**Children’s Services Procedures**

**6: Staffing**

**6:1:1 Safeguarding Children Supervision Policy**

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**Children’s Services Procedures**

**Safeguarding Children Supervision Policy**

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**Children’s Services Procedures**

**Safeguarding Children Supervision Policy**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 *“The role of social work staff and managers is particularly critical in ensuring enabling action to protect children. There is concern that the tradition of deliberate, reflective social work practice is being put in danger because of an overemphasis on process and targets, resulting in a loss of confidence amongst social workers. It is vitally important that social work is carried out in a supportive learning environment that actively encourages the continuous development of professional judgement and skills. Regular, high- quality, organised supervision is critical, as are routine opportunities for peer-learning and discussion. Currently, not enough time is dedicated to this and individuals are carrying too much personal responsibility, with no outlet for the sometimes severe emotional and psychological stresses that staff involved in child protection often face. Supervision should be open and supportive, focusing on the quality of decisions, good risk analysis, and improving outcomes for children rather than meeting targets.”[[1]](#endnote-1)[[2]](#footnote-1)*

1.2 The purpose of this Supervision Policy is to provide social workers, with a common framework and clear expectations for supervision so that they can deliver positive outcomes for children and families. It is designed to ensure consistent supervision practice across the service, to guarantee minimum supervisory standards and to help all involved be clear about what to expect from supervision.

1.3 Good quality supervision can help to:

* avoid drift
* keep a focus on the child
* maintain a degree of objectivity and challenge fixed views
* test and assess the evidence base for assessment and decisions
* address the emotional impact of work
* contribute to professional development

1.4 This Policy has been developed to reflect:

* Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board Supervision Standards[[3]](#footnote-2)
* Sunderland City Council Practice Standards (2015)
* Health and Care Professions Council Standards of proficiency – Social workers in England[[4]](#footnote-3)
* The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)[[5]](#footnote-4)

1.5 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Sunderland City

Council Appraisal Guidance and other HR Policies and Procedures, for

example, Induction, Training and Health and Safety.

1.6 The Quality Assurance Framework and the use of Case File Audits complement supervision arrangements in ensuring professional standards are upheld and that both Sunderland City Council and Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board procedural frameworks are complied with.

1.7 Supporting documents/templates for use with this Policy can be found at appendices one and two

**2.0 DEFINITION**

2.1 Supervision is a fundamental part of effective social work practice; it enables reflective practice to occur and ensures that evidence based practice is followed. Supervision is an on-going process in which children’s social workers receive guidance, support and challenge in a formal setting. It provides the opportunity for workers to think, explore and confront issues that are pertinent to their ability to perform their role to the expected standard. It is also a mutually beneficial exchange which allows managers and staff to explore what, why and how work is undertaken and managed within the overarching framework of council objectives, values and priorities - particularly working in the best interests of the child.

2.2 Through supervision, operational and strategic managers ensure that Sunderland City Council’s accountability is properly exercised in accordance with its legal obligations. The title of supervision has been deliberately retained to acknowledge the professional differences and the challenges that children’s social workers face; throughout the rest of the Council the supervision process is referred to as “one to one”.

2.3 The functions of supervision are:

* Management (ensuring competent and accountable performance)
* Educative (developing the professional practice of the supervisee)
* Support (managing the impact of the work, stress, work/life boundary)
* Professional Impact & Engagement (engaging the individual with the organisation).

2.4 This formal supervision is provided in a regular meeting between the supervisor and supervisee in order to meet organisational, professional and personal objectives. Ad-hoc and peer supervision may also be used to support practice but they cannot and should not replace planned, formal, recorded face to face sessions.

2.5 When staff need to check something with a supervisor or need a decision between supervision sessions, then ad-hoc or informal supervision may be required; any actions or decisions must be recorded on the relevant CCM file.

2.6 Peer learning and group supervision within teams, or in multi-agency forums[[6]](#footnote-5) may be used to complement the formal supervision arrangements.

**3.0 Supervision Agreement**

3.1 A Supervision Agreement template is contained in Appendix 1. The purpose of the supervision agreement is to establish the basis on which the supervisor and supervisee will work together during one to one supervisions. This establishment of “ground rules” should be through negotiation and should clarify the rights and expectations on both sides to create a safe, secure and effective supervisory setting.

3.2 When establishing the supervision agreement the following will be discussed:

* the purpose of supervision
* the frequency of supervision
* the specific responsibilities of both supervisor and supervisee
* the preparation required before a session including for example: agenda setting, producing summaries and reading
* the recording of supervision, including where records will be kept to safeguard confidentiality, whether records will be typed or handwritten, how quickly records will be given to the supervisee for signature.
* the arrangements for any ad-hoc or unplanned supervision
* how any difficulties with supervision will be resolved
* how and when the agreement will be reviewed
* the practical arrangements (e.g. the process if supervision has to be cancelled or rearranged, an agreement that supervision will be uninterrupted, and the anticipated length of time for each session)
* when supervision records may be disclosed, e.g. in the event of performance concerns, for Serious Case Review processes

**4.0 Frequency of Sessions**

4.1 The national standard is to ensure that supervision takes place at least weekly for the first six weeks of employment of a newly qualified social worker, at least fortnightly for the duration of the first six months of employment, and a minimum of monthly supervision thereafter.

