***(Policy Number) SAMPLE* STAFF SUPERVISION POLICY**

This can also be called Staff Support and Supervision Policy as support is an inherent part of professional supervision.

## Rationale and Policy Considerations

The Staff Supervision Policy in relation to an early years service means a policy specifying the way [employees](#employee), [unpaid workers](#unpaid_worker) and [contractors](#CONTRACTOR) are supervised and supported in the service in relation to their work practices.

Staff development provides chances for greater knowledge, improved skill and better understanding, not as an end in itself but as a means to develop and improve the level of service to children and their families. Good supervision can increase reflective practice and research has shown that good supervision is associated with job satisfaction, commitment and staff retention.

Supervision and appraisals are core elements of the staff development process for all team members, paid or unpaid. Team meetings and mentoring also form part of a quality support and supervision, and team development structure for the staff team.

The purpose of supervision is to provide support to team members as well as to promote and provide accountability for work practice. Good supervision supports decision-making, development of the work and development of the staff member’s knowledge, skills and competencies.

Appraisals provide an opportunity to acknowledge an individual staff member’s strengths and a context for setting new professional development goals. Appraisals also contribute to identifying training and development needs of staff members.

### Legislation and regulatory requirements

* Under Regulation 9 of the [Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2016/si/221/made/en/print) the registered provider must ensure that staff are appropriately supervised in relation to all of the regulatory requirements for the service.
* Having a clear, written policy and procedure on Staff Supervision is a requirement under Regulation 10 of the [Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2016/si/221/made/en/print).

**Children’s needs**

Children need:

* To be cared for and educated by adults who are well supported in their role and whose practice is monitored to ensure that the care and education they receive while attending the service is of good quality.
* The adults, whose role is to work alongside their parents/guardians, in supporting their wellbeing, learning and development, to be encouraged and supported to be reflective practitioners and to feel valued in this very important and significant role.

**Parents’/Families’ needs**

Parents/guardians need to know that the:

* Service provided for their child’s learning and development is of a high quality.
* Staff to whom they entrust their young child’s care and education, while in the service, are adequately and appropriately informed, motivated, supported, guided and monitored in their role.

**Staff needs**

Staff members need:

* This policy to ensure that they will be appropriately supported in their very important role.
* To be able to discuss the day-to-day issues, challenges and opportunities that inevitably come with providing quality care and education to young children and interacting with their parents/guardians.
* A safe space in which to be able to address any potential challenges associated with interacting positively at all times with their colleagues.
* To be accountable for the quality of their practice.
* To be given information that relates to their position in the service, in an appropriate context and be able to rely on having specific time dedicated to their particular support needs, by their manager.

**Management needs**

Management needs:

* To ensure that they meet the requirements of the Early Years Regulations in relation to how support and supervision of employees, unpaid workers and contractors, relating to their work practices, are provided.
* To ensure that the service’s Supervision Policy is known and understood by all staff members.
* To ensure that the expectations of the service in relation to supervision, and the purpose of supervision, are clear to all staff members.
* The arrangements for support and supervision set out and made clear to all team members and also to parents/guardians who use the service.

**National Quality Frameworks**

* [Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/)
* [Síolta: The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education](http://siolta.ie/)

## Definitions/Glossary

 *[Include definitions here of any words used that may need explanation.]*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Supervision | A key managerial activity. It is communication between two or more staff members, one of whom is a line manager, to support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of the staff member/s to help improve outcomes for the children and families who use the service and the staff member/s themselves – it is a formal reflective process about professional thinking, actions and decisions[[1]](#footnote-1). |
| Appraisals | A staff appraisal is a formal process by which the work and professional development of an individual staff member are reviewed. The process acknowledges the worker’s strengths and contributes to future planning and goal setting. Appraisals are about a person’s previous performance as well as future development. The appraisal considers the staff member’s achievements, their expectations, and their training and development needs. |
|  |  |

3. Policy Statement*[Outlines the principles, values and purpose of the policy. It will generally be quite short.]*

All staff members must have a regular, consistent and uninterrupted supervision meeting with their *supervisor/manager* based on a negotiated agreement to:

* Support them in their work.
* Ensure that they are clear about their role and responsibilities.
* Ensure competent and accountable performance.
* Ensure that, in their respective roles, they meet [insert *Service name]* standards and objectives.
* Ensure a positive atmosphere for practice.
* Support their professional development.
* Help keep stress to a minimum.
* Increase awareness of new areas of professional knowledge.
* Ensure that they are given the resources to do their job.
* Provide an opportunity to voice their ideas and concerns.
* Ensure the quality of service provided to children and families.

