



Lode Heath School

Name of Policy	Supervision Policy
Lead	Mr Nicholas Burke
Governor Committee	BSII Committee
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Definition

Supervision is an accountable process which supports, assures, and develops the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group, or team; undertaken by suitably trained professionals.

Purpose

The purpose is for professionals to:

- Reflect on practice.
- Improve the quality of their work.
- Increase understanding of professional issues.
- Achieve agreed objectives and outcomes.

Principles

Supervision must:

- Focus on the child.
- Ensure consistency with Arden Multi Academy Trust, local authority, and school procedures.
- Provide a safe environment for reflection and professional challenge.
- Acknowledge the emotional impact of the work.
- Recognise and manage feelings and beliefs which may affect the safeguarding of children.
- Identify when a case needs to be escalated using Solihull LSCB dispute resolution procedures, due to concerns about case progress or other aspects of case management, including ineffective multi-agency working.

Safeguarding supervision will always keep a focus on the best interests of the children in the school and promote their safety and well-being.

Promoting a safeguarding culture in the school

- Supervision will support and strengthen the safeguarding culture we are committed to for our school. Supervision will promote and model the following indicators of a safe school:
- Staff are respectful to all employees as well as children and their parents
- Staff are open about discussing good and poor practice
- Any breach of safeguarding policy or procedure is acted on appropriately
- Any learning (national, local or organisation) is acted upon through a review of policy and procedures and the undertaking of appropriate training
- Leaders model appropriate behaviour (being mindful of the staff code of conduct)
- Staff are knowledgeable about the vulnerability of the children that they look after and fully adhere to child protection and safeguarding policies, and the guidance in part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
- Staff are aware that abusers may already be in the employment of the organisation, and are clear on the managing allegations procedures
- Children are listened to
- Staff are empowered to challenge poor practice and behaviour
- Whistle-blowing policy and procedures (and other relevant procedures) are in place and staff know how to use them
- LSCB professional dispute resolution procedures are followed where there is professional disagreement.
- Staff training is regular and thorough.

The Key Functions of safeguarding supervision are:

Management Oversight and Accountability

- The child is central to all decision-making activity within the supervision process, so that children receive child focused services that meet their needs.
- The frequency of supervision sessions meets Solihull Local Safeguarding Children's Board standards (minimum every 3 months).
- Practitioners experience supervision as providing an opportunity to reflect, to receive professional challenge and to be supported in providing challenge to others.
- The supervision process evidences management oversight and support that assesses practitioners' compliance, and professional competence/confidence with regard to adhering to local policies, protocols, and procedures, and promotes timely progression of the case.
- The supervision process checks interventions are working effectively to improve outcomes for children:
 - Intervention plans are adhered to, and staff contribute to, any reassessment of the plan, so that they have a positive impact on the child and address the diverse needs of children and young people, including effective communication (particularly EAL and disabilities).
 - Swift, effective action is taken when plans are not working or a deterioration is recognised, and potential vulnerabilities are identified and countered.
 - Parental non-compliance and/or disguised compliance is recognised and acted upon, reported to children's social work appropriately and recorded.
- To provide reflective space to offload to analyse on-going concerns and specific incidents, to assess risk and need and to provide an important check and balance on decision making and planning.
- To review workloads and issues relating to workplace and working practices can be identified and discussed; checking out that our processes are fit for purpose. This includes triangulation of evidence bases and reviewing needs against thresholds.

Continuing Professional Development: so that practitioners have the knowledge to correctly apply the thresholds and referral processes to support effective and accountable practice, so that:

- Safeguarding children performance and practice is competent, accountable, and soundly based in research and practice knowledge; and that staff fully understand their roles, and responsibilities and the scope of their professional and statutory duties.
- Professional development needs with respect to safeguarding practice are considered and supported, including learning from serious case reviews.
- Practitioners are aware of the threshold's guidance, know where to find it and use it to support the making of high quality, evidence-based referrals.
- Practitioners are aware of how to make appropriate referrals to all relevant agencies, including safeguarding referrals and out of hours' services.
- Practitioners are clear about the requirement to obtain consent.
- Practitioners are aware of the need to receive feedback on a referral made and take action to pursue feedback where it is not received.
- Practitioners are aware of where to go for advice regarding a referral if he/she needs clarification; where advice is sought this is recorded.

