



Calderdale Multi Agency Safeguarding Supervision Framework

**Multi Agency Principles for
Safeguarding Supervision for Staff
Working with Children, Young
People and Adults with Support and
Care Needs or who are 'At Risk'**

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Introduction

Everyone who works with children and adults 'at risk' or with support and care needs has a responsibility for safeguarding. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a person's needs and circumstances and, if children and adults are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information (as required) and taking prompt action.

This document aims to agree and establish key principles across all agencies and is aimed at all staff who work with children, young people, adults who are 'at risk' and those who have care and support needs in Calderdale. It is intended to be read in conjunction with single agency policies and procedures, which will incorporate and interpret the principles in a way which is appropriate to each organisation.

The framework has been written, following recommendations from a Multi-agency audit and consultation with members of the Calderdale Learning and Improvement Sub-group, to ensure it meets the needs of all agencies, the staff and their supervisors, regardless of the professional area in which they work. The term 'supervision' has been agreed by all agencies as it is a nationally recognised term that is used in many policies and procedures when referring to the process of managing personal development and individual workloads. Therefore, notwithstanding terminology the principals of best practise remain the same.

The findings of many reviews in relation to both children and adults has identified that effective supervision can play a critical role in ensuring a clear focus on the person who is in need or at risk. Supervision should support practitioners to reflect critically on the impact of their decisions on the people with whom they are working.

Chapter 2 of Working Together 2018 sets out the arrangement's organisations should have in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These include the requirement of employers to provide 'appropriate supervision and support for staff' to ensure that staff are:

- *“competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children*
- *creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns*
- *feel supported in their safeguarding role*

And that all practitioners should:

- *be familiar with child protection responsibilities and the procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare and*
- *have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they have knowledge, skills and expertise that improve over time”*

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 requires that *“Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities”*.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence explains that:

‘Supervision is fundamental to good safeguarding practice across a range of settings..... The focus of supervision should be on good outcomes for adults in need of care and support.’

Both the Children and Adults Intercollegiate documents of safeguarding roles and competencies for Health Care staff highlight *“it is the duty of healthcare organisations to ensure that all health staff have access to appropriate safeguarding/child protection supervision and support to facilitate their understanding of the clinical aspects of child wellbeing and information sharing”*.

What do we mean by ‘Supervision’?

Supervision is an interactive process between a practitioner and, usually, their line manager, which promotes good practice, also develops their knowledge and skills, and supports individuals to meet organisational or professional objectives. It is an opportunity for protected time to reflect on personal development and agree goals for the future.

The objectives and functions of supervision have been described by Tony Morrison¹ as promoting:

- Competent **accountable** performance (managerial function);
- CPD - Continual Professional Development (developmental or formative function);
- Personal **support** (supportive or restorative function);
- Engaging the individual with the organisation (**mediation** function).

Calderdale also consider **reflection** to be an important feature of good quality supervision and a key skill to develop in staff as part of personal development. The Calderdale focus on reflection and accountability of this model is covered further in this framework.

It is essential that supervision whether carried out on an individual or group basis is undertaken in a positive and supportive environment. It should reflect that support and challenge is helpful, expected and is constructive in an open and safe environment. There are many models used for guidance to promote good supervision in general and although this framework concentrates on Safeguarding Supervision the principles are transferable.

¹ Tony Morrison (2006) ‘Staff Supervision in Social Care’

Promoting Reflective Supervision

One message from practice is that, too often, supervision may be dominated by management processes and task completion, and not enough time is given to reflection and critical thinking. The opportunity to promote high quality services through promoting reflection as a means of increasing the understanding of the worker and supporting practice development may therefore be lost. Discussions which incorporate messages from research and learning from Serious Case Reviews / Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews / Safeguarding Adult Reviews in supervision conversations will therefore facilitate examination of practice and current thinking, for example, see Appendix B

Skilled use of reflection and critical thinking within supervision will enable a focus on the quality of practice and may at times alert the supervisor to situations where the work of the supervisee is unlikely to promote the best outcome for the service user.

An important element in reflective supervision is enabling staff to question their practice, critically analyse and evaluate experiences and debrief after challenging or stressful encounters. This will lead to a better understanding of the cognitive and emotional elements of practice.

Reflection on feelings created by the work, including consideration of assumptions or biases that may be driving practice, is an important element of supervision.

