

JOE'S* STORY

Hello, come in. My name is Joe, and I am 11. I live at home with mum. My sister Rosie, who's 16, used to live here with us but when mum became ill again, she moved to live with her boyfriend. She doesn't visit us anymore which makes me sad as I really miss her. She used to help me look after mum.



As I said, mum is quite ill at the moment. She cries a lot and some days she doesn't get out of bed at all. I worry about mum all the time and don't like to leave her when she is really ill, so some days I don't go to school.

I find school difficult. My friends at school all call me names like "the smelly kid", which makes me feel bad about myself. They don't know about mum being ill. The washing machine doesn't work at home and I don't know how to fix it, so how can I wash my uniform?

School send letters home when I have a day off, but I don't want to bother mum with these. I can't really go in when she's this ill – you understand don't you? I overheard my teacher telling the school welfare woman that my attendance is only 60%, but I'm worried what will happen to mum when I'm not here – you understand don't you?

I manage as best I can indoors. I can do the shopping when I find some money in mum's purse; but I'm not very good at the cleaning or looking after the animals. When I don't go to school, I have some toys at home to play with or videos to watch when mum is asleep.

Night-time is difficult for mum. She likes me to cuddle her when she goes to sleep, so often I just sleep in her bed. I just bring my duvet in and sleep down the other end of the bed.

Mum doesn't feel well enough to go to the doctor, so I don't actually know what is wrong with her. Some days she is fine, and I think she is getting better but then she gets ill again.

Sorry about the state of the house as I say I'm not good at the cleaning. The toilet downstairs is broken so if you want to use the loo, please use the upstairs one. You'll need to be quiet though as mum is upstairs sleeping. I would make you a cup of tea but don't have any milk today.

Sorry...

SAFEGUARDING ADOLESCENTS CASE STUDY

**Pseudonym*

Questions to consider:

1. What category of neglect is this?
2. What do you see as the pertinent issues?
3. What else could/should have happened to identify the situation earlier?
4. What safeguards are in place in your organisation(s) to prevent such a situation occurring?