

Scenario Suite

The use of scenarios can be a great learning opportunity for staff to consider the wider risks to children and discuss how, as an individual and setting, you can respond to these quickly and effectively, utilising the appropriate procedures. Scenarios encourage dialogue and debate between colleagues which further enhances our learning and personal development.

Below are a variety of scenarios for you to pick and mix as you choose. They can be completed individually or within small groups as a team.

Annabelle is 3 years old. She lives in a 3 bed housing association house with her mum, dad and 4 siblings aged between 10 months and 7 years. Her dad lost his job 6 months ago and since then his mental health has declined and he is unable to care for the children appropriately. The primary school has raised concerns regarding hygiene, attendance and the 7 year old is being expected to care for her younger siblings. The family have received complaints from neighbours regarding noise, litter and the children playing out. These have been reported to the council. Annabelle is a healthy weight. She can say a few words but is not putting them together in sentences. She has had repeated chest and ear infections. Mum regularly takes her to A&E for this. When she arrives to nursery today she is wearing a thin T shirt and leggings with no socks on and strappy sandals although it is freezing outside.

What would you do immediately?

How would you start a conversation with parents about your concerns?

Which agencies may be able to help the family in the longer term?

Henry is age 10 years. He lives with his mum aged 28 and his 2 younger siblings. When mum picks him up from the Out of School Club she shouts at him a lot or is on her phone and ignores him. His school clothes are dirty and too small. He has recurrent headlice despite you providing advice and support to his mum. He has been the victim of name calling at school because of this. His attendance is very good (96%) but his attainment in school is below target. His behaviour can be challenging and he recently had a fixed term exclusion for bullying. He has been involved in antisocial behaviour with older boys on the estate. You see him at the out of school club most days.

How would you support Henry?

Which other agencies would be useful for you to speak with?

Which level on the Continuum of Need would you assess this to be?

Carlos is age 4 years. He has a delay in his speech that sometimes makes it hard for others to understand him. The waiting list for a Speech and Language Therapist is long so you consider there is no point in trying to make a referral. Other than his speech he is healthy, intelligent and popular – but a little shy. He lives with his mum and dad and 2 siblings in a 4 bedroom detached house.

How can you help Carlos?

What resources do you have that may be useful in supporting Carlos?

Is it in Carlos' best interest not to make a referral to the Speech and Language Therapist?

Muhammed is 4 years old. This morning you have received a telephone call from a concerned neighbour who suggests Muhammed is smacked and verbally abused at home on a regular basis. They further state he is put straight to bed without food when collected from nursery. Muhammed's grandmother and mother are the alleged abusers. The family has had previous involvement from Children's Social Care due to grandmother's overindulgence of alcohol and violence between Muhammed's parents. You are aware that his grandmother takes on the main caring role as mum's mental health is fragile and she is depressed.

How seriously do you take second hand information?

Which level on the Continuum of Need would you assess this to be and why?

As Children's Social Care has previously been involved does this make you more concerned?

It's your turn to support children's personal care routines in the toddler room (1-2 years). Whilst changing Max's nappy you are searching for his Sudocream and come across a small packet tucked in the back of the bag. You initially disregard it, but as you put things away you notice that it contains a cannabis bud.

Would you tell anyone about what you found? If so, who?

Do you consider Max is being abused or neglected?

What information would you record?

Jack is nearly 4 years old. He is in receipt of the 30 hours funding. His attendance is good and Jack appears to thoroughly enjoy being at your setting. At snack time you notice that Jack is very hungry, he tells you there was 'no breakfast'. During the morning, you observe him being very subdued from his friends. In the afternoon he tells you that 'mummy is sad'.

How would you support Jack in the first instance?

Can you identify one other agency who may be able to help?

Would you notify family of Jack's disclosure?

Lucy has been at your pre-school for six months. You have noticed that her parents have very different relationships with her. Her mum is very anxious about whether she is meeting her targets and working at the 'same level' as her friends. She constantly asks for advice and guidance, and you have noticed that she seems to question everything she does. Her father is quite abrupt with staff, and with Lucy. He frequently comments she needs to be 'braver' and 'toughen up' and Lucy is noticeably subdued when she is with him. At parents evening, her father talks over her mother and you find it challenging to engage them both in conversations about Lucy's development.

What may be happening within the family?

What may be the impact on Lucy?

What will your next actions be?

Whilst supporting children in the bathroom you notice that three year old Susie is very subdued. She is reluctant to go to the toilet despite looking uncomfortable and as though she needs to go. You ask her if she needs some help, and when you are supporting notice that her genital area is very sore and red.

What are your first thoughts?

How would you encourage Susie to use the toilet?

Would you share this information with anyone?

Dan and Andrew are twins aged 3 years. They are well presented, have healthy packed lunches, talk about holidays they go and the toys and gadgets they have at home. They attend fulltime from 7:30am to 6:00pm each day. Parents work and sometimes this involves working away. The children will then go and stay with grandparents during the week. Mum and dad never attend parents evening or any events put on by nursery. They are always in a hurry and this week didn't have time to speak with the key person who wanted to show them the fabulous drawing Dan had done. Andrew says he loves nursery because people talk to him. He went on to say he and Dan have to play in their room and never downstairs as their mum doesn't want them to make a mess.

Do you have any concerns for Dan and Andrew?

The family sound quite affluent. Does this mean there are never any concerns?

Can you think of any helpful phrases that may work in engaging with this family?

You have a new parent joining your setting with their child. On arriving mum attends alone. She is very quiet and listens carefully when you are showing her around the nursery. When you sit together to review the policies and procedures she discloses that she was subjected to Female Genital Mutilation as a child and is scared that her family may try to force this upon her baby daughter.

Can you identify any vulnerabilities within the family?

If you felt like you needed further advice who would you speak to?

What information would you record?

Joe is a father of a 3 year old in your setting. Recently, on a number of occasions, his son, Luke, has commented that 'mummy and daddy were shouting'. Luke has always been keen on rough and tumble play but in the last few weeks this has escalated. When Joe arrives to pick Luke up you notice that he has a bruise on the side of his face. On asking if he is ok, Luke shouts 'mummy did it'. Joe laughs, changes the subject and takes Luke home.

What may Luke hear, see, feel, experience and imagine when he is at home?

As a childcare practitioner how do you feel?

Do you know of any local support services that may be able to help the family?

At lunchtime, you are sat in the staff room and notice that two colleagues are looking at their personal phone. When you sit and listen it appears that they have taken photos of some of the children in the garden. You ask if they took them today your colleague responds "They were so sweet. I'm going to print the photographs for their mum".

Is this something you should ignore as they are your colleagues?

Would you tell anyone about this?

Does your setting have any policies or procedures that highlights the use of personal devices in the workplace?