Alongside this, an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of particular courses of action, and how the worker might have acted differently for the greater benefit of the person who uses services, is an essential learning tool facilitating appraisal and continuous improvement. Supervision which encourages reflection and critical thinking will also increase the potential for including comments from people who use services (service user feedback) within supervisory discussions.

A valuable tool in assisting staff to understand the success of any safeguarding measures in terms of outcome for the child or adult at risk is to use the 'Day in a Life' tool. This supports supervisees to feel the value of their work and to focus the perspective on the voice of the child or adult, as well as identify possible opportunities to improve outcomes.

Accountability

One of the functions of the Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership and Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board is to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk in the area. The guidance outlined in the Introduction Section above references the need for organisations and individuals to demonstrate that arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This includes appropriate supervision and support for staff. Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership and Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board may therefore require organisations to demonstrate the effectiveness of support to staff which will

include implementation and evaluation of the frequency and quality of supervision via single agency and multi-agency audits, Section 11 and Self-Assessment Audits.

Each agency should have a method in place to quality assure the standard and timeliness of their Safeguarding Supervision procedures and support the process of learning across teams. There should be processes in place to provide observation and peer support for supervisors and an opportunity for regular training. The Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership and Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board recommend that training is refreshed every 3 years or sooner if needed. Alternative ways of evaluating supervision could be through audits and feedback from supervisees.

What do we mean by ‘Safeguarding Supervision’?

Safeguarding Supervision is an additional focus on how the individual and organisation impacts on the welfare of children and adults ‘at risk’, their carers and families. Therefore, whilst every individual should have quality and effective supervision, only certain roles will require individuals to have Safeguarding Supervision.

Safeguarding Supervision is a formal process of professional support and learning that enables individual practitioners to develop knowledge and competence, assume responsibility for their own practice, and enhance protection and safety of care in a wide range of situations.

Good Safeguarding Supervision involves reflecting on practice to understand what is happening, how this links to other similar experiences, to make sense of the information that is gathered, to identify next steps and is therefore an important element in achieving positive outcomes for children and adults. Best practices are seen where there is evidence of a holistic review of the family or household identifying risks and support needs for children and adults irrespective of the nature of the original concern.

Lord Laming advised that Supervision should be open and supportive, focusing on the quality of decisions, good risk analysis, and improving outcomes.”

Why is Safeguarding Supervision important?

Good Safeguarding Supervision should result in positive outcomes for the people who use services as well as similar outcomes for the worker, the supervisor and the organisation as a whole. Good quality Safeguarding Supervision can help to:

- Avoid drift
- Keep the focus on the person who is at risk or in need, whilst maintaining a holistic view of the family and any wider safeguarding risks
- Maintain a degree of objectivity and challenge fixed views
- Test and assess the evidence base for assessment and decisions
- Address the emotional impact of the work
- Promote good standards of practice

- Support individual staff members
- Help ensure practice is soundly based & consistent with organisational procedures
- Inform practice with learning from research, Safeguarding Adult Reviews and / or Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Ensure that staff fully understand their roles & responsibilities
- Help identify training & development needs enabling the practitioner to provide a safe & effective service

Key principles for Safeguarding Supervision

1. Good quality Safeguarding Supervision is essential for all practitioners working with people in need or at risk.
2. Supervisors should consider undertaking a Safeguarding Supervision history to ascertain how previous experiences may impact on the supervisees present use of supervision – see appendix
3. Safeguarding Supervision should be a positive experience for both parties, therefore there is a shared responsibility for receiving and facilitating the session.
4. Safeguarding Supervision should be planned and prepared for in agreed timescales
5. Safeguarding Supervision meetings should be protected from interruptions and held in a mutually agreed private location
6. Supervisors should have an enhanced level of skills and knowledge in relation to Safeguarding in order to feel confident in their role; information sharing, partnership working and latest learning from SCR's/Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews/SAR's/DHR's in order to promote current thinking in supervision discussions
7. Each Safeguarding Supervision session should be rigorous in quality assuring work in accordance with individual and multi-agency safeguarding procedures.
8. Supervisors should consider the practitioners training and development needs during the meeting and take the opportunity to ensure that staff understand safeguarding procedures, specifically the benefits of multi-disciplinary meetings.
9. Both parties should be responsible for ensuring that decisions and actions from the meeting are agreed, recorded and completed.
10. Supervisors should be receptive to the emotional impact on staff and on their practice and work with them to identify and manage the issues raised.

