



Children's Social Care

Supervision Policy, Procedures and Guidance

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Version: V3

About this document

Title	Supervision Policy, Procedure and Guidance
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May 2022	2	Updated version including reflective model	K Peddie
March 2023	3	Updated frequencies of supervision	SLT
		Approved	CSMT

Intended Audience

This document has been issued to the following people for Review (R) Information (I) and Review and Sign off (S). The Supervision Policy is mandatory and must be shared with all managers, and social work staff and with those holding cases in Early Help.

Name	Position	S/R/I
Bob Bielby	Director of Children's Services	S
	Assistant Directors Children's Social Care	S
	Service Managers	I
	All social care staff	I

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1. Introduction

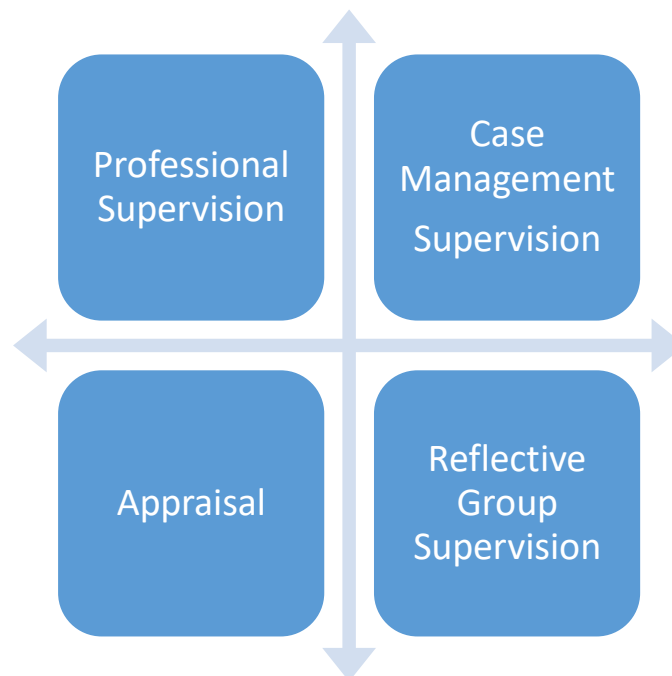
Lambeth Borough Council is committed to providing high quality supervision for all staff who support vulnerable children and their families with the aim of improving outcomes and supporting staff in their work to provide an effective service. This policy provides a framework for staff working to support children and families, for example, families in receipt of targeted support, children who are Children in Need, children supported through Child Protection Plans and those children who are looked after by Lambeth Borough Council.

We will review the quality and impact of supervision to ensure that the experience and voice of staff informs further development of supervision standards, practice and tools aligned with our growing understanding and use of Motivational Interviewing and the cultural and organisational changes ahead.

This document sets out our vision, our commitment, the tools, the framework and the expectations for how we do supervision within statutory social work services in Lambeth.

This document represents our commitment to supporting practice by ensuring that staff within a CSC setting at all levels within the organisation have access to supervision, which is regular, reliable, reflective with critical challenge and professional support in a safe environment .

This document will focus on 4 separate strands of Supervision and professional development.



Included in the scope of this policy, procedure and guidance are all staff in all settings throughout Children’s Social Care in Lambeth.

Standards

This policy has been developed within the context of the following standards and guidance:

- [Adoption: National Minimum Standards 2014](#)
- [Fostering: National Minimum Standards 2011](#)
- [The knowledge and skills statement for child and family practitioners \(2018\)](#)
- [Post-qualifying standard – knowledge and skills statement for child and family practitioners \(2018\)](#)

- [The knowledge and skills statement for child and family practice leaders \(2018\)](#)
- [Social Work Professional Standards – Social Work England 2020](#)
- [The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment 2015 guidance:](#)
- [British Association of Social Work \(BASW\) – supervision policy 2011](#)
- [The Council's policy and procedures for staff appraisal;](#)
- [The Quality Assurance Framework for Lambeth](#)
- [Lambeth Practice Standards](#)

This policy is consistent with the Children's Social Work Practice Standards and meets the particular requirements of social care workers.

It also reflects the **Professional Standards for Social Work (Social Work England):**

“Supervision describes the support and guidance social workers access to critically reflect on and improve their practice. It is aimed at supporting social workers to consider their own values and judgements and provides a means for exploring a social worker's practice, including ethical dilemmas, cultural issues and decision-making.

“Supervision can look different in different workplaces and settings but should be relevant to the social worker's role and take account of development frameworks that they may be working with Social Work England” **Supervision and reflection Standard 4.2 Social Work England**

Lambeth requires managers to have clear oversight of casework and to create a safe environment for social work to flourish. The supervision and development of all staff is therefore integral to the work we do in keeping children and families safe. Supervision is a right for all staff and it benefits the individual, the organisation and those who use services.

Social work with children and their families is complex which can impact on the way we function as individuals and as an organisation. Supervision which supports staff to critically analyse, challenge and reflect on their practice and to manage the emotional impact of their work will result in better outcomes for our children.

It arguably has the greatest influence on practice, other than the practitioner themselves. Managers, supervisors and practitioners (supervisees) are jointly responsible for ensuring that supervision meets the requirements as set out in this policy.

All staff have a right to expect supervision which is appropriate to their needs and that of the organisation. We are aspirational about the standard of supervision we provide and the senior managers will model the supervision approach being promoted within this guidance.

This policy sets out how staff can expect to be supervised and provides managers with the key elements needed to supervise staff effectively.

