Supervision Policy

Approved by Governors _____

Written September 2023

To be reviewed September 2025 (or in light of new legislation)

Whitefield Infant School and Nursery

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR STAFF SUPERVISION

Introduction

This policy and associated paperwork have been written by the school Child Protection and Safeguarding team with reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016, all DfE guidance, recommendations of the Serious Case Review into Little Ted's Nursery in 2010 as well as guidance published by the Kent County Council Education Safeguarding Team to aid schools and academies in fulfilling their responsibilities in providing supervision to their staff.

Good supervision can give staff an opportunity to reflect on their practice, explore any worries or concerns they may have about the welfare and development of all children in the setting and contribute towards highly effective practice and increased staff confidence. This supports the development of a safe setting where children are safeguarded from harm.

Supervision for EYFS Staff

Supervision is a legal requirement for EYFS staff; in the revised EYFS Statutory Framework (2014), supervision of staff becomes a 'must' rather than 'should' which is was in the 2012 Framework. This was following a SCR linked to Little Ted's Nursery in 2010.

The Framework states that supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being;
- Identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and
- Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness

Supervision for other staff

Although the EYFS is only applicable to schools with a Reception class, supervision is an important part of staff development and keeping children safe. At Whitefield Infant School, we recognise the importance of staff development keeping children safe throughout school; this takes the highest priority and therefore we also provided supervision to all staff with responsibility for pupils who may be vulnerable.

All members of staff are invited to request additional supervision at any time to discuss any issue linked to safeguarding. This is in addition to their responsibilities under KCSiE 2016 and the school's safeguarding policy. The Safeguarding team, through their regular and routine review, may identify the need for additional supervision.

What is supervision?

Formal supervision has been around for many years in Social Work, therapy and counselling. Government guidance has now identified that effective supervision is important for any practitioner involved in day to day work with children and their families (Working Together to Safeguard Children… Chapter 2 para 4 DfE:2013).

Similarly, lessons from serious case reviews have found that supervision is essential for any staff working in this sector "Supervision is … essential to help practitioners to cope with the emotional demands of work with children and their families which has an impact at all levels of intervention" (DCSF:2008).

Supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer 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 discuss sensitive issues including the safeguarding of children and any concerns raised about an individual or colleague's practice.

Who benefits from supervision?

The main beneficiary of supervision should be the service user, so in the case of Early Years Providers, the children who attend your school and their families.

Effective supervision ensures the delivery of efficient and safe care through regular monitoring of practice, professional support and the identification of an employee's training and development needs. It also supports increased staff retention which ensures continuity of care for children.

For the employee, supervision provides professional one to one support and "space" away from the direct work environment to discuss progress, professional role, workload and concerns. The supervisory relationship should develop trust which will allow for free and open discussion and learning without the fear of being criticised. Employees should receive constructive feedback about their work, with concerns being challenged sensitively and honestly and successes being acknowledged on a regular basis. This hopefully increases the feeling of being valued by management at the school which in turn, increases job satisfaction.

For the employer, communication between staff and management is improved, allowing for full discussion of the school's objectives, and priorities. Effective supervision encourages motivated, confident employees who understand the principles of safe practice and can mentor and support each other more effectively in the school. Staff are more focussed and efficient, knowing their individual priorities which increases productivity. Staff are clear about their responsibilities, what policies and procedures should be followed and what to do when they have concerns about either their own or others' practice.

Qualities of a 'good' supervisor

Supervision is only effective and positive for individuals and the organisation if it is carried out by the 'right' person. Supervisors should be competent, perhaps gaining skills through a management training programme, specific supervision training or shadowing a more experienced supervisor. They need to be clear about their role and responsibilities and on where to access additional advice when they need it.

Supervisors are normally the line managers of staff. A supervisor will have responsibility for the day to day oversight of staff and the work they do, as well as conducting regular supervision meetings and yearly appraisals with the staff members they supervise. However, it is vital that school management give careful consideration to 'matching' who is the most appropriate person to supervise each member of staff. For example, if there are known tensions between a room leader and an individual member of staff, it is going to be difficult to achieve a positive, trusting supervision relationship for either member of staff.

Some of the skills of a 'good' supervisor are: Honesty; accountability; challenging; trustworthy; supportive; diplomatic; empathic; reliable; competent; good time keeping skills; interested; responsible; non-judgemental.

The aim of supervision is to allow staff and their supervisors to:

- ✓ Discuss and challenge concerns, issues or difficulties;
- ✓ Identify solutions to address concerns and issues;
- ✓ Be coached in tackling issues as they arise and plan future action;
- ✓ Review work and workload;
- ✓ Explore feelings and emotional impact;
- ✓ Develop practice and competencies, including training needs;
- ✓ Explore the understanding of school policy, philosophy and practice;
- ✓ Ensure every child's safety and wellbeing;
- ✓ To maintain an accurate and agreed record of professional progress.

The rights and responsibilities of a supervisee:

- ➢ To receive effective and sensitive supervision;
- ➢ To be treated in an anti-discriminatory manner;
- ➢ To have their feelings and opinions recognised;
- ➢ To raise issues of concern about their own practice and that of their colleagues;
- ➢ To learn from mistakes and seek advice if they are unsure;
- ➢ To be listened to and receive appropriate professional support;
- ➢ To be briefed about changes;
- ➢ To commit to regular supervision and understand its value.

