



Supervision Policy

St Helens Borough Council

April 2022 - April 2023

Version Number:	Date:
V5	1/04/2022

CONTENTS PAGE

1. Introduction	Page 3
2. Reflection and Learning	Page 4
3. Frequency	Page 5
4. Supervision Types	Page 6
5. Recording Supervision	Page 8
6. Professional Supervision	Page 9
7. Case Supervision	Page 10
8. Newly Qualified Social Workers	Page 11
9. Confidentiality and Retention	Page 11
10. Appendices	Page 13

1. **Introduction**

St Helens Children's Services recognises that our team members are our most important asset in fulfilling the Council's responsibility to deliver safe and effective high-quality services to children and families.

The role our social workers and fellow practitioners perform whilst working in children's services is a challenging one which takes place in a complex adaptive environment where professional judgement is paramount. Staff working in children's services need to be confident, articulate, and professional with highly developed skills which are analytical, based on verbal, nonverbal and written skills. They also need stamina, emotional resilience, and determination.

We recognise that our social workers and practitioners working with children and families will be more effective if they receive good quality supervision, which does not just take the form of one-to-one meetings but considers other models to support the development of emotional resilience, self-reflection, learning and confident practice and decision making, such as group supervision, reflective case discussions and observations.

The Standards for Employers of Social Workers in England promote the value of the social work profession by setting out a framework that creates an ethical and effective work environment and supports high quality social work practice wherever that takes place. These standards are relevant to all practitioners working with children and families and practitioners should review and understand those standards as part of their own professional accountability.

https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/1640/1227_socialworkengland_standards_prof_standards_final-aw.pdf .

This policy is underpinned by The Standards for Employers of Social Workers in England and the post qualifying Knowledge and Skills Statement for Child and Family Practice Supervisors This statement of knowledge and skills provides the basis for accrediting practice supervisors in child and family social work.

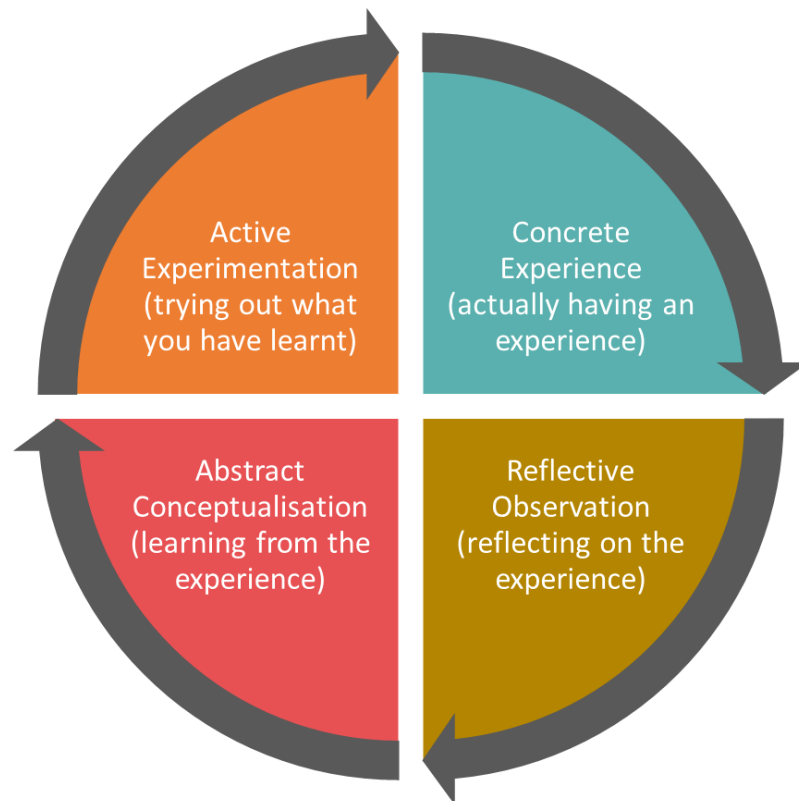
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/knowledge-and-skills-statements-for-child-and-family-social-work>.

