Effective Supervision in Children’s Social Care Practice Guidance Resource Pack and Toolkit For Supervisors
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## Supervisor’s Toolkit

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Practice Guidance

This guidance is supplementary to the Delivery Service Supervision Policy. These guidance notes may be used as a checklist to help you audit your supervision practice, and help you to get the best out of the session, both as a supervisor and a supervisee.

Introduction

It is expected that all staff, at all stages of their career in Lambeth Delivery Services, will engage in regular supervision of their work.

Supervision is a core activity to ensure the delivery of effective and high quality children and young people’s services.

Supervision is a planned, accountable, two-way process, which should support, motivate and ensure all practitioners develop good practice.

Effective supervision, supported by appropriately trained professionals, is key to delivering positive outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The Supervision Relationship as a Partnership

To ensure the effective implementation of this policy it is good practice to observe the following points for the supervision relationship:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervision should...</th>
<th>Supervision should not.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be a continuous process</td>
<td>Be a one off event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage and involve you</td>
<td>Undermine you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognise your good performance and personal achievements</td>
<td>Avoid challenge where this is needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help you to be clear about your roles and responsibilities</td>
<td>Confuse you</td>
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<td>Be structured and focused</td>
<td>Should not be unstructured</td>
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<td>Identify the resources you need to do the job</td>
<td>Make unfair demands</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be planned and private</td>
<td>Be rushed or interrupted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be a two way process</td>
<td>Be one-sided</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on your individual needs</td>
<td>Focus on the supervisor's needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be motivating</td>
<td>Feel negative or demoralising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address professional development</td>
<td>Ignore the right and need for development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat you as an individual respecting diversity issues</td>
<td>Ignore the supervisee’s individual needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be confidential regarding issues specific to the supervisee, subject to the safety of people or staff</td>
<td>Break confidentiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal with situations sensitively and clearly</td>
<td>Ignore or fail to support the supervisee</td>
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Joint Responsibilities Shared between Supervisor and Supervisee

To ensure the effective implementation of the policy it is good practice for Supervisors and supervisees to adopt the following responsibilities

- Ensure clarity of purpose when negotiating and agreeing the statement of arrangements
- Locate individual supervision within the context of wider constructive working relationships between supervisor and supervisee; the team; and Lambeth Delivery service
- Be open to learning, feedback and challenge within an atmosphere of mutual respect
- Arrange dates in advance, including for the appraisal process
- A supervisee should provide evidence of work and the supervisee should make constructive use of evidence e.g. project work; and in casework:
- Observations of practice; use of quality assurance audit tools; internal and external feedback; ICS case recordings.
- Within supervision, discuss and plan how the variety of needs, which are identified, may be addressed outside the individual supervision setting e.g. use of the confidential counselling line; expert consultation; mentoring.
- Implement agreed actions between supervision settings
- Seek agreement wherever possible and where not, escalate in accordance with the policy

Responsibilities of the Supervisor

- Maintain balance between reflection and accountability; between positive feedback and constructive challenge; between celebrating strengths and identifying issues to be addressed.
- Record supervision sessions promptly and clearly
- Include workload considerations
- Ensure that casework practice meets the practice standards
- Ensure that safeguarding processes are being followed
- Ensure issues arising from the case planning process are addressed
- Ensure a child-centred approach to all casework discussions
- Observe direct engagement with children and young people on a planned basis at least once during each year
- Record any case-related supervision notes on the child’s file
Common Barriers to the Delivery of Effective Supervision

Common Barriers to the delivery of effective supervision can include the following:
- “Dumping” saving up criticisms and discussing them all at once
- Unplanned, rushed agenda, and unfocussed sessions
- Inadequate preparation by supervisor or supervisee
- Unclear or unrealistic goals for staff members
- Telling rather than listening
- Failure to offer constructive commentary on performance
- Misuse of power, e.g. bullying, harassment, victimisation
- Allowing interruptions
- Running out of time
- Poor recording of supervision
- Emotional issues unaddressed
- Case management rather than a developmental focus

What are the Purpose and Benefits of Effective Supervision?

For the Organisation

- To make sure children and their families/carers receive a quality service;
- To ensure that the practitioner meets the organisation’s objectives and standards;
- To ensure implementation of policies and procedures;
- To improve internal communication;
- To share responsibility;
- To assist in staff retention;
- To assist the supervisee to understand the organisational values, where the organisation is going and how they contribute to these;
- To promote clear communication between the organisation and the practitioner;
- To ensure that the practitioner has a manageable and appropriate workload; and
- To adhere to the Lambeth FRESH Values and relevant codes of practice.

