Safeguarding Supervision Guidelines for Education Settings

This document should be read in conjunction with the Calderdale Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) Calderdale Supervision Framework, and thus recognises the multi-agency principles for the supervision of staff working with children and young people. These guidelines have been produced by the Schools Safeguarding Advisor in consultation with a working group comprising Headteachers, Designated Safeguarding Leads, School Based Social Worker, Learning Mentors and representative from partner agencies where Safeguarding Supervision is already established. Their purpose is to clarify the purpose and minimum requirements of Safeguarding Supervision within an education setting.

Supervision is well-established in a number of partner agencies, however historically supervision in education settings is non-existent. Lessons learnt from serious case reviews have proven that decision making under pressure can have tragic results, and consequently there are a number of National and Local drivers to establish Safeguarding Supervision within Calderdale education settings.

Working Together 2015 states that:

4. These organisations should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:

• a designated professional lead for safeguarding. Their role is to support other professionals in their agencies to recognise the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect. Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Professionals should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively;

Likewise in the Ofsted Schools Inspection Handbook for September 2015 it states as an outstanding feature:

• Incisive evaluation of the impact of staff's practice leads to rigorous performance management and **supervision**. Highly focused professional development improves the quality of teaching.

What should Safeguarding Supervision in Education Settings look like?

Safeguarding Supervision should:

• Be an interactive process which promotes good practice, provides support and develops knowledge and skills;
• Provide an opportunity for reflection on practice to help achieve positive outcomes for children;

- Focus on 'Signs of Safety' Model or Strengthening Families Approach;
- Use key questions to facilitate a reflective conversation.

Safeguarding Supervision is the provision of professional support and learning which enable practitioners to develop knowledge and competence. It facilitiates the practitioner to be able to take responsibility for their own practice and respond to the needs and risks presented by the children.

Supervision should therefore help those working directly in safeguarding to focus on the child and consider the processes which impact on how the practitioner recognises and responds when a child is presenting with a concern. It should help to avoid drift, maintain an element of objectivity, provide challenge and address some of the emotional impact of the work.

Safeguarding Supervision is not:

- Appraisal
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Auditing

It is therefore not essential that the Supervisor is the line manager for or sits hierarchically above the Supervisee, thus reciprocal arrangements can be used.

Supervision should be a 1:1 arrangement with a negotiated written supervision contract. The discussions should be recorded. Other types of supervision such as informal/ad-hoc or group supervision may be valuable and still exist, however whilst they may link to or inform the Safeguarding Supervision they do not replace it.

Minimum requirements for schools:
- Children to be discussed regularly should be those who are at **Early Intervention Single Assessment stage or above, thus level 3 upwards** on the Continuum of Need. There should also be some opportunity to discuss those who are sitting just below this threshold to ensure effective Early Intervention.
- Safeguarding Supervision should take place at least once every half term, clearly dependent on the number if children to be discussed and the threshold they are sitting at this may need to increase in frequency.
- Safeguarding Supervision sessions should be timetabled in advance and treated as a priority. Clearly there are many competing demands in schools, however ideally supervision needs to be considered as 'protected time'.
- Education settings need to have Safeguarding Supervision arrangements in place for at least their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their deputy DSL. This may extend to other pastoral staff where appropriate in the future.

- Responsibility for the decisions made in supervision remains with the Supervisee who is working with the child, and the accountability remains with the Headteacher of the schools the child attends.
- Education settings will need to report their Safeguarding Supervision arrangements on a quarterly basis to the Calderdale Safeguarding Child Board (CSCB) via the Schools Safeguarding Advisor. Safeguarding Supervision is also included within the Section 11 audit sent to all agencies including education settings.
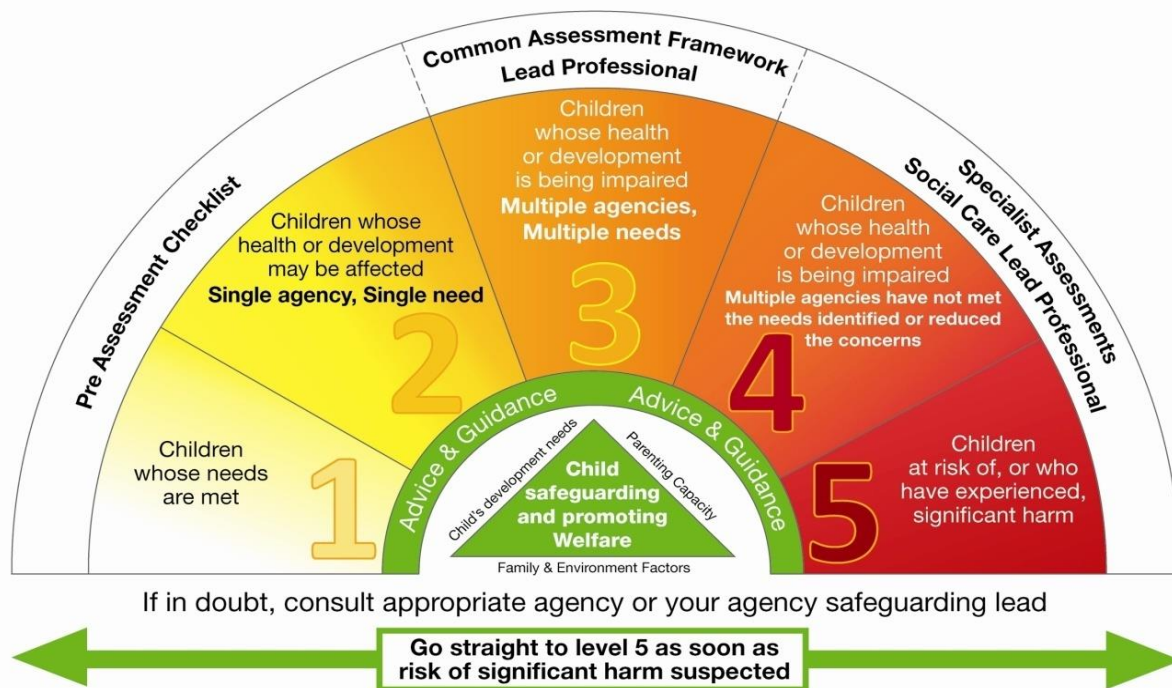
Level 1 – represents children with no identified additional need and their needs are met through accessing universal services.

Level 2 – represents children with additional needs that can be met by targeted support by a single practitioner or agency.

Level 3 – represents children with additional needs that can be met by targeted support by a multi-agency integrated support package.

Level 4 – represents children with significant additional needs that have not been met following a co-ordinated, multi-agency response and for whom significant concern remains.

Level 5 – represents children with complex needs at the highest level of vulnerability which will be met by multi-agency support from specialist services. (Social care will always be the lead professional when a child protection enquiry is necessary, s47 children act 2004).