

Falkirk Council - Social Work Services Supervision Framework

1. Introduction

Effective professional supervision plays a key component part in ensuring that Social Work Services employees achieve high quality service provision and consistent outcomes for people who use services.

It is also necessary in the support and motivation of workers undertaking demanding jobs. It should contribute to workers meeting performance standards and enabling them to develop good practice and exercise professional judgement and discretion in decision making.

2. Definition / Function and Principles of Supervision

Supervision sessions are regular one to one meetings between a supervisor and supervisee in order to meet organisational, professional and personal objectives.

Supervision needs to combine a performance management approach with an empowering and enabling supervisory relationship between supervisor and supervisee.

There are four interrelated aspects to supervision:

- **Line management**, which is about accountability for practice and quality of service. Discussion during supervision should include; the overall quality of the supervisee's performance and work output / outcomes and the policies and procedures relating to their work, ensuring that these are understood and followed.
- **Professional / Case Supervision**, with a key aspect to review and reflect on practice issues. Discussion during supervision should include: the role 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 / care plans, targets and objectives and monitoring of the supervisee's workload.
Due to the, at times, demanding nature of the work, supervisee's may require support to carry out their role; this may be because of particular situations, specific incidents or personal issues that may temporarily impact upon their work performance. Support within the supervision context should give supervisee's the opportunity to reflect on the impact of the work upon them and prevent issues adversely affecting them and their work.
- **Continuing professional development**, which will ensure employees have the relevant skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes to do the job and progress their careers. Discussion during supervision should include; giving and receiving constructive feedback on performance and assessing development needs and identifying learning opportunities. A Case File Audit (Appendix 5) has been developed to be used as an audit tool and provide feedback on practitioner performance, highlighting good practice and areas for action or improvement.

Supervision is underpinned by the following stated principles, which reflect the values of our service:-

- all social work service staff should have access to regular, effective supervision
- supervision is a shared responsibility between the supervisor and the supervisee

- supervision should be planned, uninterrupted and recorded
- supervision should promote best practice and best value
- supervision should ensure competency, accountability and empowerment of staff
- supervision agendas should be agreed between the supervisor and supervisee
- supervision should promote anti discriminatory practice
- the best interests of service users are paramount, unless there is a significant risk to public safety where; any potential conflict will be assessed and decisions made in consultation with senior managers

3. 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.

Two points to be taken into account in these circumstances:

- Any decisions made with regard to a service user should be clearly recorded by the Team Manager in the service user’s file
- This does not negate the need for private one to one time together on a regular basis

4. Professional Supervision / Peer Support

There are some situations where employees are line managed by a staff member from a different professional background. It is acknowledged that there may be a need for arrangements to be put in place for the employee to be offered additional professional supervision or consultation.

It is also recognised that there may be occasions when employees would benefit from peer support in circumstances where complex work is being undertaken which impacts upon a number of staff and there are obvious benefits to time being allocated to shared debriefing and support.

5. Frequency and Duration

The frequency of supervision should take into account the role, responsibilities, experience and needs of the staff member. In addition, when agreeing supervision, the complexity of the work being carried out or where appropriate, the types of cases being held, should inform the agreed frequency and duration of supervision.

Supervision meetings should be scheduled during paid work time.

Part time staff should receive supervision on a pro rata basis.

Temporary and agency staff should receive supervision in the same way as permanent employees.

See Appendix 1 for table outlining minimum standards of frequency of supervision for social work service employees.

6. Individual Supervision Agreements

The purpose of the Individual Supervision Agreement (*Appendix 2*) is to establish a basis for which the supervisor and supervisee will work together during one to one supervision sessions. This establishment of “ground rules” or “safeguards” should clarify the rights and expectations on both sides to create a safe, secure and effective supervisory setting.

When establishing the Agreement the following should be discussed:-

- purpose of supervision
- frequency
- location and venue
- any specific responsibilities of supervisor and supervisee
- recording, including storage of records
- practical arrangements e.g. the process if supervision has to be cancelled and re-arranged

7. Supervision records

A record will be kept of the supervision, the recording of which will be the responsibility of the supervisor. However, during the session, the supervisee will be expected to take a note of any key actions.

The summary of discussions should be completed using the Supervision Agenda and Record proforma (*Appendix 3 & 4*).

The detail included in the supervision record is a matter of judgement for the supervisor. In general the record should be detailed enough so that the issue can be revisited, if necessary, at a later date and still be understood.