For the Supervisor

To ensure that supervisees are supported to make choices that is in the best interest of children young people and their families,
To ensure that cases are managed in accordance with the local authority’s policies and procedures
- That all decisions and case work activity are fully recorded and added to the child/young person electronic case file (framework).
- To assist the supervisee to make the best use of resources.
- To provide and harness the opportunity for monitoring practice to ensure good outcomes for children and young people and the service.
- To enable reflection so as to understand what has worked well and to learn from mistakes.
- To contribute to and meet responsibilities for supporting the continuing learning and development of supervisees to ensure they have the relevant skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes to do a job role.
For the Supervisee/Practitioner

- To ensure that the practitioner is clear and competent about his or her role, responsibilities and accountabilities;
- To reflect on, analyse and evaluate their practice;
- To set, agree and review SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic timely) goals and objectives;
- To provide constructive feedback;
- To ensure consistency of practice;
- To value and appraise the practitioner’s work;
- To promote the health and wellbeing of the practitioner;
- To understand their role in the children’s workforce;
- To set clear boundaries;
- To build self-confidence;
- To identify learning needs;
- To improve team working; and
- To increase transparency and openness.

Planning for Supervision

Both supervisor and supervisee must plan and prepare for each formal supervision meeting.

The supervisee and supervisor should both attend the supervision session with written agenda of specific cases and issues that they want prioritised within the standard agenda.

Minutes from the previous supervision should be used in the planning for the next supervision in order to review agreed actions from the last meeting.

General Recording Principles

Where signatures are asked for on the pro-forma, these can be email agreement rather than direct writing on paper and a copy of the email stating ‘agreed’ should be saved and printed. Matters arising with regard to the following must always be discussed and recorded:

- Issues concerning staff performance and conduct
- Case issues which need to be shared with colleagues involved
- Issues concerning safety of clients and staff
- Matters involving legal issues affecting the service or the supervisee
Confidentiality

The supervisor should try and agree the next steps with the Supervisee, but should also be aware of their duties to safeguard clients and protect staff under Health and Safety legislation. If failure to disclose the information would place someone at risk of harm the Manager should explain to the Supervisee that they are obliged to pass on the information.

It is important that employees can discuss any aspects of their work with their manager. Service-user confidentiality is not breached by discussion during supervision, although there is a clear responsibility to ensure that supervision discussions take place in a private room rather than a shared office.

Supervision should be used to support and develop social workers professional judgement in handling and sharing confidential information. Managers should ensure that practitioners are aware of their responsibilities regarding confidential information and that they are sharing information effectively, ethically and securely in compliance with Lambeth Council’s Procedures and the London Child Protection Procedures.

Learning and Supervision

It is expected that all staff will keep a record of the training and learning undertaken. Social Workers must maintain a continuous up-to-date and accurate record of the CPD activities as per HCPC requirements. This can be recorded this using Template five in the Supervision & Observation Template (see appendix Five).

A written record must be kept by qualified social workers in order to meet the criteria for continued registration with the Health and Care Professions Council.

Supervisors have a responsibility to support social work staff to meet these requirements, to access study and training opportunities and to monitor progress in supervision.
Supervision Arrangements relating to Serious Incidents

This section should be read in conjunction with the overall guidance for Managing Staff following a Child’s Death or Serious Incident.

Serious incidents, including the unexpected death of a child/young person on a social worker’s caseload is a traumatic event, and may require additional support being provided to the worker.

Consideration must also be given to whether or not the individual's supervisor is in need of additional support at that time.

On hearing of a serious incident, involving a child on a social workers caseload, the Team Manager (or in their absence, the most senior member of the team in work) should undertake to make contact immediately with the social worker to inform them of the incident and to arrange to meet with them as soon as possible on that day.

Workers must be treated with empathy and an acknowledgement made of the likely impact of the event on their feelings of personal and professional role.

The allocated social worker should be offered the opportunity to leave the work place for the remainder of the day with appropriate support following discussion between themselves and their supervisor and/or head of service. This will be considered to be compassionate leave and will not be taken into account when reviewing annual leave or absence through sickness.

In the event that there is a disagreement between the supervisor and the social worker as to the appropriateness of them staying on in the work place, the final decision and recommended actions will rest with the head of service.