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for case management, professional supervision, reflective team case discussion supervision and the appraisal process for all children's services social care staff who support statutory social work services.

Implementation of this policy will be supported through practice training and development, our quality assurance framework, practice evaluation and practice and performance processes.

2. Supervision Policy

Core Values and Principles

- All staff, irrespective of their role, have the right to receive high quality supervision.

Supervision must ensure the effective management of practice, develops and supports staff and promotes their engagement with the organisation.

- All staff bear responsibility for the quality of their own work and, should prepare for and make a positive contribution to the supervisory process.
- Senior managers have a responsibility to promote good supervision by implementing this policy and ensuring training is provided for both supervisors and supervisees.
- Senior managers will provide ongoing oversight and quality assurance of supervision to ensure this policy and standards are being implemented.
- Supervision must promote and model anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice, ensuring that the council's policies on equalities and diversity should be adhered to at all times.
- Supervision must be a safe place in which the worker is permissioned to explore strengths and learning needs, feelings of being unsure and stuck in their work as well as hear challenge and praise for their work.
- A Strengths based approach will be used in the practice of supervision at all levels of the organisation. This includes the use of the Motivational Interviewing practice model, tools, language and system alignment.

The Objectives and Functions of Supervision

Professional supervision is a process in which the supervisor enables, guides and facilitates the social care worker's development and need for support, in meeting certain organisational, professional and personal objectives. This occurs during formal prearranged meetings and in less formal day to day case discussions. Development and support needs of supervisees should be addressed. The records of supervision should enable a child to understand the reason for provision of services if s/he accesses his/her file.

Reflective thinking should be part of every supervision session, It should enable the Manager to have a clear understanding of a case, particularly where plans are not progressing and Management direction might need to change. It should assist the supervisee to gain insight into their practice and seek support if they require it and create a culture of openness.

There are 4 main functions of supervision

1. Competent, accountable performance (managerial function)
2. Continuing professional development (developmental/formative function)
3. Personal support (supportive/restorative function)
4. Engaging the individual with the organisation (mediation function)

[Research in Practice Resource Pack 2017](#)

The objectives of supervision can be clearly aligned with the functions listed above:

1. Competent, accountable performance (managerial function)

- To ensure Children's Services policies and procedures are followed;
- To maintain clarity about key roles, responsibilities and accountabilities;
- To review agreed objectives and priorities for work and record progress;

- To monitor and regulate workload;
- To consider progress on individual cases, including assessment, planning, intervention and review and to allow reflection on the effectiveness of the casework;
- To consider working relationships with other professionals and partners and the effectiveness of joint working
- To improve the quality of services to children and families and outcomes for children preventing drift and delay and promoting good quality relationships with families;
- To ensure the supervisee is clear about what work has been allocated to them, what action is required and how that action will be monitored and reviewed;

2. Continuing professional development (developmental/formative function)

- To identify the supervisee's learning and development style and needs and arrange to meet them through the use of courses, coaching, mentoring, job shadowing, research and literature and peer learning sessions;
- To signpost the supervisee to useful literature and research, and the policy and procedures, to support evidence informed practice;
- To maintain a record of the supervisee's learning and development
- To provide feedback to the supervisee on his / her practice and performance and identify any actions for improvement, and acknowledge evidence of professional development and competence
- To ensure the worker's and employer's practice accords with the professional standards issued by **Social Work England**;

3. Personal support (supportive/restorative function)

- To agree and record timescales for the completion of tasks and record any reasons for delay;
- To monitor case recording undertaken by the supervisee and ensure it meets departmental expectations and for the supervisor to record that scrutiny on the electronic case file;
- To recognise the impact of what can be stressful work with children and families on the supervisee and agree ways to manage stress;
- To debrief and offer support following significant events that have impacted on the supervisee;
- To consider the supervisee's personal safety when undertaking his / her work and take appropriate action;
- To monitor the supervisee's progress in meeting the continuing professional development to maximise their potential requirements for registration (if applicable)

4. Engaging the individual with the organisation (mediation function)

- To make decisions about cases and record them;
- To identify and allocate resources to accomplish tasks or obtain authorisation's for proposed expenditure;
- To identify any matters that need to be escalated to senior managers;
- To identify risks arising from non-engagement of families and amend plans accordingly.
- To put in place appropriate safeguards as necessary to ensure work is carried out safely e.g. social work visit by manager, involvement of further professionals;
- To consider the resources the supervisee has available to do their job and discuss issues arising where they are not adequate;
- To provide a positive environment in which social work practice can be discussed and reviewed allowing constructive two way feedback .
- Professional challenge about casework practice, assessment, analysis and decision making between the supervisee and supervisor is an essential part of effective supervision and should take place in a respectful and child focused manner;

- Professional supervision is the key process for balancing professional autonomy with responsibility to the service user, professional ethics and standards, along with accountability to Children's Services and society as a whole.

3. Types of Supervision

Every member of staff will receive monthly professional / individual staff supervision session.

Frontline practitioners will have an extended supervision session which incorporates Case Management Supervision in part 1 and Professional/individual staff supervision in part 2. Additionally, they may participate in reflective group supervision sessions. Direct observation of practice will be undertaken by the manager at least annually.

- a) **Case Supervision** (first part of the supervision relevant to case-holding practitioners) – this relates to discussion, support and scrutiny of the social work being undertaken with the child/ren and the care planning and is recorded on the child's record.

It is important that there is regular supervision on individual children, but the frequency of these discussions should depend on the needs, risks and circumstances of the child.

