



SUPERVISION WITHIN FAMILY PLACEMENTS

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EMPT[®] SUPERVISION WITHIN RESIDENTIAL/FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS

Supervision Functions:

- Managerial /Administrative supervision
- Communication exchange supervision
 - Educative Supervision
 - Supportive supervision

Managerial /Administrative Supervision.

- Clarify policies, procedures, priorities, levels of decision-making, assess and monitor practice.
- Set standards.
- Identify any areas of poor performance and respond accordingly.
- Provide positive feedback.

Educative Supervision.

- Provide model of good practice, with criteria.
- Develop new skills.
- Provide opportunities for reflection.
- Problem-solving processes.

Supportive Supervision.

- Sharing feelings and beliefs.
- Coping with stress.
- Identifying where the personal impinges on the professional.
- Identify any training needs.

Communication Exchange Supervision.

- Information about children and families.
- Information about social services department.
- Information about carers' situation.



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP



A working relationship that is characterised by:

- A shared sense of purpose
- Mutual respect
- Willingness to negotiate.

This implies a sharing of:

- Information
- Responsibility
- Skills
- Decision-making
- Accountability.

(Pugh and De'ath)

Useful questions to ask about any working relationship which help to determine how far it is a partnership or not and if not why?

- What do I get out of it?
- What does my partner get out of it?
- What resources do I bring to it?
- What resources does my partner bring to it?
- How do we go about making decisions or resolving disagreements?
- Which of us has the most power?
- Where does that power come from?

In Residential Care we are striving for a partnership between:

- Children and workers
- Parents and workers
- Workers and workers

Many factors affect how successful/unsuccessful such partnerships are in practice. Among these factors are:

- **The nature of the task** - is it clear and is everyone committed to it? So, they have the information necessary to contribute, and are they clear about each other's role?
- **Different roles** - do the various professionals involved hold stereotyped views of each other, which prevent them listening to each other? Do they 'talk down' to those they see as non-professionals and dismiss the valuable skills that individuals have learnt through other routes?

- **Communication** - willing are individuals with different skills, responsibilities and experience to talk to one another and to develop a common language to enable this to happen effectively? Use of professional jargon and withholding of information for reasons of 'professional, confidentiality' are strategies that are often employed to gain a position of power over others.
- **Interpersonal relationships** - within any group trying to work together there may be those members who appear authoritative and rigid in their attitudes and therefore inhibit other group members. Failure to co-operate through rigidity or inappropriate attitudes is not the same as conflict. Conflict, if handled carefully, can be very constructive.
- **Distribution of power** - any working group there is likely to be unequal distributions of

power. Generally, parents have more power than children, agency workers have more power than parents, social workers more power than Residential Carers, white people more power than black people, men more power than women. (Here the word power' is being used in the sense of having more opportunity and resources to take control of one's life and of having access to the individuals and institutions who control those opportunities and resources.)

All these factors are clearly related. One of the most important ways of trying to break down the barriers to successful co-working is to provide opportunities for joint training. People then get the chance to know each other as people rather than representatives of different groups. Through joint problem solving they learn to value the different skills that they bring to the common task.

Leaner's notes

EMPT® Case study 1: To Profess or not to Profess

Michael: A Physiotherapist's story.

What work do you do?

I am a physiotherapist and work in a primary care team attached to a GP's surgery. I have a case load of patients who are referred to me (usually by the GP). I treat individuals primarily with muscular-skeletal disorders – that's my area of expertise.

Do you see yourself as a professional?

Yes, very much so and in different ways.

1. I've gone through a recognised degree training course. I see patients in my work and offer them my 'expert' advice. And as a professional I have some autonomy in terms of deciding how to treat my patients.

2. Also, in an official sense I am a professional because I belong to an organised professional body – the CSP- which lays down our standards and code of performance. They monitor our training courses and give a stamp of approval to our being registered. I can also call on them for

special advice.

3. I also feel like a professional in a more informal way in that I try to behave with integrity, to give a proper service. I try to put patients' interest first. I try to make sure my skills and knowledge are kept up to date.

What challenges do you face as a professional?

Keeping up a good standard of service. Sometimes the pressure of work means I can't do exactly what needs to be done. I must be selective and prioritise my case load. Often the most challenging thing is the amount of paperwork and PR-type stuff you must do. The patient contact and treatments I give is the easy bit. It's all the rest that gets you down. There are just huge demands on you to record things, fill out forms, prove you're working to a standard- sometimes the bureaucracy takes over and you wonder if you have any time to see patients.

