

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. Often called Reflective safeguarding supervision, it is a formalised discussion which 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.

Supervision is a structured process whereby an appropriately qualified, experienced and nominated supervisor meets with a member of staff to allow that person to reflect upon their safeguarding practice and assist with concerns that may require resolution.

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

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

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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- 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 recorded on a child's CPOMS record and 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. Opportunities for Supervision at Bedfordshire Schools Trust include

- Cross Trust DSL meetings held
- Mixture of group and 1:1 supervision
- DSLs have access to half termly 1:1 supervision
- 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 the individual case supervision form in [Appendix D](#) which can then be uploaded to a child's CPOMS record.

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.

A suggested safeguarding supervision agenda is included in [Appendix B](#).

5. Safeguarding Supervision Agreement

Every supervisor should complete Appendix A, the Safeguarding Supervision 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 that they are accurate. Records should be made as a shared document, and shared with both parties. A 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 individual 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

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- preparation for supervision – supervisee should identify cases/issues to discuss and start to reflect on these. A document to help supervisees prepare for the meeting can be found in [Appendix F](#)

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

6. Entitlement to Safeguarding Supervision

It is important that safeguarding supervision is provided to the DSL.
The Trust will provide supervision for all DSLs every half-term.
DSLs will be trained to provide supervision to others in their settings as required.

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

Between(The Supervisee) and(The Supervisor)

At.....(name of school/setting)

Agreement dated:

To be reviewed on:

Supervision will be undertaken with the following agreement:

- Safeguarding supervision will happen at least half-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 there are disagreements that cannot be resolved during supervision, 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 where information is identified that could bring the organisation into disrepute which may need to be reported via line management, the Staff code of conduct and/or Whistle Blowing policy will be followed
- Notes and agreed actions will be recorded, signed, shared and kept securely on a google document, available to both parties.
- CPOMS should be used to record any specific actions and incidents onto the child's record.

Signed (Supervisee):

Date:

Signed (Supervisor):

Date

Appendix B – Individual Supervision Agenda

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Individual Safeguarding Supervision Suggested Agenda	
Introduction	1. Welcome
	2. Clarify roles and confidentiality. Reminder of contract.
	3. Agreed expectations. <i>What do you both hope to achieve in this meeting?</i>
Review	4. Review notes of previous meeting
Specific case discussions (when appropriate also put on child's safeguarding file)	
Explore	5. What is happening? <i>What is the child's experience? What is the child's voice and how do we know this? What is the issue you need support with today?</i>
	6. Reflection. <i>What is the working hypothesis and alternative explanations? What were your intuitive responses?</i>
	7. Analysis – <i>celebrate success and good practice as well as consider what could be improved</i>
Action	8. What needs to happen? – action planning. Set SMART goals
Professional and Personal support	
Develop	9. CPD support and access to resources e.g. reflect on recent or forthcoming training development opportunities
	10. Impact of work on individuals professionally or personally and any additional support which may be necessary
	11. Professional practice issues e.g. new policies, quality of performance, safer working practice, professional boundaries, role within setting
Conclude	12. Any Other Business (AOB)
	13. Date of Next Supervision

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Appendix C – Record of Safeguarding Supervision

Record of Safeguarding Supervision

Supervisee:

Supervisor:

Date:

Review notes of previous supervision session		
Progress on actions:		
Case Discussion: Initials of children discussed (more detailed notes can be made on the individual child record, or directly into CPOMS)		
Initial		Notes
	Explore	
	Action	
	Explore	
	Action	
	Explore	
	Action	
Notes of discussion:		
Develop	CPD and resources	
	Professional and personal support	
	Professional practice	
Conclude – AOB and set next meeting date		

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Appendix D – Record of Individual Child Supervision

Record of Case Supervision – Individual child/family

Name of child(ren)			
Supervision Date			
Supervisee			
Supervisor			
What is the happening?			
<i>What is the child's experience? What is the child's voice and how do we know this? What is the issue you need support with today?</i>			
What does this mean?			
<i>Analysis of the current situation. What is the working hypothesis and possible alternative explanations? How can theory and research inform understanding and conclusions regarding what this situation means for the child and family?</i>			
What needs to happen?			
<i>What is the plan? How will this improve the child's daily lived experience? What have you learned? What would you do if this situation arose again?</i>			
SMART Actions Agreed and who is responsible. Include contingency planning.			
Action, and who is responsible	Measurable impact	By when	Complete ✓
Supervisee Signature			
Supervisor Signature			

This form should be stored on CPOMS using the Case Supervision category

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Appendix E – Group Supervision Format

Group Supervision Format

Aim

- To provide a safe space for reflective practice to occur
- Provide practitioners with access to other expertise and experience
- Help practitioners to develop and test hypotheses and 'next steps' for a child and their family

Each group member will be invited to present information about a child or family they would like to discuss.

The facilitator will be responsible for keeping the time and making any notes.

Step one – What's the story? (10 minutes)

Presenter:

- Briefly talk about your involvement with the family including reasons for current involvement and first concern (You can use the preparation tool if this helps you).
- Share any information about GRRRAACCESS (Gender, Race, Religion, Age, Abilities, Culture, Class, Ethnicity, Spirituality, Sexual Orientation).
- When out of time, you can take one more minute to share any final details you think are important.

Group:

- Listen and seek to distinguish between facts, thoughts and feelings.

Tips for the presenter

- Choose a piece of work that others in the group do not know about
- Talk without too much preparation
- You can start by giving your reason for choosing a particular case
- You can omit information if you wish
- Describe a real interaction.

Step 2 – Explore (10 minutes)

Group:

- Only ask questions in order to clarify and establish facts.

Facilitator should prevent the group from digging too deeply

Step 3 – What does this mean? (10 minutes)

Presenter:

- Do not take part in the group discussion, don't step in or answer questions
- Observe what the group focuses on (do they omit anything?)
- Listens to their discussion and take note of new ideas and hypotheses generated.

Tips for the presenter

- 'Which hypothesis is new to me?'
- 'Which sounds familiar and has been tested already?'
- 'Which one would I like to test next?'

Group:

- Explore the dilemma but do not seek to solve it
- Disclose thoughts and feelings

Facilitator should prevent the group from problem-solving and steer back to exploration

Step 4: Next steps (5 minutes)

Presenter:

- Tells the group what they noticed and learnt from their discussion
- Responds to any further points that need clarifying
- Tells the group which hypotheses they intend to test next and what this means for the child.

Group:

- Discuss next steps and perhaps help the practitioner to formulate solution-focused questions.

Step 5: Additional reflections

- Did the presenter find the process helpful?

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Appendix F – Preparing for Supervision

The purpose of this tool is to support you to reflect on the positive and negative aspects of the child's lived experience and the next steps AND/OR define the issue you would like support with. You don't have to use it each time, but it might help you to think through cases before a meeting.

This is what is working well...	This is what I am worried about...	This is what I have decided to do...
This is what I would like support with today...		