



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Supervision and Appraisal Policy

Children's Social Care, People Group

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Version

Version 6

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Supervision Policy

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for the one to one supervision of staff working for Darlington Borough Council Children's social care. This policy is aimed at Social Work staff and those working directly with children and families within a social care setting.

The policy has been written to ensure it meets the needs of the services, their staff and their supervisors, regardless of the professional area in which they work.

Policy Statement

Darlington Borough Council aim to provide high quality service in consultation with, and responsive to, citizens, partners and other stakeholders.

Darlington Children's Social Care aim to provide appropriate, responsive, flexible and cost-effective services for the most vulnerable children and young people of Darlington and can only do this efficiently if the staff employed by the Council:

- Understand what is expected of them.
- Have the skills, knowledge, behaviours, values and attitudes necessary to carry out their role.
- Are fully supported in their work and managed effectively.

Effective supervision is one of the most important measures that we can put in place to ensure positive outcomes and quality services for the people who use the services provided by Children's Social Care. This policy sets out how staff can expect to be supervised and provides supervisors and manages with the key elements needed to supervise staff effectively.

Core Values

Our values are:

- be respectful towards the Council, each other as colleagues as well as our community, residents, service users, stakeholders and wider partners.
- be innovative in everything we do and voice improvements to ensure we offer quality services
- act collaboratively and ensure our successful journey of collaboration continues to ensure that we maximise opportunities to achieve success
- deliver quality services to all and strive to always deliver the best we can with the resources available

Set out clearly the standards of conduct performance and ethics that the regulatory bodies expect of the member. More information can be found by the following link:

<https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/standards/professional-standards/>

What is supervision?

Supervision – a regular one to one discussion between an individual member of staff and their line manager with the purpose of achieving certain professional, personal and organisational objectives. These objectives include competent, accountable practice, continuing professional development and personal support. Group supervision may also be utilised but must not replace the one to one discussion. When supervising individual children it may be beneficial to conduct a joint supervision session between practitioners where these are co-worked.

Alongside this all members of Darlington Borough Council must follow the ‘my journey’ guidance. More info can be found at <https://intranet.darlington.gov.uk/services-search/hr/my-journey/>

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed by Darlington Borough Council Children’s Social Care, People Services whether on a permanent, temporary (including agency staff), full-time or part-time basis.

The purpose of supervision

1. **Maintaining and developing the quality of practice.** The overriding aim of supervision is to promote best practice by maintaining existing good practice and continuously striving to improve it.
2. **Reflection** - Supervision provides the opportunity for a collaborative reflection between supervisee and supervisor that builds on the supervisee’s use of their thoughts, feelings and values with regard to individual cases.
 - a. To deepen and broaden workers’ knowledge and critical analysis skills.
 - b. To enable confident, competent, creative and independent decision-making.
 - c. To help workers build clear plans that seek to enable positive change for children and families.
3. **Professional development.** Supervision is about prompting and developing a learning culture. It may also be about training needs but more often it is about learning from the many varied experiences within the job.
4. **Role clarity.** Supervision presents an opportunity to discuss and clarify what is involved in a job and what is not.
5. **Organisational objectives.** Supervision must be related to the core purposes of a job. Through clarifying and enabling individual contributions it assists the organisation in achieving its overall objectives.
6. **Promoting a suitable climate for practice.** Supervision provides for the establishment of a purposeful and supportive relationship between supervisor and supervisee, that enables workers to feel valued, supported and motivated. This can enable the undertaking of often complex and emotionally demanding tasks within a supportive environment, developing workers emotional resilience and self-awareness.
7. **Communication.** Supervision should assist in providing a structure and vehicle for two-way communication between individual staff and the organisation both from top to bottom and vice versa.

8. **Resources.** Supervision can provide a vehicle for discussions about resourcing issues and identifying ways in which some of these issues may be addressed.

Functions of supervision

The five main functions of supervision are:

- Performance management.
- Learning and development.
- Support.
- Professional practice and organisational issues.
- Recordings of supervision.

Frequency of supervision

All line managers/supervisors should ensure regular supervision within the following **minimum** timescales:

Children’s Social Care

Role	Frequency
Service Managers	Monthly
Practice Supervisors/Team Managers/practitioners	Monthly
Social Workers	Monthly
Non-Qualified roles working directly with children	Monthly
Children’s Residential Service Staff	Monthly
Newly Qualified Social Workers	As a minimum weekly for the first 6 weeks then fortnightly until 6 months, monthly thereafter.

N.B. These are minimum timescales. Line managers/supervisors will supervise staff more frequently as and when required.