The Team Manager should agree with the social worker what level and type of support they might wish to receive following the serious incident. This might include the identification of a “team buddy” not directly associated with the case.

The agreement of any such support should be recorded in the social worker’s personal supervision notes and its ongoing appropriateness regularly reviewed.

The allocated worker must also be signposted to the employee assistance programme in the event that they wish to receive confidential support from outside of the team.

The allocated social worker should be kept informed of the progression of any investigations relating to the case within reason, including if a serious case review is initiated by Lambeth Safeguarding Children Board.
In the event that the social worker remains off work due to ill health following a serious incident, the Team Leader must ensure that regular contact is maintained with the worker. This should include any appropriate support provided through the identified buddy or named supervisor.

Returning to Work: It is sometimes helpful to arrange a visit back into the office before the employee comes back to work. For some people, returning in a part-time basis for the first few days can be helpful.

It is natural for the employee to be less productive at first and the manager should ensure that any health and safety considerations are dealt with in situations where reduced powers of concentration could put the employee or others at risk.
Supervisors Toolkit
**Introduction:**

The purpose of these resources is to provide essential information and practical tools rather than in-depth or specialist materials.

Supervision is a diverse and rich subject area where each supervisor can find perspectives and ideas which will be useful and stimulating for their practice and further materials will be added in time.

The Guide is intended to work as a 'living document', open to change, and able to incorporate new and evolving ideas. It works on the principle that each supervisee will be supported by his or her line manager to access a range of supervision support from a number of sources as appropriate. In doing so it seeks to ensure that supervision is not confused with, or restricted to, performance or workload management.

**Guiding Principles:**

This guidance considers a range of ways of providing quality supervision across children’s services in line with five core principles:

- Good supervision within a positive organisational culture can support the development of analytical, critical and reflective thinking in practice.

- Supervision is a shared responsibility and can be drawn from a multiplicity of sources. It is a process rather than an event, session or method.

- Supervision is relational and invites regular feedback in all directions.

- Supervision arrangements are set out in a clear contract which is negotiated and reviewed, and which includes regular, uninterrupted, structured and recorded sessions.

- The organisation values and supports the process, recognising the critical influence of supervision on transformational practice.
Skills and Approach
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights in Supervision

The process and practice of supervision in provides an excellent opportunity for the supervisor to model behaviours which ensure equality, promote diversity and explore any relevant human rights issues. However, just because these areas are so fundamental to the value base of social work we can easily make assumptions and forget their importance. Only when we draw out issues and share learning together can the knowledge and experience we have become part of a positive and enabling culture.

The following prompts are included as useful ways in which equality, diversity and human rights issues can be raised and discussed:

**Team Meetings:** Initially a team discussion could consider what equality, diversity and human rights means to team members and to their particular work. Feedback following a training session could inform this discussion so people who have attended can share their understanding with the team and plan how to apply the learning together. Some specialist input might also be useful on occasions.

**Supervision:** Within a supervision session the following can be useful reminders of how and where equality, diversity and human rights issues might arise:

Any examples of direct discrimination experienced by service users or staff (consider the nine protected characteristics of: Gender, Age, Sexual Orientation, Race, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity and Religion and Belief.)

- Any examples of policy or procedures that may be perceived as discriminatory towards some individuals or groups
- Any concerns which could be harassment or victimisation
- Examples of good practice, particularly in working with any of the protected characteristics
- Learning Needs
- Legislation change/updates
Person-Centred Approach

Being person-centred in approach means creating a positive environment with:

- Respect
- Empathy
- Genuineness
- Unconditional Positive Regard

The ‘person-centred’ approach was developed by Carl Rogers in the 1950s in the field of psychotherapy. Essentially he proposed that a person will grow and develop if these core conditions are in place and believed ‘that persons have a basically positive direction.

**Respect** for the individual as the person they are, offering non-judgmental acceptance. It is a commitment to being real and honest in the relationship and also about the professional standards expected.

**Empathy** involves ‘getting in contact with another’s world’, understanding their perspectives and feelings. Empathy builds self-esteem and is very powerful when working with resistance. An important component of empathy is reflecting key themes and messages back to the supervisee through skilled communication (see Active Listening).

**Genuineness** or congruence can be understood simply as ‘being oneself’. This will inevitably influence the level of trust in the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee. Trust built on an honest, professional relationship is essential so that the likelihood of positive motivation can be maximised.

