

Supervision Policy



Equalities Statement

In our Trust we work to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of our community who hold a range of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as having regard to other factors which have the potential to cause inequality, such as socio-economic factors.

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Rationale

‘Everyone who comes in contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children... School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns escalating... [designated safeguarding leads] will provide support to staff members to carrying out their safeguarding duties and (who) will liaise closely with other services such as children’s social care.’

Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Supervision is a method of ensuring staff and more often Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are clear on their responsibilities and supported in their roles to safeguard students. This policy is based on the premise that the supervision of staff is an integral part of the day-to-day business of our schools and supplements other management practices. It will occur both formally and in other forums including informal discussions and group settings and, in these forums, the process of supervision should be informed by the standards set out within this document.

The Trust recognises that:

- DSL supervision is integral to the effective delivery of services.
- The quality of DSL supervision impacts on outcomes for students.
- The delivery of supervision must be a priority task within the school.
- DSL have the right to receive regular formal supervision from supervisors who have received appropriate training and are supported within their supervisory role.
- All staff have a responsibility to participate in supervision and attend formal sessions.
- The process of supervision is shared responsibility: staff and their supervisors are expected to contribute to the effectiveness of the process and a responsibility to facilitate a culture which supports the process.

Definition – what is supervision?

For the purposes of this policy supervision is defined as a process by which one staff member is given responsibility by the school to work with another member of staff/group of staff in order to meet certain school, professional and personal objectives in order to promote positive outcomes for students.

The objectives are:

1. Competent, accountable performance. Managerial Function
2. Continuing professional development. Educational/Development Function
3. Personal support. Supportive Function
4. Linking the individual to the organisation. Mediation Function

(Definition taken and adapted from Morrison (2005) Staff Supervision in Social Care. Brighton: Pavilion).

The process of supervision is supported by the development of a relationship between supervisors and supervisees which provides a safe environment to support the staff member and facilitate reflection, challenge and critical thinking.

Statement of Expectations

The Trust will:

1. Prioritise supervision as an important activity within the service
2. Ensure that all staff who come within the scope of this policy has a named supervisor
3. Provide training and ongoing development opportunities for supervisors
4. Ensure appropriate space is provided for meetings, whether individually or in groups.
5. Regularly evaluate the quality of supervision being provided.
6. Supervision sessions will be delivered by a trained supervisor. This will be determined by the identified needs of an individual or staff groups.

The Supervisor will:

1. Ensure the delivery of one to one/ group supervision sessions at a frequency in line with this policy.
2. Ensure that supervision is recorded in line with the expectations set out within this policy.
3. Ensure that the prime focus of supervision is to safeguard students' wellbeing and maintain public trust (Teachers' Standards 2012).
4. Use the supervision agreement as the basis for the development of a relationship where supervisees can be supported in their work and to reflect on their practice.
5. Ensure the supervisee is clear about how to raise any concerns about the quality of supervision being received.

6. Use the supervisory process to learn from good practice and give constructive feedback to promote professional development.
7. Address performance concerns as they arise and work positively with the supervisee to improve practice.
8. Take responsibility for their personal development as a supervisor and use their own supervision to reflect on their supervisory practice.

Supervisees will:

1. Take responsibility for attending one to one supervision or group sessions as set out in their supervision agreement.
2. Prepare adequately for supervision and take an active part in the process.
3. Take responsibility for raising any concerns they may have about the quality of the supervisory relationship with the supervisor or, if this is not possible, the third party named within the supervision agreement.

Method of delivery

A relationship between a supervisor and supervisee is fundamental to the supervisory process and supervision will take place in a variety of settings and circumstances.

A formal supervision session, whether in a group or one to one is at the heart of the process and staff should receive regular supervision.

Ad hoc supervision is the dialogue that takes place between a supervisor and supervisee as the need arises. This should be available to all staff but is not a substitute for formal one to one supervision. The value of ad hoc supervision is that it is an important way of supporting staff, improving performance, keeping pace with change and ensuring that the school's requirements are met. It should be recorded in line with these procedures.

Frequency

The frequency of supervision sessions will be agreed on a case by case basis at each school within the Trust based on the identified needs of individuals or staff groups.

The Supervision Agreement

The development of a productive supervisory relationship starts with:

- Clarity about roles and responsibilities and the school's requirements.
- Building rapport, understanding each other's perspective and any factors that might affect the process.
- Acknowledging that effective supervision may not always be comfortable and exploring how power, authority and differences of opinion may be negotiated.