Recording of supervision

The recording of supervision sessions is the responsibility of the supervisor. Personal Supervision is recorded on the document found at Appendix 1.

Supervision of children’s support (minimum frequency)

Children’s case supervision should be fully recorded on the agreed case file on the appropriate case form on Liquid Logic.

All cases should have management oversight and allocation recorded on file within three days of case allocation/transfer.

During the assessment process all cases should be supervised monthly, until final outcome of assessment is agreed by a Team Manager. At this stage the Team Manager will agree a frequency RAG rating for case supervisions on the Liquid Logic Supervision frequency form, this can be updated and changed at any time by the Team Manager whilst the case is open to reflect changing need.

Case supervision rating	Frequency	Criteria
Red	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child protection • Children subject to care proceedings • Children who are in our care where their final plan has not been determined • Children at risk of exploitation • Children subject to Care Orders at home
Amber	Bi monthly (every other month)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in need (during C&F period) • Children subject to Supervision Orders or Family Assistance Orders
Green	Every 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in long term matched foster or residential placements • Children in need
Green CWD	Every 6 months or 26 weeks if a child with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children with a disability who are open for review of their care package only

The criteria above are not exhaustive but is to be used as a guide by Team Managers. For example, some children in need may require monthly supervision whereas some may be suitable for supervision every two or three months. The Team Manager must keep the supervision rating under review and change it according to need.

If a case is **Green** the Head of Service will need to approve this status on Liquid logic.

Amber cases will be monitored through Senior Management review as part of the Quality Assurance function in addition to the Practice Review Audits which monitor supervision as part of the process. This will be undertaken on a monthly basis by SLT and via Practice Review Audit Activity which takes place monthly.

Confidentiality and Access

Supervision is a private but not a confidential process. This means that records are the property of the organisation, not the individual. From time to time supervisors will need to discuss the content of supervision sessions with others, for example, their own line manager. This should always be with the knowledge of the supervisee.

Access to supervision records should be controlled and should be uploaded to my view. Supervisees should be aware, however, that other than themselves and their supervisor others will, from time to time, access records. These might include:

- **Senior managers** – for quality assurance purposes.

- **Investigating officers** – e.g. for disciplinary purposes.
- **Inspectors** – e.g. OFSTED inspectors of Peer Reviewers.
- **Quality staff** – e.g. for audit and quality assurance purposes.

Storage and Retention

Supervision records and other associated documentation should be stored on the HR system 'my view'.

Quality Assurance

In order to be effective, the supervision process requires monitoring and quality assurance arrangements.

The quality assurance process ensures that:

- The standards of supervision as outlined in this policy are being followed.
- Staff are being supervised professionally and effectively.
- Supervision sessions are being recorded.
- Individual Supervision Agreements are being developed, reviewed and used.
- The supervision process promotes equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice.

Dispute/Conflict Resolution

Supervisees should be clear about whom they should contact if they feel the terms of their supervision agreement are not being met.

Supervisees should always discuss any complaints or dissatisfaction in the first instance with their manager/supervisor and endeavour to reach an agreement within the normal supervision process.

If resolution is not achieved by discussion with the supervisor the supervisee should raise the issue with their supervisor's line manager.

Appendix 1

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISION RECORD**

Name of Supervisee:	
Name of Supervisor:	
Date and time of session:	

1. General check in:

Include staff welfare, personal and health issues.

2. Formal case discussions during this session:

Include name of service user, developments since last supervision, review of previous actions and required future actions including timescale and responsibility. Please state the date that each case will next be discussed if this will not be at the next session.

3. Workload, practice and performance issues:

Include any issues of anti-oppressive or anti-discriminatory practice, workload management issues, caseload discussions, general practice and any required performance indicators. Be sure to note areas of good practice as well as areas for improve

Individual case load analysis

Capacity/Current case pressures

Current performance/Practice (to include performance re C&F/S47 timescale)

Professional feedback/Challenges (including IRO feedback/Practice Issues)

Audit Feedback & agreed actions/timescales

Individual case load analysis

Capacity/Current case pressures

Current performance/Practice (to include performance re C&F/S47 timescale)

Professional feedback/Challenges (including IRO feedback/Practice Issues)

Audit Feedback & agreed actions/timescales

4. Training/Staff Development:

Include completed or required training and other development opportunities, including career progression where appropriate.

5. Any other business:

Include annual leave, flexi, health and safety and information governance.

6. Areas of disagreement:

Note areas of disagreement and required actions as a result of:

Signature of supervisee:	
Signature of supervisor:	
Duration of session:	
Date of next session:	