Staff members are encouraged to reflect on the quality of their practice, continually update their knowledge base and raise any safeguarding concerns.

Staff members will be supported appropriately in the case of child protection concerns and outside support will be sought if it is needed.

All staff members are entitled to:

* Respect as a person and in their role.
* Clarity in relation to their role and responsibilities.
* Clarity about the boundaries of confidentiality – where it is necessary to inform others of something that arises during supervision, the supervisor and supervisee should discuss how this can be done.
* Clarity about expectations.
* Have their experience and contribution acknowledged.
* Be briefed aboutchanges in the service.
* Participate in planning and problem solving and not just be told what to do.
* Access to continuing professional development/training relevant to their job.
* Clarification about the service’s policies and procedures.
* Clear performance targets.
* Be allocated an appropriate and manageable workload.
* Clarity about the basis of decisions that impact on them either directly or indirectly.
* Regular and uninterrupted supervision.
* Formal appraisal.

The supervision programme will be reviewed at least annually to ensure that it is effective.

Staff appraisals will be carried out for each staff member within the first six months of appointment and annually thereafter.

4. Procedures & Practices*[Outlines the specific steps and/or guidance to be followed in order to implement the policy.]*

**Supervision**

Before the first Supervision Meeting, an initial discussion takes place between supervisor and supervisee to discuss what supervision is and also what it is not, and to outline the frequency, duration and format of supervision meetings. Both participants’ expectations are discussed, clarified and agreed at the beginning of the supervision relationship.

A Supervision Meeting will be scheduled *[monthly*/*every six weeks]*, at least *[insert number]* months in advance, with each staff member (paid or unpaid). *[Outline here who in the service will supervise whom – anyone assigned as supervisor must be appropriately trained.]* The meeting will generally be a minimum of one hour’s duration. *[Outline here when and where supervision takes place and the resources available].*

There will be an agreed agenda for the meeting.

 *[Outline the type of areas for discussion within supervision. There is likely to be a number of standing items on the agenda for supervision. In an early years educator role, the agenda items may include but are not limited to:*

* *Care and welfare of the group.*
* *Care and welfare of individual children.*
* *Contact and work with parents/guardians and families/key person role.*
* *Any new ideas/reflections on quality practice.*
* *Any concerns including, but not limited to, child safeguarding concerns.*
* *Networking with other agencies and organisations.*
* *Training needs.*
* *Teamwork.*
* *Staff welfare and support.*
* *Health and safety issues.]*

**Records and record keeping**

The supervision session is recorded by the supervisor and the record kept in accordance with good practice, legislation and regulation in… *[state where the record will be stored]* (see Record Keeping Policy). Both supervisor and supervisee sign the record to ensure that it is an accurate and fair reflection of the discussion and decisions. Decisions made at one session will be followed up at the next session to ensure they were acted upon.

**Supervision of students**

Students/Trainees who work with the children are at all times under the supervision of an appropriately qualified staff member. They are supported and supervised by appropriately experienced members of staff to assist them to carry out their duties to promote and protect the wellbeing, learning and development of the children.