4.2 Supervision arrangements should relate to the experience of the worker, and be sufficiently flexible to allow for additional time where required. There may be circumstances where more frequent supervision is appropriate; however, no supervision schedule should be less frequent than monthly

4.3 The Supervision Schedule must be prepared in January for the following 12 months, with appraisal dates recorded on this form. (Appendix 2) This form should be saved in the electronic supervision file.

**5.0 Recording of Safeguarding Children Supervision**

5.1 All supervision sessions must be recorded – see recording template at Appendix 2. Once this form is completed by the supervisor it can either be directly scanned in or typed and stored in the supervisee’s supervision file once agreed with the supervisee.

5.2 Part 1 of the template allows for the recording of a general discussion which includes an opportunity to discuss the supervisee’s general well-being (including personal issues), training etc. Part 2 of the supervision record consists of a template to record specific case discussion. This is used as an opportunity for the worker and manager to discuss the status of cases and consider, using appropriate models and frameworks, any significant risks or issues which require further discussion and agree any actions to be taken.

5.3 It is recommended that one-third of the worker’s caseload is considered at every supervision session – this ensures that each quarter the whole caseload has been considered and discussed within supervision. If decisions are made and recorded on any case the social worker then has the responsibility of transferring these decisions onto CCM in respect of each case within 24 hours, clearly recording this as “supervision”.

5.4 The supervisee may use evidence from their supervision records to support the appraisal process; their continuing professional development record must be maintained to support their HCPC registration.

**6.0 Specific considerations during Supervision**

* **All** unborn to under 2’s **must** be discussed in each supervision session to ensure appropriate and timely assessments and safe decision making
* Case oversight and compliance with procedures/statutory visits
* Record Keeping
* Hearing and considering the “child’s voice”
* Outcome focused plans
* Workload management/completion of the workload management tool
* Scrutiny and reflection on complex, “stuck” and high risk cases
* Risk assessments and management of risk
* Identification of dangerous practice, e.g. enmeshment, “rule of optimism”
* Plan for permanence at 4 month LAC Review
* Reflective Practice
* Quality Assurance
* Performance Framework
* Learning from near misses/significant events/serious case reviews/other learning reviews
* Partnership working/collaborative arrangements
* Celebration of achievements and good practice
* Professional development and identification of training needs
* Annual leave/other leave arrangements
* Any other business

6.1 If a social worker changes teams, it is the joint responsibility of the Operational Managers of the 2 teams to take responsibility for information sharing in relation to any casework transferring with the social worker, and any support or performance need of the social worker.

6.2 If a social worker is not receiving regular, high quality supervision in line with this policy he/she is obliged to bring this to the attention of a Senior Manager.

**APPENDIX 1 – SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN SUPERVISION AGREEMENT**

1. *This document is designed to help the supervisor and supervisee construct a contract in which expectations are clear.*

   This contract is between supervisor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and supervisee \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

   **Frequency, Length and Location**

   We will normally meet at \_\_\_\_\_ intervals. Our supervision session will last as a minimum for 90 mins. We will meet in a location which is private. Interruptions will be kept to a minimum.

   **Agenda and Structure**

   We will both prepare for supervision by identifying cases/ issues to be addressed. We will notify each other of any major issues to be addressed in advance. An agenda will be drawn up at the start of the supervision session.

   **Functions**

   Supervision will cover:

   a) Management (ensuring competent/accountable performance)

   b) Development

   c) Support

   d) Professional Impact & Engagement (engaging the individual with the organisation).

   **Additional requirements for appraisal and professional development.**

   Through the appraisal process, the supervisee will have a personal development plan detailing the learning and development required that period. This will be reviewed in supervision along with any requirements emerging from regulation e.g. assessed year in practice, HCPC continuous professional development.

   The appraisal is undertaken separately from supervision sessions; however, the preparation for and the supervision session are an opportunity for the supervisee to gather and record evidence of their performance so that the appraisal is meaningful and accurately reflects the supervisee’s work

   **Equalities Issues**

   Supervision will be based on anti-discriminatory principles and sensitive to differences between our backgrounds and experiences. We will deal with these differences by

   All supervision sessions will be recorded on a pro-forma (see appendix 3 & 4) by the supervisor and passed to the supervisee within stipulated timescales (see policy and standards).