The frequency of supervision, and rationale for this frequency, will be recorded clearly by the manager in each child's file. A child should be reviewed as a minimum every 8 weeks or sooner if the child's needs, risks and circumstances change significantly.

Generally, all cases will be discussed every 4 weeks (with the exception of Care Leavers). This will include **at least** discussion of:

- Presenting issues – needs / risks
- Visits
- Plans
- The voice of the child
- Core Group Meetings (where appropriate)
- Planned Reviews

Some cases will require more in depth discussion depending on the complexity of the challenges facing the child / family.

- b) **Professional / Individual Staff Supervision** (second part of the supervision relevant to all staff) – This relates to staff wellbeing, practice development, direct observations of practice, learning or development needs, performance, HR process and the appraisal process. This is recorded on the staff file and should be agreed.

All staff (including managers, SMs, ADs, DCS) will have a 4-weekly reflective supervision session with their manager.

The frequency of supervision may be increased if the worker is new in post or inexperienced or if the job they undertake requires it. For example, workers in an Assessment Team may require more frequent supervision because of the short timescales involved.

This will be recorded on the Staff Supervision Record, covering the following headings:

- Agreed Agenda

- Check In - Well-being/Impact of Work on Staff Member;
- Review of actions from last supervision;
- Workload and performance management;
- Reflection on practice ensuring two way feedback;
- Worker support / self-care
- Learning and Development;
- Any other issues/business.

Information from this record should be used proactively to capture evidence within the Appraisal Framework, which consists of a mid-year progress review and an annual performance appraisal. The paper record should be placed on the staff's supervision file, and a copy given to the supervisee. This is not a record to be placed on Mosaic. All records must be maintained and accessible to managers.

- c) **Reflective group supervision** - this is a facilitated group supervision model. It is a structure, evidence informed approach to discussing and reflecting on social work intervention with children and their families and is also recorded on the child's record.

This approach to supervision is equal and equivalent to individual case management supervision and is used to compliment 1:1 arrangements and this is a core feature of our practice approach.

See Also [Group Supervision Policy](#)

- d) **Direct Observation of practice:** Direct Observation of practice will be an integral part of the professional supervision of practitioners working with children and will be undertaken annually.
- e) **Appraisals:** The appraisal process will provide the platform for career development and progression which connects to the wider strategic aims ensuring that every child, family and community receive high quality services from skilled professionals and evidenced informed help. Online support is available [here](#).

Principles and Expectations for Professional Supervision

Supervision will take place within the supervisor's and supervisee's paid hours of employment. In some parts of the service e.g. Emergency Duty team it will be appropriate to make minor adjustments to the forms

Supervision will take place in an area where case details can be discussed without being overheard, that has sufficient space for case files to be read and where interruptions can be kept to a minimum. Access to **Mosaic** and other electronic records should be available.

Both supervisee and supervisor must be prepared for formal supervision session. For example supervisees must be able to give an update on children identified for discussion in the previous supervision.

Supervision should reflect understanding and commitment to diversity and equalities issues, and the Council's Vision, Values and Practice Standards. To ensure equality of opportunity it is necessary to have an understanding, and to work sensitively and knowledgeably, with diversity to identify the particular issues for a child and his / her

family, taking account of experiences and family context. Lambeth Borough Council's Equal Opportunities Policy should be followed.

Supervision meetings must be arranged in advance – it is important that supervision arrangements are reliable, protected spaces and whilst it may be necessary to change dates and times, this should be an exception rather than the norm and both supervisors and supervisee will need to ensure that the timescales for supervision are adhered to as supervision is key area of performance and outcomes for children which will be closely tracked and monitored.

Where supervision cannot take place at the usual time because of booked leave, it should be rescheduled to take place before the leave or within 1 week of the staff member returning. A note must be recorded within the Supervision Record stating why it did not take place within the correct timescales.

If the supervisor is absent from work for a period longer than four weeks alternative formal supervision arrangements should be put in place within the following week. In any urgent situation a staff member should approach a manager for directions or support.

Any supervisee who is concerned about the quality or quantity of supervision received should discuss this with the supervisor and, if this does not resolve the matter, with the supervisor's line manager.

Managers should in their recording of professional supervision ensure that they explicitly record both evidence of reflection, the worker's understanding of the principles of good practice, including equality issues, their learning needs and how they will be addressed, and how the worker is being supported to exercise professional judgements rather than purely the meeting timescales and tasks.

Newly qualified social workers

The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) was recommended by the Social Work Task Force and introduced in September 2012.

When supervising newly qualified social workers, team managers must refer to Lambeth [ASYE handbook](#).

In addition to formal case supervision, professional supervision and reflective group supervision, each ASYE cohort has a programme which includes monthly facilitated group learning and reflection.

Supervision of managers and senior managers

Every manager within the service will also be supervised by their immediate line manager. This form of supervision comprises a combination of a welfare and a 'business' matters and creates the 'golden thread' in the organisation so that managers can be appraised of the business risks and the risks to children and families. It is also a mechanism for managers to reflect on good practice within their area and to respond to performance challenges and issues of capacity, vacancies and absence and budget management.

Managers will have supervision every 4 weeks and this should be clearly recorded and retained on their supervision record. The format of management supervision should include all of the elements where relevant of the welfare supervision and:

- Key performance indicators and commentary;
- Any serious incidents / children of concern / exploitation / complaints / escalations / commendations and good practice;
- Risk management issues (including Health and Safety) & strategies;

- Budget position (service manager and above);
- Capacity, vacancies and staff absence / maternity and staff morale;
- Updates on key policy / procedural changes (Corporate and Directorate)

In this way good practice and risks can be shared upwards in the organisation in a formal setting. Conversely, decisions from senior management level can be assured that they have been cascaded down to frontline staff through management supervision. This is the 'golden thread' of the organisation and is part of our governance and assurance mechanisms.

