

Supervision Policy

Sutton Children's Services

Standards, guidance and tools for the supervision of all practitioners
within Sutton Children's Services

August 2023

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2. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for the professional supervision for all staff working within Sutton Children's Services.

For the purposes of this policy, supervision is defined as,

'a process by which one worker is given responsibility by the organisation to work with another worker in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives which together promote the best outcomes for service users'¹.

The reasons for offering those working in social care access to effective supervision are numerous and the importance of good quality supervision is highlighted in national policy and often cited in serious case reviews. Supervision is one of the key mechanisms for ensuring the best possible outcomes for children, retention of social care staff and promoting an organisational learning culture.

The [Social Care Institute for Excellence \(2013\)](#) highlights,

'Both research and practice point to the benefits of developing, operating and sustaining good supervision within an organisational culture that values both the people who work there and the people it offers services to. If these conditions are met, best practice is more likely. Good supervision should result in positive outcomes for people who use services as well as similar outcomes for the worker, the supervisor and the organisation as a whole.'

Supervision provides a form of accountability between the employer and employee on behalf of the public. It is a tool for monitoring the quantity and quality of work being done. Just as employers have a duty of care to provide supervision for those working in social care, employees have a duty to keep their line manager informed of all matters of a complex or contentious nature.

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that it meets the needs of the service, the staff and their supervisors regardless of the area in which they work and sets out the minimum practice standards regarding the organisation's expectations of supervision. It also embeds the restorative practice and trauma-informed practice models within supervision for Sutton Children's Services.

This policy sits alongside the national [Knowledge and Skills Statement for Approved Child and Family Practitioners](#) and the [Knowledge and Skills Statement for Practice Leaders and Practice Supervisors](#), which set out the expectations of professional practice and the basis for accreditation within Children and Families Social Work. It also complies with the supervision standards outlined in the Local Government Association's [The Standards for Employers](#).

¹ Morrison, T. (2005) 'Staff supervision in social care', Brighton: Pavilion.

3. Policy Statement

Sutton Children's Services is committed to ensuring that every member of the Social Care workforce receives good quality, effective supervision on a regular basis. Our aspirations for Sutton children and families can only be achieved by recognising the value of each individual worker, investing in their continued professional development and emotional wellbeing and being clear about the standards of practice required.

We recognise that the delivery of social care services is a complex and demanding task, often involving exposure to high levels of trauma. Professional supervision, whether for new or experienced practitioners or managers, is critical to ensuring that staff practice safely and can achieve positive outcomes for children and families. This policy sets out the expectations of how staff should be supervised and guides managers in the key elements needed to supervise staff in all relevant settings effectively.

4. Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed by Sutton Children's Services whether on a temporary (including agency staff), permanent, full time or part-time basis;
- Supervisors employed by other agencies or Directorates within the London Borough of Sutton with responsibility for the supervision of children's services staff.
- Teams which offer a service to carers, such as Adoption and Fostering will adhere to Adoption and Fostering Regulations governing this area of practice.
- In multi-agency teams, such as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or Integrated Youth Services (IYS), where the supervisee may be seconded or commissioned into Sutton Children's Services, it is likely the day-to-day supervisor may be of a different professional discipline. As such the supervisee will continue to have access to supervision from their employer (i.e. Police, Probation) and in the case of health professionals access to clinical supervision from their own agency (i.e. CAMHS, Cognus).

5. Supervision as part of the Quality Assurance Framework

Supervision is just one method in which practitioners in Sutton are provided with feedback on their performance and practice. Sutton has a range of performance management and quality assurance tools that allow for practitioners to have their performance appraised and practice regularly supported and challenged by their line managers or senior leaders. This includes but is not limited to: annual appraisals, observations of practice by Senior Leaders as part of Practice Week, as well as thematic and regular practice learning audits.

- **Appraisals**

All staff in Sutton should have an annual appraisal with their line manager to reflect on their performance over the previous 12 months and set objectives to work towards for the coming 12 months. Appraisal objectives should be monitored and reviewed throughout the year via supervision. Since 2016, Sutton has implemented performance-related pay, whereby achievement of objectives set results in pay increments and progression. For further information on the Appraisal process, refer to [Appraisal Guidance](#) on the intranet.

