



## Supervision Guidance– Early Help and Support Service

**Here in Blackburn with Darwen, we are committed to ensuring that all workers receive the necessary support and guidance to enable them to undertake their roles. Supervision for staff is underpinned by a culture of high expectations, high support and high challenge with a “No blame” approach.**

**Regular good quality supervision of staff is necessary to ensure that we appropriately safeguard children, promote their welfare and achieve the best possible outcome for each child and their family.**



## Supervision Guidance– Early Help and Support Service

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### 1. Context

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The Early Help and Support Service plays a key role alongside social workers and partner agencies in protecting children.

*'Supervision is an integral element of practice not an add-on. Through it, Family Support Workers and Family Time Support Workers review their day to day practice on decision making, plan their learning and development as professionals.'*

*'Supervision is the context in which the critical appraisal of assessment and planning for a child, which is central to promoting good practice and reducing error, can take place'. (A Child Central System, Munro 2011).'*

Supervision is fundamental to the delivery of effective services.

Supervision may be defined as a process of planned interaction with staff for the purposes of sharing important information about the work being done, problem solving, reflecting on process and practice, making decisions, managing performance and professional development.



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### 2. Purpose

Supervision should.....:

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1. Create a space for practitioners to reflect on events, on professional reflexivity (i.e. a consideration of the impact of professional involvement in the lives of families) and on dilemmas and issues over time.
2. Adopt curiosity as a position or stance that encourages us to embrace uncertainty
3. Be a stance of 'perpetual doubt' where we question all our theories and responses
4. Encourage hypothesising in what we do in order to maintain our fundamental stance of curiosity
5. Mitigate against verification bias highlighted to be very common in social work practice
6. Support a child centred, outcome focussed service
7. Build professional confidence, competence and empower creative ways of working

We place an emphasis and importance on exploring aspects of a family's culture, race, class, ability, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, education, spirituality; that families feel are important for us to consider when working with them. These are referred to as the Social Graces. Having these conversations can sometimes seem like we are taking a "relational risk" but it can be very helpful to explore similarities and differences between the worker and family.

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### 3.The Supervision Contract

Morrison and Knapman define a contract as:

*'A means of making explicit the aims of the parties to work towards agreed goals in agreed ways'*

This definition clearly identifies the supervisory relationship as a partnership based on mutually agreed **expectations**. It is important therefore at the beginning of the supervisory relationship that the mutual expectations of supervisor and supervisee are made clear and are written down in the form of an individual supervision contract.



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Each staff member should have a supervision contract negotiated between the participants which should address the following issues:

9. Mandate - This is the purpose of supervision and should reflect the four functions referred to earlier – management, support, development and mediation;
10. Structure - When, how often, how long, how the agenda will be created, rules on cancellation, location;
11. Confidentiality - Who will have access to supervision records, what can be kept strictly confidential, what would be referred out;
12. Recording - How the record of supervision will be made and maintained. Clarification about how 'case material' and 'other' (support / development / mediation) material will be recorded;
13. Review - When the contract is to be reviewed (usually annually) and who is to be involved in the process.

### 4. The Supervision Model

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The Model – Systemic Reflective Cycle (adapted from Jude and Regan, 2010)

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

From this definition, four distinct, related, functions were identified:

#### 14. **Competent Accountable Performance**

**Managerial function** – to ensure that the worker is meeting the expectations of the organisation in the discharge of their duties. This will include consideration of case material to ensure activity is purposeful and outcome focused and that cases are being managed at an appropriate level upon the Continuum of Need and Response.



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### 15. Engaging the Individual with the Organisation

**Mediation function** – To facilitate the exchange of information. This function allows supervisors the opportunity to inform staff about what is happening in the wider organisation and hearing from them what is happening at practitioner level. This function also allows supervisors to consult with staff when changes are proposed

### 16. Personal Support

**Support Function** – to provide the opportunity for staff to consult on practice issues and the personal impact these might have. It is an opportunity to reflect on incidents and work related issues that present challenge, cause the worker difficulty or are particularly stressful, and subsequently agree management strategies. Reflection upon experiences allows workers the opportunity to talk about feelings that may impact on their effectiveness;

The functions of supervision will be delivered in the following ways:

### Case Supervision

Experienced staff will be supervised monthly. New staff will be supervised fortnightly for the first 3 months

17. Each supervision session will last for 2 ½ hours.
18. Both parties will prepare beforehand
19. The supervisor will allocate 1 x 20minute slot to 6 case supervision and the remaining cases will be brought to supervision the following month, which will offer rigorous challenge and support being offered.