This process should be captured within the written agreement, and it is the responsibility of supervisors to ensure that an agreement is in place for every supervisee using the school's template.

This agreement should be signed by both parties and placed in the supervisee's file.

The written agreement is a working tool and should be reviewed at least once a year.

Supervision Process and Content

Please see the four functions of supervision and the use of the supervision cycle, as below:

1. Experience (SENSE – engaging and observing): the story – what happened?
2. Reflection (FEEL – investigating experience): what was it like?
3. Analysis (THINK – seeking to understand, hypothesising, asking why, what does this mean?)
4. Action plans (DO – preparing for action, trying things out): what next?

Recording Supervision

All supervision sessions will be recorded, records are only accessible to the supervisors.

This information will not be accessible to line managers for performance management purposes.

Monitoring and Review

To be developed and agreed within the school – including how supervisee feedback on the process will be obtained.

Model Supervision agreement

Supervision agreement – *individual and groups*

Agreement between _____ and _____

This agreement is designed to be a working tool to underpin the development and maintenance of a good supervisory relationship.

The agreement should be:

- Completed at the start of a new supervisory relationship
- Reviewed at least once a year.

The expectations of the provision regarding supervision are set out within the Supervision Policy, are non-negotiable and provide the framework for this agreement.

The effectiveness of the supervision agreement depends upon the quality of conversation between the supervisor and supervisees, and it is very important that this document provides a foundation for discussion. It should be completed at the conclusion of an exploration of the issues and not become a form filling exercise.

Practical Arrangements

Frequency of supervision:

Venue/space:

Arrangements if either party needs to cancel:

Availability of the supervisor for ad hoc discussions between sessions will be:

Content

The process for agreeing the agenda will be:

-
-

Preparation for supervision will include:

-
-

Particular priority areas to be discussed regularly:

-
-

Making Supervision Work

Are there any things it would be helpful for the supervisor to know about the supervisees prior to commencing the supervision arrangement? (e.g. previous work experience, experience of being supervised, preferred learning style)?

-
-

What are the supervisees' expectations of the supervisor?

-
-

What are the supervisor's expectations of the supervisees?

-

-

Are there any factors to acknowledge as relevant to the development of the supervisory relationship (e.g. race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, impairment, including learning difficulties)?

-

-

Agreed 'permissions' e.g. It is OK for the supervisor not to know all the answers/for the supervisees to say they are stuck, etc.

-

-

How will we recognise when the supervisory relationship is not working effectively?

-

-

What methods will be used to resolve any difficulties in working together?

-

-

Any other relevant issues for this agreement?

Recording

Any decisions made in formal or informal supervision about a pupil will be recorded on the pupil's record.

Responsibility for this lies with:

The content of supervision sessions regarding the development and support needs of the supervisees will be recorded, agreed by both parties and placed in the supervisees' files.

Responsibility for this lies with:

Date Agreement due to be reviewed:

Signed:

Supervisor:

Supervisee/s:

Date:

Model Group Supervision Agenda

Task	Function	Outcome
Introduction	Clarifying roles and confidentiality	Agreed expectations
Experience	Sharing experiences, what is working well, and who would welcome space to explore further.	Agenda making – which issues have priority, and who has reflective space today (Up to 3 x 20-minute discussions)?
Reflection	How the protagonist feels, who else is affected, and how are they feeling? Different levels of reflection. Opportunity to check out what assumptions have been made.	Assessment of impact
Analysis	What understanding of the issue can be reached? Which theories, policies or procedures assist with making sense of the experiences?	A range of options and meanings explored with likely consequences considered.
Action planning	What needs to happen next? Who should do it? What support/training is needed?	Decision making and responsibility assigned.
Review of group process	Assessing impact for others of discussion and supporting in meeting emotional needs.	Concluding group with summary of learning and actions required by whom, with timescales agreed and summary recorded.

Group Supervision Record – brief notes of group

Attendance		Date of supervision
Agreed agenda	Discussion – reflection – analysis	Outcome – what needs to happen next
Topic 1 – outline of issue		
Topic 2		

Topic 3		
Agreed by group		

** Individual specific recordings should be noted, recorded and filed separately in agreement with the school recording policies.*

Discussions related to specific individuals

Child name	Presenting issue / dilemma	Reflective discussion and analysis	What needs to happen now? Who is taking responsibility?
Discussion took place on: Staff members:			

Key Questions for establishing supervision in your school

Experience / sense

What are you planning to do? What challenges / obstacles do you anticipate?

