

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

SUPERVISION POLICY & GUIDANCE

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1. Definition of Safeguarding Supervision

Supervision is a method of supporting staff so they can provide for the needs of their students¹. Safeguarding supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer emotional support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. Its purpose is to monitor the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus improving outcomes for children and young people as well as achieving agreed objectives. Supervision also provides an opportunity to ensure that codes of conduct and standards of practice are maintained therefore promoting a safe culture. This will relate to Teaching Standards and the BEST Staff Code of Conduct. This may be part of supervision or can take place separately especially where supervision is not given by the line manager/DSL.

The definition of supervision that is often used for education settings, 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)

2. Purpose of Safeguarding Supervision for DSLs

The purpose of Safeguarding supervision is to:

- Provide protected time to reflect on practice
- provide support with emotional well-being, resilience, picking up on demands and developing coping strategies
- have an opportunity to off-load, talk about how they are feeling when dealing with distressed students and the impact on their own life. It should feel restorative and help build resilience
- celebrating success
- review workloads and time management
- discuss and seek guidance on specific cases – 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 work place and to working practices to be identified and discussed including safer working practice and professional boundaries
- enable an opportunity for creative thinking and solution focussed thinking
- consider how their role fits with the rest of the setting/other services and the community
- identify achievements and good practice
- consider appropriate CPD/training needs in relation to the safeguarding role

¹ For the purposes of this policy, the term ‘student’ refers to all children and young people educated in the BEST settings

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3. Principles

- Safeguarding supervision is not related to and does not replace appraisal, but should complement it
- It is not counselling and a supervisor at times may need to refer a supervisee to other services such as counselling or the EAP service
- The relationship between supervisor and supervisee should be positive and trusting
- The Senior Leadership/Governors/Executive Board should see supervision as an important aspect of the professionals' work and ensure adequate time is provided
- The supervisor may not sit hierarchically above the supervisee e.g. reciprocal arrangements, use of independent supervisor. However, where someone other than the line manager provides supervision, the line manager still provides accountability for the work and should oversee direction of the plan and work for individual children/young person
- Decision making on a child's records should be signed off by the DSL who remains responsible
- Where supervision takes place across settings or with an independent person, confidentiality of individual children/young person and families must be maintained. Case discussions will therefore be anonymised
- The supervisor should have attended supervision training and also be receiving supervision themselves.

4. Models of Supervision at Bedfordshire Schools Trust include

- Cross Trust DSL meetings held
- Mixture of group and 1:1 supervision (offer of supervision is available within the Trust)
- Advice available from external specialist consultant
- Most supervision will be planned but this may be supplemented by informal supervision sessions e.g. in relation to a crisis, need to de-brief after a session with a student

To reflect on individual cases/scenarios, the supervisor may find it useful to use

- **T**ell me
- **E**xplain to me
- **D**escribe to me

And consider 4 aspects

- **EXPERIENCE** – the story, what happened?
- **REFLECTION** - what was it like?
- **ANALYSIS** - what does this mean?
- **ACTION** - what next?

(Morrison T 2005) The Supervision Cycle

Supervision should enable the supervisee to consider the best way to support the student's current needs, reflecting on and adapting responses to achieve the best outcome for the pupil.

Lists of possible questions for supervision can be found in Sturt and Rowe, using Supervision in Schools. A suggested safeguarding supervision agenda is included in Appendix B (further examples of suggested questions can be found in the BEST DSL shared information google drive folder).

