



Supervision policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of supervision is to ensure that all staff receive regular support, guidance, challenge and professional reflection to help them provide safe, effective and child-centred care.

Supervision is a key part of safeguarding children, supporting staff wellbeing and ensuring accountability within the home.

Effective supervision should:

- improve practice
- promote safeguarding awareness
- support staff wellbeing
- identify training and development needs
- ensure accountability
- encourage reflective practice
- strengthen consistency across the staff team
- improve outcomes for children

Supervision is not simply a “catch up” meeting. It is a professional process that should evidence support, challenge and management oversight.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- residential childcare workers
- senior staff
- waking night staff
- bank staff
- managers
- ancillary staff where appropriate
- agency staff where supervision arrangements are required

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy supports compliance with:

Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015

- Regulation 13 — leadership and management
- Regulation 33 — employment of staff

The Workforce Development Standard

The Quality Standards

Ofsted SCCIF

Children's homes must ensure staff are supervised and supported to meet children's needs safely and effectively.

4. Key Principles of Supervision

Supervision should be:

- Safeguarding-focused
- Children's safety and wellbeing must remain central.
- Reflective

Staff should be encouraged to think about:

- why situations happened
- how children may have felt
- what could have been done differently
- learning from incidents

Supportive

- Staff should feel listened to and supported.

Challenging

- Managers must appropriately challenge poor practice, poor recording or unsafe behaviours.

Solution-focused

- Supervision should identify practical actions and improvements.

Consistent

- All staff should receive regular supervision.

5. Types of Supervision

Formal Supervision - Planned, structured supervision sessions with recorded notes.

Informal Supervision - Day-to-day guidance, support and debriefs.

Reflective Supervision - Focused discussion exploring:

- emotional impact of the work
- relationships with children
- safeguarding thinking
- behavioural understanding

Group Supervision - Team reflection sessions around themes, practice issues or learning.

Debrief Supervision - Following incidents, safeguarding concerns or restraints.

Frequency of supervision

Staff role	Minimum frequency
New staff	Every 2 weeks during probation
RCW's	Monthly
SRCW's	Monthly
Waking Night staff	Monthly
Bank staff	Every 3 months or after concerns
Agency staff	As required

Additional supervision should occur:

- following safeguarding concerns
- after serious incidents
- where performance concerns arise
- following complaints
- after allegations
- following periods of sickness or absence
- where emotional wellbeing support is needed

7. Responsibilities

Registered Manager

Responsible for:

- ensuring supervision takes place
- monitoring supervision quality
- ensuring actions are followed up
- identifying patterns/themes
- ensuring safeguarding issues are addressed

Supervisors

Responsible for:

- preparing for supervision
- creating a reflective environment
- challenging unsafe practice
- supporting staff development
- recording discussions accurately
- following up actions

Staff Members

Responsible for:

- attending supervision
- preparing honestly and openly
- reflecting on practice
- completing agreed actions
- raising concerns or support needs

8. Step-by-Step Supervision Procedure

STEP 1 — Preparation

Before supervision, the supervisor should review:

- incidents
- safeguarding concerns
- recording quality
- attendance/sickness
- training compliance
- previous supervision actions
- complaints/compliments
- key work completed

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- children's feedback
- performance concerns

The supervisor should identify:

- strengths
- concerns
- themes
- safeguarding matters
- support needs

The staff member should also prepare reflections.

STEP 2 — Create a Reflective Environment

Supervision should:

- take place privately
- be free from interruptions
- feel professional but supportive
- allow honest discussion

Managers should encourage reflective thinking rather than simply "question and answer."

STEP 3 — Discuss Safeguarding and Children

Safeguarding must always be discussed.

The supervisor should explore:

- any concerns about children
- exploitation risks
- online safety concerns
- missing episodes
- staff boundaries
- allegations/whistleblowing
- professional curiosity
- children's emotional wellbeing
- child protection concerns
- complaints or disclosures
- children's wishes and feelings

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Managers should ask:

“What worries you most currently?”

“Are there any children you feel particularly concerned about?”

“Do you feel risks are being managed effectively?”

