

# Redhill Primary School



## Supervision Policy and Guidance (For staff working with safeguarding issues in schools.)

Ratified by Governing Body November 2016  
Reviewed by Governing Body November 2018

### Definition of supervision and mentoring

Supervision can mean different things to different people but essentially it is an activity that brings skilled supervisors and practitioners together in order to reflect upon their practice. *"Supervision aims to identify solutions to problems, improve practice and increase understanding of professional issues" UKCC (1996).*

Mentoring can be defined as: *'An experienced person in a company or educational institution who trains and supports new employees or students'*. The document, **'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015)** states; organisations should provide *"appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training."*

There are various models or approaches to supervision and mentoring; one-to-one, group, or peer supervision. The choice of approach will depend upon a number of factors, including personal choice, access to support, length of experience, qualifications, availability of groups etc.

Supervision policy  
Redhill Primary School  
Jo Jones/ Hannah Fox November 2016

## Purpose

- Review workloads, if needed
- A place where a member of staff can be challenged supportively and constructively within mutually agreed and accepted boundaries
- Issues relating to the work place and to working practices can be identified and discussed
- Achievements are identified and celebrated
- Emotional well-being/work life balance is considered
- A place to offload

## Structure

Supervision at Redhill is offered internally. Safeguarding supervision will be carried out by the named Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection (DSL and DDSL) in the school (Jo Jones and Hannah Fox). Supervision for the DSL should be carried out by the Head teacher (Jo Jones), or where the DSL is the Head teacher, the Safeguarding Governor (Jenny Campbell) or a DSL colleague (Hannah Fox).

Supervision should be undertaken with designated staff responsible for or working with identified vulnerable children and/or their families. It should include all staff working with children who are subject to a child protection or child in need plan, children with social care involvement, children looked after (LAC) and children subject to an Early Help Assessment.

Who might need safeguarding supervision	Who might provide safeguarding supervision
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Head teacher, DDSL, safeguarding governor
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	DSL, Head teacher
Phase leaders	DSL, DDSL
SENCO	DSL
Class teachers	DSL, DDSL
Teaching Assistants	DSL, DDSL
Family Support Workers	DSL, DDSL
Other specialist support workers	DSL, DDSL

If the head teacher is not directly involved in the supervision then they should assure themselves that the process is robust and be in a position to report, in general terms, on the effectiveness of the process to their governing body.

The structure of the supervision arrangements should be clear and reported to governors.

Support will also be available for ALL staff at any time the need may arise; this could be informal and incidental supervision. Referrals to Occupational Health for further counselling and support can be made upon request.

### Supervision methods

This policy is concerned primarily with one to one supervision that takes place in private at a pre-arranged time with an agreed agenda and preparation on behalf of both parties. All staff with responsibility for safeguarding children (as identified above) will have access to this method of supervision.

It is recognised, however, that supervision is an on-going process that takes place in other ways. The two other main methods are outlined below. They have a place but should not replace planned, formal, recorded, one to one sessions.

### **Group safeguarding supervision**

In some cases it may be necessary to conduct a group safeguarding supervision. This is a session where there may be several staff involved in direct child protection/safeguarding work with a specific child/ family. There are many benefits to be gained from group supervision including problem solving, peer group learning and giving and receiving strong feedback within a supportive setting.

In group supervision the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor and supervisees should be the same with the added principles:

- The group should clarify and agree the boundaries of confidentiality
- The records should reflect that this was group supervision

### **Unplanned or "ad-hoc" supervision**

The pace of work and change and the frequency of supervision means that staff often have to 'check something out' with a supervisor, obtain a decision or gain permission to do something in between formal supervision sessions. In addition, staff who work in schools where there are a lot of child protection concerns will be working closely with their supervisor and often communicating daily about thresholds, decision making, disagreements between agencies etc.

This form of supervision is a normal and acceptable part of the staff/supervisor relationship. However the following points should be borne in mind when considering unplanned or ad-hoc supervision:

- Any decisions made with regard to a child or family should be clearly recorded on the child's records as appropriate.
- Where supervisees and supervisors work closely together this does not negate the need for private one to one time together on a regular basis. The focus of these sessions is wholly on the individual, their development, performance and any issues arising from their work that do not arise on a day-to-day basis.

### **Practicalities**

- Frequency and length - meetings should take place at least once a half term.

- Supervision should take place in a private and uninterrupted space during the working day.
- Recording supervision -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.
- Should the supervisor leave then the replacement would have access to the previous six months records.

### Confidentiality

There will be three levels relating to the need to breach confidentiality within supervision as set out below, this is provided so that all individuals receiving supervision within their employment are clear about what can and cannot remain confidential to supervision.

Issue	Response
Behaviour or activities which bring the school into disrepute. Harm to self or others Illegal activity Actions of gross Misconduct Activities where child protection and vulnerable adults policies apply	There is a duty as an employee to report/action through the appropriate channels.
Activities that may lead to disciplinary action being taken Actions relating to performance and capability regarding putting children's safety at risk	Items <b>would</b> need to be reported via line management structures
The information given by the supervisee will have significant impact on the organisation	Items <b>may</b> need to be reported via line management structures.

## Guidance notes

Each person in supervision will have their own style and approach: however the following agenda is provided as a checklist to ensure that all core items are covered.

- Welcome and informal opener
- Setting agenda - both parties to input
- General offload and information sharing
- Review notes and agreed actions from previous meeting.
- Specific case load issues discussed.
- Problem solving and finding solutions
- Recognise and celebrate achievement
- Job related resource and support needs
- AOB

## Working guidelines for Good Practice

Creating the right environment is an important element but we must accept that this is not always possible within school, however we should strive to:

- Have a quiet private space to allow for open discussion,
- Ensure a relaxed atmosphere possibly with refreshments,
- Try to avoid telephone interruptions,
- Prioritise this time and avoid interruptions,
- Make sure you keep to agreed starting and stopping times
- Consider the time of day supervision is scheduled.

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## Actions from Supervision

Date	Action	Person	Notes