Findlay (2000) adapted.

EMPT® Case study 2. Jennifer: Residential Care Worker's story

What work do you do?

As a residential worker I care for children living in children's homes. Sometimes the social workers are so busy that I become involved in what can be considered as their work. This sometimes involves me observing and recording contact between children and their families as well as undertaking life story work with the children in my care.

Do you see yourself as a professional?

Sometimes I'm just a residential worker, but most times I feel like a professional. Sometimes I feel like a counsellor when I'm talking to children's parents and helping them. My supervisor says Residential Care Workers are part of a professional team, so I guess we are sort of professionals. I have an NVQ in caring for children and young people.

What challenges do you face as a professional?

Well, I guess I form strong emotional relationships with the children I work with, and when it's time for them to move on, (sometimes back to live with their family or other permanent arrangement), I have to pick myself up and support my residential care family through the experience of letting go. I also sometimes continue appropriate contact with some children when they move on. My supervisor is always telling us that this is part of our job. I guess the fact that I receive supervision, attend meetings about children looked after, must continuously attend training about the work, and must have some understanding about childcare legislation makes me some sort of professional.

EMPT® Case study 3.

Pat: A Supervising Social Worker's story

What work do you do?

I manage, assess, support and supervise foster Carers. I also work closely with social workers who hold case load responsibility for children looked after.

Do you see yourself as a professional?

Yes. I hold a professional qualification. My qualifications highlight that I have competence around understanding social work practice and theory as well as the legislation. I am supervised by a team manager, and I am usually included in discussions about development concerning the fostering agency. I am expected to continually update my understanding of foster care practice and child protection by attending training. I am presently undertaking the post qualifying social worker award (unit by unit). I am also a member of BASW as well as being registered.

What challenges do you face as a professional?

My role includes supervising carers – usually in

their home. I oversee the general standard of health and safety that they must promote to care for children in their home. With the present shortage of children's social workers, I usually get frustrated with the boundaries that appear to constrain what a supervising social worker may be able to do to promote a child/young person's wellbeing. I feel that front line social workers and their managers are at last beginning to acknowledge that the link worker role has changed to that of a 'supervising social worker'.

EMPT® case study guidance!

- Discuss in your groups any issues that come up about professionalism from reading the three case studies. What are the issues for Residential Care Workers' or foster carers regarding professionalism? What may be the issues for social workers in relation to professionalism in contrast to other professionals? Flipchart the issues for discussion in the wider group. Please write your answers below:

EMPT® SAMPLE SUPERVISION CONTRACT

This is a contract for supervision between: Supervisor and Supervisee which will reflect individual circumstances and needs:

Supervisee: _____

Supervisor: _____

Mandate for Supervision:

The Agency expects all social workers to be supervised once every three weeks. The principle functions of the supervisory process are:

1. To ensure that the supervisor named above is offering line management support, accountability and guidance to the supervisee also named above.
2. To ensure that the Supervisor and supervisee meets statutory requirements in working with children.
3. To ensure that the supervisee is clear about her or his role and responsibilities and carries these out the agency's standards. This will include systematic and proactive discussion of work allocated to the supervisee. Case files managed by the supervisee are examined, on a regular basis, by the supervisor.
4. To ensure that the supervisor is accountable for managing the supervisee's leave, sickness and other absences. The supervisee must keep the supervisor informed of absences.
5. To assist with the professional development of the supervisee including areas identified in supervision and in the agencies performance management system.
6. To be a primary source of support for the worker recognising the considerable demands of this job.
7. **To provide both regular constructive feedback to each other.**
The structure we have agreed on is as follows:
8. **Frequency**
Every three weeks
9. **Length**
1.5 – 2 hours
10. **Location**
11. **Recording of session**
It is the supervisor's responsibility to set an agenda for your supervision. The supervisor will also note a brief overview of the supervision discussions and list any agreed action.
12. **Purpose for which supervisory record may/ not be used, other who may see record.**
Only other managers or senior managers or any persons authorised by senior managers, or any persons involved in inspecting the agency's work.
13. **The agenda for the sessions will be set by both Supervisor and Supervisee**

Supervisor: to bring relevant case management issues, pertinent training/development opportunities and general staff management issues.

Supervisee: to bring relevant professional issues, professional development issues and relevant personal issues (i.e. where personal will impact on professional).