- **Practice Learning Week**

Implemented in January 2019, Practice Learning Week takes place in Sutton Children's Services twice yearly and allows for Senior Managers from across both the Chief Executive and People Directorates to engage in direct observations of frontline practice. The purpose of these observations are to both assure the quality of work, learn about current practice conditions to inform decision making and also to influence front line practice by facilitating reflection on case direction, work undertaken and case recording. For further information on Practice Learning Week, please see the guidance [Practice Learning Week Overview](#)

- **Thematic & Regular Practice Learning Audits**

Throughout the year practitioners can expect that audits will be undertaken on their cases. There is a programme of [thematic case audits](#) scheduled annually, which reviews practice on 20 cases per quarter. These audits are conducted quarterly by management and members of the QA team and assess the quality of practice in regards to a particular theme or topic.

There are also regular [practice learning audits](#) which involve practitioners assessing their own practice and then engaging in discussions about this with their line manager. These audits focus on both compliance with standards and outcomes for children and families.

All of the above processes should be underpinned by a restorative approach whereby the line manager or leader should have an open and honest conversation *with* the practitioner and reflectively explore their thoughts and feelings in relation to their practice and what impact this is having on outcomes for children and families. It is important to highlight that all these processes, as with supervision, should be a *two-way* process and that practitioners should not feel *done to* by them. Practitioners should feel confident to raise issues that might be impacting on their performance: these could be personal, professional or organisational issues.

6. Model of Supervision

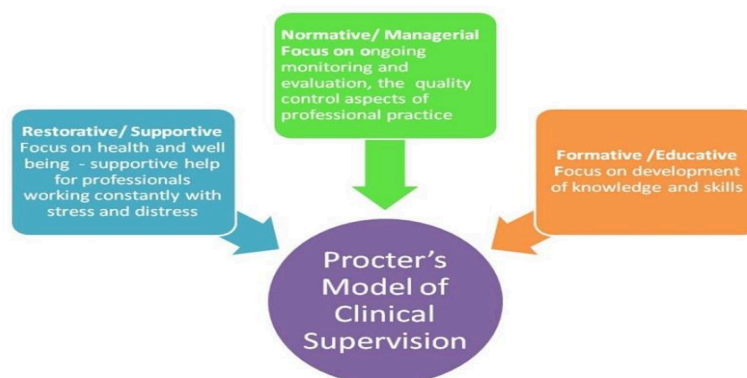
Supervision should be adaptable to meet the practitioner's needs; these needs will vary according to where the individual is at in terms of:

- their professional development (e.g. are they a new starter or have they been in their role for several years?);
- their workload (e.g. do they have a high risk case they are worried about or are they struggling to complete reports on time?); and
- their personal lives (e.g.. are family members unwell or do they have parental commitments impacting on their time?).

As such the model of supervision used should not be too prescriptive and be fluid enough to meet these varied but sometimes competing needs. Supervision should be delivered in a way that balances each of the key functions. This means at times more focus might need to be given to one function than another but that it is important not to disregard some functions or always focus on one function. The supervisor and supervisee should negotiate which functions require more attention at the beginning of any supervision session- this can be achieved through a check-in discussion.

Proctor's Model of Supervision

The model of supervision that we use in Sutton Children's Services is one that fits with both our restorative and trauma-informed practice models and that is Proctor's Model of Supervision². In 1987, Brigid Proctor developed a model of supervision which had three, interactive functions to it: restorative/supportive, normative/managerial and formative/educative (see diagram below).



Proctor (1987) explained: 'Both [supervisor and supervisee] carry some degree of responsibility for the development of the student or worker (the formative task). Both carry some share of responsibility for the ongoing monitoring and evaluating of the student or worker and at certain times – at the end of the course or the point of promotion, for instance – either may carry responsibility for assessment (the normative task). Each carries a share of the responsibility for ensuring that the student or worker is adequately refreshed and re-creative (the restorative function).' This model emphasises the two-way process of supervision and highlights

² Proctor B (1987) Supervision: a co-operative exercise in accountability. Enabling and Ensuring: Supervision in Practice. MM and PM Leicester, National Youth Bureau and the Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work.

how both the practitioner and their line manager have responsibility to ensure that supervision is effective and meets both the practitioner and ultimately service users needs.

