



Bury Council Children's Social Care

Supervision & Employee Review Policy & Procedure

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Introduction

This policy and procedure seeks to build upon the previous supervision policy and practice in Bury Council Children's Social Care which defined supervision as a 'means of making explicit the aims of the parties to work toward agreed goals in agreed ways'. This previous definition rooted supervision in the performance management culture and focused on mutually agreed goals and objectives.

This policy has been written in consultation with workers and managers in our organisation, and seeks to improve the situation recognised in inspection and internal audit. We will link the employee review process more closely with social work practice, supervision and continuing professional development in line with the Professional Capabilities Framework for social workers.

Policy Statement

Our approach to social work supervision and employee review recognises that these are processes rather than single events. We are working towards implementing an integrated model of supervision which moves beyond supervision as a functional process; which recognises the supervisor as a leader of practice; and where critical reflection is crucial to sound analysis, professional judgement and decision making.

The annual employee review process aims to ensure that each employee knows and understands what is expected of them and has the skills and abilities to deliver on these expectations. Employee review is a part of the process of continuing professional development (CPD), which is essential to ensure that social care workers remain up-to-date with professional developments, and can adjust their practice in line with new evidence.

Under the new model for CPD Social Workers will be supported by employers and expected to take professional responsibility for developing their skills to a high professional level, through undertaking learning and development activities over and above the core standards required for re-registration with HCPC.

The approach will be aligned with the relevant levels of the professional capabilities framework (PCF) and linked to the career structure. This means that the PCF will 'scaffold' the CPD requirements of any individual social worker. Integrating the PCF into our employee review and supervision structures will identify learning requirements to support the social care worker in meeting organisational, personal and professional needs.

Our approach to assessment of workers' capability will be holistic – different evidence, from different sources gathered over a period of time, against the 9 interdependent 'domains' of the Professional Capabilities Framework. Supervision will be the process where this evidence is considered, in line with the learning and development requirements identified in Personal Development Plans.

Scope of this Policy

This policy and procedure is intended for all staff in Bury Council Children's Services Social Care. The supervision policy and procedure may be adapted for use with workers in allied departments where staff work directly with children and their families. It recognises the value of reflective supervision in social work and that this leads to better outcomes for children, young people and their families.

This policy and procedure specifically applies to Principal Social Worker, Social Work Managers and Assistant Managers, Consultant Social Workers and Advanced Practitioners, Social Workers, Child and Family Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers. The employee review documents will have different versions tailored to the relevant level on the Professional Capabilities Framework.

This policy also acknowledges the standards for employers as outlined in the document "Standards for Employers of Social Workers in England" published by the Social Work Reform Board, with particular reference to Standard 5 – ensure that social workers have regular and appropriate social work supervision.

The 4x4x4 model of supervision

We are adopting this model as the most effective model of supervision and as the basis for our integrated approach to supervision in Children's Social Care. The model is in diagram 1.

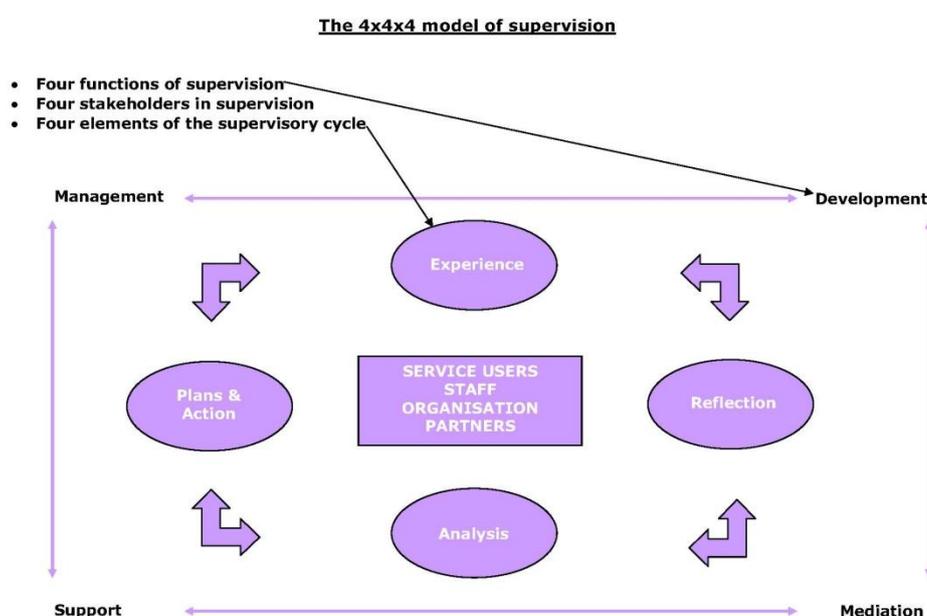


Diagram 1 The model describes 4 functions of supervision, 4 stakeholders and 4 elements of the supervisory cycle (Morrison 2005)

