Children’s Services Supervision Policy

**Version FINAL v1.3**

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About this document

**Title**

**Supervision Policy**

**Purpose**

**To set out the procedure for case, group and individual staff supervision**

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Copies of these forms can be downloaded from the Tri-X procedure manual, from the Document Library section under ‘All Children’ <https://www.proceduresonline.com/surrey/cs/local_resources.html>

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# Introduction

Surrey County 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 Surrey County Council. As a result all staff in Children’s Services will adopt the principles in this framework (*note: some work such as LADO, Section 7 reports, private fostering fall outside those examples).*

This Supervision Policy has been developed in consultation with practitioners across Surrey. It seeks to create a framework for an effective and consistent approach to supervision that will support the development of Children’s Services Practice Models which are Effective Family Resilience and Family Safeguarding in line with our vision and the implementation of Motivational Interviewing as a model of practice over the next year.

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 professional supervision policy applies to all social care workers and managers in Children’s Services.

It is consistent with the Children’s Social Work Practice Standards and meets the particular requirements of social care workers.

This policy reflects the standards issued by [**Social Work England**](https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/)[.](http://www.hpc-uk.org/)

In particular:

* + *As a social care worker, you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.*

This includes:

* + *Meeting relevant standards of practice and working in a lawful safe and effective way;*
	+ *Seeking assistance from your employer or the appropriate authority if you do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your work or you are not sure how to proceed in a work matter;*

and;

* + *As a social care employer, you must have written policies and procedures in place to enable social care workers to meet the requisite standards set out by Social Work England.*

This includes:

* + *Effectively managing and supervising staff to support effective practice and good conduct and supporting staff to address deficiencies in their performance.*

## Definitions, Purpose and Function

Good supervision is based on a relationship that when working well, should provide a safe environment for critical reflection, challenge and professional support ensuring competent accountable practice. The relationship will not just be task-focused but will make space and time for reflection on the experience and purpose of everyday work to help workers and their managers be effective in their jobs.

The purpose of supervision is to promote the best possible outcomes for children. There is a body of research evidence showing that good outcomes are most likely to be achieved by emotionally intelligent practice, which enables positive, open, honest working relationships between professionals and service users. The aim of the supervision is to foster such practice by developing a relationship between the supervisor and supervisee, which both supports the worker but also facilitates challenge, critical and reflective thinking.

Supervision is part of the intervention with service users. Professional practice and worker/service user dynamics need to be critically analysed, and the impact of the worker’s emotions on thoughts and actions explored. *(Morrison and Wannacott 2010)*

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)

This definition describes a way of thinking about supervision which recognises the need to integrate all four functions within the relational process. It includes an acknowledgment that the supervisor is in a position of authority within the relationship, is focused on the quality of practice and works alongside the supervisee to support them in recognising and managing the emotional impact of the work

*(Morrison 2005, Wannacott 2013)*

We recognise that 1-1 supervision is not able to meet all of these functions fully. A wider systems approach to strengthen reflective practice and learning is also required. All staff will also be provided with a range of additional reflective learning forums and opportunities that promote a positive learning environment that drives practice in Surrey. Reflective Group Supervision sessions will be developed as part of the Surrey Family Safeguarding practice model implementation. .

## 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, to this end, should prepare for and make a positive contribution to the supervisory process. They are not passive recipients.
* 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, though not with every case. It should enable the Manager to get 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. It is about creating a culture of openness.

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

## 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;

## Continuing professional development (developmental/formative function)

* To identify the supervisee's learning and development 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 as in the [Performance Conversations Framework](https://snet.surreycc.gov.uk/hr/staff-performance/performance-conversations)
* 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 particularly in relation to Knowledge; Critical reflection and analysis; and Intervention and Skills1
* To ensure the worker's and employer's practice accords with the professional standards issued by [Social Work England](https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/)[;](https://www.hcpc-uk.org/)

## 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 paper and / or electronic case file;

1 Paragraph 6.41 of [The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report (2011));](http://www.education.gov.uk/munroreview/downloads/8875_DfE_Munro_Report_TAGGED.pdf)

* 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 action;
* To monitor the supervisee's progress in meeting the continuing professional development requirements for registration (if applicable);

## 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. 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, Schools and Families and society as a whole.

# A Model of Reflective Practice

## Reflective 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 hands on work 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:

## 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 Continued 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'.

Additionally, 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.’

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. (This specific requirement has come about following a series of management reviews). Chronic neglect has devastating effects on children and the causes of neglect need to be identified and addressed or legal advice sought on thresholds for care proceedings where there is no sustained improvement to the child's circumstances.

* + - Clear description of the task and what the worker experienced

* + - Supervisor asks questions and seeks clarity

Experience

Reflection and critical thinking

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Worker explores feelings evoked and think about what this might mean for the child, family or themselves

Staff member and supervisor reflect critically on the impact of their decisions on the child and their family

•

•

Plans

* Realistic and safer plans ca

be developed

* Actions can be explained and justified
* Timescales and contingency plans should be considered and agreed

and

actions

Analysis

valuate perceived

knowledge and beliefs judgments and decisions based on observations,

valuation of information, evidence, experience, reflection and consideration to relevant research

*Figure 1: Reflective Supervision*

# 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. Residential Care 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 **LCS** 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 County Council’s Vision, Values and Working Principles](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/finance-and-performance/vision-strategy-and-performance/our-organisation-strategy/community-vision-for-surrey-in-2030)[.](https://snet.surreycc.gov.uk/organisational-info/corporate-strategy-and-values-and-leadership/vision-for-surrey-in-2030-values-working-principles-and-strategies) 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. Surrey County Council’s [Equal Opportunities Policy](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/finance-and-performance/equality-and-diversity/our-commitment-to-equality-diversity-and-inclusion) should be followed.

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.

## Types of Supervision and Frequency

There are various types of Supervision:

* [Individual](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) [Staff Supervision](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) (all staff) including Case Supervision (where the staff member is a case holding worker);
* [Group Case Supervision](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1)  (Family Safeguarding)
* IRO / CP Chair and LADO supervision
* [Management Supervision](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) (supervision of all managers)

All case workers (including part time and agency staff) in Children’s Services will receive a formal supervision session at least once a month.

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.

Monthly supervision sessions usually consist of two elements:

* Individual Staff Supervision, and
* Case Supervision (if Group Supervision has been undertaken on a particular child and family, that child and family would not be discussed as a case supervision in that month)

Case Supervision

* + - LCS form
		- All children on SW caseload to be reviewed at least every 3 months

Individual Staff Supervision

* + - Wellbeing Performance and Development form
		- Reflective practice
		- Monthly supervision

 Group

Supervision

* + - Used by Family Safeguarding Service
		- Prioritised according to risk rating

IRO / CP

Chair / LADO Supervision

* + - Supervision Agenda template (and the Wellbeing Performance and Development form)
		- Reflective practice
		- Monthly supervision

Manager Supervision

* + - Manager form and Wellbeing Performance and Development form
		- Key risks (business and case) identified and escalated appropriately

*Figure 2: Types of Supervision*

* + 1. Individual Staff Supervision

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;
			* Worker support / self-care
			* Learning and Development; Any other issues/business.

Information from this record should be used proactively to capture evidence within the [Performance Conversations Framework,](https://snet.surreycc.gov.uk/hr/staff-performance/performance-conversations) which consists of a quarterly progress reviews and an annual performance appraisal. Quarterly Performance Conversations complement, rather than replace, 1 to 1s and “in the moment” feedback. The 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 LCS. Reflective Supervision will most clearly be seen through this form.

* + 1. Group Case Supervision

Group case supervision is held within the Family Safeguarding Service. Each child

/family is supervised according to risk rating:

* + - * Red – Monthly or more frequently if required;
			* Amber – Monthly or more frequently if required;
			* Green – Monthly or more frequently if required.