Frequency of supervision

Case Supervision generally will be undertaken every 4 weeks for all children. In some teams it will be agreed with the AD that the AP can supervise these children, however the TM should oversee these cases at least quarterly and record their management oversight.

Case type	Frequency
Early Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every 4-6 weeks
CAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once child has been open for an assessment for 4 weeks, supervision should take place monthly (Within CAT there might only be 1 supervision but all cases must have at least 1 supervision on the record before case transfer. The sign-off of the assessment is NOT classed as the supervision for the case). • A 10 day review (recorded as Management Oversight) will be undertaken • Additional management oversight during the assessment for complex cases can be recorded as frequently as required
Children in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 weekly Additional management oversight during the review period for complex cases can be recorded as frequently as required
Children in need of protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 weekly Additional management oversight during the review period for complex cases can be recorded as frequently as required
Children Looked After	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 weekly Additional management oversight during the review period for complex cases can be recorded as frequently as required
Children with Disabilities who are open to review (care package / short breaks only) who are reviewed annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least every 3 months (four times a year).
Care leavers 18 – 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 weekly • Additional management oversight during the review period for complex cases can be recorded as frequently as required • SM or AD may set a more frequent supervision for particular children
Supervising Social Workers supervision of foster carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 weekly with the exception of where there are no children placed. In these circumstances every 2 months.

Supervision of IRO / CPC cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 - 6 weekly • In particular the cases that should be discussed include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All cases where there has been a QA alert /escalation • Where there is any drift or possibility of drift • Where there are concerns about safety or complexity
Group Supervision (about complex / stuck cases)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 - 4 weekly (under review) • Complex cases or stuck cases only should be considered for Group Supervision and agreed with the TM
Joint Supervision with other teams in Children's Services (e.g siblings / Contextual Safeguarding / YJS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working towards systematic implementation with other services by 1st May
ASYEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 1 ½ hours duration of uninterrupted time, weekly for the first 6 weeks; fortnightly up to the 6 month review and at least monthly thereafter

Professional Supervision

All staff (including managers, SMs, ADs, DCS) should have a 4-weekly reflective supervision session with their manager.

Supervisor / Supervisee Ratios

It is difficult to give an explicit numerical recommendation as the nature of roles across children's services varies significantly, and with it the need and frequency of supervision.

As a general guide, for those supervisors who directly supervise staff having face to face contact with children and families the recommended maximum ratio is 1 Supervisor up to a maximum of 6 supervisees.

Where that ratio is exceeded the line manager should review the arrangements to ensure that any potentially negative impact is reduced. This may involve agreeing a different frequency for supervision, arranging for more experienced staff to take on some supervisory responsibilities, supplementing 1:1 supervision with group supervision. It must be remembered that all supervisees are entitled to 1:1 supervision and that any alternative arrangements should complement and not replace it.

Case Management Oversight

In **addition** to formal case management supervision, line managers will have many informal discussion and conversations to support interventions progressing.

Core decisions and the rationale for decisions affecting children are critical when people review their case files. These must be recorded as **case management oversight**. This **does not replace** the regular supervision session but will be in addition to it.

Other activity such as quality assurance of court reports and signing of mosaic work flow tasks offer opportunities to evidence case management footprint – where this is not explicit use professionals judgement

4. Reflective Supervision Model

The Munro Review of Child Protection 2011 Chapter 6 states that:

'Social work involves forming relationships with children and families to understand them and help them change. This has implications for how they are managed and supervised to minimise bias, help them articulate their reasoning, draw on research evidence, and manage their emotions to reduce the risk of distorted reasoning. It also states that 'Gut feelings are neither stupid nor perfect. They take advantage of the evolved capacities of the brain and are based on rules of thumb that enable us to act fast. Critical challenge by others is needed to help case workers catch biases and correct them - hence the importance of supervision.'

Reflective Supervision should be offered on a regular basis in the context of a collaborative relationship, providing opportunities for the individuals involved to reflect on casework and provide an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of a situation, become more aware of their own reactions and responses to the service user, how they intervened and the consequences of their intervention.