The four stakeholders – service users, staff, organisation and partners. This recognises that effective supervision of the worker contributes to improved outcomes for the service users and impacts positively on the relationships within the organisation and with partners.

The four elements of the supervisory cycle are adapted from adult learning theory (Kolb) and are an established method of engaging and helping the supervisor and social worker to reflect on their practice and come to well grounded conclusions and direction in a case. The same elements of the cycle can also be used to help workers who are not engaging in direct casework and the method has given proven results. It is essential that supervisors undertake the training provided regularly in the organisation on effective supervision so that they can practice this reflective cycle.

The four functions of supervision are outlined in more detail in the next section.

The four functions of supervision

The four functions of supervision are:

Management, Development, Mediation and Support.

- Management – this function is to ensure that the supervisee’s work is carried being carried out to a high standard and is important for accountability. This function will include clarity of role and responsibility; completion of tasks according to established policy and procedure; monitoring of workload or caseload and other associated work; overall quality and outcomes.
- Development – this function is to encourage workers to reflect on their own performance and to recognise and address their own developmental, learning and training needs. This will include time to reflect on learning emerging from their work, assessment of development needs and identification of learning opportunities; and giving and receiving constructive feedback on performance or coaching.
- Mediation – this function is to ensure that the relationship between the worker, their colleagues and teammates, and wider organisations with whom they work are positive and effective. This will require communication between the worker and manager about emerging issues in their work; briefing more senior staff about significant issues or problems that are arising; consultation with staff about issues that affect them; and dealing sensitively but clearly with issues about colleagues.
- Support – this function recognises that there are times when a worker may need support to carry out their role because of specific situations or incidents in their work or personal life. Supervisors should offer support and give workers an opportunity to reflect on the impact of the work upon them and issues that are adversely affecting their performance.

Supervision Practice

Supervision Definition

In this policy the **core activity of supervision** is defined as 'a regular one to one meeting between the supervisor and supervisee in order to meet organisational, professional and personal objectives.' Supervision can also include ad-hoc discussions with a manager; an individual or group discussion with a Consultant Social Worker; employee review and completion of a personal development plan. These latter activities are complementary to the core 1:1 supervision sessions.

It will not always be possible to review and reflect on every case in each supervision session. It is expected therefore that in each 1:1 supervision there will be more in-depth supervision on fewer cases, approximately one third of the caseload, and these will be determined between supervisor and supervisee. Child Protection and high level Child in Need cases should usually be discussed at each monthly supervision although it is acknowledged that this may not always be possible due to a range of factors and competing demands. This will also include most cases held by the Advice and Assessment team due to the shorter term nature of the work. Other more settled cases or those where long term work is being undertaken can be discussed on a three monthly basis. The exception to this is some cases held within the Children's Disability service which may require supervision at 6 monthly intervals dependant on the specific requirements of the case and the nature of the involvement. A settled case can be defined by having a manageable lower level of risk and must be agreed between supervisor and supervisee and the rationale recorded in supervision notes. Supervision within the Safeguarding Unit will take the format of discussing cases where there are issues / escalation. In addition the team manager will select a minimum of 2 cases for discussion.

Frequency and Duration of Supervision

A one to one planned supervision session should take place every month and last for at least one and a half hours, but probably no more than three unless in exceptional circumstances. This will ensure that the minimum standards for employers are met but also it reflects the important role that regular planned supervision plays in Children's Social Care. The frequency increases for newly qualified social workers or for others where the need for more frequent supervision sessions has been identified. Please refer to the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment handbook for newly qualified social workers for further information.

The frequency of supervision should be no less for part time employees, i.e. an employee who works 2.5 days per week should be receiving 1:1 supervision every month. However, the supervision session may be shorter as the worker will have fewer cases.