Considering each of the 3 functions in more detail we can consider how a supervisee can receive the requisite support from supervision:

Restorative/Supportive

This involves providing psychological or emotional support to the supervisee. Using restorative skills such as active listening, the supervisee will be both supported and challenged to improve their capacity to cope with stressful or difficult situations, thereby developing resilience.

Whilst this is the focus of restorative group supervision, it should also form part of formal, 1:1 supervision or informal supervision discussions. The supervisor can ask the supervisee to reflect on their feelings and how they have coped with certain cases and what they have learnt from these experiences. It might also require the supervisor to support the supervisee to reflect on their relationships with colleagues or other professionals. Restorative support can also be achieved through informal processes such as peer support and by the supervisor or colleagues giving praise, recognising achievements and highlighting positive experiences.

Normative/Managerial

The normative or managerial function of supervision focuses on supporting the supervisee's performance through the promotion and monitoring of their adherence to standards, policies and procedures. This function requires supervisees to demonstrate their compliance and competence and take professional accountability for their work.

Normative conversations could include but are not limited to the supervisor checking that:

- policies, procedures and standards are understood and correctly applied;
- individual performance meets individual, team and service objectives;
- national standards and professional standards, as they relate to regulatory bodies (eg. Social Work England) are complied with and maintained;
- the supervisee has a safe, working environment in which to practice; and
- the supervisee stays up-to-date with any pertinent information being shared by senior management, the Corporate Directorate or external agencies (eg. new services available, new requirements).

The supervisor should be reminded that safeguarding supervision can become overly driven by organisational demand for assurance that practice is safe and thus often the normative function can become the sole focus of formal supervision, negatively impacting on the time given to the restorative and formative functions. The long term impact of this is that the supervisee can feel disempowered through supervision and performance management processes and may come to de-value these processes. To support greater balance, practice learning audits focus equally on compliance but also case outcomes, which allows for both normative and formative development. The supervisor should reflect on how they can balance the three functions through their formal and informal supervision of supervisees.

Formative/Educative

The primary aim of this function is for the supervisee to learn from observation, reflection and exploration of their work. This can again be encouraged by the supervisor's use of restorative skills such as open questions,

asking the supervisee to reflect on what they have learnt from certain cases or pieces of work, what they could have done differently or what difference their actions have had on the outcomes for cases.

Whilst appraisals and quality assurance activity which all form part of the performance management framework will support the formative function, direct observations by the supervisor (i.e. observing the practitioner chair a meeting and providing feedback on this) and formal supervision discussions to provide feedback are also a key method of supporting the supervisee's formative development.

Exploring supervisee's training and development needs and supporting the practitioner to reflect on how their own work contributes to the development of others and the wider organisation also comes under this function. The ability for the supervisee to reflect on how they fit and contribute to the wider organisation (in terms of influencing, advocacy, system change and service development/innovation) is helpful to support the supervisee feel connected to Sutton, which supports retention. Tony Morrison (2005)³ described this link between worker and the broader organisation, or mediation, as the fourth function of supervision.

³ Morrison, T. (2005) 'Staff supervision in social care', Brighton: Pavilion.

7. Types of Supervision

In Sutton Children's Services there are 3 main types of supervision available to practitioners: formal, informal and group supervision.

Formal

Formal supervision, also known as 1:1 supervision, is key to the development of a safe and supportive supervisor/supervisee relationship. Research suggests that good, one-to-one supervision has the following features:

- it occurs *regularly* in a *safe* environment
- it is based on a *respectful* relationship
- the process is understood and valued, and is embedded in the organisation's culture⁴.

Supervision Environment

It is important that formal supervision is delivered in a *confidential* environment which is free from distractions and interruptions. This will support the development of a safe and trusting supervisory relationship. It is the supervisor's responsibility to book a meeting room or identify a private space in which to conduct supervision. Formal supervision should not be conducted in break-out areas.

Frequency and Duration of Formal Supervision

Sutton Children's Services is committed to providing all practitioners with regular, formal supervision to reflect on their practice and support ongoing learning and development. The frequency should be in line with the guidance issued by professional bodies for social work. The supervision needs to consider the practitioner's role, level of experience and competence, as well as any other particular circumstances (eg. level of risk associated with work, personal difficulties, performance issues).

