

# Waltham Forest Early Years Guidance

## Supervision for Early Years Practitioners – A Managers Guide

This guidance document is designed to support managers and supervisors in Early Years and Childcare settings with the supervision of staff they manage and undertaking safeguarding supervision.

### What is 'Supervision'?

The Early Years Foundation Stage in 2017 made it a statutory requirement to undertake Supervision with staff and it has continued to remain a requirement in the current published document in 2025.

Providers must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides **support, coaching and training** for practitioners and promotes the interests of children. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

Supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer support and develop the individual. Its purpose is to monitor the progress of practitioners and to help them improve the quality of their work they do which will improve outcomes for children. Supervision also provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues, including the safeguarding of children and any other concerns raised about an individual's or colleague's practice.

### Why?

Lessons learnt from Serious Case Reviews have found that supervision is crucial for practitioners working in the Early Years and

Childcare Sector; it is essential to help them cope with the emotional demands of work with children and their families.



Good supervision gives staff an opportunity to reflect on their practice, explore worries or concerns about the welfare of children within the setting and contribute towards developing a confident and competent staff team.

All practitioners, whether they are full time, part-time, volunteers, apprentices or work placement students need supervision.

Supervision provides professional one to one support away from the children and direct work environment. To reflect on own practice, professional progress, safeguarding issues and to self-evaluate. It also supports increased staff retention which ensures continuity of care for children.

### Role of the manager?

The manager doesn't always have to be the person who carries out the supervision meetings. It may be that room leaders can do their own room, or the deputy manager could do some. It is important that supervisions are structured to provide discussion around staff development and support and any sensitive issues and concerns affecting team members. You should try to ensure

that whoever is carrying out the supervision has had appropriate training and has a good relationship with the supervisee.

Supervision gives managers an opportunity to:

- Support staff members with their development needs
- Provide mentoring and coaching options
- Share successes
- Identify any children who need support
- Discuss any safeguarding concerns
- Support staff members with their own self-reflection
- Ensure issues/problems are solved
- Build trusting relationships that provide a culture of information sharing.

The 2025 EYFS (pg.29) states “*Supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:*

- *Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children’s development or well-being, including child protection concerns.*
- *Identify solutions to address issues as they arise.*
- *Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.”*

## How?

A private room should be used away from any interruptions and a summary of the meeting should be recorded and kept in the practitioner’s file. The whole purpose of the meeting is to constructively evaluate practitioners practice, therefore constructive feedback should be given, and practitioners should leave the meeting feeling positive not deflated.

To ensure that staff are involved in the supervision process you should enable them to have a shared responsibility for supervision meetings. Both parties should be filling out any supervision forms/paperwork prior to the meeting to get their



thoughts and ideas on paper. This will save time during the meeting and will ensure a more productive and focused meeting.

## Supervision and Ofsted?

The Early Years Inspection Toolkit, (2025) states for a setting to meet the Safeguarding requirement:

*“Leaders ensure that supervision, support and monitoring of adults are appropriate.” (pg. 8)*

## What Next?

Ensure all staff are aware of the setting’s supervision policy and the procedures/format the meetings will take.

Supervision should be recorded:

- To keep a record of what was discussed, and actions agreed
- To keep a record of any disagreements
- To benchmark and audit the quality of supervision
- For performance management of staff

At the end of each session both supervisor and supervisee should sign and date the supervision notes to confirm its accuracy and both keep a copy.

Consider confidentiality; it is important for staff to be comfortable in discussing all aspects of their work but there needs to be clarity as to what will happen to information discussed if it raises concerns about the practice of a member of staff or a child.

## Further Information

- [Early years inspection toolkit](#)
- [The Hub - Further Information and Supervision Proforma](#)
- [EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#)