

Supervision of Staff Policy



**‘Supervision is the cornerstone of all good social work practice’
(Lord Laming, Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report, 2003)**

<i>Office Use Only</i>	
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The supervision of staff policy provides minimum standards for the supervision of staff working with, or whose work brings them into close contact with, children, young people and families. It also clearly defines the responsibilities of supervisors in relation to their role. Reflective supervision should support practitioners' critical thinking and analysis, enhance emotional wellbeing and is a prerequisite in any learning organisation. Good supervision should enable improved outcomes for children and young people and their families. Supervision should be the thread that links intervention, engagement and outcomes.

- 1.2 Supervision is a formal recorded process which allows managers/supervisors and those staff for whom they have supervisory responsibility to jointly assess, review, analyse and agree actions to ensure that service objectives and, for social workers, individuals professional and personal objectives continue to be met in line with the requirements of [Social Work England](#). Supervision is a partnership between the supervisee, the supervisor and the organisation to support accountable decision making and safer outcomes for children, young people and families, and can be defined as *"A process in which one worker is given professional responsibility to work with another in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives. These objectives are competent, accountable performance, continuing professional development and personal support."* Morrison 1993, (adapted from, Harries 1987)

- 1.3 Supervision provides the mechanism for ensuring that children are at the heart of our planning and interventions. Practitioners have regular, reflective and supportive protected supervision time with a manager that enables them to consider risk, harm and need and have opportunity for critical reflection on practice for learning and development. The relationship between the social worker/practitioner, child and, their family is central to good care planning and positive outcomes for the child or young person. Wherever safe to do so, planning and intervention will be focused on strengthening families to enable children to remain in the care of the birth family. It is essential that we evidence in our recording of supervision how supervision has benefited an approach to a particular case and what the impact of our intervention, including reflective supervision has been. It is equally essential that our recording of supervision can evidence how supervision has helped with professional development and learning. This

supervision policy sets out our commitment to providing quality support and supervision to all members of staff who have a role in supporting and providing services to children, young people and their families.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The procedure applies to all staff working within Children's Social Care and/or employed in partner organisations deployed within teams within the above services.
- 2.2 This Supervision Policy is for front line practitioners and their managers in the Integrated Front Door, Children and Young People Service, Children in Care service, Leaving Care Service, Disabled Children's Team, Residential, and Fostering and Adoption Services. For purpose of clarity this includes: Service Managers, Team Managers, Social Workers, Personal Assistants, Residential Workers, Family Support Workers and Students.
- 2.3 Hyperlinks are also included within this document for further reading and direct access to relevant Appendices. Please ensure you make yourselves familiar with these in conjunction with this Supervision Policy.

3. Principles

3.1 Child at the Centre

- 3.1.1 [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#) provides a child-centred framework within which services to children are located. It spells out the basic human rights that all children have, including 'the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life'.
- 3.1.2 As seen in the Munro report (2011) *The system should be child-centred: everyone involved in*

child protection should pursue child-centred working and recognise children and young people as individuals with rights, including their right to participation in decisions about them in line with their age and maturity. Supervision is part of intervention with people who use services, it is intimately linked with the quality of the service received and the degree to which the service has a positive impact on children, young people and families. Supervision has a vital role in ensuring child centred practice. Protected time for reflective supervision allows opportunity to explore our day-to-day practice. We know that being intuitive, analytical and professionally curious is fundamental within our daily work, the most effective way to develop this is during reflective discussions within supervision. Day to day practice is often busy and demanding and it is crucial that supervision allows time for this level reflection. Without this, the focus on the child is at risk of being lost.

3.2 One Service

3.2.1 Barnsley MBC provides services to children and young people in Barnsley through a variety of different service provisions. High quality children's services are the responsibility of all managers and staff who work with children, young people and their families. All managers should work from the perspective of one service with children and their families at the centre of their decision making.