The minimum frequency for supervision within Sutton Children's Services is set as follows:

ROLE	FREQUENCY AND DURATION	Guidance
Student Social Workers	As stipulated by the university and outlined in the Student Learning agreement.	Education and Training Standards 2021 S. 2.3 states that to ensure that while on placements, students have appropriate supervision.
Newly Qualified Social Workers/ASYE	Weekly during the first 3 months Fortnightly between 3-6 months. Moving to every 4 weeks from the six months stage of the ASYE programme. Sessions should last a minimum of 1.5 hours.	SW England Professional Standards 4.2 Standards for employers of social workers in England/ Skills for Care Support and Assessment Agreement (SAA)

⁴ Lambley, S. and Marrable, T. (2013) '[Practice enquiry into supervision in a variety of adult care settings where there are health and social care practitioners working together](#)', London: SCIE.

Social Workers and Non-SW Qualified practitioners (incl Family Support Workers, Early Help/Restorative Family Coaches. Personal Advisers, Support Workers)	Every 4 weeks although this should be based on agreement between the supervisor/supervisee and dependent on the complexity of the work and experience of the practitioner. Sessions should last a minimum of 1.5 hours.	SW England Professional Standards 4.2 Standards for employers of social workers in England/
Assistant Team Managers, Team Managers and Heads of Service	Every 4 weeks	SW England Professional Standards 4.2 Standards for employers of social workers in England/

Any ongoing deviation from the recommended frequency as detailed above, would need to be made with both the supervisor and supervisee's agreement and the reason for this decision clearly recorded on the Supervision Agreement and approved by the senior manager.

Scheduled supervision sessions must be given priority over other activities and should not be cancelled unless there are exceptional circumstances which affect the core business. When it is necessary to postpone a supervision session, the supervisor should discuss the reasons for postponement with the supervisee, reschedule the session at the earliest convenience and note the postponement on the next personal supervision record.

If a supervisor is absent for an extended period of time (in excess of a month), the senior manager will need to identify an alternative supervisor to oversee and supervise all supervisees until the supervisor returns.

Informal

Informal or impromptu supervision is when discussions take place between the supervisor and supervisee about a case, outside of formal supervision meetings. The nature of children's social care practice is such that practitioners may often have to "check something out" with a supervisor, obtain a decision or gain permission to do something in between formal supervision sessions. This additional consultation with managers and supervisors outside of formal arrangements, ensures practitioners can respond to the unexpected and complex needs of and decisions within their case work. Whilst it is likely that less experienced staff may require more frequent support and consultation with supervisors, it is important to remember that making safe decisions for and with children and their families will require collaborative working, debate and agreement at all levels of practice and managers and supervisors should operate an 'open door' approach for staff to seek advice whenever needed.

Although these discussions will be informal in nature, it is important that a record of these discussions is made, particularly where actions or directions about how to proceed with a case are given. A 'Management Oversight' case note should be added to the child's case record on MOSAIC and where the discussion relates to more than one child within a family unit, this case note should be copied to all children's records.

Group

Sutton introduced Restorative Group Supervision to the majority of frontline children's social care teams during 2018, as part of the implementation of restorative and trauma-informed models of practice.

Restorative group supervision recognises that practitioners in children's social care are exposed to high levels of trauma within their roles. Exposure to trauma will elicit both conscious and unconscious emotional and

behavioural responses by individuals. This can result in individual's displaying maladaptive coping strategies (i.e. aggression, withdrawal, non-attendance, etc) which can then impact on team and organisational dynamics.

The aim of restorative group supervision is to provide practitioners with an opportunity to discuss difficult feelings associated with their work and the emotional labour associated with working in social care. By providing practitioners with a protected space to share these thoughts and feelings it is hoped that:

- Staff will feel more supported and more able to contain and manage difficult feelings
- Practitioners will be encouraged to see that experiencing difficult feelings in social care is "normal"
- Practitioners will be supported to identify and express their feelings in a way that does not impact on their work or outcomes for service users.
- Individual, team and organisational resilience will increase
- Burnout and maladaptive coping strategies will decrease

Unlike other forms of reflective group supervision, restorative group supervision is less focused on case discussions but rather supporting the practitioner reflect on their feelings about the case or work. Other areas commonly discussed may include: team dynamics, struggles, dilemmas, trauma, uncertainty/change, successes and breakthroughs. The focus of discussions is generated by the participants in the group and not the facilitator.