The content of the sessions will include:

14. Reviewing your work through discussion and files
15. Agreeing action plans and review strategies
16. Looking at the development of your skills and knowledge base
17. Looking at your development needs and setting goals
18. Space for you to reflect on your experience of and feelings about work
19. Mutual constructive feedback and periodic review
20. Identifying appropriate training

Expectations: the process of supervision

Following the preparatory discussions, we have had about supervision these are the ways we have agreed to work together to get the most out of supervision:

21. What I want from you as my supervisor
22. What I am willing to contribute as the Supervisee
23. What I want from you as the Supervisor
24. What I am willing to contribute as the Supervisor
Feedback, accountability, guidance and being there to listen to your perspective.
25. The things I have responsibility as the Supervisor for
Case management.
Informing and offering regular development opportunities.
To assist the supervised worker to work towards meeting her/his best potential.
26. Things I have responsibility as the Supervisee.
Keeping my line manager informed about case issues and/or any other factors which are impacting on my work. Prioritising supervision and my supervision tasks arising, raising my issues of concern that may affect the process of working together.
25. In addition, this contract will address the following:

This contract will be reviewed by: _____

or earlier, according to need.

Signed _____ Supervisor

Date: _____

Signed _____ Supervisee

Date: _____

Foster Carer and Supervising Social Worker Example Agreement

Foster Carer: _____

Supervising Social Worker: _____

Purpose:

- To agree on a structure of supervision and support for carer(s) that is in line with the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards and Regulations.
- To outline dual expectations and responsibilities
- To outline areas of support, guidance and advice for Foster Carer(s)

Supervising Social Worker's responsibilities

- To advise, support and *supervise Foster Carer(s)
- To provide accurate information
- To continually assess that the fostering household meets health and safety standards
- To assist in monitoring financial procedures around the payment to the carer(s) and the management of the fostering placement's allowances
- To assist in organising holiday periods and respite where appropriate
- To keep records of contact between Foster Carer(s) and Supervising Social Worker
- To monitor and assess foster carer's practice to facilitate the Foster Carer's review
- To challenge oppressive practice and to work in an anti-discriminatory way
- To work from the BASW principle of 'professional responsibility takes precedence over personal interest'.
- To work within Agency's Supervising Social Worker's role and responsibilities
- Supervising social worker (if applicable) ensures adequate time is allocated to meeting with the children that live within the carer(s) household
- To ensure foster carers are working in line with the requirements of the Training Support and Development Standards and to support and enable Adults who live in the fostering household achieve the TSD Standards Award

Foster Carer's Responsibilities:

- To keep supervising social worker informed about any changes in her or his circumstance that may impact on fostering placements.
- To provide the supervising social worker with accurate documentation of the family's safe caring practice, this can be incorporated within the carer's family safer caring policy
- To attend meetings concerning prospective and present fostering placements
- To monitor own learning and development and identify any future learning needs
- To attend training
- To develop and sustain a good and appropriate relationship with your Supervising Social Worker. This involves receiving constructive feedback around your work
- To keep a record of expenditure that accounts for the fostering placement's allowance
- To provide reasonable notice around holiday requests and the use of respite
- To consistently demonstrate that you know who you are accountable to in your work as a foster carer and where to go for support (TSD 2.4b)

Ground Rules:

- Regular agreed contact appropriate to placement(s)
- Honesty and trustworthiness
- Punctuality and reliability
- Mutual working respect
- To work within the Agency's Foster Care Agreement

Regularity of Supervision Fortnightly/Monthly and Support Meetings

Signed by Foster Carer(s): _____

Date: _____

Signed by Supervising Social Worker: _____

Date: _____

Unit 503 Lead and manage a team within
a residential childcare setting UAN:

L/506/7607

Unit level:

5

Credit value:

5

GLH:

36

Unit aim:

This unit provides the knowledge and skills
required to lead and manage a team within a
residential childcare setting

Relationship to NOS:

SCDLMCA1, SCDLMCA2, SCDLMCA5
SCDLMCE2, SCDLMCE10

Endorsed by:

Skills for Care and Development and
Department for Education

LEARNING OUTCOME

The learner will:

1 Understand the concepts of management and
leadership

Assessment criteria

The learner can:

1.1 Compare and contrast leadership and
management

1.2 Analyse theoretical models of leadership styles

1.3 Analyse theoretical models of management
styles

1.4 Explain how both leadership and management
involve a two-way dynamic between the people
involved.

2.1 Compare models of team working

2.2 Analyse the features of an effective team

2.3 Analyse barriers to effective team performance

2.4 Analyse how management and leadership
styles influence team performance

2.5 Analyse methods for conflict resolution within
a team.

LEARNING OUTCOME

The learner will:

3 Be able to lead the development of a positive
organisational culture

Assessment criteria

The learner can:

3.1 Analyse components of a positive
organisational culture

3.2 Develop strategies to support a positive
organisational culture in own team

3.3 Implement strategies to support a positive
organisational culture in own team

3.4 Evaluate strategies used to develop a positive
organisational structure.

LEARNING OUTCOME

The learner will:

2 Understand the features of effective team
performance within residential childcare

Assessment criteria

The learner can:

LEARNING OUTCOME

The learner will:

4 Be able to develop a plan with team members to meet agreed objectives

Assessment criteria

The learner can:

- 4.1 Support team members to understand and commit to the vision and strategic direction of the organisation
- 4.2 Work with team members to agree team objectives that implement the vision, ambition and strategic direction
- 4.3 Deploy the skills, interests, knowledge, creativity and expertise within the team to meet agreed objectives
- 4.4 Agree roles and responsibilities with team members
- 4.5 Support sharing of skills and knowledge between team members.

LEARNING OUTCOME

The learner will:

5 Be able to support individual team members to work towards agreed objectives

Assessment criteria

The learner can:

- 5.1 Carry out professional supervision with team members in accordance with organisational requirements
- 5.2 Set individual work objectives with team members based on agreed team objectives
- 5.3 Use a solution focused approach to support team members in addressing challenges
- 5.4 Support team members to manage their emotional responses to distressing situations that arise in their job role
- 5.5 Work with team members to identify opportunities for continuing professional development.

LEARNING OUTCOME

The learner will:

6 Be able to manage performance

Assessment criteria

The learner can:

- 6.1 Involve children or young people in the monitoring and management of team performance
- 6.2 Monitor progress towards agreed objectives
- 6.3 Provide feedback on performance to:
 - a. the individual
 - b. the team
- 6.4 Explain processes for managing individuals when their performance does not meet agreed personal objectives
- 6.5 Explain processes for managing teams when their performance does not meet agreed objectives
- 6.6 Recognise individual and team achievements

LEARNING OUTCOME

The learner will:

7 Understand how to lead a team through change

Assessment criteria

The learner can:

- 7.1 Analyse factors that drive change in residential childcare settings
- 7.2 Compare theories of change management
- 7.3 Evaluate tools and techniques that support team members to implement

Social care common inspection framework (SCCIF):

Independent fostering agencies Ofsted 5.3 The effectiveness of leaders and managers

GOOD

A. The agency is managed effectively and efficiently by a permanent, suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. Urgent action is taken to address any vacancy of the registered manager post.

B. The agency is properly staffed and resourced to meet the needs of foster carers and children. Staff and panel members are suitably vetted and qualified and are able to deliver high quality services to foster carers and children. Arrangements for recruitment and appraisals are robust.

C. Leaders and managers actively and regularly monitor the quality of care provided. They use learning from practice and feedback to improve the experiences and care of children. This includes, for example, direct testimony from children, young people, parents, carers, other professionals and other stakeholders.

D. They learn from complaints, staff feedback, placement successes and breakdowns, and any serious events. They identify strengths and areas for improvement and implement clear development plans that continually improve the experiences of children.

E. Robust action is taken to address all issues of concern, including any concerns or complaints from children, young people and local residents. Proper investigations are undertaken. Placing and host authorities are engaged as necessary. Effective action has been taken to address all requirements and recommendations from previous inspections. The agency's responses to recommendations from the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) are timely and appropriate.

F. Leaders and managers take steps to ensure that plans for individual children comprehensively address their needs. The agency works proactively and positively with other agencies and professionals. Leaders and managers seek to build effective working relationships with parents and social workers from placing authorities and with the local authority where they are located to secure positive outcomes for children.

G. Where children are not settling into their placement, leaders and managers take steps to ensure that the plan is reviewed with the placing authority, the carers and parents (where this is appropriate) to consider the best steps to take next.

H. They challenge effectively and take action when they are concerned that placing authorities are not making decisions that are in children's best interests, when the statutory requirements for looked-after children are not met, or when they cannot keep children safe.

I. Leaders and managers understand the plans for the children and actively drive the achievement of important milestones, goals and permanence for their futures. Leaders and managers monitor the progress that individual children make and can demonstrate the positive impact that a placement has had on individual children's progress and life chances.