Multi-agency working: to check out the quality of information sharing including core group work, MAACE, early help and other appropriate multi-agency meetings so that:

- There is appropriate involvement and engagement in cases.
- Practitioners are aware of, understand and apply information sharing protocols.
- Practitioners review the evidence, prepare reports (using relevant templates), and actively contribute to multi-agency meetings.
- Records of multi-agency meetings are obtained, relevant actions are followed through and reported on, as necessary.
- Practitioners are aware of the Solihull LSCB dispute resolution procedures and use these effectively.

Voice of the Child

- Professionals consider what life is like for the child.
- The child's wishes and feelings are gathered and considered in an age-appropriate way.
- Diversity and disability issues are appropriately identified, understood, addressed, and recorded.

Personal Support

- To provide reflective space for the supervisee to discuss and work through the personal impact of the safeguarding role and responsibilities. This includes support to address the emotional impact of the work where required.
- Clarify boundaries between support, counselling, consultation, and confidentiality in supervision.
- Help the worker to explore emotional blocks/barriers to their work.
- Create a safe climate for the worker to look at their practice and the impact it has on them as a person.

Good supervision involves a balance between all five key functions, not always within one session, but certainly over the entire supervision process.

Benefits of Effective Supervision	Impact of Poor Supervision
More accurate assessment and enhanced development of worker	Worker less clear, more rigid
Worker clear and confident in role and task	Child, young person (CYP) or family less confident
User confident in the worker, good relationships built	CYP or family less open, less information given, poorer relationships built
Increased capacity, trust, and openness, reduced anxiety, stronger partnership	Assessment weaker, less likely to be shared/agreed
Clearer assessment, more evidenced based, worker and CYP/family clearer about the work being carried out	Plans less likely to be shared/agreed
Worker communicates better with other agencies	Poorer links with other agencies/danger of drift and delay
Plans more informed, owned, implemented and reviewed	CYP and families may be less open, more dependent

Roles and Responsibilities

The 'supervisor' is responsible for:

- Sharing the responsibility for making the supervisory relationship work.
- Ensuring confidentiality, subject to child and staff safety.
- Creating an effective, sensitive, and supportive supervision.
- Providing suitable time and location.
- Agreeing timescales within which supervision takes place.
- Eliminating interruptions.
- Maintaining accurate and clear records.
- Recording supervision on the child protection file.
- Ensuring the school's professional standards are met.
- Ensuring that where a change in line management occurs, a handover process is arranged between all parties concerned.
- Ensuring that issues relating to diversity are addressed constructively and positively and provide an opportunity for staff to raise issues about their experience and diversity.

The 'supervisee' is responsible for:

- Sharing the responsibility for making the supervisory relationship work.
- Attending regularly, on time and participating actively; being open and honest, raising concerns and seeking support where needed.
- Accepting the mandate to be supervised and being accountable for any actions.
- Preparing appropriately for supervision sessions.
- Ensuring the recording of supervision is reflective of the meeting.
- Actively participating in an effective sensitive and supportive supervision.
- Aiming to meet the school's professional standards.

