

**Knowsley Adult & Children’s**

**Social Worker Supervision Policy**

**2024 – 2026**

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| **Date formally approved:** |  |
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# Scope

* 1. All registered Social Workers and Social Work students working within Knowsley Council fall within the scope of this supervision policy. This supervision policy, unless

highlighted is applicable to both Children and Adults Social Workers. Supervision should always be led by a registered Social Worker who may or may not have direct line management responsibilities. However, all Social Workers working within Knowsley must be supervised by their line manager, at least once a month, and more frequently if in the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE), in line with the ASYE Programme (see [**Section 8.2, Assessed and supported year of employment (ASYE)**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/p_supervision.html#ayse)).

* 1. This document identifies the importance and need for high quality, supportive and reflective supervision for every Social Worker. Supervision is a priority for Knowsley Council Social Care employees. Knowsley council will ensure that all Social Workers receive good quality supervision, whilst recognising the autonomous practice and professional accountability of each Social Worker.
  2. The policy also ensures that all supervision should be undertaken in a confidential and respectful way.

# Supervision is…

2.1 to be a dynamic, interpersonal focused experience which enables all Social Workers (Supervisees) along with their Manager (Supervisor), to examine their practice, knowledge, skills, values, and personal welfare in a safe learning environment;

2.2 a safe space to talk through any personal/welfare issues that the Social Worker is facing that may impact on their work or they may need support with;

2.3 a time that enables Social Workers and their Managers to jointly plan for meeting learning needs that have been identified though critical reflection on their experiences in practice;

2.4 an opportunity for Managers to review operational caseloads and challenge any issues recognised within their management oversight on practice. It enables Managers to recognise areas of practice risk and operational and personal stressors on their staff. One of the primary reasons for all supervisions is to ensure that the quality of practice is of a consistently high standard in relation to the children/young people/adult's needs and managing risk. Consequently, supervision must be acknowledged as the cornerstone of good Social Work practice;

2.5 an opportunity for the Social Worker and their supervisor to give and receive appreciative and constructive feedback;

2.6 a space that enables Social Workers in Children's Social Care to reflect on how they are meeting the Practice Standards ([**see Appendix 1: Knowsley Practice Standards (Children's Social Care**](#_Appendix_1)**)**) and the Knowledge and Skills Statements ([**see Appendix 2: Knowledge & Skills Statements**](#_Appendix_2));

2.7 a process that incorporates the My Time conversation and the annual My Time Extra meeting;

2.8 a space that enables Social Workers to evidence that they are meeting their Standards of Proficiency and associated professional obligations on which they are regulated by Social Work England, as well as a time to recognise that OFSTED (Children's Services) and in future, CQC (Adults Services) standards for inspection also take into account the quality of practice that is facilitated by effective supervision.

2.9 Social Work England Professional Standards, specifically Standards 3 and 4, link explicitly to the use of supervision and state that Social Workers will:

* + 1. Be accountable for the quality of my practice and the decisions I make:

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

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

* 1. Maintain my continuing professional development:
     1. Use supervision and feedback to critically reflect on, and identify my learning needs, including how I use research and evidence to inform my practice;
     2. Reflect on my learning activities and evidence what impact continuing professional development has on the quality of my practice;
     3. Reflect on my own values and challenge the impact they have on my practice.

# Knowsley Council will…

3.1 Ensure that social work supervision is not treated as an isolated activity but is intrinsically linked to the My Time process;

3.2 Take steps to be assured, as appropriate, that the quality and frequency of supervision is good and in line with this policy.

3.3 Audit the quality and frequency of supervision against clear statements about what is expected; detailed within this policy;

3.4 Promote and encourage group/team supervision/action learning as a separate meeting in addition to 1-1 supervision to support continuous learning and knowledge sharing, through which social workers will be encouraged to draw out learning points by reflecting on their own cases considering the experience of peers;

3.5 Provide regular supervision training;

3.6 Provide additional professional supervision by a registered social worker for practitioners whose line manager is not a social worker or for social workers located in multi-professional teams or project groups with a manager from another professional experience and background.

# Good Practice Guidelines

4.1 To ensure consistency across the Council it is important that all Social Workers and their supervisors are aware of the following Good Practice Guidelines:

4.2 Prior to the first supervision session taking place, a supervision contract should be agreed and signed by both parties (**see**[**Appendix 3: Supervision Contract/Agreement).**](#_Appendix_3) A new contract should be drawn up if there is a change of supervisor/supervisee;

4.3 To ensure supervision takes place at regular intervals, the sessions must be planned twelve months in advance and the dates be put in both parties' calendars;

4.4 Supervisors will record the supervision session ([**see Appendix 4: Supervision Record**](#_Appendix_4)**)** and send it to the Social worker to sign and return;

* 1. Supervision must be a priority for all Social Workers and their supervisors. Whilst it is understood that on occasion something will happen that means supervision needs to be re-arranged this should be the exception and not the rule;
  2. Supervision should be delivered in a quiet, confidential area with no interruptions. This may be face-to-face in an office or virtually via TEAMS;
  3. Supervision sessions should be prepared for in advance:
  4. Both Social Worker and Supervisor should consider the issues that need discussing in the supervision session. Social Workers should send agenda items and updates on actions to their supervisor in advance of supervision;
  5. Social Workers in Adults Social Care should complete (and send to their supervisor) notes in respect of the adults they wish to discuss in supervision that month;

4.10 Social Workers in Children's Social Care should also complete (and send to their supervisor) the ICS supervision template for each child/young person that the social worker wants to discuss in supervision that month;

* 1. Supervisors should read through the forms that Social Workers have sent them prior to the supervision session;
  2. Adequate time needs to be given to preparation as well as time for supervision.

To ensure that Social Workers are meeting the requirements for ongoing registration and practice, and to support them to complete their annual My Time Extra (Continuous Professional Development) and supervision should consider the following as a benchmark to demonstrate capability in practice at the career level of the individual Social Worker:

4.12.1 [**Knowsley Adult Policies, Procedures and Practice**](https://www.knowsleyappp.co.uk/home/)**;**

4.12.2 [**Knowsley Children's Social Care Operational Procedures Manual**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/)**;**

4.12.3 Knowledge & Skills Statements for Social Workers (see [**Appendix 2: Knowledge & Skills Statements**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/p_supervision.html#app2));

4.12.4 [**Professional Standards - Social Work England**](https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/standards/professional-standards/);

4.12.5 [**Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)**](https://www.basw.co.uk/social-work-training/professional-capabilities-framework-pcf);

4.12.6 Knowsley Practice Standards (Children's Social Care) (see [**Appendix 1: Knowsley Practice Standards (Children's Social Care)**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/files/app1_prac_standards.pdf)).

4.13 If any concerns in respect of capability or registration status are raised during supervision, the Social Worker can expect to be treated fairly in line with Knowsley Council's capability procedure. This can be found within the [**Managing Conduct, Performance and Information Policy**](http://sharepoint.knowsley.gov.uk/sites/bertha/documents-centre/Documents/MANAGING-CONDUCT-PERFORMANCE-AND-INFORMATION-POLICY-VERSION.doc);

4.14 If any concerns in respect of breaching regulations or Council policy are raised during supervision these may be communicated with Social Work England in line with their [**Fitness to Practice Process**](https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/concerns/fitness-to-practise-guide/);

4.15 Supervision will cover several issues, including but not restricted to:

4.16 Personal matters such as welfare, managing stress, flexi, annual leave, and training needs;

4.17 Values and ethics of the Social Worker;

4.18 Roles & responsibilities;

4.18.1 Accountability of professional practice to people, quality of recording, management of resources, safeguarding issues and management of risk in line with the [**Social Work England Professional Standards**](https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/standards/professional-standards/);

4.18.2 Work and case load management; including an analysis of this. It should address any issues relating to the extent of time available to work directly with children, adults, and families as well as meeting other demands;

4.18.3 There should be a focus on protecting the public, delivering effective services, and identifying barriers to effective practice;

4.18.4 Continuous Professional Development (CPD) should be monitored and promoted in supervision. This should include:

4.18.5 Checking on how the Social Worker plans to submit evidence of CPD as part of their professional registration with Social Work England;

4.18.6 Reflecting on recent learning/development experiences / training and how they have impacted (or not) on social work practice and the quality and outcomes of the service provided to children/young people/adults;

4.18.7 Discussions on career development, giving career advice, and taking time to explore professional development opportunities such as further qualifications;

4.18.8 The regular discussions about CPD which will feed into the Social Worker's annual My Time Extra meeting.

4.19 Reflection:

4.19.1 Reflective supervision can be on cases or on carers (fostering/adoption) or on any area of social work practice;

4.19.2 Reflective supervision is where the Social Worker leads the practice conversation / issue and explores their own thinking and rationale on decision making in a learning environment where the supervisor offers challenge and constructive feedback to the Social Worker. Social Workers need to demonstrate that they can critically reflect on their practice and through this promote greater self-awareness and understanding of issues;

4.19.3 Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle or the Social Graces model are examples of reflective models that can be used if appropriate. can be used as a reflective model if appropriate ([**see Appendix 6: Tools for Reflection**](#_Appendix_6)).

4.19.4 In Children's Social Care, the Signs of Safety model should be used when discussing both the children that the Social Worker is working with, and the Social Work's own practice and continuing professional development;

4.19.5 Failure to provide, or take part in, supervision can lead to a formal disciplinary process.

# Frequency of Supervision

5.1. One to one supervision:

5.1.1 Newly Qualified Social Workers during the Assessed and Supported Years of Employment (ASYE) must have supervision weekly for the first six weeks of employment, fortnightly until six-month review and a minimum of monthly supervision thereafter.

5.1.2 Student Social Workers must have weekly supervision for the first six weeks and fortnightly for the remainder of their placement.

5.1.3 All other Registered Social Workers must have a supervision monthly; this can be increased for Social Workers who are experiencing performance or practice issues.

5.2Group supervision:

5.2.1 Group supervision is a useful tool and should be used to support staff to discuss issues that arise within their practice or team; the Team Manager decides if this is to be undertaken as part of a team meeting or as a separate meeting;

5.2.2 In Children's Social Care, group supervision should be undertaken using the Signs of Safety Group Supervision model (**see [Appendix 5: Signs of Safety Group Supervision Guidance).](#_Appendix_5)**

5.3 Case supervision:

5.3.1 Social Workers and supervisors should use their judgement in respect of how frequently then need to talk about a child/young person/adult in their supervision:

5.3.2 The minimum frequency at which each child/young person should be discussed however is outlined in **[Appendix 7: Minimum Supervision Frequency for Cases in Children's Social Care](#_Appendix_7)**

# Social Workers Responsibilities

6.1 In addition to ensuring the rest of this policy is adhered to, all Social Workers need to:

6.1.1 Attend Supervision Training and refresh this training every 2 years.

6.1.2 Ensure that other practice objectives within their My Time Extra action plan are being met/worked towards. This includes discussing opportunities for progression;

6.1.3 Recognise and report any stress (workplace or personal);

6.1.4 When the Supervisor sends a copy of the record of the session to the Social Worker, they should upload this information to Oracle. [**Please see Appendix 8 for guidance.**](#_Appendix_8)

6.1.5 Update any agreed goals, timescales, outcomes/actions related to children/adults/families onto the Liquid Logic system.

6.1.6 Keep a reflective learning log (if appropriate) as part of CPD to increase the learning experience.

6.2 Social Workers should also demonstrate:

6.2.1 Their capability as autonomous professionals within their role;

6.2.2 Where appropriate how to relate theory to their practice;

6.2.3 How to transfer any skills and knowledge;

6.2.4 How they prefer to learn and any known barriers to learning development;

6.2.5 Any gaps in their learning and development needs and how they can be met;

6.2.6 Their capacity to set goals and subsequent actions;

6.2.7 Their ability, with support from their supervisor, to seek out any additional skills within the outside the supervisor’s or group supervision knowledge/experience;

6.2.8 Their ability to critically analyse and reflect on their practice e.g., interaction with adults, children, families, colleagues and other agencies;

6.2.9 That they receive regular and constructive feedback on aspects of their practice and that they take ownership of their professional learning but jointly share learning from their own practice experiences with their supervisor;

# Supervisors Responsibilities

7.1 In addition to ensuring the rest of this policy is adhered to, all Supervisors need to;

7.1.1 Attend supervision training for Managers, and refresh this training every 2 years;

7.1.2 If a supervision session MUST be cancelled; plan another date an update Oracle with the reasons for the cancellation;

7.1.3 Prepare an agenda that is shared with the Social Worker prior to the session;

7.1.4 If any stressors are identified for the Social Worker, the supervisor should create an action plan to address this/support the Social Worker;

7.1.5 Ensure discussions around learning and development and progression are used to create a plan to meet organisational needs as well as personal and professional objectives for the social worker;

7.1.6 Recognise, acknowledge and value good practice; strengths-based supervision;

7.1.7 Ensure the Social Worker updates any agreed goals, timescales, outcomes/actions related to children/adults/families onto Liquid Logic.

7.1.8

Record any management oversight (actions/recommendations/ decisions) within the supervision record. Note: In Children’s Services, if management oversight occurs outside of the supervision process this should be recorded on the child’s file on a “Management Oversight” case note;

7.1.9 Enable the Social Worker to contribute to the record of supervision by sending it to them once it’s recorded to agree/amend and sign;

7.1.10 Ensure the supervision record is placed on Oracle. [**Please see Appendix 8 for guidance.**](#_Appendix_8)

7.2 Supervisors should also demonstrate:

7.2.1 They encourage, value and support their supervisee;

7.2.2 How they achieve an effective learning environment for their supervisee using critical reflection on practice and effective feedback;

7.2.3 They can clarify the boundary between what supervision is not;

7.2.4 That they ensure confidentiality in a supervision session and create a safe learning environment for supervisees to look at their practice and its impact on them;

7.2.5 That they use a coaching approach to supervision and encourage the Social Worker to talk about how their feelings/emotions may have an impact on them e.g., happiness, sadness, conflict, abusive behaviours they may encounter to help the supervisee to explore emotional barriers to their work to increase their personal resilience;

7.2.6 They explore in safe setting any issues surrounding discrimination in line with Single Equality Act and local Safeguarding policies and procedures;

7.2.7 They support Social Workers who are subject to any form of abuse whether from service users or from colleagues, whether this be physical or verbal and the impact this may have.

7.2.8 They monitor the overall health and wellbeing of the Social Worker; especially with regard to the effect of stress (see Occupational Health and Wellbeing Policy (including individual stress risk assessment and action plan);

7.2.9 They enable the Social Worker to reflect on difficulties with professional relationships to assist the supervisee in resolving these issues;

7.2.10 They clarify when the supervisee should be advised to seek external counselling, and its relationship with monitoring performance.

# Additional Information

8.1 Student Placements

Student placements for both internal and external students are a period of practice learning and support offered to student practitioners, and they are covered within the scope of this policy. Practice Educators are the primary mentor for all student social workers and should ensure reflective supervision takes places for their named student. Case supervision should also take place between the Practice Educator and their student, as well as with the Practice Educator's Supervisor as appropriate.

8.2 Assessed and Supported Year of Employment (ASYE)

The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) for newly qualified social workers (NQSWs) will be managed both regionally and locally to effectively assess and support the newly qualified social worker. All NQSWs have additional mentoring and supervision during the ASYE programme and are covered within the scope of this policy.

8.3 Confidentiality

Supervision is a confidential process, and this must be clearly respected by the staff involved.

All information (relating to people or agencies) that is disclosed during supervision must be treated as strictly confidential and not be discussed with anyone outside of the session.

However, in some circumstances, the supervisor may be required to submit access to or provide disclosure of information from the session.

These circumstances could include:

* Human Resources;
* Occupational Health;
* Information required by regulators (e.g., OFSTED, CQC) or Directors/Heads of Service for audit purposes;
* A disciplinary, capability or fitness to practice matter;
* A staff grievance;
* A safeguarding matter.

The supervisee would, in all circumstances, be informed of information was to be shared in this way.

8.4 Safeguarding in Supervision

Where Social Workers have safeguarding and protection work as a core part of their role, then lines of professional accountability should be clearly identified within the supervision contract. All supervision must be undertaken by the Line Manager who would be a registered social worker. If a safeguarding children or adult issue is raised or identified within general 1-1 or group supervision, then the appropriate child or adult protection procedures should be initiated.

8.5 Supervision Governance and Survey

The Supervision Group will continue to monitor and audit implementation of the supervision policy and quality of the sessions undertaken, through the annual supervision survey. This is a confidential survey which will allow Social Workers to explain their experiences of supervision. Any recommendations as a result of the survey will be fed back through the group to the Directors across Children and Adults services.

# Registration and Additional Policies and Guides

Supervision and continuing professional development (CPD) is linked to a Social Workers continued registration with Social Work England.

Other helpful policies and guides include:

* [**Social Work England, Professional Standards**](https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/standards/professional-standards/);
* [**Social Work England, CPD overview**](https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/cpd/);
* [**Social Work England, Registration**](https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/registration/);
* Knowsley Developing people policy;
* Knowsley Council Capability procedure within the Managing Conduct, Performance and Information policy;
* Practice Educator professional Standards;
* Professional Capability Framework;
* Knowsley Progression Plan for Social Workers;
* Knowsley CPD for Social Workers guide ([**Bertha**](http://bertha.knowsley.gov.uk/Staff_Stuff/learning_development/Pages/default.aspx)).

All these sources of information should be treated as complimentary and should link closely with the Social Workers Supervision Policy and practice and the My Time process.

# References

* Morrison T, (2001) *Staff Supervision in Social Care; Making a real difference for staff and service users*. Pavilion Publishing: Brighton;
* Standards for Employers and Supervision Framework 2012;
* Social Work England Professional Standards 2019;
* Munro review of child protection: final report - a child-centred system. Department for Education 2011.

# Appendices

### Appendix 1

Knowsley Practice Standards (Children’s Social Care)

[**Click here to view Appendix 1: Knowsley Practice Standards (Children's Social Care).**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/files/app1_prac_standards.pdf)

### Appendix 2

Knowledge and Skills Statements/Social Work Standards

[**Post-qualifying standard: knowledge and skills statement for child and family practitioners (DfE, May 2018)**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/files/post_qualify_stand.pdf)**;**

[**The Knowledge and Skills Statement for Social Workers in Adult Services Statutory Guidance (March 2015)**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/411957/KSS.pdf)**;**

[**Knowledge and Skills Statement for Social Workers in Adult Services (DfH)**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/files/kss_sw_adult.pdf)**.**

### Appendix 3

Supervision Contract/Agreement

[**Click here to view Appendix 3: Supervision Contract/Agreement**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/files/app_2_sup_contract.pdf)**.**

### Appendix 4

Supervision Record

[**Click here to view Appendix 4: Supervision Record**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/files/app_1_sup_record.docx)**.**

### Appendix 5

Signs of Safety Group Supervision Guidance

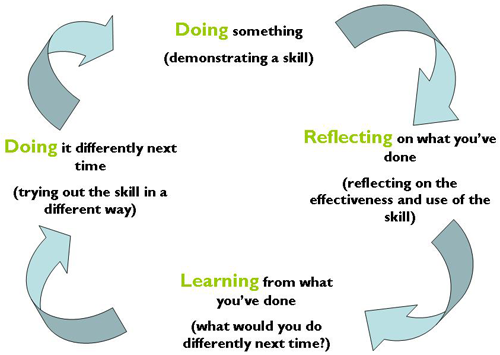
[**Click here to view Appendix 5: Signs of Safety Group Supervision Guidance.**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/files/signs_safety_group.pdf)

### Appendix 6

Tools for Reflection

Social Graces: [**The Power of Social Graces to a Time Pressed Social Worker and the role they play in Supervision - Tool for Practice Supervisors & Practitioners**](https://knowsleychildcare.proceduresonline.com/files/social_graces.pdf)

Kolb:





### Appendix 7

Minimum Supervision Frequency for Cases in Children’s Social Care

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Case Status | Supervision Frequency |
| C&F Assessment | Supervision to be held 10 days from allocation to review the plan and timescales for the assessment completion. |
| Child in Need (from day 35 of open assessment) | Every 2 months and first one should be within first month of C&F Authorisation |
| Child in Need – Children with Disabilities Team | The frequency for the children with disability team will vary dependent upon the case status (CIN, CP, CLA etc). If however:  The child is only open to the service to offer support to the parents/carers and there are no parental/carer deficits and the risk to the child is low OR;  The child is only open to the service for Direct Payments and the risk to the child is low  the frequency of supervision can (like the CIN Reviews) be reduced to a minimum of every 6 months. This should be agreed in advance with the Team Manager. |
| Child Protection | Every 2 months |
| Children in Pre-Proceedings | Every month |
| Supervision Order | Every Month for 3 months then two monthly thereafter until ending of Supervision Order |
| Pre Birth | Every Month |
| Children Looked After – dependent upon placement type | |
| Children in Public Law Proceedings (ICO) | Every month |
| Placement with Parents | Every month unless agreement from manager due to stability and no plan for discharge |
| Residential | First 3 months of new placement – monthly After first 3 months but permanence plan not fully implemented – every 2 months  Stable placement – every 3 months |
| Foster Care | First 3 months of new placement – monthly After first 3 months but permanence plan not fully implemented – every 2 months  Stable placement – every 3 months |
| Children placed for adoption | Every month |

### Appendix 8

Guidance notes for uploading Supervision documents;

