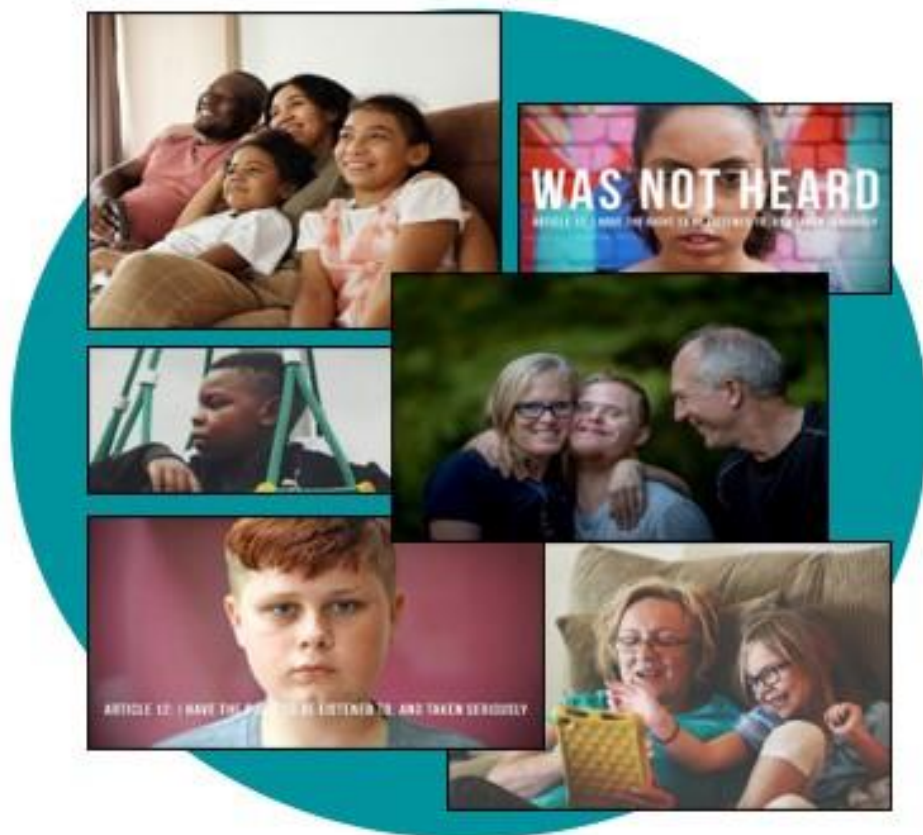


Children's Social Care and Early Help

Children's Social Care and Early Help Supervision Policy and Practice Guidance 2021



Children's Social Care and Early Help

committed to supporting children, young people, vulnerable adults and families to be safe, be independent, be ambitious for themselves, and live the best life they can.

Supervision Policy and Practice Guidance



2021

Introduction

This policy is designed to provide guidance and tools to practitioners, supervisors and managers across Children's Social Care and Early Help to support effective supervision, management oversight and outline minimum standards. This is applicable to all practitioners across the division.

It is recognised that the workforce are the most important resource in fulfilling the division's responsibility to provide a high quality service to the children, families, young people and young adults of Leicester. Supervision is fundamental to support the development and well-being of practitioners, as well as ensuring that effective support is provided.

It is acknowledged the effective regular supervision improves the retention of practitioners, reducing changes for families, and as such is key focus for our workforce.

Principles

- Supervision is a key management function at all levels to ensure effective management of performance and practice. Supervision ensures that work is progressed in accordance with the national standards, statutory duties, departmental objectives, policies, procedures and relevant legislation in order to improve the outcomes for children, young people and adults.
- Supervision is fundamental to the delivery of effective work with children, young people and their families and must support professionals to make good quality decisions based on analysis, judgement, balance, drawing on professional knowledge and experience.
- Supervision offers the opportunity for professional conversations promoting learning and reflective practice.
- Supervision supports adherence to values, practice frameworks and methodologies
- Good supervision supports emotional well-being and opportunities to explore the impact of values and difference in the work we do.
- Good supervision should include reflection on feedback from the people we work with and/or a consideration of the effectiveness of the professional relationships formed with the people we work with.
- Supervision must be combined with management oversight and quality assurance to ensure effective decision making, the progression of plans and understanding around workers' capability and performance.