**Unconditional Positive Regard** involves regarding the supervisee as a separate person of intrinsic worth and value, a human being and not just a ‘human doing’. The challenge for supervisors can be to achieve this while being clear about the standards and performance required.
Active Listening Skills

These involve:

**Paying full attention** and communicating this through verbal and non-verbal cues which include:

- Looking interested
- Leaning forward while not compromising the supervisee’s personal space
- Offering eye contact sensitively and as appropriate
- Nodding
- Encouraging through ‘ah ha’s’, mmm… or similar

**Paraphrasing** what has been said to ensure accurate understanding and clarification. The following phrases can be useful:

- ‘Can I just check I’ve understood, you said….’
- ‘So what you’re saying is….’

**Summarising** – this is really useful tool for checking understanding or any agreed actions so far, and particularly before moving on to another topic. You may like to use:

- ‘Overall, it seems that…’
- ‘What seems to be most important to you is…’
- ‘So to pull this together…’
- ‘To summarise so far…’

**Reflecting feelings** – to show recognition that someone’s feelings are important while checking out understanding and interpretation. This can be very empowering and release the supervisee’s energy to change and develop. Useful phrases include:

- ‘You sound upset (or very pleased) about that’
- ‘I notice that you seem anxious when you mention…’
Effective Questioning

Asking different types of questions effectively (and listening carefully to the answers) provides a way of structuring information in sequence to explore a topic and to get to the heart of the issues. Types of questions include:

- **Open questions** - These are useful in getting another person to speak and can provide you with a good deal of information. They often begin with the words: What, Why, When, Who. Sometimes statements are also useful: “tell me about” or “give me examples of”.

- **Closed questions** - These are questions that require a yes or no answer and are useful for checking facts. They should be used with care - too many closed questions can cause frustration and shut down conversation.

- **Specific questions** - These are used to determine facts. For example “How much did you spend on that?”

- **Probing questions** - These check for more detail or clarification. Probing questions allow you to explore specific areas. However, be careful because they can easily make people feel they are being interrogated.

- **Hypothetical questions** - These pose a theoretical situation in the future. For example, "What would you do if…?" These can be used to get others to think of new situations and how they might cope or use their skills.

- **Reflective questions** - You can use these to reflect back what you think a speaker has said, to check understanding. You can also reflect the speaker’s feelings, which is useful in dealing with angry or difficult people and for defusing emotional situations (ref. Active Listening Skills above).

- **Leading questions** - These are used to gain acceptance of your view – they are not useful in providing honest views and opinions. If you say to someone ‘you will be able to cope, won’t you?’ they may not like to disagree.
Giving and Receiving Feedback

Supervision aims to be a two-way process where learning is effectively and respectfully shared, so the giving and receiving of good feedback by both supervisor and supervisee is essential. When offered within a relationship of trust and professionalism helpful information can be offered about the impact a person’s behaviour has on others.

Good feedback is

Invited – ideally feedback, should only be offered on request or by agreement.

Timed – for most people feedback is more effective when given shortly after the event.

Positive – It is paramount to spend time commenting on the positive aspects of performance.

Specific and prioritised – Quote the exact words or actions rather than using general statements like ‘that was fine’ and explain your reasons to the other person. Most people can only cope with a maximum of three points at any one time so be selective about your feedback even if this does cover every aspect.

Alternatives and suggestions – After listening to how the person themselves perceives their performance, offer your views on the ways in which they might develop or improve.

Owned – If the giver of feedback uses an ‘I’ statement, this leaves the receiver free to accept or reject a comment rather than having a view or a judgement imposed; it is a more sensitive approach for delicate issues in particular.

When Receiving Feedback

Listen – focus on understanding the feedback and avoid rejecting, arguing or being defensive.

Check your understanding – ask questions to fully clarify; for instance seek examples.

Acknowledge the giver – Show appreciation. The feedback might not have been easy to give.

Make a choice about what to do – You may wish to act on the feedback – or not. There is a choice.

Take a positive view – Remind yourself that the aim of feedback is to help you learn in order to improve future performance.
Challenging and Confronting

Once again there is a wide range of tools and models available, two of which are outlined below. Challenge may be required because of poor performance or because behaviour falls short of professional standards. While people mostly do not set out to deliberately offend, we can all behave inappropriately because of:

- Ignorance
- Pressure to conform
- Our vulnerability
- Being in a position of power
- Behaviour or language from our upbringing

A Three-Step Approach for Challenging

This is a valuable everyday tool, probably not suitable for complex or very serious situations, but very useful indeed for preventing any escalation of unacceptable behaviour and embedding a positive culture which is professional at all times. Discriminatory behaviour or harassment can be confronted which enables managers to fulfil their responsibilities under the HCPC Codes of Practice, organisational policies and the Equality Act 2010.

