

# Supervision Policy & Guidance

This policy was adopted: May 2024 on behalf of  
Emmanuel Community School

Review date: May 2027

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## 1. Introduction

This policy provides for use in TEST schools for the provision of Safeguarding Supervision for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The document,

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115222/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2023-statutory-guidance.pdf)

highlights the role of supervision for those with safeguarding responsibilities.

## 2. Background

It was identified through learning from multiagency audits that there was a need for DSLs in schools to be provided with support and guidance specifically around their safeguarding role, separate from management supervision and that this was not always taking place. As the member of school staff with specific responsibility and leadership in safeguarding children, there can be a risk of feeling isolated, particularly when first in the role. In response to this need, TEST has adopted this policy which was developed by The Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP) in consultation with Service and other partners.

## 3. Definition of Safeguarding Supervision

Supervision is a method of supporting staff so they can provide for the needs of their students. Safeguarding Supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer emotional support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. Its purpose is to monitor the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus improving outcomes for children as well as achieving agreed objectives. Supervision also provides an opportunity to ensure that codes of conduct and standards of practice are maintained therefore promoting a safe culture. This will relate to Teaching Standards. This may be part of supervision or can take place separately especially where supervision is not given by the line manager/DSL.

The definition of supervision that is often used for school settings, which has been adapted from the work of Morrison (2005) states that:

‘Supervision is a process by which one member of staff is given responsibility by the school to work with

another staff member in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives, which together promote the best outcomes for students. These objectives and functions are

- a. Competent accountable performance (managerial function)
- b. Continuing professional development (developmental/formative function)
- c. Personal support (supportive/restorative function)
- d. Engaging the staff member with the school (mediation function)’

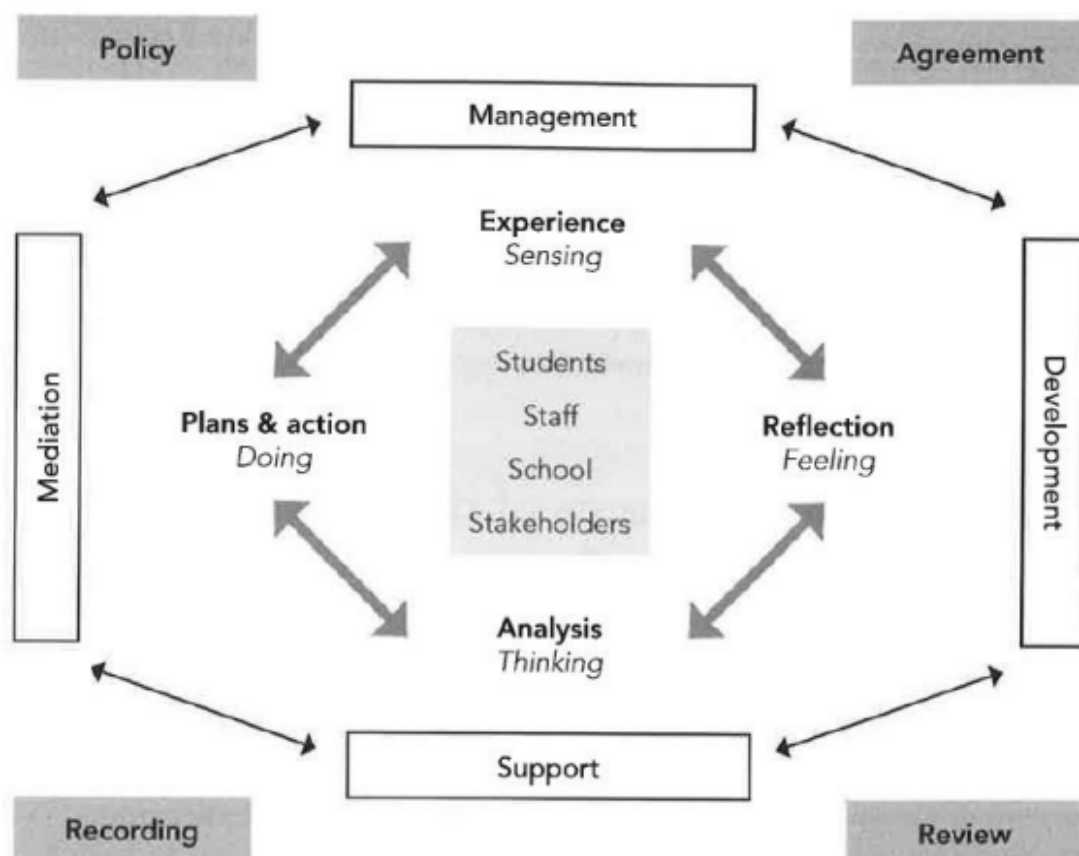


Figure 2.1: 4x4 model of supervision. Developed from Morrison T (2005) *Staff Supervision in Social Care* (3rd edition). Brighton: Pavilion Publishing and Media.

