gaining ethical approval from the University, one of the authorities in which the research took place also required their own approval through the completion of a Research Governance form, which was then considered by a Board. They requested two things. First, that the University Supervisor be named as my sponsor. Secondly, upon considering the ethics of discussing families, they decided that the importance of emphasising that cases would be used anonymously, that is to say, the 'ground rules' for the interview should be echoed prior to it taking place. The interview script (Appendix 8) was therefore altered to include a short introduction:

(Insert name) may I first of all thank you for participating in this research. In the agreement that we have both signed, you stated that you would / would not like a copy of the interview script. *(If they say they do not wish a copy state that they may change their mind at the end of the interview)*. May I also remind you that you do not have to answer any question should you not wish to do so, and that you may request any part of our discussion be removed from consideration, or withdraw completely from the study for up to six weeks after today. The agreement states that I will remove any identifying features from anything we discuss, and I would like to reassure you that whilst I would ask that you try not to use names of families you are working with, or provide specific information that would enable others to identify them, I will remove any identifying information should any examples of the work you undertake be used in the thesis.

Is there anything you wish to ask before we begin?

This caused a few interviewees to be hesitant when discussing cases – they were trying to think through how to ensure what they said did not reveal any identifying features. However, after reassurance that any identifying comments would be removed from the script as well as in any paper, the flow of the conversation returned. On the scripts detailed conversations are

shown as, for example, (*discussed a domestic violence case in which the family have been placed in a shelter*).

Ethical considerations therefore included issues pertaining to all research; notably, participants' rights and protection from harm as well as a commitment to knowledge. Specifically it raised issues around discussing cases without families consent, and also what to do if information shared raised safeguarding concerns. Those issues explored, the thesis now considers how data was credible and trustworthy – an important aspect of commitment to knowledge.

3.8 Credibility, Trustworthiness and Authenticity

3.8.1 Introduction

Many headteachers have heard the story of the successful heads, shipped in to 'failing' schools with the expectation being that they will turn them around. However, when the strategies and day-to-day management techniques that person used in their previous school are imposed without reflection, often standards fail to move forward. Instead, we are taught that it is the head that takes their satchel of strategies, gets to know the 'unique school' then applies them as appropriate that is successful.

Therefore, one of the aims of this thesis is to provide leaders with reflections on the CAF process, so that they may be placed in their 'satchel' and considered alongside the facts on the ground that the leader is dealing with. There won't be an universal strategy that emerges out of the thesis, which, applied guarantees to address the issues that schools face with safeguarding children through the common assessment framework. Instead, it focuses upon

teasing out repeated experiences to consider what those in education may find to be problematic or of support in this situation. Findings are therefore considered in relation to their ability to be credible and trustworthy. This section therefore discusses multiple interviews with this lens.

3.8.2 Multiple Interviews

Whilst Atkins (1984) asserts that small-scale research can produce generalizable data, others disagree. Consequently the intention is to provide analytical comment, which will contribute to the wider body of knowledge in the field. This pool of knowledge and experience is important in the development of education (Thomas, 2013). He argues that practitioners take the experiences of others and the strategies they use/models suggested by small scale studies to consider in their own unique context – reflecting upon them to decide whether the information may help improve their work. The focus here is therefore upon the credibility of data, the credibility of the information that multiple interviews provides from which practitioners and others may reflect and consider their own position. This is particularly pertinent as it is recognised that the narrative in interviews may be biased (Usher, 1998; Erben, 1998) and researchers should be aware of this. That is to say:

The argument is that what people say in interviews is closely attuned to the local context, and is driven by a preoccupation with self-presentation and/or with persuasion of others, rather than being concerned primarily with presenting facts about the world or about the informant him or herself. So, the interview is a social occasion and what is said there is socially constructed and reflects the particularities of the context. (Hammersley, 2003: 120)

Consequently, in this study, the understanding of the reality of safeguarding in schools may be influenced by time, wishing to present a certain version of the self to the interviewer, factors relating to where and when the interview is taking place (as well as events that may have led up to this) and the rapport with, and influence of the interviewer herself. With the

interviewer, this includes implicit and explicit personal and prior knowledge, understandings and beliefs may influence how evidence is collected and examined. This may result in findings affirming beliefs and bias rather than providing objective findings (Tight, 2010).

As I am researching this from personal interest, and I am collating and analysing the data (rather than a computer) credibility and trustworthiness need to be considered in detail. I began with a belief about the CAF process – I had seen it work. I therefore needed to be mindful of it, but felt that this should not deter research of this type as:

These experiential data should not be ignored because of the usual canons governing research (which regard personal experience and data as likely to bias the research), for these canons lead to the squashing of valuable experiential data. We say, rather, “mine your experience, there is potential gold there.” (Strauss, 1987:11)

This issue of ensuring that findings were not unduly influenced by bias, and that they were credible and trustworthy, was addressed through a range of strategies including piloting, self-reflection and critical analysis. There was constant self-reflection on how data was being collated (e.g. ensuring that the participant spoke for themselves, and were not influenced by body language or comments). Therefore, questions were piloted to ensure they were easily understood and free from bias, and they were provided in advance of the interview, so that the respondent could consider their reply without influence from the interviewer. Interviews were conducted at the respondents’ school, to ensure that they were at ease and felt confident to express their own opinion. Then responses were considered alongside other interviews, looking for replication, and findings were examined with due regard to established literature. Responses were also considered in relation to context (for example how multi-agency working was organised in that authority, any potential influencing factors such as when the respondent was trained and the views held about the welfare responsibilities of schools at that time) and documentary evidence (for example, local agreements) (Erben, 1998). For

example, during one interview, a new policy had been implemented by the local authority, which affected some of the interviewees' deprived children detrimentally, and the respondent was angry with this. This needed to be borne in mind when they were talking about local authority issues – was it anger, or a true reflection of their opinion?

Transcribed interviews were then subjected to critical analysis, e.g. by looking for replications (Robson, 2002; Yin, 2009). Other examples of findings in established literature supporting theories in multi-agency working were used for comparison (Stark and Torrance, 2005). For example questions 6 and 7 of the interview schedule can be directly related to Baginsky's (2007) work, so that data gained from the interviews conducted as part of this thesis can be compared with her findings. This enabled patterns of experience to be considered as credible and trustworthy. Where experiences did not match the emerging pattern or established literature they were also considered, and explanations sought. For example, there is a new finding from Policy Interviewees – elements of Every Child Matters concerning Lead Professionals and multi-agency working did not stem purely from Victoria Climbié's death. Instead, work was already taking place on this, and her death was seen as the vehicle through which to implement these strategies. As this challenges some academic writings, Parliamentary minutes (Parliament, 2004) were checked, and I found minutes supporting their statements.

3.8.3 Observations

Despite observations being heralded as 'the gold standard' (Lindle, 2009: 243) there are potential disadvantages to this method of data collection. These include the potential observer bias (Simpson and Tuson, 2003); the dangers of being drawn into conversations

(Hall and Hall, 2004); and the influence an observer may have on what happens (Aspinall *et al.*, 1992).

These issues were addressed through clearly stating the underlying assumptions of research collection and interpretation, as well as actively looking for alternate explanations to findings (Simpson and Tuson, 2003). An observation schedule was therefore used with categories aimed to cover all possible eventualities, as recommended by Denscombe (2007); whilst being aware that other factors may arise (Punch, 2009) so that Aspinall *et al.*'s (1992) concerns that the checklist may be limiting are reduced.

3.9 Analysing Data

Interviews were analysed through reducing, displaying and then using that information to form conclusions, as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1984).

Whilst recognising that data reduction, selecting the information to be used in field notes and transcripts, began in the field, it was also a continuous process as I sought to use information to determine themes or exemplify points as the research progressed. Interviews were therefore transcribed in a table format. There were four columns:

1. Line numbers (for ease of reference);
2. Speaker (Interviewer or Lead Professional);
3. What is said; and
4. Notes.

As I conducted the interview, reducing the data in this way concerns that information and understandings could be lost through transcription (Atkins, 1984). In addition to this, column four provided the opportunity to use informal notes made during the meeting for example on

non-verbal language, which contributed to meaning (Miles and Huberman, 1984). The final column also facilitated ad hoc notes – for example, themes that were emerging; things to check with the literature or explore further. This complimented the memos (ideas) that were kept to put data in a, ‘broader / deeper / higher conceptual framework,’ (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 71).

After transcribing the interviews, comments were then cut and pasted into a chart with three columns – one for each research question. Soon themes began to emerge (for example, funding, relationship with social care, training wishes), so themes were established under each research question. A table format was then used – a new table for each research question, the themes on the left and two columns on the right. The first of these two was for supporting evidence, the second for evidence that questioned or discredited any points made in the first. Working systematically through this, and using field notes, enabled pictures to be formed. Where possible, this was then shown diagrammatically, and considered against alternate viewpoints and counter arguments. This then enabled tentative conclusions to be drawn. Here the intention was that they would enable the researcher to determine the role of the lead professional in education, commenting on training and the language used, as well as themes, which emerge through the research itself.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has explained the post-positivist philosophical stance taken in relation to this research question. It explored how the data can be gained through multiple interviews, and what steps were taken to address perceived validity issues, before explaining how data was obtained and analysed.

CHAPTER FOUR THE EMERGENCE OF SAFEGUARDING

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into sections, the first briefly examines Foucault's concept of power and knowledge in order to explain why a genealogy of safeguarding has been included in this thesis. The second section discusses the emergence of safeguarding in relation to schools through three major themes, notably:

- The drivers and primary conceptions behind government policies;
- The Coalition Strategy: Early Help and Austerity; and
- The language of child protection.

Through examining these themes, it will illustrate that preventative and multi-agency working are not new concepts – they have strong foundations in the Seebohm Report (1968). The ideology of this report can be seen in subsequent reports and initiatives; and difficulties with implementation due to training and funding are repeated across the decades. It explores two drivers for change. First, it considers the impact of the 'blame culture' resulting from child deaths, on the way in which agencies work. Second, it examines the influence of political agendas, suggesting that there has been a shift from welfare including cost/benefit analysis; to that of the 'Social Investment State' (Giddens, 1998) where the focus is developing an economically productive workforce for the future. Through these drivers, the role of the school has evolved from an agency that referred concerns to social services, to that of an important source of early intervention.

4.2 Foucault

Michel Foucault was a French philosopher. His seminal work includes *The Archeology of Knowledge*, (1969); *Discipline and Punishment* (1975); and *The History of Sexuality* (1978).

These works, and others, looked at the relationship between power and knowledge. As such, he examined how power operates. As safeguarding is a concept where understandings, priorities and practices are constantly changing it is appropriate to consider it in relation to his work. Whilst this is not a detailed Foucauldian perspective, it does provide a stage upon which to look at how policies have evolved then practices and understandings have been negotiated between various levels of power: the state in terms of the policies they put in to place and funding they make available; the local authorities in terms of the infrastructure, support and training they provide for schools; other agencies in terms of their expectations on schools and willingness/ability to work together and finally the school itself in terms of how past experience may shape present and future working practices.

As such, there are multiple levels of power at play. There is the genealogical view of power – how safeguarding understandings and practices evolved over the last fifty years. There is also the more subliminal element of power – the way in which various agents exert power over each other to create a ‘truth’ about a particular way of working. For example, Foucault’s work includes the development of a concept called ‘biopower’, the wish to make people into ‘docile bodies’, which worked as a resource that strengthened the viability of the State and its wealth. He argued that one of the most effective ways to do this was through producing ‘self regulating subjects,’ (Danaher *et al.*, 2000: 66). He believed that, when considering knowledge about a subject:

Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth – that is, the types of discourse it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances that enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth, the status with those who are charged as what counts as true. (Foucault, 1994: 131)

Therefore, Foucault argues that as different eras have different understandings of what they believe to be ‘truth’ (which could include factors such as scientific knowledge at the time, cultural beliefs, events shaping and focusing people’s thinking – such as reactions to child deaths), we need to consider the genealogy of subjects, which he describes as: ‘...an analysis that can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework,’ (Foucault, 1994: 118). He explained that there are dominant apparatuses for the production of knowledge/truth (university, army, writing, media) but that the power that controls truth is ‘mobile and contingent’ therefore truth and power are subject to change and influence (Danaher et al., 2000; Foucault, 1994).

As previously stated, ‘safeguarding’ (the focus of this thesis) has evolved through time. The remainder of this chapter will focus on the genealogy of safeguarding by examining both the major drivers for change, but also how the position and beliefs of those in power at a specific time (both in terms of political party and dominant profession in safeguarding debates) have shaped the ‘truth’ of safeguarding. This knowledge will then be considered with the findings from interviews to discuss safeguarding from a Foucauldian viewpoint (whilst noting this is not a Foucauldian analysis)..

This genealogy is presented through examining the themes of drivers and conceptions; language and multi-agency working. It argues that the concepts of child protection and safeguarding are transient – they develop in response to lessons learned from research and inquiries, as well as being adjusted to suit the political agendas of the time. A historical perspective on safeguarding is presented, which may be pertinent when examining how some educationalists view safeguarding in terms of what it means, and also the importance (explicit and implicit) they place upon this aspect of their work. Whilst focussing on six key texts: Baginsky (2008); Broadhurst *et al.*, (2009); Taylor (2009); and Parton (2002; 2010; 2011);

government policies and associated papers are also considered. However, as the concept of multi-agency working to support children with welfare needs was rooted in the Seebohm report, the thematic discussion begins by examining this vision.

4.3 The Seebohm Report

In December 1965 the Labour Government tasked the committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services to respond to issues regarding the welfare of the elderly and:

... concerns about increasing levels of juvenile delinquency and the need for an effective family service for children from deprived and troubled backgrounds, (Dickens, 2011: 24).

The Seebohm Report (1968) created a vision for integrated social services departments, working together with other agencies (for example, housing and education) thereby providing support and co-ordinating support from other agencies, resulting in a single point of contact for those receiving help, and to a certain extent, an information provider for those other agencies. In short:

...this can be seen as the high-watermark of the welfarist project with its aims of providing non-stigmatizing, universal services to support individuals and families in need. (Taylor, 2009: 19)

Social workers were tasked as the key point of contact as they were identified as having the expertise to deal with the child in their environment; it would bring services together, social workers would be part of a community based team and have access to additional support and resources; and the social worker would bring benefit to other children in the schools through working with staff (Seebohm *et al*, 1968: para 226). In order to fulfil this responsibility, it argued that social care must create strong links with education and other agencies (Seebohm *et al*, 1968; Callaghan *et al*, 1968).

On links with education, one must note that the key determiner for need was if children were, ‘... educationally crippled by a variety of social handicaps’ (Seebohm *et al*, 1968: para 213). This illustrates child protection as a moral stance, arguably rooted in the ‘first wave’ of its development – when voluntary organisations, such as Barnardos, supported homeless and neglected children (Taylor, 2009:18). The Seebohm Report therefore refers to the earlier Plowden Report’s (Central Advisory Council for Education, 1967) finding that very few teachers knew the social background of their pupils, nor did teachers know the provision that community services provided. Therefore, whilst social workers were identified as the key professionals for welfare, it also discussed training needs for teachers in relation to, ‘ ... social factors which affect the behaviour and progress and children,’ (para 219), and the work of social service departments. It also suggested that initial teacher training should include working with social workers.

Whilst the importance of increased funding was highlighted in the report, and justified through potential savings on the cost of residential care, research suggests this commitment was not made by the government and subsequently ‘utopia’ was not achieved (Taylor, 2009). This raises questions regarding why funds were unavailable, and why this vision, elements of which we still strive for today, has not been realised.

4.4 The Drivers and Primary Conceptions Behind Government Policies

4.4.1 Introduction

In order to discuss why the vision was not fully realized, this section looks at the way that it was taken forward, and the drivers that steered policy reform. Therefore, this section details three emerging themes for shaping and influencing government policy on child protection/safeguarding forward. *Scandal Politics* is discussed first, as five years after the

Seebohm report the death of a child, Maria Coldwell, and the subsequent public outcry influenced changes in policy and led to defensive working by many agencies (a focus on protecting the home agency from blame) - a pattern that continues today. The following decade, the Conservative government came to power, with a commitment to opening up welfare services to the marketplace. This is discussed in *Marketisation and Modernisation*. New Labour continued marketisation when they came to power. They also sought to improve multi-agency working to reduce costs relating to social care involvement and to address potential barriers to children becoming economically productive individuals later in life. This is explored in the third theme, *The Third Way*.

4.4.2 *Scandal Politics*

The first focus for trying to understand why integrated working is still a focus for development is a consideration of drivers and primary conceptions behind government policies.

In the early 1970s, shortly after the development of integrated social services departments, civil liberties were being debated – particularly how the state may intervene in family life, placing a greater emphasis on individual rights and legal aspects of intervention (Parton, 2002). In this context ‘scandal politics’ emerged (Ayre, 2001). That is, political response to public outcry regarding child deaths. This response shaped policies for decades to come (Ayre, 2001; Ferguson, 1997; Munro, 2011).

The scandal concerned a seven year old girl, Maria Colwell, who died in 1973. She was known to Social Services, and many concerns had been raised about her welfare. There were many failures to pass on information – such as notifying the school she was subject to a care order, and misunderstandings regarding who was visiting to ensure her welfare (Social Services thought the NSPCC were visiting, and vice versa), (Department of Health and Social

Security (DHSS), 1974a). The report on her death not only affected the language of child abuse (which will be discussed later) but highlighted issues with multi-agency working. The subsequent memoranda (DHSS, 1974b) led to two significant changes for education; notably:

- Teachers should be aware of care orders and attend case conferences; and
- The newly formed Area Review Committee (ARC) would develop a training and development plan which would ‘... increase knowledge, awareness and vigilance,’ throughout different agencies (Baginsky, 2008:12).

Through the training, staff would be aware of what to look for, and support should be co-ordinated through Social Services (Parton, 2011). However, Baginsky (2008) argues that the changes were unsuccessful – not least because they were not applied systematically across authorities). It is also argued that it led to defensive working (Harris, 1987; Taylor, 2009), with heavy reliance on following procedures, as agencies did not want to be ‘blamed’ for errors.

Defensive working developed as further reports resulted in further changes. For example, some inquiries found that Social Services had not intervened enough, such as in respect of the deaths of Jasmine Beckford, (London Borough of Brent, 1985) and Kimberley Carlile, (Blom-Cooper, 1987)); whereas the Cleveland Inquiry (Butler-Sloss, 1988) found that social workers were over zealous in removing children from their homes. These led to proceduralisation of child protection through Acts of Parliament (Children Act (CA) 2002, 2004; and Education Act 2002) as well as guidance for different agencies on how to work together. The guidance includes the key document *Working Together*, first published in 1988, which gave inter-agency co-ordination and co-operation more prominence (Taylor, 2009). It was subsequently altered in response to findings of further inquiries and reports (Home Office *et al.*, 1991, DoH *et al.*, 1999; HM Government, 2006; DCSF, 2010b) and was

awaiting revision in response to Munro's (2011) recommendations at the time of writing this thesis.

4.4.3 Marketisation and Modernisation

As well as the development of 'scandal politics' in the 1970s, society also questioned the state's abilities to overcome social problems through welfare programmes. As people began to focus on the rights of families to be free of intervention, the 'New Right' emerged (Parton, 2002). The rise of the 'New Right' was evident in Margaret Thatcher's first term in office in the 1980s when she tried to address the rising costs of the public sector by opening it up to the market place⁷. That is, she introduced a 'contract culture' where the local authority had to purchase services from the private sector that they had previously provided themselves (Stone and Rixon, 2008: 99). This resulted in a fundamental shift from professionalism and community to markets and managerialism, when implementing new policies, responding to Acts of Parliament and allocating resources (Parton, 2009). This, and the increasing tension between government and local authorities had an impact on the way in which the CA 1989 was implemented. With limited resources, social services responded by providing for children most at risk. As each social service department is part of the local authority, each local authority therefore formed their own thresholds for help, rather than also working with children and families in a preventative way. (This will be discussed in more detail when examining the *Language Of Child Protection*). One consequence was that schools saw a decline in support for children that they referred to social services, with this causing tension between the two agencies (Baginsky, 2008).

⁷ Margaret Thatcher was the leader of the Conservative government from 1979-1990. In 1990 she agreed to resign, and John Major became the new Prime Minister and the leader of the Conservative party. During her time as Prime Minister a set of ideas and policy approaches, which have become known as 'Thatcherism' (emphasizing privatisation and neoliberal economic models of privatization of public sector services). (See Gamble, 1988:7).

In 1997 Labour (later called New Labour) came into power and brought with it a modernisation agenda. Its aims included effective use of taxpayers' money and improving standards. Strategies included introducing or extending performance targets, inspection regimes and auditing (Parton, 2009; Stone and Rixon, 2008). They wanted to invest much more strategically in their 'human capital' (Parton, 2009: 71). This involved early intervention, improving communication and multi-agency working and focusing upon family issues (for example through the Sure Start program) (Parton, 2002).

4.4.4 The 'Third Way'

New Labour continued to build on the premise that welfare provision should be open to the market with an ideology based on Giddens's (1998) *Social Investment State* – where children are viewed as workers of the future and are to be given opportunities to develop to their full potential through education. This would enable them to choose the 'right' path out of disadvantage – that is, to enter paid work and not rely on the state. This is known as the 'Third Way' (Broadhurst et al., 2009; Taylor, 2009). Parents were seen to be a key tool in its realisation, and the state would intervene where this was not the case. David Blunkett (then Secretary of State for Education) is reported to have said:

When there is a problem it is all too often because parents claim not to have the time, because they have disengaged from their children's education or because . . . they lack even the basic parenting skills . . . So far from being a nanny state, we must become an enabling state, which ensures that parents and families have the backing when they need it. (Bridges, 2010: 320)

Parton (2009) expanded the 'Third Way' argument by discussing New Labour's wish to speed up reforms to child protection and safeguarding, after their re-election in 2001. This included focussing on mainstream services such as schools and health visitors working in Sure Start centres, the goal being that fewer children would be referred to Social Services, potentially decreasing the number of children receiving support by them, and increasing the number of other agencies able to respond to needs within their existing budgets, thereby

saving money. This was evident in their ‘Children at Risk’ Spending Review (HM Treasury, 2002) and Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which stated that schools have a duty not only to safeguard, but also to promote children’s welfare (Baginsky, 2008). It may be argued that the beginnings of this are evident in *Supporting Families, A Consultation Document* (Home Office, 1998), which discusses tax credits to help people work (p20-22), education maintenance allowance (a payment for children staying in further education) (p23), and a section on ‘Problems with children’s learning’ (p40-42) which includes a sub-section entitled ‘Discipline in the home’ (p42).

It was this model of safeguarding that the Coalition government (Conservative and Liberal Democrats) inherited when they came in to power in 2010. Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, indicated that the new government accepted the safeguarding agenda of the previous (Labour) government, particularly its concern with early help and intervention (Gove, 2010). The language and practices of safeguarding children with additional needs then changed.

4.5 The Coalition Strategy: Early Help in an Era of Austerity

4.5.1 Introduction

Shortly after coming to power in 2010 the Coalition government commissioned three major reports to provide recommendations on how to promote their priority on ‘early help’. Professor Eileen Munro (2011) – a noted academic on child protection (in this area), wrote on the development of child protection and safeguarding; the Labour MP Graham Allen (2011a, 2011b) focussed on how reforms may be funded, and Dame Clare Tickell (2010), championed early intervention in her work on the Early Years.

However, the Coalition's commitment to Early Help; and their priorities for, and definition of, support provided in this way may be questioned. They did not, for example, make the provision for Early Help mandatory, and the priorities for Early Help appear to be a much smaller range of welfare issues. This is discussed through sections on *Munro*, which explores some of the recommendations that were rejected; the *Troubled Families Initiative*, which details the reduction of scope for early help; *Funding*, which illustrates the move to an American model of payment by results; and finally, *Working Together* which explicitly details how the Coalition is proposing to increase thresholds for support from Social Care so that 'Early Help' becomes a tool for supporting children previously requiring specialised support from social workers.

4.5.2 *Munro*

Munro's (2011) report: *The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report. A Child Centred System* provides suggestions on how the Coalition may reform child protection. Some of the recommendations focus on multi-agency working. The government's response to her report emphasises that their:

... vision for a child-centred system includes providing effective help when a problem first arises ... The Government wants to work with partners to create a radical change in the way local agencies coordinate their work to maximise existing resources and increase the range and number of preventative services on offer to children and families. (DfE, 2011: para 16)

Munro (2011) provided a range of recommendations for achieving this vision. These included a call for a 'duty on local authorities and statutory partners to secure the sufficient provision of local early help services for children, young people and families,' (Recommendation 10). Local authorities would have to ensure that agencies know how to determine if help was required, and if this did not meet social care thresholds for support then

they would have to ensure an early help offer for families – which appeared to be a key goal in *The Coalition: Our Programme for Government* (Her Majesty's Government, 2012) and also their response to the report. One may see this as an opportunity to place a statutory duty on organisations to adhere to the Common Assessment Framework (which under the previous Labour government remained non-statutory). However, this recommendation was rejected after consideration. The reason given for this was that existing legislation (such as the 'duty to co-operate') already placed legal responsibilities on agencies, and that the government would 'emphasise the importance of early help,' in their reforms (Department for Education, 2011: 2).

Whilst the Coalition government claimed they would champion safeguarding through reforms to public services, examining the reforms casts doubt on this claim. For example, the White Paper for Education (DfE, 2010b) included the intention to remove the 'duty to co-operate' from schools, thereby weakening the responsibility for safeguarding, not championing it, although this was retracted in the final bill. In addition to this, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, (RCPCH) (2012) found that 'safeguarding roles are not protected,' (p1) in reforms to the NHS and suggests that DfE should, 'ensure the new statutory guidance on safeguarding details all the responsibilities and accountabilities of all agencies and professionals,' (p2) ensuring that there is 'no wriggle room,' (p11). This suggests that safeguarding may not be a priority consideration in reforms. One should therefore question what the priorities are in safeguarding.

4.5.3 Troubled Families Initiative

One of the ways in which we may explore the priorities for safeguarding is to examine the programmes put in to place/planned. These include the Children and Families Bill (DfE,

2012a), which, at the time of writing, focuses upon special educational needs, disabilities and family court proceedings, as well as the Troubled Families Initiative (Communities and Local Government, 2012b). This section discusses the Troubled Families Initiative in detail, and briefly compares it to the ECM before exploring the way in which funding mechanisms for interventions relating to this policy have changed.

The Troubled Families Initiative defines ‘troubled families’ as those who:

1. Are involved in crime and anti-social behaviour;
 2. Have children not in school;
 3. Have an adult on out of work benefits; and
 4. Cause high cost to the public purse.
- (Communities and Local Governments, 2012b: 3)

The first three of the categories are clearly areas that the Government wants local authorities to target, although it is important to note category three (work) is only addressed if members of the household also fall into category one (crime) or two (education). The fourth category enables authorities to meet local needs through ‘Local Discretion’. This may include issues such as health, domestic violence or children on a Child Protection Plan (Communities and Local Government, 2012b: 6)

Whilst the policy advisors interviewed for this study suggested that Troubled Families is a replacement for the ECM, elements of the ECM outcomes are missing. Looking at ‘Enjoy and Achieve’ neither children’s right to recreation facilities, nor the right to social development are included in the Troubled Families Initiative. ‘Be Healthy’ is not prioritised, unless it is seen by the local authority to cause high cost to the public purse and can therefore be addressed through ‘Local Discretion’. Instead, there is clear emphasis on reducing crime, improving school attendance and reducing costs to the public purse through tackling unemployment and any other factors an authority may prioritise.

Consequently, it may be argued the priorities within the Troubled Families Initiative places primary emphases on targeting those on out of work benefits (the poor), and those involved in crime and with poor attendance at school. This focus has led to concerns regarding who may be targeted by this definition, particularly in relation to the narrative of ‘troubled’ families - that is, those that may be experiencing troubles (like being poor, inadequate housing, mothers with mental health problems, etc.) may also be seen as ‘trouble’ (as in ‘troublesome’) families (Levitas, 2012). This is echoed in changes in popular and even political language: ‘vulnerable’ families are increasingly referred to as ‘idle’, which some claim is now a Tory buzzword (Hinsliff, 2012).

As well as a distinctive shift in the priorities for ‘early help’ there is also a shift in practice. Whereas the focus was previously on individuals (for example the Common Assessment Framework includes a team of different professions / agencies meeting to discuss how best to address an individual’s needs) there is now a shift towards meeting together to address the needs of the whole family (Communities and Local Government, 2012a). This may be seen as a positive move, as some research on European models of welfare work have found that focusing on families improves outcomes (Katz and Hetherington, 2006). It can also be seen as a promotion of multi-agency working, as it recommends that a key worker deliver intensive support for the family, and as such may be seen as a development from the Lead Professional’s role. However, as key determiners of which families should be targeted involve crime/anti-social behaviour or low attendance at school as well as claiming benefits, this suggests that a priority is being placed on developing economically productive citizens. This focus is arguably a step away from promoting the holistic needs of the individual child, such as the right to play and be healthy, provided by the previous ECM agenda.

4.5.4 Funding

As well as considering the key priorities for selecting families for early intervention, local authorities also need to consider funding for initiatives aimed at addressing them. To this end, the supporting document to the Troubled Families Initiative, the *Troubled Families Financial Payments* (Communities and Local Governments, 2012b) exemplifies each of the four areas (Crime, Education, Work, Local Discretion), and illustrates how funding will now work. Importantly, as recommended by Allen (2011) in his report, there is a shift towards an American model in which the government pays some money at the beginning of the intervention, and the remainder when outcomes, determined by the document, can be proven.

For example, families fall into the ‘Education’ category if a child:

- Has been subject to permanent exclusion; three or more fixed school exclusions across the last 3 consecutive terms;
OR
- Is in a Pupil Referral Unit or alternative provision because they have previously been excluded; *OR* is not on a school roll;
AND/OR
- A child has had 15% unauthorised absences or more from school across the last 3 consecutive terms.

(Communities and Local Governments, 2012b: 4)

Once the children for targeted support are identified, the local authority will receive £4,000 ‘attachment fee’ per family (up to a limited number of families). For 2012/13 80% of this funding is to be paid at the beginning of the intervention, (reducing to 40% upfront funding in 2014/15). To gain the rest of the money, known as the ‘result’ fee, local authorities will need to prove outcomes, the educational outcome being⁸, ‘Each child in the family has had fewer than 3 fixed exclusions and less than 15% unauthorised absence in the last three terms,’

⁸ Note that outcomes in all three areas for an individual family need to be proven before the results fee is paid, with the exception of ‘Work’ criteria. If a member of the family returns to paid work the full result fee is paid.

(Communities and Local Governments, 2012b: 10).

It is interesting to note that in the discussion on school attendance, 15% non-attendance is now the threshold, rather than the previous Labour figure of 20% (Levitas, 2012:8). However, while attendance data is readily available to authorities for grant maintained schools, the report acknowledges that this is not the case for academies, who are instead 'legally able' (but not legally required) to share this information. This is also true of fixed exclusions (Community and Local Government, 2012b: 14). Whilst we will return to Academies later, the point here is that this begs the question of how, in the case of Academies, local authorities will be able to implement and monitor this.

As such, Local Authorities are ultimately responsible for safeguarding children through providing early help. This they need to do in line with new policies and at a time when significant cuts are being made to services through austerity measures (Sidebotham, 2012). A key document for exploring how the government suggests local authorities provide early help is the latest version of *Working Together*.

4.5.5 *Working Together 2012*

Working Together, first published in 1988, provides statutory advice on multi-agency working in regards to child protection and safeguarding. It has been regularly added to, particularly after crises, providing both guidance and support for practitioners, detailing agencies specific responsibilities. For example, should schools have child protection concerns the current version is clear that:

Staff in schools and FE institutions should not themselves investigate possible abuse or neglect. They have a key role to play by referring concerns about those issues to local authority children's social care, providing information for police investigations and/or

enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, and by contributing to assessments. (DCSF, 2010a: 2.159)

In addition to this, the document provides supplementary guidance on areas that agencies working with children may encounter (such as female genital mutilation and trafficked children). Munro (2011) argued that this had resulted in it becoming, ‘too long to be practically useful,’ (p44) – a sentiment shared by a number of the professionals interviewed for this study. Munro (2011) also concluded that it stifled local innovation, and was too prescriptive.