Opportunities for Safeguarding Supervision

Informal Supervision:

Because of the dynamic nature of work with people in need or at risk, there will be a requirement for occasional unplanned, ad hoc consultation between a manager or Safeguarding Lead and the practitioner. This informal Supervision needs to be carefully managed and should not be a replacement for formal meetings. Parties should always consider whether a particular issue can be satisfactorily dealt with by informal Supervision, or whether it can wait to be discussed at the next formal meeting. Where key decisions are made through informal Supervision, a record of the decision should be made and agreed by both parties.

Group Supervision:

With sessional staff or those with a minimal involvement in safeguarding issues, supervision and reflection on practice with staff in a group can be a more efficient use of everyone's time.

Peer Networking:

As an addition to formal Supervision, peer networking can be a valuable way for practitioners to exchange information and knowledge about their work and should be encouraged by employers. Peer networks can be actual – via regular meetings and seminars – or virtual, via email or web-based resources including social media.

Practice Forums:

These are particularly useful as a means of bringing multi professional groups together to discuss particular issues. Forums can be informal – such as a lunchtime seminar – or more structured, for example, as learning sets.

Coaching and Mentoring:

These terms are often used interchangeably, but each has a specific meaning. Coaching tends to be short term and focused on a specific task. The line manager of the person being coached often provides or is closely involved in the coaching. Mentoring is longer term and focused on the relationship between the parties. Mentors are not usually the line manager of the person being mentored. Both coaching and mentoring are useful in supporting and developing staff involved with safeguarding.

Written Agreements / Contracts in Safeguarding

Supervision (see Appendix A)

A written agreement, negotiated between the supervisor and supervisee can help to clarify the functions of supervision and the expectations of an effective supervisory relationship. The following provides an example of the contents of a written agreement:

Expectations and Responsibilities of Supervisees:

A supervisee should expect:

- To be treated with respect in a way which demonstrates anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice.
- Protected time for safeguarding supervision.

- Confidentiality within the terms of this contract.
- To discuss stressful aspects of the work; be given support and be directed to further sources of support if requested.

All supervisees have a responsibility to:

- Prepare for each session by identifying cases or issues for discussion.
- Bring any relevant paperwork to the safeguarding supervision.
- Prepare for each session by reviewing any Action Plans developed during the previous session.
- Contribute in a positive and constructive manner to the safeguarding supervision session.
- Prioritises attendance at safeguarding supervision.

Expectations and Responsibilities of Supervisors:

All supervisors should expect:

- To be treated with respect in a way which demonstrates anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice.
- Confidentiality within the terms of this contract.
- To challenge values or behaviours which may compromise good practice.

All supervisors have a responsibility to:

- Exercise a duty of care towards the supervisee.
- Acknowledge the stressful nature of safeguarding children and adults and ensure that any necessary support available is offered to minimise risk to the individual, to supervisees and to the organisation.
- Prepare for each session by reviewing any Action Plans developed during the previous session.
- Identify any compromised practice and bring to the attention of the relevant manager.
- Make arrangements for their own supervision.

Recording of Safeguarding Supervision

Safeguarding Supervision discussions should be recorded and copies agreed and held by both the supervisee and supervisor.

In addition to a model recording template, this framework provides a number of examples to facilitate and record reflective supervision sessions See Appendices C and D.

Appendix A

Example: Safeguarding Supervision Agreement / Contract

This agreement was drawn up on: (date) between Supervisee (name) and Supervisor (name).

A copy of this contract will be held by both the Supervisor and Supervisee. This contract will change as and when necessary and with prior consultation.

Frequency / Length

Safeguarding Supervision sessions will be held every 4 to 6 weeks. (Minimum 4 weekly)

A minimum of one and a half hours will be available. If a supervision session is missed, the Supervisor takes responsibility to rearrange an alternative date as soon as possible.

Confidentiality

The Supervisee (name) accepts that work issues may be discussed, when appropriate, with other managers.

The Supervisee (name) is entitled to have issues concerning the quality of his/her work to be overt and open to his/her involvement.

The Supervisee (name) and Supervisor (name) are to inform each other of anything that needs to be kept confidential.

The Supervisee (name) accepts that their supervision records will move with them in the event of transfer of Supervisor.

The Supervisee (name) accepts that following their departure, their supervision record will be held in their personnel file.

Supervisee's expectations

- To uninterrupted time in a private venue.
- To have the Supervisor's attention, ideas and guidance.
- To receive feedback.
- To set part of the agenda.
- To ask questions.
- To have the Supervisor carry out agreed action or provide an appropriate explanation, within an agreed time frame.
- To state when over/under worked.
- To have his/her development/training needs met.
- To challenge ideas and guidance in a constructive way.