Dr David Wilkins undertook a piece of research into '*Reflections from a series of empirical studies of supervision: what have we learnt so far*' Dr Wilkins advises that formal supervision is only one part of the support that we offer to staff, the research undertaken identified that supervision offered by those who participated in the research was about meeting the organisations responsibilities and for the practitioner was about providing an update on cases rather than an opportunity to reflect. Tony Morrison advises of '*the importance of getting the supervision of staff right in social care, and of positive role modelling by managers, cannot be overstated. The quality of services to vulnerable users and the level of staff morale, skills and motivation are all inextricably bound up with the fate of supervision and the degree to which supervisors and managers model the attitudes and behaviors*' that the organisation wishes its frontline staff to adopt. Put starkly, it is not the existence of supervision per se that makes a difference, what is necessary is good supervision" (Tony Morrison – Staff Supervision in Social Care).

2. Reflection and learning

St Helens recognises that supervision is an important part of self-reflection, learning and development, and as a consequence we endeavour to provide a flexible and adaptive approach to supervision that supports individuals to engage and value the supervision process. Managers should consider the individual needs of staff when planning their supervision. St Helens does not wish to be constrained by a model of 1:1 supervision on its own, Managers should consider how learning circles, reflective case discussion, observations and group supervision all contribute to and are valid forms of supervision. However, we should not confuse adopting a multi-faceted approach with an ad hoc approach to supervision which can result in dependency. A practitioner seeking support around a decision for a family is different to having a reflective case discussion that supports learning. If your practitioner comes to you to reflect on a piece of work, ask them to think about what went well, what may need to change and what they think are the next steps, this preparation will support them to seek their own solutions but will also support you as a manager to facilitate reflection for your practitioner, record your discussions and any agreements made.

When undertaking reflection with your practitioner or as a supervisee consider Kolb's Learning Cycle published in 1984 which identifies the four stages of learning, utilising this model will support managers to guide their practitioners through a reflective learning process.



Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984)

3. **Frequency**

Our level of oversight / support / reflection and supervision should be considered based on the complexity of the intervention and families, the confidence and competence of the practitioner and the stage of the practitioner's professional development. Managers and Social Workers should be able to independently identify particular families to be discussed and where observed practices will take place. The below are the minimum expectations around frequency of supervision.

Child / Case supervision.

Nature of Involvement	Frequency of Case Supervision
Level 2	Bi-monthly
Assessment	Review at 20 days and then monthly
Child in Need	Bi-monthly or monthly if required for example where additional support for the practitioner is required or where there are increasing risks.
Child Protection Plan	Monthly
Looked After Children	Bi-monthly or monthly if known High risk
Care Leavers 18 - 21yrs	Bi-monthly
Care Leavers 21yrs +	Quarterly
Medium/High Risk Exploitation	Monthly

Whilst the above is set as a bottom line, the nature of the staff members experience, confidence and competence will also determine the frequency of supervision offered St Helens offer will vary depending on the nature of their qualification and work. As a consequence, St Helen's offer of supervisory support is as follows:

Staff supervision frequency

Staff level	Frequency of case supervision
Student Placements	Weekly
ASYE's	Weekly for first 6 weeks Fortnightly up to 6 months Monthly thereafter
2 Year post qualifying Social Workers	Monthly
Personal Advisors	Monthly
Family Time Workers	Monthly
Family Intervention Workers	Monthly
Performance Management	Minimum of Fortnightly
Business Support staff / Administration Officers including PA's	6 Weekly

Supervision of Youth Justice staff

Youth Justice practitioners include qualified social workers, probation officers and other staff from a range of disciplines appropriate to the nature of the specialist work, from fields such as Psychology and Criminology. In order to ensure that all staff are supervised in line with the principles of the overarching policy in place within CSC, it has been agreed that all practice Childview (YJ database for St Helens). Specialist staff and administration staff receive supervision on a bi-monthly basis. The attached template is for inclusion in any appendices. Staff who hold cases receive monthly supervision using the SOS framework, alongside scrutiny of the Assetplus framework assessment (National Youth Justice Assessment Tool) within.