Further guidance on this is available separately at [“Group Case Supervision Guidance”](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1)

* + 1. Supervision of CP Chairs / IROs and LADOs

CP Chairs, IROS and LADOs will also have supervision every 4 weeks. The approach and expectations outlined above apply to these roles in the same way as they apply to other staff. The Supervision Agenda form will be used alongside the Case Supervision Form and the staff must bring along with them their Learning Portfolios.

Service Co-ordinators and managers will undertake a thematic review of issues faced by CP Chairs / IROS and LADOS within their supervision to ensure a robust quality assurance of the work done. This may include for example:

* + - * 3 most recent plans started
			* 3 most recent step-downs
			* Evidence of plans (including CP plans, Care Plans etc)
			* Repeat plans
			* Child’s voice
			* Escalations
			* Care Planning Alerts
			* Midway discussions
			* Families subject to plans longer than 9 months (CP Chairs)
			* Secure reviews
			* Feedback from children and families Whilst LADO thematic supervision may include:
			* 3 most recent allegations
			* 3 most recent completed allegations
			* Complex / non recent abuse
			* Cases ongoing longer than 6 months
			* Partnership working including issues
			* Training with external agencies
			* Notifications to Ofsted, Social Work England or other regulatory bodies
			* Feedback from agencies
			* Feedback from MASMs
		1. Supervision of managers and senior managers

All managers within the service are also expected to 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 should have supervision every 4-6 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.

# Recording of Supervision

## Recording

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 may be typed or handwritten. Written records must be legible. 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 (in the case of handwritten notes, these must be scanned in and saved to the worker’s 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](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1)
* [Individual Staff Supervision Record](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1)
* Children’s Case Supervision Template (in LCS)
* [Group Case Supervision agreement template](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) (For use by the Family Safeguarding Service in addition to Supervision Template)
* [Group Case Supervision Template](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) (For use by the Family Safeguarding Service);
* [Supervision Agenda](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) (For use by the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO / CP Chairs)) – where relevant
* [Supervision Agenda](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) (For use by the LADOs) – where relevant.
* [Management Supervision Template](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1)

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.

Any case supervision should be typed directly into the child’s LCS supervision form.

The management decision made (outside of case supervision) should also be typed into the LCS Management / Panel Decision casenote.

The [Supervision Monitoring Form](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) can also be completed at the same time.

The forms must be added within 2 working days of the supervision session and will be finalised by the Manager on LCS following confirmation of the record by the case worker. Once finalised the form cannot be amended.

## Supervision Agreement

Each social care worker should have a written supervision agreement which is consistent with this professional supervision policy. It should be reviewed at least annually and at each change of supervisor (please see [Supervision Agreement Template](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) – Appendix 2[)](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms1/media/1713/appendix-2-supervision-agreement.docx).

Supervision agreements for new staff should show the agreed frequency of supervision that reflects the support and learning needs of the individual. The agreement for frequency of supervision for new staff should be recorded with purpose and aims.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that a supervision agreement is in place for each supervisee.

## 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. 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 3 Format for Supervision Files](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) 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 of Surrey County 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.

## Joint supervision and joint working arrangements

When workers from different teams or multi-agency settings are working on a case, the supervisors (managers) for the workers must agree who has management oversight and supervision responsibility. This, together with the supervision arrangements and timescales, should be recorded on the child's file and in the supervision file.

In some circumstances a number of workers from one service work with one family. Group case supervision/case discussion should be evidenced to ensure that there is a coherent approach to engaging the family system and working together to progress

one plan with a joined-up purpose that is clearly focused on the safety/needs of each child.

# 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](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1)

## 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](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1)[***.***](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms1/media/1317/practice-standards-2019.pdf)

### 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 six months in advance, recorded on the [Supervision Monitoring Form (Appendix 6)](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) 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

# 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](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) (Appendix 8) should be completed by the supervisee and sent to the manager undertaking the [observation/audit of supervision](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms2/surreycs/doc-library/#collapse1) (Appendix 7)[.](https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms1/media/1716/appendix-7-effective-supervision-audit-form.docx)

Supervision audits will be undertaken as part of the on-going audit 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.

# Further Resources:

* **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)