Scope of the Policy

- Supervision is defined as an ongoing process of communication between two or more staff, one of whom is the manager or supervisor, where the primary purpose is to enhance staff performance, quality assurance, accountability and effectiveness in carrying out organisational, professional and personal objectives to promote the best outcomes for children and families.
- Every member of staff is entitled to receive effective supervision on a regular basis and this policy ensures that there is a consistent approach to supervision throughout the Council to enhance the quality of staff performance in providing high quality services. The policy sets out the standards and requirements on staff and supervisors.
- The policy applies to all employees of the Children's Social Care and Early Help Division at all levels including those on temporary contracts..
- Relief staff, casual or agency employees will also be given supervision appropriate to their levels of responsibility and in accordance with national and professional standards where these apply.
- Students and trainees on placement may have separately negotiated supervision contracts, but the same principles apply.
- This policy does not apply to Administration and Business Support Workers, Domestic, Premises Officers and/or Premises Support Workers, Waking Night Staff, Cooks/Chefs or Housekeepers. These posts will be covered by the Corporate Supervision requirements.

The four main functions of supervision are

1. **Managerial and accountability** - concerned with ensuring that the work of the supervisee is carried out to the expectations and standards of the service. This seeks to monitor and explore the quality of an employees' work; to ensure that statutory obligations are being met; and to provide clarity to the worker regarding their roles and responsibilities. This element seeks to review the supervisees' case load, to establish clear and appropriate priorities and actions to inform case direction. This also involves giving the supervisee feedback on their performance; acknowledging and appreciating good performance; and identifying and planning how to address areas of underachievement. Good supervision should also ensure practice is soundly based and consistent with [Leicester and the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures Manual \(proceduresonline.com\)](https://proceduresonline.com/leicester-and-the-leicestershire-and-rutland-safeguarding-children-partnerships-procedures-manual) and organisational procedures [Leicester City Childrens Social Care and Early Help Policy, Procedures & Guidance.](#)

2. **Learning and Development** - the supervisory process is a key element in the continuing professional development of staff. The role of the supervisor is to help the worker reflect on their current performance and learning experiences, identify areas of good practice and areas for development and education needs and plan on how these can best be met.
3. **Support and Wellbeing**- the nature of the work carried out can mean that staff are faced with difficult situations, uncertainty and distress. The supportive function of supervision is extremely important to help staff cope with these difficulties by valuing staff as people and not just professionals. This element encourages supervisees to discuss their feelings and the role of 'self' in the work as well as thoughts and actions and aims to help supervisees to explore emotional blocks to their work and how the work impacts upon them. This function also assists in monitoring the overall health and well-being of the worker with regards to stress and ensures that they use leave effectively and are aware of the supports available to them.
4. **Mediation/advocacy** - concerned with building the relationship between the individual and the service as an organisation. This may include the supervisor representing the supervisee's needs and views to higher management and briefing higher management about resource shortfalls or exercises and their impact on supervisees. Wider concerns relating to practice or the workplace including health and safety issues should also be explored. This function also seeks to ensure that resources are allocated in ways that are efficient and equitable including access to training and development opportunities.

Supervision Standards

1. Supervision Agreement

All employees are entitled to regular formal supervision and will meet with their supervisor on a one to one basis on a regular basis. In some service areas, it may be relevant to conduct some supervision in group sessions.

Every member of staff will have an individual written supervision agreement with their supervisor. The frequency, length and location of supervision will be agreed with each employee and set out in the supervision agreement, which will be discussed at the first supervision meeting. The agreement should be reviewed at least every 12 months, usually at the annual quality conversation, and amended as required. The format for the supervision agreement is set out in Appendix 1.

Supervision consists of case supervision where staff holds case accountability and professional supervision, where the development needs of staff are addressed.

If the supervisee feels that their supervision does not meet policy requirements they should speak, in the first instance, to their line manager, or alternatively, the line manager's supervisor.

2. Case Supervision will

- Address the key areas of work in relation to the individual child/children focusing on the impact for the child/young person, family member, carer.
- Ensure that actions agreed within supervision are carried out in a timely manner
- Identify any difficulties in implementing decisions or plans
- Ensure statutory requirements are met
- Celebrate good work, positive outcomes and good feedback.
- Address feedback and outcomes from quality assurance processes.
- Offer reflection on practice within the context of the case offer and discuss perspectives on the case to explore or identify whether a different and/or better outcome could have been achieved.
- Review the use of practice tools

3. Group Supervision

Case supervision may be undertaken 1-1 or within a group environment. Different service areas / roles will identify when group supervision is a suitable process to ensure that the objectives of case supervision are met. Where group supervision is used, this will be based on reflective discussions and group input to support best thinking, using the principles of the Signs of Safety framework. In the Early Help Children and Family Centres case supervision will mainly be delivered using a Signs of Safety based group supervision process with different tools focused on to explore case progression.

