



Policy Document:

Staff Supervision.

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Policy statement

Staff supervision is a statutory requirement. It is a formal and recorded process through which the professional actions of staff are examined and regularly reviewed.

Supervision acts as a means for ensuring that members of staff have access to the support, training and procedures they require for professional growth and development.

Supervision enables supervisors and supervisees to examine and reflect on the quality of their practice and to facilitate discussion. Supervision meetings should provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any/all issues.
- Identify solutions to address issues as they arise.
- Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

The Meadows recognises that at a time of heightened awareness of safeguarding issues, there is increasing recognition that working in the early years includes a high degree of outreach work and contact with families. Many practitioners find themselves working in unfamiliar contexts and dealing with unpredictable issues, not least those arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. The need for keeping our practice and our staff is a priority.

At the Meadows we appreciate that our staff often manage increasingly complex issues in their intensive work with children and families. They can feel anxious, discouraged or overwhelmed, lose confidence and perspective, feel threatened and unable to cope with the demands of their jobs. Even when things are going well, there is a need to step away from the day-to-day demands and review and reflect on practice.

The role of supervision

Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

Staff supervision is a two-way process which promotes accountability and staff support and development. Both parties should be committed to making supervision worthwhile, positive, honest, objective and unbiased. Both parties should be fair and open and promote equality and trust.

Supervision should be a positive experience for all and take place regularly.

Good Practice in Supervision

Effective staff supervision is commonly characterised by the following features

- Confidentiality.* Issues of trust need to be thoroughly explored and the importance of confidentiality emphasised. Supervision should include a joint commitment to openness and clarity about what may be treated as confidential by both parties (or a supervision group) Any matters discussed in a supervision meeting can be treated as confidential when it is agreed that it is unnecessary to discuss them elsewhere. However, openness requires all parties to be sensitive to those occasions when difficult issues will have to be discussed elsewhere, and to be transparent about when and why this will be necessary and how it will be done.
- Commitment to preparation* for supervision by both supervisor and supervisee, including a review of previous actions and consideration of points for discussion. The structure of the agenda can be jointly agreed by both parties at the beginning of each meeting, allowing

prioritisation of topics and flexibility to reflect current needs. Topics for discussion may include: - review of last supervision and tasks undertaken - positive feedback and recognition - professional development and training - project updates - individual children's progress - interactions with families, - safeguarding issues, - equality and diversity issues, - general health and safety issues, -work patterns and annual leave.

- iii. *Agreed frequency and duration of meetings.* Staff supervision is often planned on a half termly weekly cycle for each member of the team. (This maybe on an individual or group basis) Supervision is effective when meetings are scheduled in advance and timings are not changed. Meetings held at a time and venues agreed by both parties with an approximate duration of 1-1.5 hours are recommended.
- iv. *Appropriate physical environment for supervision.* Supervision will normally take place in an agreed, comfortable and confidential setting.
- v. *Volunteers* - Volunteers will take part in regular supervision in line with their role and hours of work.
- vi. *Recording a supervision meeting.* The prompt recording of supervision sessions is necessary to provide an accurate record of decisions made and actions required. Often the supervisor takes responsibility for documenting the discussion during the session, formally agreeing actions at the end and providing the supervisee with a record shortly following the meeting. Any safeguarding decisions will be clearly stated and recorded in case files (in accordance with safeguarding standards) The supervisee will check the notes upon receipt and send any additions/amendments to the supervisor. In line with data protection, the supervisor is responsible for the safe storage of supervision records.

Roles and responsibilities

Supervisors need to:

- Ensure that staff members receive the appropriate amount and regularity of supervision. This may vary according to roles and hours worked
- Avoid postponing supervision sessions. Where cancellation is unavoidable, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to arrange an alternative time as near as possible to the original time.
- Arrange a suitably private venue free from disturbances.
- Be prepared to challenge and to give and receive constructive feedback.
- Supervisees need to:
 - Value the importance of supervision and contribute to an effective process.
 - Prepare for, attend and actively contribute to supervision meetings.
 - Act on decisions made in supervision.
 - Be open to challenge and to receive and give constructive feedback.