#### 4. Purpose of Safeguarding Supervision for DSLs

The purpose of Safeguarding Supervision is to:

- Provide protected time to reflect on practice
- Provide support with emotional well-being, resilience, picking up on demands and developing coping strategies
- Have an opportunity to off-load, talk about how they are feeling when dealing with distressed students and the impact on their own life. It should feel restorative and help build resilience
- Celebrating success
- Review workloads and time management
- Discuss and seek guidance on specific cases – review action plans, avoid drift. Provide a fresh eye, talk through intolerances, frustrations e.g. with other agencies/systems
- Provide an opportunity where a member of staff can be challenged supportively and constructively with advice offered on areas for improvement

- Allow for issues relating to the work place and to working practices to be identified and discussed including safer working practice and professional boundaries
- Enable an opportunity for reflection, creative thinking and solution focussed thinking
- Consider how their role fits with the rest of the school/other services and the community
- Identify achievements and good practice
- Consider appropriate CPD/training needs in relation to the safeguarding role

Safeguarding supervision is not related to appraisal, auditing or line management. It is therefore not essential that the Supervisor sits hierarchically above the supervisee, thus reciprocal arrangements can be used. It would usually be provided by a professional independent on the school.

## 5. Principles

- Safeguarding supervision is not related to and does not replace appraisal, but should compliment it.
- It is not counselling and a supervisor at times may need to refer a supervisee to other services such as counselling
- The relationship between supervisor and supervisee should be positive and trusting
- The school SLT/Governors should see supervision as an important aspect of the professionals' work and ensure adequate time is provided
- The supervisor may not sit hierarchically above the supervisee e.g. reciprocal arrangements, use of independent supervisor. However where someone other than the line manager provides supervision, the line manager still provides accountability for the work and should oversee direction of the plan and work for individual children.
- Decision making on a child's records should be signed off by the DSL who remains responsible
- Where supervision takes place across schools or with an independent person, confidentiality of individual children and families must be maintained. Case discussions will therefore be anonymised
- The supervisor should have attended supervision training and also be receiving supervision themselves

## 6. Models and Tools of Supervision at The Emmanuel School Trust

This policy is concerned primarily with one to one safeguarding supervision for DSLs that takes place in private at a pre-arranged time with an agreed agenda and preparation on behalf of both parties. However, if there is also a place for unplanned or “ad hoc” supervision, if the supervisee requires this, which is allowed for the Supervision Contract, and value in group safeguarding supervision with other DSLs.

There are many different tools that can be used during supervision, including:

- processes that help to frame the dilemma or issue that the supervisee is facing;
- Socratic questioning(1) (using questions that encourage the use of critical reflection on the supervisees thought processes and decision-making);
- Wonnacott’s Discrepancy Matrix (2) (looking at what is known, not yet known or unknown about a case from the point of view of the professionals and the family);
- Supervisee anxiety scale to for use in helping to deal with stress, anxiety and workload pressure;
- learnable skills of resilience and other resilience tools;
- Decision making ‘hats’ (looking at how the supervisee makes decisions); and
- Maclean’s head, heart, hands and feet(3) which aids reflection and considering of the range of skills, knowledge and experience used in a particular case.

For further information about any of the above or supervision tools in general, contact the RSCP. A good practice examples of safeguarding supervision for DSLs in primary schools can be found on the What Works in Children’s Social Care website. [Supervision of Designated Safeguarding Leads in Primary Schools in Bolton \(whatworks-csc.org.uk\)](https://www.whatworks-csc.org.uk) .

- Group of DSL’s/Deputies meet across an academy group or local group of schools
- Mixture of group and 1:1 supervision
- Most supervision will be planned but this may be supplemented by informal supervision sessions e.g. in relation to a crisis, need to de-brief after a session with a student

## 7. Discussion

To reflect on individual cases/scenarios, the supervisor may find it useful to use (TED)

- Tell me
- Explain to me
- Describe to me

and consider 4 aspects

**SENSE** – the story, what happened?

**FEEL** – reflection, what was it like?

**THINK** – Analysis, what does this mean?

**DO** – Action plans, what next?

(Morrison T 2005) The Supervision Cycle

Supervision should enable the supervisee to consider the best way to support the pupil's current needs, reflecting on and adapting responses to achieve the best outcome for the pupil.

