

Supervision Procedure

For social workers and social care workers in Warwickshire

Please note: there is a separate supervision procedure for foster carers who are also part of the team around the child.

Family and Parenting support are developing a supervision procedure to sit alongside this overarching procedure.

January 2017 updates

- *Clear standards given for manager oversight for children open to social care, with an expectation that each child is discussed in supervision once a month, but also giving guidance as to how manager oversight should be recorded if this is not always possible. **Pg.7 (Section 9)***
- *Personal supervision records need only to note a child's Mosaic number when a case is discussed in supervision. **Pg.8 (Section 16)***
- *Reflective case discussion, including the thinking, analysis, reflection, decisions and actions taken need recording only on the child's record in Mosaic. **Pg.9 (Section 18)***
- *Guidance is also given on how to record reflective case supervision in Mosaic. **Pg.9 (Section 18)***
- *Easy to follow Flow chart. **Pg. 11 – Appendix 1***
- *Approval has been given that at each supervision, the agreement and the signing of the previous supervision record is undertaken to reflect a true and accurate account. This record can then be uploaded onto HRER. It is recognised therefore that supervision uploads to HRER will be a month in arrears. **Pg. 14 (Recording)***

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure sets out the core expectations of supervision for children's social workers and social care workers in Warwickshire County Council.
- 1.2 Children and family services' in Warwickshire believes that high quality, regular and planned supervision is central to the development and maintenance of high standards of practice. Good, effective supervision is also seen as a priority for the council to ensure and evidence quality of service to customers within legislation and practice governance, codes of standards and ethics.
- 1.3 Supervision should challenge students and qualified practitioners to reflect critically on their practice and should foster an inquisitive approach to their work. Supervision should be conducted in the context of a supportive, safe environment.
- 1.4 The council recognises that providing effective supervision is a highly-skilled task and is committed to providing training and support to undertake the supervisor's role.

2. Scope of this procedure

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all registered social workers, social care workers, permanent, temporary, agency, sessional or contracted staff within the council, as well as managers and social work students.

3. How this Procedure was developed

- 3.1 This procedure also takes account of:
 - The new children's social care and safeguarding [Procedure for Electronic Recording Supervision Notes \(1\).docx](#)
 - The reviewed overarching 1:1 framework implemented by the council, setting out broad expectations and guidelines to effective qualitative supervision. [1:1's - The Essentials.](#)
[A Managers Perspective of Supervision Meetings \(PDF, 146.96 KB\)](#)
[Staff Perspective of Supervision Meetings \(PDF, 134.2 KB\)](#)
 - [The Standards for Employers of Social Workers in England as published by the Local Government Association](#) on behalf of the Social Work Reform Board.
 - [Guidance for providing supervision in different settings](#)
 - [SCIE supervision guides](#)
 - [BASW supervision policy](#)
 - [Children and Families routine audit programme](#) developed by Practice Improvement and Quality Assurance.

4. Key messages from research

- Research has demonstrated that good supervision is associated with job satisfaction, commitment to the organisation and retention.
- Supervision helps reduced staff turnover and is significantly linked to employees' perceptions of the support they receive from the organisation.
- Good supervision is correlated with perceived worker effectiveness. There is some evidence that group supervision can increase critical thinking.
- Supervision works best when it pays attention to task assistance, social and emotional support and that workers have a positive relationship with supervisors.
- The emotionally charged nature of the work can place particular demands on people in the field. It is important to provide opportunities for reflective supervision.
- In an inter-professional context, workers relate job satisfaction and professional development to their supervisor's expert knowledge, regardless of whether respondents shared the same professional background.
- The impact of supervision on outcomes for service users and carers has rarely been investigated. Anecdotal evidence suggests that supervision may promote empowerment, fewer complaints and more positive feedback.
- Overall, the empirical basis for supervision in social work and social care in the UK is weak. Most of the evidence is correlational and derives from child welfare services in the US.

5. Purpose of supervision

5.1 The purpose of supervision is:

- For those working with children and families to have the opportunity to '*critically reflect on the understanding they are forming of the family, of considering their emotional response and whether this is adversely affecting their reasoning, and for making decisions about how best to help*' ([Munro 2010. Paragraph 4.10](#))
- Ensure accountability for practice and ensure quality of service for people who use services.
- Uphold professional standards.
- Build purposeful, professional relationships and communicate effectively.
- Manage risk and protection alongside a duty to respect rights and address need.
- Reflect on, analyse and evaluate practice.
- Manage the emotional impact of the work.
- To share, debrief and identify any further required resources to address responses to stressful situations.
- Challenge constructively in the interests of client, worker and agency.
- Develop the knowledge, skills and values required for worker own role, professional development and as part of an integrated, multi-professional or multi-agency team or service.
- Contribute to research and use knowledge and experience to explore new ways of working.

