



Leeds
Safeguarding
Children Board



Supervision: Policy and Guidance

*Minimum standards for the supervision of staff and volunteers
working with children, young people and families*

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JFDI Level: 3

Improving Safeguarding Practice

Purpose

Developed by the Child and Family Trust Board Workforce Development Subgroup and the LSCB, this policy and guidance has been produced to identify the minimum standards for the supervision of staff and / or volunteers who work directly with children, young people and families and / or those whose work brings them into regular contact with children, young people and their families.

Although focusing on safeguarding supervision the principles and guidance within this document are overarching for other types of supervision, for example clinical and managerial.

All agencies and organisations working with children and young people should ensure that their staff and / or volunteers receive good quality, supervision which offers high support and high challenge through either:

1. The adoption of this policy and guidance

or

2. The use of this policy and guidance as a basis for their own supervision policy, which includes the identified minimum standards (or cross reference that own supervision policies include the identified minimum standards).

All managers undertaking supervision should ensure they follow their **own agency** supervision policy and use the associated paperwork.

A Framework for Supervision

Introduction

Supervision is a fundamental task that managers will undertake to support the development of their staff's skills and practices in work with children, young people and families and the safeguarding of those in their care. Following the inquiry of Victoria Climbié Lord Laming stated that:-

“All staff working directly with children must be regularly supervised”

(Lord Laming Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report 2003)

This framework provides an understanding about the requirements and processes of supervision, which is relevant for all those who work with children, young people and families. The purpose of this framework is to ensure effective supervision and is not a prescriptive template – services may already have established good practice and effective recording systems and the continued use of this is supported.

Supervision

There are different types of supervision, e.g. informal and formal. This framework specifically addresses 'formal supervision'. Informal supervision is often on-going in most effective teams, as staff members seek advice and help in situations that they deal with on an on-going basis. This is good practice but should NOT replace a formal supervision session.

Significant issues discussed through informal supervision should be clearly recorded immediately and revisited at the formal session.

Supervision is a partnership between the supervisee, the supervisor and the setting. In schools and clusters, ideally, supervision should always be carried out by the named senior designated leader/officer for child protection in the school, or the identified appropriately trained lead for cluster staff. In other agencies or services it could be the line manager, the designated leader/officer for child protection or another appropriately identified supervisor.

The Key Functions of supervision are the 3 Ps

1. Performance Management

- Ensure that performance and practice, including safeguarding, is competent, accountable and soundly based in research and practice knowledge
- Ensure that safeguarding children practice is consistent with the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board, West Yorkshire Consortium Procedures and organisational procedures.
- Ensure that practitioners fully understand their roles, and responsibilities and the scope of their professional discretion and authority.
- To provide reflective space to analyse ongoing work and specific incidents, to assess risk and need and to provide an important check and balance on decision making and planning .

2. Professional Development

- Ensure that professional development needs, including safeguarding practice are considered and supported.

3. Personal Support

- To provide reflective space for the supervisee to discuss and work through the personal impact of their role and responsibilities. This should include support to address the emotional impact of the work where required.

Good supervision involves a balance between all three elements, not always within one session, but certainly over the entire supervision process.

A. Roles and Responsibility

The Supervisor is responsible for:-

- Sharing the responsibility for making the supervisory relationship work
- Ensuring confidentiality, subject to service user and staff safety
- Creating an effective sensitive and supportive supervision
- Providing suitable time and location
- Agree the timescales within which supervision takes place.
- Eliminating interruptions
- Maintaining accurate and clear records in relation to comments about or actions for the supervisee as well as changes or actions in relation to particular cases.

- Ensuring that the supervision contract has been agreed and reviewed annually.
- Ensuring the Organisation's professional standards are met.
- Ensuring that where a change in line management occurs, a handover process is arranged between all parties concerned.
- Ensuring that issues relating to diversity are addressed constructively and positively and provide opportunity for staff to raise issues about their experience and diversity.
- Ensuring the shared responsibility for case oversight and maintenance, including safeguarding, accountability and workload.