4. Supervision types

It is the responsibility of both manager and practitioner to ensure that they have a planned supervision schedule. Supervision sessions should be planned no less than 12 months in advance and should only be rearranged if unavoidable and rearranged at the earliest opportunity.

4:1 Supervision should:

- not exceed more than two hours in most instances, but it is acknowledged that for some practitioners, longer supervision sessions are required and manageable,
- must take place in an environment that offers privacy and safety and is without interruption.
- must take place in line with staff level / confidence and competence.
- provide the space for practitioners to reflect, to consider their own developmental needs and CPD and to build on their knowledge and skills.
- support performance and quality of work, will allow for reflective case discussions and should be a time to consider quality assurance of practice as well as individual welfare.

4:2 Reflective supervision: Kolb's 4 stage learning cycle, allows the practitioner to experience a situation whether this be a visit, a meeting, or an assessment, it allows them to reflect on the experience thinking about and exploring inconsistencies in experience and understanding, Abstract Conceptualization thinking how it may be done differently, building on the experience and then Active experimentation, they test and apply their new ideas and reflections to the next experience. The manager and the practitioner are able to reflect throughout the experience and discuss what impact this has on the child/practitioner and what they may do differently. This type of supervision allows the practitioner to develop their practice with the guidance and support from their manager, the manager is a facilitator, it is not for the manager to have all the answers rather support the practitioner to seek solutions themselves. Outcomes and learning should be set in the context of the child's journey the intervention we have delivered, the practitioner's journey and next steps and recorded as part of our reflective supervision.

4:3 Group supervision. Signs of Safety provides us with a framework for group supervision, recognising the value of shared discussions, problem solving and planning. This type of supervision supports a shared culture, shared structures, it contributes to a questioning culture within a team and across a service. Group supervisions will help gather the information, develop analysis, judgement, and questioning skills.

Group supervisions will not happen for all children's cases, but the questions, explorations and group discussions will support individual practitioners to think about children on their own caseloads with similar needs or risks. Group Supervision is led by the facilitator helping the Case worker to bring the information and present whilst other participants listen and write down their ideas. The Advisor supports the facilitator making sure that the group do not get distracted by the content and detail of the case but remain focused on the process.

Group supervision is structured and timed to keep on track and the facilitator must ensure that all engage, and the discussion isn't taken over by stronger more confident personalities. Group supervision regardless of the whether the worker's case was discussed should be included in the individual's supervision record considering how it could support children on their own case load and the practitioner's development/ confidence and knowledge.

- 4:4** Case reflections/ discussions and collaborative case discussions, are all an important part of the practitioner's supervision process. When a case discussion has taken place, this should form part of the supervision and reflection; the learning when identified should be tracked through the supervision process. A case discussion / reflection / collaborative case Review are all forms of supervision and reflection. These should be recognised as valuable opportunities for the practitioner and are an opportunity to reflect on certain children and our impact and their outcomes.

5. Recording supervision

Case supervision records must be placed on the child's case file where a specific child has been discussed, within two working days, using the agreed Case Supervision template

- A record of Professional Supervision must be provided to the supervisee within a maximum 7 working days of the supervision session taking place on the agreed Professional Supervision template. The supervision standards include as a minimum; Supervisors are trained in supervision processes and the application of these procedures and that new supervisors are inducted into this supervision policy and procedures.

- Any disagreements arising between the Supervisor and Supervisee are recorded together with proposed activities to resolve or escalate as required.
- The Principal Social Worker will carry out an annual Social Work Health Check Survey no less than annually which will include a focus on supervision.
- Monthly reports will be run on the timeliness of Case Supervision. Heads of Service will carry out an audit of the quality and timeliness of professional supervision.
- All audit tools have Supervision and Management Oversight running through them as a 'golden thread'.