- Identify and manage stress factors that may impinge on the worker, service user or agency.
- Ensure peer and management review of professional decisions and to encourage mutual learning and development.
- Communicate with their line manager on organisational issues.
- Manage realistic workloads and caseloads.

6. Types of supervision

- 6.1 Employees in the council are entitled to supervision in relation to practice and personal development.
- 6.2 Practice and personal supervision together will be undertaken within the planned 1:1 session, with informal and group supervision sitting alongside the formal sessions.
- 6.3 **Practice supervision.** The prime focus of practice supervision should be the exploration and critical analysis of practice.
- 6.4 **Personal supervision** should provide personal support and contribute to continuing professional development, ensuring workers have the relevant skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes to do the job and progress their careers. For social workers, personal supervision should be based on a rigorous understanding of the [Knowledge and Skills Statement \(KSS\)](#). Practice supervisors should use the [Post Qualifying Standards](#).
- 6.5 Personal development plans should be completed as part of the supervision process where a learning need has been identified.
- 6.6 **Informal supervision** can appropriately take place where there is a need for decision making between formal methods of supervision. This should not, however, be a substitute for formal methods of supervision.
- 6.7 **Group supervision.** Team managers and or principal practitioners should meet with their teams on a bi monthly basis to discuss, explore, hypothesis and use the groups joint knowledge and expertise to enable effective progression of complex or 'stuck' cases.
- 6.8 These discussions must be recorded as a case note by the allocated social worker on Mosaic and any notes from group supervision sessions should be uploaded to Electronic Social Care Records (ESCR) by the allocated worker.
- 6.9 The benefit of this process ensures the joint ownership and knowledge of the children within the team, appropriate progression of cases and that supervision sessions with staff will have the capacity to equally focus on personal supervision as well as practice supervision. In addition, ideas, knowledge and experience can be shared and workers will not feel isolated when dealing with a complex or complicated case.

- 6.10 The appraisal process sits outside supervision, but the two are inextricably linked. Supervision sessions can be used to discuss appraisal or extra sessions can be arranged as necessary.

7. Frequency of supervision

7.1 Practice and personal supervision

- Monthly (minimum 10 per year plus 2 appraisal sessions)

7.2 Students on placement

- As agreed with student and Higher Education Institution (HEI)

7.3 Newly qualified social workers

- 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, and a minimum of monthly supervision thereafter
- Supervision should be uninterrupted time and should take place regularly and consistently.

7.4 Group supervision

- Group supervision to be offered to all social workers every two months. This will be led by team managers or principal social work practitioners and could also be undertaken at the end of team meetings for a minimum of 1 hour.

7.5 Observation of practice

- The proposed accreditation of social workers is suggesting that all social workers have direct observations of practice as a requirement for their ongoing accreditation and registration. In Warwickshire, every social worker will be offered a minimum of two observations of practice a year with operations managers ensuring compliance with this. The direct observation of practice will be recorded on the [Children and Families - Direct observation of practice - audit template](#) and will also feed into the appraisal process. In addition, the direct observation must be recorded on HR Electronic Records (HRER) by the line manager, using the following naming criteria: -

121 *add name of worker* Observed Practice on 02NOV2016

8. Monitoring supervision

- 8.1 Team managers are responsible for ensuring that personal supervision records are uploaded to HRER. This information will inform the performance data that is reported to the business unit Senior Leadership Team.
- 8.2 Operations managers and team managers should review HRER on a regular basis to monitor the actual frequency of supervision and should take steps to address any gaps in supervision. They should also monitor the quality of supervision on a regular basis and as a minimum every 6 months.
- 8.3 Service managers and heads of service should undertake a random dip sample of two supervision files each per month. Service managers would monitor the quality of supervision given by operations managers and heads of service would monitor the supervision given by service managers. The quality of supervision will be audited on a regular basis using [Children and Families Supervision File - Audit Template](#)

9. Manager oversight

- 9.1 It is essential that every child open to children's social care has regular management oversight recorded. It is an expectation that each child is discussed in supervision once a month, however there may be exceptions where this may not be possible. Therefore, to ensure robust management oversight, it is a requirement that all cases files must have a **manager oversight, manager decision** or **supervision case note** recorded at least monthly. Within Mosaic, there are mandatory **management views** which are captured in any primary workflow and this is also evidence of **manager oversight**.

10. Responsibilities

- 10.1 Managers are responsible for arranging appropriate professional supervision for all their staff in accordance with this procedure.
- 10.2 Employees are responsible for ensuring they have access to and use professional supervision and discussion.
- 10.3 The supervisor should regularly read case records to review and record whether the work undertaken is appropriate to the child's current needs and circumstances in accordance with the organisation's responsibilities.
- 10.4 Where social workers have safeguarding and protection work as a core role then lines of accountability should be clearly identified, and supervision should be undertaken by a registered social worker.