The supervisee is responsible for:-

- Sharing the responsibility for making the supervisory relationship work
- Attending regularly and on time, participating actively and bringing their agenda.
- Accepting the mandate to be supervised, and being accountable for any actions.
- Preparing appropriately for supervision sessions.
- Ensuring the recording of supervision is reflective of the particular meeting.
- Ensure any identified changes or actions regarding individual caseloads are recorded on the case files
- Ensure that the contract has been agreed and reviewed annually.
- Actively participating in an effective sensitive and supportive supervision.
- Aiming to meet the organisation's professional standards

Group supervision

In some cases it may be necessary or appropriate to conduct a group supervision session, where there may be several staff involved in direct work with a specific child/ family. There are many benefits to be gained from group supervision including problem solving, peer group learning and giving and receiving strong feedback within a supportive setting.

When a group supervision process is undertaken the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor and supervisees should be the same with the added principles:-

- The group should clarify and agree the boundaries of confidentiality
- The records should reflect that this was a group supervision

B Contract

The contract between a supervisee and a supervisor should clearly outline's the responsibilities and expectations of both parties as outlined above. This should be discussed, agreed and signed off at the beginning of the supervisory arrangement. The contract should form part of the supervision records and should be reviewed annually (*see Appendix 1 for sample Supervision Contract*).

C Frequency of Supervision

The frequency of supervision is highlighted on the contract form under the section "supervisor's responsibilities". The frequency of supervision will be dependent on the role you play within the organisation, your skills, experiences, team requirements and Government guidelines. Good practice indicates that the sessions should be regular (occurring at set intervals) and frequent enough to provide the support and oversight needed. It is recommended that this is monthly, but certainly no more than every three months, for staff who are case holders or who manage complex cases.

The supervisor and supervisee should agree on the duration and frequency of supervision taking into account the experience of the supervisee and the complexity of work. It will be appropriate to arrange for more frequent supervision for staff who are newly qualified or new to post but also if there are particular pieces of work which need more time in supervision.

D Recording

Recording should follow the principle that:-

- The contract is the initial record of agreement between both parties.
- All supervision sessions must be recorded by the supervisor (*see Appendix 2 for sample Supervision Record*).
- Records of supervision should be signed off and dated by supervisor and supervisee. All records of supervision are confidential and should be stored securely by the supervisor. They will be subject to inspection and audit.
- Records should ensure case management decisions of individual cases through supervision are recorded on the individual CYP and family records held by the organisation (*see Appendix 3 for sample Decision Record*), hand written records must be legible.
- The standard format supplied in the appendices should be used as a framework for recording purposes. It is available as an electronic version on the LSCB Website (www.leedslscb.org.uk).

E Quality Assurance

There is a critical link between good quality regular supervision and good outcomes for service users

- Supervision files will be subject to inspection and audit which may include checking your file to ensure that supervision is taking place.

F Entitlement

It is essential that supervision is provided. A member of staff who is not receiving supervision at the required frequency during the year should:-

- In the first instance arrange a one to one with their supervisor to discuss and resolve, where possible.
- If they are unable to find a solution, the supervisee should request a three way meeting between themselves, their supervisor and their supervisor's line manager. The difficulties should be discussed and outcomes agreed. For school staff this may be the head teacher or in the instance that the head teacher is also the supervisor, a governor. For cluster staff, they should request a three way meeting between their supervisor, line manager /or if appropriate Cluster Chair or Targeted services leader.

NB this entitlement should be clearly agreed and defined in the supervision contract agreed by both parties at the start of the supervision process (*see Appendix 1 sample Supervision Contract*).

G Capacity to deliver supervision

Workers who are providing casework and child protection support need to be suitably trained in order to be able to provide this effectively. In addition they should also be provided with supervision relevant to their role. Initially staff should access supervision training within their own organisation / agency, however if this is not available training is available through Children's Services Workforce Development (bookable via the online PALS system or via the Business Support Centre on 0113 247 5570)

Name of Organisation /Agency

Supervision Contract

NB: This pro-forma can be altered to reflect individual and organisational needs and be adapted to the setting.

Purpose of supervision

1. Supervisors statement

Supervision is a way of ensuring accountable decision making and safer outcomes for children.

