



Tudor Grange Academies Trust

Safeguarding Supervision Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is written to support the supervision process and incorporates statutory guidance within 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (HM Government 2018). This document has also been written with regard to the Tudor Grange Academies Trust (TGAT) 'Safeguarding Children' Policy.

2 Definition of Supervision in Safeguarding

- 2.1 Supervision is a method of supporting staff so they can meet the presenting needs of all individuals with whom they are working. Supervision is a regular, planned, accountable, two-way process which should offer emotional support whilst also developing the competence and values of individuals or groups.
- 2.2 Effective supervision has been defined as, 'open and supportive, focusing on the quality of decisions, good risk analysis and improving outcomes for children rather than meeting targets' (Laming 2009). Furthermore 'the importance of effective supervision to protect and identify vulnerable children and young people, provides the basis of sound professional judgements and partnership working. The importance of effective safeguarding supervision has been highlighted as a key theme in serious case reviews' (Munro 2011).
- 2.3 Supervisors made available to staff are an important source of safeguarding expertise and support, and may be required to endorse judgements at key points in time. Effective supervision will take an anti-discriminatory approach and recognise equality and diversity issues appropriately. We expect those delivering safeguarding supervision to demonstrate compassion, enable expression and to contain emotions of staff in order to enhance the long term quality of safeguarding provision being delivered by all.

3 Purpose of Safeguarding Supervision for DSLs and DDSLs

3.1 Whilst 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' makes it clear that the responsibility for safeguarding children in schools is a responsibility that all staff share, this policy refers exclusively to the supervision arrangements in place for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and key Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs). The focus of this enhanced support is deliberate, due to the nature of the core work undertaken routinely by staff within these roles.

3.2 We believe that effective supervision for all key safeguarding staff operating within TGAT is essential and this is a sentiment endorsed in guidance.

'Designated practitioner roles... should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively'
(Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018))

3.3 Safeguarding Supervision is protected time to reflect on practice and to offer staff support with their emotional wellbeing and resilience. This will enable the development of coping strategies and provide staff with an opportunity to discuss their own feelings when exposed with distress or difficult situations and the toll that this takes upon them as individuals. This, it is hoped, will mitigate against 'compassion fatigue', to which staff in safeguarding roles may be more susceptible.

'Compassion fatigue refers to the physical and mental exhaustion and emotional withdrawal experienced over an extended period of time by those in the helping professions'
(www.childwelfare.gov).

3.4 Furthermore, issues related to contact with other agencies or systems and processes can be explored, and constructive advice offered to overcome such challenges. Focus can also be given to specific cases or situations to mitigate against drift or delay in reaching safe outcomes.

3.5 Due consideration of workload and the identification of appropriate CPD opportunities should also be considered.

3.6 Supervision provides an opportunity to ensure that codes of conduct and standards of practice are maintained, therefore promoting a safe culture for all.

3.7 The supervision process should also be an opportunity for staff to celebrate successes and share good practice.

4 Principles

4.1 Safeguarding supervision is not related to and does not replace the appraisal process, but should complement standard line management arrangements.

4.2 This support is not counselling and a supervisor at times may need to refer a supervisee for more intensive support or specialist services. The relationship between supervisor and supervisee should be positive and trusting.

4.3 Principals/Heads of School should regard supervision to be an important element of the DSL/DDSL role and ensure that adequate time and space is provided for key staff to engage in this process.

4.4 Where supervision takes place across schools or with an independent person, confidentiality of individual children and families must be maintained. Case discussions will therefore be anonymised. The supervisor should have attended supervision training and be receiving supervision themselves.

5 Models of Supervision

- 5.1 Delivery of standard safeguarding supervision provided by TGAT comprises a termly group session for the safeguarding team at each school. However, bespoke individual supervision sessions can be arranged with an agreed provider should a need be identified. Any additional supervision must be approved by the Principal/Head of School as the cost incurred by supplementary sessions or other services will be drawn from respective school budgets.
- 5.2 Formal supervision will always be planned, but this may also be supplemented by informal supervision, for example in relation to a crisis or need to de-brief after a live situation. In such instances informal supervision may be offered by immediate colleagues, line managers or the Trust Safeguarding Lead/Executive Trust Lead for Safeguarding.