The record of this will be recorded within case notes on the child's electronic record; LCS/protocol, EHM/ e-CAF

### Family Time Team Supervision

Experienced Family Time Support workers will be supervised monthly. New staff will be supervised fortnightly for the first 3 months



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Supervision will also be dependent on the frequency of the Family Time, and for that purpose, the following will be applied:

<i>Frequency of FTS</i>	<i>Number of caseload supervisions annually</i>
3 or 4 times annually	2 x supervisions
6 or 8 times annually	4 x supervisions

If family members are attending separately i.e. 6 x Family Time Sessions for one parent and 6 x Family Time Sessions for the other parent the supervision this will be 12 annually and supervision will be monthly.

The remaining 30 mins will cover personal supervision. This form of supervision will explore the management, development, mediation and support functions of supervision and take place on a quarterly basis

20. Performance Management
21. Professional Development
22. Health and Wellbeing

### **Reflective Supervision**

This form of supervision will explore the support and development functions of supervision.

The service works alongside children's social care colleagues where reflective supervision is undertaken jointly.

We believe that supervision must include elements of reflection on events, on professional reflexivity (i.e. a consideration of the impact of professional involvement in the lives of families) and on dilemmas and issues over time.

## **5. Case Supervision**

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Case supervision will seek to ensure that practice is child centred and that the intervention is both effective and procedurally compliant.



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A greater level of concisely recorded 'meaningful conversations' which explore complex issues, explain decisions, provide rationales and set clear ways forward.

Supervision notes should also set actions which are specific, clear and timed to tackle the issues identified.

In order to effectively monitor progress, the manager will consider the case records on protocol and e-CAF and will refer to the previous supervision session to review the subsequent progress and previously agreed actions.

### **Plan**

#### **Progress of plan**

#### **Child's voice**

#### **What is working well?**

#### **What is worrying us?**

#### **What does this mean?**

#### **Does practice meet BwD practice standards?**

### **Actions**

## **6. Reflective Supervision**

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The supervisor will undertake a reflective supervision with the Early Help and Support team. The supervisor will identify a case to be prepared and brought to the additional bi monthly session. Consideration will be given to:

23. Sudden escalation or de-escalation of a case
24. QA activity
25. Case that is deemed a cause for concern
26. Or by mutual agreement between the supervisor and supervisee

A range of solution focussed, critical thinking and reflective models are used alongside children's social care.



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Case notes in the child's records will be updated by the supervisor to indicate that a Reflective Supervision has taken place.

### 7. Observed Practice

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In addition to case supervision and reflective supervision sessions, the supervisor will complete two pieces of observed practice with supervisees annually. The observations will be selected by the supervisor and may consist of practise, group delivery, meetings, joint home visits.

Following the session, the supervisor will provide feedback on:

- a. Brief description of the Observed Practice;
- b. Reflections on the Observed Practice;
- c. Comments on the feedback given by the observer and reflect on areas for future development.

### 8. Personal Supervision

This supervisor will complete this part of supervision at the end of case management supervision and will consist of the following:

#### **Performance Management and Feedback:**

- a. Quality assurance undertaken;
- b. Case discussions and reflections;
- c. Case file audit discussion;

**Professional Development discussions of your skills, knowledge base and value base to include:**

- d. Induction requirements;
- e. Training requirements (and formal completion of Performance Development Plans and Reviews);





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- f. Longer term development plans and setting of professional goals;

### **Health and Wellbeing:**

- g. Factors affecting performance;
- h. Personal issues;
- i. Stress-related issues;
- j. Absence(s) from work;
- k. Health and Safety;
- l. Opportunity for you to give feedback on your experience of and expectation of supervision;
- m. Equal Opportunities – to discuss any issues of oppression that the supervisee wishes to raise, from personal experience to institutional and structural matters;
- n. Annual Leave.