

Practice Matters

Supervision Orders

What is a Supervision Order

The legislative basis for a supervision order is specified in the Children's Act 1989 S31 and S35 and further information is given in Schedule 3. They cannot be made in private proceedings unless a section 37 report has been requested. A supervision order can be made as an outcome to care proceedings where the threshold for significant harm is met, but a care order is not required. The order does not give the local authority PR. The order gives responsibility to the local authority to "advise, assist and befriend the supervised child" but it also gives powers to the local authority as specified in the order, for instance for the child and their parent to attend certain activities. They are initially made for a period of 12 months but it is possible to renew them for a total maximum period of 3 years.

Why use Supervision orders?

It allows the Local Authority to continue to work with the child and their carers to ensure that the care plan presented in court is followed through and any emerging issues dealt with promptly. When making any other order e.g. a special guardianship order, the court may choose to make a supervision order to ensure that the local authority continue to have oversight of the care plan for a period of time.

How to use Supervision orders

If the local authority is asking for a supervision order, or the court is minded to make one, consideration must be given to what *specific directions* if any should be included in the order in addition to the outline care plan which will also be submitted.

Consideration must be given to the type of child's plan that will support the delivery of the supervision order- a Child Protection plan or a Child in Need plan

A Child Protection plan may be considered appropriate where a child is returning to carers in whose care the significant harm originally occurred. A Child in Need plan may be considered appropriate where a child is going to be living with carers who were not responsible for the significant harm e.g. a SGO with grandparents.

Whatever the decision this must be recorded in defined case notes under Managers Decision

All children's plans must be outcome focused and have clear timelines for actions to be accomplished.

All child's plans should be reviewed and updated in line with the appropriate procedures (CP or CiN)

The supervision order should be reviewed at intervals of 3 months by a Team manager or equivalent and can coincide with the CP or CIN review.

Action Required

At the making of a supervision order the child's Social Worker must complete the Change of Circumstances episode and task it to Business Services to send a letter to notify agencies of the change in legal status.

All managers must ensure that all supervision orders open to their teams have an up to date child's plan which is reviewed in line with procedure.