State the BEHAVIOUR

For example this might be inappropriate language, time keeping, shouting, invasion of personal space

‘When you ......................’

Simply describe the behaviour or quote the language without judgement or accusation.

Explain the IMPACT or EFFECT

For example, as an individual you may have found the language or behaviour offensive, embarrassing or distasteful. In a team or work-setting the behaviour may have been unprofessional or reflected badly on the competence or reputation of the team.

‘I feel...’ or ‘....it has.............us as a team or profession’

Explain what you want to happen

This may simply be a request for the behaviour to stop or a constructive suggestion about how things could be done differently. (If this is not the first time the behaviour has occurred, or if it is very serious, you may need to be clear about what the possible consequences could be.)

‘I would like you to.........................’
Supervision
Process
Models
Supervision Process Models

Ways, methods and models for conducting supervision are many and varied often being borrowed from a range of other disciplines. The examples offered are a selection which are tried and tested but do not represent a comprehensive sample.

Before beginning the following bullet points could be helpful:

- Ensure that you have arranged the session at a mutually convenient time and place.
- Allow enough time for the supervision and be punctual
- Arrange a suitable and comfortable venue and ensure that you are free from interruptions.

The 4x4x4 Model of Supervision

Supervision has to address a range of requirements on behalf of different stakeholders, involving a complex set of activities. The 4x4x4 model developed by Tony Morrision is an integrated framework that brings together the functions, stakeholders and main processes involved in supervision.

![4x4x4 Model Diagram](image)

The supervision process includes four critical functions management, development, mediation and support. The four objectives or functions of supervision are:

- Competent, accountable performance/practice (management function).
- Continuing professional development (development function).
- Personal support (support function).
- Engaging the individual with the organisation (mediation function).
These functions are interdependent, that is one function cannot be effectively performed without the others.

An over-emphasis on, for example, management, will leave the supervisee feeling that they are being overly controlled and that the only purpose of supervision is to “check up on them”.

An over-emphasis on support could result in important discussions about workload, decision-making, and accountability being neglected.

The integrated 4x4x4 model provides a coherent, practical, and well-tested framework to integrate these different but connected elements of supervision.

Recognising the different functions of supervision and the needs of different stakeholders is essential. Sometimes the needs of supervisee, service user, supervisor and agency may be aligned; at other times they will conflict and the different functions will pull in opposite directions.

**CLEAR Coaching Model by Peter Hawkins**

The CLEAR model was developed by Peter Hawkins in the early 80’s as a process for coaching. It is also applicable and well-tried within a supervision environment as will become apparent.

CLEAR an acronym for **C**ontacting; **L**istening; **E**xploring; **A**ction; **R**eview. It is not dissimilar to the GROW model (another well-known coaching model) although it includes additional elements.

**Contracting**

Contracting is an opportunity to set the ground rules for working together and establishing the outcomes and priorities wanted by both supervisor and supervisee. If this is an initial meeting this step will be probably be extended to ensure the understanding and signing of a written Supervision Agreement or Contract and explanation of the standard agenda items.

**Listening**

This stage is all about actively listening to your supervisee. Using a person-centred approach, help them to gain an understanding of their situation with respect to the standards, priorities and tasks required.

**Exploring**

This stage comprises two elements:

**Exploring 1:** Helping the supervisee to understand the impact of their performance, both positive and negative, and the effects on themselves, both personally and professionally.

**Exploring 2:** Challenging the supervisee to think through possibilities for future action in resolving the situation or developing their practice.
**Action**

At this stage you are supporting the supervisee to choose a way ahead, and decide the next steps within the context of the standards, priorities and plans which inform their role.

**Review**

Finally this is about closing the session, reinforcing ground covered, decisions made and value added. As a supervisor you are also encouraging feedback from your supervisee on what was helpful about the supervision process or session, what was difficult and what they would might be helpful in future sessions.

**Further Reading:**
Coaching, Mentoring and Organizational Consultancy: Supervision and Development by Peter Hawkins and Nick Smith (Paperback - 1 Jan 2007)
Egan model of Problem Management and Opportunity Development – Adapted for Supervision

STAGE 1
Where the supervisee is now

Begin & Review
Focus where to start
Offer new perspectives

Agree Outcomes
Options to achieve outcomes explored
Options for actions agreed

STAGE 2
Where the supervisee needs to be

Action plan devised
Implementation
Action plan reviewed

STAGE 3
How to get there

Process Notes

The proposed model has been adapted and developed from a model of problem management and opportunity development initially devised by Gerard Egan. It comprises three stages and each stage consists of three steps. The recording of the process is agreed and shared.