It should note both the issues discussed, detail any decisions taken and the reasons for these, and any agreed actions to be taken, by who and when.

The supervisor and supervisee will have joint ownership of ensuring the accuracy of the record.

This record should be issued to the supervisee within 2 weeks of supervision, with any amendments noted and signed by both parties. If there is any disagreement as to the content of the record this should be recorded by the supervisor.

A copy should be retained by both parties.

8. Confidentiality and Access

Whilst supervision records are confidential documents there may be occasions when the supervisor might need to discuss issues arising out of supervision with their line managers who may require access to the supervision record e.g. as a result of an investigation, self evaluation audit or as evidence in legal proceedings or inspections.

Access to supervision records should be controlled and all records locked away or password protected.

Whilst it is recognised that many staff prefer to keep records on computer systems, in the case of supervision records hard copies must be taken. This is to both safeguard the supervisor and the supervisee in the case of investigations (e.g. disciplinary or complaints) and to ensure that records are not altered in any way.

9. Storage and Retention

The Individual Supervision Agreement and the supervision records will be kept in the supervisee's file held by the supervisor or in an agreed place, in a locked cabinet. It is a matter for the supervisor what other documents are held with the supervision records, these may include a copy of the supervisee's current post application, references, annual employee development review records, copies of sickness documents and correspondence.

When the supervisee leaves the Council the records should be retained in the File Store for seven years after the staff member has left and then be shredded. The supervisee should not leave the Council taking with them any supervision records which contain case discussions.

Where a member of staff transfers to another post or section within the Council their records should be passed onto the new supervisor. Human Resource Service will retain all other relevant employee information for a period of seven years, as outlined in the Retention Schedule for Information Received or Created by Falkirk Council.

Appendix 1

Supervision frequency

	First 6 weeks of employment	Up to 6 months of employment	After 6 months of employment	Duration
Newly Qualified Social workers	weekly	fortnightly	monthly	1.5hrs
Newly appointed staff	Weekly / fortnightly *		monthly	1.5hrs
Experienced staff			monthly	1.5hrs
Team Managers			monthly	1.5hrs
Home Care Managers			monthly	1.5hrs
Residential Home Managers			monthly	1.5hrs
Service Managers			monthly	1.5hrs
SMT			monthly	1.5hrs
Staff who are acting up		fortnightly	monthly	1.5hrs

These are the minimum standards.

* Dependant upon role and responsibilities.

Individual Supervision Agreement

1. Supervision is undertaken in accordance with Falkirk Council Social Work Services Supervision Framework
2. The supervisor is
3. Supervision frequency and duration will be undertaken in accordance with the supervisees experience and role.
Supervision will be undertakenfor a duration of
4. The time and location to undertake supervision will be agreed
5. There may be instances in the absence of your supervisor that these duties may have to be undertaken by another senior member of staff.
6. Access to your supervision records may be required by Senior Managers as the result of any allegation/complaint, and the reasons for this will be explained to you at the appropriate time.
7. There will be a set agenda for the supervision. Employees will also be expected to contribute to this process by bringing their own agenda.
8. Records will be kept in individual files in a locked cupboard accessed only by the designated supervisor. You will receive a copy of the supervision record within two weeks of the session to comment on, sign and retain a copy for your own records.

Dates for Supervision

Date	Time	Venue	Purpose (e.g. Supervision/Annual Employee Development Review)

Employee:	Designation:	Date:
Supervisor:	Designation:	Date:

Supervision Agenda and Record

The following agenda provides a framework to help supervisors and supervisees to structure their discussions. These should be adjusted to meet the requirements of your service or the role of the supervisee.

- Agree agenda items at the beginning of the meeting or prior to the meeting.
- Check out how the member of staff is feeling
- Review the previous supervision notes, tasks and actions. Revise, agree new targets as required.
- Managing performance and work load update – review tasks, objectives and targets. Reflection and analysis of any specific pieces of work , particularly in identified complex areas of work. Revise, agree new targets, as required.
- Cases - recordings to be on a separate form and placed in service users case file
- Case File Audit proforma to be completed for 2 cases in each session
- Development and training
- Annual leave / TOIL / Flexi
- Personnel or employment issues including: sickness, disciplinary, grievance, capability, equality
- Health and safety
- Budgets and finance issues relevant to the service / team / unit/ tasks
- Any other business
- Date of the next meeting

For some supervisees, particularly managers, the following may also be relevant areas for discussion:-

- Corporate and developmental strategic plans
- Business plans
- Budget / finance
- Performance Indicators
- Staffing or rota issues
- Complaints and investigations
- Recruitment
- Staff performance and appraisals
- Agree setting targets and timescales for completion of work
- Monitoring work performance
- Individual and team morale and motivation
- Discussion re project or task groups
- Stakeholder and partnership issues

Staff Supervision Form

This form must be completed during each supervision session. The contents should be checked by both supervisor and supervisee and then signed by both.