Consequently, in 2012 a draft was released for consultation. It is much shorter (in title and contents) *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE, 2012b). Note that ‘*To Promote Children’s Welfare*’, part of the subtitle of the 2010 version of *Working Together*, has been removed, raising the question whether this is now to be considered implicit in the meaning of the word ‘safeguarding’. However, in addition to the removal of promoting children’s welfare, there is a proposed change in definition of ‘safeguarding’ in the document. The new definition parallels Ofsted’s previous definition (above) in all but one point. ‘Undertaking that role so as to enable those *children and learners* to have optimum life chances and *enter adulthood successfully*,’ (Ofsted, 2011: 5, my emphasis); has been altered to, ‘taking action to enable *children in need* to have optimum life chances.’ (DfE, 2012b: para 6, my emphasis). Therefore it is no longer all children (‘children and learners’), but a much smaller group of ‘children in need’ that the definition targets. The document then states that a social worker may place children in the ‘children in need’ category if they find that their health or development may be ‘significantly impaired.’ If so, appropriate support may be put in place (DfE, 2012b: para 7). This is a notable shift in emphasis. Ofsted’s (2011) previous definition included all four groups: significant harm, child in need, additional needs and universal; with

a broad range of needs (such as teenage pregnancies and emotional health) being addressed through the terms ‘optimum life chances’ and ‘enter adulthood successfully’ (p5). However, the proposed focus on ‘children in need’ drastically reduces the scope of safeguarding work to those deemed ‘in need’ under S17 of the CA 1989. This is a higher threshold than CAF intervention was previously intended to address. As such, the CAF will be used to meet the needs of ‘children in need’, rather than those with ‘additional needs’ at the lower end of the spectrum of concern. This may result in children experiencing wider welfare concerns such as poor health or substance misuse not receiving the support previously available. This is an important point, as, ‘Neglecting the wider package of support for children ... means some children will never do as well in education as they should,’ (Nandy, 2012: 678).

The report is also notable in that Education is recognised as having, ‘...a crucial role to play in identifying welfare concerns, additional needs and indicators of possible abuse and neglect, at an early stage,’ (DfE, 2012b: para 44). Moreover, Education is the only partner tasked with identifying ‘additional needs.’ This term is not used anywhere else in the document, indicating that the use of the term in Education’s statutory duties does not relate to the currently held meaning of the term, as described by the now disbanded Children’s Workforce Development Council, further evidencing the claim that there is a reduction in focus for support. Indeed, strategies used for children that have ‘additional needs’ (such as the Common Assessment Framework) are now to be put into place when professionals ‘identify the early signs of abuse and neglect,’ (DfE, 2012b: 53), and that by working together agencies, ‘...will identify the help needed for families to prevent such needs escalating to a point where statutory intervention would be needed’ (para 54). This emphasis on abuse and neglect again indicates a narrowing in scope of ‘safeguarding’ and suggests that some of the circumstances that used to constitute an additional need are no longer prioritised.

Moreover, the section of the consultation document entitled, *Early Identification of Concerns About a Child's Welfare* (DfE, 2012b: para 53-60) also places emphasis on local arrangements and local shared frameworks – strongly placing the onus on local authorities. In the context of schools this is interesting since academies are run independently of them. This is an important distinction because local authorities are not legally entitled to some information regarding academies – for example, they are not told if Ofsted deem an academy to be failing in its safeguarding duties. Indeed, the Education Act 2005 (13(3)) states Ofsted only have to inform the proprietor and Secretary of State if safeguarding is unsatisfactory in an academy school. One wonders how local authorities will be able to carry out their responsibilities in respect of children outside the state sector, who could become the majority. However, due to the complexity of the issues detailed above, the thesis will focus upon Lead Professionals in grant maintained primary schools. It will seek to elicit any views about the austerity measures and/or changes in foci of provision in schools. In addition, it will be interesting to explore whether the language of early help is perceived to have an impact on the CAF process. Other language issues, which will be borne in mind, are detailed below.

4.6 The Language Of Child Protection

4.6.1 A Brief History

The second consideration for understanding why Seebohm's vision is yet to be realized is developing an appreciation that, as time has progressed, the language and meaning of child protection has expanded. This section highlights two further points. First, that language can be seen as placing specific professions at the fore of child protection issues. Secondly, there have been issues not only with the language of child protection, but also professional specific

language which other agencies then need to ‘interpret’ leading to confusion and even contributing to child deaths (Laming, 2003).

The ‘first wave’ of child protection related to charities supporting homeless and neglected children in the early twentieth century (Taylor, 2009). The first Children Act responding to cruelty and neglect was passed in 1889, and focused on the protection of, and prevention of cruelty to, children. Until the 1960s decisions regarding children’s welfare were mainly made on moral grounds, the remit of Children’s Departments, Health Departments, and Welfare Departments. The key professional then focused upon those in medicine when, Kempe *et al.* (1962) put child abuse at the centre stage through their definition of ‘battered-child syndrome’. Child abuse became a ‘syndrome’ making the medical profession an important agency in diagnosing abuse, and perpetrators required research into what predisposed them to this behaviour, and the response to them became less friendly and supportive and more specialised (Taylor, 2009). The focus therefore moves from social deprivation where social workers are key professionals (as exemplified in the Seebohm Report (1968)) to personality being the key factor - Kempe *et al.* (1962: 62) identified perpetrators as, ‘... immature, impulsive, self-centred, hypersensitive and quick to react with purely controlled aggression.’

Language altered throughout the decades in response to research and a change in focus on which agencies should be involved in highlighting concerns. For example, shortly after Maria Colwell’s death in 1973 the language shifted from ‘battered baby’ to ‘non-accidental injury’ and agencies such as education had increasing importance in identifying possible cases (DHSS, 1974b). However, it was in the late 1980s that the term ‘safeguarding’ really began to develop in relationship to child welfare and protection, which is discussed below. ‘*Child in Need*’ and ‘*Significant Harm*’ discusses how these two terms are defined in law, and

issues regarding the lack of clarity between the two terms; and *The Language of Child Abuse and Neglect* illustrates that the categorisation of abuse and the language used to do this is also problematic.

4.6.2 'Child in Need' and 'Significant Harm'

It may be argued that the role of schools was increased with legal definitions, that are still in use today, coming into force through the Children Act 1989. It provided legal thresholds for child protection. In addition to this, it also focused upon Local Authorities' duty, 'to safeguard and promote the welfare of children,' (CA 1989:s17(1)) thereby strongly encouraging the state to work in a preventative capacity with children deemed 'in need' (CA 1989: s17).

The CA 1989 has two categories for child abuse and neglect. As stated previously (Chapter 2), in the most severe cases, under Section 47 (s47) children are classed as being at risk of 'significant harm', and may need removing from the home; whereas within the second category, 'in need', under Section 17 (s17) of the Act determines that children would potentially require social care support.

There are, however, regional variations on what constitutes 'significant harm' and 'child in need' concerns. This is because local authorities were forced in the late 1980s and early 1990s to create their own thresholds for what constituted 'in need' due to a lack of clear definitions in the legislation, a hostile political climate between social care and the Conservative government in power at that time - the government's focus upon child protection rather than safeguarding, and a lack of resources (Baginsky, 2008; DoH, 1995; Parton, 2009; Parton 2011).

However, it may be argued that despite the government of that time portraying a desire to help those ‘in need’ as well as those whom have suffered abuse, this was not their priority. This is reflected in the Conservatives’ prioritisation of children ‘at risk of significant harm’ being evident in the title of the key document for agencies, *Working Together Under the Children Act 1989: A Guide for Inter-Agency Co-operation for the **Protection of Children from Abuse*** (Home Office et al., 1991). It was not until the New Labour government came into power with their modernisation agenda, that this document was revised to reflect their priority on working with children deemed ‘in need’ by the CA 1989, reflected in the title *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to **Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children*** (DoH et al, 1999) (Parton, 2011).

It may be argued that further evidence of bias against responding to those in need is exemplified in DfEE’s (1995) guidance to schools, titled *Protecting Children From Abuse: The role of the Education Service* which charged schools with recognising and reporting abuse; having designated staff with responsibility for child protection who received appropriate training and would be responsible for co-ordinating action in school and liaising with other agencies and working within local authority guidelines.

Furthermore, in 1995 the Department of Health (DoH) produced *Messages from Research* – focusing upon the implementation of the CA 1989 and the associated documentation provided to support agencies (for example, Home Office et al, 1991). The DoH (1995) collated 20 research study findings. It argued that the ‘problem of definition,’ (p11) is that there cannot be an absolute definition – incidents need to be regarded in their context, how often they occurred, and where they would be on a continuum. To exemplify the continuum, dropping a baby on a bed is considered as, ‘gentle play’ at one end and ‘extreme frenzy’ at the other (p14). It confirmed the focus on Section 37 and child protection in practices at that

time as well as the shifting thresholds. It subsequently called for a refocusing on Section 17, stating,

There is overlap between protection work and other services provided for children in need. Many researchers question if some children in child protection procedures would benefit more from family support under Section 17 of the Children Act. (DoH, 1995:34)

This clearly illustrates that what may have been previously required social service intervention, should fall under the preventative work covered by other agencies. They then later echo their call for:

An approach, which encourages a perspective on children in need in circumstances where there may be a protection problem, is more likely to lead to a wider range of services being used to ensure the child's safety and recovery. (DoH, 1995:48)

Together with the general findings that affect education, they also examined educationally specific issues, and found that:

- Teacher training was 'very limited' (p71);
- The role of the teacher was 'particularly confused' (p27); and
- Other professions were unclear about the role of education in child protection, and some teachers were unclear about their own contribution (p27). However;
- One of the factors that, if a case conference was called, make it unlikely for a child to go on the child protection register is if, '... the concerns are not pressed by the school'. (p34)

It may therefore be argued that, as a result of these factors (government priorities, lack of definitions, media criticism, devolved responsibility, market forces, scarce resources) local authorities focussed upon Section 47 - working on child protection issues, setting their own thresholds for intervention and help (Baginsky, 2008; DoH, 1995; Parton 2009; Stone and Rixon, 2008). Consequently, as schools received training related to their responsibilities, without developing an understanding of social services thresholds, definitions or practices; they referred more children, so the thresholds were set higher (as there were scarce resources) leading to frustration between schools and social services (Baginsky, 2008). Moreover, work on Section 17 of the CA 1989, charged with supporting children before they are in an abusive

situation, was not forthcoming at this time so schools saw a decrease in support, therefore even if children were placed on the child protection register, it did not mean that they would receive assistance (DoH, 1995).

A focus on inter-agency working, particularly in respect of Section 17, was the crux of the *Every Child Matters Agenda* (ECM) (DfES, 2003, 2004). Lord Laming's (2003) report, led to the publication of *Every Child Matters* (Green Paper) (DfES, 2003) then *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* (DfES, 2004). They focussed on five outcomes:

- Enjoy and achieve
- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Economic wellbeing
- Make a positive contribution.

Together with the Children Act (CA) 2004, which placed a 'duty to co-operate' with safeguarding on schools, (even though the term 'safeguarding' was not defined until two years later (DoH, 2006: 1.6), the ECM agenda aimed at ensuring universal provision for all children, ensuring none 'fell through the net' through tackling child poverty, improving Early Years provision and education, raising school standards and supporting parents with the emphasis being on intervening before a crisis (Baginsky, 2008; DfES, 2003).

Schools and Early Years settings were seen as playing a key role in the realisation of this vision yet were not included in the duty to co-operate with LCSBs (CA, 2004: s13). To aid practitioners with identifying children for early help, the DfES published guidance specifically for schools (DfES, 2005) where the focus was on supporting children to enable them to achieve their potential by removing barriers to learning, with a *mention* of safeguarding them from abuse. This focus on prevention from abuse being the origin of safeguarding, and the subsequent expansion of meaning for this term is clearly exemplified in the Chief Inspectors Reports for Safeguarding (Department of Health, 2002; Behan *et al.*,

2005; and Gilbert *et al.*, 2008). The 2005 report illustrates that the *first Joint Chief Inspectors Report on Arrangements to Safeguarding Children* (Department of Health, 2002) lacked a clear legal definition of safeguarding, and provides a link to the 2002 report stating that the role of schools was to refer concerns to social services (Behan *et al.*, 2005: 1.5). Then, it states that the Every Child Matters Agenda defines safeguarding as ‘protecting children from maltreatment; and preventing the impairment of children’s health or development’ (para 1.6). The following paragraph focuses upon Utting’s report, *People Like Us*, which argues that safeguarding is ‘taking proactive steps to keep children safe.’ (Utting, 1997, cited in Behan *et al.*, 2005: 1.6). The later 2008 report discusses the ‘wider safeguarding role,’ (Gilbert *et al.*, 2008: 45) stating it is, ‘... also about keeping them safe from accidents, crime and bullying and actively promoting their welfare.’

The first definition of safeguarding stated:

We have taken the term to mean:

- all agencies working with children, young people and their families take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children’s welfare are minimised; and
- where there are concerns about children and young people’s welfare, all agencies take all appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies. (DoH, 2006: 1.5)

In addition to this, the DfES (2006a) also developed, and provided non-statutory guidance on, Common Assessment Forms (CAFs) which were intended to help practitioners gather and share information, whilst developing a common language (one of Lord Laming’s (2003) key recommendations). In it they provided a link to guidance on which children may be deemed ‘in need’. The *Supporting Tools* (DfES, 2006b: 5) places, ‘making slower progress than expected at school,’ first on the list and included, ‘exposed to substance abuse/misuse, violence or crime within the family,’ which may have previously been a social care concern;

arguably demonstrating how the DoH's (1995) recommendation that concerns previously requiring a response from social services could be addressed by other agencies.

During the Labour Government changes were made to how organisations responded to concerns about children in need or at risk of significant harm; and a renewed focus was placed on safeguarding children. The term 'safeguarding' now also encompassed, arguably, roots in their welfare reforms, aimed at reducing those requiring support and developing the future workforce, by tackling issues such as barriers to learning. With a change to a Coalition Government, the question remained whether this ideology would continue in the 2010s.

One of the Coalition's first commissioned reports on child protection, *The Munro Review of Child Protection* (2011), developed 'safeguarding' with the terminology of 'early intervention', (para 8.1). She comments on help at an early stage is building upon the CA 1989, and this was echoed by Tickell's (2011) and Allen's (2011a, 2011b) reports.

Allen (2011b) clearly illustrates that safeguarding was now much more than preventing abuse. He states:

Early Intervention investment has the potential to make massive savings in public expenditure, reduce the costs of educational underachievement, drink and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, vandalism and criminality, court and police costs, academic underachievement, lack of aspiration to work and the bills from lifetimes wasted while claiming benefits. (p *xiv*)

This section has illustrated how definitions relating to child protection and safeguarding have prioritised the work of certain professions, which has not included education, until recently. It argues that when the role of teachers seemed to be promoted through the legal requirement to respond to 'children in need' the government's lack of commitment (evident through document titles and lack of funding for social care), and lack of clear definitions of terms meant this was not the case in practice under the Conservative government in power up until 1997. The later Labour government integrated safeguarding into their modernisation agenda,

arguably expanding its definition and raising its profile, but still ceasing to make early help mandatory.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has briefly explained Foucault's theories of 'biopower' and 'truth' before providing a historical perspective on the development of the term 'safeguarding' so that these may be drawn upon, together with the findings from interviews, later in this thesis. This chapter has focussed upon addressing the first research question, 'Why have schools come to play an increasing role in the safeguarding of children?' It suggests that the historical understanding of child protection placed social workers and medical practitioners at the fore; and that a number of inquiries into child deaths (which are perceived to be the driver for change) often did not involve education to a great extent, resulting in research being focused on other agencies or a collection of agencies rather than being education specific. Furthermore, it argues that government ideologies, both through how they choose to prioritise elements of a reform, (for example Conservatives prioritising children at risk of significant harm) and the drive for economically productive workers, are key factors in policy development and implementation. This consequently affects resources available to schools and the subsequent priority they attach to it.

When considering issues that have been identified in safeguarding, which may affect current ideologies, this chapter perceives them to include government ideology and prioritisation, communication, funding, training and the development of a shared language and identity. Finally, the chapter ends with the policies associated with multi-agency at the time of this research in preparation for further discussion.

CHAPTER FIVE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses each of the research questions through the voices of the interviewees as well as evidence collated during observations of training sessions. The research questions are:

- 1 Why have schools come to play an increasing role in the safeguarding of children?
- 2 How have schools come to understand the Common Assessment Framework through their experience of using it to work with other agencies to support children?
- 3 How do Lead Professionals working in a multi-agency context view the support provided by government/local authority practices, processes and strategies for overcoming established issues?

Whilst the first question is rooted in a genealogy of safeguarding, and is therefore primarily addressed through the literature review, elements of this were touched upon through some interviews so a brief discussion is included.

There are three levels of interviews, with twenty-two interviewees in total. Two interviewees are based in London and have been heavily involved in the formulation of law, policies related to those laws and subsequent guidance for practitioners for over two decades. They are referred to as ‘policy’ respondents – P1 and P2. Two interviews were then held with managers – one from each of the two authorities. They are referred to as ‘local authority’ – LA1 and LA2. The final eighteen interviewees are teachers that have been Lead Professional. They are referred to as E1 – E18. Questions asked, and a selection of excerpts from transcripts (one from each group), are available in the appendices. Their locations are detailed in Table 5.1 (below).

Group	Referred to as	Interview Questions to be Found in Appendix	Sample Transcript to be Found in Appendix
Policy Advisor	P1-2	2	11
Local Authority	LA1-2	4	12
Lead Professionals	E1-18	7	13

Table 5.1: Interview Groups and References

This chapter is therefore consists of five further distinct sections: *Definitions of Safeguarding* (5.2), which explores how this term is understood; *Developments in Policy and Law* (5.3), which explores drivers for change and looks at education’s role within those developments; *Perceived Understandings and Priorities* (5.4), which explores views regarding safeguarding in education today; *The CAF Process* (5.5) which includes views on the CAF form, support for Lead Professionals and schools relationship with Social Care; *Multi-Agency Issues* (5.6), which focuses upon what is perceived to be the inhibitors and facilitators for successful working as well as what strategies are in place to promote and further improve effective strategies and relationships; and finally a *Conclusion* (5.7) to emphasise the main findings within the chapter and propose a new model for understanding safeguarding terms.

5.2 Definitions of Safeguarding

With the expanding definition of safeguarding established in the Literature Review, it is pertinent to establish how respondents define the term, thereby ascertaining if policy makers and practitioners share the same understanding.

The ‘Policy’ respondents both had a clear personal definition of safeguarding – one relating to Article 19 of the Children’s Rights Convention; the other defining it, ‘... as all the ways in which services, practices, systems and the wider society ensures that children have their best

interests looked after so that they are protected from harm,' (P2). However, both then continued to state that they believed that there was, 'some confusion' (P2) and that some people are not 'comfortable' (P1) with language and terminology in this field.

This confusion was explained through the use of the terminology of 'child protection' and 'safeguarding'. Whilst all welfare issues relating to children are a continuum, there is a perceived difference. 'Child protection' is the, '... formal end of the spectrum, which is where there is the system which has clear definitions around them and formal systems set up around state intervention to protect children, particularly around abuse and neglect,' (P2). Whereas safeguarding addresses needs that do not warrant formal support (for example, working with young people who have begun to offend to prevent further occurrences) and also, 'focuses increasingly on the preventative, on the developmental, on strengthening the abilities of the child and the family that they are in and therefore makes them more able to safeguard themselves, rather than constructing a safety net around the child,' (P1).

Therefore, their views may be expressed in figure 5.1 (below). It illustrates how child protection is viewed as a continuum with two legal categories related to the impact that the abuse or neglect is having on the child. At the more severe end a child may be removed from their family, at the less severe end they may receive support from social care. There is an additional category, that of 'safeguarding' which relates to responding to issues that do not meet the criteria for social care support but in which there may be detrimental affects on the child if they remain unaddressed, preventing harm and abuse and working in a holistic way in the best interests of the child.

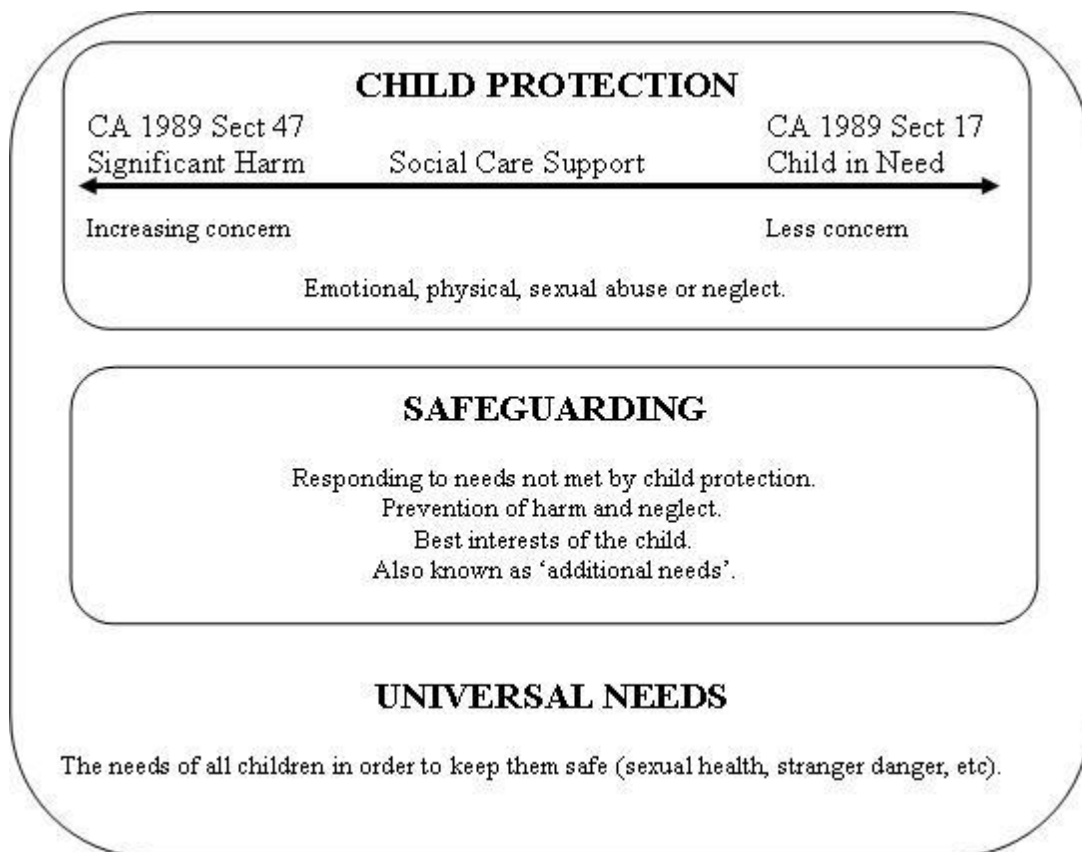


Figure 5.1: Definition of Safeguarding Expressed by Those Involved in Policy Development.

It is interesting to note that both LA interviewees focussed upon the holistic needs of the child when asked to define safeguarding. LA2 stated: ‘It is about understanding and promoting the whole welfare of the young child and enabling them to reach their full potential.’ Also, when discussing the differences between ‘child in need’ and ‘additional needs’, they clearly stated that some social care departments do not have funding to address ‘child in need’ so those children are given support through the common assessment framework (which is not what it is for), and that boundaries for support are moving up across the board.

When Lead Professionals based in education were asked what their personal understanding of safeguarding was, most responses echoed the figure above. They were clear that it was about

both ensuring children were safe by developing robust systems and practices (such as Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks, Concerns Logs, training staff in child protection, and ensuring premises were secure) and developing children's abilities in keeping themselves safe. Developing self awareness included allowing children some control in deciding if activities were safe to participate in, and teaching them that it is sometimes ok to feel a little scared (such as at a fairground ride) whilst at other times feeling scared indicates that a situation is of concern. There was only one interview where this view was not held, and the definition of safeguarding related to 'significant harm' and 'child in need' only.

This section has shown that the definition of 'safeguarding', particularly in relation to what constitutes CAF intervention, and what should be considered to be 'child protection' is not always clear. The following section looks at developments in policy and law, and illustrates the shift to 'early help' through multi-agency practices.

5.3 Developments in Policy and Law

Whilst the first research question is primarily detailed through the exploration of law and policy developments in the Literature Review (Chapter 2), and the drivers that were understood to be at play for those changes, this area formed part of the discussions, particularly with the two Policy interviewees. Talk focussed upon the development of the ECM in the early 2000s, and the shift to alternate policies developed by the Coalition government since 2010.

Every Child Matters, as discussed in the Literature Review, is widely understood to be a result of the Laming Report, which details the failings of the system designed to protect children like Victoria Climbié. Indeed, ‘If you read the formal government documents it appears that it came about because of the Victoria Climbié case. There is an element of truth to that, but it is only a small part of the truth,’ (P1). Both indicated that work had already begun on improving and strengthening multi-agency relationships and working practices whilst simultaneously acknowledging that some children needed issues to be addressed even though they did not fall into ‘child in need’ category or above. P2 explained that it was the deaths of

Paul Church and James Bulger⁹ that were the triggers to these concerns about children that were in this category of children and families type of agenda. The concern was that there were children growing up who agencies weren’t getting hold of who were getting into trouble and were in wider need. ... a wider focus needed to be taken, prevention and support in a much wider context, children’s welfare needs need to be seen in a broader way. If we could get agencies to work together at that sort of threshold...

As Bulger died in 1993, that is nearly a decade of work before the ECM was introduced. Whilst P2 acknowledged that work was occurring on improving multi-agency work the decade before Climbié’s death, P1 was directly involved in it:

Before the Climbié review, and before the writing of ECM, I was commissioned by two government departments (education and health) to review a service provision for very young disabled children and their families, and to identify to some extent what would even be familiar to you, as families find that their child might need services from a whole range of services. Each service may be a really good one, but actually nobody was joining up the dots. ... And so concepts like Team Around the Child, Lead Professional, information sharing ... The rest flowed round it, the thinking went, if it works for disabled children it will also work with any child that needs more than one professional, the children that cross the boundaries. Then the thinking went, actually that is really quite a lot of children, and having a good process of doing that will improve educational attainment, which was the big driver for the last government as well as for this government. (P1)

⁹ A two-year-old child, killed by other children on 12th February 1993.

At the time of Laming's report this work was therefore well underway, so, 'When Climbié came along and there was a head of steam, the public feeling that services for children are not good enough, there was a moment, the possibility that we could be catching a wave, catching a moment and developing something new and different,' (P1). Both interviewees agreed that this public mood was drawn upon to push through these changes, and former work was integrated into the development of the ECM.

The ECM was developed during a Labour government, and both interviewees felt that, even though Conservative and Liberal Democrats may be wedded to its principles, it needed to be made into a Coalition document. Therefore, they argue, it was 're-badged' under new policies, so that the holistic needs of the child could be addressed, whilst P1 acknowledged that, 'Michael Gove¹⁰ doesn't think of children in the same rounded way,' other ministers were, 'proper joined up people.' The effects of this were exemplified through comment that Sarah Teather¹¹ is not only developing integrated working with, 'less money, but she is having to do it tiptoeing round Michael Gove's opinions and views as well,' (P1). P1 continues to state that the Coalition reforms place a:

... focus on problem families, it is looking at how to make integrated working work, how to get effective information sharing, how to get quite early and rapid intervention with these families, before things get really out of hand – you keep going and you really focus on it; how to bring together the budgets from across the range of the public sector so that it works for them – for example, they are looking at going stronger hooking up with housing, and the police. It is a natural progression from ECM and I back it. (P1)

¹⁰ Secretary of State for Education.

¹¹ Minister of State for Children and Families.

However, P2 felt that the focus was not necessarily on strengthening links between agencies and ensuring rapid interventions, instead it was about focusing down and having specific outcomes in mind. These were, ‘Sharper education, attainment focus for education; sharper in relation to anti-social behaviour, looking for decreases in anti-social behaviour and sharper in relation to jobs and money.’ This person had three concerns with this. First, the narrowing of scope means that projects addressing other welfare issues will be reduced significantly. The second concern related to the language of the policies, particularly ‘Troubled Families.’ It was felt that that kind of, ‘... stigmatizing rhetoric can have counterproductive effects, you can end up with people not engaging in the programmes’ (P2). The third concern was the move to payment by results (that is to say, local authorities will receive part of their payments for interventions after specific outcomes have been achieved). One interviewee commented:

The Home Office put out a report in the autumn for the local authorities, but actually it is unknown territory. They could end up commissioning the wrong thing, or depending on how you define your results, spending lots of money and getting nothing for it. There is quite a lot in it because it is not really known territory about how easy it is to specify these outcomes. (P2)

New insights into the development of the ECM have been provided in this section, together with a brief discussion on some of the concerns held regarding its replacement, the Troubled Families Initiative. This chapter now moves on to explore views on multi-agency working, arguably a key component for the successful realisation of ECM and the Troubled Families Initiative.

5.4 Perceived Understandings and Priorities of Safeguarding

5.4.1 A Policy Advisor/Local Authority View of Priorities

This research was conducted during a time of change, and new policies and information were being developed and published as interviews progress. This section explores how

interviewees felt about changes, both known and under consultation, and their individual views on safeguarding in schools.

The *White Paper 2010* (DfE, 2010b) did not mention safeguarding, multi-agency working or extended schools as ways to support pupils and raise academic achievement. For example, in the section on behaviour, there is no mention of working with families, nor how multi-agency working may help meet the needs of the child in order to help them improve their behaviour. Respondents were asked for their views on this. P1 discussed this in depth, and explained how, as a member of the Children's Inter-Agency Group explored this issue was explained with government, and that it was subsequently dropped – they felt it was not a determined strategy, rather a 'sin of omission rather than sins of commission.' However, two respondents (P2 and LA1) felt this undermined the importance of multi-agency working, and would, 'give those who don't want to do it permission not to do it,' (P2). LA2 felt that whilst it was disappointing that the opportunity for a 'quick win' achieved by multi-agency working being incorporated in the Education Act (2011) was not exploited, it did not need to be in the Education Bill as statutory guidance on multi-agency working is found in *Working Together*, so it was deemed to be a separate issue.

Those that did provide early support were '... having to think a bit more creatively about which service they will bring in because some need to be bought in and others wont,' as, 'Children's Services are having to function in a world of a lot less and decreasing budgets,' (LA2). However, whilst the authorities expressed concerns about the cuts in terms of impact on services one talked about this in terms of thinking creatively. Indeed, one LA interviewee questioned that when things had been 'paired down to the bare bone' what was left to cut out?

With these challenges in mind, it was clear that the two authorities had responded in distinct ways. The changes explained here represent findings from the interviews with Lead Professionals in schools – therefore it represents a perception of the changes from those that use it.

5.4.2 Lead Professionals' Perceptions of Organisational Changes: Authority A

Prior to the Coalition government Authority A had Multi Agency Teams (MAT) throughout the authority. Completed Common Assessment Forms were submitted to a local MAT, and schools received advice on which agencies to contact and support with gaining access was provided.

Due to the cuts, Authority A decided to become creative and ensure that there were workers to support families – so cuts were made at a management level, and ‘creative’ (LA1) solutions were found. This included local MAT Centres being replaced by centralised telephone helpdesks. Some workers (e.g. CAMHS) found the area they were responsible for increased. At the same time, training for CAFs ceased whilst the authority reviewed their practices in light of the Munro Report.

Many schools were frustrated with these new organisational arrangements. They felt that they did not know the new structure, and that their contact person could be difficult to access – particularly on a Friday afternoon. There was a strong message that things have ‘gone backwards’ (E10).