6. Professional Supervision

Professional supervision is the regular opportunity for supervising managers and supervisees to:

- Spend dedicated time ensuring that the member of staff understands what is expected from them
- Give time and space to ensure that the supervisor can hear of any issues both personal and professional which are affecting the member of staff, and ensure support is in place. For example, this would include agreeing leave and toil arrangements, hearing about health difficulties and issues that may be impacting on their work practice and performance
- Give and receive constructive feedback about practice and performance
- Give and receive clear direction around tasks and work planning, and for the employer and organisation to provide support including ensuring that lieu time arrangements are agreed
- Jointly review training and development needs and agree how these needs will be met
- Provide a forum in which performance concerns are identified and plans formulated to improve performance and monitor such plans

- Provide a basis for the collection of evidence for the annual appraisal of staff for both parties, with reference to continuous professional development, learning and development needs.
- Provides an opportunity to review workers current caseload and ensures that this is within the individuals' professional competency and capacity. This should be balanced against the demands of the caseload at that point. Caseload management is a fluid dynamic process.
- Performance Management and annual Appraisals system underpins operational management and supervision arrangements and encourages continuous professional development.

7. Case Supervision

Direct work with children and families can be highly rewarding as well as complex, stressful and emotionally demanding. Case supervision is of critical importance to social workers and staff with case holding responsibilities; it is the primary opportunity to review cases, practice issues and developmental needs.

Our objective is to deliver effective services that safeguard and protect children and achieve positive outcomes for children and families. Effective supervision facilitates reflective practice; a learning process in which the supervising manager engages the supervisee to:

- Be challenging and inquisitive as to the progress and management of cases. Explore the supervisees practice and factors influencing their practice responses (including emotions, assumptions, power relations and the wider social context);
- Develop a shared understanding of the knowledge base informing the supervisees assessment and critical analysis of risk and need and limitations.
- Identify practice strengths and development needs where practitioners are sufficiently supported, stretched, and mentored to ensure the welfare of the child remains paramount, that services and interventions are delivered within a timely way that avoids drift and that their wishes, views and feelings and their daily lived experience is understood and taken into consideration.

- Use practice observations, reflection, evidence and feedback from children, families and others to reflect on and agree what needs to happen to make confident decisions in the best interest of children.
- Ensuring that the provision of services promotes the ethnic, cultural, racial, gender, religious, identity and language needs of the child and family.
- Identifying and enabling clear and effective management of risk. (Risks to child, family, staff member, and organisation).
- Establishing a clear understanding of accountability, enabling targets and objectives to be agreed and outcomes to be monitored in relation to specific cases or roles.
- Ensuring that recording on the child's record is compliant with information governance and records management policy, procedure, and guidance.

8. Newly Qualified Social Workers

During Newly Qualified Social Workers, Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE), their supervision will be tailored to their individual needs, but there will be increased supervision alongside protected time dedicated to learning and development as outlined in the ASYE Programme. Newly Qualified Social Workers will also have a reduced caseload and their caseloads will reflect their level of knowledge and experience in terms of complexity. Newly Qualified Social Workers will engage in all learning and development opportunities linked to the ASYE Programme. They will also attend monthly reflective group supervision offered by the Principal Social Worker and/or Advanced Practitioners.

9. Confidentiality and Retention

Supervision records must be securely secured in the supervisees share point folder when the member of staff moves post or ceases employment, these records should be transferred to the new manager or archived.

There are circumstances where it may be necessary for supervisors to discuss information gained from supervision with senior managers.

Supervision records may be released for the purpose of monitoring the quality of supervision or used as documentation in disciplinary or legal proceedings. Supervision records are the property of Children's Services. Where issues of a personal nature, to the member of staff, are contained within a supervision record, the confidentiality of such material should be protected in line with the Data Protection Act.