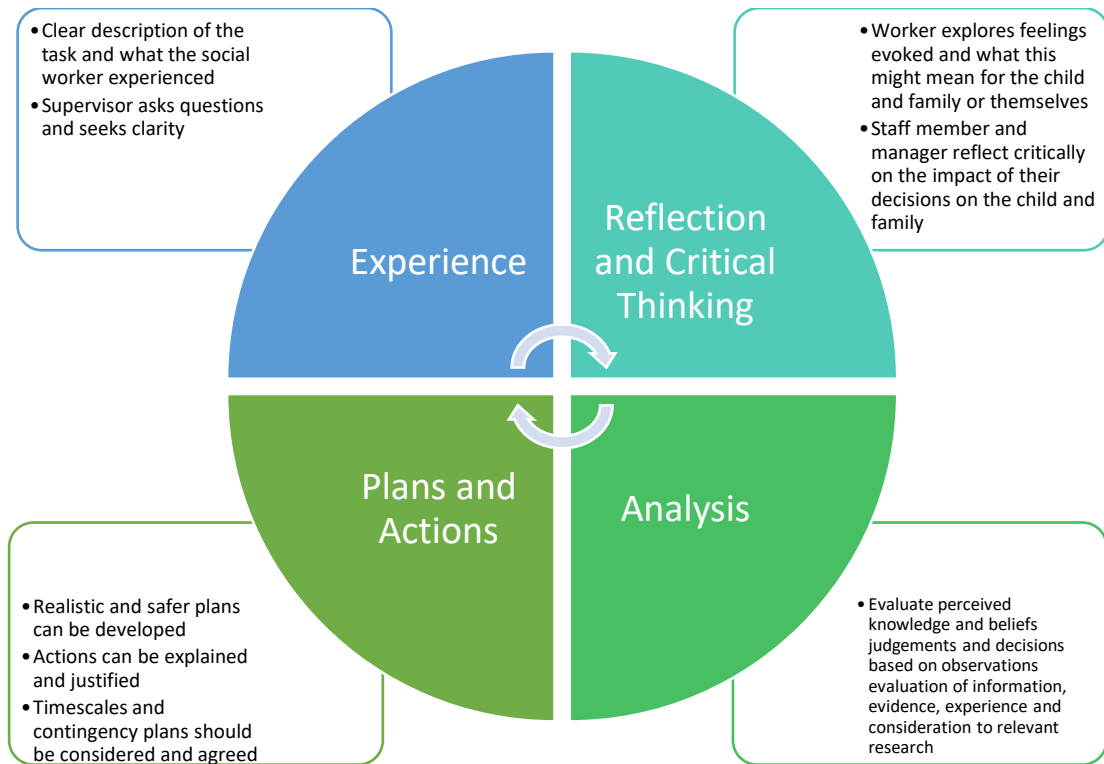
This relationship based reflection provides opportunities for ongoing professional self-evaluation. The relationship models that of the case worker with the service user (one which promotes partnership working, and uses motivational interviewing techniques). It aims to create a culture of intellectual enquiry, to promote empathy and support long term professional development

Sessions incorporate discussion about intervention goals, the process of service delivery, values, reactions and emotions, identification and analysis of pertinent knowledge, risk assessment, use of self and exploration of healthy scepticism. Supervisees are encouraged to explore other ways of working with a variety of client interventions.

These approaches encourage supervisees to become more creative, develops critical thinking and problem solving skills, and their decision-making processes.

The process of reflective supervision should include:

Figure 1: Reflective Supervision



The Experience

This is where the supervisor elicits a clear description of the task and what the worker experienced by asking questions and seeking clarity. An important element of this stage is that the supervisor is clear about the intended task and whether it was achieved or not.

Reflection and critical thinking

The supervisee is encouraged to explore the feelings evoked by the task or experience and think about what this might mean for the child, family or themselves. Without this, subtle yet important clues to family functioning might go unrecognised.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) identifies that 'social workers, their managers and other professionals should be mindful of the requirement to understand the level of need and risk in a family from the child's perspective and ensure action or commission services which will have maximum impact on the child's life'. Decisions should be made with the best interests of the child in mind, informed by evidence and underpinned by research and knowledge of child development.

Effective professional supervision should support professionals to reflect critically on the impact of their decisions on the child and their family. Any professional working with vulnerable children should always have access to a manager to talk through their concerns and judgements affecting the welfare of the child.

Where this has been undertaken, a brief summary of the issues discussed and the learning from this reflection, including strengths and identified learning and development needs for the worker, should be recorded as part of the staff supervision notes.

The learning and development outcomes should be used to inform the workers appraisal. Where appropriate, this could also be used by the worker when completing their Continuous Professional Development log to evidence learning activity with supporting evidence.

Analysis

The supervisor and supervisee need to evaluate their perceived knowledge and beliefs about the case. They need to make judgements and decisions based on observations, evaluation of information, available evidence, wider experience, reflection and consideration to relevant research.

Plans and Actions

Where critical thinking and critical reflection have occurred, realistic and safer plans can be developed. Actions can be explained and justified. Timescales and contingency plans should also be considered and agreed.

For professional development or problem solving to be fully effective, all four parts of the learning cycle need to be engaged. External reflective supervision, should develop workers' own 'internal supervisor'.

Where supervision includes children who are subject of a Child Protection Plan for chronic neglect, Team Managers must consider the need for regular independent review of the home conditions, review chronologies and written agreements. and consider legal advice on thresholds for care proceedings where there is no sustained improvement to the child's circumstances.

5. Recording, record keeping and tracking.

This guidance takes into account the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998, and the EU General Data Protection Regulation. In particular, any personal information held about an individual must be accurate, adequate, relevant, not excessive, and available to the subject. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to comply with these principles at all times.

The named or professional supervisor is responsible for ensuring that a record is made of the content of each supervision meeting using the appropriate Supervision recording template.

The Individual Staff Supervision Record must be typed up **within 2 working days** of the session. Supervision records should clearly detail any decisions that have been made, and the reasons for these, any agreed actions including who will take responsibility and the timescale for completion. Records must be signed as agreed by both parties to indicate it is a correct account of the meeting.

Where the record is online a copy should be saved to the workers online file. A duplicate copy should be sent to the worker with a request that they read and return an email with amendments or approved. The amendments and approval of the previous supervision record will be recorded on the next supervision record.

Where there is disagreement, the supervisor and supervisee may agree to amend the record. Where agreement cannot be reached, a note should be made on the record of different views and signed by both parties.

The supervisee will have a copy of the supervision records for their own use, which they will need to store responsibly. The supervisee is not required to keep their copies of supervision records and they may destroy them when they no longer have a use for them.