Why should Supervision be recorded?

- ✓ To keep a record of what was discussed and actions agreed;
- ✓ To keep a record of any disagreements;
- ✓ To benchmark and audit the quality of supervision;
- ✓ For performance management of staff.

At the end of each session, or as soon as possible thereafter, both supervisor and supervisee should sign and date the supervision notes to confirm its accuracy and both should keep a copy. The supervisor's copy may be kept in a supervision file or personal staff file.

Confidentiality

It is important for staff to be comfortable in discussing all aspects of their work but there needs to be clarity as to what will happen to information discussed if it raises concerns about the practice of a particular member of staff or a child. Accordingly, any supervision policy must be compatible with the safeguarding children, allegations against staff and confidentiality policies within the school.

Supervision records should be maintained confidentially and not be accessible to other school staff.

Frequency

The frequency of supervision may depend on a number of factors including staff ratios, availability of supervisors and availability of rooms, for example. Although no guidance is given in the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012 as to the expected frequency of supervision, "appropriate arrangements" should be in place with sessions held sufficiently often to allow it to be a meaningful experience for both the

supervisee and supervisor and to ensure the purpose of supervision, as outlined above, is met. One confidential supervision should be held at least every term. Group supervision, for example by means of a team meeting, could be offered in between these times.

Some staff, for example if they are newly qualified or less confident, may need supervision sessions to be held more regularly.

At Whitefield Infant School, the following routine for supervision is established:

- DSL and Back-up DSL's will have a monthly group supervision when all cases are reviewed.
- All members of the EYFS team receive supervision provided by the main DSL at least every term
- Any members of staff with responsibility for vulnerable pupils or those subject to additional agency involvement with receive supervision at least every term from a member of the Safeguarding team
- Any member of staff can request additional supervision at any time during the year.

How does supervision fit in with the appraisal process?

Appraisal and performance management clearly has some crossover with supervision. In the appraisal system targets are set, for example in terms of performance, activities and training needs and relate to the School Improvement Plan and to the professional standards required in providing a service. The targets are set annually and are often formally reviewed at the midway point of the year. In terms of good practice it is recommended that if each member of staff has termly supervision sessions (three times a year) then two could be largely set aside for the annual appraisal and the mid-year review.

Issues related to performance and training needs would be considered as part of the agenda of every supervision meeting and appraisal templates may be a helpful tool in structuring discussion.

A focus on how well an individual is performing in relation to organisational needs and priorities should not, however, be the main focus of the other four sessions. If one considers the comments of Mike Craddock, the Chair of the Little Ted's Serious Case Review panel, it is clear that he was considering the need to provide a safe space where difficult issues may be raised in a supportive and confidential manner. The kind of issues to which he alluded were working relationships, concerns about colleagues' behaviour and actions and the impact of personal relationships on reporting concerns. Individual attitudes and the opinions, values and beliefs underpinning these need to be explored to assist staff in distinguishing personal and professional beliefs and to develop a professional identity. This is particularly important for less experienced staff or those who have not had independent professional training.

Appendix 1: Guidance for Staff

Supervision will promote and model the following indicators of a safe setting:

· Staff are respectful to all employees as well as children
· Staff are open about discussing good and poor practice
· Blame only occurs in extreme circumstances
· Leaders model the appropriate behaviour
· Staff are knowledgeable about the vulnerability of the children that they look after
· Staff are aware that abusers may already be in the employment of the provision
· Children are listened to
· Staff are listened to and empowered to challenge poor practice
· Parents are encouraged to be involved in planning their child's care and are welcomed into the provision
· Staff are valued
· The culture of the setting is embedded and fortified
· Whistle-blowing procedures are in place and staff know how to use them

Supervision will benefit the Practitioner:

· Opportunity to look at your role and responsibilities, where you are now and where you would like to go. This could include training opportunities
· To reflect on, analyse and evaluate own practice
· Supports the setting of personal goals and a chance to review, change or adapt recent or past actions
· Promotes confidence and safe working practices
· Provides an opportunity to agree actions for both parties
· Allows disagreements to be recorded and solutions explored at the earliest opportunity

Supervision will benefit the Provision:

· To find out about staff as individuals and enable them to see where the provision they work for is going and how they can contribute to it
· An opportunity to respectfully challenge practice
· To manage performance and capabilities
· Reiterates provisional expectations and the culture of the setting
· To make sure children and their families receive the highest quality care and service
· To improve communication and share responsibility
· Assist staff retention
· Maximise safeguarding of children

Supervision is Supportive:

· It is a time to be listen to each other, value, motivate and empower staff their work and ongoing commitment
· Get staff involved in decision-making and problem solving
· Can be used to reduce stress and explore staff feelings
· Will support staff to manage work effectively
· Any issues can be discussed including issues related to health and safety, safeguarding and caseload

Whitefield Infant School and Nursery Supervision Meeting

Date		Staff name:		Role:	
Review of previous supervision meeting and tasks undertaken	➢				
Identified pupils	**Review of work**: What models, frameworks, techniques have you tried? What could you do differently? How can you improve what you are doing?				**Action and Deadline**
Targeted Support (specific cohort related issues and responsibility)					
Practitioner items (reflective practice around issues arising within setting)					
Management - feedback/ practice and performance/ work load:					
Any other Business					
Date of next supervision:		**Practitioner's signature/date**		**Supervisor's signature/date**	