Restorative group supervision operates on the 6 restorative principles: safety, respect, restoration, voluntarism, accessibility and neutrality. These are embedded as follows:

1. *Safety*- Each group will draw up a group learning agreement which will be revisited whenever new members join so that all members are clear about the group's expectations. These ground rules will clarify issues such as confidentiality, records, etc. Participants should only discuss matters they feel safe discussing and over time trust should develop between group members. Participants will be reminded by the facilitator of additional emotional support available to them outside of the group.
2. *Respect*- All participants should act respectfully whilst in the group and consider how issues they may raise will impact on fellow group members and consider the manner in which they raise these issues. The facilitator has a key role in maintaining respect within the group and referring members back to the ground rules if it appears that respect is being lost or forgotten.
3. *Restoration*- The aim of the group is that members will leave sessions having had their feelings normalised, feeling more supported and better able to continue in their day-to-day work.
4. *Voluntarism*- Group supervision, as with any restorative process, is a voluntary process and practitioners should not be "forced" to attend. To do so would be counterproductive and impact on individual's feelings of safety. Likewise when in the group, if members don't feel comfortable or able to contribute to the discussions, they should not be pressured to do so.
5. *Accessibility*- The group will wherever possible be convened at a day and time which maximises opportunities for the team to attend. The facilitator will do their best to ensure that all those who wish to participate in the group discussions have a chance to speak and be heard.
6. *Neutrality*- All groups are facilitated by a CAMHS Tier 2 Alliance practitioner or restorative practitioner who is not part of the team. This supports independence and promotes both member and facilitator safety.

8. Supervision Agreements

The negotiation and use of a supervision agreement is an essential method for establishing and reviewing the supervisory relationship. It helps set “ground rules” by outlining both parties rights, responsibilities and expectations from the supervisory relationship.

Although there is a [template](#), the Supervision Agreement should be unique to the individual and thought of as a ‘living’ document which can be reviewed and updated according to the changing needs of the supervisee. As such, the development of a supervision agreement will involve a restorative conversation between the supervisor/supervisee about what will support the development of a safe and respectful supervisory relationship. The agreement should outline frequency of supervision and the individual's roles and responsibilities.

As with any restorative process, the supervisor should be aware of the power imbalance in the supervisory relationship and recognise how supervisees may feel anxious as a result of perceived criticism or examination of their work. Likewise issues of equality and diversity should be explored to ensure that supervision is anti-discriminatory and in line with the *Equality Act 2010*. This should be addressed when drawing up a supervision agreement and revisited regularly.

A new supervision agreement should be completed at the commencement of every new supervisory relationship (i.e. whenever there is a change of supervisor). Even if there is no change in supervisor, the supervision agreement should be reviewed annually. A supervision agreement should be completed and signed by both parties and kept in the supervisee's electronic supervision file.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be discussed during the negotiation of the supervision agreement so that each party is clear on the limits of confidentiality and when issues may need to be escalated or discussed with third parties (eg. senior manager, colleague, HR, Occupational Health). During supervision, the supervisee may disclose information about themselves or their colleagues that is of a private or sensitive nature. The supervisor has a duty to respect the privacy of the supervisee but also has duties to ensure service users are safeguarded and staff are protected under Health and Safety legislation. If the supervisor feels that it is necessary to raise these issues with a third party, a conversation should be had between the supervisor and supervisee to agree the next steps.

It is advisable that supervision records only contain information relevant to the professional role and as agreed with the supervisee. Where there is a level of disagreement, but a supervisor feels that it is necessary to record something they have been told (e.g. because of possible practice impact), the rationale should be explained, discussed and considered within supervision and records should document the outcome of those discussions.

Supervisees should be aware that senior managers have a right to access supervision records at any time and that supervision records are the property of the London Borough of Sutton and not the individual.

