

Case study - Leroy

Background

Leroy is seven years old. He lives at home with his mum, dad and three siblings – Jordan aged 10, Connor aged 12 and Zahindra aged 14. Leroy's mum often helps out at school and is a member of the parents association.

After returning from the summer holidays, Leroy is much quieter than usual and has lost interest in his schoolwork. Leroy used to be a very sociable child who had lots of friends and enjoyed playing football at every opportunity. During break times he now stands on his own in the playground and has recently become aggressive if any of the other children go near him.

During the next half term you notice that Leroy is constantly tired, he sometimes falls asleep in class and he finds it very difficult to concentrate. His clothes are often dirty and he has poor personal hygiene. He says that there is never any hot water in the house and he is frightened of getting in the bath as nobody comes to watch him. He often forgets to bring his lunch to school and during one break time Leroy is found in the classroom eating the food from the other children's lunch boxes. He says that there is never any food to eat in his house.

Leroy's mum has rarely been seen at school since the return from the summer break. She comes to see you after school one day and tells you that she and Leroy's dad separated during the summer holidays and he is now living with his pregnant girlfriend. The children have not seen their dad since he left as mum feels that he should be punished for leaving them all. She tells you that she has been prescribed anti-depressants by the doctor but is finding it difficult to get up in the mornings and wishes that everything and everyone would just go away as she is finding it difficult to cope. She admits that Leroy and his siblings look after themselves and it is up to them to get up and get ready for school.

What type(s) of abuse may have taken place?	
What are the factors that indicate this?	
What actions might be taken?	
By whom might these actions be taken?	
Comment	

Case study – Suggested response

<p>Background</p>	<p>Leroy is seven years old. He lives at home with his mum, dad and three siblings – Jordan aged 10, Connor aged 12 and Zahindra aged 14. Leroy’s mum often helps out at school and is a member of the parents association.</p> <p>After returning from the summer holidays, Leroy is much quieter than usual and has lost interest in his schoolwork. Leroy used to be a very sociable child who had lots of friends and enjoyed playing football at every opportunity. During break times he now stands on his own in the playground and has recently become aggressive if any of the other children go near him.</p> <p>During the next half term you notice that Leroy is constantly tired, he sometimes falls asleep in class and he finds it very difficult to concentrate. His clothes are often dirty and he has poor personal hygiene. He says that there is never any hot water in the house and he is frightened of getting in the bath as nobody comes to watch him. He often forgets to bring his lunch to school and during one break time Leroy is found in the classroom eating the food from the other children’s lunch boxes. He says that there is never any food to eat in his house.</p> <p>Leroy’s mum has rarely been seen at school since the return from the summer break. She comes to see you after school one day and tells you that she and Leroy’s dad separated during the summer holidays and he is now living with his pregnant girlfriend. The children have not seen their dad since he left as mum feels that he should be punished for leaving them all. She tells you that she has been prescribed anti-depressants by the doctor but is finding it difficult to get up in the mornings and wishes that everything and everyone would just go away as she is finding it difficult to cope. She admits that Leroy and his siblings look after themselves and it is up to them to get up and get ready for school.</p>
<p>What type(s) of abuse may have taken place?</p>	<p>Neglect – physical and educational. Emotional abuse.</p>

<p>What are the factors that indicate this?</p>	<p>Leroy's mum doesn't care whether he comes to school or not. Changes in behaviour. Not being able to see dad as mum is punishing him for leaving. Stealing food from other children's lunchboxes. Not bringing lunch to school. Deterioration in personal hygiene. Constant fatigue.</p>
<p>What actions might be taken?</p>	<p>Report compiled. Involvement of social services. Referral to school nurse/health service. Education welfare officer. Provide wrap-around care. Support for mum.</p>
<p>By whom might these actions be taken?</p>	<p>Practitioner to report to manager/child protection officer any concerns. Referral to other agencies or social services after investigation within the setting.</p>
<p>Comment</p>	<p>Leroy's mum is finding it difficult to cope after the separation with from his Dad. She is getting some support from her GP and is taking anti-depressants. These may take some time to work. It is important to support the mother at this stressful time. It may be that she needs counselling to help her deal with her anxieties. She obviously needs help if she just wants everything to go away.</p> <p>Leroy has three older siblings. It is important to find out the level of support that the mother is getting from them.</p> <p>Intervention from the father may also be needed.</p>