5.4.3 Lead Professionals' Perceptions of Organisational Changes: Authority B

Authority B adopted a different approach. Prior to, and after the cuts, CAF training continued, with a dedicated department to support education and a named CAF Officer for each area. However, there was a charge to access some levels of training and support.

Prior to the cuts the authority employed staff to support families, such as Parent Support Advisors. These roles were made redundant and schools were encouraged to appoint these people themselves, so the support was no longer ‘free’. In addition, the amount of services requiring a service level agreement with schools (i.e. that schools had to purchase) increased. This agreement often included detail on the amount of time to be spent in school. Therefore, if schools requested an agency’s attendance at a CAF meeting, then the time spent at the meeting came out of their purchased time.

This resulted in a range of views on the CAF. Many felt that it worked because the school paid for resources, but that it was up to individual schools to calculate whether the cost would be beneficial for their school community. However, where there were funding issues, such as a low number on roll or few children on free school meals, there was a feeling that these children (and schools) were being neglected as they could not afford to purchase support.

This section has provided an overview of perceptions to changes in the CAF process over the last few years. The next section focuses upon further expanding Lead Professionals’ views of the Common Assessment Framework.

5.5 The CAF Process

5.5.1 General Views of Lead Professionals on the CAF Process

The role of the Lead Professional was, in all cases, an ‘add on’ to the duties of a Senior Manager within the school. Most schools had taken the strategic decision that this person should be the Headteacher (to facilitate communication, ensure power to commit to resources and strategies for support at CAF meetings and also to have the power to hold others to account). A small number of schools had used other members of Senior Staff to undertake this role, the feeling being that they could have dedicated time and parents may feel more

comfortable working with them. In essence, some schools felt that the involvement of the Headteacher may deter some parents from engaging with the CAF process to support their child.

Most respondents discussed the need for preparatory work with families prior to completing a Common Assessment Form and calling a meeting to bring different professionals together to address the family's needs. The Lead Professional, or another member of staff in the school team who were deemed to have a good relationship with the parent(s) either led this. Once parent(s) agreed to this in principle, most schools then arranged a mutually convenient time to complete the CAF form together. It was felt this was a vital time for gaining trust and developing a wider picture of needs. There were two schools with different practices: one completed the educational part then sent the form home for parents to complete; another informed parents that it was a layer below social care involvement.

Once the CAF form was completed, schools contacted their CAF Officer for advice on which agencies to contact, although most had their own list of agencies. However, here there was a difference between the two authorities – those in Authority A felt that this was much easier prior to the 'creative cuts' as they had local, well-run MAT teams. For example, one respondent stated:

... no one knows how they run anymore really. That is one of our difficulties. It did run very, very well when (*name*) was here. But now it has changed, and you can't get anyone. You can't get anywhere and they constantly change who you have got to contact and how you can contact them, so you lose the will to ... (E4)

This comment was typical of many responses. In contrast, most of those interviewed in Authority B had clear named CAF Officers and felt that this system still continued to work in the same way. However in one geographical area of Authority B, respondents felt that they

were viewed as an affluent area with little need for support. Consequently, they did not have a CAF Officer or a local MAT Centre to call upon.

Despite the Helpdesk that Lead Professionals may call in Authority A, and Named CAF Officers for most schools in Authority B, there was a common feeling that some resources were 'hidden' to prevent people from accessing them. (See *Inhibitors to Multi-Agency Working*). This, at times, had repercussions for the school's relationship with the parents.

Cuts in services resulted in many schools providing more support themselves. Strategies included training Teaching Assistants in counselling, behaviour support and anger management. In Authority B some schools pooled together to employ Counsellors (for parents and children) and Parent Support Advisors. They consequently reduced the number of CAFs as, due to the support being available in school, a CAF was not needed.

Despite this, some schools stated that the CAF could be effective if everyone was on board and the help was implemented at the correct time for the family. Many felt it was the individual staff within agencies making it work by exceeding the remit of their role at times, citing examples ranging from School Nurses to Occupational Therapists. This section has looked at general views regarding the CAF, and the following section examines strengths and concerns regarding the form itself.

5.5.2 The Common Assessment Framework Form: Strengths and Concerns

Once a school persuaded parents to participate in the CAF process, they completed a CAF form. Respondents in both authorities felt that there were positive and negative features to the form. These are listed in the table below (Table 5.2).

	Strength	Concern
Both Authorities	Helpful / thorough.	Relies on parents telling you the truth. Information is repeated. Additional forms needed for some agencies. Time consuming.
Authority A Only		It can be intrusive. It can also be difficult to separate issues and decide on the priority. eCAF does not allow agencies to be listed.
Authority B Only	Straightforward	There are issues with completing them on the website.

Table 5.2: Lead Professionals' Views on the CAF Form

As forms were completed with parents, most felt they were time consuming. Whilst the various aspects of the form could open up discussion, it was also intrusive and made parents feel as though they were being judged. The validity of information provided was questioned as some felt that a number of parents were trying to guess what you wanted them to say, and it relied on parents giving an open, honest and frank account of their family life.

It was felt that the form's design did not allow for complex issues, as they could not necessarily be separated into distinct categories/priorities. Interviewees were frustrated that nothing could happen without the paperwork, which contributed to a lengthy process of accessing support. Indeed, some agencies then required schools to complete additional forms. Issues regarding the form established, the following section discusses the help available to Lead Professionals when the form is completed and they are looking at how to support the family.

5.5.3 Support for the Role of Lead Professional

As involvement in CAF is optional, one must examine Lead Professionals' views on the support that they receive and what support they would like to be made available when they choose to take on this role.

In Authority A, group training in CAFs ceased whilst the authority underwent a review, with individual one to one meetings being available during this time. However, when respondents were questioned about what training they received through structured group training sessions on the CAF process, specific training attended was 4-8 years ago. Those in post after this date only seemed to receive 1:1 training. One interviewee felt quite strongly about the position the lack of training put him in:

When I was a Lead Professional for the first time I had not got a clue what I was doing. Absolutely not got a clue. It was a very awkward and embarrassing meeting. You are chairing a meeting with no experience, and you are just trying to lead, just in to the job as a Head. It was just unbelievable. (E1)

In Authority B attendance at training ranged from 3.5 years ago to a month before the interview took place. One Head stated, 'CAF training focuses on identifying features and filling in forms but they don't touch on CP and thresholds' (E14). Consequently, Lead Professionals in Authority B also felt they would like more training on what is available within the authority to support families, how to work with parents and also for CAF training to be available for all staff. There was a desire to learn more about other agencies. When training opportunities provided by the authority for this was discussed, some were unaware that they could attend multi-agency training days, as these sessions were not advertised under the 'Education' banner. One interviewee expanded on this, stating that they had worked on secondment as a SEN Advisor in the authority and had found that, '... there were all these groups dealing with SEN in different headings, they were not necessarily in the Education bit,' (E16) and that through the LA role they got to know where things were, but that this was not clear to those in school and they felt that this was also the case with the CAF process. That is to say, s/he felt that there were pockets of training and resources in different departments within the Local Authority, and that part of the issue was that whilst the

Authority may provide relevant training, schools might not hear about it. If they did hear they may question whether they were eligible to attend. This view was echoed in Authority A. In both authorities, when staff attended training sessions the school would then need to meet the cost of cover if their post was class based.

Support was also discussed in terms of support identifying and accessing other agencies. Those in Authority A tended to feel that local MAT teams had been more successful in helping them identify and source services than the new arrangements, and that services had higher thresholds and longer waiting times. In Authority B interviewees felt that they could reach a CAF Officer who would advise them quite easily, indeed most spoke highly of the person in this role and the support they provided, and that ‘The ease of access is there. The fact is you have to pay for it now,’ (E11).

In addition to the MAT Centres and CAF Officers many interviewees stated that Children’s Centres also provided support. For some this was signposting, whereas others accessed support provided by the Children’s Centre for children that were under 5, or had siblings under 5. In Authority B most interviewees also spoke of Parent Support Advisors in a positive way, stating that they helped the school and the families.

When asked specifically how they would like to role of Lead Professional to be supported the key messages consistent across both authorities were a clear resource illustrating who plays what role within the authority, and what agencies may be contacted for what issues. In Authority A the core message was quicker access to services and support – for many this was a concern with the current CAF process: ‘... the process of trying to get some one, it is a lengthy process. Resources are depleting all the time’ (E1). This element also included the

wish for a named person that they could build a relationship with and talk to; they wanted local CAF officers with local knowledge and some wanted Social Workers that they could ask advice from.

Interestingly, most schools in Authority B had named Social Workers that they could call. For them, the secondary wishes included administrative support or funding for this element of CAFs and a service level agreement that all agencies signed up to.

The dominant messages in regards to support available for Lead Professionals were that training was good quality where it could be accessed, but that additional elements (such as an overview of staff in the authority and their roles, developing trust with parents and thresholds for different agencies) would be beneficial. In Authority B interviewees appreciated the fact that they could contact the trainer directly. Whilst interviewees in both authorities valued the support that other agencies could provide, it was felt by some respondents that if agencies sent representatives to CAF meetings that were not in power to agree to resources or support, this wasted time and could be frustrating. Therefore the issue of power and authority is discussed in the following section.

5.5.4 Power and Authority

The issue of power and authority arose in two aspects during the interviews with Lead Professionals. First, there were contrasting views regarding whether those sent to attend meetings should be in positions of management/power; and secondly, there were issues regarding what the framework actually empowered you to do.

With regard to the position of those attending meetings, one interviewee stated:

Well because I am on the SLT – to be fair, I think you need to be. Actually I get concerned about the people sitting around the table and they are not always at the same level ... That does impact on being able to make decisions, being able to make resources ... For example, as a LP, if I try to engage resources, for me to actually have a conversation with someone in counselling or whatever, I have far more clout. You can imagine, if I was an NQT or one of the class teachers, not on the SLT then... (E14)

This clearly shows that the respondent felt that if the attendee was not in a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) post or equivalent, for example they were a newly qualified teacher (NQT), they have less power in the conversation, and would not have the power to secure resources. Other respondents echoed elements of this view. Experience as a Headteacher, and the way in which the role was viewed in the local area was seen to provide power, including power to gain information from other agencies and persuade others to provide services. Despite this perceived power there was frustration with agencies either not responding or sending people unable to commit resources. In contrast, other Lead Professionals felt that it was the knowledge of the child that was most important, so they would welcome attendance by people in non-managerial roles (such as Teaching Assistants). However, they also felt that the person in attendance should have considered and agreed with their managers what support may be available from their home agency prior to meetings.

Whereas some clearly felt their position and experience enabled them to persuade and action support, others felt that they lacked power to do this. One contrasted it to the role of a social worker, as they, ‘have power and authority so things can move on,’ (E7). They felt this was not the case as the Lead Professional, and some attributed this to the legislation itself. As CAF is not mandatory, if parents were not willing to participate in the process the child’s need remained unaddressed. An example of support for the child being withdrawn because of a parent’s lack of engagement, and the Lead Professional’s lack of power to force them to engage was given:

I had another one last academic year, but he, mum stopped attending the TAC meeting so we closed it in the end. The issue was behaviour. It was very bad. Spitting, kicking, swearing, throwing equipment. We think it was deep rooted – dad in prison ... She was going to have an appointment with me, but she failed to do that. She failed to keep appointments with CAMHS. (E5)

This was of particular concern in several examples of when a case previously determined as ‘Child in Need’ (and therefore families received social care support) had been reclassified as ‘CAF’ with the school as the Lead Professional (see *Relationships with Social Care*, below).

It was felt that relationships with parents were paramount in the successful realisation of outcomes through the CAF process. Another key relationship was between schools and Social Care, as this was seen to have an impact on which concerns were reported to/ investigated by Social Care, and which were left to the school to address.

5.5.5 Relationships with Social Care

Whilst many believed that Social Workers had the power to intervene, there was evidence that this did not always happen. One interviewee commented:

... when you have very committed staff distraught because a child has disclosed something to them and as far as the child sees, nothing happens. They say to that teacher, ‘But I told you what was happening.’ (E4)

This quote exemplifies one of the effects of shifting thresholds for support from Social Care experienced in both authorities. Some feel that this is due to constraints placed on social workers in terms of resources, staffing and workload – almost that they would do more if they could. Other Lead Professionals felt that social workers did not respect schools, nor did they appreciate that calls were made after gathering evidence (particularly when the concern was neglect) and consequently school’s concerns were not taken seriously. Comments included, ‘rude and unhelpful’ (E13), ‘frustrating’ (E2), ‘quite accusing’ (E13) and ‘listen to parents too easily,’ (E12). Consequently, in both authorities at least one person stated that

they may not refer some concerns due to past experiences. One such negative experience of the school being unhappy with a response was where a Headteacher was asked to talk to the alleged perpetrator of sexual abuse:

... there was one child protection case where a child was rocking and exposing themselves etc, and they disclosed issues (*brief details of sexual abuse allegation given*). I phoned social care and they said to get (*person that the child had named as the perpetrator of sexual abuse*) in and have a discussion.
(E2 (my paraphrasing to ensure anonymity indicated through the use of italics))

The Headteacher did not talk to the alleged perpetrator – the school took action to ensure that an appropriately trained person dealt with this issue. In addition to feelings that social care sometimes asked schools to play an inappropriate role in responding to concerns, there was also a feeling that Social Care influenced which concerns should be addressed through CAF, even though CAF is optional. This led to frustration.

The belief that CAFs were being used as a way to reduce Social Care's workload, included the comment that, '... they [Social Care] would try and make me do a CAF first before they did anything, especially Child in Need,' (E14). There were also examples of Child in Need cases, which Social Care had been dealing with, but parents had disengaged causing more concern, and potential reclassification as 'significant harm' being transferred to CAF instead. In both cases the school became the Lead Professional, with the agreement that they could refer back to Social Care at any time. The plan was to see how the family responded to support provided this way, and both schools stated that retrospectively they had concerns about the quality of help they could provide. In one case when the child became 5 some external agency support was withdrawn (as, whilst they met the criteria of need, they no longer met the criteria of age). In the second there were concerns regarding the parents using drugs and the school were unable to verify if the issue remained.

In contrast, there was one interviewee in Authority B that was very positive about their relationship with Social Care, and the response that they had had to concerns they had raised. As with most schools within this authority, there was a named social worker for the school, and during the time in post this person had developed a strong working relationship with them. This is particularly worth noting, as several interviewees in Authority A found dealing with different people each time they called for advice or to log a concern very frustrating.

5.5.6 Summary

The CAF is an optional, lengthy and time consuming process with financial implications for the school, yet many Lead Professionals find it very valuable in meeting the needs of their pupils. Lead Professionals in schools would like a better understanding of the people in the authority that may help them, their roles and their responsibilities in addition to a clear document detailing what agencies / support may be accessed for different children's needs within the local area. Where this section has given a picture of the process, the following section examines their view of multi-agency working in order to meet children's needs.

5.6 Multi-Agency Issues

5.6.1: A View From The Policy Advisors and Members of the Local Authority

The key themes that arose through transcript analysis were inhibitors to multi-agency working; strategies for developing multi-agency working; changes in multi-agency working (particularly as a result of the cuts) and ideas for the focus of resources and training. It is important to note that interviews with both Policy interviewees and one of the LA interviewees were held prior to the publication of the revised *Working Together* (DfE, 2012b)

document, so some views are speculative whilst one is based on the draft available at that time.

Working Together is statutory guidance on multi-agency working. Whilst it is worth noting that very few Lead Professionals in schools were aware of the document, and of those that were aware of it even less could detail what it states, one may view it as a document which influences how the Local Authorities drive the agenda forward. Both policy interviewees stated that previous versions of *Working Together* had clearly become unmanageable, as various sections had been added over the years, with a trimming down needed. However, LA2 felt that this may be dangerous – that ‘you must’ was needed in safeguarding in order to keep some people engaged and working in a timely manner. LA1 also discussed the trimming down who may be targeted through the proposed change to the definition of safeguarding at that time, and felt that fewer children will receive support.

LA1’s concern regarding the lack of ‘you must’ in *Working Together* (for example, time frames) relates to a key inhibitor in multi-agency working – personalities. That is to say, if the person is already convinced that early help is beneficial, they found a way to make things happen. If they were not, support was not provided for families, or what was in place was not effective. This view was echoed by P2. Other inhibitors discussed included hard to reach agencies, communication, cuts, time, paperwork, lack of power / engagement, local / profession specific understandings of abuse and a lack of recognition of the importance of multi-agency working.

Communication was a key theme, and fell into three categories: communicating with schools, information sharing and language issues. Communication issues with school arose due to

different staffing structures of individual schools leading to confusion by the LA and others with regards to who was the Lead Professional. They were therefore unsure whom to contact with general information regarding multi-agency services and working, and they found there were different preferred styles of communication (e.g. telephone, email). This confusion, together with a perceived lack of commitment on the part of some schools to seek information themselves (through webpages / reading emails, etc) meant that there were problems disseminating knowledge about key services and squashing rumours developed that were not strictly true (such as less services in one of the two authorities) (LA2). In addition to this, one authority stated that some professionals still had concerns regarding what information they were allowed to share without breaching the data protection act (LA1). The final strand became apparent through the interviews themselves – each uses a different ‘language’ for safeguarding, which included different acronyms (see Table 5.3, below).

Whilst it was agreed that national guidelines would be useful, training was seen as a key tool for developing understandings around the Common Assessment Framework

Acronym	LA1	LA2
CAF	Common Assessment Framework, including the form and any subsequent meetings.	Common Assessment Form
TAC		Team Around the Child
CAF Officer	Support from county – a person that will oversee, advise and sit in on meetings.	
ISA Co-ordinator		Integrated Support Agency Co-ordinator. Responsible for training, advice, and liaisons with different agencies.

Table 5.3: Authority Specific Use of Acronyms

and multi-agency working (such as the roles of different professionals) and local priorities. With regard to local authority issues, which are decided at a senior strategic level, one felt that if senior managers do not have the ‘power’ and ‘authority’ that an issue being on this list brings, then issues are much harder to challenge. The issue discussed was domestic violence. During the training day it was observed that members of the Police only deemed certain behaviours to be ‘domestic violence’ in specific areas, otherwise it was part of the local culture. Discussion with the interviewee revealed that this issue was known, but that without a county push they felt their efforts to change this were in vain. Whilst Police may respond differently to issues in affluent areas, LA2 acknowledged the concerns of headteachers in such areas around the lack of funding and support in comparison to deprived areas, even though they also dealt with safeguarding issues (such as drug misuse). Both LA respondents therefore spoke of a ‘postcode lottery’ for safeguarding provision in terms of authority priorities, funding and views of key staff.

Commitment and willingness to participate in CAF was also raised, particularly the issue of disillusionment. This was framed in terms of power, and was discussed at length in most interviews. In P1 and P2 it was in regards to the power of titles, and also the power of schools (particularly headteachers) to sway opinion and make other voices quiet, (such as that of a nursery worker), as the latter did not feel as well educated. This was pertinent, as the detail of the story could be lost. LA1 said to consider *A Child Called It*¹², and to imagine how much more powerful the narrative would be if the author was sitting there in front of you. S/he then related this to the person that sees the child each day, thereby stressing that those voices may have more influence. Power was also discussed in terms of frustration and

¹² Peltzer’s (2000) autobiographical account of child abuse from an alcoholic mother which includes beatings, having his hand deliberately burned on the stove and severe neglect.

feeling helpless in facilitating change through working with others. LA1 related this to workers relating concerns to Designated Officer (for child protection) and being told that it is not an issue of concern. LA2 relates it to agency supporting families and organising a meeting with other professionals, to then be powerless to enforce support or changes within the family. All discussed these issues as reasons people became disengaged with multi-agency working, and felt it was an area that needed to be addressed.

Most interviewees agreed that training was essential, particularly in respect of challenging previously held views and removing barriers. Interestingly, both LA interviewees believed there should be national guidance for training, particularly in respect of what Ofsted is looking for when an authority is inspected. Both Policy interviewees took this further, and stated that safeguarding and multi-agency training should be developed in initial training for all professions. All agreed that training should continue throughout a career.

Training was also discussed in relation to cuts to funding – one authority is discussing what training they will charge for in the future, whilst the other is already charging. Cuts have also impacted provision and also organisation structures around safeguarding, therefore affecting multi-agency work. P1 stated, ‘Family support below the threshold has been cut a lot, and then nice little things like teenage pregnancy support has almost vanished.’ Cuts to local authority funding and the prioritisation of the academy agenda has resulted in one authority rationalising senior management posts and creatively replacing services that have been cut through other mechanisms – for example, two YISP (Youth Inclusion Support Panel) posts previously funded by the Youth Justice Board are now provided by a different agency. This has led to concern from front line practitioners that services are no longer available, as they do not yet fully understand how to access them in the new structure. In addition to this, in

both authorities some schools now need to purchase some support through their Dedicated Schools Grant¹³. In the other authority the interviewee was clear: ‘... with the cutbacks we have got a highering of the goalposts really, so people have got to be so much worse to get services,’ (LA1).

As well as providing new insights into the development of the Every Child Matters Agenda, the interviews produced a range of opinions on safeguarding in schools from a policy and local authority level. Comments made it clear that this is a time of change, and there are difficulties associated to that change. The majority view was that those committed to the rhetoric of safeguarding and early intervention consistently show determination in working creatively in responding to wider welfare needs. However, there was also a feeling that that commitment was being tested, as it was becoming harder to gain support, the risk being that some organisations would cease to try. Whilst all provided evidence on the shifting of criteria and rationalisation of resources, one interviewee went further, stating that some social care departments no longer addressed ‘child in need’ cases, and this was now addressed through the common assessment framework, which is was never designed to do. This suggests a new model for safeguarding is emerging, as illustrated in figure 5.2, below.

By comparing the figure below to figure 5.1 (in *Definitions of Safeguarding*) there is a shift in the cases qualifying for Social Care support. In 5.1 the solid black line denoted that all ‘Child in Need’ cases were to be addressed by Social Care. However, a different story emerged from the interviews. Here Social Care deals with fewer cases. Whilst some cases may be determined to be ‘Child in Need’ the support is provided through the Common

¹³ The Dedicated Schools Grant provides the majority of funding for schools, and is subject to cuts (DfE, 2012c).

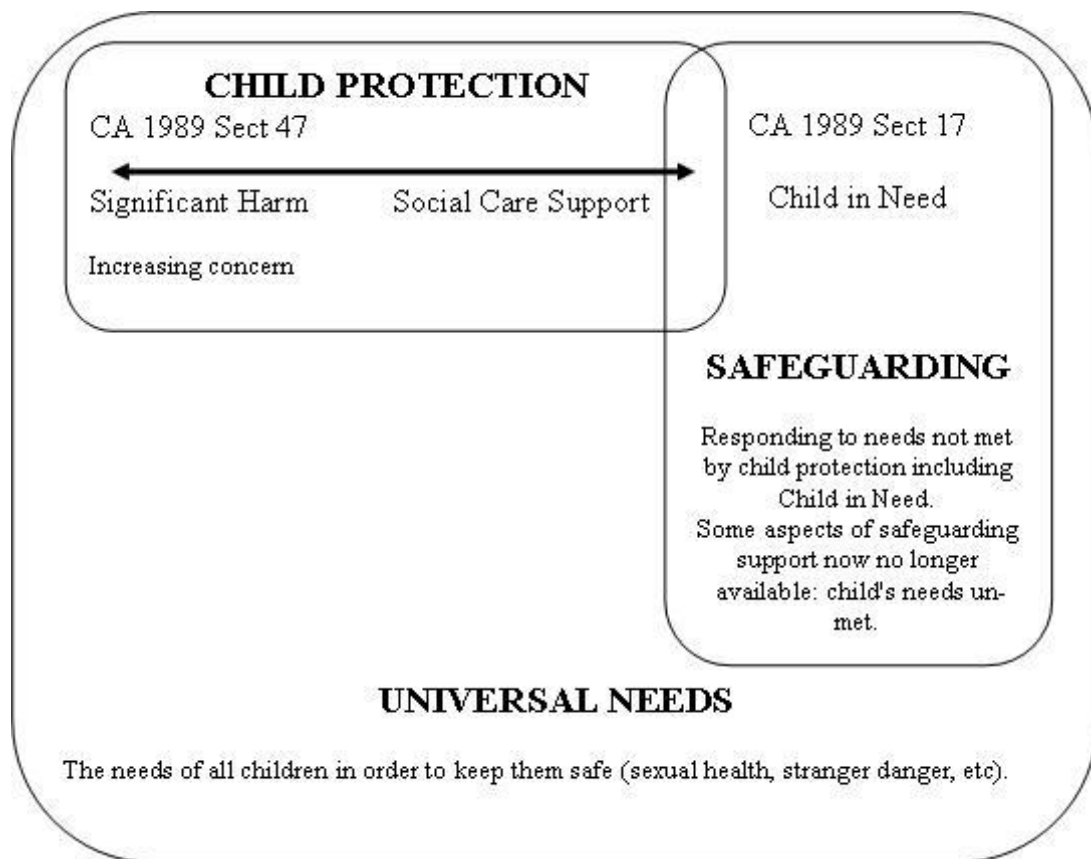


Figure 5.2: Shifting Priorities in Safeguarding Categories

Assessment Framework instead. As resources are now being used for this group, and there are cuts to services, it was felt that what could be addressed via multi-agency support through the CAF process had reduced.

As well as the view that other agencies are now dealing with needs previously addressed by social care, relationships were also discussed. This included the continued existence of a ‘them’ and ‘us’ culture, in relation to Social Care and other agencies as well as in relation to poverty, class and education. This was perceived to be evolving through government rhetoric. For example, anecdotal evidence illustrated that not only are ‘educated’ people perceived to have a more important voice in safeguarding/child protection meetings, but also that ‘educated’ people, for example, parents of children in independent schools, are far less likely

to be the source of safeguarding concerns. Whilst it must be emphasised that not all felt this way, there was general agreement about the stigmatizing effect of the Troubled Families Initiative, and concerns that it will lead to the embedding of the view that children with educated parents cannot possibly have any safeguarding issues.

In short, with cuts, semi-privatisation and significant changes within education and welfare provision, some felt that this is a 'wait and see' (P2) era for safeguarding. That is to say, it is not clear how safeguarding will be organised or provided for. Influencing factors were believed to be lack of commitment from some educators (as documentation may be seen as justifying non-participation in early help), funding cuts and new priorities resulting in a sharper focus for provision (at the expense of some universal services, such as support for all parents of under 5s; and other targeted provision, such as support for teenage mothers) and new relationships between academy schools and the local authority (including charging for training). As one interviewee commented:

This is not a safe period for some of the most vulnerable children. It is not that people in power are evil; it is that the protections are weakening, and when money gets tight and people are put under all types of pressures all sorts of silly things start to happen.
(P1)

Views from those involved in policy making and developing initiatives at a local level explored, this chapter now goes on provide a voice for Lead Professionals in schools to show how they view the Common Assessment Framework.

5.6.2 A View from Education on Inhibitors and Facilitators to Multi-Agency Working

A crucial element of the CAF is multi-agency working, therefore inhibitors and facilitators to multi-agency working were discussed with Lead Professionals based in schools, the results of

which are summarised in Table 5.4, below. A number of these issues have already been discussed; and prominent themes are discussed below (notably the *Expectation that the School Should be the Lead Professional* (5.6.3), *Costs* (5.6.4) and *Communication* (5.6.5)).

This table shows that one of the major hurdles facing Lead Professionals was gaining access to agencies that they did not buy in to, particularly CAMHS. In Authority A it was felt that this was due to staff reductions in CAMHS, leading to staff servicing a larger area. As a result, schools felt that it was harder to get CAMHS to CAF meetings, communication was poor and when a service was provided it was for a shorter time. In Authority B there were examples of schools waiting 6 months for a child to be seen – over half an academic year!

	Inhibitor	Facilitator
Both Authorities	Communication. Costs. Expectation that the school will be the Lead Professional. Issues gaining access to other agencies. Lack of engagement with CAF by other agencies. Time.	Individual people committed to helping families. Strong relationships with families.
Authority A	Length of process. Poor resources. Reduction in school and county resources. Workload.	Ongoing contact with agencies. Participants are open, honest and critical friends. Some professionals exceeded the remit provided by their home agency.
Authority B	Non-attendance by some agencies. Some agencies are unaware of CAF.	It helps get access to resources. Named contact. People come to meetings with ideas.

Table 5.4: Facilitators and Inhibitors for Multi-Agency Working

In contrast, interviewees in both authorities stated that Barnardos was doing, ‘a brilliant job,’ (E13). Consequently, schools continued to refer children despite eight month waiting lists for support. In Authority A Barnardos’ success was attributed to the time that they spent with each child and the way that they built a long-term personal relationship with them (E1).

In Authority B there was a different agency noted for difficulty gaining access: housing. Here difficulties included children being in unsuitable homes particularly when a family had been rehoused due to domestic violence. One person spoke of a Housing Agency not participating in CAFs and they did not feel it was appropriate to do so. Where support was offered, it was to guide the family through the application process for that Housing Association rather than make a concerted effort to provide them with suitable accommodation. This supported a comment made during the training day that there was a lack of social housing available for families and this had an impact on Police/Social Care’s ability to rehouse families experiencing domestic violence. In Authority A housing issues for a family that had been rehoused for domestic violence were also raised – here a school had employed a Teaching Assistant to transport the children to and from school, and the school had made a collection of clothes, etc to help the family. The feeling was that other agencies (such as Social Care) should do this, but as it was not happening the school plugged the gap. This was a prevalent strategy in both authorities – schools using staff to work with children, or employing external workers. This had consequently led to schools considering whether a CAF was appropriate if they could deal with the child’s needs internally through the support they now offered.

Whilst the majority view was that all professionals wanted to help children but were constrained, there was an exception: Bereavement Services. There was frustration that the advice provided was to wait, usually 6 months, to see if the child really did need support, and

a view that the agency is not committed to the CAF process. One headteacher tried to gain support for a child that had seen their father die and commented:

They say we nag them about TAC, but we are here for the children. They are trained with those skills, and sometimes they wont even give you advice. No advice, it is the grieving process. If it continues after six months we might get involved. (E3, my italics)

Here the view was that the agency did not want to become involved in TAC (Team Around the Child meeting as part of the CAF process). This led the Head to gain support from another agency – the third that they tried. Other schools have responded to issues like this by training Teaching Assistants in counselling or purchasing counsellors to work within the school.

Whilst some services were provided by schools to address gaps in provision, there were examples of good working relationships, particularly with the School Nurse, Occupational Health, and the Children’s Centre. Lead Professionals in both authorities often voiced the opinion that successful working relationships were down to the individual characteristics of the person rather than the parameters within which they work. That is to say, they found some professionals exceeded their guidelines for offering support, which was beneficial to both schools and families. Examples included the School Nurse working with a child with an eating disorder (E6) and a CAMHS worker stating, ‘I should not be doing this, *I should not be working with you*, but now this issue has arisen I will continue to work with the family,’ (E7, my italics). Note here that the CAMHS worker felt that they were doing the school a favour, not the family, which may be seen to suggest that they believe the school the agency with responsibility to the family, not that it is a multi-agency responsibility.

Despite difficulties gaining support the CAF process was viewed as a tool for gaining access to services that the school would not otherwise have been able to source. At its most

successful professionals spoke with professional knowledge and came to meetings prepared with ideas regarding support that they could offer. Interestingly, the importance of challenge/being a critical friend to other agencies only arose in one interview in Authority A. Here, the interviewee emphasised the importance of considering things from different angles, and also being able to take time to think about things rather than carrying on with doubts (E6). This was the only example of a professional using a strategy taught in the training observed in Authority B. They encouraged participants to have a hypothesis for why a child may have difficulties, gather evidence, but if the hypothesis does not stand up, move on.

Another element of relationships that proved beneficial to multi-agency working was the ability to work with the same person. In Authority A this was seen as a major strength of the now disbanded local MAT centres, and in Authority B those schools which had a named CAF Officer for support, and a trainer that they could then call and ask for support and advice was viewed as very beneficial.