9. Roles & Responsibilities

Although detailed throughout this policy, the following summarises the general roles and responsibilities of both the supervisor and supervisee as they relate to supervision:

Supervisor

- Share the responsibility for making the supervisory relationship work;
- Ensure that the supervision agreement is completed, signed reviewed annually.
- Ensure supervisee's rights to privacy, subject to service user and staff safety;
- Ensure that supervision takes place within the agreed timescales;
- Ensure the supervision environment is confidential and conducive to the promotion of a safe and trusting supervisory relationship by considering the location and minimising interruptions;
- Ensure that issues relating to power, equality and diversity are addressed constructively and positively and provide opportunity for staff to raise issues about their experience and diversity;
- Maintain accurate and clear records in relation to comments about or actions for the supervisee as well as changes or actions in relation to particular cases.
- Support the development of a restorative and formative supervisory relationship which promotes reflection;
- Ensure the organisation's and professional standards are met;
- Follow organisational policies as they relate to Health and Safety, Sickness, Leave, etc.
- Ensure that where a change in line management occurs, a handover process is arranged between all parties concerned;
- Ensure the shared responsibility for case oversight and maintenance, including safeguarding, accountability and workload;
- Address performance issues and agreeing on an improvement plan to resolve concerns early.

Supervisee

- Share the responsibility for making the supervisory relationship work;
- Ensure that the supervision agreement is completed, signed and reviewed annually;
- Attend supervision regularly, on time and prepared, including with updates on previous actions set;
- Carry out actions set in supervision within the agreed timescales;
- In situations where the supervisee has a difference of opinion with their supervisor they need to highlight their views and if this cannot be resolved, following the problem solving process;
- Participate actively in formal supervision sessions including contributing to the agenda and engaging in reflective discussions on cases, practice and personal development;
- Accept the mandate to be supervised, and being accountable for any actions which may arise from supervision;
- Notify the supervisor or duty manager of any high risk situations or cases as soon as they become aware of these;
- Ensure the supervisor's recording of supervision is accurate and reflective of the particular meeting;
- Ensure the organisation's and professional standards are met;
- Take responsibility for promoting their own learning and continued professional development;
- Request leave or training in advance and update the supervisor if there are any changes to this.

10. Recording Process & Templates

Supervision records as they pertain to the supervisee's health, welfare, professional development, performance and other aspects of workforce management and support must be kept separately to records of supervisory discussions in regards to case-work.

As such there are two separate templates that need to be completed in any formal supervision session:

- [Personal Supervision Record](#) or [Personal Supervision Record for Managers](#)
- [Case Supervision Record](#)

There are also specific case supervision record templates for certain areas of the service as follows:

- [LAC/LCT Supervision Record](#)
- [Foster Carer Supervision Record](#)
- [SG/Kinship Assessment Supervision Record](#)

Personal Supervision Record or Personal Supervision Record for Managers

This record shall be completed by the supervisor and both records have the following key agenda items:

1. Review of Previous Actions,
2. Restorative Support
3. Normative Support
4. Formative Support
5. AOBs

The record has space under each of the above agenda items to record discussions, any actions arising and if so record by whom and when these actions will be completed.

For frontline practitioners the Personal Supervision Record also has space to record the initials of all cases discussed (the case discussions should be recorded on the separate Case Supervision Record on MOSAIC). For Managers there is a space to record any team issues (i.e. Staffing, Recruitment), as well as case issues (i.e. Transfers, NTK's).

The *restorative support* item allows for monitoring of the practitioner's progress and welfare within their role and incorporate aspects of health, welfare and functioning that may impact on their ability to undertake work either safely or competently. Supervision records should track workload, as well as hours worked/TOIL and A/L to ensure that any connected welfare issues are considered and addressed within the organisation's duty of care. Within this, sickness absence should be understood and monitored to enable its consideration in the context of any possible links to work, capability, coping, etc. and to ensure support and risk assessment is considered

where appropriate. This item also allows for discussion of particular situations, specific incidents or personal issues that may temporarily impact on the supervisee's work performance.

The *normative support* item allows for the supervisor to communicate the impact of any new policies/procedures, as well as service and organisational expectations and explore issues relating to quality of practice and performance. This might involve reviewing findings from audits or other performance management tools. Where there are concerns about under performance or capability, or where the need for other supports are identified, the support plan should be outlined in the supervision record to ensure clarity of expectation, reassurance and accountability (both for the staff member and the organisation).

The *formative support* function allows for professional development and career progression to be explored and monitored including regular reviews of annual appraisal targets. Good practice should be acknowledged and recorded, as should discussion for individual and specific areas of additional practitioner responsibility (e.g. supervision/practice education/lead responsibility of a particular area of practice). Recording feedback, by way of complaints and compliments received, as well as feedback from the supervisor to the supervisee will be a core component of the formative support function. This function should also allow space for the supervisee to reflect on their connection to the wider organisation and explore how they can contribute or share their ideas/skills/experience.