How do you think colleagues will respond?

Reflections / feeling

How are you feeling about setting this up?

What previous experience, skills or knowledge might be helpful?

What assumptions might you be making?

Analysis / thinking

What are the current needs, risks, strengths in this situation?

What is unknown?

What expectations does the school have of your role?

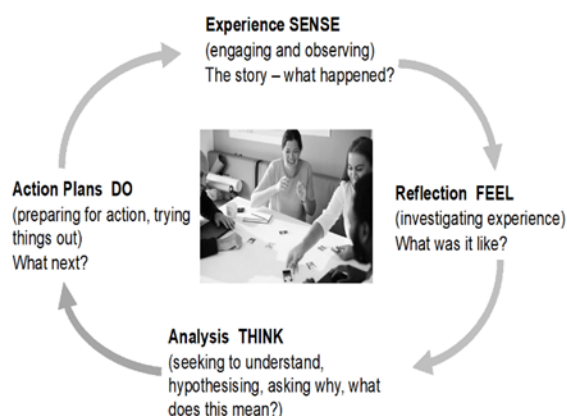
Action plan / do

What information needs to be obtained from others before proceeding?

What are your top 3 actions right now?

What support do you need?

THE SUPERVISION CYCLE



Morrison, 2005

Possible questions to use in supervision sessions

To support you in developing your supervision practice, we have reproduced examples of possible questions from pages 111-114 of 'Using Supervision in Schools', set out against the 4 parts of the supervision cycle.

You do not have to use all of these questions, they are included as prompts.

It may be useful to print off and laminate the following 4 pages to use as 'crib sheets' in supervision sessions. These will come more naturally with practice and in time you may add in your own questions to your repertoire.

Focusing on experience (sensing)

Here the emphasis is on facilitating an accurate and detailed recall of events since a partial description of the situation will undermine the rest of the cycle. We can be assisted to recall more than we think we know if the right questions are asked.

- How do you see your role with this student/class?
- How do you think others (professionals and family) see your role?
- What did you expect to happen?
- What happened?
- What reactions did you notice to what you said/did?
- What surprised or puzzled you?
- What struck you? What were the key moments?
- What words, non-verbal communication, small sounds, images struck you?
- What did you notice about yourself/this student/other students in the class/other staff in the room?
- What was hard to observe?
- What went according to plan? What didn't happen?
- What changes or choices did you make?
- What did you say, notice or do immediately after the event?

These questions can be enhanced by using other methods, such as learning walks, video or audio recording, observation, learning diaries, or incident logs. Eco maps/genograms might also be helpful at this point.

TED:

Tell me

Explain to me

Describe to me

Focusing on reflection (feeling)

Here the emphasis is on eliciting feelings, partly because they bring out further information, or may reveal our underlying attitudes and assumptions. They may also give clues to other personal factors complicating the staff member's experience. Reflection helps the staff member make links between the current situation and his/her prior experiences, skills and knowledge.

- What feelings did you bring into the session?
- What is your gut feeling about this student?
- Describe the range of feelings you had in the lesson?
- What did the lesson or this student(s) remind you of?
- What previous work, processes, skills, knowledge are relevant here?
- Where have you encountered similar processes?
- What assumptions might you be making? E.g. assumptions related to race, culture, age, gender, sexuality, ability.
- Does this situation challenge your feelings about acceptable/unacceptable behaviour?
- Where and when did you feel most or least comfortable?
- What feelings were you left with – does this always happen after being in these kinds of lessons/classes?
- What metaphor or analogy would you describe your experiences of working with this situation?
- What was left unfinished?

Other methods to assist reflection include role play, sculpting, artwork to draw out feelings and perceptions, further reflection on genograms and ecomaps to draw out context, role and patterns.

This is an opportunity to explore emotions.

Focusing on analysis (thinking)

Here the emphasis is on analysis, probing the meanings that the supervisee and the student(s) attribute to the situation, consideration of other explanations, the identification of what is known or understood, and the areas for further assessment.

- Taking account of your feelings – what does this tell us about what the students may be feeling in this situation?
- How do you explain or understand what happened?
- How would this have been different if the student had been female/black/disabled, etc.?
- Did power relations shift – if so, how and why?
- What went well, or not well, and why?
- How far did this lesson confirm or challenge your previous understanding or hypothesis?
- What new information emerged?
- What theory, training, research, policy, values might help you make sense of what happened?
- How else might you have managed the lesson/situation?
- What are the current needs, risks, strengths in this situation?
- What is unknown?
- What conclusions are you drawing from this work so far?
- How do you now define your role in this situation?
- How would the students define your role?
- What expectations does the school have of your role?