Strong personal relationships with parents were also viewed as key to effective support. Therefore schools spent a lot of time developing relationships with parents, particularly prior to CAF meetings. Some interviewees felt that school's ability to do this contributed to other agencies feeling that schools were in the strongest position for taking the lead in the CAF process.

5.6.3 Expectations that the School Should Be The Lead Professional

An observation of a multi-agency training day in Authority B revealed that other agencies felt that schools 'do CAFs'. This belief was highlighted when a group of agencies (which did not include education) were asked to consider Education's role in Child Protection and feedback to the remaining groups. Those running the course did not challenge their view. During

interviews in both authorities there were also several examples of the school being contacted by other agencies to request that a CAF be initiated. These agencies included GP, Health and Disability Service. In general the response was to just do it rather than question it: ‘To be quite honest, in most CAFs when I have been involved, I have ended up being the Lead Professional because it just seems to be the expectation,’ (E14). Of thirty-six CAF cases discussed, three were led by other agencies: Occupational Health (complex health needs), School Nurse (health needs) and Early Intervention Service (EIS) (new school for a challenging child). The expectation with the EIS was that the school would take over the role of Lead Professional shortly, and that the EIS would withdraw the ‘free’ support that they offered this child and start charging the school.

5.6.4 Costs

The overwhelming issue was the increasing financial burden on schools that wish to engage with the CAF process. Concerns were also shared about how parents, particularly if they were on benefits, would be able to afford the transport costs to access help that was increasingly becoming more centralised. Schools in both authorities sought to provide support for children and families through in-house expertise. One school argued that they had done this out of frustration with lack of engagement from other bodies, and by paying for services they had actually reduced the number of CAFs, as multi-agency support was not required.

In addition to paying for their own staff to undertake these roles, expertise needed to be bought in in both authorities. Examples of costs are detailed in Table 5.5 above. The culture of buying in services for CAF support appears more imbedded in Authority B. In Authority A it tended to be traded services provided by the authority with additional support purchased from a school that focussed upon special needs children. One Lead Professional stated that

Authority A	Authority B
Autistic Spectrum Disorder support - £200 Educational Psychologists £700 a session Learning Support Advisory Teachers Special Needs Support (including behaviour issues) about £6k per year - £210 per session.	Behavioural Support £4,640 Early Intervention Service £6,500 Educational Psychologist £1,500 (Schools share of cost to a cluster for sessions and training) Educational Social Worker £2,000 pa for 5 children Educational Social Worker £469 for telephone support Outsourced Learning Support £4,640pa + £400 to support any additional child(ren). Parent Support Advisor £3,000 /£30k shared across a cluster of schools
<i>(Please note: Different packages and levels of support were available from these agencies. The figures above are examples of what the schools interviewed were paying).</i>	

Table 5.5: Examples of Purchased Services Relating to CAF

if a service was, for example, £200 an hour then any travelling time from the office to the school and back would be charged at the same rate, making it prohibitive. In both authorities concerns were raised that if a school wished one of these services to attend a CAF meeting this would also be charged to the school, either in terms of it being classed as a purchased session or the meeting resulting in an additional bill. This led to a situation where:

Local Authority Services are generally pretty good in attending but then there is the issue of does it come out of our buy in? Then we have to make the decision do we want them to come to this meeting or do we want them to do this work with the child?
(E16)

Consequently, some schools asked agencies (particularly outreach support) to compile detailed reports for CAF meetings (which again would be part of their purchased sessions). This is despite a school complaining about this ‘morally wrong’ practice at Heads’ Meetings with the Local Authority (E16).

Some felt that charging for services previously provided without cost by the local authority was an expansion of the traded services culture, which began prior to the Coalition government coming in to power, but has significantly expanded since their time in Office. Major concerns with this trend included the impact on provision that schools could offer for children with additional needs, particularly if schools were small or in an area that the Local Authority did not deem as needy as other parts of the County: ‘...if you are in a small school which is cash strapped you are stuffed,’ (E14).

This section has discussed the impact of costs on providing support through CAF. It has found that the main issue is the cost to the school. As such, some schools have provided support in house; others have met the costs of different agencies. The following section explores another inhibitor: poor communication.

5.6.5 Communication

In addition to 5.6.2 *A View from Education on Inhibitors and Facilitators to Multi-Agency Working*, this section also compliments Section 5.6.1, *A View From The Policy Advisors and Members of the Local Authority*, which found that those in Policy and Local Authority positions believed that communication was an issue in terms of information sharing and different professional languages as well as difficulties they may experience themselves communicating with the appropriate person in individual schools as a result of the different staffing structures and job titles that may be in place. Lead Professionals felt that communication with other agencies was poor, both in terms of communications with the school, and communications with parents. This had an impact on their time. For example, several headteachers stated that they took on the Lead Professional role as they were able to, ‘play table tennis with phone calls’ (E8), whereas class based staff could not.

There is also a frustration regarding how parents are treated. Most interviewees that discussed CAMHS felt that resources had been cut and that there were higher thresholds for support due to this. One interviewee took this further, stating that they felt that if a parent contacted CAMHS directly they, ‘... can be quite obstructive sometimes to parents, but feel more duty bound to be helpful for schools.’ (E11). In addition, many felt that information sharing was not a two way process – schools were rarely informed of the results of any meetings/interventions; when an intervention had been agreed at a CAF meeting schools were unaware when/why there may be delays between the decisions being made and actions actually occurring; and if a key worker was off sick they would later find that there had been no support provided for that family until their return. Indeed, one school learned of a case conference to be held in their school via the parents. Social Care had not asked nor invited the school, nor had they let them know they had investigated the numerous concerns logged by the school.

There were examples of important information not being passed on to the school. For example, a Health Visitor, who was based on the school site, did not inform the school there were concerns about a child based in their Reception class, nor did they invite them to a CAF meeting called in the Autumn term. It was felt that:

So many times we have conversations and we are told that we did not believe that was appropriate to inform the school, whether it be from the parent or other agencies. (E2)

Poor communication was seen as a potential issue prior to the CAF process beginning and support being put into place, and a contributing factor for disengagement from an active CAF process by families: ‘If everyone is working together, if the parents are on board, then yes there are going to be positive results. It is when there is a breakdown in communications’

(E5). In Authority A in particular it was felt that breakdowns in communication, together with long waiting lists, impacted significantly on school time as schools worked to keep a positive relationship with the parents whilst spending time chasing up other agencies.

The issue of agencies trying to contact the correct person at a school was discussed, and each Headteacher / Lead Professional had their own preferred method of contact, and they could generally appreciate the difficulties that differing staff structures may pose to a range of agencies. However, they felt that an update at meeting for Headteachers (such as School Development Group / Cluster meetings) with a written document that they could take away and reflect upon would be preferable. Then they could pass it to the appropriate person if appropriate, and the value of meeting in person would be that questions could be asked.

5.6.6 Summary

The discussion of multi-agency issues in this section has provided a voice for those working in education, supported at times by the views of those in local authority or policy advisor positions. It has discussed strengths and weaknesses in multi-agency working from an educational perspective in detail, focussing upon issues around cost, communication and the expectation that the school will be the Lead Professional in meetings. It suggests that, rather than being a voluntary partner in the CAF process, the role of schools is developing to be the service that purchases support and even, at times, the provider of services.

5.7 Conclusion

Safeguarding priorities are shifting, and new understandings of the term are evolving. It is a time of great change in terms of welfare and education reform, austerity measures, and a move from the language of Labour's ECM agenda to the Coalition's Troubled Families

Initiative. It is recognised at all levels, (Policy Advisor, Local Authority and Lead Professional), that provision and the way in which it is accessed is changing.

The implementation of payment by results and the focus of the groups determined by the Troubled Families Initiative (Crime, Low School Attendance, Unemployment and Local Need) are being discussed primarily at a Policy Advisor and Local Authority level. In schools, there was no evidence of this policy impacting practice – for example, schools were paying for services in house or externally to monitor and address attendance issues. It is reorganisation, cuts and increased costs that have been raised instead. In Authority B the culture of the school buying support is much more embedded, whereas in Authority A this is not so prevalent and waiting lists were a primary issue. A cautionary note is needed here though – all schools voluntarily participated in the study, and expressed a commitment to the CAF process, so one cannot speak for CAF in all schools in either county – particularly those that have decided not to engage with CAF.

Local Authority interviewees and Lead Professionals in both counties both agreed on the ‘postcode lottery’ of provision, where those in affluent or remote areas received less support; access to services was getting harder as agencies raised their threshold for support in response to cuts; and that the CAF process was being used to service the needs of children previously classified as ‘in need.’ This led to a detailed discussion of the shift in language (Section 5.6.1, Figure 5.2), which illustrated this point. The process of safeguarding through CAF was also seen to be changing in schools. Here the picture emerges of few agencies taking the role of Lead Professional, as there is the expectation that school will either take the lead or take over the role once the child has been in their school for a term. (The exception being those with complex health needs). Schools may refer concerns to Social Care. When cases were below

the 'Child in Need' threshold, schools were asked to instigate CAFs on numerous occasions. In addition to this, in some cases schools were asked to take on 'Child In Need' cases where parents were not engaging with Social Care so that they did not become escalated to a 'Significant Harm' case. When considering CAFs, frustrated with lack of provision, there were schools in both counties that employed Teaching Assistants or external professionals to address needs. Where needs could be met in this way, the need for a CAF was questioned. Where external support was deemed to be required, schools worked to strengthen the relationship with parents before completing a CAF form with them. This facilitated the prioritisation of need, and consideration of agencies that may be able to support the family. Schools then questioned whether agencies would charge the school for attendance at the CAF meeting. If there was a charge, schools tended to opt to pay for a detailed report and plan which they then shared at the meeting. If it was free they approached agencies, sometimes completing further paperwork to try and access support / be placed on their waiting lists.

The following chapter, Discussion, relates the findings to the material examined in the Literature Review and continues to question if new meanings and practises are being formed.

CHAPTER SIX DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter responds to each research question by examining findings in relation to Foucault. There are three central sections, each relating to a research question.

The first section focuses upon Foucault's concepts of governmentality, power and knowledge by exploring how the 'truth' of safeguarding (that is to say, what safeguarding is understood to be, and the practices related to it) has evolved as a result of different agencies, institutions and ideologies working together to influence and determine understandings and practices.

The second section focuses upon how schools view the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) today. It compares the 'Four Step Model' for the CAF process (CWDC, 2009) with the picture that emerges from the Lead Professionals' responses in interviews. After this new model is explored, it proceeds by detailing the Lead Professionals' views on the CAF process and multi-agency working, including inhibitors and facilitators. Through this discussion, Lead Professionals attribute some of the changes to alterations to Local Authority practices and government rhetoric.

The final section examines the views of Lead Professionals in relation to the contract culture, decreasing resources and the language surrounding the provision of early help. It concludes by summarising what support schools would like in preparation for recommendations being made for future practice in the following chapter.

6.2 The Increasing Role of Education in the Safeguarding of Children

Foucault argues that subjects need to be examined in their historical frameworks, and he calls this 'genealogy' (Foucault, 1994). Whilst Chapter 4 thematically explores the shifting

understandings and practices regarding the concept of safeguarding, this section provides a chronological overview and finds that ‘safeguarding’ is a fluid term. It includes a new finding, that there was work on the processes embedded in the Every Child Matters Agenda and the Common Assessment Framework prior to the Laming report, which is seen as the catalyst for the focus on multi-agency working in this way.

By looking at a chronology of a selection of key events related to safeguarding (Table 6.1, below), we can begin to understand how the ‘truth and knowledge’ of what is meant by the terms ‘safeguarding’, including how its relationship with the terminology of ‘child protection’ has altered across the decades.

Decade	Selection of Key Events / Documents	Dominant Voice / Considerations
1880s	Children Act 1889 – first law concerned with the protection of, and prevention of cruelty to children.	Social Workers determined concerns for children. (Taylor, 2009)
1960s	Kempe et al.’s (1962) article introduced ‘battered-child syndrome’. Seebohm Report1(1968)	Medical profession now also determined child abuse. Seebohm sought to improve multi-agency working. Unique position of schools recognised, and training recommended.
1970s	Death of Maria Colwell (1973) <i>Memorandum on Non-Accidental Injury</i> (DHSS, 1974b)	All agencies became involved in a ‘blame culture’ and working in a defensive way. (Harris, 1987) Education’s role in spotting abuse increased as language shifted from ‘battered baby’ to ‘non-accidental injury’, and schools were now to attend case conferences.
1980s	Thatcher led the Conservative government, in power at that time, and introduced marketization to public services.	The government focussed on ‘significant harm’ and reduced social service resources. As a result, support decreased, and frustrations between schools and social services arose as schools felt that their concerns were not taken seriously. (Baginsky, 2008; Parton, 2009).

	<p>Children Act 1989 introduced distinction between ‘significant harm’ and ‘child in need’.</p> <p>The first version of <i>Working Together</i> (DES, 1988)</p>	<p>Some services traditionally provided by Social Services now require purchasing from private providers.</p> <p><i>Working Together</i> guided schools on how to safeguard children and work with other agencies (now a statutory duty through the Children Act 1989)</p>
1990s	<p><i>Messages from Research</i> (DoH, 1995).</p> <p>Labour came to power.</p> <p><i>Working Together</i> (DoH, 1999) updated to place emphasis on safeguarding.</p>	<p>The Department of Health’s report included the recognition that if schools did not press their concerns, it was unlikely that a child would go on the Child Protection register. It also called for a focus on safeguarding, which emerged when Labour came into power, through the revised <i>Working Together</i>. (Parton, 2011).</p>
2000s	<p>Laming’s (2003) report in to the death of Victoria Climbié.</p> <p>Every Child Matters (ECM) Agenda (DfES, 2003, 2004a, 2004b) placed a focus on safeguarding, and introduced the Common Assessment Framework.</p> <p>Education Act 2002</p> <p>Children Act 2004</p> <p><i>The Common Assessment Framework For Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners</i> (DfES, 2006a)</p>	<p>Laming’s (2003) report into Victoria’s death led to a refocusing on multi-agency working. This led to ECM, which had a strong onus on multi-agency working. Through the EA 2002 and CA 2004 schools now had a legal duty to co-operate with other agencies, and promote the welfare of children. A strategy for ensuring this was the Common Assessment Framework, which any agency working with children could instigate.</p> <p>The first definition of safeguarding was produced in the DfES (2006a) document, supporting agencies with the CAF process.</p>
2010	<p>Coalition Government.</p> <p>Austerity Measures.</p> <p>Munro’s (2011) report included a call to make early help a statutory duty and for local authorities to design their own Common Assessment Forms and structures for working.</p>	<p>The Coalition continued the marketisation agenda, together with ‘Big Society’ (voluntary work / charities addressing gaps in services) and cuts to local authority budgets. This had an impact on support available to families. (Sidebotham, 2012)</p>

Table 6.1: A Brief Chronology of Safeguarding

The table above illustrates that prior to Thatcher's time in office, child protection was viewed as part of public welfare, and professionals (first Social Workers, later GPs) were seen to have the most authoritative voice in identifying concerns. The first substantive document focussing upon multi-agency working was the Seebohm Report in the late 1960s. During these decades the 'truth' of child protection/safeguarding was that agencies/individuals would identify concerns and report them to Social Services (later called Social Care), who would then investigate and act according to their findings. The power and influence of other 'actors' in determining truths and understandings is illustrated clearly as the media outcry following the death of Maria Colwell resulted in agencies working in a defensive way. However, civil servants (e.g. Social Workers) continued to be the dominant agency when dealing with child protection/safeguarding concerns.

When Thatcher, then leader of the Conservative Party, came into power there was a paradigm shift. Services now became part of the market system, with support now being bought and sold, rather than automatically provided by the State. Welfare, in the form of safeguarding, was something not necessarily provided by the State through Social Services. Therefore, we can see evidence supporting an element of Foucault's concept of 'biopower'. Here, people are viewed as a resource, a means of gaining wealth for the state, through the purchasing of resources (Danaher et al., 2000). There is evidence of Foucault's claim that 'knowledge and truth' are shaped by power struggles, as government reduced support for Social Services, they responded by increasing the threshold for support, and consequently schools became frustrated with the lack of support for children (Baginsky, 2008).

Concurrent to this power struggle, the Conservative Government passed the Children Act 1989, which distinguished between 'significant harm' and 'child in need' without providing clear definitions of the two terms. The CA 1989 clearly places a duty on schools to refer

concerns about potential abuse to Social Services (later called Social Care), and it places an additional requirement on them to also respond to concerns regarding children's welfare, together with other agencies. Different forces then came into play to shape how this translated into practice, such as media outcries (for example, in relation to the deaths of Jasmine Beckford and Kimberley Carlile), the first publication of *Working Together* (a guide for agencies on how they should work together), and a reduction in the support provided by Social Services. Interviewees involved in Policy development commented on the confusion from the CA 1989, particularly what is understood to be a 'safeguarding' and a 'child protection' concern, and how this should work at the time was also unclear, leading to the *Messages From Research* (DHSS, 1995) concluding that there needed to be a refocusing on safeguarding.

The impact of this report, and the subsequent changes to the understandings of the term safeguarding, can be seen through New Labour's term in office. Here, the title of the revised *Working Together* document includes the phrase '*To Safeguard And Promote The Welfare Of Children,*' (DCSF, 2010). Practices then evolved, including the Common Assessment Framework, originally designed to enable agencies to hold multi-agency meetings, where families and other agencies work together to improve things for the child(ren). During this time, Thatcher's 'New Right' ideology of markets and marketisation was further developed and rebadged under the terminology of 'The Third Way.' Consequently, to continue to produce wealth, children are seen as future economic providers through the elements of 'Economic Wellbeing' and 'Make a Positive Contribution' in *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2004). This relates to Foucault's concept of 'biopower' as this focus would enable those in position to retain and build their wealth (Rabinow, 1984; Danaher, 2000), through the lowering of the Welfare Budget, and the revenue accrued by the workforce. There are also examples of the second element of Foucault's concept of biopower, 'regulatory control'

(Rabinow, 1984:262). Foucault argues that, whilst governance includes looking at ways that the people can keep those in power in position, and increase their wealth; there are also mechanisms of ‘policing’ to ensure this occurs. This included schools receiving Ofsted inspections, part of which focussed on Safeguarding, their responsibilities in this area being further mandated through the Education Act 2002 (which requires governing bodies and local authorities to make arrangements to meet safeguarding needs) and Children Act 2004 (which further promotes multi-agency working and provides a statutory duty on agencies to work together).

The CA 2004 may be seen as part of a response to Laming’s (2003) report on the tragic death of Victoria Climbié. The Laming report is viewed by some to be the catalyst for the focus on multi-agency working, (Baginsky, 2008; Parton, 2011) yet this research finds that work was already being piloted on this area, and that the report was used as a platform to drive the changes forward – for example, the role of the Lead Professional and multi-agency meetings. Three years later non-statutory guidance was provided on multi-agency working to support children with ‘additional’ or safeguarding needs through the Common Assessment Framework (DfES, 2006a).

The term ‘additional’ need is used in relation to ‘welfare’ or ‘safeguarding’ concerns (that is, an issue which may not warrant social care support and may be addressed through the Common Assessment Framework), and it is recognised that since the CA 1989 situations that fall into this category have increased (Department of Health, 2002; Behan *et al.*, 2005; and Gilbert *et al.*, 2008). This relates to Foucault’s argument that ‘knowledge’ and ‘truth’ are shifting concepts, influenced by a range of factors because historically, the range of needs addressed, thresholds for access and quantity of support for children with additional needs

have been influenced by government priorities, local resources and finances (Baginsky, 2008; DoH, 1995; Parton 2009; Stone and Rixon, 2008).

At the time of this research the Coalition government (Conservative and Liberal Democrats) were in power. Through the continuation of the marketization agenda (further services now charge for their support, and semi-private schools are opened through the Academies agenda) there is further evidence of 'biopower'. It may be argued that a new 'truth' is emerging as the Coalition tried to distance themselves from the Labour terminology, as evidenced by interviewees with those involved in formulating policies, and the documents themselves. For example, the language moved from 'safeguarding' to 'Early Help'. There is also an increased focus on the people as an economic workforce through the 'Troubled Families Initiative' (with its focus on families out of work, missing school, involved in crime or causing expense to the public purse) from 'Every Child Matters' (which has a wider range of target groups). Throughout this time the 'truth' of safeguarding has also been influenced by austerity measures, designed to help the country out of recession. The subsequent cuts impacted the resources available for children, a view supported in literature (Harris, 2010), and in the empirical evidence (e.g. no support for teenage mums, reduction in staffing at CAMHS).

All interviewees at all levels clearly felt that austerity measures impacted not only resources, but also the way that agencies worked. Consequently, whilst most schools took the role of Lead Professional in CAF meetings (which had also been the case in the past, see Dagely et al., 2007; Baginsky, 2008; Gilbert et al., 2008); now there was an increasing feeling from other agencies that it was the school's responsibility to take on this role, building on findings of Social Investment Systems (2009).

The interviews were held shortly after the Coalition coming in to power, so the true impact of changes were not yet fully embedded. For example, Local Authorities were still responding

to calls for local decisions in relation to reports including the Munro (2011) report, which acknowledged concerns regarding the way in which child protection had become a defensive practice, as well as the need for guidance to be slimmed. It also recommended that Local Authorities adapt the Common Assessment Framework to local needs, and the redrafting of *Working Together* was not yet complete.

This section has explored Foucault's concepts of governance, biopower and truth and knowledge in relation to safeguarding through the Common Assessment Framework. It has found that 'truth' and 'knowledge' are not fixed, they evolve with time. For example, it would be unthinkable for schools to support families with welfare concerns in the 1960s. It has illustrated how the understandings are developed through governance, which is constituted by the power plays of different agencies (such as schools, social services, government policies and the media). This has then been related to biopower in terms of safeguarding as a tool for ensuring economic wellbeing (to help those in power accrue further wealth) and the ways in which it is enforced (through strategies such as Ofsted inspections). The following section explores Foucault's concept of self-governance through looking at how the Lead Professionals interviewed perceive this offer of 'Early Help' to be evolving in their authority, and compares their experiences of multi-agency working to those recognised in the literature in this field.

6.3 Schools Perceptions of the Common Assessment Framework

6.3.1 Introduction

This section details how schools' response to the Common Assessment Framework may be seen as 'self governing'. Whilst recognising and detailing differences between the two areas,

it begins by looking at common elements, and comparing the emerging picture to the model for CAF working provided by the CWDC in 2009.

Foucault stated that power is most effective when hidden from view. This can be related to biopower, when the subject becomes self-regulatory (Danaher et al., 2000). Here, it is clear that engagement with the Common Assessment Framework is not mandatory, yet many schools continue to use it, so those interviewed may be viewed as predisposed to being committed to the CAF process, and wanting it to be successful. Therefore, the ‘silent power’ encourages them to believe that the CAF may support families. That borne in mind, this section illustrates views regarding the school’s role in the CAF process, including views regarding the benefits of working in this way before moving on to experiences of working with other agencies. Whilst confirming many of the inhibitors and facilitators for successful multi-agency working identified in literature to date, it also raises new issues, including the work involved prior to calling a CAF; the financial cost of engaging in CAFs, particularly as a number of agencies now charge schools for their attendance at CAF meetings as well as their time supporting children; the negative impact that a lack of resources for CAFs may have on relationships between families and schools should educationalists be successful in persuading parents to engage to find that support is unavailable; and difficulties schools may experience as other agencies remodel / have a high staff turnover.

The thesis then explores the relationship with social care and, more in particular, how changes to the definition of safeguarding and working practices proposed in the consultative draft of *Working Together* (DfE, 2012b) can already be seen as being implemented. It therefore illustrates how some cases previously deemed ‘Child in Need’ are now being reclassified as ‘CAF’ with the expectation that the school will be the Lead Professional. This

section concludes by discussing communication and funding issues and emphasising that, despite the difficulties, schools still viewed CAF support as an important part of their role.

6.3.2 The CAF Model: A Case of Increasing Steps

In 2009 the Children’s Workforce Development Council provided a four step model to guide agencies in how to work together under the Common Assessment Framework (Figure 6.1, below). In it any agency can identify concerns, then call a CAF meeting that other agencies may then attend. There is no implication that the school will be the dominant agency nor that they would meet the costs of other agencies in supporting a child.

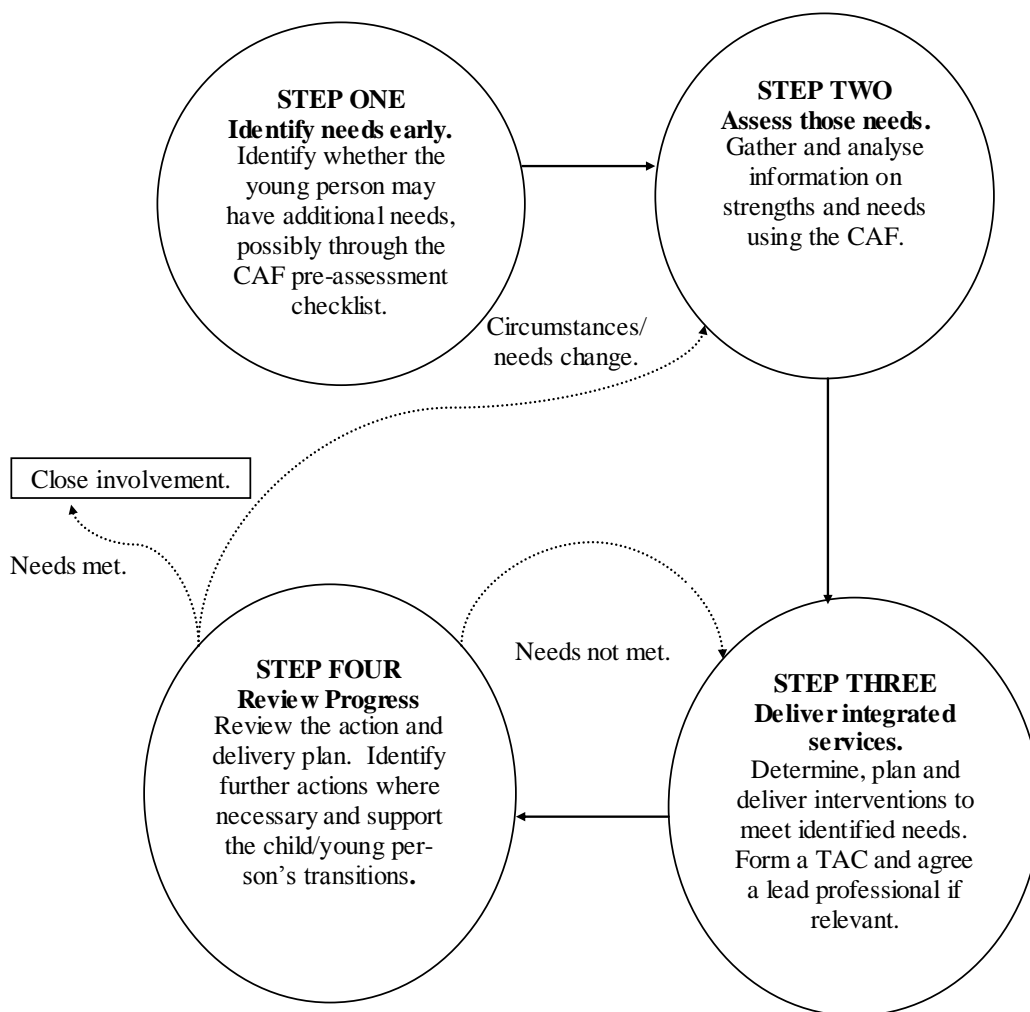


Figure 6.1: The Four-Step CAF Process (Adapted from CWDC, 2009: 43)

However, data gained through interviews for this thesis illustrates that schools felt that the model in reality was quite different. They often received calls asking them to ‘call a CAF’ and investigate concerns regarding a child’s welfare. Schools would previously then contact CAF Officers for guidance on which agencies to contact for possible help, but are increasingly needed to fund support themselves (for example, in terms of buying back services from the local authority, and in some cases paying other professionals to attend meetings). Whilst the ‘buy back’ of support was prevalent in both authorities, the culture of schools meeting the financial requirements for providing support was much more embedded in one of the two authorities as they also trained Teaching Assistants to meet the pastoral needs of their children, purchased Family Support Workers across clusters (previously employed by Local Authorities) and purchased trained counsellors. A new flow chart therefore emerged from the schools regarding the CAF process, detailed below (figure 6.2).

In the new model (figure 6.2, below) schools are the central agency. They may raise concerns themselves, or be the conduit for other agencies/individuals (including members of the local community) to ensure concerns they have noticed are dealt with without the original agency needing to play a key role. All schools then refer concerns that may fall under the banner of child protection to Social Care. Social Care then consider the issues raised, and decide whether to investigate. If not, the school can continue to keep a watchful eye on the family, or take things further by instigating a CAF. (Please note, not all CAFs are addressing Child Protection concerns though, this is one area that they are used for). The diagram also illustrates a new finding – that where Social Care has found there may be cause for concern, but parents are not working with them, for example refusing entry to the home, a professionals meeting can be held and Social Care may request that the school deals with the case through the CAF process instead. In all of these situations the first step is to get the

family on board, and complete a Common Assessment Form. Using this document, they can contact other agencies for help (although this may also require additional paperwork, e.g. CAMHS referrals). If agencies charge for attendance at meetings, the school then decides if they will meet the costs, potentially determining if the Team Around the Child meeting will go ahead. Where the schools do decide to pay, they often ask for reports that they then take to the meeting. There was a concern that schools may begin the process in good faith but then find that they are unable to purchase support; or, if it is 'free' find there are higher thresholds for access, long waiting lists and/or reduced interventions. During this time there may be a negative impact on the trust between the family and the school, as parents may feel that the school is letting them down.

Possibilities of negative impact aside, the emerging process suggests education is viewed as having the primary responsibility with regards to instigating and leading the Common Assessment Framework as other agencies are seen to charge schools for their involvement in the CAF process, and where this was the case all but one Lead Professional accepted this and responded to this request). This may be viewed as evidence of Foucault's 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1995) – subjects that, after governance has exerted power over them (for example, through the watchful eye of Ofsted; or through the power of self-governance as they feel duty bound to help children), become compliant and do not question. The charging for services is a new finding, whilst the expectation that the school take the lead role echoes previous findings that schools are often the Lead Professional (Gilbert *et al.*, 2008; Holmes *et al.*, 2012) and strengthens Social Information Systems' (2009) view that other agencies felt that schools should undertake this role. For example, during the observation an attendee stated 'Schools do CAFs' and a range of schools spoke of agencies calling them, asking them to investigate concerns about children and call a meeting.

PRIOR TO SCHOOL AGE
Health Visitors and others identify needs that may be addressed through CAF process.

CHILD IN PRIMARY SCHOOL
CAF continues, if Lead Professional is the Health Visitor the school takes over Lead Professional role before the child is 5.

