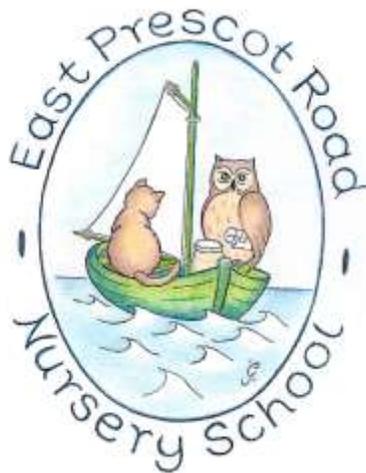


East Prescott Road Nursery School



Supervision Policy

Introduction & Rationale

The Early Years' Foundation Stage places emphasis on welfare and safeguarding standards, stipulating that regular staff supervision is now a statutory requirement. The role of supervision in improving practice and maintaining effective early years provision is well understood within the sector, supporting performance management and continuous professional development.

As we strive to improve outcomes for all children and narrow the gap in achievement of vulnerable children in East Prescott Road Nursery School, 'safe' practices and the effective management of staff performance and well-being are of paramount importance. Comprehensive, inclusive policies and management systems for safeguarding practices must therefore include the regular supervision of all staff.

Context

The Early Years Foundation Stage sets out a statutory requirement that all early years' settings have arrangements for staff supervision in place. This highlights the importance of good supervisory practice throughout the EYFS in the context of a supportive professional culture to ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for both children and staff. Providers must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families.

Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

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'

Professionally, staff supervision has been a normal part of counselling, psychotherapy and social work practice and is increasingly to be found in related caring professions, including medicine, nursing, education and children's services. 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. The need for keeping practice and practitioners 'safe' is a priority.

What is supervision?

Practitioners 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.

Supervision provides a regular, dedicated time (approx. 1-1.5 hours) for 1-1 or small group reflection and discussion. Commonly, supervision is organised over a 6-weekly cycle. The following definition recognises supervision as a core process by which those with leadership and management responsibilities regularly provide support and challenge to ensure and improve the quality of their services

'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. The needs of the individual, the project or department where they work and the organization as a whole should all be taken into account. Parties should be fair and open and promote equality and trust.

Supervision fulfils the following three main functions:

- **Supportive/Restorative Supervision** focuses on how a staff member's work with children, families and other team members is affecting them personally.
- **Management Supervision** concerns issues of quality assurance and safeguarding of the children and families who use services, ensuring that aims, principles, policies and standards are upheld.
- **Developmental Supervision** concerns the development of skills and understanding through exploration and reflection, which can help to identify training needs. It is not the same as training.

Supportive working cultures

Critically, supervision should take place in the context of a supportive professional culture built on trust and respect, recognising the influence and impact of establishing good working relationships.

In relation to safeguarding, there needs to be recognition of the need to provide a 'safe' space to 'hold' the strong emotions that are sometimes aroused by issues that arise in efforts to protect children. This also applies to everyday, often personal issues presented by staff, impacting on their well-being and effectiveness. Such scenarios require emotionally intelligent leaders and managers who confidently offer opportunities for open, honest reflection and demonstrate commitment to supporting supervisees in finding ways forward. It is, however, recognised that early years practitioners may feel uncomfortable with the term 'supervision', which seems to imply being overseen, and this can evoke fear of being under surveillance, at risk of being judged or deemed inadequate in some way.

Whilst management is one of the three key functions of supervision, research suggests that good performance is more likely when a manager is respectful, assumes a collegial stance and comes alongside the staff member, inviting them to review their work and discuss any pressing issues - suggesting that together they might achieve a clearer and wider perspective.

Good practice in supervision

Confidentiality

Issues of trust need to be thoroughly explored and the importance of confidentiality emphasized. 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 celebration of strong practice
- professional development and training project updates
- individual children's progress interactions with families, colleagues other professionals
- safeguarding issues
- equality and diversity issues
- general health and safety issues
- working schedules

However, all topics cannot be covered each time and will need to be jointly prioritised at the beginning of supervision sessions.

Agreed frequency and duration of meetings – staff supervision is planned on termly cycle for each member of the team. (This may be 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.

Appropriate physical environment - Supervision normally takes place in an agreed confidential, comfortable setting where interruptions are minimized.

Recording a supervision meeting The prompt recording of supervision sessions is necessary to provide an accurate record of decisions made and actions required. The supervisor will take 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.

Supervision ratios

Supervision will be carried out by a member of the SLT and their workload will reflect the time required for this.

Supervision of volunteers

Volunteers need to take part in regular supervision in line with their role and hours of work.

Training

Supervision training is essential for all those leading or undertaking supervision. Training will include general supervision skills and detailed information for using standards and documentation.

Quality assurance

Regular monitoring and evaluation of supervision is the responsibility of the Headteacher who will ensure impact and alignment with development priorities and compliance with safeguarding policy.

Models of supervision

Supervision meetings can take the form of individual or group meetings. As a general rule, the more responsibility the job carries for making decisions which affect other people (children, staff, families), the more access there should be to individual supervision.