The principle of confidentiality within supervision does not exclude the supervisor or supervisee from their professional responsibilities as registered social workers and professionals working with children should evidence of misconduct, unsafe or illegal practice arise during supervision sessions or otherwise they will be shared.

Welfare Supervision Record

Supervision Date	
Supervisor	
Supervisee	

Agenda

What are the areas that both wish to discuss

Welfare

Any personal circumstances that impacts on work/performance

Annual leave and FLEXI

Previous Minutes / Actions

Check to ensure all completed

Staffing

For completion with managers

Cases discussed

Record Child's ICS ID all case discussions are held on the child's record. This section can be used to record impact in professional which is deemed private for the practitioner and not appropriate for the record what is going well areas for improvement

Development and Training

Portfolios, CPD, Progression, Skills gap, leadership and mentoring, links to appraisal

Performance

*Identify strengths and areas for development, use self- service dashboard to ensure performance is tracked and supported.
For new staff think about how this relates to interview questions and scoring ie additional support.*

Feedback

Quality of practice in line with practice standards compliments/complaints Feedback from service users and peers, partners, what have they learnt and what would they do differently

Audits

Reflect on the audit, what are the strengths. What are the areas for development, are actions completed what will we do differently, is there shared learning that could be used, any partnership learning

Reflections

Overarching reflection on practice, self. Areas of strength areas of development.

AOB

Corporate messages, organisational, new developments, team meeting reflections. Building, Other

Actions agreed

Action	Who is responsible	Date for completion

Supervision contract and agreement.

This is a true reflection of the discussion between supervisor and supervisee

Sign:

Date:

Models of Reflection

Surprises to Learning Reflective Model (adapted from University of York 2000)

Surprises

What surprised you about that?

Satisfactions

What were you satisfied with or about?

Dissatisfactions

What were you dissatisfied with or about?

Learning

What have you learnt?

How will you use all this?

Rolfe et al (2001) The So What Model of Reflection

Consider these 3 simple questions to guide your reflection:

What...	So, what...	Now what...
is the problem?	was going through my mind?	do I need to do?
was my role?	should I have done?	broader issues have been raised?
Happened?	do I know about what happened now?	might happen now?
were the consequences?		

The Weather Model of Reflection

Sunshine – what went well? What felt good?



Rain – what didn't go so well?



Lightening – what came as a shock to you?



Fog – where did you get lost? What couldn't you see? Why?



Gibbs Reflective Account

<p>Description What happened? Select a particular experience/episode/event and provide a brief, factual summary.</p>	
<p>Feelings the thoughts What were you thinking and feeling at the time? How were you feeling at the beginning and as events unfolded? How do you feel about it now?</p>	
<p>Evaluation What was good and bad about the experience? List the positive and negative points. How do you think it felt from the service user's perspective?</p>	
<p>Analysis What sense can you make of the situation? What does it mean? What knowledge did/can you draw on (e.g. theories, legislation, values and ethics, professional standards)?</p>	
<p>Conclusion What else could you have done? What could you have done differently? Is there anything you feel you perhaps shouldn't have done? What did you learn about yourself?</p>	
<p>Action Plan What would you do differently if a similar situation arose again? How will you adapt your practice in light of this experience?</p>	



OBSERVED PRACTICES

Name of Observer:	Date of Observation:
Child ID:	Level of Need:

Nature of the Observed Practice	
Meeting	
Supervision	
Visit	
Other (Please specify)	

Identified Strengths

Areas for Development

Reflections with the Practitioner

Other Comments

Supervision Agreement

The purpose of this supervision agreement is to set out the standards of supervision and expectations that underpin our work together.

The supervision meeting will consist of the following:

- Case discussions
- Workload management
- Factors affecting the quality of practice and performance.
- Learning and development needs
- Annual Leave arrangements
- Audit discussions.