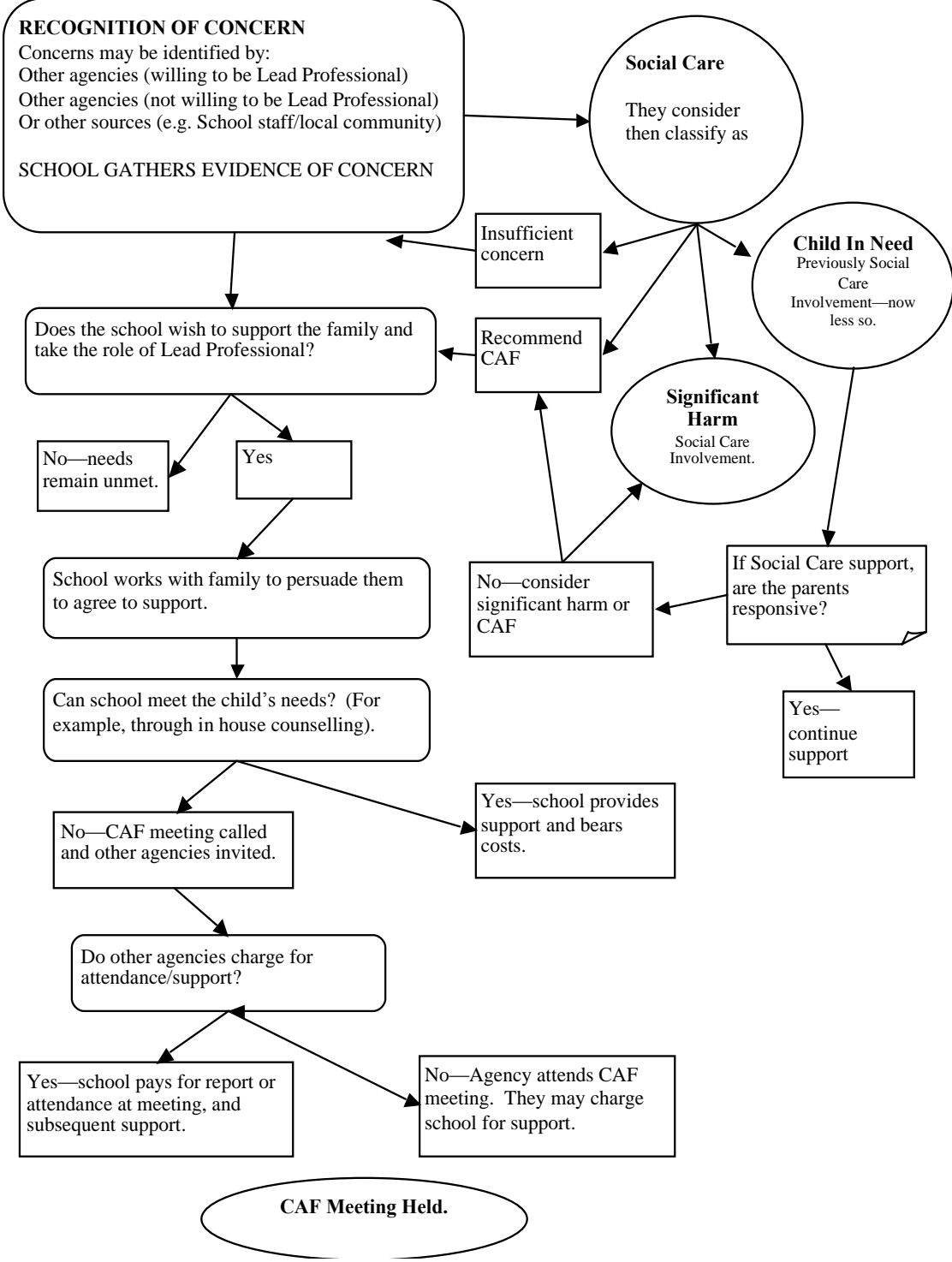


Figure 6.2: The Emerging Model of the CAF Process from An Educational Viewpoint

It was interesting to note that this included the CAF Officer in one authority asking the school to take the Lead Professional role for a case that would either be classified as CAF or Child in Need. As there are clearly costs for schools taking on this role, the next section therefore explores why they felt this was a worthwhile use of school resources.

6.3.3 The Benefits of Multi-Agency Working

When discussing the benefits of multi-agency working, those factors recognised in the literature such as increased attainment, improved behavior and better relationships for child – this was viewed as the primary benefit of the CAF. This sense of duty may again be viewed as an example of biopolitics, where it is the individuals' belief about their responsibilities, which drive their action. The following section therefore looks at the Lead Professional views regarding the official first step of this process, the completion of the Common Assessment Form.

6.3.4 Views regarding the Common Assessment Form

Schools argued that a substantial amount of time could be spent with parents building relationships and persuading them that a CAF may help their family, an issue that is not recognised in literature to date. Once an agreement is reached to complete the form together, an additional 'new finding' was the concern that it relies on parents telling you the truth. There was an agreement that the form was time consuming, (confirming NUT 2005; Social Investment Systems (SIS), 2009 and Holmes et al, 2012); and it was an add on to other roles (indeed several Headteachers commented they took this role as the school could not afford

staff to be out of class regularly to do such work). Whilst some felt that the form was intrusive, others supported Oliver *et al.*'s (2010) finding that it improved the information collated as the detail needed for the form lead to a deeper understanding of the family, and sometimes highlighted concerns that were not previously identified. There was strong agreement with Social Investment Systems' (2009) finding that the CAF form did not reduce the need for other paperwork to be completed for referrals to other agencies, (particularly when referring to CAMHS), nor did it necessarily guarantee support from other agencies. However, SIS' finding that it was sometimes unclear when to use it for SEN issues was not substantiated at any point. Whilst some felt that the CAF form was onerous, there was a general agreement that sometimes the additional information that you would not normally seek could help target support, consequently it formed a good 'starting point' for sharing information with other agencies. Once contact is made, and multi-agency work begins, the factors that Lead Professionals in schools feel aid effective multi-agency working are discussed below.

6.3.5 Facilitators for Multi-Agency Working

When discussing facilitators for effective multi-agency working the dominant theme was training. Therefore, before discussing other ways in which multi-agency working may be strengthened, this section relates findings to the remit of training as determined by *Working Together* (DCSF, 2010), both in terms of training and subsequent practice. Through this, a clear difference in the organisation of training and support for better understanding of the identity, priorities and practices of other agencies emerge between the two authorities. However, there are clear agreements between professionals in both authorities with regards to what their training needs are, and elements of good practice. As Lead Professionals feel that

some issues are not yet addressed well (for example, thresholds for support, communication and decision making), these are discussed in more detail in the later section, *Inhibitors for Multi-Agency Working*.

It is recognised that the quality and consistency of training can vary between authorities (Behan *et al*, 2005) and this was evident in the way in which the two authorities organised their training. Formal training for the Common Assessment Framework in Authority A was suspended during the twelve months that the interviews took place for this research. Instead, a CAF Officer was available for 1:1 sessions with staff at schools, and some interviewees stated that this had been the way in which CAF training had been organised for several years. In contrast, Authority B had an education CAF training department, and schools were able to contact trainers after sessions for advice. This may be seen as a clear response to the concern that there is little training from a purely educational viewpoint (Carpenter *et al.*, 2010). Both systems seemed to have their issues. In Authority A, staff that had been in post prior to the changes in training felt that the one to one sessions sufficed, whereas those that had only received 1:1 training felt 'unprepared' (E1) at times. In Authority B the main concern was in regard to the fragmentation of training. That is to say, different local authority departments ran training and schools were sometimes unclear what they were able to access.

Within these frameworks trainers are tasked with ensuring that training fosters:

1. A shared understanding of the tasks, processes, principles, roles and responsibilities outlined in the national guidance and local arrangements for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare;
2. More effective and integrated services at both the strategic and individual case level;
3. Improved communication and information sharing between professionals, including a common understanding of key terms, definitions and thresholds for action;
4. Effective working relationships, including an ability to work in multi-disciplinary groups or teams;
5. Sound child focused assessments and decision making; and
6. Learning from Serious Case Reviews and reviews of child deaths.

(DCSF, 2010: 4.4)

With regard to point one, two interviewees agreed that there should be a statutory obligation to participate in early help provision, as recommended by Department of Health (2002) and again by Munro (2011). One interviewee strongly believed that the language needed to change to ‘You must’ (LA2) rather than mere recommendations to force agencies to work in this way. Both a Local Authority and Lead Professionals stated that there should be national guidelines for training, rather than just the *Working Together* document upon which training is based.

In both authorities, it was felt that the focus was on how to complete the paperwork in training sessions. There was an agreement that multi-agency training was an important tool in breaking down barriers between agencies, particularly by understanding each other’s remit and thresholds for support, but this was not always fully exploited. In Authority A there was an acknowledgement that there was a lot of work on this in the early days of the CAF process – several meetings where professionals got together and shared training / discussed fictional cases; but that pressures on time caused schools to gradually withdraw from this opportunity. Respondents in Authority B also discussed multi-agency training days and short local meetings in the early days of the CAF process, and this still happened. There were formal training days, organised by a different training department and charged for. One interviewee spoke of multi-agency lunches held once a term for professionals in the local cluster, which they attended. This addresses a need for a focus on opportunities on how to work with other agencies, highlighted by Baginsky (2005) as during these meetings ‘live’ cases were brainstormed so that ways of working could be explored. Two other interviewees spoke of these opportunities but stated that pressures on school time meant they were not always able to attend, echoing Gilbert et al.’s (2008) finding that staffing and finance issues may affect schools’ ability to access support.

However, cost did not always prevent schools from accessing training. Indeed, in Authority B there was an example of a school purchasing and delivering NSPCC training materials for all staff in addition to authority based training and a consensus that the authority provided quality training in response to their needs. For example, one issue for four schools was handling difficult conversations with parents, and a school in Authority B acknowledged that training was available on this.

When interviewees in both authorities were asked what they would like training to focus upon, there was a clear consensus that a better understanding of what each agency did and how to access support was still required, therefore suggesting that this element of training is not yet fully met. In addition to this, personal relationships with those you are working with (for example, a named trainer in the authority that can be contacted after training is completed) was highly valued, and there was a clear call for a 'Who's Who' with contact details of people within the authority, and a brief description of their role to aid multi-agency working.

Whilst most Lead Professionals have devised their own lists of contacts and agencies through their time in post, the importance of Children's Centre as a centre of information for other local agencies was clear in the research. Although one school had poor communication with their Children's Centre, all other schools that had a Children Centre nearby found it beneficial to multi-agency working. This was because some children may be referred there for support, particularly if there was a sibling under 5, but not always.

In addition to training, a central facilitator was the personal relationship with other individuals involved in the CAF process. This included positive relationships with families (as discussed previously) and other professionals. As it is argued that training is designed to develop knowledge skills and attitudes for multi-agency working (Glennie, 2007; see table

2.1) it is worth noting that some of these elements are highlighted as important characteristics by Lead Professionals. These include a professional joint purpose, with clear lines of communication. The schools want some-one that is not only clear what their agency may be able to offer, but who comes to meeting prepared with ideas and actions they are in a position to sanction, and are sometimes willing to exceed the remit of their own agency to meet the needs of the child. Assertiveness and the ability to be a critical friend and challenge beliefs were also valued.

Whilst this section explores how training may be a strong facilitator in effective multi-agency working, it is important to emphasise two points. First, good relationships are a key tool, and secondly, not all elements of training are successful in the opinions of Lead Professionals in schools. That is to say, they find that there are still issues with working relationships, communication and accessing resources. These are discussed in the following section, *Inhibitors for Multi-Agency working*.

6.3.6 Inhibitors for Multi-Agency Working

This section addresses compares the issues that Lead Professionals in schools felt prevented effective multi-agency working to those in the literature. Whilst this section finds that most recognised inhibitors, such as lack of resources, increased workload and fear of blame are validated through the findings, it stresses the issue of communication and also makes two additional key points. The first point relates to power, as schools often express their frustration at being unable to force compliance from families or other agencies. The second point addresses issues that are not prevalent in the literature which have emerged through the interviews. These include staffing issues, disillusionment with the CAF process, and the impact that strategies to make access to services / engagement with the CAF process more

difficult is having on the relationship between school and families in some settings, as listed in table 6.2, below.

Inhibitors to Multi-Agency Working as Viewed by Lead Professionals in Schools	
Themes Identified in Literature Review	Additional Themes
GPs difficult to engage. Lack of resources. Differences in professional priorities, identities and cultures. Relationships and bias between different agencies. Staff shortages. Perceived increase in workload. Lack of knowledge about thresholds for intervention. Unsure of line between safeguarding and child in need concern. Fear of blame / wish not to take responsibility. Communication issues. Cuts.	Power. Changes to practice detailed in proposed revisions to <i>Working Together</i> already evident in some schools. Charging – costs for schools. Strategies by other agencies to deny access to resources having an impact on relationships between families and schools. Disillusionment with the CAF process.

Table 6.2: Inhibitors to Multi-Agency Working

Interviews with Lead Professionals echoed many findings in the Literature Review regarding inhibitors to multi-agency working. For example, it is noted that GPs are difficult to engage (Laming, 2009; Oliver, 2010) and in *Findings* the negative impact that this may have on the relationship between families and schools is discussed, as some GPs told parents that ‘poor teaching’ contributed to the child’s poor behaviour. In addition to this, Housing and CAMHS were named as hard to reach agencies in both authorities. It was argued that housing, if they became involved, were only able to offer support with filling forms. In contrast, all Lead Professionals valued the work that CAMHS did once they became involved, but stated that thresholds for support were increasing whilst time spent communicating with other agencies and working with families were decreasing as a result of cuts. This has led to confusion regarding how severe a child needs should be in order to satisfy criteria for support, again a recognised inhibitor to multi-agency working (Daniels et al., 2007; Horwath, 2009; Walker

2008). However, Lead Professionals recognised that depleting resources impacted the school's ability to source support for families. In Authority A this resulted in long waiting lists, complicated by the loss of local CAF Officers who previously guided schools in which agencies to contact for support; whereas in Authority B schools were purchasing support to address the gap and therefore small schools felt they were at a disadvantage as they were not in a position to meet these costs.

It was stated that part of the issue with gaining support from other agencies related to priorities and power, and this element has two aspects to it: professional identity and prejudice and local priorities. It is argued that multi-agency working involves a lack of ownership; therefore mistrust and prejudices regarding the validity of the status of other professionals can impact on working relationships (Atkinson *et al.*, 2005; Behan *et al.*, 2005; Horwath, 2009; Hymans, 2008). Examples of this provided by interview data exposed a range of opinions. For example, one Headteacher felt that all attendees at CAF meetings should be in a managerial position and able to commit resources to the CAF plan; whereas other Heads felt it was more important that the person that knew the child best was heard at these meetings, and that they had discussed with their home agency what support they may be able to offer prior to coming to the meeting. One interviewee, a Family Support Worker (which is not a managerial role) experienced both attitudes. In one meeting she was ignored. Indeed the Chair commented twice that no-one was attending the meeting to represent her school; and in another her opinions and professional knowledge were valued.

The second element of this issue relates to not only profession specific priorities (an issue discussed by Frost and Robinson, 2007) but also local priorities. Take for example, domestic violence. In both authorities schools felt that there were issues with how this was addressed. In Authority A there were examples of schools filling gaps in support previously provided by

Social Care (transport to school from a place of safety, providing clothing and basic material goods). In Authority B there was a concern that domestic violence was not taken seriously. This was evidenced through examples of reports being made to social care of violence in the home, and the school being told not to worry as it was not aimed at the children (one later escalated into a very serious situation, and support was provided); and also a Police Officer stating in a training day that in some geographical areas it may be considered part of the local culture rather than domestic violence, and also commenting they had issues within the County with supporting domestic violence because of issues around support for the family (e.g. availability of housing to move them to). In Authority B some Lead Professionals and the Local Authority interviewee felt that the authority needed to make this a priority area and channel resources at it, as without this they did not have the power to make other agencies support families they felt were in need.

The lack of power to force engagement was also a dominant theme in relation to families themselves. The CAF process is entirely voluntary, and if families do not want support, then it may not even begin. It is important that this inhibitor is recognised and considered in relation to changes to support for a family considered to have a 'child in need' proposed by *Working Together* (DfE, 2012b), which is already being seen as taking place in both authorities. The consultation document states that early help should be targeted at children deemed 'in need' by a social worker (DfE, 2012b: para 6-7), not those with 'additional needs' which fall below this threshold. This means that children previously meeting criteria for social care support may be supported through CAF instead. Although Parton (2009) argues that there has been a focus on decreasing amount of support provided by social care by successive governments, and consequently reduce costs, it is unclear whether this is the intention here. In both authorities, there were examples of 'child in need' cases where parents had disengaged, and so meetings were held to determine whether support should be

provided through CAF or they be escalated to ‘significant harm’. However, costs were not the focus, the relationship between the family and social worker seemed to be the main point of the discussion. In both cases the school felt they had positive relationships with the family, and agreed to take on the role of Lead Professional in the CAF. However, both then later questioned their ability to support the family as they had no access to the home and had to rely on what parents wished to tell them about their drug use.

The proposed changes to *Working Together* (DfE, 2012b) has another potential impact on school practice, which is already evident in some schools. The current document states that schools should not investigate abuse/neglect concerns, they should refer them to Social Care for investigation (DCSF, 2010a: 2.159). This paragraph is not in the consultation document. However, in both authorities there were examples of schools feeling that social care did not take concerns seriously. Indeed social care would ask schools to talk to parents and investigate concerns themselves – this included an allegation of sexual abuse. In Authority A in particular, this has led to some schools filtering what concerns they are reporting to social care, even a lack of trust in the department. This may be seen as providing further evidence to the historical pattern that as reductions in resources impact on the way in which agencies work, particularly social care, this may then result in issues with relationships between agencies, as Social Care feel that schools are over reporting and schools feel that their concerns are not taken seriously (Baginsky, 2008). That said, whilst there were some issues with Social Care in Authority B there was a strong feeling that having a named Social Worker for schools went some way to repairing bridges that may be burned with reductions in help, as the personal relationship contributed to empathy that social care was working under restraint, and it was not necessarily that an individual social worker did not wish to support the family. That is to say, it went some way to preventing the ‘them and us’ culture.

Having a named social worker, and building a personal relationship was one way in which communication may prevent inhibitors developing. However, communication remains a key theme. Whilst, as Laming (2003) recognised in his report into Victoria Climbié's death, and other writers since (Oliver et al., 2010; Holmes et al., 2012), multi-agency communication is of paramount importance in supporting families and preventing crises, even deaths, the view of many Lead Professionals is that communication is still not robust. There were examples of Health Visitors holding CAF meetings for children in Reception classes and not notifying the school; agencies investigating concerns then not informing schools of planned support / withdrawal of services; even Social Care organising case conferences to be held at the school, without informing the school nor inviting them (despite the school having raised concerns to social care). It was also felt that there was still a lack of a shared language, which included the terminology used for the CAF process itself – note that Authority B did not use the language of 'Team Around the Child' therefore CAF referred to the process (Common Assessment Framework), the form (Common Assessment Form) and the multi-agency meeting itself – an issue identified in a recent report by Holmes *et al.*, (2012).

Furthermore, there were two additional aspects of communication explored through the interviews. The first is the issue of communication between other agencies and schools, and the second is what was viewed as deliberate lack of communication to prevent access to resources. Taking the first point, LA interviewees discussed problems targeting information at the right person within a school, as the wide range of staffing structures and job titles meant different people might have this role. When asked about this, most schools wanted information disseminated at Heads meetings (either briefings or cluster groups (meetings of local heads)) with information that may be taken away, including a contact name, so that it may be reflected upon and the person contacted should the need arise. Secondly, some Heads felt that pots of resources were hidden, often commenting that a CAF Officer may let you

know that a certain support package may be available when you contact them with specific concerns, rather than this package being 'advertised' in training, meetings or the website. When this situation occurred it was felt that this was being done as there may be more families meeting the criteria for support than the authority was able to fund.

Cuts therefore were seen as having a multi-faceted impact on support provided through the CAF. Institutions (e.g. CAMHS, Barnardos) were viewed as running on decreasing budgets, which have impacted on their staffing levels, thresholds for support and the amount of support available once a threshold had been met. Others (e.g. Bereavement) were seen to be incorporating stalling tactics to prevent access (6 months before consideration for support). This is evidence of the 'rationing' of support in accordance with local resources identified by Gilligan and Mamby (2008). However, now schools were being asked to meet costs. In Authority A the increased cost focuses upon buy back of services; in Authority B this goes further, with schools purchasing agency attendance at CAF meetings and also providing in house support by training Teaching Assistants, or purchasing external support such as Family Support Workers and Educational Psychologists. In some schools the fear was that this could lead to disillusionment with the CAF process, as discussed in relation to figure 6.2 (above). This is in addition to the internal staffing costs that the school itself would bear (teacher release, time spent chasing other agencies, etc.). Consequently, it was stated that some schools are less inclined to instigate CAFs. One school interviewed stated they now start considerably less CAFs as they did two years ago, as they know that the support is no longer there. Despite this, most Lead Professionals interviewed believe this as a fundamental part of their role. The following section therefore summarises how Lead Professionals in schools view the support provided by the government and local authority help or hinder multi-agency working.

6.4 Government and Local Authority Policies and Practices: The View of Lead Professionals in Schools

6.4.1 Introduction

The crux of this research was to explore the perceptions of Lead Professionals involved in the CAF processes, particularly in relation to multi-agency working. It finds that those interviewed were, on the whole, committed to the process, but that there was recognition that this may not be the case in all schools, nor all agencies. Indeed, some began to state that they were becoming disillusioned and felt that some aspects of multi-agency working had gone backwards (such as the closure of local MAT centres). This section relates their views (which have previously been discussed in detail) to the wider picture of government and local authority practices. It is separated into *Current Perceptions* and as such covers four areas: contract culture; labeling and language; working together; and decreasing resources before finally a separate section details their *Wishes For The Future*.

6.4.2 Current Perceptions

Since Thatcher's time in power a contract culture, and marketisation of support has developed (Stone and Rixon, 2008, Parton, 2009). Schools viewed this to include the 'buy back' of services from local authorities, but also stated that this now included purchasing attendance at CAF meetings and, more recently, the purchasing of support previously provided by the authority, such as Family Support Workers. As such, this was viewed as an issue by schools, as not all were in a financial position to do this, and it relied on support being available in the geographical location you were based in, particularly as some agencies also charged travelling time from a central office within the county. This is an area that some schools felt needed reviewing, and one interviewee had even raised it at strategic meetings within her authority.

An additional barrier provided by governmental policies was that of language. Many interviewees were disturbed by the language associated with policies, e.g. *Troubled Families*, (Communities and Local Government, 2012b) implies that they are ‘trouble’ (Levitas, 2012) and felt that this did not help them persuade parents to become engaged in the CAF process. A lesser point was that of those on benefits being viewed as scroungers in some media (Hinsliff, 2012). This again made it difficult to support families as Lead Professionals needed to reassure parents that CAF is not about professionals making personal judgments about them (a fear highlighted in Holmes *et al.*'s (2012) report). They do not feel that their working status influences their ability to care for their child. Conversely, although more schools are becoming aware of those with difficulties feeding their families and some are able to address this through vouchers for food parcels from local charities including the church. This, of course, is determined by what is available in the area that the school is situated in.

Practitioners in both authorities noted the ‘postcode lottery’ of support; both in terms of what was available and what schools could purchase from the authority’s central location when travelling costs were factored in. The difficulties of county boundaries were also raised, particularly the continued lack of a national database despite the need being identified by Laming (2003). Consequently, in the view of some Lead Professionals, boundary issues remain, particularly as schools cannot easily check if any agency has / has had involvement with a school.

Of course, lack of knowledge about prior concerns or support is only part of the issue. Once needs are identified, there is no statutory duty in law compelling agencies to work together to provide early support for families, and there is no statutory duty in the proposed redraft of the statutory *Working Together* (DfE, 2012b), even though this was recommended in the Munro (2011) report. This means that schools are unable to force agencies to support families, which

contributes to their lack of power at a time they feel when they are being asked to do more as part of the government's 'radical change' (DfE, 2011:16) – such as take the Lead Professional role in CAFs targeting support for children previously meeting thresholds for Social Care support.

Despite this frustration, Lead Professionals acknowledged that many agencies would want to support families; it is the impact of restructuring and cuts, which prevents them from doing so at times. This, in turn, opened up discussions on organisation. Many interviewees in Authority A felt that local MAT centres were effective in helping schools identify sources of support, particularly as they had a local knowledge and would like to return to this model. Those in Authority B, in contrast, valued their named CAF Officer and the person responsible for training in CAFs for the educational sector – her name came up often in a positive way. Other positives included networks that had forged with colleagues within the authority, and some local charities. Therefore, despite the plethora of issues that may deter schools from engaging in CAFs, they continue to feel that it is a vital part of their role. The following section, *Wishes for the Future*, therefore details how Lead Professionals in schools would like to be supported by their Local Authority.

6.4.3 Wishes for the Future

Some aspects of multi-agency working and organisation were celebrated during the interviews. These included the importance of individuals and their commitment to the role (with examples of such people in post); local MAT centres; named contacts (CAF Officer / Trainer / Social Worker); and Children's Centres (due to their detailed knowledge of families, access to resources and local knowledge).

Schools acknowledge that cuts have impacted, and request that agencies be honest about their waiting times so that they may communicate that to parents, and also that they be furnished with contact names and details so that they do not waste time trying to ascertain who the correct person to speak to is. A joint commitment between agencies, including a joint commitment to meet the costs of CAF, was sought. This included the wish that small schools and those in remote locations were at a disadvantage when trying to help families, and that something is done to address this imbalance. In addition to this, they would like new information (for example, about local services) communicated to them in face to face meetings, preferably Heads meetings, with further details to take away and reflect upon.

With regards to training the Department of Health's (2002) recommendation, endorsed by Carpenter *et al.*, (2010) that there should be a national standard was upheld by some interviewees. It was clear that the training provided by Authority B was valued, particularly as some was targeted at particular difficulties they would meet working with families, such as difficult conversations. It was felt that more was needed to understand the thresholds of different agencies, and whilst this seemed a focus when CAFs were introduced, this had decreased over time due to other foci and demands on time.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter, Discussion, has related key findings to Foucault's concepts of power and governance, and the literature detailed in the Literature Review and has highlighted new findings. Grounded in the three research questions it comments that, whilst education has always been viewed as in a strong position to notice child welfare concerns, understandings and practices surrounding safeguarding, that is to say, the 'truth' of safeguarding, has been a fluid concept affected by a range of forces (including marketisation, austerity measures and

cuts in services). This is an example of Foucault's governance, leading to the current understanding in which schools are a central organisation in the CAF process. This has had a financial impact on schools, particularly in Authority B and is detailed through comparing the CWDC's (2009) model for CAF support (figure 6.1) with that which emerges from the interviewees' narrative (figure 6.2). The chapter then moved on to explore how Lead Professionals based in schools view the CAF process. It found that there is an increasing expectation that the school will be the Lead Professional, and that cases previously deemed 'child in need' are beginning to be reclassified as CAF. With this in mind, it then went on to detail the facilitators and inhibitors for multi-agency working. The main facilitators were individual people and their commitment, quality training and the school staff, which may be viewed as illustrations of Foucault's governance of the self. Most inhibitors discussed in the Literature Review were echoed in the findings, particularly that of communication, and new themes emerged, notably, power, changes in practice (including charging schools) and disillusionment with the process. The final section summarised those points, which related to governmental and local authority practices before recapping strategies that were seen as successful and detailing how schools felt they may be better support.

The thesis now moves to its final chapter, Conclusion. In this chapter the research design will be evaluated, particularly in relation to the main findings detailed in this chapter, Discussion. It will then explore possible implications from the findings, and list recommendations in relation to costs, communication, multi-agency working, structures within schools and training. It will then detail any areas identified for future research before summarising findings in relation to the research questions.

CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

The primary purpose of this research is to provide a voice for schools on safeguarding children through the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), which is a recognised gap in the literature (Laming, 2009; Carpenter *et al.*, 2010: 169; Gasper, 2010). Research is grounded in a genealogy of the concept of safeguarding in relation to this, so that the evolving nature of what ‘safeguarding’ means and the lack of firm understandings and unified practice is established. This study shows that schools are increasingly becoming the primary provider and instigator of support under the CAF process, and as such issues including costs, resources, lack of power and expertise available are limiting the support that children and families receive. Therefore a new model for the CAF process is emerging from their narratives. It finds that, from an educational viewpoint, other agencies place an onus on schools to support families through the CAF. The marketization of services, and closure/reduction of some services previously provided by Local Authorities Services, has resulted in some schools purchasing such support or trying to train their own staff so that provision can be provided in house. Some schools also feel that they are dealing with cases that they do not have the expertise to support, for example, when they are asked to take on a ‘Child in Need’ case involving drug use by a parent by Social Care. Whilst the schools interviewed were meeting those challenges, there was an acknowledgement that some schools had become disillusioned by the process, and were therefore no longer committed to the CAF process. As CAF is optional, there was concern that should parents/other professionals not wish to engage the child’s needs are left unaddressed.

This chapter is organized into three further sections. It begins by presenting an overview of findings and highlights those that contribute to new knowledge, which subsequently forms the basis of the recommendations for future practice. Suggestions for future research are discussed before a concluding statement is made.

7.2 Review of Findings

7.2.1 Introduction

To recap, there are three central research questions through which the perceptions of Lead Professionals for the CAF process based in educational settings emerge. They are:

- 4 Why have schools come to play an increasing role in the safeguarding of children?
- 5 How have schools come to understand the Common Assessment Framework through their experience of using it to work with other agencies to support children?
- 6 How do Lead Professionals working in a multi-agency context view the support provided by government/local authority practices, processes and strategies for overcoming established issues?

Research on these questions included a review of the literature, an observation of a training session and interviews with policy advisors, members of the local authority and lead professionals in primary schools. This section now proceeds to address each question in turn.

7.2.2 Why have schools come to play an increasing role in the safeguarding of children?

This question has primarily been addressed by examining the history of the concept from a Foucauldian perspective. As such, there is evidence that there are a variety of powers that have shaped the direction of safeguarding since the Seebohm Report (1968) where the first clear vision of multi-agency working seems to have been presented. These powers have included the press, government ideology, biopower and self-governance.

Media reaction to child deaths is a major contributor to changes to practices within safeguarding and child protection. In the case of the death of Victoria Climbié, Laming's

(2003) report is believed to have been the catalyst for the development of the Every Child Matters Agenda (DES, 2004). The ECM focuses on the holistic needs of all children. Subsequent to this report, it was determined that each child's needs at a particular point in time fell into one of four categories:

1. Significant harm, where the child may need to be removed from the home;
2. Child in need, where focus support may be required from a social worker;
3. Additional need, where support may be provided by a group of specialist agencies; or
4. Universal, where children are taught to keep themselves safe.

Category three, 'Additional need' led to the development of the Common Assessment Framework (DfES, 2006a). Within this framework any agency working with a child/ family could identify needs that may be addressed by a range of support (for example, bereavement, mental health) and, with the parents' permission, call a meeting of agencies so that a plan to support the family may be devised. There would be a Lead Professional, who would oversee this process, for example by calling meetings and sharing information about the family. However, this thesis provides an alternate narrative. It emerged that both 'policy' interviewees were heavily involved in work on strengthening multi-agency working and introduction of the multi-agency meeting and lead professional. Therefore, the outcry to Victoria Climbié's death became the vehicle to implement the strategies already tested through pilot studies. These strategies formed a fundamental element of the ECM agenda and subsequent drive to develop multi-agency work.

It is also believed that media outcry is also a contributory factor to defensive working (Harris, 1987; Taylor, 2009). This means that agencies have become increasingly concerned with following procedure, rather than focussing on the needs of the child/family, in order to

protect themselves from blame should their roles be scrutinised. However, in the case of schools, it is interesting to note that most headteachers were unaware of the key document, *Working Together*, which details the responsibilities of different agencies and provides further guidance for specific circumstances. This therefore questions whether schools are primarily concerned with defensive working.

This thesis also argues that governmental ideology has also shaped safeguarding, and that there is evidence that ‘truths’ and ‘power’ are fluid, as suggested by Foucault. For example, at the time of the Seebohm Report (1968) the Social Worker was the central expert in child protection, and teachers’ were to report concerns and improve their own knowledge of ‘social handicaps’, which it was believed was a major contributory factor to child abuse at that time. In 2010, schools are charged with identifying concerns, determining if they warrant social care involvement, and, if not, persuading parents to accept support from agencies they identify (sometimes with additional guidance from CAF Officers) or support they provide themselves. The current situation would have been difficult to imagine in the 1960s.

