

Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership  
(RSCP)

Designated Safeguarding Lead  
(DSL) in Schools

Model Supervision Policy &  
Guidance

3rd Edition

June 2021

## Contents

Section	Title	Page
1	Introduction	<u>3</u>
2	Background	<u>3</u>
3	Definition of Safeguarding Supervision	<u>3</u>
4	Purpose of Safeguarding Supervision for DSLs	<u>3</u>
5	Supervision Models and Tools	<u>4</u>
6	Safeguarding Supervision Contract	<u>4</u>
7	Entitlement to Safeguarding Supervision	<u>5</u>
Appendix A	Supervision Contract	<u>6</u>
Appendix B	Supervision Agenda	<u>7</u>
Appendix C	Supervision Notes and Action Points Template	<u>8</u>
Appendix D	References and Useful Links	<u>9</u>

## 1. Introduction

This 'model' policy provides a template for use in schools and colleges in Redbridge for the provision of Safeguarding Supervision for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The document is a good practice guide for what should be included in a policy and can be amended by an individual school or college as appropriate.

The document, [Working Together to Safeguard Children, HM Government, 2018](#), highlights the role of supervision for those with safeguarding responsibilities.

## 2. Background

The Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP) identified through learning from multi-agency audits that there was a need for DSLs in schools to be provided with support and guidance specifically around their safeguarding role, separate from management supervision and that this was not always taking place. As the member of school staff with specific responsibility and leadership in safeguarding children, there can be a risk of feeling isolated, particularly when first in the role. In response to this need, the RSCP have developed this template policy in consultation with **the Borough's Education and Inclusion** Service and other partners.

## 3. Definition of Safeguarding Supervision

Safeguarding supervision is the provision of professional support and learning which enables practitioners (in this case the DSL) to develop knowledge and competence. It facilitates the practitioner to be able to take responsibility for their own practice and respond to the needs and risks presented by children and young people. Safeguarding supervision is separate from line management supervision.

## 4. Purpose of Safeguarding Supervision for DSLs

The purpose of Safeguarding Supervision for DSLs is to:

- review workloads, if needed;
- discuss and seek guidance on specific cases;
- provide an opportunity where a member of staff can be challenged supportively and constructively within mutually agreed and accepted boundaries by a professional experienced in safeguarding children;
- allow for issues relating to the work place and to working practices to be identified and discussed;
- identification of achievements; and
- provide support with emotional well-being and resilience.

Safeguarding supervision is not related to appraisal, auditing or line management. It is therefore not essential that the Supervisor sits hierarchically above the supervisee, thus reciprocal arrangements can be used. It would usually be provided by a professional independent on the school or college.

## 5. Supervision Models and Tools

This policy is concerned primarily with one to one safeguarding supervision for DSLs that takes place in private at a pre-arranged time with an agreed agenda and preparation on behalf of both parties. **However, if there is also a place for unplanned or “ad hoc” supervision, if the supervisee requires this, which is allowed for the Supervision Contract, and value in group safeguarding supervision with other DSLs.**

There are many different tools that can be used during supervision, including:

- processes that help to frame the dilemma or issue that the supervisee is facing;
- Socratic questioning<sup>1</sup> (using questions that encourage the use of critical reflection on the supervisees thought processes and decision-making);
- **Wonnacott’s Discrepancy Matrix**<sup>2</sup> (looking at what is known, not yet known or unknown about a case from the point of view of the professionals and the family);
- Supervisee anxiety scale to for use in helping to deal with stress, anxiety and workload pressure;
- learnable skills of resilience and other resilience tools;
- **decision making ‘hats’ (looking at how the supervisee makes decisions);** and
- **Maclean’s head, heart, hands and feet**<sup>3</sup> which aids reflection and considering of the range of skills, knowledge and experience used in a particular case.

For further information about any of the above or supervision tools in general, contact the [RSCP](#). A good practice examples of safeguarding supervision for DSLs in primary schools can be found on the [What Works in Children’s Social Care website](#).