11. Social work minimum practice standards

- 11.1 Social work managers should use supervision to assess compliance with the Warwickshire Social Work Practice Standards. Where standards are not being met appropriate action should be taken to address this.

12. Performance issues

- 12.1 For anyone on a performance plan supervision may need to be more frequent and should be set as part of the plan.

13. Supervision contract

- 13.1 [A supervision contract](#) should be agreed and signed at the beginning of the supervision relationship and should be reviewed annually.

14. Preparation for supervision

- 14.1 The key to success of supervision is preparation, and both the supervisor and supervisee should take responsibility for preparing all the information that will be needed.
- 14.2 Actions agreed at the last supervision should be followed up in each supervision session.
- 14.3 Supervision should be programmed in advance for the whole year.
- 14.4 Supervision must be undertaken in a confidential space and within normal working hours.

15. Cancellation of supervision

- 15.1 Supervision should be prioritised and should only be cancelled for annual leave or exceptional circumstances (e.g. unwell/required in court). Any cancelled supervisions should be rescheduled as soon as possible.

16. Recording supervision – appendix 2

- 16.1 The supervisor should record the supervision session on the [Supervision record template](#) which should ideally be typed, and provide a copy to the supervisee within 5 working days. Written records are acceptable providing the record is legible.

- 16.2 Supervision records should be recorded and stored in line with the [Procedure for Electronic Recording Supervision Notes](#). All records should be stored electronically, and no paper copies should be retained. Providing written records are legible they can be scanned and saved electronically to negate the need for typing.
- 16.3 Any child or family related information or decisions should be recorded on Mosaic. The case notes arising from supervision should be finalised the same day they are written.
- 16.4 The supervision record should clearly detail any decisions that have been made, and the reasons for these, any agreed actions including who will take responsibility and the timescale for carrying out these actions. The records should be signed and dated by both parties. Records of supervision must be accessible to senior managers for audit purposes.
- 16.5 If there is disagreement as to the content of the record, this should be recorded. A copy of the supervision notes should be kept by both parties and needs to be signed.

17. Informal supervision

- 17.1 Decisions made in informal supervisions should be recorded on Mosaic as a manager oversight or manager decision by the line manager or duty manager as appropriate.

18. Recording reflective case discussion in supervision

- 18.1 Reflective case discussion should be recorded on the child's Mosaic record within a record of supervision case note. Some reflections maybe quite brief, but it is suggested that when discussing complex situations, any significant and key life events within a family as well as when making decisions requiring considerable analysis, that the following guidelines are used:
- Details of family situation
 - Experience – What has the worker been doing? What happened?
 - Evaluation – what went well? What did not work?
 - Analysis – what sense can be made of the situation? What are the options? What knowledge has been used (evidence, theory, research) Consider from the worker, the child and their family and other professionals' perspectives.
 - Evaluation – what can be concluded? Is there anything else that needs to be done?
 - Decision clearly recorded on the child's record.
 - Actions taken clearly recorded.

19. Standards for measuring the quality of supervision

19.1 The following factors indicate good standards of practice:

- All allocated children are discussed over time;
- Use of hypothesis, reflection and professional curiosity;
- Protected time;
- Next actions/areas for exploration;
- Risk analysis;
- Strength based analysis;
- Clear goals;
- Clear interventions;
- Outcomes as a result of actions;
- The voice/experience of the child is regularly recorded.

20. Wellbeing

20.1 In order to support and develop the workforce:

- Warwickshire offer wellbeing services: e.g. occupational health, staff support services, and an independent employee assistant programme;
- Personal wellbeing plans and a personal wellbeing day each year for social workers;
- Sports facilities and wellbeing activities;
- Bupa's Cash Plan – healthcare benefit allowing employees to claim money back towards everyday healthcare costs.

21. Further reading

- Morrison, T (2005), Staff Supervision in Social care, Pavilion
- Morrison, T and Wonnacott, J (2010), Supervision: Now or Never Reclaiming Supervision in Social Work. 9
- Research in Practice (RiP) (2016), Reflective Supervision: A Handbook

Supervision flow chart



SUPERVISION FLOW CHART

Supervision contract signed by supervisor and supervisee and uploaded to HRER



Supervision dates for the next 12 months agreed



Confidential space booked for all supervision sessions



Practice/personal supervision takes place monthly



At each supervision session, the previous supervision records are agreed, dated, signed and uploaded to HRER by supervisor.



All case files open to children social care to have clear management oversight recorded monthly



Reflective supervision discussions recorded on Mosaic by supervisor



Group supervision sessions noted on a case note by allocated worker



Notes/record of group supervision session uploaded to ESCR by allocated worker

Supervision Templates

[Supervision agreement](#)

[Supervision record template](#)

[Children and Families - Direct observation of practice - audit template](#)

[Children and Families Supervision File - Audit Template](#)