Changes from the social worker as the central actor, to the focus of social workers’ expertise on only the most severe end of the child protection spectrum has been attributed to a variety of factors in this thesis. These include the marketization of services, particularly during Thatcher’s term of office, which was then extended during New Labour’s government. As services that were previously provided by Social Services were increasingly provided by private providers, and subject to market forces, schools’ role as a purchaser increased (for example, by buying support from the authority – commonly known as ‘buy back’). New Labour also, arguably, used the safeguarding agenda as a tool to develop future workforces, which Foucault argues is linked with strengthening their own power, (Danaher et al., 2000). The Coalition government (Conservative and Liberal Democrat) then tightened the focus of

safeguarding through austerity measures (subsequently reducing services available) and a new focus (such as the *Troubled Families Initiative*). Consequently, fewer services were funded directly by the Local Authority, and schools therefore needed to purchase support and look at alternate providers, such as charities.

With such a fundamental change in the way schools respond to welfare concerns since the 1960s, one may question how schools have been persuaded to take on this increasing role. This thesis suggests it has been through ‘biopower’. Foucault argues that ‘biopower’ is the silent way in which subjects are persuaded to adhere to the wishes of a different power. For example, in the case of schools, the government checked that schools were complying with the safeguarding agenda through Ofsted inspections. In the 2000s this included a focus on safeguarding as a part of all Ofsted reports.

Foucault argues that ‘silent power’ is highly effective, particularly when the subject governs himself or herself. In this thesis we see evidence of this. Many Lead Professionals felt that, despite the difficulties within the CAF process, it was their responsibility and their duty to use it to support the child(ren).

This section has provided a brief overview of how schools have become a more prominent actor in the field of safeguarding. The following section examines their experiences of safeguarding through the Common Assessment Framework.

7.2.3 How have schools come to understand the Common Assessment Framework through their experience of using it to work with other agencies to support children?

With a context provided through Question One, Question Two provides a picture of the CAF process from an educational viewpoint. Data was primarily gained from interviews. This enables us to see how individuals have shaped the CAF process in their own institutions, as

the importance of the individual is recognised in developing understandings of different situations (Searle, 1995). In contrast Stake (1995) argues that this forms a poor basis to form generalisations, and the author would agree that this research provides a picture from a selection of schools in two counties, therefore different schools and different counties may yield different themes, particularly as there are variations in CAF processes across different authorities (Holmes et al., 2012). However, through interviewing Lead Professionals in two counties some themes were echoed in both locations. This facilitated the creation of a new model, which encompassed the majority of voices.

As participation in the research was voluntary, and a requirement for involvement in the study was that interviewees had taken the role of Lead Professional in meetings within the last twelve months, they could be viewed as committed to CAF, as they may be leaders based in schools who choose not engage with the CAF process and therefore may provide a different opinion as one delved into the reasons behind their disengagement. That acknowledged, it was an appropriate way to organise this study due to the size of the sample (twenty-four interviewees in total) particularly as those not involved with the CAF process would be unable to respond to some of the questions asked. It is therefore a purposive sample (Denscombe 2007) where interviewees have been selected with the research needs in mind.

All interviewees were committed to the CAF process; however, there were some issues in both authorities, which hindered its successful implementation. In Authority A these centred on lack of resources and training, and the Local Authority reorganisation of staff and departments leading to confusion regarding who to contact when; and streamlining of staff and departments left some heads feeling like a lot of local knowledge was lost and resources were overstretched. In Authority B it centred on schools being expected to fund

interventions. Common themes emerged across the two authorities with regards to the CAF process; notably: cost of CAF (due to buy back, schools employing staff previously employed at an authority level, training staff to work with children and purchasing expertise); cuts affecting resources; training issues, and disillusionment. Through this a new model of safeguarding emerged (see figure 6.2) which not only emphasises that other agencies expect schools to be the Lead Professional but also offers new findings as schools feel that other agencies are putting the onus on them to start the CAF process (i.e. they call schools with their concerns and ask them to start a CAF), and some agencies are requiring schools to pay them to attend meetings. In addition to this there were two examples of Child in Need cases where parents did not co-operate with Social Care, and schools were subsequently being asked to support the family through the CAF process so that it did not escalate to a significant harm concern, indicating that Social Care are requesting this level of support from schools too.

Whilst it is important to recognise that thresholds for support were seen to have risen in all areas of support (CAMHS, Bereavement, etc.), there were specific ‘fallouts’ from the lack of support and intervention from Social Care in certain situations. Relationships with Social Care in both authorities appeared to have suffered due to thresholds for support being raised, a situation that was evident in previous decades (Horwath, 2009; Walker, 2008). However, here the interviewees express their concern on the impact this has within the school setting. Examples include staff, distressed that a child has made a disclosure, then does not see any action and does not understand why, which affects them. There were also examples of children being angry with the people they made disclosures to, as they felt they trusted them, and expected things to change, and they did not. Concerns were also raised over the

expectation that schools discuss allegations with parents first, as this often resulted in a punishment for the child when they got home, so the child no longer expressed their concerns to the school.

Schools recognised that Social Care was operating with reduced resources, impacting the support available, and felt that this influenced what schools were expected to do. As a result of cuts and other changes these additional roles included addressing gaps in support (such as training Teaching Assistants in bereavement counselling and Positive Parenting Programmes) as well as passing out tokens to families in need of food parcels from local charities.

Inhibitors and facilitators for multi-agency working discussed in the literature review were confirmed in the Findings with two exceptions. First, schools were confident in their own definitions distinguishing between ‘Child in Need’ and ‘safeguarding’ concerns, (Baginsky, 2007). However, although some concerns were ‘Child in Need’, the rising of thresholds and subsequent lack of support for these families made them frustrated. The second exception was that schools did not discuss CAF in terms of preventing future blame (although during one interview, the Head spoke to a CAF Officer regarding lack of support from CAMHS and was told to document everything so they could prove what they had tried to do should they need to at a future date –

Facilitators	Inhibitors
The Common Assessment Form. Training. Agencies coming to meetings prepared.	Workload. Difficult to engage agencies (CAMHS, GP). Resources.

<p>A named trainer that could be contacted at a later date.</p> <p>Individuals committed to the CAF process.</p> <p>A named Social Worker.</p> <p>Power (to make decisions).</p> <p>Training tailored to specific needs (such as engaging parents and handling difficult conversations).</p>	<p>Different identities / priorities between agencies.</p> <p>Language associated with unemployment etc.</p> <p>Waiting times.</p> <p>Poor communication.</p> <p>Costs.</p> <p>‘Hidden’ resources.</p> <p>Lack of power (to enforce participation in CAF).</p> <p>Relies on parents telling you the truth.</p> <p>Disillusionment with the CAF process.</p>
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Table 7.1: Facilitators and Inhibitors to Multi-Agency Working

this was not the response the Headteacher wanted). Additional facilitators and inhibitors to multi-agency working were raised through the interviews, highlighted in bold in Table 7.1, below. The ‘coal face’ of multi-agency working exposed, in Question Three then sought the views of Lead Professionals on the support they receive at a national and local authority level.

7.2.4 How do Lead Professionals working in a multi-agency context view the support provided by government/local authority practices, processes and strategies for overcoming established issues?

This section continues to find that cuts are having an impact on services, and that the choices made by each separate authority in how to make those cuts highlight how multi-agency working may be supported. As a result of the cuts to other agencies, schools are experiencing a ‘double whammy’. As other agencies decrease the scope of what they are prepared to pay for, resulting in an increase in costs for schools that are committed to early support at a time

where there is no additional money to pay for it and a reduction in local support available due to the centralisation of MAT Centres. It also finds that there is frustration that, whilst those interviewed remain wedded to the principles of CAF, they believe they should be given more support with forcing compliance from other agencies and parents.

At a governmental level, there was acknowledgement that cuts need to be made, but also agreement that this is having an impact on what needs could be met, (Nandy, 2012). There was also frustration with the lack of power that schools had to force other agencies to participate in the CAF process, particularly as a statutory duty was recommended in the recent Munro Report (2011, recommendation 10). In addition, there was frustration with the language that the current government used in relation to those on benefits, as it deterred families from seeking or accepting help.

At a local level there were distinct differences between the two authorities. In Authority A there was frustration, even anger, at the lack of training available and the position that schools sometimes found themselves in. One to one training was available, but some Heads reported, though not invariably, that this was provided after the first CAF had been held. This, and the restructuring leading to the closure of local MAT centres and reductions in staff resulted in less support for staff in schools, as the local knowledge was lost and it was not always easy to contact the advisor. However, as Tight (2010) and Hammersley (2003) argued, local context did at times effect interviewees comments. During the latter part of the interview period Authority A put into place a governmental policy, which affected children receiving free school meals, and this had angered several Lead Professionals. Their transcripts had to be read with this in mind, and themes that were in transcripts before this policy was put into place were considered more robust. In Authority B many Lead Professionals were resigned to the fact that help was available, they just had to pay for most

of it. Others, particularly small school heads, or heads in areas that were not targeted for support, felt this was unfair as they did not have the budget/local resources to enable them to meet the needs of their children.

Praise for support available within the authority included named contacts (CAF Officers, Trainers, and Social Workers) with whom a personal relationship could be built. The importance of Children's Centres emerged, as they were considered an invaluable source of information and guidance, which is a new finding. In addition to this, Lead Professionals felt they would like more targeted training, a directory of Who's Who and an overview of what support is available.

This section has provided a summary of findings in relation to the research questions. This provides a context within which the recommendations for future practice may be discussed.

7.3 Recommendations

7.3.1 Introduction

This study now moves to making recommendations for future practice. They are grouped in to four groups: School Structures; Multi-Agency Working; Communication and Training. A list of recommendations is provided before discussing reasons behind them.

7.3.2 School Structures

All schools interviewed highly valued the role that staff at all levels within the school played in the safeguarding process. Many had the names of Designated Persons for Child Protection on display in the staff room; others had photos in the Reception area and brought these to the attention of new staff, parents and supply staff. This was considered good practice. The shared responsibility also enabled managers to train a range of staff so that the most

appropriate person to work with the family could liaise with the family, that is, the one that the parents may respond to.

With regards to monitoring, all schools kept files of concerns, but the important point was that they were reviewed regularly to look for any patterns that may emerge. Then reports could be made to the link governor as part of a more general report on safeguarding within the school. Part of this reporting would include numbers of CAFs that the school was involved with. Once families are committed to the CAF

process, schools then work with other agencies to support them. Multi-agency working is therefore the next focus for recommendations.

1. Photos of Lead Professional/Designation Person for Child Protection around the school – including the school entrance. Photos to be brought to the attention of staff and parents as part of induction procedures.
2. More than one CAF trained member of staff at different levels (e.g. managerial and classroom assistant) to allow discussion, joint decisions, and to target the right person to talk to the parents (i.e. whom might the parents develop the best relationship with).
3. File of concerns – to be reviewed termly.
4. Governors – a link governor for safeguarding should be appointed. All Governors should receive safer recruitment training and reports on safeguarding.

Box 7.1: Recommendations for Schools Structures

7.3.3 Multi-Agency Working

Other agencies referred the pressures they faced as organisations on to schools by charging schools for their participation in CAF meetings, even charging them for their services with families at times. Consequently, wanted the power to force agencies to

support children, and the expectation that schools bear costs removed. The only time that funding was easier to access was if the child or sibling was under five, leading to the view that relationships between schools and Children’s Centres should be strengthened. The importance of relationships was paramount, hence the promotion of local MAT centres and named contacts (which should be listed in a book, distributed to all schools). Relationships could also be strengthened through the promotion of multi- agency lunches, in which teams discussed cases and possible solutions – this would also help with the understanding of thresholds and reduce time wasted trying to contact people and chase them up. Communication was still considered an inhibitor to multi-agency working, so recommendations for communication are discussed next.

1. Mandatory responsibility for families and agencies to be involved in CAF process and to meet their own costs.
2. Training on CAF for all agencies.
3. Greater links between Children’s Centres and Schools.
4. Promotion of local MAT Teams.
5. A single CAF form, which also serves as a method of requesting services from all other agencies.
6. Named contacts for schools for all local authority agencies (named social worker, named school nurse, named CAMHS contact, etc).
7. Multi-agency lunches (to discuss cases).

Box 7.2: Recommendations for Multi-Agency Working

7.3.4 Communication

Communication remained an inhibitor to multi-agency working. Again, the importance of individual relationships and face-to-face meetings (rather than chasing phone calls) were emphasised. Whilst Lead Professionals in schools did not feel that they were unable to identify ‘child in need’ concerns the feeling was that they were not taken seriously.

Therefore, joint meetings would help address this – either discussing real time concerns or reflecting upon historical cases.

With regard to understanding thresholds, schools requested that they be made aware of the outcomes of investigations (e.g. CAMHS) and also reasons why a family may not receive support from them. This would help them also address an impact of poor communication / lack of resources: impact on staff and relationships between the school and family. Whilst schools informed staff what was happening after they reported concerns (at an appropriate level of disclosure) it was felt that lack of support from other agencies could be quite distressing, and being able to explain decisions would help Lead Professionals with this aspect of their role.

Whilst schools stated they had problems speaking to the appropriate people in other agencies, there were also concerns from Local Authorities that this is what they experienced with schools as well. The solution, from a schools' perspective, was that information should be shared in Heads' meetings with a handout containing a contact name. They would then share this information with staff, and contact the person should any further queries arise.

Lack of information also arose in a national context, particularly when a child had moved from a different County or lived across a County border (i.e. the school was in one county, their home in the next). In these circumstances a national database would be invaluable in sharing information. In addition to gaining information from databases, sharing information through high quality communication and developing personal relationships through face-to-face contact was necessary. One of the strategies identified to challenge inhibitors to multi-agency working is training, which the following section makes recommendations for.

1. Joint meeting within each authority for Social care, schools and other agencies to share thresholds – particularly in respect of defining ‘child in need’ and ‘significant harm’.
2. Information disseminated through Heads meetings as much as possible.
3. Prompt sharing of information, with a national database of concerns.
4. CAF forms suffice for referrals to all agencies.
5. A directory of ‘Who’s Who’ and support available in the authority.
6. Feedback to schools on outcomes of investigations by other agencies / reasons they have not engaged.
7. Feedback for staff reporting concerns.

Box 7.3: Recommendations for Communication

7.3.4 Training

Multi-agency training is recognised to be a key strategy for challenging difficulties between different agencies (such as thresholds, professional rivalries, understanding each others roles). Through ensuring that training is multi-agency as much as possible, and held in a range of settings (as most LA training is from a central location, causing issues for schools in remote locations), professional dialogues can occur, both during training and over coffee, and relationships can be built. Authority B praised their educational CAF training department, but felt they were unsure what training they could access from other departments within the authority – one list of all CAF/intervention training should be on one list with clear target audiences for each event.

This section has explored the possible implications of this research through detailing recommendations for future practice. The study now details suggestions for future research.

7.4 Suggestions for Future Research

This small-scale study provides significant concerns regarding the future of safeguarding children through the CAF. It is not mandatory for families or agencies to participate, and

1. Training in CAF should be for all agencies involved with children.
2. CAF training should include what support is available and thresholds for access.
3. More multi-agency training should be available in a range of settings (e.g. formal training days, multi-agency lunches).
4. Training should include responding to needs: e.g. managing difficult meetings.
5. Training should be available to enable schools to address gaps; for example counselling and behaviour management.
6. Agencies should be able to contact the main trainer after the event with any queries.
7. Lists of training should come from one central source, not lots of different departments.

Box 7.4: Recommendations for Training

schools are facing an increasing financial burden should they wish to help families in this way. Even if schools are able to meet the costs, there is no guarantee that support is available. In addition to this, schools are being asked to support families with ‘Child in Need’ cases despite not having the resources or training to deal with the issues that they involve (e.g. parental drug use). As many serious case reviews highlight the abilities of parents to hide and give plausible explanations for things which may be of concern, one wonders how schools are going to be in a position to determine whether a child is in danger.

In addition to this, there is a much larger area to be researched. As Free Schools and Academies are, to some extent, outside these arrangements, and the Government pushes for more of these to be established one may question:

- a) What will be the effect, if any, of schools remaining in the Local Authority sector?
Will they become ‘sink’ schools for children in need, for example?
- b) What will be the effect on the ‘agencies’ that currently work with the schools – will they be able to employ people with expertise or will this be bought in? At what and whose cost?
- c) More importantly, will more children ‘in need’ slip through the net and safeguarding become nothing more than a pipedream.

7.5 Summary

Safeguarding has never been a fixed concept, and it has continuously evolved to in response to reports, public outcry, the ideology of successive governments and resource issues. During the period of this study one can see a new understanding, with new priorities emerging. The raising of thresholds for access (in response to current government policies and austerity measures) has shifted levels of support (see figure 4.2). For example, what was previously considered a ‘child in need’ concern may now be supported through systems designed to provide early help, such as the CAF; and schools are reporting that it is harder to gain support for families from other agencies, particularly CAMHS, whom they feel are overstretched. This is evident through teachers anecdotes of what they put CAFs into place for, and the way in which they are deploying staff to meet gaps in provision from other services, at cost to the school. There were also examples of schools being asked to be Lead Professionals for cases previously determined as ‘Child in Need’ due to disengagement from parents, rather than concerns having been addressed. This may be considered as suggesting that the government’s plans to use early help to target this level of need (DfE, 2012b) are already being put in to place.

A new model (figure 5.2) for the CAF process also emerged, placing primary responsibility on schools (should they wish to respond), unless the child had complex health needs (when the medical profession, e.g. Occupational Therapist, would take the lead). Due to the continued lack of statutory obligation to provide early help, schools are powerless to force agencies to support children. Those interviewed are therefore responding to calls with non-educational concerns that require investigation, meeting the costs of a range of support services and providing in-house support where available.

The lack of support available provided additional challenges for schools, notably: staff morale, relationships with parents and relationships with children. If a child made a disclosure to a member of staff, and social care did not decide to support that child, this had emotional ramifications both for the member of staff (who could be quite distressed) and the trust that the child had in that person ('I told you but it is still happening'). There was frustration with long waiting times for support, particularly for CAMHS, when schools continued to see the child's needs, and the impact of those needs, on a daily basis. When parents had asked school for support the waiting times, and tactics of some agencies to deny support, were also viewed as potentially damaging to the relationship between home and school. Whilst schools in the study persevered, there was an understanding that this could lead to disillusionment, and reluctance to use the CAF process.

When discussing other factors affecting multi-agency working some new themes emerged. These included the lack of power to force families to participate or agencies to become involved; the 'pre-work' developing relationships with families prior to suggesting CAF support; other agencies charging schools for support and the importance of individuals – particularly their commitment to the CAF process. Multi-agency training was viewed as an important strategy in addressing difficulties schools face, in terms of developing their own expertise and understanding the remit of other agencies.

Training, where available, was considered to be good quality. There was a large disparity between opportunities between the two authorities, emphasizing the potential need for a national training agreement. Schools generally accepted the impact that austerity measures were having on other agencies, but would like more multi-agency opportunities (e.g. lunches, training days) so that they may build an understanding of the new thresholds and also build personal relationships with key staff within organisations.

This study therefore illustrates the perceptions of Lead Professionals based in primary schools on the Common Assessment Framework, and has resulted in contributions to knowledge through the formation of two new models related to understanding of terminology and the CAF process in schools. Further work in a larger number of schools, across a range of authorities, will enable these models to be refined. A summary of these findings (ensuring confidentiality) will be distributed to all participants, enabling them to reflect on their practice and act accordingly.

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CAF form

Date assessment started*¹⁴

Notes for use: If you are completing form electronically, text boxes will expand to fit your text
Where check boxes appear, insert an 'X' in those that apply.

Identifying details

Record details of unborn baby, infant, child or young person being assessed. If unborn, state name as 'unborn baby' and mother's name, e.g. unborn baby of Ann Smith.

Given name(s)*

Family name*

*Male Female Unknown

AKA¹⁵/previous names

Address*

Date of birth or EDD^{16*}

Contact tel. no.*

Unique ref. no.

Version no.

Postcode*

Ethnicity*

White

Black or Black British

Asian or Asian British

Mixed/Dual Background

Chinese & Other

¹⁴ It is recommended that practitioners complete all fields marked with an asterisk(*) to obtain basic identifying data when completing the CAF form

¹⁵ 'Also known as'

¹⁶ Expected date of delivery

White British	<input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Traveller of Irish Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other Black background [^]	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other ethnic group [^]	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsy/Roma	<input type="checkbox"/>			Any other Asian background [^]	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other Mixed background [^]	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not given	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other White background [^]	<input type="checkbox"/>								

[^]If other, please specify

 Immigration status

Child's first language

 Parent's first language

Is the child or young person disabled? Yes No

If 'yes' give details

Details of any special requirements
 (for child and/or their parent) e.g. signing, interpretation or access needs

Assessment information

People present at assessment*

What has led to this unborn baby, infant, child or young person being assessed?*

Details of parents/carers

Name

Contact tel. no.

Relationship to unborn baby, infant, child or young person

Address

Parental responsibility?
Yes No

Postcode:

Name

Contact tel. no.

Relationship to unborn baby, infant, child or young person

Address

Parental responsibility?
Yes No

Postcode:

Current family and home situation

(e.g. family structure including siblings, other significant adults etc; who lives with the child and who does not live with the child)

Details of person(s) undertaking assessment

Name*

Contact tel. no.*

Address

Role

Organisation

Postcode:

Name of lead professional (where applicable)

Lead professional's contact number

Lead professional's email address

Services working with this infant, child or young person

Universal	GP	<input type="checkbox"/> Details		Tel.	
	Early years/education/FE training provision	<input type="checkbox"/> Details		Tel.	
Other services	Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Details		Tel.	
	Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Details		Tel.	
	Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Details		Tel.	
	Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Details		Tel.	
	Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Details		Tel.	
	Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Details		Tel.	

CAF assessment summary: strengths and needs

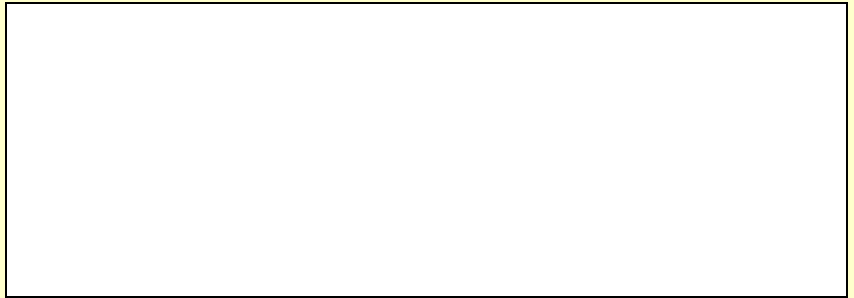
Consider each of the elements to the extent they are appropriate in the circumstances. You do not need to comment on every element. Wherever possible, base comments on evidence, not just opinion, and indicate what your evidence is. However, if there are any major differences of view, these should be recorded too.

1. Development of unborn baby, infant, child or young person

Health

General health

Conditions and impairments; access to and use of dentist, GP, optician; immunisations, developmental checks, hospital admissions, accidents, health advice and information



Physical development

Nourishment; activity; relaxation; vision and hearing; fine motor skills (drawing etc.); gross motor skills (mobility, playing games and sport etc.)



Speech, language and communication

Preferred communication, language, conversation, expression, questioning; games; stories and songs; listening; responding; understanding



Emotional and social development

Feeling special; early attachments; risking/actual self-harm; phobias; psychological difficulties; coping with stress; motivation, positive attitudes; confidence; relationships with peers; feeling isolated and solitary; fears; often unhappy



Behavioural development

Lifestyle, self-control, reckless or impulsive activity; behaviour with peers; substance misuse; anti-social behaviour; sexual behaviour; offending; violence and aggression; restless and overactive; easily distracted, attention span/concentration

1. Development of unborn baby, infant, child or young person (continued)

Identity, self-esteem, self-image and social presentation

Perceptions of self; knowledge of personal/family history; sense of belonging; experiences of discrimination due to race, religion, age, gender, sexuality and disability

Family and social relationships

Building stable relationships with family, peers and wider community; helping others; friendships; levels of association for negative relationships

Self-care skills and independence

Becoming independent; boundaries, rules, asking for help, decision-making; changes to body; washing, dressing, feeding; positive separation from family

Learning

Understanding, reasoning and problem solving

Organising, making connections; being creative, exploring, experimenting; imaginative play and interaction

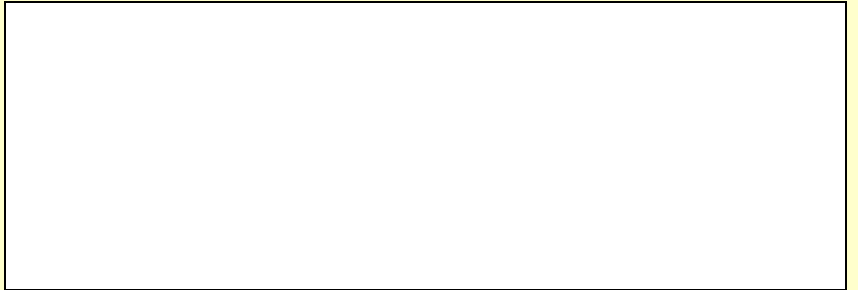
Participation in learning, education and employment

Access and engagement; attendance, participation; adult support; access to appropriate resources



Progress and achievement in learning

Progress in basic and key skills; available opportunities; support with disruption to education; level of adult interest



Aspirations

Ambition; pupil's confidence and view of progress; motivation, perseverance



2. Parents and carers

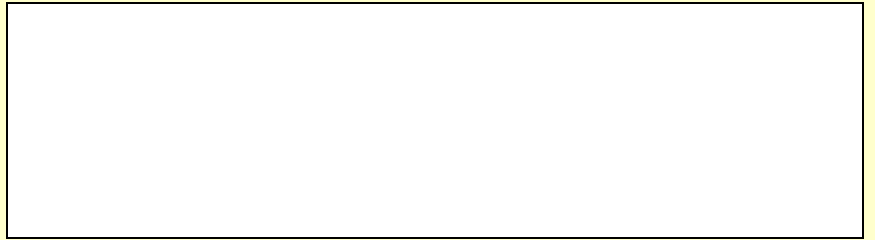
Basic care, ensuring safety and protection

Provision of food, drink, warmth, shelter, appropriate clothing; personal, dental hygiene; engagement with services; safe and healthy environment




Emotional warmth and stability

Stable, affectionate, stimulating family environment; praise and encouragement; secure attachments; frequency of house, school, employment moves



Guidance, boundaries and stimulation

Encouraging self-control; modelling positive behaviour; effective and appropriate discipline; avoiding over-protection; support for positive activities



3. Family and environmental

Family history, functioning and well-being

Illness, bereavement, violence, parental substance misuse, criminality, anti-social behaviour; culture, size and composition of household; absent parents, relationship breakdown; physical disability and mental health; abusive behaviour



Wider family

Formal and informal support networks from extended family and others; wider caring and employment roles and responsibilities



Housing, employment and

financial considerations

Water/heating/sanitation facilities, sleeping arrangements; reason for homelessness; work and shifts; employment; income/benefits; effects of hardship

--

**Social and community elements
and resources, including education**

Day care; places of worship; transport; shops; leisure facilities; crime, unemployment, anti-social behaviour in area; peer groups, social networks and relationships; religion

--

Conclusions, solutions and actions

Now the assessment is completed you need to record conclusions, solutions and actions. Work with the baby, child or young person and/or parent or carer, and take account of their ideas, solutions and goals.

What are your aims?*

(What are the key aims the child, young person and/or family would like to address?)

What are your conclusions?* *(What are the child/young person's/families strengths and resources, what are their needs – e.g. no additional needs, additional needs, complex needs, risk of harm to self or others?)*

Strengths & Resources:

Needs/ worries:

What changes are wanted?* *(Include the child/young person's, parent/carer's and practitioner's views)*

How can change happen?* *(Include the child/young person's, parent/carer's and practitioner's views)*

Agreed Actions* *(At least one action must be entered)*

(in order of priority list the actions agreed for the people present at the assessment)

Desired Outcomes

Action

Who will do this?

By when?

(as agreed with child, young person and/or family)

Agreed review date*

Goals* (e.g. How will you know that things have improved? What will things look like at review?)

Child or young person's comment on the assessment and actions identified*

Parent or carer's comment on the assessment and actions identified*

Consent statement for information storage and information sharing*

"We need to collect the information in this CAF form so that we can understand what help you may need. If we cannot cover all of your needs we may need to share some of this information with the other organisations specified below, so that they can help us to provide the services you need. If we need to share information with any other organisation(s) later to offer you more help we will ask you about this before we do it."

"We will treat your information as confidential and we will not share it with any other organisation unless we are required by law to share it or unless you or any other person will come to some harm if we do not share it. In any case we will only ever share the minimum information we need to share"

I understand the information that is recorded on this form and that it will be stored and used for the purpose of providing services to:

- Me

- This infant, child or young person for whom I am a parent

- This infant, child or young person for whom I am a carer

I have had the reasons for information sharing and information storage explained to me and I understand those reasons.

Yes No

I agree to the sharing of information, as agreed, between the services listed below

Yes No

Signed

Name

Date

Assessor's signature

Signed

Name

Date

Exceptional circumstances: concerns about significant harm to infant, child or young person

If at any time during the course of this assessment you are concerned that an infant, child or young person has been harmed or abused or is at risk of being harmed or abused, you must follow your Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) safeguarding children procedures. The practice guidance *What to do If you're worried a child is being abused* (HM Government, 2006) sets out the processes to be followed by all practitioners.

If you think the child may be a child in need (under section 17 of the Children Act 1989) then you should also consider referring the child to children's social care. These referral processes will be included in your local safeguarding children procedures and are set out in Chapter 5 of *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2006) (www.ecm.gov.uk/workingtogether). You should seek the agreement of the child and family before making such a referral **unless to do so would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.**

Delivery Plan & Review *(Actions from the assessment should be brought forward into the delivery plan and added to where a multi-agency team around the child response is required and/or used to review progress)*

Personal Details

Given name(s) * Family name* DOB or EDD*

Address* Postcode* *Male Female Unknown

LP Details

Name* Agency/Relationship* Email*

Address* Contact Number*

FOR COMPLETION AT REVIEW STAGE

Desired outcome <i>(at least one action must be entered)(as agreed with child, young person, family)</i>	Action	Who will do this?	By when?	Progress & Comment	Date Closed	Contributing to ECM Aim¹⁷
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

¹⁷ These outcomes should be linked to the 'Every Child Matters' aims where appropriate. Please see the CAF Practitioners Guide Annex B for a full list of the ECM aims which sit below the five ECM outcomes.

Review

Date*:

People present*

(Review delivery plan and update with any agreed further action)

Next Steps*

Can the CAF be closed?*	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Reason for closure:	<input type="text"/>
	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Agreed review date:	<input type="text"/>

Review Notes*

Child or young person's comment on the review and actions identified*

Parent or carer's comment on the assessment and actions identified*

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<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/deliveringservices1/caf/cafframework/>

APPENDIX TWO
INFORMATION PACK FOR POLICY ADVISORS

Dear

Thank you for expressing an interest in being interviewed regarding your work on safeguarding children, both in relation to policy development and your knowledge and views about safeguarding in schools. I am delighted that you have agreed to be interviewed on (date). I have enclosed further information, as promised.

The project focuses upon Team Around the Child meetings from the perspective of education. This includes how policy developments since the 1960s have given education a much more prominent role in dealing with welfare concerns. That is to say, they have moved from being an agency that passed information on to social workers, to being much more instrumental in helping to address children's needs. I am interested in how you view the role of schools in safeguarding in relation to policy development. The interview should last approximately sixty minutes and focus upon ten questions. (Additional questions may be asked to ensure that I fully understand answers). You may opt not to answer all questions if you wish. The questions are:

1. How would you define safeguarding?
2. Some believe that there are issues regarding teachers not understanding what 'significant harm' is from a social care perspective, leading to unnecessary referrals. How would you describe the threshold for 'significant harm' to teachers?
3. What were the main drivers for the development of the Every Child Matters Agenda / CYP Act 2008?
4. Thinking specifically of the ECM / CYP Act 2008 what do you believe is the role of education in fulfilling the requirements of the legislation?
5. The EdA 2002's duty to co-operate applies to all schools through the law itself, and regulations applied to section 175 so that academies and independent schools are not exempt. However, the CYP Act 2008 20(3), when dealing with 'Designated Person' for children in care (whose additional needs are well documented, particularly in relation to education), the law only applies to Grant Maintained Schools - therefore Independent Schools and Academies are exempt.
 - A) Would Free Schools also be exempt?
 - B) As the needs would also be relevant under the Every Child Matters Agenda, and the CA of 1989 and 2004, would this place a statutory duty of care for looked after children on staff in non- grant maintained schools?
6. The White Paper 2010 does not appear to mention safeguarding, multi-agency working or extended schools as ways to support pupils and raise academic achievement. For example, in their section on behaviour, there is

no mention of working with families, nor how multi-agency working may help meet the needs of the child in order to help them improve their behaviour. What is your view on this?