The Supervision monitoring form provides a record that will permit the ongoing monitoring and review of supervision

Supervisors need to use the relevant template(s) for their supervision sessions:

- Supervision Agreement

- Individual Staff Supervision Record
- Children's Case Supervision Template (in Mosaic)
- Reflective Group Supervision agreement template
- Reflective Group Supervision Template
- Management Supervision Template

The headings (as described in the templates) should be completed thoroughly. The aim is to demonstrate that cases have been considered for safeguarding, effective planning and the avoidance of drift, and the impact of services on the child and family.

The Supervision Monitoring Form can also be completed at the same time.

Supervision case records must be uploaded on Mosaic within 2 working days of the supervision session and will be finalised by the Manager on Mosaic following confirmation of the record by the case worker. Once finalised the form cannot be amended.

Any **case supervision** should be typed directly into the child's case notes on Mosaic as a **Record of supervision discussion**.

Management oversight decisions made (outside of case supervision) should also be typed into the Management Oversight / Panel Decision casenote.

Management Supervision and Reflective Group Supervision are to be recorded on Mosaic.

The frequency of case management supervision records will be tracked as part of the practice and performance structures in place.

There will be service area audits to ensure that each staff member has a completed supervision agreement. Professional Supervision experience and quality will be tracked and monitored via surveys and other staff forums.

Probation and Appraisal Objective Setting and reviews should be recorded on Oracle. Appraisal performance will be regularly tracked and monitored.

Supervision Agreement:

The supervision agreement is a tool to aid the discussion between the supervisor and supervisee to discuss and agree how to best to utilise the space for supervision. You will agree the necessary pragmatic arrangements, boundaries and structures that are the right fit within each supervisory arrangement. Where a new supervisor is appointed, a new agreement must be signed by the supervisor and the supervisee.

All staff are required to sign the supervision agreement following discussion with their supervisors.

See Appendix 1 for Supervision Agreement proforma

Personal Supervision Files

Each member of staff should have a supervision file that is held by the supervisor and must be kept securely, this should ideally be electronic and accessible to the supervisor, supervisee and the supervisor's line manager. The supervision file should contain a range of information that is needed by the department regarding the employee's status, job details and information that evidences appropriate support and compliance with departmental processes.

Appendix 6: Format for Supervision Files provides details of the anticipated contents of supervision files.

In the event of the supervisee moving to a new team, or a change in Line Manager, the supervision file should be passed to the new supervisor.

When staff leave the local authority, supervision files should be archived. All supervision records will be stored for a period of 7 years after an employee's departure. The supervision file is the property Lambeth Borough Council.

If forms are handwritten and scanned into the system, they must be legible and it is the responsibility of the person scanning in to ensure that the scan is of good quality.

This may be stored electronically or in paper format but if it is stored electronically, relevant permissions must be given to direct line managers to be able to review.

Where a supervisor leaves the authority they will give permission to their line manager to manage the online files until a new supervisor is recruited.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Supervision is a relational process not an event. It entails preparation, open discussion and the implementation of decisions. Both supervisors and supervisees have a responsibility to actively engage in this process and supervisors should ensure adherence to the standards outlined in the Practice Standards.

The role of supervisee

Supervisees will make a substantial contribution to the quality of their own supervision by ensuring they prepare beforehand.

Good preparation for supervision by supervisee will include:-

- Review of the last supervision record before supervision. Ensure actions are followed through.
- Be prepared to identify drift and summarise any barriers to implementing decisions or progressing plans.
- Case holding, workers will print off their case load and rag rate before supervision and be prepared to summarise key information on high priority children ensuring they are informed by the voice of the child in each case.
- Staff should have considered agenda items regarding
 - Their own personal care and support
 - Their workload and work environment
 - Their learning needs and professional development.
 - The impact of any aspect of the work on themselves that can inform reflective analysis or response.

The role of supervisor

Supervisors will make a substantial contribution to the quality of supervision by adhering to the standards set out in the Practice Standards.

Good Practice in preparing for supervision for managers

- Review the last supervision notes and previous actions agreed
- Consider and plan for best questions to ask and scaling questions that will support clear thinking in the supervision conversation
- Print the workers case list and highlight children who must be discussed in this supervision alongside other priority children highlighted by the worker
- Review case files to check for any additional management oversight instructions on file since last supervision

Confidentiality

Supervision sessions are in general confidential exchanges between the supervisor and supervisee. However, supervision records are organisational documents which may be seen by others for example audit and inspection purposes or where there are grievances or disciplinary proceedings, without the consent of the parties involved.

Supervisors should be able to use their own supervision sessions to discuss their supervision practice or a particular supervisory relationship. It is important that the supervisor is able to seek support and development in this way.

The supervision agreement should clarify these constraints upon confidentiality.

Professional development

Enabling the development of professional competence during supervision is a key aspect of supervision, facilitated through the appraisal process which considers current performance and areas for development, including how identified learning needs can be met. Alongside formal training, supervision can be used to develop staff through:

- Modelling e.g. listening, problem solving or prioritising skills
- Overtly applying best practice within supervision e.g. demonstrating critical thinking, reflective practice, analysis or use of evidence in decision making
- Application of lessons from case reviews and audits to current cases
- Respect for diversity by acknowledging power differentials and issues arising from differences regarding gender, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion and social exclusion

Cancellation and absence

Supervision dates should be agreed at least 6 months in advance, recorded on the Supervision Monitoring Form (Appendix 5) and filed at the front of the supervision file, along with any changes required.

