



Guidance for Policy on Staff Supervision in Pre-school Services

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide preschool services with the regulatory requirements for the specific policy of Supervision (of staff), as set out by the [Child Care Act \(1991\) Early Years Service Regulations \(2016\)](#). This document sets out the core regulatory requirements as well as prompts and considerations that will support registered providers to ensure that their policy and procedures are fully developed and are reflected in the practices in their service.

The information in this document should be applied to the specific policy on Supervision and the accompanying procedures of the pre-school service. This document should be read in conjunction with the [A Practical Guide to Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Years Services](#), and the [Quality and Regulatory Framework](#).

This document is for reference only. It should not be assumed that the guidance provided is comprehensive or that it provides a definitive answer in every situation.

Further resources are available in [Appendix 1](#).

Regulatory Requirements of this Policy

Child Care Act (1991) Early Years Service Regulations (2016), Schedule 5. 1 (u)

A supervision policy, in relation to a pre-school service, means a policy specifying the manner in which employees, unpaid workers and contractors are supervised and supported in the service in relation to their work practices.

2.0 Core Policy Requirements

A Policy Statement is recommended in this policy, alongside the core requirements as set out further in this document. The policy statement should make clear that supervision, support and appraisals are core elements of staff development, and that quality support and improvement processes and structures for all team members, paid or unpaid are in place.

Requirement 1

The policy states that employees, unpaid workers, contractors and trainees where appropriate are supervised and supported in the service in relation to their work practices.

Prompts and considerations (not an exhaustive list)

The policy specifies:

- (a)** What staff supervision is and its purpose, namely, to provide support, guidance and oversight to staff, to review and manage workload and responsibilities, and to foster and enhance professional thinking and development, learning opportunities, communication, actions and decisions, with the overall aim of improving the quality of provision in the service.
- (b)** That employees, unpaid workers and contractors (as appropriate) have access to regular supervision and support from a line manager in relation to their work practices and professional development.
- (c)** The objectives for support and/or supervision meetings between staff members and managements including the provision of:
 - Support in relation to work practices and performances
 - Clarity about role and responsibilities.
 - Support in meeting quality standards.
 - An opportunity to discuss any updates, changes or plans within or external to the service, which may affect practice.
- (d)** The procedures for:
 - probation periods
 - appraisal and performance reviews
 - mentoring/coaching (including from outside agencies)
 - information sharing and communication within the team.
- (e)** The ways in which students on placement and/or work experience are supervised and supported during their placement.

Requirement 2

The policy outlines the format, duration and frequency of supervision, including induction and ongoing supervision.

Prompts and considerations (not an exhaustive list)

The policy specifies:

- (a) The process for the supervisee and supervisor to agree the frequency, duration and format of supervision meetings.
- (b) That expectations for supervision and support are clarified and agreed during staff induction, including any additional resources required.
- (c) That there will be an agreed agenda for the meeting.
- (d) That supervision is required on an ongoing basis for all staff members.
- (e) The guidance on team meetings as an aspect of support and supervision in the service.

Requirement 3

The policy sets out what records will be kept for supervision, where the records will be stored and how long they will be kept for.

Prompts and considerations (not an exhaustive list)

The policy specifies:

- (a) The records that are required for supervision and support
- (b) The roles and responsibilities of the supervisor and supervisee in keeping written records of supervision meetings.
- (c) The procedures for recording/minute taking during the supervision session and that supervision records are kept in accordance with the requirements of legislation and regulation (including the [Preschool Regulations](#) and the [General Data Protection Regulation](#)).
- (d) The location where the records are stored is stated, and the timeframe for retention is specified in the policy.

3.0 Best practice in developing and implementing a policy on supervision.

In addition to the regulatory requirements for this policy as set out in this document, service providers can enhance the quality of practice in the implementation of the supervision policy in the service. In this section, best practice in this policy area is outlined and further information is signposted where available.

- Implementation of this policy should reflect the standards, in particular Standard 10 [Organisation](#).
- Supervision provides a dedicated time and space for 1-1 or small group reflection and discussion.
- Supervision meetings are regular and planned, typically organised over a 6-weekly cycle, or more frequently if required.
- Supervision is a core process by line managers to provide guidance and support to staff and to ensure consistency and improve the quality of their services.
- Supervision meetings should focus on children's outcomes and experiences, in addition to professional tasks, roles and responsibilities.
- Supervisors can adopt mentoring and coaching approaches to support staff, and include time for discussion of continuous professional development requirements and personal development where relevant.
- Supervision meetings should provide increased awareness of best practice and new ideas in professional knowledge.
- Supervision meetings should provide an opportunity for staff to voice their ideas and concerns and raise any professional or personal concerns.

4.0 Appendix

4.1 Supporting Information

- Aistear Siolta: [Practice Guide](#)
- Learning Hub: [Nurturing Skills](#)
- Barnardos: [Support and Supervision in Early Learning and Care](#)
- Aistear Siolta: [Practice Guide](#)
- Wicklow Childcare Committee: [To Compliance and Beyond](#)
- Linc Programme: [The Importance of Mentoring](#)
- NCN: [Mentoring](#)

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