A copy of the completed Personal Supervision Record should be shared with the supervisee electronically as soon as possible and saved in the supervisee's file on the supervisor's secure Google Drive folder. Ideally this record should be available to the supervisee at least one week prior to their next supervision session so they have time to prepare any actions.

Case Supervision Record

The supervisor's responsibility for direct work is exercised mainly through the formal supervision of their supervisees. Effective case supervision will ensure that practitioners are supported to make decisions that are in the child's interest; that cases are managed in accordance with the authority's procedures and that all decisions are fully recorded and added to the child's MOSAIC⁵ case file. Case supervision also aims to ensure best use of resources. Regular case supervision is the primary tool for ensuring the delivery of sound case management and effective child safeguarding by social care staff.

Professional supervision provides an opportunity for supervisors and supervisees to fully examine and reflect on the quality of practice. Reflective supervision is relationship-based and models effective professional social work relationships. Such supervision reflects on all aspects of the service the practitioner is delivering; is regular; collaborative; it promotes empathy, self-evaluation, intellectual enquiry; it considers the worker's feelings and builds on professional competence. Reflective professional supervision embodies the restorative principles of 'high support/high challenge', where by the supervisor provides a supportive environment and appropriate feedback, and also challenges where appropriate.

The Case Supervision Record should record the reflective case discussions made between the supervisor and supervisee. The record encourages and shapes discussion about the child's experience, promotes analysis, explores theory and research that increases our understanding and informs our interventions, explores options and evidences how and why decisions have been made. The manager should complete the Case Supervision Record on MOSAIC after formal supervision within 48 hours. For details on how to complete the Case Supervision Record and Supervision workflow on MOSAIC please see [recording guide](#).

⁵ In the case of youth offending cases, supervision records would be entered on the C:Vision database not MOSAIC

Frequency of Case Supervision

The following table outlines the expected minimum frequency with which cases will be discussed in supervision:

Type of Case	Minimum Frequency
All cases	Initial supervision at point of allocation
Children subject to Initial Child & Family Assessments	4 weekly
Children open to RAS subject to ICPC (awaiting transfer)	8 weekly
Early Help, Child in Need and Pre-Court Youth Offending cases	8 weekly
Children with Disability	8 weekly
Child Protection Plan / Court Proceedings	8 weekly
Statutory Order- Youth Offending	4 weekly
Looked After Children (unstable requiring permanency)	8 weekly
Looked After Children (permanency/stable)	12 weekly
Leaving care young people (unstable placement)	8 weekly
Leaving care young people (stable placement)	12 weekly
Foster carer Supervision	4 weekly

Storage & Retention

Every supervisor should have a secure folder on their Google Drive named Staff Supervision. When a new supervisory relationship is formed (generally at point of induction or when there is a change in supervisor), the supervisor should create a subfolder in this folder with the supervisee's name. This folder should be shared (view only access) with the supervisee and the supervisor's line manager and becomes the electronic Supervision File.

Supervision Agreements and Personal Supervision Records should be recorded on the relevant Google form (making a copy as required), and then moved to the Supervisee's folder. Upon completion of a new Personal Supervision Record the supervisor should share this with the Supervisee (comment access).

When a supervisee changes supervisor, the previous Supervisor should wherever possible share the supervisee's Supervision File with them so this is an ongoing record of the supervisee's performance.

Supervision files are the property of the local authority and can be subject to internal audit or external inspection. Files will be retained in accordance with GDPR and the LB of Sutton file [Retention Policy](#). Files are currently held for 6 years following an individual terminating their employment and are not shared with new employers.

Case Supervision Records are held on the child's MOSAIC file and can be subject to [Subject Access Requests](#).

11. Complaints & Disagreements

From time to time, supervisees and supervisors will disagree about matters within the supervisory process or supervisees may wish to raise a specific complaint about the supervision that they are receiving. Sutton Children's Services is a restorative service and thus challenge is to be expected. However practitioners are encouraged to raise issues or difficulties with other parties in a respectful manner and consider what they can do to resolve the issues/difficulties.