   **Confidentiality**

   Personal information will be treated as confidential and not recorded, unless the personal information has or will have an impact on the work. There are however, constraints on confidentiality in that supervision records may be accessed by interim managers or senior management for e.g. audit and inspection, serious case reviews, grievances and disciplinary purposes

   **Disagreements**

   Areas of disagreement between us will be recorded on the supervision records. In the first instance we will seek to resolve differences within supervision. However, if they cannot be resolved either of us may refer these to the supervisor’s line manager.

   **Review of Supervision**

   Supervision session process, content, length, frequency, format and style should be reviewed by the supervisor and the supervisee on a six monthly basis.

   Feedback on the quality of the supervision will be given by (the supervisee) to (the supervisor) by the following method \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (please state frequency too).

   **Absence of Supervision**

   Sunderland City Council Safeguarding Children Policy requires that supervision be provided at stipulated minimal intervals. We will only postpone supervision in exceptional circumstances. Should supervision not take place e.g. long-term sickness, failure to adhere to the supervision timetable, we will refer this to (the supervisor’s line manager).

   Signed: Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

   Signed: Supervisee \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

   **APPENDIX TWO – SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN SUPERVISION RECORD TEMPLATE**

   **PART ONE:**

   Record of a supervision session between:

   * Supervisor:
   * Supervisee:
   * Held on:
   * Date of last supervision session:

   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
   | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
   | **PART ONE – NON CASE DISCUSSION** | | | | | | | | |
   | AGENDA ITEMS – SUPERVISOR | | | | AGENDA ITEMS - SUPERVISEE | | | | |
   |  | | | |  | | | | |
   | OUTSTANDING ISSUES/ACTIONS FROM LAST SUPERVISION SESSION | | | | | | | | |
   |  | | | | | | | | |
   | **Management (ensuring competent and accountable performance)** | | | | | | | | |
   | **Issues raised:** | | | | | | | | |
   | Action to be taken | | | By Whom | | | When | | |
   |  | | |  | | |  | | |
   |  | | |  | | |  | | |
   | **Educative (developing the professional practice of the supervisee)** | | | | | | | | |
   | **Issues raised:** | | | | | | | | |
   | Action to be taken | | | By Whom | | | When | | |
   |  | | |  | | |  | | |
   |  | | |  | | |  | | |
   | **Support (managing the impact of the work, stress, work/life boundary)** | | | | | | | | |
   | **Issues raised:** | | | | | | | | |
   | Action to be taken | | | By Whom | | | When | | |
   |  | | |  | | |  | | |
   |  | | |  | | |  | | |
   | **Professional Impact & Engagement (engaging the individual with the organisation)** | | | | | | | | |
   | **Issues raised:** | | | | | | | | |
   | Action to be taken | | | By Whom | | | When | | |
   |  | | |  | | |  | | |
   |  | | |  | | |  | | |
   | **PART TWO – CASE DISCUSSION – MUST BE DOCUMENTED ON CCM ON CHILD/YOUNG PERSON’S RECORD** | | | | | | | | |
   | **PID** | | **FOCUS OF WORK** | | | | | | |
   |  | |  | | | | | | |
   | **Date child last seen:** | |  | | | | | | |
   | **Actions to be taken** | | | | | **By Whom** | | **When** | |
   |  | | | | |  | |  | |
   |  | | | | |  | |  | |
   |  | | | | |  | |  | |
   | **PID** | **FOCUS OF WORK** | | | | | | | |
   |  |  | | | | | | | |
   | **Date child last seen:** |  | | | | | | | |
   | **Actions to be taken** | | | | | **By Whom** | | **When** | |
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   | **PID** | **FOCUS OF WORK** | | | | | | | |
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   | **Date child last seen:** |  | | | | | | | |
   | **Actions to be taken** | | | | | **By Whom** | | | **When** |
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   |  | | | | |  | | |  |
   | **PID** | **FOCUS OF WORK** | | | | | | | |
   |  |  | | | | | | |  |
   | **Date child last seen** |  | | | | | | | |
   | **Actions to be taken** | | | | | **By Whom** | | | **When** |
   |  | | | | |  | | |  |
   |  | | | | |  | | |  |
   |  | | | | |  | | |  |

   Arrangements for next supervision session(s):

   Date: Time: Venue:

   Appraisal date: [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Lord Laming (2009) The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report, para 3.15. TSO [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. SSCB (2011) [http://www.sunderlandscb.com](http://www.sunderlandscb.com/search/search.html?zoom_query=supervision+standards) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. HCPC (2012) [http://www.hpc-uk.org](http://www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10003b08standardsofproficiency-socialworkersinengland.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <http://www.tcsw.org.uk/uploadedFiles/TheCollege/_CollegeLibrary/Reform_resources/PCFfancolour.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. SSCB (2015) Joint Supervision Model: [http://www.sunderlandscb.com](http://www.sunderlandscb.com/index.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)