SUPERVISION STANDARDS

The manager will:

- make supervision a priority. If supervision needs to be cancelled for any reason it will be rearranged to the earliest possible date.
- ensure the supervisee understands their role and responsibilities and what is expected of them.
- inform the supervisee of Corporate and Directorate policies, procedures and practice.
- ensure appropriate induction and training is planned according to the supervisees needs.
- assess the supervisees performance against performance standards and give constructive open feedback.
- read and review case records at regular intervals.
- record any advice, consultations they give or decisions they make on the case file.
- be open and honest at all times.
- seek feedback from the supervisee and be receptive to it.
- will inform the social worker/support worker if any aspect of the supervision meeting is to be shared with other parties.
- demonstrate anti-oppressive practice within their managerial role.
- monitor absence from work and explore issues which may contribute to improved attendance.
- support the supervisee with difficult or stressful work situations or issues that are impacting on them as appropriate.

The supervisee will:

- make supervision a priority and will prepare appropriately for it.
- will ensure that requested actions are completed to the standard and timescale requested in-between supervision sessions.
- demonstrate a personal responsibility for their own learning and development.
- use performance management data positively to monitor their own performance against Team, Directorate and national standards.
- inform the manager of ongoing case issues and seek guidance when necessary.
- accept constructive criticism positively and take the necessary action to improve performance.
- give the manager constructive feedback on their supervisory role.
- seek, read and apply guidance on Corporate and Directorate policies, procedures and practice.
- observe all workplace requirements including timekeeping and absence from work procedures.

Dispute Resolution

The supervisor and supervisee will strive for openness, and any difficulties that may arise within the supervision relationship should be discussed between them in the first instance. If this is simply not possible – for whatever reason – the person who is dissatisfied with the relationship must feel able and be encouraged to discuss this with their second line manager.

We have read, understood, and agree with the Delivery Service Supervision Policy and this supervision agreement.

Supervisee Signature:

Date:

Supervisor Signature:

Date:

SUPERVISION RECORD
YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

Supervisor	
Supervisee	
Date and time of Session	
Has supervision gone ahead or been re arranged? If so, give reason:	
Duration of session	
Date of last session	
Date last supervision notes circulated	

Agenda	
	Check in
	Review of previous minutes, actions and matters arising
	Case Discussion
	Other work/lead areas discussion
	Performance
	Development
	HR Issues
	Positives of the month
	AOB

1. Check in.

(inc. how is the worker feeling – professionally and personally? general well-being at work.

Ask if they have any agenda items to bring to supervision)

What's working well –

What are your worries –

What needs to happen

2. Review of previous minutes and matters arising.

3. Case Discussion

(use signs of safety for case discussions/reflection; ensure RJ is discussed where relevant within case discussion; ensure timescales for actions are set; check if any updates/guidance on MARMMs and COCL other than has previously been discussed outside of supervision. Consider referrals to Families First)

Cases focused on using SOS today (2/3 in depth):

What is working well

What are you worried about?

What needs to happen

YJS COCL Cases

MARMM Process

MAPPA

VLO Referrals

Do It Profiler

Health Referrals

Mentoring update

Interventions

CELLS

CSC referrals

GCP2

Families First

4. Other Work/lead areas discussion

(issues from other areas of work or lead areas)

Transitions

Disability/Diversity and Equality

5. Performance

(inc. feedback from audits, quality assurance processes, other meetings for done in advance with manager)

Performance

Lead Roles

Data cleaning

Audits

6. Development

(inc. progress against appraisal objectives, professional development, and identification of areas for support)

Appraisals

Personal Objectives

Service Objectives

Training Completed

Training Planned

7. HR Issues

(inc. discussion around issues, health and safety issues/concerns, leave/sickness/training)

Sickness – 4 days sickness, 2 days for flexi, this was agreed with Tracy Monteith
Return to work to be completed on 7th June.

8. Positives of the month

9. AOB

Date of next session			
Signed (Supervisee)		Date	
Signed (Supervisor)		Date	

