

**Safeguarding
Training Centre** from
The Key

In partnership with
OneEducation
Putting children first

Safeguarding and child protection: the essentials

Group activity pack

Part 1 – Signs and indicators of abuse



Our group is looking at (please circle):

Physical abuse	Sexual abuse	Neglect	Emotional abuse
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Definition:

Physical signs and indicators	Behavioural signs and indicators

Part 2 – Serious case review 1



Daniel Pelka was part of a Polish family living in the UK. He was nearly five years old when he was murdered by his mother and stepfather in March 2012. During the last six months of his life he was subjected to physical and emotional abuse and neglect.

Daniel started school in 2011. He spoke very little English and staff relied on his mother and older sister Anna for help with communication. Daniel was often isolated. Daniel and Anna had poor attendance and often arrived late.

It became apparent that Daniel was obsessively hungry, taking food at every opportunity – including discarded food from bins, and beans planted in soil. His mother told school staff that he had medical problems. Daniel's mother was seen as caring by most staff. However, some felt she was too severe, to the extent they stopped telling her about Daniel's eating problems. An inquiry into his death found that, at home, Daniel was force fed salt to induce vomit.


A school nurse and a support worker conducted a home visit but Daniel was not seen as part of this. Daniel's mother told them he was aggressive and interventions were put in place to support his behaviour, but there were not sustained. There was also a lack of coordination between the school nurse and other staff, and so their concerns were not shared.

Daniel started to come to school with bruises and unexplained marks. These were seen by different school staff but due to poor record keeping it was unclear what injuries were seen, when, and what the responses were. These injuries were viewed individually and were also not linked to staff concerns about his behaviour around food. None of Daniel's injuries were referred to social care or police. Daniel's mother and stepfather persistently deceived and used Daniel's sister to confirm their lies. Professionals did not think the unthinkable.

On one occasion a teaching assistant asked Daniel how his injuries occurred. He did not provide any explanation. A teacher from a neighbouring school made an attempt to speak with Daniel in Polish three days before his death, but without success.

Before he started school, police and health visitors were involved with Daniel's family numerous times due to domestic violence and alcohol misuse. The school was not made aware of this.

Coventry Safeguarding Children Board (2013) *Serious case review RE Daniel Pelka*. Online. Available at: [http://www.cscb-new.co.uk/downloads/Serious%20Case%20Reviews%20-%20exec.%20summaries/SCR_Archive/Coventry%20SCR%20-%20Daniel%20Pelka%20\(2013\).pdf](http://www.cscb-new.co.uk/downloads/Serious%20Case%20Reviews%20-%20exec.%20summaries/SCR_Archive/Coventry%20SCR%20-%20Daniel%20Pelka%20(2013).pdf)



Name: Daniel Pelka
Age at time of death: 4 years 8 months
Convicted of murder: His mother and stepfather
Cause of death: Head injury, following months of physical and emotional abuse, and neglect