Ad-hoc Supervision and Consultation

The pace of work or frequently changing situations can mean that a worker needs to 'check something out' with the manager on a regular basis. This may be to seek advice, gain permission or a decision on resources and is entirely normal part of a professional workers life. Any decisions that are made following an ad-hoc supervision or consultation must be recorded on the service user's electronic file using the management oversight option on case notes. The manager should stipulate to the worker if they want them to record this or if they intend to record these themselves. If the worker and manager have been working closely on casework and there have been regular ad-hoc discussion then the need for regular planned supervision is not negated and the need for regular reflective supervision is still necessary and beneficial to the management of the case.

Supervision Agreement

The process of discussing the supervision agreement and the written agreement itself are equally important. The purpose of the supervision agreement is to establish how the supervisor and supervisee will work together during one to one supervisions and in the ad-hoc supervision and consultations as outlined in the previous section. The agreement seeks to establish through negotiation the expectations and responsibilities of both parties which will ultimately lead to a productive and effective working relationship.

A supervision agreement proforma is available in the Departments shared file server folder (often referred to as Q server). The completion of the agreement should not be a bureaucratic exercise and may not be completed in one session. It should also be reviewed annually to ensure that it is still meeting the expectations of both supervisor and supervisee, and should be re-negotiated if the supervisor changes. The main points to consider when discussing the supervision agreement are:

- Frequency of supervision (monthly), purpose and preparation for supervision
- Venue and setting – in a private room or office, ideally with access to a computer with ICS available, free from interruptions i.e. telephones / other alerts
- Expectations and responsibilities of supervisor and supervisee
- Recording of supervision – which will be two fold. There will be a record of the supervision session using the proforma and recording of supervision or management oversight on LCS (case notes tab / drop down box - supervision).
- Links to employee review, quality assurance, performance and progression.
- Arrangements for reflective supervision

Recording of Supervision

One to one supervision sessions will be recorded using the proforma and guidance. The proforma covers the main areas of discussion, actions agreed at previous supervision sessions or brought from other forums or meetings,

personal development and support. This should be completed by the supervisor and returned to the supervisee within one week of the supervision session.

Secondly case specific supervision records will be placed on the LCS (Liquidlogic Childrens System) under **case notes / supervision**. This could be recorded as a record of a reflective discussion and actions decisions in the form of a supervision note or a management oversight if it was ad-hoc supervision. It is important in the supervision of social workers that records are kept in a child or young person's file about decisions that are made and the rationale for these decisions. The supervisor will normally record LCS system supervision records unless it is agreed with the supervisee that it is for them to record, for example a decision about financial support to a family in need following an ad-hoc discussion.

Reflective supervision

Reflective supervision is for the principal purpose of learning for the supervisee. There is an expectation that at least one case will be selected for a reflective session during each 1:1 supervision. The case should be chosen by the supervisee and agreed with the supervisor. The reflective account is to be recorded in the personal supervision folder of the supervisee with actions to be placed on the child's LCS record with a rationale for the decisions made.

(The reflective session template can be found via the Local File Server folder locations for templates section.)

In addition to reflective supervision with the supervisor there is an opportunity for staff to meet with senior managers once a month (half day) for a reflective session. The purpose of the sessions are for staff to explore issues and to be assisted in developing a plan to progress the case. Each session can accommodate 2 – 3 cases. There will be notes made by one of the senior managers in attendance which will be placed on the child's file.

Evidence of reflective supervision and consultation can also be found in other locations such as case planning meeting minutes and consultations with senior managers or independent reviewing officers.

Case review

In addition to formal supervision, all cases should have a case review taking the form of a discussion between the manager and supervisee at a frequency to be determined at the point of allocation / transfer.

The case review should be put into case notes / management overview on LCS. The review should take place at 3 monthly intervals in most cases with the exception of some Children's Disability service cases where the supervisory period may be less frequent. The review timescale for any case should not exceed 6 months.

In addition to case reviews between supervisor and supervisee, there will be opportunities for case reviews to be held with senior managers including the DCS.