- If, exceptionally, a supervision session has to be cancelled by either party it should be rescheduled as soon as possible, but no later than 2 weeks from the date of cancellation
- If a supervisor is absent from work for more than 2 weeks, the supervisor's manager should ensure that effective arrangements are in place for the supervision
- Cancellations should be recorded on the Supervision Monitoring form

7. Quality Assurance, Audit and Review

Quality assurance of supervision is the responsibility of both the first-line manager and senior management.

The first-line manager should read/audit a sample of the supervisee's case files regularly to ensure adherence to policy and the quality of work undertaken. They will also undertake direct observations of practice and from this they should select a number of cases to review in supervision. A form on the supervisee's view should be completed by the supervisee and sent to the manager undertaking the observation / audit of supervision.

Supervision audits will be undertaken as part of the on-going quality assurance framework programme of the directorate to ensure that supervision is reflective and addresses the needs of children and their families and of the staff member working with them.

8. Resources and further reading

Theory and evidence informed Supervision practice

There are range of tools to assist supervisees and supervisors get the best out of supervision

This policy is aligned with a wide range of tools from Research in Practice

<https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/children-and-families/>

Area of Practice

Understanding the lived experience of children and families

Hearing Marginalised Voices

<https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/children-and-families/hearing-marginalised-voices/>

Exploring the Experiences of Families in Supervision

<https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/children-and-families/exploring-the-experiences/>

Emotions, Relationships and resilience

Building relationships with families

<https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/emotions-relationships-and-resilience/building-relationships/>

Helping Practitioners to develop emotional resilience

<https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/emotions-relationships-and-resilience/helping-social-workers/>

Having Reflective Discussions

<https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/supervision/having-reflective-discussions-in-supervision/>

Using Group Supervision

<https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/supervision/using-group-supervision/>

Excellent Social Work

<https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/excellent-social-work/developing-the-skills-of-your-team/>

- **Providing Effective Supervision** CWDC (Children's Workforce Development Council), July 2007
- **Building a safe, confident future** Social Work Task Force, Nov 2009
- **Staff Supervision in Social Care: Making a Real Difference for Staff and Service Users** Tony Morrison, Jan 2006
- NQSW Task Force
- **Reclaiming Reflective Supervision in Social Work** <http://www.in-trac.co.uk/>
- **Standards for Employers of Social Workers in England and Supervision Framework** Social Work Reform Board (2010)
- **Supervision in times of austerity** Wannacott, Jane (2013) <http://www.intrac.co.uk/>

Appendix 1 – SUPERVISION AGREEMENT

ADD NAME Supervisee - Supervision Agreement DATE

Supervision Agreement Between:	Supervisee	
	Supervisor	

The expectations of the organisation regarding supervision are set out within the supervision policy, these expectations 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 supervisee, and it is very important that this document provides a foundation for discussion. It should be completed at the conclusion of a discussion in supervision rather than filled out at the time.

This is to be discussed at the start of your supervisory relationship and reviewed twice a year

Date for Initial review	
Date Subsequent review	

Practical Arrangements

Frequency and Duration	Professional supervision: Case Management Supervision: Group Supervision: Peer Supervision: Appraisal:
-------------------------------	---

Venue

In Person	
Virtual	

Cancellation

Arrangements if either party needs to cancel	
---	--

Agreed arrangements for Ad Hoc discussion	
--	--

How content of Supervision will be agreed	Personal Supervision	
	Case Management	
	Appraisal	

	Group Supervision	
--	-------------------	--

Preparation should include	
----------------------------	--

Making Supervision Work

What does the supervisee bring to this relationship (e.g. previous work experience, experience of being supervised, preferred learning style)?	
What are the supervisee's expectations of the supervisor?	
What are the supervisor's expectations of the supervisee?	
Are there any factors to acknowledge as relevant to the development of the supervisory relationship (e.g. race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, impairment, including learning difficulties)?	
Agreed 'permissions' e.g. it's OK for the supervisor not to know all the answers / for the supervisee 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 areas for this agreement?	

Suggested Priority Items for Agenda:

Check in: for both Case Management Discussion and Professional Supervision Discussions

Check-in is confidential safe space – these discussions will not be recorded unless there is an agreed reason to record or if there are issues that that might represent a significant risk to the staff member or others.

Any recordings will be open and transparent, if there are disagreements or issues that cannot be resolved this can be escalated via the appropriate line management structures.

Learning and Professional Development: Professional Supervision

Will focus on the professional and practice development.

Developmental Feedback: Professional Supervision

How are you doing in your role?

What are your strengths and what are you areas for development.

Performance

Appraisal and objective setting =

Workload: Both Case Management and Professional Supervision

Exploration about current work load, capacity and breadth of types or work and level of complexity.

Leave and Cover: Professional Supervision

Planning and preparation around leave and requirements for cover arrangements.

Cases Discussions/Project: Case Management Supervision

Case Discussion to be recorded on Mosiac

Project/Portfolio/Reports to be recorded via supervision records

It may also be appropriate to discuss children and families during professional supervision where issues may be impacting on the supervisor or supervisee, it is however important to maintain a protected and distinct focus on supervision that focuses staff development and wellbeing.

Direct Observations of practice for QSW at least once a year

Other standing Agenda Items to be agreed:

AOB:

Complaints or disagreements process:

In the first instance every effort should be made to resolve any issues between the involved parties. If this is not possible, approach senior manager to facilitate an informal resolution discussion.