7. What would be your vision of safeguarding in schools?
8. How would you empower teachers to challenge the practices of others, for example the medical profession?
9. If you were speaking directly to a consortium of headteachers about safeguarding, what would your key messages be?
10. Is there any information that you would like to add?

A Participant Information Sheet is enclosed, forming an agreement between us both, with regard to your right to withdraw and confidentiality. I would be most grateful if you return it to me by (date) formally agreeing to the interview on (date).

I look forward to hearing from you, and to meeting you in (Month).

Kindest regards

T. M. Browning

Participant Information Sheet

The Project

The aim of the research is to explain what safeguarding is like from a purely educational perspective, both positive and negative. This Participant Information Sheet formally requests a 60 minute interview to gain your thoughts on this area.

Information gained during the interview will be considered together with literature, observations of training, and views expressed in other interviews to form part of the EdD Leaders and Leadership thesis. Excerpts from the interview transcript, with names and identifying features removed may be used in the thesis. Quotations may also be used in books or papers, again without any identifying features, and subject to research ethics.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Transcripts of interviews and notes of conversations / observations as well as any other collected data will be anonymised and only used for research purposes. The data from the interview will only be available to staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis, but your name will be excluded and any identifying characteristics removed. Excerpts from the transcript may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to not to answer questions, and to withdraw from the study up to two months after the interview takes place. You may also ask for some information not to be used in the study.

Informed Consent

If you have any questions about this Participant Information Sheet, the questions (included in the covering letter) or any other aspect of the research please contact me.

The interview will be recorded and transcribed with your consent, within a month of the interview. If you would like a copy of the transcript please indicate this below (so that you may request that some information is not included in the thesis, or you just wish to check the information is correct) please indicate this on the form.

Feedback

A summary of main findings will be made available for participants upon completion of the thesis. If you would like a copy of the summary, please indicate this on the form.

I very much hope that you feel able to participate in this research.

Interview Request Form

Interviewee:

Interviewer: Tessa Browning

Purpose of Observation

The interview is part of my research for the award of EdD at the University of Birmingham.

Confidentiality

Research ethics will be observed at all times in the analysis and use to which data may be put. The data from the interview will only be available to staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis, but your name will be excluded and any identifying characteristics removed. The interview may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to not to answer questions, and to withdraw from the study up to six weeks after the interview takes place.

Acknowledgement:

Please sign this form to show that we have agreed its content, and complete the table below to signify whether you would like a summary of observation notes or research findings, as detailed in the Participant Information Sheet.

	Yes	No
I am willing to be interviewed.		
I give permission for the interview to be recorded.		
I would like a copy of the interview transcript within four weeks of the interview taking place.		
I would like a summary of findings when the research is complete.		

Signed (Interviewer) _____ Date: _____

Signed (Interviewee) _____ Date: _____

Please return this form in the SAE enclosed by (date).

**APPENDIX THREE:
INFORMATION PACK FOR TRAINERS**

NOTE: THIS IS IN TWO SECTIONS, ILLUSTRATING THE INFORMATION SENT TO THE TWO SEPARATE COUNTIES

Dear (name of trainer)

I have gained permission from (*Insert name of head of safeguarding in that area of the county*) to observe safeguarding training, subject to your agreement, as part of my research for a doctorate at the University of Birmingham.

The project focuses upon Team Around the Child meetings from the perspective of education. This includes how teachers are prepared for the role and work with other agencies, for which training is a vital component. I would like your permission to observe the training, and make written notes on the content and focus of the training.

Excerpts from the notes made may be used as part of the thesis, but names will not be used and any identifying factors will be removed. An Participant Information Sheet is enclosed, forming an agreement between us both with regard to your right to withdraw and confidentiality. I would be most grateful if you return it to me by (insert date – 14 days of being sent) formally agreeing to my observation of your training session.

I very much hope that you feel able to participate.

Kindest regards

Tessa Browning

Participant Information Sheet

The Project

The aim of the research is to explain what safeguarding is like from a purely educational perspective, both positive and negative. This Participant Information Sheet formally requests permission to observe training related to safeguarding children.

Information gained during the observation will be considered together with literature and views expressed in interviews with Lead Professionals in education, to form part of the EdD Leaders and Leadership thesis. Excerpts from observation notes, with names and identifying features removed, may be used in the thesis. Quotations may also be used in books or papers, again without any identifying features, subject to research ethics.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Notes on observations as well as any other collected data will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes. No names of students, staff or institutions will be used. Care will be taken to keep the work anonymous.

Informed Consent

If you have any questions about this Participant Information Sheet, the questions (included in the covering letter) or any other aspect of the research please contact me.

If you would like a summary of notes made (so that you may request that some information is not included in the thesis, or you just wish to check the information is correct) please indicate this on the form.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to withdraw from the study up to two months after the observation takes place.

Feedback

A summary of main findings will be made available for participants upon completion of the thesis. If you would like a copy of the summary, please indicate this on the form.

I very much hope that you feel able to participate in this research.

Observation Consent Form

Observer:

Trainer:

Date of Training:

Location of Training:

Purpose of Observation

The observation is part of my research for the award of EdD at the University of Birmingham.

Confidentiality

Research ethics will be observed at all times in the analysis and use to which data may be put. The data from the observation will only be available to staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis, but your name will be excluded and any identifying characteristics removed. The observation may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Acknowledgement:

Please sign this form to show that we have agreed its content, and complete the table below to signify whether you would like a summary of observation notes or research findings, as detailed in the Participant Information Sheet.

Signed (Observer):

Date:

Signed (Trainer):

Date:

	Yes	No
I would like a summary of observation notes.		
I would like a summary of findings when the research is complete.		

SUBMISSION TO SECOND AUTHORITY

LETTER TO MANAGERS

Dear (name of manager)

I would like to gain a greater understanding of safeguarding in schools, specifically in relation to multi-agency working and Team Around the Child Meetings for children deemed to have additional needs. Therefore, I am currently undertaking a doctorate at the University of Birmingham looking at this issue and would very much appreciate your co-operation in this.

The project focuses upon Team Around the Child meetings from the perspective of education. This includes how teachers are prepared for the role and work with other agencies, for which training is a vital component. I would like your permission to observe training, and make written notes on the content and focus of the training.

Excerpts from the notes made may be used as part of the thesis, but names will not be used and any identifying factors will be removed. The name of the authority in which the research is conducted will not be given in the study, it will be described as a Shire county. A copy of the Participant Information Sheet is enclosed, forming an agreement between trainers and myself with regard to their right to withdraw and confidentiality. I am most interested in observing Working Together to Update Child Protection and Improving Interagency Communication (Tuesday 15th May), and would like your permission to contact trainers to gain their agreement to observing this session. If you are willing for the observation to go ahead, please may I have the names and contact details of the trainers so that I may contact them personally?

In addition, it would be most helpful to know how many Team Around the Child cases your area is dealing with, and how many of these have the school as the Lead Professional.

The second part of the research involves interviewing Lead Professionals to gain their views. If a list of Lead Professionals is available, please may I have a copy so that I telephone them and ask them to participate in the study? This information will be kept secure and confidential. It will be destroyed once schools have been contacted.

I very much hope that you feel able to participate.

Kindest regards

Tessa Browning

Participant Information Sheet

The Project

The aim of the research is to explain what safeguarding is like from a purely educational perspective, both positive and negative. This Participant Information Sheet formally requests permission to observe training related to safeguarding children.

Information gained during the observation will be considered together with literature and views expressed in interviews with Lead Professionals in education, to form part of the EdD Leaders and Leadership thesis. Excerpts from observation notes, with names and identifying features removed, may be used in the thesis. Quotations may also be used in books or papers, again without any identifying features, subject to research ethics.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Notes on observations as well as any other collected data will be anonymised and only used for research purposes. This means that data from the observation will only be available to staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis, but your name will be excluded and any identifying characteristics removed. The observation may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Informed Consent

If you have any questions about this Participant Information Sheet, the questions (included in the covering letter) or any other aspect of the research please contact me.

If you would like a summary of notes made (so that you may request that some information is not included in the thesis, or you just wish to check the information is correct) please indicate this on the form.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to withdraw from the study up to six weeks after the observation takes place. You may request a copy of main findings of the observation within a month of the observation occurring, then have two further weeks to consider them and withdraw from the study should you wish to do so.

Feedback

A summary of main findings will be made available for participants upon completion of the thesis. If you would like a copy of the summary, please indicate this on the form.

I very much hope that you feel able to participate in this research.

Observation Consent Form

Observer:

Trainer:

Date of Training:

Location of Training:

Purpose of Observation

The observation is part of my research for the award of EdD at the University of Birmingham.

Confidentiality

Research ethics will be observed at all times in the analysis and use to which data may be put. The data from the observation will only be available to staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis, but your name will be excluded and any identifying characteristics removed. The observation may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to withdraw from the study up to six weeks after the observation takes place.

Acknowledgement:

Please sign this form to show that we have agreed its content, and complete the table below to signify whether you would like a summary of observation notes or research findings, as detailed in the Participant Information Sheet.

Signed (Observer):

Date:

Signed (Trainer):

Date:

	Yes	No
I would like a summary of observation notes within four weeks of the observation taking place.		
I would like a summary of findings when the research is complete.		

APPENDIX FOUR
INFORMATION PACK FOR MANAGER/ COUNTY INTERVIEWEE

Dear (name of manager)

I would like to gain a greater understanding of safeguarding in schools, specifically in relation to multi-agency working and Team Around the Child Meetings for children deemed in need. Therefore, I am currently undertaking a doctorate at the University of Birmingham looking at this issue and would very much appreciate your co-operation in this.

The project focuses upon Team Around the Child meetings from the perspective of education. This includes how teachers are prepared for the role and work with other agencies, for which training is a vital component. I would like your permission to observe training, and make written notes on the content and focus of the training.

Excerpts from the notes made may be used as part of the thesis, but names will not be used and any identifying factors will be removed. An Participant Information Sheet is enclosed, forming an agreement between us both with regard to your right to withdraw and confidentiality. I would be most grateful if you return it to me by (insert date – 14 days of being sent) formally agreeing to my observation of your training session.

In addition, it would be most helpful to know how many Team Around the Child cases your area is dealing with, and what percentage of these have the school as the Lead Professional.

The second part of the research involves interviewing Lead Professionals to gain their views. If a list of Lead Professionals is available, please may I have a copy so that I telephone them and ask them to participate in the study. This information will be kept secure and confidential. It will be destroyed once schools have been contacted.

I very much hope that you feel able to participate.

Kindest regards

Tessa Browning

Participant Information Sheet

The Project

The aim of the research is to explain what safeguarding is like from a purely educational perspective, both positive and negative. This Participant Information Sheet formally requests permission to observe training related to safeguarding children.

Information gained during the observation will be considered together with literature and views expressed in interviews with Lead Professionals in education, to form part of the EdD Leaders and Leadership thesis. Excerpts from observation notes, with names and identifying features removed, may be used in the thesis. Quotations may also be used in books or papers, again without any identifying features, subject to research ethics.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Notes on observations as well as any other collected data will be anonymised and only used for research purposes. This means that data from the observation will only be available to staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis, but your name will be excluded and any identifying characteristics removed. The observation may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Informed Consent

If you have any questions about this Participant Information Sheet, the questions (included in the covering letter) or any other aspect of the research please contact me.

If you would like a summary of notes made (so that you may request that some information is not included in the thesis, or you just wish to check the information is correct) please indicate this on the form.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to withdraw from the study up to two months after the observation takes place.

Feedback

A summary of main findings will be made available for participants upon completion of the thesis. If you would like a copy of the summary, please indicate this on the form.

I very much hope that you feel able to participate in this research.

Observation Consent Form

Observer:

Trainer:

Date of Training:

Location of Training:

Purpose of Observation

The observation is part of my research for the award of EdD at the University of Birmingham.

Confidentiality

Research ethics will be observed at all times in the analysis and use to which data may be put. The data from the observation will only be available to staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis, but your name will be excluded and any identifying characteristics removed. The observation may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to withdraw from the study up to two months after the observation takes place.

Acknowledgement:

Please sign this form to show that we have agreed its content, and complete the table below to signify whether you would like a summary of observation notes or research findings, as detailed in the Participant Information Sheet.

Signed (Observer):

Date:

Signed (Trainer):

Date:

	Yes	No
I would like a summary of observation notes.		
I would like a summary of findings when the research is complete.		

**APPENDIX FIVE
TELEPHONE SCRIPT**

Name of school

Telephone number

Secretary's name

Lead Professional's name

Head's name

Feelings mainly: (Circle) Positive Negative

Willing to interview: Yes No

Good morning / afternoon (name of secretary). May I speak to (*name of Lead Professional*)?
(*If not available – ask for a good time to call*).

If available:

Hello (*name of Lead Professional*). My name is Tess Browning, and (*name of contact at authority*) has kindly informed me that you are the Lead Professional for safeguarding at your school.

I am researching school's perspectives of safeguarding, positive and negative, in relation to team around the child meetings and all comments given are in the strictest confidence. With that in mind, please would you tell if your experience of safeguarding children through team around the child meetings have been mainly positive or mainly negative?

Thank you, I would be most interested in exploring this further with you. Whilst I appreciate that you would need more information before making a firm commitment, would you, in principle, be willing for me to arrange a time to meet you at your school and conduct a 40 minute interview? Thank you.

If yes, I will send you an information pack, providing a brief summary of the research, and a form for you to return and sign if you are still willing to be interviewed, within the next few weeks.

(*If Head is a different person*) I shall also send a copy to your headteacher explaining that I have spoken to you, and providing a summary of the research for their information.

Thank you again for your time. I hope to meet with you and discuss this further.

APPENDIX SIX EMAIL TO HEADTEACHERS

After leaving headship to have my daughter, I began a doctorate on safeguarding children through the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process, an area in which little research has been done from an educational perspective. I seek to find the opinions of Lead Professionals in schools, both positive and negative. In return for a short interview with the Lead Professional in your school, I will provide a summary of the research. This will include:

1. A summary of recent changes to legislation and a reading of how they may affect grant maintained schools and academies; and
2. A list of agencies that provide support for vulnerable children that have been discussed in the research.

Some strategic bodies are interested in the findings of the research, for example, how it may inform training.

Please be reassured that the research has passed both University of Birmingham and (Name of county) own ethical criteria. The research is being conducted in two authorities. All responses are anonymous, and you can request a copy of the interview transcript, and remove any points you have made from consideration for the thesis up to six weeks after the interview takes place.

Should you be willing to participate, the questions I would ask are detailed in the letter enclosed, together with more detail regarding the study. The interview on average lasts 40 minutes, so I will take no longer than an hour of your time. If you would like to participate I am available most Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays during school hours. If you are not available at these times, I will try and work around your schedule.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call or email me. If you are willing to participate, please let me know and I will call your secretary to arrange an appointment.

Many thanks
Tess Browning
(Phone number)

APPENDIX SEVEN
INFORMATION PACK FOR SCHOOLS

Dear (*name of Lead Professional*)

Thank you for taking my telephone call on (*date*) regarding your experience of team around the child meetings to safeguard children. I am delighted that you are interested in being interviewed for this research. I have enclosed further information, as promised.

The project focuses upon Team Around the Child meetings from the perspective of education, so the interview questions seek to discover honest opinions, based on experience as well as information regarding how the role is managed. The interview should last approximately forty minutes and focus upon ten questions. (Additional questions may be asked to ensure that I fully understand answers). The questions are:

11. Tell me a little about yourself and how you became a lead professional for team around the child meetings.
12. What, if any, other responsibilities do you have within the school? Do you feel that they assist you in your role as Lead Professional?
13. Is there anything or anyone to assist you in your role as lead professional?
14. How do you determine which children need TAC support?
15. What issues are you currently dealing with through TAC meetings?
16. Is there anything, which is in place locally, which you think contributes to good multi agency working?
17. What improvement, if any, do you think could be put in place to make your role as Lead Professional more effective?
18. What support, if any, do you have in developing a knowledge of support available for children and families in your community?
19. How would you describe your experiences of working with other agencies? (Please give examples).
20. Is there anything else you would like to say about team around the child meetings with respect to multi-agency working or anything else?

There is also a short information sheet (copy enclosed), which asks for a few pieces of information regarding the school, if you are willing to be interviewed.

Responses will be kept strictly anonymous in the research. An Participant Information Sheet is enclosed, forming an agreement between us both with regard to your right to withdraw and confidentiality. I would be most grateful if you return it to me by (*insert date – 14 days of being sent*) formally agreeing to the interview if you are still happy to do this, or letting me know if you are not. If you agree to meet, I will contact you to organise a convenient date and time for the interview during this term.

Dear (*name of Headteacher if not Lead Professional in school*)

I am writing to formally request your permission to conduct research with a member of your school staff (*insert name*) as part of my doctoral thesis. I spoke to *him/her* on (*date*) regarding his/her experience of team around the child meetings to safeguard children. I am delighted that (*name*) has provisionally expressed an interest in being interviewed and enclosed further information, as promised.

The project focuses upon Team Around the Child meetings from the perspective of education, so the interview questions seek to discover honest opinions, based on experience as well as information regarding how the role is managed. The interview should last approximately forty minutes and focus upon ten questions. (Additional questions may be asked to ensure that I fully understand answers). The questions are:

1. Tell me a little about yourself and how you became a lead professional for team around the child meetings.
2. What, if any, other responsibilities do you have within the school? Do you feel that they assist you in your role as Lead Professional?
3. Is there anything or anyone to assist you in your role as lead professional?
4. How do you determine which children need TAC support? What issues are you currently dealing with through TAC meetings?
5. Is there anything, which is in place locally, which you think contributes to good multi agency working?
6. What improvement, if any, do you think could be put in place to make your role as Lead Professional more effective?
7. What support, if any, do you have in developing a knowledge of support available for children and families in your community?
8. How would you describe your experiences of working with other agencies? (Please give examples).
9. Is there anything else you would like to say about team around the child meetings with respect to multi-agency working or anything else?

There is also a short information sheet (copy enclosed), which asks for a few pieces of information regarding the school.

Responses will be kept strictly anonymous in the research. An ethics form is enclosed, forming an agreement between us, with regard to right to withdraw and confidentiality. I have asked (*insert name*) to return it to me by (*insert date – 14 days of being sent*), formally agreeing to the interview if they are still happy to do this, or letting me know if they are not. I would be most grateful if you would also sign it to give your permission. If (*insert name*) agrees to meet, I will contact him / her to organise a convenient date and time for the interview during this term.

Thank you in anticipation of your co-operation in this matter.

Participant Information Sheet

The Project

The aim of the research is to explain what safeguarding is like from a purely educational perspective, both positive and negative. This Participant Information Sheet formally requests a short 40 minute interview to gain your thoughts on this area.

Information gained during the interview will be considered together with literature, an observation of a training session within the authority (where if I meet you, I will not come up to you to protect your anonymity) and views expressed in other interviews to form part of the EdD Leaders and Leadership thesis. Excerpts from the interview transcript, with names and identifying features removed, may be used in the thesis. Quotations may also be used in books or papers, again without any identifying features, subject to research ethics.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Transcripts of interviews and notes of conversations / observations as well as any other collected data will be anonymised and only used for research purposes. The data from the interview will only be available to staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis, but your name will be excluded and any identifying characteristics removed. Excerpts from the transcript may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to not to answer questions, and to withdraw from the study up to two months after the observation takes place.

Informed Consent

If you have any questions about this Participant Information Sheet, the questions (included in the covering letter) or any other aspect of the research please contact me.

The interview will be recorded and transcribed with your consent, within a month of the interview. If you would like a copy of the transcript please indicate this below (so that you may request that some information is not included in the thesis, or you just wish to check the information is correct) please indicate this on the form.

Feedback

A summary of main findings will be made available for participants upon completion of the thesis. If you would like a copy of the summary, please indicate this on the form.

I very much hope that you feel able to participate in this research.

Interview Request Form

Name: _____

School: _____

Purpose of Observation

The observation is part of my research for the award of EdD at the University of Birmingham.

Confidentiality

Research ethics will be observed at all times in the analysis and use to which data may be put. The data from the interview will only be available to staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis, but your name will be excluded and any identifying characteristics removed. The interview may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Right to Withdraw

You have the right to not to answer questions, and to withdraw from the study up to two months after the observation takes place.

Acknowledgement:

Please sign this form to show that we have agreed its content, and complete the table below to signify whether you would like a summary of observation notes or research findings, as detailed in the Participant Information Sheet.

	Yes	No
I am willing to be interviewed.		
I would like a copy of the interview transcript.		
I would like a summary of findings when the research is complete.		
The Head Teacher has given permission for the school to be involved in this research, and for the interview to be held on school premises.		

Signed (Interviewer) _____

Date: _____

Signed (Interviewee) _____

Date: _____

Signed (Head Teacher) _____

Date: _____

If you are willing to be interviewed, please also complete the Information Sheet. Then take a copy of the forms for your records and return them, in the SAE provided by (insert date).

Information Sheet

Please complete the information below, and return it together with the Participant Information Sheet form in the SAE provided.

Thank you.

Name of School:

Number on Roll:

Lead Professional:

Are you also the Named Person for Child Protection? Yes No

Number of Team Around the Child (TAC) cases:

Number of TAC cases in which the school is the Lead Professional:

Number of TAC cases in which the school is not the Lead Professional:

Approximate number of meetings attended this term:

Approximate number of meetings attended which have required cover for a class:

Does the school have funding specifically identified for safeguarding?

APPENDIX EIGHT
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, PROMPTS AND PROBES

INTRODUCTION

(Insert name) may I first of all thank you for participating in this research. In the agreement that we have both signed, you stated that you would / would not like a copy of the interview script. *(If they say they do not wish a copy state that they may change their mind at the end of the interview)*. May I also remind you that you do not have to answer any question should you not wish to do so, and that you may request any part of our discussion be removed from consideration, or withdraw completely from the study for up to six weeks after today. The agreement states that I will remove any identifying features from anything we discuss, and I would like to reassure you that whilst I would ask that you try not to use names of families you are working with, or provide specific information that would enable others to identify them, I will remove any identifying information should any examples of the work you undertake be used in the thesis.

Is there anything you wish to ask before we begin?

Interview Question	Prompts (if not already mentioned)	Probes (for further clarification)	Notes
Tell me a little about yourself and how you became a lead professional for team around the child meetings.	When trained? Experience? Personal experience? Interviewed? (If appropriate – change of focus of role since started?)		What priority does the school give to the role – is it a discreet responsibility or an ‘add on’?
What, if any, other responsibilities do you have in the school? Do you feel that they assist you in your role as Lead Professional? If so, how?	What other areas of responsibility do you have (PSHE / Senior Management / SEN?) see Walker, 2008:98 and SIS, 2009)	Does their role include PSHE? If not, do they think it would be appropriate (see DfES 2006: 98)	Try to ascertain if they are Head / Senior Manager.
Is there anything that assists you in your role as lead professional? (This may include training, documentation)	Training Documentation Support If training is mentioned – how much / how often? How does this compare to	Are you aware of, and do you use: Working Together (DCSF, 2010) CAF Guidance from CDWC (2009a, b, c)	Take copies of documentation to interview.

	training for other areas of their role (length / duration / frequency?)		
How do you determine which children need TAC support?	Do you use CAF for children with SEN or behavioural needs (see SIS, 2009)	Bring in example from DoH, (1995), detailed below, and ask them how they would respond. How would you define children 'in need' and those 'at risk of significant harm'?	Do they view child protection to now be part of their remit?
What issues are you currently dealing with through TAC meetings?		Are there any issues that you feel TAC meetings may help with, but are not currently involved with?	
Is there anything, which is in place locally, which you think contributes to good multi agency working? (From Baginsky, 2007: 229)	Advice from social care (see Munro, 2011) Support from Local Authority? If not – what would they think would help? If yes – how did they hear about it / examples.	If not already covered: Does the local authority offer any support or advice? (Ask for details if so). Do you receive any support with regard what support is available for families? Do you have the opportunity to discuss cases with other professionals?	
What improvement, if any, do you think could be put in place to make your role as Lead Professional more effective? (Based on Baginsky, 2007: 231)	Support from Local Authority? Advice from social care?		
What support, if any, do you have in developing a knowledge of support available for children and families			

in your community?			
How would you describe your experiences of working with other agencies? (Please give examples).	Attendance Apologies Communications Support Barriers / incentives?	Do they send reports if unavailable? On average, how many different agencies are involved in TAC meetings? Do you find that the number of attendees may affect the meeting? (See Horwarth, 2009: 125) Have you experienced any difficulties with working with other agencies? (Probes: different understandings / priorities / power/ thresholds for intervention or support). What would you describe the characteristics of a good working relationship with other agencies? Are parents / children encouraged to take an active role? If so, how?	
Is there anything else you would like to say about your role as Lead Professional , regarding your experiences of multi-agency working or anything else?			

(When thanking them for their participation, again ask if they would like a copy of the transcript if they have said no on the form).

**APPENDIX NINE
OBSERVATION SCHEDULE**

Time	Main Focus of Activity SI – developing a shared identity C- communication issues ICP – identifying child protection IS – Identifying safeguarding CL – developing a common language R – resources O - other	Notes on Activity	Other Notes

**APPENDIX TEN:
EXCERPT OF INTERVIEW WITH POLICY ADVISOR**

Line No		Interview with Policy 1 (I- Interviewee; R- Respondent)
160 161	I	Q3: What were the main drivers for the development of the Every Child Matters Agenda / CYP Act 2008?
162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203	R	<p>If you read the formal government documents it appears that it came about because of the Victoria Climbié case. There is an element of truth in that but it is only a small part of the truth. Of course, the Climbié case was a classic example of the parts of the system not working together, so it was a clear cameo of the failures of joined up working. But even at that time most people in government then, and in the sector, knew that bad cases make bad law. That is, if you just redesign something around how to tackle a particular issue around the Climbié case then you wont work very well. In fact, ECM, even if had been in place then, that would not have prevented Victoria Climbié's death, there were very specific circumstances around the child being privately fostered, all kinds of things. But it tapped in to a mood. It was at that point, with the Climbié case, there had been a lot of work going on looking at the possibilities of joining up services, and to me the most powerful was the work going on around joining up services for disabled children. And I would say that, because I was leading that work. Before the Climbié review, and before the writing of ECM, I was commissioned by two government departments (education and health) to review a service provision for very young disabled children and their families, and to identify to some extent what would even be familiar to you, as families find that their child might need services from a whole range of services. Each service may be a really good one, but actually nobody was joining up the dots. I remember interviewing a parent of a little boy, Adam, who at that stage was 18 months old, and the mother had got a record of 191 appointments that she had had with different professionals to address a complex range of needs. She was not being critical of the professionals, but she was describing how she was having to become the case manager, she also had to repeat endlessly the same story, which was quite painful in itself. And so concepts like Team Around the Child, Lead Professional, information sharing; it is not as if they were totally new it is just that they weren't embedded in service delivery. So we developed some guidance, which the government approved, for joining up services for very young disabled children, joining up PCTs and local authorities, developing the concept of the lead professional, developing training for the lead professional role, and getting it so that at least for that small group of families the services were relatively joined up. You would pick one member of the Team Around the Child, around the family, and they would have some additional co-ordinating and liaising responsibilities. They would be budgeted for and trained to have the power to knock heads and hopefully make services more effective. This developed quite a bit of momentum and we developed from that the Early Support Programme, which is still rolling, but not that visible, and the government at that point decided on</p>

204	the concept of Children's Trusts. This was well before the Children Act;
205	well before the Laming inquiry came though. At that point, their concept
206	of Children's Trusts, joining up local authorities and health and schools
207	which should be looking at improving provision was driven by
208	improving services for disabled children. The rest flowed round it, the
209	thinking went, if it works for disabled children it will also work with any
210	child that needs more than one professional, the children that cross the
211	boundaries. Then the thinking went, actually that is really quite a lot of
212	children, and having a good process of doing that will improve
213	educational attainment, which was the big driver for the last government
214	as well as for this government. So then when Climbié came along and
215	there was a head of steam, the public feeling that services for children are
216	not good enough, there was a moment, the possibility that we could be
217	catching a wave, catching a moment and developing something new and
218	different. And the government was brave enough to look at that and so
219	was the wider children's sector. At that time I was (Title and place of
220	work given), and in the period that Laming was running the inquiry there
221	was the real risk that when he came out with his strong recommendations
222	health would defend themselves against social workers, who would
223	defend themselves against the police, who would defend themselves
224	against the NSPCC who were partners who had failed in that family,
225	good enough organisation but had failed in that family, and the risk was
226	that it would lead to worse in fighting within the sector. So we called
227	together a group called the Children's Inter-Agency group with the
228	leaders of Directors of Education, Directors of Social Services, Local
229	Authority Chief Executives, the leaders of the key voluntary
230	organisations, to have a joint response to Laming. And we came together
231	whilst Laming was doing his inquiry to initially make sure that we did
232	not attack each other. Quite early on it became clear that there was a lot
233	of common ground between us, not just about what shouldn't have
234	happened but what could happen in the future. And so, very early on,
235	before Laming produced his report we produced a small report called
236	Serving Children Well. It was revolutionary because it was written and
237	signed off by local government, the NHS federation, directors of
238	education, and the key voluntary sector members. They all said we need
239	a joined up approach. When you look at it, you won't see all the things in
240	ECM, and it was a compromised piece of work, but that is where ECM
241	came from, because we published that, we talked to the department about
242	it, and they said there is a lot in this, we are going to produce a green
243	paper, looking at all of children's services, and so we wrote ECM
244	together. So ECM, which set out the key principles in which there is
245	early intervention and family support and the plan being joining the
246	planning and joining up at every level across the system, was a
247	collective, sector led document. Of course it was a government
248	document, but it was one that was produced with us, and to a large extent
249	by us, which gave it a lot more credibility in the wider sector. I think
250	CAG which has always been a behind the scenes group, not a
251	campaigning group but an influencing group behind government, has
252	played an integral role and still does, with seeking to shape the way in
253	which children's services develop. It was the Children's Inter Agency

254	Group, which persuaded this government not to drop the duty to co-operate from schools, nor the duty to safeguard and promote the well-being of children in the schools act of last year. That was what they were originally intending to do, and we persuaded them quietly, behind the scenes, with debate with ministers, with talking to the select committee, that actually it wouldn't meet their interests let alone children's interests.
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APPENDIX ELEVEN
SAMPLE SCRIPT FROM LOCAL AUTHORITY EMPLOYEE