**Guidance on recording case notes on LCS system can be found on departments file server as follows:
Shared Documents\Supervision&Employee Review\Recording supervision in case notes (screenshots)**

Useful things to remember in recording supervision:

- Set out the decision but also the reasons for it.
- Evidence that the worker has had assumptions and hypotheses challenged, and that they have taken an opportunity to reflect.
- On the proforma use initials or unique numbers rather than full names of service users for the purposes of confidentiality as this record may follow the worker to other jobs or councils.
- Keep the supervision records in a secure folder or if printed in a secure location. Ensure the worker has a copy of the supervision record also.
- If you prefer to handwrite case specific notes then these can be typed and recorded by admin support officers. However supervision should take place in a room with access to LCS system so that the supervisor can review LCS records and case pathways as part of supervision.

Confidentiality and Record retention

Supervision is a private process but not a confidential one. The records are the property of the organisation and can therefore be used by the organisation and the individuals involved for a range of purposes. From time to time they can be checked by senior managers for the purpose of quality assurance and performance management; they may be used by the supervisee for evidence in career progression and professional registration; they can be viewed by inspectors or others for the purpose of audit, inspection and serious case review.

The written record of supervision must be stored securely by both the supervisor and supervisee. ICT can advise on setting up private folders. The records should be retained by the organisation for two years after an employee leaves or retires. Case specific supervision notes on LCS system form part of the service user's case file and are retained as per the specific council policy on confidential data and records retention.

Employee Review

General Principles and Duties

Employee review is an integral part of the process of Continuing Professional Development with supervision being a key activity of the overall process. Employee review and supervision are an integrated part of the process and do not operate in isolation of each other. Every worker will have an employee review annually. Employee review should be carried out by the immediate line manager. In exceptional circumstances, a more senior manager or supervisor in the line management chain of the employee may also carry out a review.

The content of review discussions and documentation used during or following a review meeting should be treated as private and should only be disclosed to a senior manager, or the person responsible for future employee reviews. Employee Review Records and the Personal Development Plan will be retained by Children's Workforce Development and used for organisational development purposes.

Agreeing Performance Level

Staff will prepare for their employee review prior to their employee review meeting by completing the 'PCF Performance Level Achievement' form, appropriate to their level within the career structure.

Performance Level Achievement forms are in the shared folder

There is a section in the PCF Performance Level Agreement Form to note any additional relevant information or issues for discussion in the review meeting. Managers will also complete a PCF Performance Level Agreement Form for the staff member prior to the employee review meeting.

These completed forms are to be used as part of an open and honest dialogue between employee and manager, enabling an agreed overall assessment of the employee's capability at that particular level.

Reviewing Personal Development

A Personal Development Plan should be agreed as a result of each employee review. The basis for this plan is the agreed assessment of the employee's capability against the PCF. At each supervision session consideration should be given to the progress of the personal development plan.

Supervisions should be planned in accordance with the supervision policy for the next 12 months and include the following;

A review date (six months from the date of employee review)

The date of the next employee review (twelve months from the date of employee review).

An exception to employee review taking place on a 12 monthly basis may be due to promotions or significant role changes. In this case an employee review would take place before the 12 month timescale.

Employee Review Record, Personal Development Plan and a handy supervision and employee review planner are all available in the shared documents folder.

Employee Review Meetings

Employee review meetings should allow for open and honest dialogue. Employee review meetings should be planned sufficiently in advance to enable both the manager and employee to prepare properly.

Review meetings should only be cancelled in exceptional circumstances and the next management level should be informed of the cancellation. A new date must be made priority and the next management level informed of the new date as well as the cancellation.

Meetings must be held in private and without interruptions and adequate time should be set aside to conclude the meeting. The job description for the post should be reviewed to ensure that it continues to reflect the role and responsibilities of the individual accurately.

Performance of the individual in the previous year should be reviewed against the Professional Capability Framework, along with the personal development plan and any objectives and action plans agreed at the previous employee review meeting or 6 monthly reviews. If necessary, plans should be updated to reflect these discussions with the actions to be taken.

Progression Points should be aligned with Employee Review dates, if they are relevant. The Employee Review Meeting should be the forum where the manager is able to make and record a recommendation to Progression Panel.

All learning and development activities undertaken during the year should be reviewed, including those identified in the Personal Development Plan. Expected outcomes from learning and development opportunities should be identified and agreed. It is essential that attendance at mandatory training is discussed and recorded on the Personal Development Plan.

Corporate, departmental and team objectives should be discussed in order to confirm an individual's overall contribution and to plan individual and team developments and objectives for the future.