Supervisee's Responsibilities

- To be proactive.
- To have a predominantly problem solving approach.
- To accept feedback positively.
- To update Supervisor and provide relevant information.

- To prepare for safeguarding supervision, and to keep their copy of the supervision record in a secure location.
- To bring issues, concerns and problems.
- To maintain the agreement.
- To identify development / training needs and engage in agreed activities.

Supervisor's expectations

- To bring concerns/issues about Supervisee's work.
- To discuss the Supervisee's work and workload.
- To give Supervisee constructive feedback on his/her work performance.
- To negotiate around Supervisee's work/workload.
- To observe Supervisee's practice and to initiate supportive / corrective action as required.

Supervisor's Responsibilities

- To make sure safeguarding supervision sessions happen as agreed and to keep a record of the meeting.
- To ensure the location is suitable and time is protected for the meeting.
- To create a safeguarding supervision file for the Supervisee containing their supervision records and other documents relating to their employment and development.
- To ensure that the Supervisee is clear about his/her role and responsibilities.
- To ensure the Supervisee is clear regarding their employment status e.g. induction, probation, temporary, permanent.
- To make available to the Supervisee a copy of their up to date Job Description and Person Specification.
- To record the safeguarding supervision session and to store their copy in the supervision file.
- To ensure that the Supervisee is kept up-to-date with departmental/local authority policy and procedures.
- To monitor the Supervisee's performance, including work and attendance.
- To set standards and assess the Supervisee against these.
- To know what the Supervisee is doing and how it is being done.
- To deal with problems as they impact on the Supervisee's performance.
- To support the Supervisee and the agreed personal development plan.

Conflict

Every effort should be made to resolve any conflict, within safeguarding supervision.

In exceptional circumstances, where this cannot be achieved, the Supervisee has recourse to the Supervisor's line manager.

Recording Safeguarding Supervision

The Supervisor and Supervisee agree notes of the session, which should be signed and dated, using the pro-forma provided.

Signed by: (name)

Date:

(Supervisee)

Signed by: (name)

Date:

(Supervisor)

Appendix B

Using the Strengthening Families Approach in Supervision

(Based on the Signs of Safety model)

Primarily used in Initial Child Protection Case Conferences and Reviews, the 'Strengthening Families' approach can be used when supervising individuals to structure discussions about casework. This model can also be used in meetings to structure conversation to identify risks, strengths and to plan for the future.

Central to the Strengthening Families approach are the principles of Solution Focused Brief Therapy, namely to explore the service user's preferred future instead of focusing on a problem; to identify resources, strengths and goals to attain the preferred future (and in doing so change the problem). Careful questioning is carried out to establish preferred futures and to make them concrete, observable, realistic and noticeable to the individual / family members / carers as steps are achieved towards them.

In practice, the Strengthening Families approach focuses on:

1. What are we worried about? (past harm, future danger, unmet needs and complicating factors)
2. What's working well? (existing strengths and safety)
3. What needs to happen? (future safety and next steps)

Applying this model requires practitioners to establish an open mind about cases, to engage in critical thinking and maintain a constant position of inquiry. It is important that the worker resists the urge to make definitive conclusions about solutions, so they can be open to hearing other's perspectives and goals. This applies also to professionals who may have different views on a case, so that they can be heard and considered when discussing goals and plans for action.

Please note: This model alone does not facilitate the expression or understanding of the emotional impact of Safeguarding work on the worker.

Questions to Facilitate a Reflective Conversation

(Based on the work of Tony Morrison)

Focusing on Experience (Engaging and Observing). The story – what happened?

This involves working with the supervisee to understand what is happening in their current practice. Where this relates directly to work with people at risk or in need of support it is an opportunity to make sure that their perspective is introduced into the discussion

- Tell me about your work with the service user/family this week.
- What were you thinking? What were you feeling? How are you feeling now?
- What words, non-verbal signals, smells, sounds, images, observations struck you?
- What was your aim? What planning did you do? What did you expect to happen?
- What went according to plan/or didn't happen? What surprised/puzzled you?
- What's worrying you about this case? What were the key moments?
- What do you need from me to help with this? How do you want to use this time now?
- What are you pleased with yourself for this week?

Focusing on Reflection (Investigating the Experience). What was it like?