Wherever possible, discussion should be sought directly between the two parties in the first instance, to identify the needs/issues and try and reach agreement on a way forward within the normal supervision process. For example this might involve reviewing the Supervision Agreement. If the concern or complaint cannot be resolved through discussion, the matter should be raised with the supervisor's manager for further consideration or external mediation.

In situations where the supervisee feels unable to raise a concern direct with their supervisor (as a result of for example, concerns about bullying or power-dynamics), the supervisee should seek to discuss direct with the supervisor's manager or alternatively (where this is not deemed possible) may defer to the [Grievance Policy and Procedure](#).

In situations where there may be dissent between the supervisee and the supervisor concerning casework decision making and this disagreement cannot be resolved by discussion, the supervisee should raise the issue with their supervisor's manager

Capability & Disciplinary Matters

If there are significant concerns regarding the work of an individual member of staff which cannot be addressed via formal supervision processes then the supervisor must manage this via formal performance management and capability procedures, as outlined within HR policies.

Where concerns about malpractice or capability arise in supervision, these may trigger HR processes and involvement from relevant regulatory bodies. In these cases, the LB of Sutton's [Capability Policy](#) or [Disciplinary Procedure](#) will be followed.

12. Quality Assurance of Supervision

In order to be effective the supervision process requires monitoring and quality assurance arrangements. The quality assurance process ensures that:

- the standards of supervision as outlined in this policy are being followed;
- staff are being supervised professionally and effectively;
- supervision sessions are being recorded;
- individual Supervision Agreements are being developed, reviewed and used; and
- the supervision process promotes equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice.

The quality assurance arrangements for supervision involve:

- frequency of supervision assessed in the Compliance section as part of the Regular Practice Learning Audits;
- supervision being reviewed as part of quarterly Thematic Audits;
- feedback on supervision from practitioners via the annual Workforce Survey; and
- supervision audits being carried out by team managers or Heads of Service annually.

A [Supervision Audit Tool](#) should be completed annually with every staff member with supervisory responsibilities. This will process will reassure the Team Manager, Head of Service and Assistant Director that their managers are offering the practitioners in their team or service high quality supervision.

The audit process involves a direct observation of one formal supervision session, audit of a supervision file and a conversation with the supervisee whose file was audited to obtain qualitative feedback. The observation can take place as part of the Practice Learning Week observations or take place independently.

The auditor should then discuss the audit findings with the supervisor as part of a supervision or appraisal meeting and the completed tool saved on the Supervisor's Supervision File and a copy shared with the CQ&P team so service-wide supervision quality can be monitored.

13. Useful Information & Documents

[The Standards for Employers of Social Workers- BASW](#)

[Effective Supervision in a Variety of Settings- Social Care Institute for Excellence](#)

[Effective Supervision Skills for Care](#)

[UK Supervision Policy- BASW](#)

[Professional Capabilities Framework- 9 domains](#)

[Professional Capabilities Framework for Newly Qualified Social workers](#)

[Knowledge & Skills Statement for Child & Family Practitioners](#)

[Knowledge & Skills Statement for Practice Leaders and Practice Supervisors](#)

[Appraisal Guidance](#)

[Grievance Policy and Procedure](#)

[Capability Policy](#)

[Disciplinary Procedure](#)

[Retention Policy](#)

[Subject Access Requests](#)

[Sickness Absence Policy](#)

[Children's Training Booking Website](#)

[Social Care L&D microsite](#)

[Teaching Partnership Training opportunities](#)

[Reflective Supervision Resource Pack- Research in Practice](#)

[Everything QA microsite](#)

[Equality & Diversity Framework](#)

[Sutton Health & Safety Policy 2023](#)

[LBS Health and Safety guidance](#)

Appendices

[Appendix 1: Personal Supervision Record](#)

[Appendix 2: Personal Supervision Record for Managers](#)

[Appendix 3: Case Supervision Record](#)

[Appendix 4: Supervision Agreement Template](#)

[Appendix 5: Supervision Audit Tool](#)

[Appendix 6: LAC/LCT Case Supervision Record](#)

[Appendix 7: Foster Carer Supervision Record](#)

[Appendix 8: SG/Kinship Assessment Supervision Record](#)

[Appendix 9: Case Supervision Record Screenshots](#)