

## SELINA'S\* STORY



Hi, I'm Selina and I'm 11. You can't hear me because I can't speak, but you are picking up my thoughts.

I used to live with my mum but when I was a baby, a social worker came round one day and took me away. They were worried about me because of the man who mum lived with. They took me to my Nan's where I live with Nan and Auntie Zoe, who is like a big sister to me. The judge in court said I should go and live with my Nan all the time.

My social worker would visit me every month at Nan's. Because my Nan had loads of stuff, the house was always cluttered and it was difficult to move about. It was especially hard for me because of my wheelchair. We ended up not using it indoors and Nan or Zoe would carry me from room to room, but most of the time I stayed in one room when I was at home. My bed was in nan's room as the spare room was full of boxes of stuff – I don't know what was in them.

I needed a special lift to get me into the bath but because of all Nan's stuff it didn't fit in our bathroom, so we've never really used it. It made me a bit smelly, not having a bath, but everyone at my school had their own problems so none of the other children said anything to me about it.

# SAFEGUARDING ADOLESCENTS CASE STUDY

Nan never got round to clearing up and Zoe was busy every day at work, and she didn't really seem to notice. I heard my social worker telling Nan that the house needed to be cleaned and because she never got round to it, he ended up getting a cleaning company to come and do it.

They turned up but said they couldn't clean it because they couldn't get into the house with their cleaning machines because of all Nan's stuff. I could sense the social worker was cross with Nan, but like everyone else he didn't really say much to her because everyone knows that she had an important job at school.

One day a nurse came round and saw Nan to talk to her about how I was getting on at something called 'respite'. This is when I go and stay in this special children's home once a month for a couple of nights. It was nice there because they used to give me a bath. Apparently, I was doing well there and they were pleased with my progress.

My social worker who'd been coming to see me since I was tiny left to get another job abroad and then I got a new social worker, who came to see me at home a few times.

One day she wasn't well, so her boss came to my house. The boss was really cross and told Nan the house wasn't clean enough and there was too much stuff so I wouldn't be able to live there. I heard them tell Nan they were worried that this would all make me ill.

I went and lived at the children's home. I've been here a while now. It's nice having a bath most days and I have my own room which is decorated lovely and has all my special toys. People around me are always happy now. I still see Nan most weeks. She seems much happier now as well. I wished she'd told my social worker at the time that she was struggling to manage me and maybe I'd have got some help sooner...

Thanks for stopping by...

*\*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?