“Have there been any situations you found difficult?”

STEP 4 — Reflect on Practice

The supervision should explore:

- relationships with children
- behaviour management
- emotional responses
- communication
- teamwork
- consistency
- use of authority
- de-escalation
- safeguarding thinking
- restorative practice

Reflective questions may include:

“Why do you think the child responded that way?”

“How do you think they experienced that interaction?”

“What would you do differently?”

“What went well?”

“What have you learned recently?”

STEP 5 — Review Recording Quality

Managers must review:

- daily logs
- key work
- safeguarding records
- incident reports
- handovers
- communication logs

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Managers should challenge:

- poor detail
- lack of child voice
- missing actions
- weak safeguarding analysis
- delays in recording

Good recording examples should also be recognised.

STEP 6 — Review Performance and Conduct

Discussion should include:

- punctuality
- professionalism
- teamwork
- communication
- attitude
- accountability
- reliability
- compliance with policies
- conduct concerns
- sleeping on shift concerns (where relevant)
- use of phones/social media
- professional boundaries

Where concerns are identified, clear expectations must be set.

STEP 7 — Training and Development

Review:

- mandatory training compliance
- Level 3 Diploma progress
- safeguarding understanding
- additional learning needs
- career aspirations
- competency gaps

Managers should identify:

- refresher training
- shadowing
- coaching
- additional reading
- workshops
- reflective exercises

STEP 8 — Wellbeing and Support

Managers should explore:

- stress levels
- emotional wellbeing
- burnout
- work/life balance
- support needs
- impact of traumatic incidents

Staff should feel able to discuss difficulties safely.

Where wellbeing concerns arise, support should be considered.

STEP 9 — Agree Actions

Every supervision must end with clear actions.

Actions should be:

- specific
- measurable
- achievable
- time-bound

Example

Action	Responsible	Timescale
Complete missing safeguarding training	Staff member	Within 2 weeks
Improve detail in key work recording	Staff member	Immediate
Update exploitation risk assessment	Key worker/ supervisor	Within 48 hours

STEP 10 — Record and Sign Off

The supervision record should include:

- discussion summary
- safeguarding discussions
- reflective discussion
- concerns raised
- agreed actions
- support offered

Both parties should sign the supervision.

Staff should have opportunity to comment.

9. Safeguarding Expectations in Supervision

Managers must ensure supervision explores:

- whether staff understand safeguarding procedures
- whether concerns are escalated correctly
- whether staff feel confident to report concerns
- whether whistleblowing culture is healthy
- whether staff understand current risks within the home

Supervision must not avoid difficult conversations.

10. Managing Poor Performance Through Supervision

Where concerns are identified, supervision should:

- clearly identify the concern
- explain impact on children/safety
- identify required improvement
- set review dates
- identify support/training needed

Repeated concerns may lead to:

- capability processes
- disciplinary procedures
- additional monitoring
- probation review

11. Recording Standards

Supervision records must:

- be factual
- be respectful
- avoid inappropriate language
- clearly evidence discussion and actions
- show safeguarding oversight
- show management challenge where necessary

Poor examples:

- "Discussed practice."
- "No concerns."
- "All okay."

Good examples:

- "Discussed delays in completing key work actions linked to exploitation concerns. Staff member acknowledged this and reflected on workload management. Agreed that all safeguarding actions must be completed within required timescales moving forward."

12. Missed or Delayed Supervision

Where supervision is delayed:

- a new date must be arranged immediately
- the reason should be recorded
- managers must ensure drift does not occur

Repeated missed supervision by either party should be addressed.

13. Quality Assurance

The Registered Manager should regularly audit supervision to ensure:

- sessions occur regularly
- safeguarding is discussed
- actions are followed up
- recording quality is good

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- reflective practice is evident
- managers are appropriately challenging staff

Themes should feed into:

- team meetings
- training plans
- Regulation 45 reviews
- workforce development planning

15. Policy Review

This policy should be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- safeguarding concerns identify gaps
- Ofsted identifies weaknesses
- legislation changes
- workforce issues arise
- practice concerns emerge