3.3 High Standards of practice

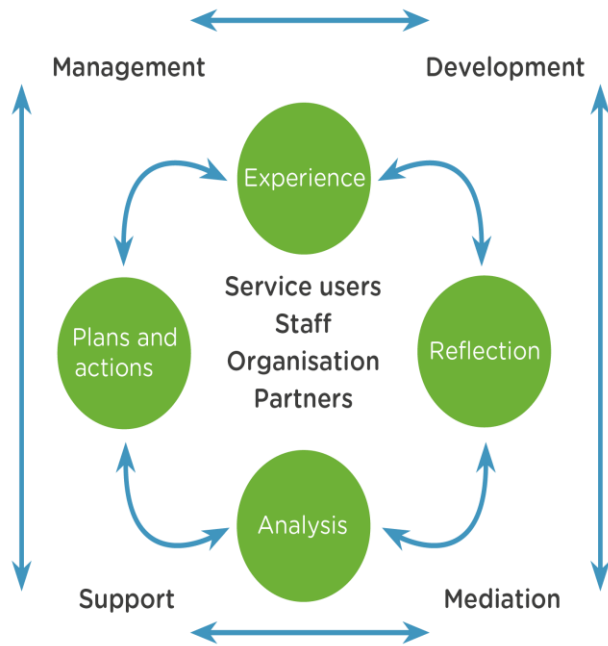
3.3.1 All children social care staff can expect high standards of supervision and support delivered by their manager. Good quality supervision should support respectful challenge, reflection, and critical thinking.

3.3.2 All children social care managers will be expected to undertake training to ensure that their supervision practice is of a high standard and they have the necessary skills and experience to provide staff with the support, knowledge and skills to achieve positive outcomes for children and their families.

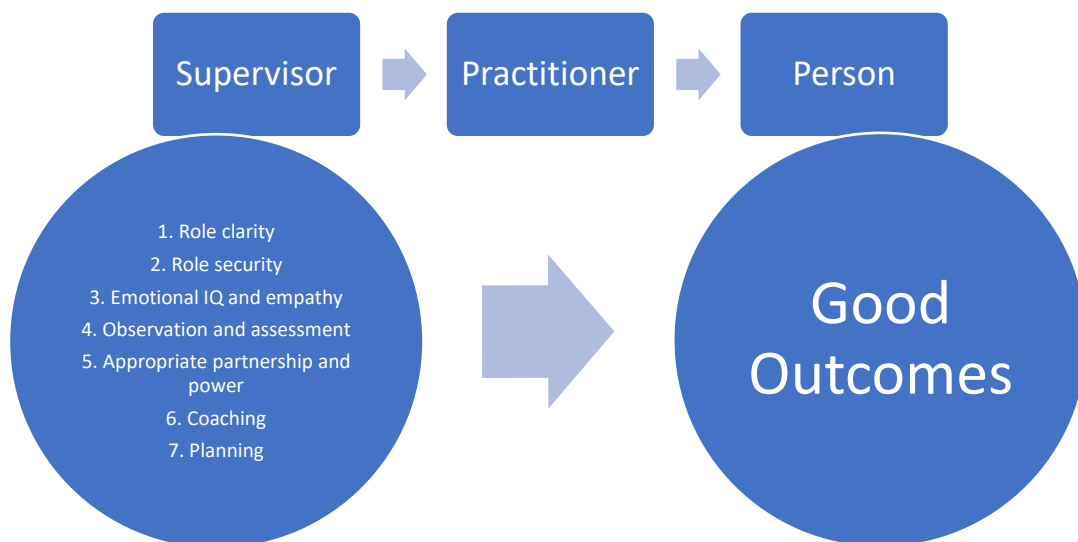
4. Integrated model of Supervision (4x4x4 Model)

- 4.1 The four functions of supervision are central to our supervision policy:
- > Personal support (support function)
 - > Competent, accountable practice (management function)
 - > Engaging the individual with the organisation (mediation function)
 - > Continuing professional development (development function)
- 4.2 Supervision should be outcome focused, whereby the supervisor holds the supervisee to account for plans put forward for the child, young person and family, reflects and builds on good practice, and thoroughly explores and considers the supervisee's rationale and thinking behind each plan. The supervisor will hold central to the discussions the fundamental question of whether the plan is likely to achieve the desired outcome. And if not, why not, and how does this affect the overall understanding of the case.
- 4.3 Within the integrated model of supervision (4x4x4) the term 'management' is used broadly to refer to the role that any supervisor has (whether or not they are the supervisee's line manager) in being accountable for the advice supervisees are giving and any practice decisions that emerge from supervision. All supervisors, whether clinical, professional or managerial, will also have a responsibility to report any unsafe or dangerous practice. This 4x4x4 model also known as the Integrated Model of Supervision acknowledges the interdependence of all four functions of supervision, their impact on key stakeholders and the four stages of the supervision cycle as seen in the below diagrams.

Four Stakeholders in Supervision	Four Functions of Supervision	Four Elements of the Supervisory Cycle
People who use services	Management	Experience
Staff	Support	Reflection
The organisation	Development	Analysis
Partner Organisations	Mediation	Action Planning



4.4 Within this model a key principle is that supervision is part of intervention with people who use services. It is intimately linked with the quality of the service received and the extent to which the service has a positive impact on the lives of people who use services. Morrison refers to this as the 'supervision-outcome chain', a process that has seven factors linking the quality of supervision to eventual outcomes for people who use services Morrison, T. and Wonnacott, J. (2010) 'Supervision: now or never. Reclaiming reflective supervision on social work'.



Morrison and Wonnacott, Training materials, 2009

5. Expectations

- 5.1 There are different types of supervision. This supervision policy specifically addresses planned and structured supervision rather than unplanned supervision (Ad hoc) which is on-going in effective teams, as staff members seek advice and guidance on a day-to-day basis. Ad hoc supervision is good practice but should not replace a planned and structured supervision session. Significant issues discussed, including any decisions made, through unplanned supervision should be clearly recorded in a timely manner ideally within 72 hours as a Managers Decision or Supervision on Mosaic and revisited at the next planned and structured session where required.
- 5.2 Planned and structured supervision must include both professional supervision and casework supervision, good supervision involves a balance between both elements, not always within one session, but certainly over the entire supervision process.
- 5.3 Professional supervision should address the individual needs of practitioners in term of the development, skills and progression. Professional supervision should provide reflective space for the supervisee to discuss and work through the personal impact of their role and responsibilities. This should include support to address the emotional impact of the work where required. It should include a conversation about their workload and address any issues relating to the extent of the time available to work directly with children, adults and families as well as meeting other demands. It should explore opportunities for celebration of good practice and feedback from observations of the supervisee's practice and how this can be used within other situations. This will be the place to discuss practical issues such as annual leave, flexi and personal issues. It is expected that all staff will keep a record of the training and learning undertaken and share this in supervision as well as discussion about continued professional development and, for social workers, the requirement of registration with [Social Work England](#). Each worker will have a confidential file on Sharepoint and Professional and personal supervision will be recorded in the workers file on Sharepoint within 72 hours of the supervision occurring.
- 5.4 Casework supervision will consider whether practitioner performance and practice, including

safeguarding, is competent, accountable and soundly based in research and practice knowledge and is consistent with organisational and partnership procedures. Through casework supervision the supervisor will ensure that the supervisee fully understand their roles, and responsibilities and the scope of their professional discretion and authority. Casework supervision will include sharing information (experience/observation), reflection, review and analysis in order to agree actions and forward planning for children, young people and their families to improve outcomes. Casework supervision will consider the individual needs of the child and their family, considering diversity, race, gender and disability. Casework supervision enables the supervisor and supervisee to have dedicated time to meet and reflect in order to assess risk and need and to provide an important check and balance on decision making and planning.

- 5.5 All members of staff (including agency/fixed term contract workers/students) must have a named supervisor and be given access during induction to this procedure. There will be a supervision contract agreed between each supervisor and supervisee and placed on the supervisee's supervision file in Mosaic, this will be reviewed annually. Staff must be informed if their named supervisor changes on a permanent basis and the supervision contract will then be updated. Supervision by managers who are not the named supervisor may be required by exception.
- 5.6 It is expected that the supervisee and the supervisor will prepare in advance of the session for a successful exchange of information (experience/observations), reflection, review, analysis and action planning. The supervisee will make their own record of action points to refer to prior to the posting of case decisions on Mosaic or receipt of the professional supervision record compiled by the supervisor.
- 5.7 Supervision must be arranged in advance, at a time that is convenient for both. In arranging the date and time of supervision, the specific requirements of staff working shifts must be considered.
- 5.8 The supervision venue should be considered carefully to ensure it is suitably private for confidential discussions.

5.9 Supervision sessions should be prioritised and diarised in advance in line with the supervision contract. It is the responsibility of both parties to ensure that agreed appointments are kept. Where it is necessary to postpone/cancel supervision the revised session date should be rearranged for the earliest opportunity at a mutually agreed date/time. The reason for postponement/cancellation of supervision must be logged on the staff members supervision file. The postponement of supervision sessions should be minimised and occur only the exceptional circumstances

6. Minimum Frequency and Duration of Supervision

6.1 The tables below set out the minimum supervision requirements and expectations for individual service areas and professional groups. The supervisor and supervisee should agree on the duration and frequency of supervision considering the experience of the supervisee and the complexity of work. It will be appropriate to arrange for more frequent supervision for staff who are newly qualified or new to post and if there are particular pieces of work which need more time in supervision.