Formal Grievance processes are identified via the following Link:

<https://lambeth.sharepoint.com/teams/hub01/hr/Intranet%20Documents/Grievance%20policy%20and%20procedue.pdf#search=grievance%20policy>

Whistleblowing Policy is available via the following link:

<https://lambeth.sharepoint.com/teams/hub01/iacf/Intranet%20Documents/Whistleblowing%20Policy%20and%20Procedure.pdf#search=grievance%20policy>

Signed

Supervisee		Date:
Supervisor		Date:

Appendix 2 – Case Supervision Tool - Children living within their family

Name:				
Case ID:		D.O.B:		
Oyster card id:		Passport No		
Key Areas of need being met.	Key area of Need	Last Completed	Due	Review Due
	CIN/CP plan			
	CIN/CP review meeting			
	CIN/CGM Meeting			
	ADD any other KEY DATES			
	SWET /Final Evidence			
	Life Story Details			
	Other Key areas for consideration			
	Other Key Areas for consideration			
	Other Key Areas for consideration			
	Mosaic front sheet details			
	Genogram			
	Case Summary			
Chronology				
<p>Case Summary, Update and review of previous Actions: What is this family’s story, why are children social care involved? What the are primary issues of need and risk requiring intervention Review of previous case management actions decision</p>				
<p>Voice of the child: What is the lived experience for each child within the home (individually and what is life like for the family as a unit). What would the child and the family members say are the main issues in their life What would the child and the family members say</p>				

about the social work intervention?

Legislative framework:

What framework/s are informing our intervention with this family
Is the current level and framework for intervention appropriate?

Impact:

What impact is this social work intervention having?
How do know if the intervention is making a difference

What is working well:

What are we worried about:

What are the grey areas:

Partnership Working:

How are partners assisting with the intervention to safeguard this family.

Decisions:

Do any decision need to be made – if yes rational for decision to provided.

Actions:

What needs to be done?	I will know this works when?	Which person will lead on this	This will be done by?	This will be reviewed on

Appendix 3 – Case Supervision recording tool – Child and young people in our care and who have left care and are eligible for support from Lambeth.

Name:			
Case ID:	D.O.B:	Legal Status:	
Oyster card id:	Passport No		
Key Areas of need being met.	Key area of Need	Date completed/Due	Review Due
	CLA review		
	IHA/RHA		
	Care Plan/Pathway Plan		
	Family Time Arrangements *Where these can be located on case record		
	Permanency Planning Meeting		
	Life Story Work		
	Other Key areas for consideration		
	Other Key areas for consideration		
	Other Key areas for consideration		
	Mosaic front sheet details		
	Genogram		
	Case Summary		
Chronology			
<p>Case Summary, Update and review of previous Actions: What is this family's story, why are children social care involved? What the are primary issues of need and risk requiring intervention Review of previous case management actions decision</p>			
<p>Voice of the child: What is the lived experience for each child within the home (individually and what is life like for the family as a unit). What would the child and the family members say are the main issues in their life What would the child and the family members say about the social work intervention?</p>			

<p>Legislative framework: What framework/s are informing our intervention with this family Is the current level and framework for intervention appropriate?</p>
<p>Impact: What impact is this social work intervention having? How do know if the intervention is making a difference</p>
<p>What is working well:</p> <p>What are we worried about:</p> <p>What are the grey areas:</p>
<p>Partnership Working: How are partners assisting with the intervention to safeguard this family.</p>
<p>Decisions: Do any decision need to be made – if yes rational for decision to provided.</p>

What needs to be done?	I will know this works when?	Which person will lead on this	This will be done by?	This will be reviewed on

Appendix 4 - Professional Supervision Recording template

Professional Supervision

Supervisee	
Supervisor	
Date	
What will supervision include?	<p>Standing Agenda agreed as follows: Suggested</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check in 2. Previous Minutes 3. Health and Wellbeing 4. Learning and Professional Development 5. Appraisal and Objective Setting 6. Issues requiring escalation 6. AOB <p>Other agenda items can be added as needed.</p>

Check in:

Previous Minutes and Actions	Update
Health and Wellbeing	
Learning and Development	<p>It is useful to identify and agree what framework is most helpful to use to provide a frame and focus on the areas of discussion.</p> <p>KSS – Knowledge and Skills Statement for Children and family Practitioners, Practice Supervisors and Practice Leaders</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/knowledge-and-skills-statements-for-child-and-family-social-work</p> <p>Practice Standards – Lambeth Specific</p>
Appraisal and Objective Setting	

Issues requiring escalation

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Actions:

Task	By Whom	By When

Signed
Name:
Date
Signed
Name:
Date

Appendix 5: Supervision Monitoring Form

Supervisor:

Supervisee

Date	Completed <i>(Please tick)</i>	Cancelled <i>(Please tick)</i>	If cancelled, reason for cancellation, name and designation of	New date
			Reason:	
			Reason:	
			Reason:	
			Reason:	
			Reason:	
			Reason:	

This sheet should be completed and included at the front of the supervision file.

Appendix 6: Format for Supervision File –

Supervision File – List of Contents	
1. Employee information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal details and emergency contacts • References • Confirmation of DBS (and professional registration if appropriate) • Job description and person specification • Induction check list • Driving licence and insurance checks (annual)
2. Supervision records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision Agreement • Supervision Frequency and Verification Log • Staff Supervision Records • For case holding workers – List of current cases/workloads
3. Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations of practice
4. Performance conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed Performance conversations and reviews • Evidence of learning activities undertaken • For ASYE/CPD progression - copies of Learning Agreements
5. Attendance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness absence notification forms • Self-certification of sickness absence • Copies of Fit Notes • Return to work pro-forma • Occupational Health referrals and related correspondence
6. Performance Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of any reports and plans prepared in relation to capability procedures
7. Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous employment information (e.g. application form and interview pack) • Personal information