See

[Group supervision initial mapping template](#)

[Group supervision safety planning template](#)

[Group supervision networks template](#)

Supervisors should always discuss whether the child/ren have been seen alone and whether the practice is reflecting a knowledge and understanding of what it is like for the child/ren living in this family.

Practitioners should come prepared to discuss the case and review its progress since the last meeting, including any issues and barriers to improved outcomes for the child/ren.

All case records of supervision must be recorded on the child's file Liquid Logic, any other electronic or manual recording system used by the service.

4. Professional supervision will

- Identify any learning and developments
- Feedback from audits, observations and practice
- Agree on professional /personal goals in relation to the Quality Conversation, registration requirements or progression frameworks and expectations.
- Enable the supervisee time to reflect on and identify opportunity for career development
- Support ambition
- Support employee wellbeing.

Professional supervision will be kept in the employee's supervision file by the employee and manager. All electronic files should be kept securely with manager access only.

The professional supervision file should contain the following information

- Professional/personal supervision notes,
- Copies of Quality Conversations
- Current car insurance documents
- Evidence of registration with relevant professional bodies (eg Social Work England)
- Evidence of compliance with data protection and safeguarding training
- Information about any sickness processes (including warnings, referrals to / information from Occupational Health, stress action plans)
- Information regarding any performance processes
- Any agreements / documents related to maternity / paternity / adoption / shared parental leave

5. Quality Conversations (Annual professional development review)

Leicester City has implemented a focus on [Quality Conversations](#) as part of the corporate requirements for supervision, support and development. Within Children's Social Care and Early Help we have an expectation that an Annual Quality Conversation takes place between January – March focusing on performance, development, learning and aspirations. Both supervisor and supervisee have a responsibility to prepare for this meeting, with the supervisor having overall responsibility for recording the conversation.

The training needs identified are then fed into the plan for the next divisional training plan, alongside shaping development opportunities and support. It is both the supervisee and supervisor's responsibility to ensure that identified developments / training are progressed.

6. Location

The supervisor and supervisee will discuss and agree a suitable venue for supervision, preferably a quiet, comfortable situation free from interruptions, in order to promote trust and confidence.

If agreed by both parties, it can be undertaken virtually. Good practice would be to ensure that face to face supervision is undertaken at least every 3rd supervision if possible.

Where meetings take place outside of the workplace, the supervisor and supervisee must ensure confidentiality is maintained.

7. Frequency

Every supervisor will agree the planned frequency of supervision with each member of staff directly supervised and record this on the agreement.

The frequency of supervision will vary according to service function. However it must ensure the service objectives are met and employees are provided with the appropriate level of supervision and support to be effective in their role.

Frequency will vary dependent on job roles and responsibilities, length of time in post, complexity of the work, level of experience and individual support needs. The minimum standard for an employee is one formal supervision meeting every 3 months. This is in addition to the annual quality conversation meeting. Different roles and service areas will have different service standards

Employees who are case responsible will have formal supervision monthly (at least 10 times a year). According to each child's needs, the supervisor will be responsible for establishing the frequency each child is discussed in supervision. This will vary according to the child's needs and status. In exceptional circumstances this will be varied dependent on the child/young person's circumstances. An example may be children who meet the criteria as stated in the revised Case Planning, Placement and Review Regs (2015) for long term foster placements. An exception to monthly supervision on these cases must be gained from the service manager. The frequency will be agreed with the Team Manager and the rationale recorded in the case summary

However, it is noted that some practitioners, who manage complex, high-risk cases, newly qualified workers or new starters may require more frequent supervision on a weekly basis or two weekly basis for a period of time. The national standards for newly qualified social workers (NQSWS) are weekly for the first 6 weeks, 2 weekly for next 6 months and then monthly thereafter.

8. Supervision Agenda

The agenda for supervision is a shared responsibility and should be jointly agreed at the beginning of the supervision meeting. It should include a review of any issues, decisions or

actions from the previous meeting. A review of objectives and development agreed at the annual appraisal should be included on a regular basis. The supervisor and supervisee should prepare for supervision in advance.

9. Employees who transfer or leave the department

For staff employed in the Children's Social Care and Early Help, with the exception of employees transferring to new posts, managers are required to forward the Supervision and Appraisal Records to the HR Section for all employees who leave the Council.

The Human Resources function determines how long records will be kept with regard to the Statute of Limitation and the protection of vulnerable children and adults and the corporate file retention policy will be implemented. The Department is obliged to retain supervision records for all employees working directly with children and families for 70 years to meet the requirements of the Warner Report.