Name of Supervisee.....

Job Title.....

Name of Supervisor.....

Job Title.....

Date of Supervision Session.....

Start Time..... Finish Time.....

Date of Last Supervision Session.....

If Supervision is later than agreed previously, state why?.....

.....

Sick Leave since last Supervision.....

Holiday/TOIL and/or any other leave since last Supervision.....

.....

POTENTIAL AGENDA ITEMS FOR SUPERVISION

(only some of these items will be relevant depending on the employee's post and remit)

- Review of tasks/actions from previous supervision
- Key work planning/management
- Development/Training
- Team issues
- Practice issues
- Health & Safety
- HR issues
- Budget/Finance issues
- Annual Leave/Toil/Flexi
-

- AOCB (list)

Agenda Item

Decisions and Actions

Additional notes/areas to be discussed at next Supervision Session

SIGNED

Supervisor.....

Supervisee.....

Date of next Supervision Session.....

Date of Annual Development Review.....

FALKIRK COUNCIL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES
CASE FILE AUDIT SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS
GUIDELINES

Case File Audit Self-Evaluation

The Case File Self-Evaluation Form (Appendix 4) has been developed to support a pro-active response to our need to ensure the quality of Social Work Services case file recording and casework is meeting the standards expected by our services' users and by our inspecting agency, the Care Inspectorate.

The Case File Self-Evaluation Form is to be used as a tool to audit and provide feedback on practitioner performance in key areas of case file recording; identify areas for action and improvement; highlight good practice and be collated to inform service performance and improvement planning.

Line Manager Responsibility

The Manager will select two cases from each practitioner's caseload for audit each month. The line manager will be responsible for selecting and discussing cases with practitioners. The line manager will review the case file information and record any additional comments on the proforma. The line manager is responsible for recording any improvement actions and timescales for completion. The line manager should review this by the review date set. In Children & Families and Criminal Justice only the Team/line Manager will complete the supervision record on SWIS, including some proposed actions. The completed self-evaluation form should be forwarded to the relevant Service Manager.

Proforma Analysis

On receipt of the completed proforma at Social Work Headquarters, an Excel database will be populated to record:

- The number of cases which have been audited
- A breakdown of the number of cases which have improvement actions
- Broken down by the number of improvement actions

The Service Manager will then undertake a dip sampling exercise which will be informed by the database analysis.

The outcome of that exercise will be fed back to the relevant Team Manager in supervision.

This will be presented to the Children & Families/Criminal Justice Continuous Improvement Groups on a quarterly basis, in summary form.