Role	Minimum Frequency
Students	Weekly for the full placement which will be led by the Practice Educator (PE). Should the student also have a Work Based Supervisor (WBS) then this will be split alternate between the PE and WBS
ASYE/ NQSW	Weekly during the first 3 months for at least one hour. Fortnightly between 3-6 months then moving to the standard level of monthly as a minimum. This will be shared alternately with the Team Manager and Practice Development Team for the first 3-6 months.
Frontline Practitioners (incl. all social workers, support workers, AP's,	Minimum of every month depending on need and complexity of work – minimum of 1.5 hours duration

residential workers)	
Frontline Managers (incl. team managers, residential managers, family centre managers)	Minimum of Monthly – minimum of 1.5 hours duration.
Service Managers / Head of Service	Minimum of Monthly – minimum of 1.5 hours duration.

Child's Plan	Minimum Frequency
Assessment following referral (includes assessments under S17 and S47 of the Children Act 1989)	Case discussion within 10 working days of allocation and then monthly during the assessment period.
Child in Need	Monthly
Children who are the subject of a child in need plan only by virtue of their disability or health needs or are accessing short breaks, with a stable care plan in place.	12 weekly
Child Protection	Monthly
Children in Care and Care Leavers(plan for permanence not agreed and/or without a stable placement)	Monthly
Children in Care and Care Leavers (permanence plan in place and stable placement meeting their needs)	Every two months
Children in an adoptive placement who are in receipt of adoption support only	Every two months
Children who are subject of Private Fostering arrangements	Monthly
Targeted Early Help	Monthly
Adopters	Monthly

Foster Carers (plan for permanence not agreed and/or without a stable placement)	Monthly
Foster Carers (permanence plan in place and stable placement meeting their needs)	Every two months
Residential Workers	Monthly

7 Equality and Diversity in Supervision

7.1 Addressing equalities and diversity must be an integral part of the supervisory relationship in terms of:

- Supervision must promote diversity and anti-discriminatory practice in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Practice and service delivery to children and families and or engagement with service users, partners and stakeholders.
- .Any needs of the supervisor or supervisee arising from health, disability, gender, race learning need or neuro diversity which are identified and recorded; including any identified actions
- Consideration to diversity is evidenced within the supervision record

8 Confidentiality

8.1 During supervision, the supervisee may disclose information about themselves or their colleagues that is of a private or sensitive nature. The supervisor has a duty to respect the privacy of the Supervisee and may wish to discuss some of the issues raised with another person, for example with HR or their line manager. If this is the case the supervisor should try and agree the next steps with the Supervisee. However, the supervisor should also be aware

of their duties to safeguard service users and protect staff under Safeguarding, Health and Safety and in line with professional standards. Senior managers have a right to access supervision records at any time.

- 8.2 All Professional Supervision records will be uploaded and saved to Sharepoint where the folder will have restricted access and only those permitted will have sight of the record. Professional Supervision records will not be uploaded to Mosaic. Casework supervision will be uploaded to Mosaic on the supervision record form, any person with relevant permissions to access the case file on Mosaic will have access to the casework supervision record.

12 References and Useful Resources

- Morrison, T. and Wonnacott, J. (2010) 'Supervision: now or never. Reclaiming reflective supervision on social work'.
- Morrison and Wonnacott (2009), Training materials,
- Munro, E. (2011) 'The Munro review of child protection, final report: a child-centred system', London: Department for Education
- Lord Laming, Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report, 2003
- Howe, D. (2008), 'The emotionally intelligent social worker', Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kolb, D. (1988) 'The process of experiential learning', in Kolb, D. (ed) 'Experience as the source of learning and development', London: Prentice Hall.
- Morrison, T. (2007) 'Emotional intelligence, emotion and social work: context, characteristics, complications and contribution', British Journal of Social Work, vol 37, no 2, pp 245–263.
- <https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide50/contextforeffectivesupervision/supervisionpolicy.asp>
- https://practice-supervisors.rip.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/KB_The_role_and_functions_of_supervision_NEW.pdf

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