Reflection involves engaging with the supervisee to explore their feelings, reactions and intuitive responses. This is an opportunity to discuss any anxieties and acknowledge situations where stress may be impacting on their work. Where the discussion relates to specific work with people who use services it is an opportunity to explore any assumptions and biases that might be driving practice. This can be an important element of working with diversity and promoting anti-oppressive practice.

- What similarities/differences are there between you and the service user that may have impacted on your interaction?
- What was good and bad about the experience?
- What feelings did you bring into the session/what feelings were you left with?
- Do you feel confident? Where and when did you feel most or least comfortable?
- Describe a time when you last experienced that – what happened?
- What did you think the service user was feeling – based on what?
- Who have you consulted/talked to? What was their take on the situation?
- What's at the back of your mind? So you're saying...?

Focusing on Analysis (Seeking to Understand, Hypothesising). Asking why, what does this mean?

This involves helping the supervisee to consider the meaning of the current situation and use their knowledge of similar situations to inform their thinking. At this point alternative explanations may be explored and, where the needs of a service user are being discussed, this is an opportunity to consider the relevance of research and practice knowledge. This in turn may be useful in identifying any learning and development needs for the supervisee.

- What sense can you make of the situation?

- Is there any theory or research – or training – that might help you make sense of what's going on in this case? Who else could you involve?
- What new information emerged? What was the critical moment?
- What aims/outcomes for this session were or were not achieved?
- What else could you have done? What isn't happening now? What isn't known?
- What conclusion are you drawing from this work so far?
- What could you have done differently? In what way will that help?
- What have you learned from this?

Focusing on Action Plans (Preparing for Action, Trying Things Out). What next?

Action planning involves working with the supervisee to identify where they wish to get to and how they are going to get there. Action will automatically result in a need to re-engage with the experience of carrying out identified plans as well as consideration of potential complications and contingency plans.

- If it arose again, what would you do? How can you prepare for this?
- Have you thought...? What might be your strategy for the next session?
- What would be a successful outcome to the next session from your perspective and from the user's perspective? What information do you need to progress?
- Can you identify what you are – and are not – responsible for in managing this situation?
- What are you trying to achieve and how? How will you know when you have achieved it?
- What else would you find helpful? Is there further training/support you'd like to access?
- How well equipped do you feel to undertake this? Are there any safety issues for you?
- What do you want to do here, now?

Appendix C

Examples of Reflective Supervision Discussion Templates

The following templates provide examples of how to record reflective supervision discussions.

i. SBAR

The Situation-Background-Assessment-Recommendation (SBAR) tool provides a framework to reflect a service user's situation, family, personal or social conditions. SBAR stands for:

- **S** – Situation: What is happening at the present time?
- **B** – Background: What are the circumstances leading up to this situation?
- **A** – Assessment: What do I think the problem/issue is?
- **R** – Recommendation: What should we do to correct the problem/issue? What action is now required?

ii. Reflective Framework

This uses the key stages of the reflective cycle to capture the discussion

- **DESCRIPTION** - What happened?
- **FEELING** - What were you thinking/feeling?
- **EVALUATION** - What was good and bad about the situation?
- **ANALYSIS** - What sense can you make of the situation?
- **CONCLUSION** - What else could you have done?
- **ACTION PLAN** - What are you going to do now? If it arose again, what else could you do?

iii. APIR model

APIR stands for:

- **A** – What is your assessment of needs, risks and strengths?
- **P** – What needs to happen now? Planning arising out of the assessment
- **I** - Which interventions, resources and services are required or provided to meet the needs or address the risks
- **R** – When will progress be reviewed? What conclusions can be drawn now with a focus on outcomes and reflections on practice?

You should consider:

- Summary of presenting issues:
- Assessment:
- Planning:
- Implementation:
- Review:

iv. Example: Reflection Prompts

- What has gone well?
- What has not gone well?
- What does the supervisee see as his/her learning needs?
- What does the supervisor see as the supervisee's learning needs?
- What has the supervisee learned from this experience?
- What does the supervisor feel the supervisee has learned/could have learned?
- What will the supervisee plan to do differently?
- What does the supervisor suggest the supervisee could do differently?

v. Example: Supervision Session Summary Record

- Name of Supervisee:
- Name of Supervisor
- Session No:
- Date:
- Length of session:

- Agenda items:

- Summary of session:
- Action Points (state by whom and when):

- Any issues to be carried forward:
- Date of next meeting:
- Signature of Supervisor:
- Date:
- Signature of Supervisee:
- Date:

Appendix D

'A Day in the life' Tool

Making sense of an individual's lived experience