6 Safeguarding Supervision Agreement

- 6.1 Every supervisor should make a written agreement with their supervisees.
- 6.2 It is the supervisor's responsibility to take notes and make sure they are made available to the supervisees (upon request) and the Trust Safeguarding Lead/Executive Trust Lead for Safeguarding. These documents should be saved securely. Both supervisor and supervisees need to agree and sign that records are accurate.
- 6.3 Case discussion which result in any changes to planned action, which have also been approved by the DSL, are to be added to MyConcern following the session.
- 6.4 In general supervision is considered confidential, however there will be occasions where confidentiality will be overridden, examples of which include but are not limited to: child protection issues relating to the supervisee; if not sharing information with senior management could contribute in bringing the school into disrepute; potential disciplinary matters or whistleblowing incidents.
- 6.5 In order for staff to benefit from the session, preparation for supervision is required, namely the consideration of cases/issues to discuss and an initial reflection on these prior to supervision.
- 6.6 Copies of supervision notes will be shared with the Trust Safeguarding Lead/Executive Trust Lead for Safeguarding. The purpose of this is so that feedback can inform the Central Team's understanding of emerging practice issues and areas for safeguarding CPD and to help monitor the wellbeing of all teams so that additional support or resourcing can be arranged as required.
- 6.7 It is important that safeguarding supervision is treated as an entitlement for DSLs and key DDSs. If staff in these roles are not receiving termly safeguarding supervision they should, in the first instance, discuss any complaints or dissatisfaction with their line manager and endeavour to reach an agreement within the normal supervision process. If a solution is not agreed, the supervisee should raise the issue with the Trust Safeguarding Lead or the Executive Trust Lead for Safeguarding.

7 Review

- 7.1 There will be an annual supervision audit of supervisee satisfaction and learning from supervision. This will include feedback of supervisor performance and will be undertaken by the Trust Safeguarding Lead. The feedback gathered will be shared with the Executive Team and will inform arrangements made for safeguarding supervision for the following academic year.

8 References

HM Government (2018) Working Together To Safeguard Children. London, Crown Copyright

Laming H. (2009) The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report. London, The Stationary Office

Munro E. (2011) The Munro Review of Child Protection. London, The Stationary Office

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children [NSPCC] (2015) Supervision Skills in Child Protection. London, NSPCC

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (2020), Tudor Grange Academies Trust

'Burnout, Compassion Fatigue and Secondary Traumatic Stress' – Children's Welfare Information Gateway. Available at www.childwelfare.gov/

Safeguarding Supervision Agreement for DSLs and DDSLs

Supervisee Name and Role:

Supervisor Name and Role:

Agreed Date:

Review Date:

- Safeguarding supervision will be undertaken each term, or sooner upon request, and will be for no less than 1 hour a session.
- Every effort will be made by all parties for supervision to take place as arranged in an uninterrupted environment.
- Preparation for supervision will include identifying cases or issues to discuss and starting reflection on these.
- All participants will enter into discussions, value the opinions of others and actively listen.
- Notes and agreed actions will be recorded, signed, shared and kept securely in a standardised format.
- Any decisions made on individual cases during supervision, once agreed by the DSL, will be entered onto MyConcern following the session.
- Each party in the agreement has the responsibility to notify the other in the event of cancellation or postponement.
- If at any time the Supervisor or the Supervisee is unhappy about an issue which cannot be resolved between themselves, the Trust Safeguarding Lead/Executive Trust Lead for Safeguarding must be consulted.
- Copies of supervision notes will be shared with the Trust Safeguarding Lead/Executive Trust Lead for Safeguarding. The purpose of this is so that feedback can inform the Central Team’s understanding of emerging practice issues and areas for safeguarding CPD and to help monitor the wellbeing of all teams so that additional support or resourcing can be arranged as required.
- Supervisors will respect the confidentiality of the Supervisee(s) in all areas, except where a risk of serious harm is evident. Equally, issues raised that could place TGAT into disrepute or could lead to a potential disciplinary matter or whistleblowing incident will be shared with the Trust Safeguarding Lead/Executive Trust Lead for Safeguarding.

Supervisee Signature:

Date:

Supervisor Signature:

Date:

Agenda for Safeguarding Supervision

Exact template for agenda will vary depending upon supervision provider, however the components listed should all feature within each safeguarding supervision session

- Date, time and location of session (noted)
- Attendees and apologies (with reasons stated for any absence)
- Clarify roles of all those present
- Outline remits of confidentiality and agreed expectations.
- Review notes of previous session and discuss progress with respect to identified actions
- Specific case discussions (with due consideration of confidentiality)
- Share experience and reflect upon feelings.
- Analysis and action planning – celebrate success and good practice as well as consider what could be improved
- Discuss impact of work in general on individuals professionally or personally and consider any additional support which may be necessary
- Discuss CPD requirements and resource issues, e.g. reflect on recent or forthcoming training development opportunities.
- Professional practice issues, e.g. new policies, quality of performance, safer working practice, professional boundaries, role within school
- Date of next supervision (availability to be confirmed by all present at the time)