(Lists of possible questions for supervision can be found in Sturt and Rowe, using Supervision in Schools Appendix 2)

## 6. Safeguarding Supervision Contract

It is good practice to agree a Safeguarding Supervision Contract before supervision activities commence. The most important part of this is the discussions that take place before supervision has actually begun, which is the time for the supervisor and supervisee to consider expectations of each other, particularly the boundaries between safeguarding supervision and management supervision, and establish the basis for a strong and supportive relationship going forward.

The contract should outline the expectation, including the following elements.

- frequency and length of safeguarding supervision;
- location – supervision should take place in a private and uninterrupted space during the working day;
- recording – it is the supervisor's responsibility to take notes and make sure they are made available to the Supervisee and filed. Both parties need to agree and sign that they are accurate. Records must be kept in a secure location. The records themselves must be kept in a format that suits both parties however a summary sheet of actions will be completed during or immediately after the session. A Recording Sheet is provided at **Appendix C**. Case

discussion with any changes in plan approved by the DSL are to go on a child's safeguarding record

- confidentiality – in general, supervision is considered as confidential, however there will be occasions where confidentiality will be overridden, for example in the case of child protection issues relating to the Supervisee or if not sharing information with senior school management could contribute in bringing the school into disrepute, there is a potential disciplinary matter or whistleblowing
- preparation for supervision – supervisee should identify cases/issues to discuss and start to reflect on these. A contract is included at **Appendix A**.

## **7. Entitlement to Safeguarding Supervision**

It is important that safeguarding supervision is provided to the DSL. If a DSL is not receiving safeguarding supervision at the required frequency during the year they should:

- in the first instance discuss any complaints or dissatisfaction with their supervisor and endeavour to reach an agreement within the normal supervision process; or
- if a solution is not agreed, the supervisee should raise the issue with the Headteacher.



## Appendix A

<b>Safeguarding Supervision Contract</b>			
Supervisee:	[Enter Name and Role]		
Supervisor:	[Enter Name and Role]		
Agreed Date:	/ /	Review Date:	/ /
Supervision Agreement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding supervision will be undertaken each half term or sooner if requested and will be for a minimum of 1 hour.</li>   <li>• Every effort will be made for supervision to take place in an uninterrupted environment.</li>   <li>• Each party in the agreement has the responsibility to notify the other in the event of cancellation or postponement.</li>   <li>• If at any time the Supervisor or the Supervisee is unhappy about an issue which cannot be resolved, the Head Teacher will be consulted with the agreement of both parties.</li>   <li>• Supervisors will respect the confidentiality of the Supervisee in all areas except Child Protection concerns about which need to be referred on or whether information is identified that could bring the organisation into disrepute which may need to be reported via line management.</li>   <li>• Notes and agreed actions will be recorded, signed, shared and kept securely electronically.</li> </ul>		
Supervisee:	[Insert signature]	Date:	/ /
Supervisor:	[Insert signature]	Date:	/ /

## Appendix B

### Supervision Agenda

	Date:	/ /
Time:		00:00
Introduction	1.	Welcome and informal opener
	2.	Agenda setting both parties to input
	3.	Information Sharing update
Specific case discussions (when appropriate also put on child's safeguarding file)	4.	Review notes of previous meeting
	5.	Specific case discussion including problem solving, consideration of the 'voice of the child'
	6.	Reflections (feelings)
Reflection	7.	Analysis - – celebrate success and good practice as well as consider what could be improved
	8.	Action Planning
	9.	Impact of work on individuals professionally or personally and any additional support which may be necessary
	10.	Professional practice issues e.g. new policies, quality of performance, safer working practice, professional boundaries, role within school
Development	11.	Professional practice issues e.g. new policies, quality of performance, safer working practice, professional boundaries, role within school
Completion	12.	Any Other Business (AOB)
	13.	Date of Next Supervision

**Appendix C**

**Safeguarding Supervision Notes and Action Template**

Item	Notes	Agreed Action	By Whom	By Date

Name	Role	Signature	Date Agreed
	Supervisee		/ /
	Supervisor		/ /