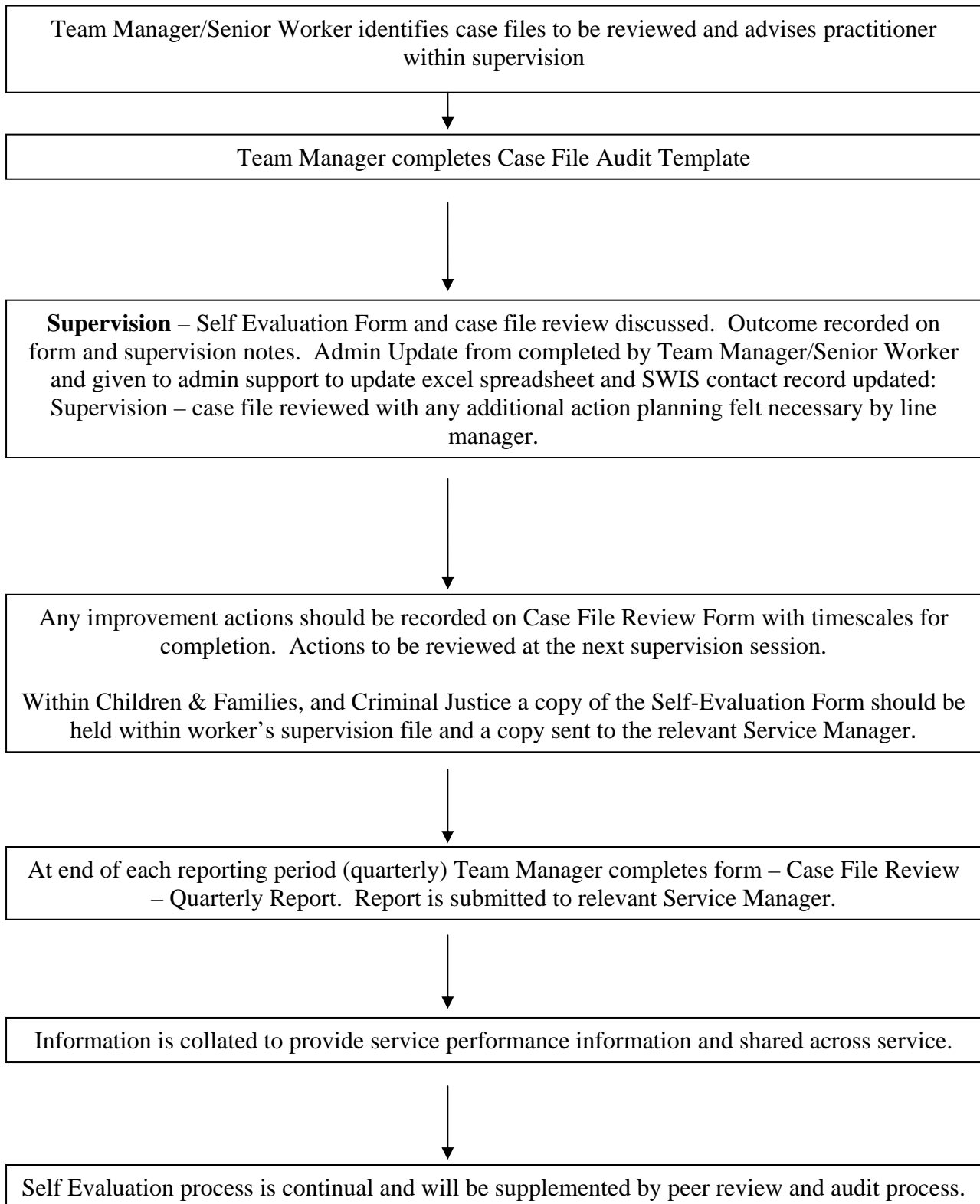
FALKIRK COUNCIL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

**CASE FILE SELF-EVALUATION FORM
FOR CHILDREN ONLY**

Service User's Name:	SWIS No.	CP/ASP Case	Yes	
			No	
Care Plan (Up-to-date within 6 months and relevant to child/young person/adult's needs/circumstances)			Yes	
			No	
Comments				
Case Recording (Up-to-date within 2 weeks)			Yes	
			No	
Comments				
Chronology		Single Agency	Yes	
		Multi-Agency	Yes	
			No	
Comments				
Risk Assessment (Up-to-date)			Yes	
			No	
Comments				
Please record any improvement action				
Care Plan		Action by Date:		
Case Recording		Action by Date:		
Chronology		Action by Date:		
Risk Assessment		Action by Date:		

Date of Review:

FALKIRK COUNCIL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES
CASE FILE SELF-EVALUATION AND AUDIT PROCESS
FLOWCHART



Appendix 5

Bibliography

- Providing effective supervision
Skills for care & CWDC July 2007
- Falkirk Council – SW Services Residential care Homes -Statement of Supervision
March 2010
- Edinburgh Social Work and Social Care Supervision Policy March 2009
- East Lothian Department of Community Services Supervision Policy March 2006

I have received, read and understand **Falkirk Council's Social Work Services Supervision Framework** which I agree to comply with.

Date of issue of the above Framework to employee:

.....

If I do not understand any aspect of the above Framework, then I shall seek advice from my line manager.

I understand that any breach of this Framework will be viewed seriously and may result in action being taken under the Council's Disciplinary Policy and Code of Practice.

EMPLOYEE NAME :

.....

EMPLOYEE NUMBER:

.....

SIGNATURE

.....

DATE

.....

This Agreement Form is to be placed in employees personnel file with a copy issued to the employee.