The model can be regarded as a map which enables the supervisor to recognise where they are in the process and move towards a satisfactory outcome. Supervisees may, of course, want to begin the process at any one of the three stages or need to retrace their steps a number of times, but if you can recognise where you are it becomes more straightforward to get to where you need to be!

The model is most effective when used within a person-centred approach and also needs supervisors to be competent in the skills of active listening, skilled questioning, appropriate challenging and accurate observation.

Prior to the supervision session, prepare the environment and review notes from previous session.

Stage 1 – Where the supervisee is now

Step One – Begin the supervision and/or review:

An essential part of this step is for the supervisee to be able to ‘check in’ and feel comfortable, being able to raise issues which are currently most important or urgent for them.

- Acknowledge achievements and progress
- Be aware of the supervisee’s feelings and alert for any signs of stress

Step Two – Focus where to start:

This is particularly important if there are several issues or the situation is complex. Follow up any matters arising from the previous session/notes

Identify and agree agenda items and priorities (the Standard Supervision Agenda can be used as a guide) according to supervisee’s and supervisor’s priorities.

Step Three – Offer new perspectives:

- The supervisor provides essential information and updates
- Through skilful listening the supervisor enables the supervisee to realise new insights and possibilities. Performance management issues may need to be identified and areas for challenge addressed.

Steps two and three also provide an opportunity to review and reflect on any learning and development which has taken place since the last supervision and complete any evaluation or monitoring forms.
Stage 2 - Where the supervisee needs to be

Step One – Clarify and agree outcomes:

- Supervisor needs to ensure that the supervisee understands specific organisational and individual performance targets, and required standards of work, by providing full, accurate and relevant information
- Consider longer term outcomes in terms of career aspirations and learning & development

Step Two – Options to achieve outcomes explored:

- Outcomes are assessed for relevance and cost (financial, time and effort) and degree of change involved
- Recognise any need for involvement of other workers, areas of expertise or agencies

Step Three – Options for action agreed:

- These need to meet the aptitudes, abilities and level of responsibility of the individual supervisee.
- Are there any learning, training or development requirements?
- How does the supervisee feel? Are there any conflicts with their own (or the organisation’s) value base?

Stage 3 - How to get there

Step One – Action plan devised:

SMART is a useful tool for assessing objectives and ensuring they are practical:

SMART stands for:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable and Agreed
- Relevant and Realistic
- Timed

Step Two – Implementation:

- Consider any appropriate resources or support which may be required – is coaching or mentoring necessary to provide necessary skills or knowledge?
- It may be necessary to challenge any unrealistic expectations
- Be clear about who does what and consider scenarios if circumstances change

Step Three – Action Plan reviewed:

- Items to be taken forward to the next supervision session are identified and agreed
- This Step may lead directly back to Step 1 in Stage 1 as the Actions are reviewed against the agreed outcomes.
A Problem Solving Approach

Identify and define the problem
Collect information and analyse the problem
Prioritise and set objectives for improvement
Outline Plan of action
Implement Plan
Monitor and Review and evaluate

Identify and define the problem – identify key problems which will have most impact on service quality. When definition is clear then ‘greater focus can be given to problem analysis, objective setting and planning’. 

Collect information and analyse – ‘Planned and methodical information collection can impact positively and directly on the effectiveness of problem solving’. The method of analysis will depend upon the nature of the problem. For example:

- Using benchmarks and standards
- Critical Reflection
- Appreciative enquiry
- Comparison with other models of good practice

Prioritise and set objectives – These ideally need to be SMART, although some qualitative objectives have value even if they are not easily measurable, for example: ‘To ensure stakeholders are committed and motivated in implementing change’. Clear objective setting helps to structure both planning and evaluation.

Plan of action – Link action plan to each identified objective. Creative methods and tools can also be used. Planning the evaluation also needs to be done at this stage.

Monitor and evaluate – identify who will monitor and how. Establish milestones with dates and activities required. Evaluate effectiveness against the agreed measures and methods.