***Team meetings***

*You can also include the service policy guidance on Team Meetings here and/or in the Staff Training Policy. Regular and consistent team meetings are an integral part of team, individual and service development as well as being core to communication within the team. Team meetings can have a number of different functions including:*

* *Information sharing*
* *Decision making*
* *Developing the team/teamwork*
* *Review, reflection, evaluation and planning*
* *Debriefing and support*
* *Skills development/sharing knowledge from training attended.*

*All team meetings and decisions made should be in the interests of the children and families who use the service. Meetings need to have a clear purpose and direction and a clear recorded outcome. There needs to be an agreed agenda, a timeframe, minutes, a chairperson (not necessarily the owner/manager) and open discussion and reflection.*

***Mentoring and/or coaching***

*The service approach (if any) to Mentoring and/or Coaching as a form of support and guidance can also be included here and/or in the Staff Training Policy. Mentoring and Coaching do not involve line management responsibility but are supportive of people and practice. The role of mentor is to provide an opportunity for reflection on work and learn from this. The mentor shares their experience and provides encouragement and support. The mentoring relationship can be formal or informal. The coaching relationship is more directive whereby the coach suggests ways of improving practice and skills.]*

### Appraisals

All new staff members have an appraisal carried out before the end of their probationary period and thereafter annually.

All staff members’ appraisals take the same approach using the service’s standard Appraisal Form.

*[The following is a list of questions that may be helpful to include when developing your Appraisal Form. The purpose of the form is to support preparing for and carrying out, as well as recording an appraisal:*

* *What have been your achievements during the last year?*
* *How do these relate to the goals you had at the beginning of the year?*
* *How do they relate to the service’s goals?*
* *What are your particular strengths in relation to your work here?*
* *What have you contributed to the team/service?*
* *What situations/issues have challenged you?*
* *What has contributed to effective work/practice?*
* *What has got in the way of effective work?*
* *What have you learned and what would you like to learn?*
* *What goals would you like to set for the coming year?*
* *What do you think the service/your colleagues can do to contribute to your achieving your goals?]*

Appraisals relate to the individual’s job description and focus on areas of performance relevant to their role.

Appraisals are recorded and records kept in each staff member’s own personnel file in accordance with good practice and legislation and regulation (see Records and Record Keeping Policy).

Where there is disagreement between the parties, they must, in the first instance, try to resolve issues between them in a respectful manner with each listening to the other’s point of view. Should this fail and agreement not be reached… *[state how the issue will be addressed and by whom, for example, intervention by the staff representative of the management committee/ a senior manager/ a mediator].*

## Communication Plan *[For staff & families]*

Staff members are informed of the policy and procedures regarding Staff Support and Supervision on commencing in the service. The registered provider/person in charge will check with staff members that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.

Familiarity with this policy will be included in staff induction and annual staff training.

A copy of all relevant policies will be available during all hours of operation to all staff team members in the Policy Folder located in ……………………………………...

All staff members will receive written notification of any updates.

Parents and guardians are informed that there is a Supervision Policy and may see it and/or receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request.

## Related Policies, Procedures and Forms *[List of all related documents. The policies in bold are those required under the Early Years Regulations 2016.]*

* **Staff Training Policy**
* **Risk Management Policy**
* Records and Record Keeping Policy
* Confidentiality Policy
* Supervision Record Form
* Appraisals Record Form

7. References/Supporting Documents/Related Legislation*[List of any relevant Legislation and Practice Guides referred to in drafting the Policy]*

* [Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/)
* [Child Care Act 1991(Early Years Services) Regulations 2016](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2016/si/221/made/en/print)
* [Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2014](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/30/enacted/en/html)
* [Data Protection Act, 1988 and 2003](https://www.dataprotection.ie/docs/Law-On-Data-Protection/m/795.htm)
* Reflective Practice for Early Childhood Professionals, Barnardos, 2015
* Human Resource Management in Early Years Services, Barnardos, 2010
* Supporting Quality: guidelines for professional practice in early childhood services (3rd edition) Book 1 Policy and Governance, Barnardos, 2008

## Who Must Observe This Policy

This policy must be observed by all managers and all staff members

## Actions to be Followed if the Policy is not Implemented

*[Add in any relevant actions to be taken]*

10. Contact Information*[Who to contact for more information]*

If you need more information about this policy, contact:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Phone number or email |  |

## Policy Created

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date this policy was created  |  |

## Signatures

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Name and position | Signature |
| Approved by  |  |  |
| Approved by |  |  |

## **Review Date**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date this policy will be reviewed  |  |

1. Social Care Institute for Excellence ([www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)