Other methods to assist analysis include sharing articles, references, case presentations, external speakers, attending in-service training, group supervision and action learning sets.

This is about making sense of the information, drawing on knowledge and theories.

Focusing on action/plans (doing)

The focus here is on translating the analysis into planning, preparation and action. This includes the identification of outcomes and success criteria as well as consideration of potential complications and contingency plans.

- In light of the reflection and analysis we have done, what is your overall summary of where things are at, and what needs to be done next?
- Can you identify what you are, and what you are not responsible for in managing this situation?
- What training, co-work and support needs have been raised for you?
- What information needs to be obtained from others before proceeding?
- What are your aims in the next phase of work?
- What is urgent and essential?
- What would be desirable?
- What is negotiable and what is non-negotiable in this situation?
- What would be a successful outcome from your perspective/the student/other students/school or key agencies?
- What might be your strategy for the next contact with the student/their family/the class and other professionals?
- What are the possible best of worst responses from the student, the class or families of the students?
- What contingency plans do you need – what is the bottom line?
- Where do you feel more or less confident?
- How can you prepare for the next steps – prepared scripts for commonly occurring situations or for difficult conversations, mental rehearsal, flip chart map, reading, co-worker discussion?
- What can I do that would be helpful at this stage?
- When does feedback and debriefing need to take place?
- What restorative sessions are required?
- Are there any safety issues for you/others?
- What can be done to minimise any dangers?

Other methods may include role play, co-work planning, care planning, contacting other agencies involved.

Enable the staff member to work it out from the questions you ask.

Checklist

Developing a culture of supervision: an audit tool to help you with your planning

Remember:

Each setting is unique so work out what's best for you

There is lots to think about and lots to do so keep it manageable and realistic

You are likely to have more questions, these considerations below are a starting point for your discussions and planning

Questions to consider	Comments	Action needed
1. MANAGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP OF SUPERVISION STRATEGY Who has responsibility for promoting and endorsing supervision in our school? Is the school senior management team (including governors) clear about the importance of supervision and why it is needed? Are SLT on board and able to commit resources to this? Do they understand the link between supervision and safeguarding practice? Have we discussed the model and style of supervision that we wish to promote? How and who introduces the project to our school?		

2. DEVELOPMENT OF SUPERVISION POLICIES AND AGREEMENTS <i>Pg 95-99</i> Is a written supervision policy in place? Have we decided how the supervision policy will fit in with other policies including safeguarding, staff appraisal and personal development plans? Is there a supervision agreement? Will we keep records of supervision meetings? What proforma will we use? <i>Pg 60-63</i>		
3. TRAINING AND SUPPORT NEEDS Do we have enough staff adequately trained and confident enough to facilitate a supervision group? Is there training for supervisees on how to make the best use of supervision? Are there plans for the ongoing development of supervisory skills? What support is available for this? Consider external and internal support.		

4. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPERVISION Who in the school will be offered supervision? All staff invited or some groups to begin with? You may wish to consider priorities, eg, staff involved in safeguarding first? Who will be in the groups? Mixed groups or those who share the same roles in a school. Managers with non-managers? What will work best? How many in a group? Is there an optimum number? How can this be managed? When? Consider timetabling of group supervision. During school day or after school? Same time slot or different ones offered? Where? Consider suitability of space offered for supervision. Will it be uninterrupted and allow for confidentiality? Online or in person meetings? How often? Consider frequency and duration of group supervision.		
5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SUPERVISION PROCESS Do we have a system in place for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of supervision including obtaining feedback from supervisees?		

What support is in place for supervisors? Are there robust supervision arrangements for them too? How will supervisors be supervised? Is there scope to have support arrangements with other schools involved in this programme? With your feeder schools or schools within trusts? Can you link in with ESCC team offers of support? (ISEND, SLES) How can we ensure supervision is sustained and fully embedded in practice? Is there a process in place for disseminating the supervision policy to both established and new staff members?		
OTHER QUESTIONS / THOUGHTS?		

Page numbers relate to the book 'Using supervision in schools' by Penny Sturt and Jo Rowe, Pavilion Publishing 2018