Reflective Practice Groups

To see supervision as only an arrangement between an individual and their manager (or a group of supervisors) is to miss rich learning opportunities provided through formal and informal peer networks. The following process model is one of many which is tried and tested it can be used in a range of settings, including team meetings or gatherings of specific peer groups to review practice.

This approach and process supports supervision by offering unconditional positive regard and being non-judgemental - the experience then becomes positive, valuing, creative, and dynamic and also helps to resolve any conflict.

Principles:

This approach begins to develop a positive climate in which team members are more likely to make the desired changes.

- The approach is affirming and optimistic and it frees the team from the blame culture, enabling learning and growth to take place.
- The focus is on each person’s strengths, potential ideas, progress and aspirations.
- Each team member’s role is to validate what other people do well – this helps individuals to feel better about themselves.
- If it doesn’t work, STOP doing it.
- Find out what works, and do more of it.
Reflection

- Critical Reflection
- What is reflective Supervision?
- Key Stages of the reflective process
- Pre-requisites for effective supervision
- Facilitating reflection
Critical Reflection

Critical reflection has long been integral to the social work profession as an essential tool to enable analysis, understanding and learning. The Social Work Reform Board (2010) states:

‘Critical reflection and analysis’ = one of the proposed professional capabilities for social workers… it should emphasise ‘reflective practice in action’.

Also Eileen Munro in her recent report is equally clear: Munro (2011) recommends that staff are supported to achieve:

‘…..a high level of critical reflection to test their thinking, drawing on relevant theory and research, and how they can create a work environment that encourages the development of expertise…’

Tony Morrison & Jane Wonnacott (2010) clarify the essential link between critical reflection and supervision:

‘Professional practice, and worker/service user dynamics need to be critically analysed, and the impact of the worker’s emotions on thoughts and actions is explored. This is the basis by which reflective but authoritative social work/care practice is developed. Drawing on research and experience of working with supervisors, the Supervision-Outcomes chain describes the way in which supervision influences practice’.

Core Conditions of Critical Reflection:

• Encouragement and facilitation of professional and personal development by attending to the emotional content of the work and how reactions to the content affect the work.
• Integration of EMOTION and REASON - it is essential to:

OBSERVE, LISTEN, WONDER and RESPOND
Reflective Supervision

What is Reflective Supervision?

Reflective Supervision is offered on a regular basis in the context of a collaborative relationship, providing opportunities for the individuals involved to reflect on hands on work.

This relationship based reflection provides opportunities for ongoing professional self-evaluation. The relationship models that of the social worker with the service user (one which promotes partnership, whilst not denying authority, knowledge, etc.). It aims to create a culture of intellectual enquiry, to promote empathy and support long term professional development.

Reflective supervision should build on capacity, resilience and resources. Sessions encompass discussion about intervention goals, the process of service delivery, values, reactions and emotions, identification and analysis of pertinent knowledge, risk assessment, use of self (e.g. the dangers of collusion), etc.

Reflective supervision helps gain an in-depth understanding of a situation, become more aware of their own reactions and responses to the client, how they intervened and the consequences of their intervention. Supervisees are encouraged to explore other ways of working with a variety of client interventions. These approaches encourage supervisees to become more creative, develops critical thinking and problem solving skills, and their decision-making processes, this, is turn, encourages autonomy within supervisees.

Key stages of the reflective process

• An awareness of uncomfortable feelings and thoughts;
• Critical analysis, including attending to feelings;
• Development of a new perspective on the situation.

Pre-requisites for effective reflection and supervision

• Honesty and openness.
• A commitment to self-enquiry
• A readiness to change practice
• Self-awareness (this implies that the individual needs to be well informed/appraised of his/her own character, including beliefs and values.
• Questioning of beliefs, values and attitudes.
• A willingness to commit time to the process and to listen to the supervisee

Facilitating Reflection;

There are various models of reflection that supervisors may find useful. The ‘what’ model of reflection contains three key elements of reflection:

- ‘what’: a description of the event
- ‘so what’: an analysis of the event
The following questions could be used to assist reflection and take supervisees through the experiential learning cycle depicted below:

- What is the overall purpose of our involvement with the family?
- How does the child feel, what do they want?
- What were you aiming for when you did that?
- What exactly did you do? How would you describe it precisely?
- What alternatives were there?
- Why did you choose that particular action over other actions that could have been taken?
- What theories/models/research informed you actions?
- What were you trying to achieve?
- How successful was it?
- What criteria are you using to judge success?
- Could you have dealt with the situation any better?
- How would you do it differently next time?
- What knowledge/values/skills were demonstrated?
- What sense can you make of this in the light of your past experience?