The career ambitions and aspirations of the individual should be discussed, with support and advice being offered where appropriate. This allows for workforce development within the organisation.

A Personal Development Plan must be drawn up which identifies the agreed learning and development activities which the individual will need to undertake, supported by their line manager and the organisation.

Record Keeping, Monitoring and Compliance

The Employee Review Record must be completed and signed. Three copies are retained:

- One on the individual's personal file
- One kept by the individual, and

- One forwarded to the Children’s Workforce Development Team for the purposes of workforce planning (employeereviews@bury.gov.uk) .

Children’s Workforce Development Team will provide reports for Social Care Management Group, showing overall compliance rates, together with a list of staff that have not had an employee review within the past 12 months.

Employee Review Process

Prior to Employee Review Meeting

Inform employee of their review date. Send out the correct Professional Capability Framework (PCF) Performance Level Achievement Form and service/team plan.



Prior to Employee Review Meeting

Employee and Manager complete the (PCF) Performance Level Achievement Form separately prior to the employee review meeting.



During Employee Review Meeting

The previous year’s objectives should be reviewed. Reflect on performance and discuss any obstacles to achieving the objectives.



During Employee Review Meeting

Manager and employee should compare their assessments (completed performance level forms). Where there is disagreement open and honest dialogue should be used to form an overall assessment of the employee, set against the PCF.



During Employee Review Meeting

The resulting overall assessment should be recorded on the Employee Review Record, indicating evidence for each of the overall ‘domain’ scores of the PCF. The record should indicate the level ‘required’ and the level ‘achieved’. Where these are not the same areas for development should also be recorded on the record, within that domain area. Ensure that the 6 monthly review meeting date is recorded on the Employee Review Record.



During Employee Review Meeting

Complete the Personal Development Plan for the staff member indicating the ‘Priority’ of the learning and development need; Mandatory, Essential or Mutually Beneficial.



Following Employee Review Meeting

Managers should look for evidence of employees working towards the aims and objectives set out in the PDP. Evidence should be triangulated (from a range of sources) and should be assessed ‘Holistically’ against the PCF.

Local File Server folder locations for templates

Pro-forma templates and guidance are held on the Children Young people and culture departmental file server (Q Server) and can be location from the following folder structures:

Supervision agreement pro-forma

Shared Documents\Supervision&Employee Review\Supervision Agreement\Supervision Agreement Proforma.dot

Record of supervision pro-forma

Shared Documents\Supervision&Employee Review\Supervision Recording\Revised Supervision Recording Proforma March 15.docx

Recording supervision on LCS system

Shared Documents\Supervision&Employee Review\Recording supervision in case notes (screenshots)

Reflective Practice Recording

Shared Documents\Supervision&Employee Review\Reflective Practice Recording\Reflective Practice Recording.docx

Performance Level Achievement Forms

The Performance Capability Framework is mapped with job title according to the table below. The forms can be found in the shared folder (Shared Documents\Supervision&Employee Review\Performance Level Achievement Forms

| Job title | PCF Career Level |
|--|---|
| Family Support Worker/Child Support Worker | End of Final Placement |
| Social Worker (Level 1) | Assessed and Supported Year in Employment |
| Social Worker (Level 2) | Social Worker |
| Social Worker (Level 3)/Advanced Practitioner | Experienced Social Worker |
| Social Work Manager/Assistant Team Manager/IRO/Consultant SW | Advanced Practitioner |
| Service Manager/Strategic Lead | Principal Social Worker |

Employee Review Record and Personal Development Plan

Shared Documents\Supervision&Employee Review\Employee Review Record & Personal Development Plan\Employee Review Record & Personal Development Plan\Employee Review Record & Personal Development Plan compat.doc

Handy Supervision Planner

Shared Documents\Supervision&Employee Review\Employee Review and Supervision Planner\Employee Review and Supervision Planner.doc

Service User Feedback Form

Shared Documents\Supervision&Employee Review\Service User Feedback Form\Service User Feedback Form.doc

PCF Information

The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) is an overarching professional standards framework, originally developed by the Social Work Reform Board, and now managed and delivered by BASW.

The purpose of the [PCF website](#) is to provide evidence to inform the employee review from service users. It enhances the voice of the child and parents/carers in the delivery of services, and strengthens our approach to quality assurance. It part of the triangulation of evidence in the overall holistic assessment of social workers.