

Support and Supervision Policy

Last Reviewed: September 2022

**This policy sets out arrangements for support and supervision of staff who work
with vulnerable children in school**

APPENDIX 2

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CONTEXT

“Working Together to Safeguard Children” (July 2018) states agencies “should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting welfare”. One of the arrangements outlined is “appropriate supervision and support for staff”.

“Keeping Children Safe in Education” (September 2022) states “Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff from the school or college leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This should be explicit in the role holder’s job description” (September 2022 Annex C Pg 161)

The same document also states, “During term time, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns” (September 2022 Annex C Pg 161)

The same document also states, in Annex C, “The designated safeguarding lead is expected to: act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff” (September 2022 Page 161)

PURPOSE

It is widespread practice in statutory agencies to provide supervision for staff responsible for child protection practice. This is seen as an effective means of ensuring compliance with procedures, providing support, and identifying professional development needs.

The definition of supervision that is often used for school settings and which has been adapted from the work of Morrison (2005) states that:

Supervision is a process by which one member of staff is given responsibility by the school to work with another staff member in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives, which together promote the best outcomes for students. These objectives and functions are:

1. Competent accountable performance (managerial function)
2. Continuing professional development (developmental/formative function)
3. Personal support (supportive/restorative function)
4. Engaging the staff member with the school (mediation function)

It is the role of the school’s governing body to ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any Deputies have appropriate support and supervision.

The Purpose of Safeguarding Supervision is to:

- Provide protected time to reflect on practice
- Provide support with emotional well-being, resilience, picking and developing coping strategies
- Have an opportunity to off-load, talk about how they are feeling when dealing with distressed children and young people and the impact on their own life. It should feel restorative and help build resilience
- Celebrate success
- Review workloads and time managements

- Discuss and seek guidance on specific children/young people – review action plans, avoid drift. Provide a fresh eye, talk through intolerances, frustrations e.g., with other agencies/systems
- Provide an opportunity where a member of staff can be challenged supportively and constructively with advice offered on areas for improvement
- Allow for issues relating to the workplace and to working practices to be identified and discussed including safe working practice and professional boundaries
- Enable an opportunity for reflection, creative thinking and solution focussed thinking
- Consider how their role fits with the rest of the school/other services and the community
- Identify achievements and good practice
- Consider appropriate CPD/Training needs in relation to the safeguarding role

There will be a number of possible models for delivery supervision involving one to one meetings and peer meeting both within the school and with other agencies (See separate Practice Guidance for further details)

BENEFITS OF SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

Research shows that there are benefits to both staff and children when a system for support and supervision is in place

BENEFITS TO ALL STAFF

Schools have a duty of care towards their members of staff in relation to their physical and emotional well-being. Any member of staff could potentially deal with a child protection concern and the nature of the concern might be upsetting or distressing to that member of staff. Additionally, the requirement of confidentiality within child protection could lead to a staff member feeling isolated. Dealing with a child protection issue could, therefore, have an adverse impact on any staff member, not just the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Offering support and supervision following a child protection concern coming to light may reduce some of the impacts highlighted above leading to increased staff well-being; this will in turn have a beneficial effect on the rest of the school community.

BENEFITS TO THE DSL/DEPUTY

In a study carried out by Barnados' Scotland, respondents (safeguarding practitioners in schools) highlighted that good Supervision helped them to feel appreciated, supported, valued, reassured and validated and they appreciated the opportunity to talk openly and honestly about how they were feeling.

The resulting benefits respondents identified included reducing burnout and compassion fatigue, improving professional practice through self-reflection and evaluation, increased self-awareness and understanding, being better able to support children and families and improving teacher retention.

“Supervision in Education – Healthier Schools for All” (Barnado’s 2020)

A support and supervision system in schools will specially benefit the DSL/Deputy in that it will offer (not an exhaustive list):

- Support in dealing with emotionally challenging situations
- Challenge and reflection to ensure that all possible actions have been considered and objectivity is maintained

- Shared responsibility for decision making.

BENEFITS TO CHILDREN

As stated at the outset of this document effective child protection work requires sound professional judgement. Staff support and supervision is one of the means by which sound judgement are achieved. Those staff members who are not DSLs/Deputies may not deal with child protection very often and will need access to support to ensure that they are taking the correct action. In this way a system which provides good support and supervision will promote robust, authoritative action to protect the child.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that all schools put in place a system for staff support and supervision. Please refer to the separate Practice Guidance for suggestions as to how this might be implemented in school

Ken Stimpson School Support and Supervision in Child Protection Work

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

THIS PRACTICE GUIDANCE NEEDS TO READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH “SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION POLICY FOR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS AND DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING LEADS IN EDUCATION”

Research shows that support and supervision are crucial to effective risk management in child protection work. Staff who are dealing with safeguarding concerns need access to guidance and support at the time they are doing the work and, in some cases, afterwards.

The designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their deputies are the people in schools who have direct responsibility for managing safeguarding decision-making and responses. However, any member of staff might receive a disclosure of abuse, see an injury on a child or witness harmful parental behaviour towards a child.

Support and supervision may need to be immediate, responding to need and also planned ahead in the diary.

This policy and guidance, therefore, extends to all staff in school and forms part of the school duty of care to all staff and pupils.

MODEL OF PROVISION

This guidance does not intend to lay down a prescriptive model the school must adhere to; rather, it intends to offer suggestions as to ways in which the school might meet this requirement.

Peer Supervision:

- Safeguarding Team
- Wellbeing Team
- Behaviour Team
- Teaching Assistants
- Student Support
- Medical Team
- Teachers/Other Staff – open access to DSL and Senior Lead Safeguarding
- Leadership Team - Principal

SUPERVISION AGREEMENT

Members of the group will feel empowered if they contribute to the agreement for the group.

It is important the meetings date and times are agreed and are not cancelled, and staff should select a space and time when they are unlikely to be interrupted.

- Meetings will be held weekly as an open forum
- A nominated Chair for the meeting rotated each week
- Meeting recorded
- Expectation staff attend the meetings

RECORDING THE MEETING/MEETING CONDUCT

- Minutes of the meeting should be brief and shared with the group with any actions for the DSL
- Minutes should avoid naming students in line with Data Protection Act, 2018 and GDPR
- Minutes are only shared with the group and with the DSL

- Meetings are a safe place to share and discuss how you feel and any students that may have been emotionally challenging on your wellbeing
- Meetings should share experiences of emotionally challenging situations and offer support and listening to other people's strategies and experiences for support
- Seek support from your peers or through discussion asking for support from your DSL

One to One supervision

There will be occasions when supervision takes place between DSL and a member of staff, these meeting will follow the same format as above, but will also look for additional support for the individual if required.

PEER SAFEGUARDING SUPERVISION RECORD FOR KEN STIMPSON SCHOOL

Description	Name
Chair	
Record-Taker	
Date/Time	
Attendees	

Topics Discussed and Actions Agreed

Date of next Meeting:

Chair of Next Meeting:

Record Taker of Next Meeting:

Record Circulated including DSL on:

Signed Meeting Chair