The electronic 'personal / professional supervision file' for eligible staff will transfer with employees moving to another post. This will take place within 4 weeks of changing manager.

10. Confidentiality

All employees are responsible for maintaining confidentiality in respect of colleagues and service users.

Any personal information will be treated as confidential unless such disclosures directly affect the work or service user situation or implementation of Council policies and guidelines. Supervisors and supervisees should discuss how they will deal with matters of confidentiality as part of the supervision agreement and record this.

Supervisors will ensure that supervision records are kept securely on the IT system.

11. Supporting and managing diversity

The Council's value base is underpinned by a commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice. All supervision must be conducted in line with this policy. Supervisors should be aware of the impact of difference and diversity within a supervisory relationship and create opportunities to explore this safely and sensitively with the supervisee. Supervisees should be offered alternative forums to explore this (via another manager, service manager or support group) if they feel unable to do this within the supervisory relationship.

Diversity, oppression and intersectionality should also be explored within case supervision, with both supervisors and supervisees considering the experience and impact of assessment and intervention for children, young people, families, carers and professionals.

12. Monitoring and review

Staff new to the Department will be made aware of the supervision policy at induction by the supervising manager.

All supervision files, individual and case files could be subject to audit as part of the quality assurance framework. The standard of supervision will be measured against the service standards.

The implementation and effectiveness of the policy will be monitored by senior managers.

13. Dispute resolution:

Any supervisee who is concerned about the effectiveness of their supervision arrangements should discuss their concerns with their supervisor in the first instance. If this does not resolve the matter, the supervisee should raise their concerns with the supervisor's line manager.

Most differences in opinion between the supervisor and the supervisee will be resolved through discussion. The supervisor's line manager will manage any differences which significantly impact on the effectiveness of the supervision process and which cannot be resolved through open discussion.

Social Work Specific Expectations

14. Supervision for ASYEs

A newly qualified social worker will receive monthly supervision from their team manager and during their ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment). They will receive additional supervision from their linked Advanced Practitioner. This supervision will be on a weekly basis for the first two months, then fortnightly, dropping to monthly (alternate fortnights to team manager supervision) after 6 months with agreement by all parties. Support and guidance will be available outside of these formal arranged meetings, from the Team Manager, Advanced Practitioner, other colleagues and the Learning and Development Manager (who co-ordinates the ASYE programme).

It is good practice that there is an initial 3 way meeting (between ASYE, Manager and AP) to discuss roles and responsibilities and then regular communication to ensure personal development and case direction are being consistently supported. As part of the ASYE programme, there are learning agreement meetings at the outset, and review meetings at 3, 6 and 9 months.

15. ASYE Supervision with the Advanced Practitioner

The role of the Advanced Practitioner (AP) with the NQSW is to provide reflective supervision to develop case hypotheses, intervention plans and develop the skills and confidence of the ASYE to ensure that assessments, plans and interventions are informed by quality analysis and knowledge of what works. This supervision should also provide the opportunity to reflect on development, feedback from people, shadowing, observations and other quality assurance activities as well as the completion of the ASYE portfolio.

AP supervision should support TM supervision as key assessments and decisions should have already been discussed in AP supervision.

16. Social Work Progression

Supervision between the team manager and social worker should support social workers to reflect on their development and readiness to progress through the career grades. As part of this process managers should support social workers to collect the evidence required for the Social Work Progression Panel [Social work progression for children's and adult's social care \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

17. Professional registration with [Social Work England](#)

It is the responsibility of the social worker to maintain their registration and therefore right to practice as a social worker. Managers should ensure through supervision that social workers have undertaken and recorded the necessary evidence of continuing professional development to enable them to maintain their registration.

Appendix 1:

**Children's Social Care and Early Help
Supervision Agreement**

Staff member:

Manager/Supervisor:

**Professional Body Registration Number (if applicable)
Last DBS Check**

Frequency:

Average length:

Venue:

How is agenda prepared?

How will supervision be recorded? *(Decisions relating to service users will be recorded separately and placed directly on the child's electronic record or case file).*

How will confidentiality be managed by supervisor and supervisee?

Under what circumstances should the staff member consult line manager outside of formal supervision?

In what way do equality or diversity issues such as race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age etc. need to be addressed on a personal or practice level, if at all? If a third party is to be involved then specify arrangements.

Review date for supervision agreement.....

Signed – staff member

Signed – Manager

Date:

Date:

