Leamington Federation
Sydenham Primary School and Lighthorne Heath Primary School
Supervision for Designated Safeguarding Leads Policy

1.   Introduction

There was a need for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) in schools to be provided with support and guidance specifically around their safeguarding role, separate from management supervision. As a 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.

The document, Working Together to Safeguard Children, HM Government 2018, highlights the role of supervision for those with safeguarding responsibilities.

2.   Definition of Safeguarding Supervision

Safeguarding supervision is the provision of professional support and learning which enables practitioners (in this case the DSL) to develop knowledge and competence. It facilitates the practitioner to be able to take responsibility for their own practice and respond to the needs and risks presented by children and young people.
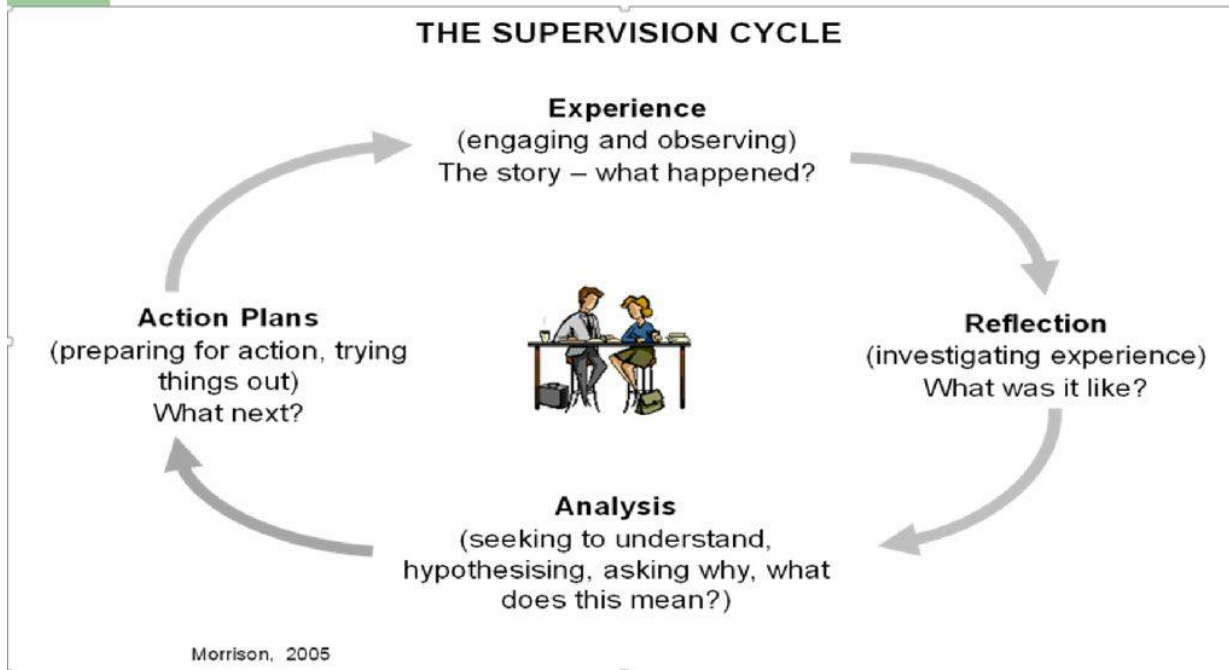
Safeguarding supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer emotional support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. Supervision ensures cases don't drift, maintains the focus on the child, and helps professionals to find out the evidence base for assessment and intervention. Supervision ensures cases don't drift, maintains the focus on the child, and helps professionals to find out the evidence base for assessment and intervention.

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 pupils.

These objectives and functions are:
1. Competent accountable performance (managerial function)
2. Continuing professional development (developmental/formative function)
3. Personal support (supportive/restorative function)
4. Engaging the staff member with the school (mediation function)'

Kolb's Model Adapted by Morrison

THE SUPERVISION CYCLE

Experience
(engaging and observing)
The story – what happened?

Reflection
(investigating experience)
What was it like?

Analysis
(seeking to understand,
hypothesising, asking why, what
does this mean?)

Action Plans
(preparing for action, trying
things out)
What next?

Morrison, 2005

3. Purpose of Safeguarding Supervision for DSLs

The purpose of Safeguarding Supervision for DSLs is to provide the opportunity 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 pupils 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

4. Principles

- Safeguarding supervision is not related to and does not replace appraisal, but should complement 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 anonymized.
- The supervisor should have attended supervision training and also be receiving supervision themselves.

5. Supervision Models and Tools

- Group of DSL's meet across the Leamington Federation.
- 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 pupil.

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

- Tell me
- Explain to me
- Describe to me

And consider 4 aspects:

1. SENSE – the story, what happened?
2. FEEL – reflection, what was it like?
3. THINK – Analysis, what does this mean?
4. 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 in Appendices)

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 will 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 copied, circulated 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 pro forma is provided in Appendix C; and
- 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 or if not sharing information with senior school management could contribute in bringing the school into disrepute.

A sample contract is included at Appendix A which can be adapted as required.   The contract and the supervision arrangement will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is meeting the learning needs of the DSL and having a positive impact on their practice.

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
- of a solution is not agreed, the supervisee should raise the issue with their Head Teacher.

This policy was ratified: September 2024

This policy will be reviewed: September 2025

Signed by the Head teacher

Juliette Westwood

Chair of Governors:
Richard Butler

Safeguarding Supervision Contract			
Supervisee:			
Supervisor:			
Agreed Date:		**Review Date:**	
Supervision Agreement:	• Safeguarding supervision will be undertaken each half term or sooner if requested and will be for a minimum of 45 minutes. • Every effort will be made for supervision to take place in an uninterrupted environment. • Each party in the agreement has the responsibility to notify the other in the event of cancellation or postponement. • 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. • 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. • Notes and agreed actions will be recorded, signed, shared and kept securely electronically.		
Supervisee:	[Insert signature]	**Date:**	/ /
Supervisor:	[Insert signature]	**Date:**	/ /

Supervision Agenda

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL Safeguarding Supervision	
A G E N D A	
Date	
Time	
Introduction	1. Welcome and informal opener
	2. Clarify role and confidentiality
	3. Agreed expectations
Specific case discussions (when appropriate also put on child's safeguarding file)	4. Review notes of previous meeting
	5. Share experience
	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. CPD support and access to resources e.g. reflect on recent or forthcoming training development opportunities
Completion	12. Any other business (AOB)
	13. Date of Next Supervision

Safeguarding Supervision Notes and Action Template

Item	Notes	Agreed Action	By Whom	By Date

Name Agreed	Role	Signature	Date
	Supervisee		
	Supervisor		

References and Useful Links

- Keeping children safe in education   Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, Department for Education, 2020

  https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_-_Update_-_January_2021.pdf

- Working together to safeguard children, HM Government, 2018

  https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance._pdf

- London Child Protection Procedures, 6th Edition, 2021

  https://www.londoncp.co.uk/

- Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP)

  https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/

References and Useful Links

Reflective Questions for Use in Supervision

Self
Self-awareness and knowledge of the impact of self on others is a key area of learning for DSLs. Reflection in supervision can support insight and knowledge about pupils' skills, strengths and areas for development.
- What personal and work experiences do you bring?
- What would friends, family or colleagues say you are good at (eg strengths and skills)?
- What tasks/activities do you feel confident doing here?
- What tasks/activities do you feel less confident or worried about?
- What do you need to know more about, to feel competent working in this setting?
- What are your strategies for balancing study, practice learning, paid work and home life?
- How do you organise yourself (making plans, prioritising, meeting deadlines)?

Knowledge
Knowledge about the DSL's practice with people receiving services.
- What factual knowledge do you need / have you applied (eg health conditions)?
- What organisational guidance have you applied?
- What national policy or practice guidance might apply?
- What law is applicable to your role and to the person you are working with?
- What theories, concepts and ideas might apply?
- What research might apply or what might I need to find out more about from research?
- What safeguarding models and methods of working apply?
- What knowledge do you already have which you can apply?
- What other knowledge might be helpful to you at this stage?

Knowledge about the DSL's role in the organisation.
- What knowledge defines your role and the expectations of you in this role?
- What school specific knowledge do you need / have you applied (processes and procedures)?
- What knowledge do you need to work effectively with other professionals?
- What knowledge about other services do you need to know?

Values and ethics
Safeguarding values and ethical practice are at the heart of safeguarding practice.
- How have you demonstrated an open minded and non-judgemental attitude?
- How might your preconceptions/assumptions about this person influence you?
- How have you shown respect for, and ability to work with, people with different values, beliefs and perspectives?
- How have you shown kindness and compassion (eg understanding the reality of peoples' lives)?
- How have you worked with cultural difference (eg regarding relationships, cultural practices, religion)? How have you made sure your recording is factual and ethical?
- What legislation about equality and human rights might apply to your work?

Questions about preparation and planning
- What knowledge are you applying to your DSL work? Examples may include:
  - factual knowledge (eg physical or mental health conditions, substance misuse, human development) theoretical knowledge and research
  - knowledge of social contexts and disadvantage
  - law or policy
- What do you need to know more about to work with this person?
- How will you assess this person's needs?
  - How will you communicate with them (are there any barriers)?
  - What information do you need to gather?
  - Who else do you need to speak with?

Questions about professional relationships
- How have you developed a relationship with this person and worked in partnership with them?
- How did you make sure the person understood you and you understood them?
- What might influence this person's behaviour (eg physical or mental illhealth, trauma, adverse childhood experiences)?
- How did you decide the balance between facilitating, supporting, advocating or directly intervening?
- How have you managed care versus control (how have you shown care and compassion and how have you used professional authority when required)?
- How have you worked effectively with other professionals (did they have different priorities, approaches, or values)?

Questions about taking action and decision making
- What are the priorities you have identified in this work?
- How did you make plans and agree goals with the person?
- How did you work with other professionals (what worked well, what were the challenges)?
- What are the next steps?
- What knowledge underpins the decisions you made with/about this person (eg factual knowledge, theory, policy, research)?
- What safeguarding in education methods or models have you used with this person?
  - What is the model about (what makes it different to other models)?
  - What do you think about this model (eg strengths and limitations, contexts when it is useful or not, the value base of the model)?
  - How does it apply to your work)?
- How have you managed any differences of opinion or conflict?

Questions about reviewing and evaluating
- How will you review and evaluate this work?
- What worked well?
- What new skills or knowledge have you gained from this work?
- What would you do differently next time and why?

Skills Questionnaire

Skills	How skilled am I? 1=not very skilled 10=very skilled
Developing relationships (with lots of different people).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Managing personal boundaries (not getting inappropriately involved, remaining objective).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Supporting people (to do things for themselves, express their needs or wishes).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Collaborating (with people receiving services, colleagues, other professionals).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Information gathering (asking personal questions, exploring information).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Resourcefulness (finding out information, services or community resources).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Adaptability (managing different roles and contexts)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Flexibility (responding to changing needs and plans, managing crises).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Organisational skills (finding your way about, juggling deadlines and priorities).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Digital skills (emails, information and recording systems).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Taking initiative (asking others, trying out new ideas, being proactive).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Perseverance (staying positive and keeping going when it's tough).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Using professional authority (saying no, having difficult conversations).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Reflective practice (analysing practice, using feedback to develop practice).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10