

Education Safeguarding Service

Safeguarding in Early Years Education

Supervision Guidance



Date: November 2018
(Reviewed by school September 2023)

Introduction

This guidance has been written by the Education Safeguarding Service to aid Early Years Settings in fulfilling their responsibilities under the 2017 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2017) in providing supervision to their staff.

Supervision is mandatory for all staff that come into contact with children in the Foundation Stage, including all those in maintained schools, non-maintained schools and independent schools. At Shipbourne School, Supervision is carried out with all staff, not just those working in the EYFS.

Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues. (EYFS 2017)

Appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training. (Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018)

What is Supervision?

Supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer 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 as well as achieving agreed objectives.

Supervision also provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues including the safeguarding of children and any concerns raised about an individual or colleague's practice.

All practitioners, whether they are full time, part-time, volunteers, apprentices or work placement students need supervision.

Early Years settings should have a supervision policy that outlines the importance of regular supervisions and how they can contribute to a positive working relationship.

Supervision provides professional one to one support away from the children and direct work environment. To reflect on own practice, professional progress, safeguarding issues and to self-evaluate. It also supports increased staff retention which ensures continuity of care for children.

Managements role in supervisions

Management should have the role of ensuring regular supervisions are carried out. A private room should be sourced away from any interruptions and a summary of the meeting should be recorded and kept in practitioners file. The

whole purpose of the meeting is to constructively evaluate practitioners practice, therefore constructive feedback should be given, and practitioners should leave the meeting feeling positive not deflated.

Management have a huge role in portraying a supervision as a way of helping their team, not a way of judging them and criticising their practice. There are many tools that management can use to ensure the meeting is constructive. This hopefully increases the feeling of being valued by management at the setting which in turn, increases job satisfaction.

Key elements of effective supervision

Supervision should provide opportunities to:

- Discuss any issues-particularly concerning children's development or well-being
- Identify solutions to address as they arise
- Receive/provide coaching to improve personal effectiveness
- Challenge and be challenged
- Address actions and follow up for the next supervision.

The benefits of supervision:

For practitioners:

- To ensure practitioners are clear and confident about their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities
- To reflect on their practice
- To provide consistency
- To provide constructive feedback
- To recognise and value work
- To promote health and well-being
- To build confidence and capacity
- To provide opportunity for an open, individual discussion.

For the organisation:

- To assist the practitioners in understanding the organisation's vision, where it is going in the future and how they can contribute
- To ensure practitioners have a manageable workload
- To ensure there is highly effective provision for children, parents and carers
- To ensure clear communication within the organisation
- To ensure practitioners meet the organisation's objectives and standards
- To assist in staff retention
- To ensure implementation of policies and procedures.

Supervision Contracts

A written contract should be drawn up by the supervisor taking in to account:

- Frequency and length of supervision
- Supervision should take place in a private and uninterrupted space.
- The content of supervision sessions, for example standard agenda items
- Confidentiality issues;
- Resolving difficulties, including how both parties might recognise where there are problems in working together and the method for resolving this.

Supervision should be recorded:

- To keep a record of what was discussed, and actions agreed
- To keep a record of any disagreements
- To benchmark and audit the quality of supervision
- For performance management of staff.

At the end of each session both supervisor and supervisee should sign and date the supervision notes to confirm its accuracy and both keep a copy. The supervisor's copy may be kept in a supervision file or personal staff file.

Confidentiality

It is important for staff to be comfortable in discussing all aspects of their work but there needs to be clarity as to what will happen to information discussed if it raises concerns about the practice of a member of staff or a child.

Accordingly, any supervision policy must be compatible with the safeguarding children, allegations against staff and confidentiality policies within the setting. Supervision records should be maintained confidentially and not be accessible to other members of staff at the setting.

Frequency

Supervision is an opportunity to meet at regular intervals to discuss and provide support and empowerment to staff to make sure they feel equipped and happy to fulfil their job effectively. The meeting needs to foster a culture of open discussion where staff have the time to discuss any concerns, worries and constraints within their role and the setting.

The frequency of supervision may depend on staff ratios, availability of supervisor and availability of rooms. The Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 indicates not only that appropriate arrangements must be in place, but supervision must be effective. It should also be a two-way process that enables both parties involved

to develop a positive and mutually supportive discussion and ongoing development plan.

Good practice would suggest that one to one confidential supervision should be held at least once every 6 weeks, in other words, once a term. Some staff, for example if they are newly qualified or less confident, may need supervision sessions to be held more regularly.

How does supervision fit in the appraisal process?

It is important to remember that although appraisals and supervision are different, annual targets from appraisals should be discussed and reviewed through supervision and changed or adapted as necessary.

Supervision Contract

Between Supervisor:

and supervisee:

Location:

Agenda and Structure

Preparation work will have been completed by both the supervisor and supervisee and where possible an agenda set before the supervision session.

Set agenda items will include:

These will be discussed and reviewed at every session.

Additional agenda items will be prioritised at the beginning of the session by both parties to ensure the most effective use of time.

Supervision will cover:

- Organisational functions
- Professional functions
- Supportive functions
- Record keeping and confidentiality

All supervision sessions will be recorded including:

- areas covered
- discussion points
- agreed action plans, timescales

Copies of the record will be available to both the supervisor and supervisee and access permitted in the following situations: Auditing, Grievance, Disciplinary, Safeguarding and Complaints.

Cancellations

In the event that a scheduled supervision session needs to be cancelled, it will be re-scheduled at the point of cancellation.

The session should be re-scheduled to take place within 5 working days of the date of the original booked session.

It is the responsibility of both the Supervisor and the Supervisee to ensure that the new session is carried out as soon as is conveniently possible.

Disagreements

Areas of disagreements between the Supervisor and Supervisees will be recorded on the supervision records. Areas of disagreements that cannot be resolved may be referred to the Manager/Owner/Proprietor or Management Committee.

Review of supervision

The supervision process including, content, length, frequency, format and record templates should be reviewed by all participants within the supervision process at least annually.

Agreement

We agree that supervision will be given and received in accordance with (setting/school name) Supervision Policy where more details regarding supervision can be located.

Signed:

Print Name:

Signed:

Print Name: