

EARLY YEARS STAFF SUPERVISION POLICY

1 Introduction

It is a statutory requirement (EYFS Statutory Framework 2026) that all staff who have contact with children and families in Early Years & Foundation Stage receive regular supervision.

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for the 1-1 supervision of any staff working for New Hall Pre-Preparatory Division or Nursery, who are in direct contact with children in Early Years & Foundation Stage.

2 Promoting a safeguarding culture in the setting

Supervision must foster **mutual support, teamwork, continuous improvement and confidential discussion of sensitive issues**. It will support and strengthen the safeguarding culture of the School.

3 Supervision policy statement

New Hall Nursery and Pre-Preparatory Division aims to provide appropriate, responsive and flexible services for all the pupils in our care. We can only do this if our staff:

- understand what is expected of them
- have the skills, knowledge, behaviours, values and attitudes necessary to carry out their role
- are fully supported in their work and managed effectively

Supervision is one of the ways that this can be achieved. This policy sets out how staff can expect to be supervised and provides managers with the key elements needed to supervise staff effectively. Supervision provides support, coaching and training, promotes children's interests and is not merely a performance-management meeting. Supervision will always be conducted with a commitment to reasonable adjustments and an inclusive supervision process for disabled staff and staff with communication, language, cultural or other relevant needs.

Supervision will always keep a focus on the best interests of the pupils and promote their safety and well-being.

4 Definition of supervision within the performance management framework

Individual performance management for staff working in Early Years involves:

Annual Performance Management Review – an annual meeting (reviewed mid-year), where the individual and their supervisor meet to discuss general performance and achievement of targets as outlined in the Whole School Performance Management Policy.

In addition to this, Nursery Practitioners, working regularly with Nursery pupils receive a regular one-to-one meeting between the supervisor and supervisee in order to meet organisational, professional and personal objectives. This opportunity is also extended to Reception and other Pre-Preparatory staff should they wish it.

The supervision process is a key part of the performance management framework as outlined above. Discussions held and recorded during supervision will form part of the Performance Management Process.

5 Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all staff employed by New Hall Pre-Preparatory Division and Nursery, who have contact with children and families in the Early Years & Foundation Stage whether on a temporary (including agency staff), permanent, full time or part-time basis. The policy also applies to students, trainees, apprentices and volunteers. Although not all will be employees, they must have suitable support and clear routes for reporting safeguarding and practice concerns.

6 Functions of supervision

The five main functions of supervision are:

1. **Management** (Competent accountable performance/wellbeing)
2. **Learning and Development** (Continuing professional development/EYFS)
3. **Support** (Health and wellbeing)
4. **Mediation** (Engaging the individual with the organisation)
5. **Safeguarding** (suitability /awareness)

These five functions are interdependent, and one function cannot be effectively performed without the others.

6.1 Management (Competent accountable performance / wellbeing)

This function is to ensure that the work for which the supervisee may be held accountable is carried out to a satisfactory standard. The management function will be achieved through discussion of:

- the overall quality of the supervisee's performance and work output/outcomes
- the policies and procedures relating to their work and that these are understood and followed
- the roles and responsibilities of the supervisee and that these are clearly understood, including the boundaries and limits of their role
- the development and monitoring of action plans/targets and objectives
- monitoring of the supervisee's workload, staffing or ratio pressures, deployment, competence, professional boundaries and any organisational condition that might affect children's safety or quality of provision

6.2 Learning and development (Continuing Professional Development/EYFS)

This function is to encourage and assist staff in reflecting on their own performance, identify their own learning and development needs and develop plans or identify opportunities to address those needs.

The learning and development function will be achieved through:

- Helping supervisees identify their preferred learning style and barriers to learning
- Assessing development needs and identifying learning opportunities
- Giving and receiving constructive feedback on performance
- Encouraging the supervisee to reflect on learning opportunities undertaken and applying that learning to the workplace

- Identification of required safeguarding, child protection, online safety, Prevent, paediatric first aid and role-specific refresher training

6.3 Support (health and wellbeing)

This function is to provide support for staff to carry out their role. The nature of the work as well as the effect of particular situations, incidents or personal issues may have an emotional impact on the staff member. By offering support within the supervision context supervisees should be given the opportunity to reflect on the impact of the work upon them and prevent issues adversely affecting them and their work.

This will be achieved through:

- creating a safe environment within supervision where trust and confidentiality are maintained
- clarifying the boundaries between support and counselling in the supervisory relationship
- enabling and empowering expression of feelings in relation to the work role
- providing an opportunity for the supervisee to raise work-related wellbeing, workload or health matters that affect their work or require support and referring to occupational health or counselling when appropriate

6.4 Mediation (engaging the individual with the organisation)

This function is to ensure that the relationship between the supervisee, their team, the organisation and other agencies with whom they work are effective. This will be achieved through:

- briefing senior managers about key issues raised by staff
- dealing sensitively but clearly with concerns and complaints about colleagues and others with whom they work
- concerns about a colleague which may be safeguarding concerns, allegations, low-level concerns or whistleblowing matters must be handled under the relevant safeguarding procedure
- consulting and briefing staff on changes and developments that affect their area of work
- advocating between worker or team and other parts of the agency or with outside agencies

6.5 Safeguarding

Supervision will support and strengthen the safeguarding culture we are committed to in New Hall Nursery Division and Pre-Preparatory Division:

- Staff are respectful to all employees and pupils
- Staff are open about discussing good and poor practice
- Concerns, mistakes and near misses should be raised openly, while deliberate misconduct or unsafe practice will be addressed under the appropriate procedure
- Leaders model the appropriate behaviour
- Staff are knowledgeable about the vulnerability of the pupils that they look after
- Staff are aware that abusers may already be in the employment of the organisation
- Pupils are listened to
- Staff are empowered to challenge poor practice
- Parents are encouraged to be involved in planning their child's care and are welcomed into the setting

- Whistle-blowing procedures are in place and staff know how to use them

Supervision will ensure that all staff looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirement of their roles. This will be achieved through:

- consulting with staff to ascertain their continued suitability to work with children in relation to any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings
- ensuring that required enhanced criminal-records and barred-list checks have been completed and recorded, with ongoing suitability monitored. Any DBS Update Service check requires the individual's consent
- ensuring that relevant individuals must not begin work or volunteering until the required enhanced criminal-records and barred-list check has been received
- discussion with staff in relation to the effects of social media
- consulting and briefing staff on current legislation and policy in relation to the Prevent duty
- making a DBS referral where a person is removed from regulated activity because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child, including where they resign before dismissal

7 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 within the organisation that have regular direct contact with children in the Early Years 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.

7.1 Group supervision

This should not replace individual supervision, but can be used to complement it. It will involve a group of staff, all involved in the same task, meeting with a supervisor to discuss issues about their work or the way they work together as a team. Personal employment matters, identifiable child-protection information and individual low-level concerns should not ordinarily be discussed in a group forum. This may be done in the context of a regular team meeting or as a separate session to look at specific issues.

7.2 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 closely with their supervisor will be communicating daily about work issues, problems arising, and changes in policies or procedures.

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 regarding 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

- While the day-to-day supervisor for a particular member of staff may change, the one-to-one sessions should be carried out by the same supervisor for a particular member of staff
- If a supervisor is absent from work for a long period, the Head of Division should ensure that cover is provided before the next scheduled meeting and immediate alternative arrangements are in place where an urgent issue arises
- An urgent concern must be reported immediately under safeguarding procedures and must not wait for formal supervision

8 Supervision records

The recording of supervision sessions is the responsibility of the supervisor. The supervisor must adhere to the following standards of recording:

8.1 Recording standards:

- The content of each supervision meeting should be recorded on the appropriate form. The detail included is a matter of judgement for the supervisor
- In general, there should be enough detail, so that the issue can be revisited, if necessary, at a later date and still be understood. A short summary of the discussion and the decisions or action points arising from it should be sufficient in most cases
- Supervisors should aim to give a copy of the form to the supervisee for signature within two weeks. Electronic acknowledgement is also permissible. If this is not possible, they should be with the supervisee before the next supervision session. The form should clearly detail any decisions that have been made, and the reasons for these, any agreed actions including who will take responsibility and the timescale for carrying out these actions
- The form should be signed and dated by both parties. If there is disagreement as to the content of the form this should be recorded by the supervisor. A copy should be retained by both parties

9 Confidentiality access

Supervision discussions are confidential within defined limits. Information will be shared only where necessary. For safeguarding, legal obligations, management action, professional advice or the protection of an individual and normally with the supervisee's knowledge unless doing so would create risk or prejudice an investigation. This means that the records are the property of New Hall School, not the individual. From time to time supervisors will need to discuss the content of supervision sessions with others, e.g. their own line manager, this should always be with the knowledge of the supervisee.

Access to supervision records should be controlled and all records should be locked away, so that others who do not have a legitimate right to see the records cannot access them. Supervisees should be aware, however, that other than themselves and their supervisor others will, from time to time, access records. These might include the Senior Leadership/Senior Management Team, the HR Department & Inspectors.

Subject access requests, legal disclosure, safeguarding investigations and information about third parties will be handled under the School's data protection procedures.

10 Storage and retention

The supervision records will be kept on the supervisee's file as a password protected document. When a supervisee leaves the Pre-Preparatory Division, the records will be retained on their personnel file. Retention periods are detailed in the School's *Data and Retention Policy*. In the Nursery Division, any electronic records will be archived with their files.

11 Complaints

Supervisees should always discuss any complaints or dissatisfaction in the first instance with their line manager and endeavour to reach an agreement within the normal supervision process. If the complaint cannot be resolved by discussion with the supervisor, the supervisee should raise the issue with their supervisor's manager in accordance with the *Grievance Procedure*. This should not be the initial route for a child-protection concern, allegation, low-level concern or whistleblowing disclosure. Using the complaints or grievance procedure does not prevent a member of staff from contacting the LADO, local authority children's social care, police, Ofsted, the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line or another prescribed body where appropriate.