## 6. Safeguarding Supervision Contract

It is good practice to agree a Safeguarding Supervision Contract before supervision activities commence. The most important part of this is the discussions that take place before supervision has actually begun, which is the time for the supervisor and supervisee to consider expectations of each other, particularly the boundaries between safeguarding supervision and management supervision, and establish the basis for a strong and supportive relationship going forward.

The contract should outline the expectation, including the following elements.

- frequency and length of safeguarding supervision;
- location – supervision should take place in a private and uninterrupted space during the working day;
- recording – it is the **supervisor’s** responsibility to take notes and make sure they are copied, circulated and filed. Both parties need to agree and sign that they are accurate.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Socratic questioning: Changing minds or guided discovery, Padesky, C. \(1993\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Social Work in Practice](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Research in Practice \(RiP\), Reflective Supervision Tools, 2017](#)

Records must be kept in a secure location. The records themselves must be kept in a format that suits both parties however a summary sheet of actions will be completed during or immediately after the session. A sample Recording Sheet is provided at [Appendix C](#); and

- confidentiality – in general supervision is considered as confidential, however there will be occasions where confidentiality will be overridden, for example in the case of child protection issues or if not sharing information with senior school management could contribute in bringing the school into disrepute.

A sample contract is included at [Appendix A](#) which can be adapted as required. It is good practice to review the contract and the supervision arrangement annually to ensure that it is meeting the learning needs of the DSL and having a positive impact on their practice. There are tools and templates available from the [RSCP](#) to support the review and evaluation process.

## 7. Entitlement to Safeguarding Supervision

It is important that safeguarding supervision is provided to the DSL. If a DSL is not receiving safeguarding supervision at the required frequency during the year they should:

- in the first instance discuss any complaints or dissatisfaction with their supervisor and endeavour to reach an agreement within the normal supervision process; or
- if a solution is not agreed, the supervisee should raise the issue with their Head Teacher.

## Supervision Contract

Safeguarding Supervision Contract			
Supervisee:	[Enter Name and Role]		
Supervisor:	[Enter Name and Role]		
Agreed Date:	/ /	Review Date:	/ /
Supervision Agreement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding supervision will be undertaken each half term or sooner if requested and will be for a minimum of 1 hour.</li> <li>• Every effort will be made for supervision to take place in an uninterrupted environment.</li> <li>• Each party in the agreement has the responsibility to notify the other in the event of cancellation or postponement.</li> <li>• If at any time the Supervisor or the Supervisee is unhappy about an issue which cannot be resolved, the Head Teacher will be consulted with the agreement of both parties.</li> <li>• Supervisors will respect the confidentiality of the Supervisee in all areas except Child Protection – concerns about which need to be referred on or whether information is identified that could bring the organisation into disrepute which may need to be reported via line management.</li> <li>• Notes and agreed actions will be recorded, signed, shared and kept securely electronically.</li> </ul>		
Supervisee:	[Insert signature]	Date:	/ /
Supervisor:	[Insert signature]	Date:	/ /

## Supervision Agenda

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Safeguarding Supervision	
AGENDA	
Date:	/ /
Time:	00:00
1	Welcome and informal opener
2	Agenda setting – both parties to input
3	Information Sharing update
4	Review notes of previous meeting
5	Specific case discussion – including problem solving, consideration of the <b>'voice of the child'</b>
6	Reflection
7	Job resource and support needs – including learning and development
8	Any Other Business (AOB)
9	Date of Next Supervision

Safeguarding Supervision Notes and Action Template

Item	Notes	Agreed Action	By Whom	By Date
				/ /
				/ /
				/ /
				/ /
				/ /
				/ /
				/ /

Name	Role	Signature	Date Agreed
	Supervisee		/ /
	Supervisor		/ /



## References and Useful Links

- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, Department for Education, 2020

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/954314/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2020\\_-\\_Update\\_-\\_January\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_-_Update_-_January_2021.pdf)

- Working together to safeguard children, HM Government, 2018

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/942454/Working\\_together\\_to\\_safeguard\\_children\\_inter\\_agency\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf)

- London Child Protection Procedures, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2021

<https://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

- Redbridge Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP)

<https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/>