The Headteacher will ensure that staff who normally receive group supervision will also have a minimum of two individual supervision meetings annually. Most staff supervision within our school is provided through the line management structure, however, on accession, the school may choose to employ the services of an external supervisor.

The following list illustrates different models of supervision (not an exhaustive list):

Individual supervision (one supervisor: one supervisee)

Intra-professional supervision (specialist practitioners take part in individual/group supervision, external to the centre.

Group supervision (one supervisor: several supervisees)

External supervision (providing supervision in specialised area. 1-1/group)

Purpose

- To develop confidence, and increase skills, insight and courage when working with children, parents and communities.
- To establish and maintain a positive and co-operative working relationship between leaders and staff, built on trust, respect and a non-judgemental style
- To provide a reflective and safe space that encourages a dynamic interaction to address issues and dilemmas experienced by staff members in their work roles
- To reduce stress-related absences, and increase confidence in dealing with complex safeguarding and other dilemmas.
- To ensure organisational and staff accountability and development, thereby promoting reflective, creative, ethical and safe practice.
- To ensure staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and that their practice is consistent with setting's values, policies, procedures and quality standards
- To monitor progress in relation to appraisal objectives
- To identify and review personal development needs and activities for staff that relate to their roles and the needs of the setting
- To model a preferred way of working and relating, which can be transferred to other working relationships

What does this look like in practice?

- Each member of staff will have a supervisor – this will usually be the member of the senior leadership team that supports their Performance Management.
- Supervision will be in addition to Performance Management, be face-to-face, and take place in a setting private and free from disturbance.
- Supervision will be on a termly basis – but the frequency may change depending on circumstances, such as complex child protection issues – and supervision sessions will last between 45 mins -1.5 hrs.
- Supervisors will establish a shared view of supervision, including ways in which staff members have felt supported in the past and what they have found useful/less useful.
- All supervision is recorded by the supervisor, shared with the supervisee and stored securely.
- An agreed Staff Supervision Record form will be used to capture discussion points and decisions made. (Appendix 1 provides an example proforma for a Staff Supervision Record form).
- Safeguarding decisions will be clearly stated and will be recorded in the child's individual file by the staff member/key person.
- The Supervision Record will be printed and given to the staff member at the end of the session or within 5 working days.
- The staff member will check the notes and complete any amendments, returning the record to the supervisor.
- At the next supervision session, both parties will formally agree the notes of the previous meeting, and this agreement will be recorded in the next meeting notes.
- During every supervision meeting, it is essential that both the supervisor and supervisee make a note of decisions made and actions required, and these actions are formally agreed at the end of the meeting.
- Supervision notes/records will be stored securely in individual staff records.

Supervision structure

Staff are placed into groups for supervision purposes.

- The Headteacher is the supervisor for members of the SLT and class teachers
- Early Years Educators will be supervised by as member of the SLT.
- Supervision of trainees and students will be by their placement mentor.
- Supervision of volunteers will be in line with this policy.

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.

Training and Development

Supervision training will be completed by all members of staff and will include general supervision skills and information for using standards and documentation.

Supervision of supervision

The supervisor's task is a complex and vital one. It is necessary that their own ongoing supervision arrangements include agreed space to talk about the supervision they offer. The provision of specific supervision of their supervisory practice will require consideration.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Supervision practices will be quality assured in line with the monitoring and evaluation policy. Outcomes to be reported to governors/management committee.

APPENDIX 1 – Staff Supervision Record Form

The Staff Supervision Record is designed to ensure that key areas are considered in supervision so that supervisor and supervisee are protected in the working relationship. Not every section needs to be covered during every session. However, it is recommended that each session begins with an open slot (welcome) and ends with a summary discussion and evaluation of the session (ending), including identifying the date of the next meeting.

Name of Supervisor	
Name of Supervisee	
Class Team:	
Date:	
<p>Welcome: How staff member is generally, what's been happening or pre-occupying the staff member – an easing into supervision. Review of last supervision session</p>	
<p>Main responsibilities: This relates to day-to-day work and priorities and should provide opportunities to discuss successes and challenges. This area will take up a substantial portion of each session as it provides an opportunity to discuss specific work with children and families and practice development</p>	
<p>Relationships: with staff members, children and families and other work contacts Discussion about the school's values and the member of staff contribution to this ethos</p>	
<p>Appraisal objectives: Discussion of progress and supported required, including training.</p>	

<p>Meetings: This relates to preparation and review of all varieties of meetings held</p>	
<p>Health, welfare and safety: This includes general health and safety issues, as well as welfare issues which could include issues around stress, race, disability, sexuality, gender, religion and age.</p>	
<p>Attendance and time-keeping</p>	
<p>Personal Development: This includes discussion of activities that will help/have helped the supervisee to develop themselves into their role. This may include working with other colleagues and experts, training or other activities</p>	
<p>Ending: This is about establishing how a staff member feels at the end of supervision and an ongoing opportunity for the staff member to constructively feedback any issues raised. Staff members are encouraged to make reasonable and realistic suggestions.</p>	

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