Staff involved in child protection casework, and early help casework, who might need safeguarding supervision	Who might provide safeguarding supervision
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Associate Headteacher (or another Headteacher), Deputy DSL, DSL from another school within the AMAT
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	DSL, Associate Headteacher
Year Heads	DSL, DDSL, Associate Headteacher
Pastoral Leads	DSL, DDSL, Associate Headteacher
SENCO/LAC Co-ordinator	DSL, DDSL, Associate Headteacher
Class teachers	DSL, DDSL, Year Heads, Pastoral Leads
Teaching Assistants	DSL, DDSL, Year Heads, Pastoral Leads
Child and Family Support Workers	DSL, DDSL, Pastoral Leads, Line Manager
Other specialist support workers	DSL, Pastoral Leads, Line Manager, professional body

Supervision Methods

Supervision should be undertaken with designated staff responsible for or working with identified vulnerable children and/or their families. It should include all staff working with children who are subject to a child protection or child in need plan, children with social care involvement, children looked after (LAC) and children subject to early help support through case work and/or and early help assessment at thresholds 1, 2 or 3.

This policy is concerned primarily with one-to-one supervision that takes place in private at a pre-arranged time with an agreed agenda and preparation on behalf of both parties. All staff within the organisation that have responsibility for safeguarding children (as identified in the grid on the previous page) will have access to this method of supervision. Supervision in the school may be offered both internally and/or externally

Internal supervision: Safeguarding supervision should always be carried out by the named Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection (DSL) in the school but may need to be delegated to other key staff with safeguarding responsibilities, such as Year Heads or Pastoral Leaders. Supervision for the DSL should be carried out by the Principal, or Headteacher, another Headteacher at another AMAT School

It is recognised, however, that supervision is an on-going process that takes place in other ways. The two other main methods are outlined below. They have a place but should not replace planned, formal, recorded, one to one sessions.

Group safeguarding supervision: In some cases, it may be necessary to conduct a group safeguarding supervision. This is a session where there may be several staff involved in direct child protection/safeguarding work with a specific child/ family. There are many benefits to be gained from group supervision including problem solving, peer group learning and giving and receiving strong feedback within a supportive setting.

In group supervision the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor and supervisees should be the same with the added principles:

- The group should clarify and agree the boundaries of confidentiality
- The records should reflect that this was a group supervision.

Unplanned or “ad-hoc” supervision: The pace of work and change and the frequency of supervision means that staff often must 'check something out' with a supervisor, obtain a decision or gain permission to do something in between formal supervision sessions. In addition, staff who work in schools where there are a lot of child protection concerns, will be working closely with their supervisor and often communicating daily about thresholds, decision making, disagreements between agencies etc.

This form of supervision is a normal and acceptable part of the staff/supervisor relationship. However, the following points should be borne in mind when considering unplanned or ad-hoc supervision:

- Any decisions made about a child or family should be clearly recorded on the child's records as appropriate.
- Where supervisees and supervisors work closely together this does not negate the need for private one to one time together on a regular basis. The focus of these sessions is wholly on the individual, their development, performance, and any issues arising from their work that do not arise on a day-to-day basis.

Frequency of Safeguarding Supervision

The frequency of supervision will be dependent on the role the supervisee plays within the organisation, their skills, experiences, team requirements and Government guidelines. The expectation in schools is that all those who require supervision will have this **at least once a term**.

The supervisor and supervisee should agree on the duration and frequency of supervision taking into account individual experience and the complexity of individual cases. It will be appropriate to arrange for more frequent supervision for staff who are newly qualified or in their probationary period but also if there are specific circumstances such as personal difficulties or relationships, performance issues or levels of stress. Further support for staff could include:

- Stress Risk Assessment undertaken by the line manager.
- Referral to Occupational Health for one-to-one counselling.

Training

All managers who provide supervision should be appropriately trained in order that they can recognise and assess any safeguarding issues. Practitioners should be provided with support and/or training to ensure that supervision is effective. In addition, supervisors should receive regular supervisor supervision, either one-to-one or as a group.

Entitlement

It is important that safeguarding supervision is provided. If an individual is not receiving safeguarding supervision at the required frequency during the year they should:

- In the first instance supervisees should always discuss any complaints or dissatisfaction with their supervisor and endeavour to reach an agreement within the normal supervision process.
- If a solution is not agreed the supervisee should raise the issue with the supervisor's manager and continue to escalate within the organisation until resolved.