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5. Safeguarding Supervision Agreement

Every supervisor should make a written agreement with their supervisees taking into account:

- frequency and length of safeguarding supervision
- location – supervision should take place in a private and uninterrupted space during the working day
- recording – it is the supervisor’s responsibility to take notes and make sure they are made available to the supervisee and filed. Both parties need to agree and sign that they are accurate. Records must be kept in a secure location. The records themselves must be kept in a format that suits both parties however a summary sheet of actions will be completed during or immediately after the session. A suggested recording sheet is provided at [Appendix C](#). Case discussion with any changes in plan approved by the DSL are to go on a child/young person’s safeguarding record – it is the supervisee’s responsibility to ensure the changes to the child/young person’s safeguarding record are made. A suggested case supervision recording sheet is provided at [Appendix D](#).
- confidentiality – in general, supervision is considered as confidential, however there will be occasions where confidentiality will be overridden, for example in the case of child protection issues relating to the supervisee or if not sharing information with senior management could contribute in bringing the setting into disrepute, there is a potential disciplinary matter or whistleblowing
- preparation for supervision – supervisee should identify cases/issues to discuss and start to reflect on these

An agreement is included at [Appendix A](#).

Entitlement to Safeguarding Supervision

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

- in the first instance discuss any complaints or dissatisfaction with their supervisor and endeavour to reach an agreement within the normal supervision process; or
- if a solution is not agreed, the supervisee should raise the issue with their line manager.

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Appendix A - Supervision Agreement

Safeguarding Supervision Agreement			
Supervisee:	[Enter Name and Role]		
Supervisor:	[Enter Name and Role]		
Agreed Date:	/ /	Review Date:	/ /
Supervision Agreement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding supervision will be undertaken at least termly, or more frequently if requested • Every effort will be made for supervision to take place in an uninterrupted environment • The preparation for supervision will include identifying cases to discuss and starting reflection on these • Each party in the agreement has the responsibility to notify the other in the event of cancellation or postponement • If at any time the supervisor or the supervisee is unhappy about an issue which cannot be resolved, the line manager will be consulted with the agreement of both parties. If the disagreement is with the line manager, this should be referred to the Trust Director of Education (or Trust CEO if the disagreement is with the Director of Education) with the aim of reaching a resolution • Supervisors will respect the confidentiality of the supervisee in all areas except child protection – concerns about which need to be referred on or whether information is identified that could bring the organisation into disrepute which may need to be reported via line management, where there is a potential disciplinary matter or whistle blowing • Notes and agreed actions will be recorded, signed, shared and kept securely in an agreed format • Any decisions made on individual cases and agreed by the DSL will be entered into an individual child/young person's safeguarding record 		
Supervisee:	[Insert signature]	Date:	/ /
Supervisor:	[Insert signature]	Date:	/ /

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Appendix B - Supervision Agenda

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Safeguarding Supervision	
A G E N D A	
Date	/ /
Time	00:00
Introduction	1. Welcome
	2. Clarify roles and confidentiality
	3. Agreed expectations
Specific case discussions (when appropriate also put on child's safeguarding file)	4. Review notes of previous meeting
	5. Share Experience
	6. Reflections (feelings)
Reflection	7. Analysis – celebrate success and good practice as well as consider what could be improved
	8. Action Planning
	9. Impact of work on individuals professionally or personally and any additional support which may be necessary
	10. Professional practice issues e.g. new policies, quality of performance, safer working practice, professional boundaries, role within setting
Development	11. CPD support and access to resources e.g. reflect on recent or forthcoming training development opportunities
Completion	12. Any Other Business (AOB)
	13. Date of Next Supervision

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Appendix C - Safeguarding Supervision Notes and Action Template

Record of Safeguarding Supervision

Supervisee:

Supervisor:

Date:

Review notes of previous supervision session	
Progress on actions:	
Case Discussion:	
Initials of children discussed: (full record of notes to be kept on individual case record sheet)	
Notes of discussion:	
Support:	
Development:	
Mediation:	
AOB:	

Date of next supervision session:

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Actions Agreed			
	Actions agreed:	By whom:	By when:
Support			
Development			
Mediation			
A.O.B			

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Appendix D – Record of Case Supervision Template

Record of Case Supervision – Individual child/family

Name of child(ren)	
Supervision Date	
Supervisee	
Supervisor	
Brief Synopsis of Safeguarding History	
Concerns	
Actions Agreed	
Supervisee Signature	
Supervisor Signature	

This form should be stored in the supervisee's supervision file.
An entry should be recorded on the student's CPOM/safeguarding chronology by the supervisee.