J. Managers and staff receive regular and effective supervision that is focused on children's experiences, needs, plans and feedback. Supervision is recorded effectively. There is effective support and challenge, including through team and management meetings, to ensure that the professional development of staff and leaders results in the right environment for good practice to thrive.

K. Training, development and induction activities are effective and are focused on ensuring that the agency can meet the specific needs of the children who they are responsible for. Activities are evaluated to ensure that they lead to effective practice. Leaders, managers and staff are up to date with current practice in their specialist area.

L. The staff team works collaboratively to provide consistency and stability. There are clear responsibilities and accountabilities, and the staff team has a sense of shared ownership about its practice. Staff report that they are well led and managed and there is other evidence to support this.

M. Leaders and managers make child-centred decisions when matching children with foster carers, including considering the needs of other

children already living with the carers.

N. The statement of purpose and children's guide, which is kept under review, clearly sets out the ethos and objectives of the fostering agency.

O. The registered provider is financially viable and can deliver high quality, stable care for children.

P. Case records reflect children's lives and the work that is undertaken with them. Case records reflect children's achievements and clearly relate to the plans for their futures. The style and clarity of records increases the understanding that children have about their histories, background and experiences. The records are available to children who are able to see or contribute to them as they wish, with appropriate support.

Q. The registered person ensures that notifications of all significant events that relate to the welfare and protection of children placed with the agency's carers are made to the appropriate authorities. The registered person takes the necessary action following the incident to ensure that the child's needs are met and that they are safe and protected.

R. The culture of the agency is characterised by high expectations and aspirations for all children. This is demonstrated in practice.

S. Leaders and managers regularly review and act on any known risks to children, taking advice and guidance from local partners and agencies.

T. Carers receive regular and effective supervision that is focused on children's experiences, needs, plans and feedback. Supervision is recorded. Carers receive a formal review annually. Early reviews are held where needed. There is effective support and challenge through the supervision and review processes to ensure that carers are providing high quality care.

U. The agency recruits a range of foster carers who can meet the diverse needs of children who are looked after or children receiving a short break service from the agency. Recruitment is in line with the agency's statement of purpose. The agency offers placements to children with complex needs and challenging behaviour and provides the necessary specialist support and help for as long as they are required. Managers review, and act on, the trends and patterns in the

recruitment of foster carers.

V. Foster carers receive effective training and supervision in respect of the specific and complex needs of children and placements are more effective and stable as a result. Foster carers achieve the training, support and development standards in foster care within 1 year of approval, or within 18 months if they are family and friends carers.

W. The fostering panel promotes safe, secure and stable placements through active engagement with the fostering agency. It carries out a rigorous quality assurance function and promotes thorough assessments, support and training for foster carers. The panel members are recruited from a range of diverse backgrounds. It has the necessary knowledge and expertise to support the agency to make effective child-centred decisions in relation to the cases before them.

OUTSTANDING

✓ The effectiveness of leaders and managers is likely to be judged outstanding if, in addition to meeting the requirements of a good judgement, there is evidence of the following.

✓ Leaders and managers are inspirational, confident and ambitious for children and influential in changing the lives of those in their care of the agency.

✓ They create a culture of aspiration and positivity and have high expectations of their staff to change and improve the lives of the children they are responsible for.

✓ They lead by example, innovate and generate creative ideas to sustain the highest quality care for children.

✓ They know their strengths and weaknesses well and can provide evidence of improvement over a sustained period.

✓ They maintain professional relationships between the agency and partner agencies that ensure the best possible care, experiences and futures for children.

Some Connected Social Work Professional Standards Links are as follows:

1.7 Recognise and use responsibly, the power and authority I have when working with people, ensuring that my interventions are always necessary, the least intrusive, proportionate, and in people's best interests.

2.5 Actively listen to understand people, using a range of appropriate communication methods to build relationships.

3.2 Use information from a range of appropriate sources, including supervision, to inform assessments, to analyse risk, and to make a professional decision.

3.7 Recognise where there may be bias in decision making and address issues that arise from ethical dilemmas, conflicting information, or differing professional decisions.

3.12 Use my assessment skills to respond quickly to dangerous situations and take any necessary protective action.

3.15 Recognise and respond to behaviour that may indicate resistance to change, ambivalent or selective cooperation with services, and recognise when there is a need for immediate action.

4.5 Contribute to an open and creative learning culture in the workplace to discuss, reflect on and share best practice.

Learner's notes