Line No		Interview with Authority Manager 2 (Folder A5) (I- Interviewee; R- Respondent)
1	I	Q1 How would you define safeguarding, and in particular, education's role in safeguarding?
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	R	I think this goes back to what we were saying before really, which is the concept that safeguarding with a small s is everybody's business. It is the notion that it is around the prevention of harm to children, which can have long term implications. What we know more than ever now is that there are implications for a young person who has been maltreated for want of a better word, and how that impacts their ability to reach their full potential. So I think the notion of safeguarding is how we enable people to reach their full potential and protect vulnerable adults or children from those around them that have intentions to cause harm or damage. I think that is the way it has always been, we just understand it more now. It is about understanding and promoting the whole welfare of the young child and enabling them to reach their full potential. This can only be done if it is in an environment which is safe, warm, protective, enable and developing really because ... so I think it is about the whole child really.
17 18 19 20	I	Q 2: Thinking specifically about how safeguarding is organised in (name of authority) what support and guidance is available to schools? What, if anything, are you most proud of? What, if anything, do you feel would benefit from further development
21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37	R	I think, through DCS we now have a chief exec and a very much reduced very senior management team. So we have one director for children's services, and the director of adults as one role now, he is called the Director of People, and that is an attempt to try and encourage safeguarding to be broadly into one role. He is responsible for the vulnerable adults as well as vulnerable children – so it is in one, it comes under one Director and it is under one group manager so we have a clear line in accountability in terms of decision making and we both sit in the safeguarding group which is clearly accountable for children and young people and vulnerable adults. That is the organisation in the local authority. We also have the safeguarding board, which of course plays a pivotal role in the strategic development of safeguarding. The safeguarding board now has an independent chair, which is one of the requirements really. They provide challenge and a degree of independence, which I think is really important. Then the board has established priorities, so it works on the priorities so that we can ensure we are focussed about the work we are doing.
38	I	What are the priorities?
39 40 41 42	R	Missing from home and care – in [name of county] this is important because we have a significant number of care homes, where we have children from across the whole country. With that is the risk that children and young people can be missing from care, so there is very

43		strong protocols with police and local authorities to still retain
44		responsibility for them. But it is a big agenda, and it fits in with the
45		whole child sex exploitation agenda which we know is very hidden, and
46		one of the vulnerable groups is children in care. So, children in care but
47		also children at home, as at least one or two a month go missing for quite
48		significant periods of time, and they can be quite vulnerable young
49		people. So we always undertake take home interviews. The care
50		provider does it for those missing from care, and we are developing a
51		protocol now for our team. Missing in one of the priorities.
52		
53		The second is around communication. This has come out of our [name]
54		review. It is around challenges to ensuring effective communication. It
55		is around key messages, changes in staff, changes in the way agencies
56		are delivering their core remits, a whole range of communication issues.
57		A number of colleagues will tell us they don't understand, they don't
58		hear messages coming out about changes. Equally we would say it is
59		difficult to communicate with all agencies in the same way. Not all
60		agencies communicate in the same way. So that is another area.
61		
62		The third and perhaps most important is around compromised parenting.
63		Those children who have parents that demonstrate compromised
64		parenting: substance misuse, mental health, learning disability; erm..
65		prostitution, a range of behaviours that are around compromised parents.
66		The statistics of it are very interesting reading, if you get a chance to look
67		at that, there is some very interesting documentation. It is a real
68		challenge for us. We are finding that a lot of the issues with children and
69		young people that we have, for them themselves, it is about the
70		parenting. We understand about that now more now than ever.
71		
72		So, those are the priorities. And if you ask about support and guidance
73		for schools, erm.. if I start then you can add in, we have, for example a
74		training and development role which [name] who is the link from
75		Learning and Skills into schools about the safeguarding role. There is an
76		allocated link there. Also of course we have the ISA co-ordinators, they
77		play a significant role in terms of offering, where schools want it, support
78		in undertaking the process in terms of direct intervention. Then I guess
79		training through the safeguarding board. I think if I was thinking of what
80		would benefit from further development, it would be schools telling us
81		how they want to be communicated to. One of our biggest challenges is
82		that we want people to say – you can't leave it up to agencies to
83		communicate to schools, because in my experience they do not all
84		communicate in the same way. So, we are told things like send it to the
85		admin or the head teacher, and often they wont get picked up; put things
86		on the learning gateway – well, some schools will look at the learning
87		gateway, some schools wont. In some schools it will be the CP lead,
88		others it is the SENCo, and we don't know routinely who that would be –
89		I would ask who that is.
90	R	Yes, I would agree. In some secondaries, particularly the larger ones, it

91	2	is not the headteacher that is actually in charge or has the most
92		knowledge about it. That is devolved down to other members of staff in
93		the pastoral team – SENCOs, people like that. Quite often the
94		information is going to entirely the wrong person, or you are having a
95		conversation with the wrong person, erm, whereas in primary it is more
96		likely to be the headteacher. We have to know where to go. That is
97		where the local links need to come in, because you know the local
98		agencies and they know you. But they change as quickly as we change.
99	R	And often I think we are blamed for not getting information in to
100	2	schools, but often it is down to the way that we are communicating. I
101		think that would be the most helpful thing
102	I	To pick up on [name's] role and something that some-one else has said to
103		me, are you linking ISA and early intervention then with extended
104		schools?
105	R	Erm, I think that is a really good question. If I am honest with you
106		[name] has been on the [name] review panel, he was a part of that
107		process. It has probably helped his learning as much as anything else, in
108		terms of the process. I would suggest that historically we have always
109		struggled to engage but Learning and Skills is now in the agenda. For
110		example, we have had through the review we were doing, one service
111		area within learning and skills, said this is not for us, delete the email and
112		do not circulate. They were told directly not to circulate it. Yet it would
113		have been absolutely clear that this service area was one of the most
114		important areas that we would want to scope views about. We have a lot
115		of development that needs to happen. I would not have known about that
116		had not some-one told me quietly. I just feel that that has been very
117		indicative of a lot of the challenges that, so it is not necessarily schools
118		that have been the problem, I think it is the people that liaise between the
119		local authorities and the schools, those that have wanted to drive an
120		education agenda and they have not seen safeguarding as something they
121		want to promote in schools. I think that is a real issue for us. There are
122		some very strong personalities and there are some difficult barriers to get
123		through sometimes, whether they are about our advisors in schools, I
124		don't know... I think it is a challenge. I think it is compounded by a lack
125		of understanding in training roles about the significance of CAF, where
126		would almost want them to be endorsing that. I think the challenge to
127		schools from roles like [name]'s is very difficult, and can be quite
128		collusive, and if I were to change anything again, being very honest, it
129		would be more of a challenge to schools about that from roles like his.

APPENDIX TWELVE
SAMPLE TRANSCRIPT FOR LEAD PROFESSIONAL

Line No	Interview with Education Respondent E15 (I- Interviewee; R- Respondent)	
1	I	(Name) may I first of all thank you for participating in this research. In
2		the agreement that we have both signed, you stated that you would like a
3		copy of the interview script.
4		May I also remind you that you do not have to answer any question
5		should you not wish to do so, and that you may request any part of our
6		discussion be removed from consideration, or withdraw completely from
7		the study for up to six weeks after today. The agreement states that I will
8		remove any identifying features from anything we discuss, and I would
9		like to reassure you that whilst I would ask that you try not to use names
10		of families you are working with, or provide specific information that
11		would enable others to identify them, I will remove any identifying
12		information should any examples of the work you undertake be used in
13		the thesis.
14		Is there anything you wish to ask before we begin?
15	R	No. That is absolutely fine.
16	I	Q1: Tell me a little about yourself and how you became a lead
17		professional for team around the child meetings, or CAF meetings.
18	R	As a Headteacher I am very involved in supporting and helping families.
19		As soon as I became head I realised that some families needs were
20		greater than others and we needed to get some professionals together. At
21		that time, it was just before CAFs came out and we had what we call a
22		Parent Support Advisor (LA employed). I used our PSA a lot, and she
23		would signpost families. But then, part of the cuts when the new
24		conservative government came in was that PSA went unless schools
25		bought in to them – there are lots of things that we have to buy in to and
26		PSA are one of them. We didn't.
27	I	So that change was when the Conservatives came in. Before that was it
28		part of your contract with the authority?
29	R	Yes. Then all local schools, we looked.. Then we were put into clusters
30		and the cluster I am in is 13 local schools. To employ a PSA was going
31		to cost £30k per year+, and a lot of schools have not used the PSA – did
32		not like her, though I thought she was brilliant and worked really well at
33		her job, but there weren't enough people to employ her full time. She
34		applied for another job.
35	I	So do you have the possibility for a PSA now in your cluster?
36	R	No, completely gone.
37	I	Because you did not take her in the beginning?
38	R	Yes.
39	I	And with the change of government, was that 2010, or later in 2011?
40	R	Did they come in in May 2010?
41	I	Yes, they did.
42	R	It was by the September it had hit us.
43	I	So they came in May, so by September you saw increased costs. So you

44		couldn't...
45	R	You see our local authority was one of the ones that made more cuts than
46		anyone else. So even by the March, following the May, they had got rid
47		of all of our training, which was called EDS – so the whole of the
48		Educational Development Service went. They all got their notice at
49		Christmas on December 31 st and by March 31 st we had no training. So
50		you can imagine how many people there were. All our Advisors went.
51	I	But there is still a safeguarding training board isn't there?
52	R	Yes.
53	I	And there is a specific education department for that?
54	R	Yes, which is absolutely crucial because you could not manage without
55		that. So what a lot of those Education people did was set up their own
56		business, and a lot of those that were better at that are still in business
57		now. So we sign up to them and continue to get our training.
58	I	So you get your training from outside the authority now because you
59		were effectively forced to.
60	R	Yes, well, there isn't any. And if you are a good school or an
61		outstanding school you don't get any support from the authority anyway,
62		and we are a good school. So we buy in our support now.
63	I	So when CAF came in did you get training in CAFs?
64	R	Yes.
65	I	And have you had training since?
66	R	It was then updated, and I started to use them straight away. But I
67		realised, because PSA was still running at the side of it for a while, was
68		to train some more of my staff. So the SENCo is trained now, and I also
69		have two higher level TA who have done the training to be a Pastoral
70		Support TA. They have also been CAF trained. This is very useful,
71		because I have passed some of the CAFs on to them. Although we are a
72		school in what is known as a good area, we still have needy children.
73	I	How would you define safeguarding?
74	R	It is a huge thing. From my job point of view I would say that
75		safeguarding for me, is to be confident that each child, I have set up
76		structures within the school to ensure that every child that is here is safe.
77		That is what safeguarding is for me. That my staff are very aware of
78		those structures, and can use those structures, abide by those structures to
79		make sure that the children are safe when they are dealing with them on a
80		day to day basis.
81	I	Ok, are you the Designated Person for CP?
82	R	I am
83	I	Do you have second person?
84	R	My Deputy as the second, but I also have my SENCo trained and one
85		other member of staff.
86	I	So there are four people
87	R	So we have an A4 sheet by the office and around school with
88		photographs of us on, so if anyone does not know who we are, there are
89		the photographs around the school. Because you might say to a parent, it
90		is (name) but they might not know who they are. So when we do an
91		induction with anybody (name) in the Office shows them those
92		photographs and says these are round the schools as well, so you know

93		who they are
94	I	Q2: What, if any, other responsibilities do you have in the school? Do you feel that they assist you in your role as Lead Professional? If so, how?
95		
96		
97	R	Well as Head and Designated person they do assist me in my role as I have the oversight of the whole school so I know the families that need support. Quite often a teacher comes to talk to me about a need and as HT I can then work out what we are going to do with that need – whether it would be a CAF or whether I could give it to the SENCO or PSTA.
98		
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101		
102		PSTA?
103		Pastoral Support Teaching Assistant.
104		Right If you send your PSTAs or SENCO to a CAF do they have the power to action things when they get back? So if you are looking at a strategy to achieve an outcome, do they have the power to say what the school might be able to do?
105		
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107		
108		They do to a certain extent because we talk about what we can do before they go. For instance, we employ a counselor. So they would know if that counselor was available, what the waiting list was, so they could offer that – that is a cost thing. Or they might put them in touch with the school nurse, which is not a cost. They might put them in touch with the Parent Partnership Support Service if it is a child with special needs, they will need to go there. They will know the different routes. I don't think they would offer anything that would cost the school without checking with me. But they do know all the signposting and they report back to me.
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118	R	Can I just ask you for a list of the things that you buy in that link to safeguarding? So you employ a counselor?
119		
120	I	That is very reasonable, because it is subsidized by cluster, so it is £20ph.
121	R	But you have to pay to be in the cluster?
122	I	Yes, because the cluster is broken into two separate bits, and that is the paid bit. But she would be about £30ph, which is not a lot, so if ever we did not get her through the cluster we would be employing her at £30ph.
123		
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125		
126		Other costs would be training, because the Designated People have to be retrained every three years. They now charge £65 or £50 for the day. Where as it did not used to cost us anything.
127		
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129		
130		The other thing that we do is Protective Behaviours, or Taking Care Project – so whenever a new teacher or a permanent TA comes, when that training comes round and they send us the email, I put them on that. It has really helped us protect children in this school. We have had Social Services say, 'We can tell you do Protective Behaviours because the children are able to express themselves.' We had one child who was able to talk about early warning signs, which is all part of that, so when she was in certain situations she had her early warning signs so she knew she wasn't safe. That was very good. That was commendable that was, that the Social Worker phoned me up and said we think you should know that this has really helped this child. It is all about feeling safe. And that there are times where it is ok not to feel safe like the fairground ride
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142		because you have the excitement and the thrill of that. But there are
143		different sorts of feelings when you are in an unsafe situation.
144	I	Ok. Do you buy into any support packages from the authority?
145	R	Yes. We buy into the ESW for attendance. (Gets list out)
146		I do buy into Communications and Media Service because if something
147		goes wrong, we need them £249 pa. So if a child did die or something
148		awful happened they would support is. So Early Intervention Service
149		which we would do anyway because that is Special Needs; ESW I have
150		said; psychology service – we paid for nine half days this year and that
151		cost us £1755. EIS we pay for half a day a week for a year and that is
152		£6500; and ESW is £468.
153	I	So it is equivalent to a TA salary if you add it together. And it is a new
154		cost since 2010? So before 2010 did you have to pay for any of these
155		services?
156	R	Yes we did. The only ones that were free were the ESW and the
157		psychology.
158	I	So only those two were free before?
159	R	Yes. Ok.
160	I	Obviously we pay into legal (£300), and safety premises service (£1100)
161		– they do the surveys and things.
162	R	And with your ESW is that the phone line, or is it intervention with
163		families?
164	I	It is both.
165	R	How many families do they work with?
166	I	At the moment, she is not working with any because we are on top of
167		that here and do not have a need. But last year... What I get her to do is,
168		one of our problems is we have got parents coming in late or like that
169		parent that I was speaking to just before you came, who I had in on
170		Friday to talk about some things about her child. (Details issue –
171		lateness, removal from school for other children’s appointments). [When
172		I spoke about] unauthorized absence she said, ‘well that’s your books,
173		not mine.’
174	R	I noticed that.
175	I	But she and I have grown to respect each other over the last (X number
176		of) months that we have known each other because she would never
177		bring him to school on time before. She just could not understand it.
178		(Discusses cultural issue – time not being part of their life).
179		
180		So the ESW has worked with her. We also get her to do what we call a
181		late pick up – so she is here round about 9 o’clock, when the parents
182		bring them in late, and she talks to them about the impact of that and how
183		if that happens frequently they can be fined.
184	I	Have you ever used the fine?
185	R	No. Nobody actually. We talk a lot to our parents. But we do get those
186		that push to the limit.

APPENDIX THIRTEEN A PERSONAL REFLECTION

Throughout my doctorate, my tutors often referred to the ‘journey’ of becoming a doctor. One of the popular analogies was that you treat a doctorate like the task of trying to eat an elephant – one bite at a time. I thought of it more as crafting something, as I could never quite envisage what the elephant may have looked like to start with. This caused me to reflect on what the elephant looks like now for me as a person in relation to what I thought it might have looked like when I began eating it. Whilst I worked hard to remove myself from the research, I would like to share my thoughts on how the research has changed my view on the CAF. That is to say, after completing the research, and policies moving forward, how do I now view the Common Assessment Framework? (Note that at the time of writing this is rapidly being redefined in terms of target children and working practices through the Early Help focus and move away from the terminology of CAF).

Prior to the research beginning I had been a Senior Manager in several primary schools, my role ranging from Key Stage Manager in a large primary to head teacher of a smaller primary for over 12 years. Throughout all of these roles I have been involved in child protection work. During my headship I had seen CAMHS and Barnardos work successfully for individual children in my care. I had accessed their services as part of the CAF process and had personally appreciated that, at last, with the tool of Common Assessment Framework *I could do something* (as previously, when children did not meet social care criteria, I felt that nothing happened to address their needs). Therefore, in 2009 I started the research with a generally positive view of the Common Assessment Framework.

In the final year of the doctorate I returned to school management and I am currently a head teacher. As prior to beginning my research, I met children that needed help that did not meet social care (now Children's Services) criteria for support both within my own school and through conversations with peers looking for ideas on what they can do for children in their care. Issues include domestic violence, self-harming, neglect and reports children telling us that they were involved in gangs. I have personally argued with social workers on help desks about what my professional expertise enables me to do, and I have used the equivalent of the escalation procedure discussed in this thesis as a result¹⁸. It would be inappropriate to provide details here, as I am not writing anonymously, therefore children/families could be identified. In addition to this, ethical clearance was not gained from my employers. Therefore, I will relate my experience to narratives from Lead Professionals in the study.

Prior to 2009, when I called CAMHS I do not remember waiting a long time for the child to be seen. I certainly never bought in counselling services, as my role was to engage other agencies in professional dialogue so that we could see how we may work together to support the child. In 2013, just like the respondents in the study, I found that this was no longer the case. The issue of cuts leading to some services just no longer being available for access by a particular school is one point. This is discussed here by E17:

R As a Headteacher I am very involved in supporting and helping families. As soon as I became head I realised that some families needs were greater than others and we needed to get some professionals together. At that time, it was just before CAFs came out and we had what we call a Parent Support Advisor (LA employed). I used our PSA a lot, and she

¹⁸ An escalation procedure enables professionals to formally state that they would question/complain about the way in which a case is being dealt with by other agencies. The case is then reviewed by a third party.

would signpost families. But then, part of the cuts when the new conservative government came in was that PSA went unless schools bought in to them – there are lots of things that we have to buy in to and PSA are one of them. We didn't.

I Before that it was part of your contract with the authority?

R Yes. Then all local schools, we looked. Then we were put into clusters and the cluster I am in is 13 local schools. To employ a PSA was going to cost £30k per year+, and a lot of schools have not used the PSA – did not like her, though I thought she was brilliant and worked really well at her job, but there weren't enough people to employ her full time. She applied for another job.

I So do you have the possibility for a PSA now in your cluster?

R No

This response was not atypical. Many professionals, including myself, have experienced a reduction of resources at a time of a narrative of focus on CAF/Early Help from the government. Where there have not been reductions that can be addressed by schools purchasing support, I found that services that were still 'free' had also been affected by reductions in staff, resulting in long waiting lists. My experiences were not uncommon to that of E16:

R Well I refer to CAMHS sometimes without a CAF and just a letter. And although they have their own issues with waiting lists and things they will accept just a letter of referral.

I Do you know what the waiting list is?

R Last summer we had a child, he was 42nd on the waiting list and that did not move. They then bought in a locum and there were, obviously they have their own priority systems, so a little boy who is chucking furniture around in the classroom was not as high a priority as a teenager who is slitting their wrists. That is what they were saying to us. They have to prioritise.

I So they have spoken to you about thresholds?

R Yes.

I Was that a personal conversation or a training event?

R No, that was a personal conversation.

So here, the interviewee is stating that the narrative is that we can refer, and indeed we can, but the resources are not necessarily there even if the child would qualify for support. The child here remained forty second on the list because cases had to be

prioritised, and through a personal communication they were told self harm was a higher priority. One may argue that they are being rational and trying to work with insufficient resources. I would also argue that waiting lists are increasing because of the reduction in the range of issues that Children's Services now use social workers to address. Therefore, families that would be supported by a Social Worker in 2009 may now find themselves being supported through other agencies instead. (This is how it appeared to interviewees, and also to myself once 'back in the field'). Whilst the issue of a child waiting for anger management support from CAMHS and never appearing to go up the list does not match particular issues in any cases that I have dealt with specifically, it does indicate the frustration that may be felt. In addition to not being able to get support in a timely manner even if a child meets the criteria there are further complications to accessing early help. For example, the decision that the school should take the Lead Professional role in increasingly complex cases is being made for us. As one interviewee explained:

- R Thinking about the three cases we have got at the moment. Two of them the decisions were made for us. One came up from pre-school. Well actually, that was a Child Protection that came down to Child in Need. The decision was made at one of those Child in Need support meetings that it no longer needed to be that, so it should be a CAF.
- I Were you involved in that or was it before the child came to the school.
- R Yes. (*Indicating she was involved in meeting*).
- E17

So, like E17 I felt that there were cases where the decision that the school should take the lead role was made by other agencies, not the school. The interviewee later explained that this case involved drug use at home, and s/he questioned their ability to address this issue during the meeting and afterwards. Like E17 my ability to support a family has been limited due to lack of access to the home, and I am therefore being

placed in a situation where I can only make a judgement on whether a child is in danger/things are improving by what I am told and see at school. And may I reiterate, I am trained in teaching, whereas there are other professional specifically trained in these areas. I have no professional expertise in the field of drugs, so how and I qualified to ensure that the child is safe and the family is supported? I strongly believe that this is highly problematic. Returning to E17, they then explained the difficulties that they were experiencing with the reclassification of the child's need:

R But the one that has come down from Child in Need, this was the one that I said earlier; we are sort of in limbo at the moment because we have contacted Children's Services again. I feel it has come down from Child in Need to a CAF when the child was at pre-school. So, at that time there was a Health Visitor involved, a support worker from the Children's Centre, there was the Nursery. But once they started school the Health Visitor isn't involved any more because of the age of the child; and the Children's Centre aren't involved any more, so it became school and family. Because of the background to it, I felt that we did not have the... it was bigger than we could... we couldn't do any monitoring at home, that sort of stuff.

I Can I ask the area of concern it was?

R It would have been welfare and maybe neglect. There were drugs involved by the parent.

I So the trigger would be that the child is now over 5. That is when people withdrew?

R Yes.

I So they did not continue because they had already established a relationship with the family, they withdrew?

R Yes.

So here the school stated that they did not have the expertise to support this family. I too have been in this situation. I have also been in the situation to play the 'sibling under 5' card to try and gain access. I have contacted agencies and made it clear that there is a child under five in the home to try and gain support for an older sibling. Of course, the cost comes when the child reaches their fifth birthday and the support is removed.

The downgrading of Child in Need to CAF was discussed in detail within five interviews. I do not disagree with E11's personal belief that the reason behind it is trying to reduce the number of families on Social Care's books, particularly if those parents are disengaging (for example, not turning up to appointments, refusing access to the home):

I Have you seen any changes in provision, or what is considered a TAC or CP issue?

R With changes, can you clarify that?

I Are there any issues where you think 5/10 years ago this would have gone to CP?

R I have definitely. I have seen a number of cases, if not me personally then in my family, my wife's experiences in school, or other heads that I have spoken to where child protection has been downgraded to CAF rather than the other way round, and the reason for it – maybe it is not CP maybe it is child in need, something like that. But it is felt that because of non-engagement from parents we downgrade it to CAF. So the problem is still there, but the people who are dealing with it – it is taken off their workload.

I And does that work?

R No.

I If I understand correctly, they are downgrading it to CAF because...

R No

I ... they [the parents] have to be involved otherwise it does not happen.

R Absolutely. So the only way that they have... the parents have to be involved when it goes to child protection – where the children are in danger of being removed from the family. I had a case of that this term where nobody could gain access to the family home, and there were rumours flying around that the family were thinking of fleeing the area and going abroad. So a court order was taken out on the family prior to the Easter holiday to keep them in the same place, then child protection procedures were initiated this term. That was the only way that family engagement would happen.

Here is another key issue which may be the case. At an event I recently attended I was told that if the concern about the child is not classified as a child protection parents can choose to disengage and no-one can force them. Therefore, the child remains without help. After completing the training, the shift from social care

involvement for children deemed to be ‘in need’ to provision from other agencies has become, in my opinion, much more blatant. At the time of writing this *Working Together* (DfE, 2013) reiterates that Child in Need concerns should still be referred to Children’s Services. I think it important to remind ourselves what ‘Child in Need’ means. According to the updated *Working Together* (DfE, 2013:88, their italics):

Section 17(10) states that a child shall be taken to be in need if:

(a) the child is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority under Part III of the Children Act 1989;

(b) the child’s health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services; or

(c) the child is disabled.

This does not mean that there is a low level need that needs to be addressed, it recognises the potential of long-term effects on the child. One should also note that the current version of *Working Together* at the time of completing this thesis states:

Under section 17, local authorities have responsibility for determining what services should be provided to a child in need. This does not necessarily require local authorities themselves to be the provider of such services. (DfE, 2013:88)

Therefore, whilst social workers may state that a child is ‘in need’ it is not necessarily them that provides support for the family. So who does? If the school becomes the Lead Professional tries to access help, upon what expertise can they base their decisions? When provision is provided by third parties, I personally also question how a local authority, at a time of cuts and refocusing the criteria for access for early help, can ensure that all provision is fit for purpose, which *Working Together* states it must do. (I am not saying it is not possible – I just question how). I also worry what happens to the children where resources are not available, or parents say no.

Another important point to remember is that schools in this research were also being asked to cover the cost of support in many cases. This could be a determining factor when deciding whether to discuss the possibility of support through the CAF process with parents. For example, what if you are a small school and you simply cannot afford it? Remember that the costs involved can be significant (see Table 5.5 which lists some of the costs associated with schools trying to support children and their families). E14 (a small school Lead Professional – marginally over 100 pupils) illustrates some of the costs associated with providing help, including additional costs should an individual child require help:

R See what I did have was a Parent Support Advisor when the local authority did produce those, and that was absolutely fantastic. We had them attached and she was able to form those links and signpost, and do some casework. What happened was when her post went, when they cut back posts in the LA, she has been appointed by the Town Schools cluster, which I am part of, but I have had to pay quite a lot of money just so that I can access her and it is not worth it, so I am going to have to, I will not be able to afford that from March so I won't have access to her. And that is such a shame because that has been one of the best services.

I So you have to pay for the PSA?

R So she has been appointed by the (Name of Cluster A). Then I have to pay an amount to be part of that cluster, which doesn't just include her. That is the only bit that I really benefit from. But the amount that I have to pay to be part of the cluster is prohibitive. So I won't be able to do that.

I Ok, sorry. Trying to learn new things. So the cluster is your group of heads, yes?

R Yes. I belong to several clusters. Through the extended services we actually created a, there was a group of (Name of Cluster A) schools, that local authority had put us into groups – we did not have any say. But when all that disappeared, and we were able to create our own clusters across the... a couple of years ago... I still stayed part of the (Name of Cluster A) cluster. I work very closely with another cluster of rural schools, now it does not cost me anything, to be part of that cluster, but Cluster A – it does cost me because they have paid for a co-ordinator, so we have to pay her salary. But also they have actually bought in the services of the PSA, because she lost her job, therefore she works between two clusters. But that is all she can offer us – if you are not part of the cluster you would not be able to access her. She is very good. However, my subscription to the cluster, for what I

am getting, I can't afford it anymore. It is too much.

I Do you buy in any other services for safeguarding children?

R Well, Educational Social Worker I always do, I buy in EPs, Learning Support, obviously.

I Can I ask how much you pay and what it will mean they will do?

R Well the ESW slightly different this year, because what they have done is that they have provided me with a telephone advisor rather than coming out. You used to have half termly meeting, but sometimes you did not have anything to discuss you know, they would just look through your attendance figures. Actually I prefer the advice line way of looking at it. I have not had to use it, but it is there if I did.

ESW £469 per year

EP £1500

Learning Support is from (name of place, not LA), which is £ ...

The cost for being part of the cluster, for the PSA is £750

The Learning Support (name of place, not LA) is... I had to pay them an extra £400 because I have a child, he had a child protection conference, and he needed extra support... They are supporting emotional abuse and I had to pay extra for that on top of my normal

....

I So there was a conference that said there was a child that needed support for emotional abuse...?

R No, no he is on the CP register for emotional abuse, unfortunately the way that that emotional abuse is working is impacting on his behaviour. So I have had to purchase some extra behavioural support on top, which I was not anticipating as part of my annual support subscription.

I Does he get support for that from Social Care?

R No. He is getting some support from Social Care now, in terms of what is called Wishes and Feelings work, and parental support. Why cannot I find a bill? It is in this folder.

Right, it costs me £4640 per year.

I What does that include?

R Two two hour sessions of a specialist teacher every term, and a Teaching Assistant for a morning a week.

I So the 2x2 hour sessions – is that regularly?

R Two per term. It is to look at caseload, if they need to do any assessments, whatever, and then give instructions to the specialist teaching assistants to deliver those programmes.

I ESW?

R Just a helpline. (*Reads from folder*) They answer the helpline; they answer any attendance questions, provide me with proven solutions to attendance problems, and also provide me with access to the latest information including legislation. It will also provide me with three home visits per year.

I Ok. What figure is your trigger for attendance?

- R My monitoring of figures for attendance.
- I But what percentage attendance would make you concerned?
- R 80%. But I have always looked at higher, but when they look at cases they have to prioritise. So if I am being realistic we are looking at 80%.
- I And your EP? What does your £1500 include?
- R But again, I have to pay for extra. Eight sessions we get each – that is what we get as a cluster. So basically we get two sessions a term, then we put into a pot the extra from each of our cluster of six schools, and from that we, for example, that has paid for our training – she has just done some resilience training for the cluster. So we use those days for visits for training, and they are doing training on Autistic Spectrum for the cluster – and it is really good quality training.
- I In this authority, in this area, if you have a child on the autistic spectrum, do you go through CAMHS to diagnose it, or do you go elsewhere?
- R CAMHS I would go through.
- I What are the waiting times like for that?
- R It all depends. From school it is a long time really, six months it has been here. But if they go through their GP it seems to be going through a lot quicker.
- I Have you actually got GPs to make referrals to CAMHS?
- R Yes. I get the parents to go to the GPs. I have had three different children do referrals through the GP.

Here we can clearly see that schools are paying to access support. This respondent lists a Parent Support Advisor (PSA) and comments that this person used to be funded by the Local Authority, and is presently purchased by the cluster of schools. However, due to the interviewee's budget restraints she will be unable to access that support for her families in future. Some of the costs listed would involve support for children with learning needs – for example, Educational Psychologist, but some of their work may touch upon safeguarding too. The Learning Support again would typically target the children with educational needs but the interviewee clearly states that when there is a need for support linked to child protection the school is paying the bill. Despite the behavior being linked to emotional abuse, the support has to be purchased by the school:

No, no he is on the CP register for emotional abuse, unfortunately the way that that emotional abuse is working is impacting on his behaviour. So I have had to purchase some extra behavioural support on top, which I was not anticipating as part of my annual support subscription. E14

So, returning to my elephant, what do I think it looks like now? It terrifies me. I see a highly decorated circus elephant, full of excitement, and perhaps promise of help, but if you look underneath it is a badly formed paper mache model that could fall apart at any moment. I am very concerned, personally, that one day one of my children (that I have previously met, am working with presently, or am yet to meet) will die. My concerns are based around the fact that as an educational professional I am being asked to do work that other people have dedicated years to train for (such as questioning whilst not investigating a child as they make a disclosure, supporting a child with emotional health needs whilst waiting for waiting lists to reduce, or deciding if a parent is on drugs and, if so, is that a significant threat to their child?). My second concern is, as the head of a small school at present, what if one year I cannot purchase a Service Level Agreement for Early Help for the children in my care? Even when I can purchase or access help the cuts are drastically reducing support available to families that wish to engage, and if parents do give permission the waiting lists of sometimes six months or more (e.g. CAMHS) can mean they no longer wish to engage by the time it is their 'turn'. What happens to the self-harming/angry/etc child during this time – how do I support them in the meantime? By agreeing to work with CAF/Early Help am I complicit? That is to say, if all the head teachers said 'NO' would someone listen and do something, or would the children just fall by the wayside? When we look back at this period of safeguarding provision, definitions and services will we hold our heads in shame? Putting it

blatantly, I no longer believe in the power of the CAF/Early Help to enable me to 'do something'. I see it as a sticking plaster over a severed leg. And I am the one putting the plaster on.