Useful Tools: Prompting Phrases:

- “I’m wondering…”
- “Can we explore for a moment…”
- “What are your thoughts on…”
- “How would you approach…”
- “What are the possibilities you see in…”
- “How will your strengths…”
- “Can you tell me (a little more) about...”
- “How would you describe...”
- “What would happen if you tried...”
- “How do you understand/Can you help me understand...”
- “If you viewed this from _______'s perspective, what would you see...”
- “What do you need from me today to feel supported...”

**REFLECTION GRID**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What has gone well?</th>
<th>What has not gone well?</th>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What does the supervisee see as his/her learning needs?</th>
<th>What does the supervisor see as the supervisee's learning needs?</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What has the supervisee learned from this experience?</th>
<th>What does the supervisor feel the supervisee has learned/could have learned?</th>
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<tr>
<th>What will the supervisee plan to do differently?</th>
<th>What does the supervisor suggest the supervisee could do differently?</th>
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Difficult Situations and Issues
Difficult Situations and Issues

Information and guidance for supervisors about dealing with difficult situations, recognising issues and supporting supervisees.

Courageous Conversations


When people try to get into tough conversations they know they should have, many find that something stops them from getting to the heart of the matter. Sometimes we shy away at the last moment, sometimes we get a reaction that tells us it’s going to be hard, so we back off, and sometimes we just can’t find the right words to start with anyway.

The problem is that we can sometimes get left feeling frustrated that what needed to be said – wasn’t said. We didn’t assert ourselves as fully as we could have. John Dickson’s model shows us a way…
The problem is overcoming the GAP. This is the difference you sense between what you FEEL and what you actually SAY.

To resolve the GAP, John suggests we need to work through the three ‘E’s:

**EXPLAIN**

1. This is the issue...
2. An example of this is …
3. What I feel is …
4. What is at stake is …
5. My contribution to this issue is …
6. I want to resolve this with you because …
7. What do you think & feel about it?

**EXPLORE**

Using the following acronym (or any other explorative process)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S situation … How do we both see it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A ambition … What are you aiming for? What am I aiming for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I impediment … What gets in the way of us achieving what we need?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N knock on impact … If we continue this way, what are the negative consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T test solutions … To be more productive, what I’d like to try out with you is</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ELIMINATE**

- What are our clear and agreed actions?
- What am I going to do?
- What are you going to do?
- What & When are our first steps?
### Table of Responsive and Assertive Behaviours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSIVE BEHAVIOURS</th>
<th>ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOURS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Display empathy</td>
<td>Voice – clear, precise, crisp, firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use body language to indicate</td>
<td>Tone – strong, steady, calm, with emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listening e.g. nod, “go on”, “uhuh”</td>
<td>Body – straight, balanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep good eye contact</td>
<td>Stand firmly on two feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice – open, interested, inquiring</td>
<td>Face to face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body – relaxed, open posture</td>
<td>Language – I think, I feel, I want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone – firm, level</td>
<td>Firm handshake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express feelings</td>
<td>Use gestures to emphasise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask information seeking questions</td>
<td>Use clear and concise statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be flexible with time perspectives</td>
<td>Regular breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow silence</td>
<td>Listen to the tempo of your delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t rush questions</td>
<td>Challenge (if appropriate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use open-ended responses</td>
<td>Concentrate on details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid whining “poor me”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use stories and anecdotes</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Literature and Research

Coaching, Mentoring and Organizational Consultancy: Supervision and Development by Peter Hawkins and Nick Smith (Paperback - 1 Jan 2007)

Evidence Informed Practice Strategy (See Research in Practice/Evidence Informed Practice at http://www.rip.org.uk)

General Social Care Council Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements
See http://www.gscc.org.uk/Training+and+learning/Continuing+your+training/Postregistration+training/

GSCC code of conduct
http://www.gscc.org.uk/cmsFiles/Registration/Codes%20of%20Practice/CodesofPracticeforSocialCareWorkers.pdf


Providing Effective Supervision CWDC/Skills for Care 2007
http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/assets/0000/2832/Providing_Effective_Supervision_unit.pdf


Other Relevant Documents


Skills for Care and Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC) (2007) Promoting Effective Supervision, London: Skills for Care and CWDC.

The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final report a child centred system. Professor Eileen Munro

Tony Morrison 4x4x4 integrated reflective model http://in-trac.co.uk/reclaimingreflectivesupervision.