The supervisor's role is to ensure that staff and those directly involved in casework and child protection are coping both physically and emotionally with the demands of the role and are handling the work suitably and professionally. It also provides the worker with a forum to reflect on the content, process and progress of their work. The supervision record will identify agreed action points and we will review these at each supervision session.

Supervision should be undertaken on a regular basis, with designated staff responsible for or working with identified vulnerable children and/or their families. It should include cases with children who are subject to a child protection care plan, children with social care involvement, children giving cause for concern, children looked after (CLA) and children subject to an Early Help Assessment or where staff are case holders for a family support and parenting service and plan or the case has been de-escalated from social care.

2. Supervision for school/cluster and other Children's Services staff

Should take place at a minimum interval of every four weeks, for full time staff. This may increase if there is a need, supervision should last approx. an hour. The interval may be adjusted depending on role and contracted hours.

Supervisor's responsibilities and expectations

- The Supervisor will meet with the supervisee a minimum of every four weeks these will commence & will be located in a confidential space which is appropriate and free from distraction.
- To undertake an open and honest discussion re cases that staff are working with.
- Challenging questions will be asked with regard to action and progress and the appropriate referral to other agencies including the cluster guidance and support meetings.
- Discussion will focus on any current identified child protection cases, social care de-escalations and any identified vulnerable child /family where there are general safeguarding issues, or an Early Help Assessment is in place, or a family support plan or casework is being undertaken.
- Support and professional challenge will be given and supervision will be recorded.
- Discussion around team work & training will be included.

Supervisee's responsibilities

- Open and honest discussion re cases that the staff are working with and have responsibility for.
- Implement actions to be taken to protect any child where there is reason to believe a child is at risk of harm.
- Implement actions to meet agreed outcomes for the child /family.
- Agree to inform other professionals where they are involved with families of any information that may impact on a child's safety. Discuss the appropriate referral to other agencies including the cluster guidance and support meetings.
- To ensure all relevant information is recorded within the child/family file.
- To ensure that the child/family action plan sheet is completed, per case at each supervision and stored in the child/family file

In the event of a review (for example a Serious Case Review (SCR)) these records may be used as evidence as part of Internal Management Review (IMR).

In the event that there is unresolved conflict / dispute between supervisor and supervisee, both parties will agree to meet together with _____ to ensure that any difficulties are satisfactorily resolved. Both parties will ensure that the other is aware in advance that a dispute resolution meeting has been arranged.

Supervisee signed:

date:

Supervisor signed:

date:

This contract should be reviewed on an annual basis

Date of review of contract:

Name of Organisation /Agency

Supervision Record

NB: This pro-forma can be altered to reflect individual and organisational needs and be adapted to the setting.

Name of Supervisee:

Name of Supervisor:

Date:

Details of holidays, sickness absence and training undertaken since last supervision:

Please indicate if the cases discussed represent ALL current cases or a sample

Agenda Items

1. Review of agreed action points from last meeting/matters arising
2. Supervision notes- Child record
3. Team/General issues impacting safeguarding practice: including training, development, wellbeing
4. Personal development and support
5. Any other business and date of next meeting

PART A for completion by the worker (where appropriate)

Family name:

Children's names:

Ages:

Current Status (e.g.: Child in Need, Subject to a Child Protection Plan, Children Looked After, Early Help Assessment, Early Help Assessment (including CAF) etc.)

Details of any change in status and date:

Summary of events since last supervision:

Your Actions taken:

Identified Risks / Issues:

Safety / Protective Factors:

Strengths / Positives:

What is your role with this family?

PART B Supervision discussion: for completion by supervisor

Actions agreed: (including all agenda items)

Delivery plans discussed

Any outstanding actions?

Any other business

Date of Next Meeting

Supervisee's signature

Supervisor's signature

SAMPLE

Name of Organisation /Agency

Supervision Decision Record

Individual Child, Young Person or Family record

NB: This pro-forma can be altered to reflect individual and organisational needs and be adapted to the setting.

Name of child / young person / family:

Date of birth of child or young person:

Supervision Date:

Supervisee:

Supervisor / Manager:

Brief synopsis of safeguarding history if appropriate:

Concerns:

Actions agreed with timescales: (to be completed post session).

Signature of Manager / Supervisor and date

SAMPLE