

Wiltshire Council Supervision Order Policy December 2017

1 Overview

- 1.1 Children subject to Supervision Order require significant oversight and support. They are children whom the court have determined to have suffered significant harm in the care of their parents and as such have a particular set of needs and are especially vulnerable. This policy has been developed to ensure that the local authority suitably prioritises their needs and that there is a clear framework for practice around children subject to Supervision Orders.
- 1.2 The policy also aims to increase the understanding among partners about the significance and shared responsibility of a Supervision Order. This includes the planning, implementation and review mechanism for children subject to a Supervision Order.
- 1.3 This policy outlines the expectations of all partners with specific reference to the process for children who are subject to a Supervision Orders. This process of planning and review is set out and all agencies will take up membership of a network around the child to oversee and contribute to the effectiveness of the Supervision Order as required (see 6.1).

2 Legal Framework (Children Act 1989, section 31)

- 2.1 An application for a Supervision Order will usually be made for a child as a result of an application by the local authority for a Care Order, however the local authority may also make application for a Supervision Order in its own right or the order may be made following a set of private law proceedings. It is of note that a number of Supervision Orders have been made alongside the making of Special Guardianship Orders in recent years.
- 2.2 When a child is the subject of a Supervision Order this means that the court has made a 'finding' that the child has suffered significant harm or is likely to have suffered significant harm and this is attributable to the care they have received.
- 2.3 A Supervision Order can be made for up to 12 months, which can then also be extended upon application for up to three years if the court consider this necessary and proportionate.
- 2.4 A Supervision Order gives the local authority three specific duties:
 - To advise, assist and befriend the child
 - To take all reasonable steps to see that the order is given effect

- To consider whether to apply for a variation or discharge of the order where it is not being wholly complied with or the authority considers that the order may no longer be necessary.

2.5 The Supervision Order is made in respect of the “named child”, not those who care for him or her.

2.6 The local authority does not have Parental Responsibility nor do they share this under a Supervision Order.

3 Directions, Requirements and Conditions

3.1 The local authority must ensure that the court attaches adequate measures / conditions to the supervision order that will enable the local authority to adequately safeguard the child.

3.2 It must be considered as to whether it is appropriate to:

- Include any directions to the supervised child (see below); or
- Attach requirements to the interim / final supervision order in relation to an adult; or
- Attach requirements regarding psychiatric or medical examination of the child

3.3 Directions to the supervised child may entail:

- Direction to live in a specified place and / or for a specified period
- Direction for the child to present him / her self to a named person and specific place and time (CAMHS, social work meetings, etc)
- To participate in activities on particular days

3.4 The local authority has the power to enforce directions, but only directions that are made by the court at the time the order is granted. The local authority cannot attach new directions/conditions to the order.

4 Notification

4.1 The allocated social worker must inform all relevant professionals that the child has been made subject of a supervision order or interim supervision order at the first available opportunity.

4.2 The allocated social worker must ensure that all relevant professionals are aware of the requirements of the supervision order and that a finding of significant harm has been made in respect of the child subject to the order.

5 Planning and Review

5.1 Wiltshire Council is of the view that children subject to Supervision Orders should require a similar level of planning, monitoring and review as children subject to child protection planning and/or Care Orders. It is

to be noted however that where the local authority's care plan was not for a Supervision Order, particularly in cases where a Special Guardianship Order has also been made, the local authority will adopt a more light touch approach to the frequency of review meetings. Nevertheless as indicated below, review frequency will be set at the first review according to the needs and risks in each case.

- 5.2 The allocated social worker must manage the process via regular Supervision Order Review Meetings (SORM). The SORM is constituted and operates in the same way as a Core Group. The family/carers for the child must be invited to these meetings as must all relevant professionals involved in the child's care and support network unless there are specific risks associated. This group will be responsible for the planning, implementation and review of plans for this child.
- 5.3 The focus for the SORM will be on any risks and how these will be managed, but also what support should be in place to assist the child and family.
- 5.4 The first SORM must be chaired by a social work manager (Team Manager, Assistant Team Manager or Aspiring Manager) and must be convened within ten days of making an interim or final supervision order.
- 5.5 The first SORM meeting must make a Supervision Order plan that takes into account the court care plan and addresses any risks and relevant actions not explicitly set out in the court care plan. Tasks will be allocated to members of the SORM as appropriate. SORM members will be responsible and accountable for actions tasked to them.
- 5.6 SORMs will be held monthly for the first three months and then the frequency will be reviewed and set by the group at an agreed rate that meets the needs of the child/children. The frequency will be no less than three monthly.

6 Visiting

- 6.1 The frequency of visits may be specified in the supervision order. If not specified, the expectation is that the child must be seen, spoken to alone, and their views and wishes recorded by the allocated social worker every ten days for the first four weeks. Thereafter, the child will be seen at no less than every four weeks.
- 6.2 The frequency visits should be discussed, reviewed and agreed at each SORM. As indicated above, if the local authority care plan was not for a Supervision Order a more light touch approach to visiting will be adopted – however visiting frequency will be set at the first review in accordance with the needs and risks in the case.

6.3 The child's caregivers and home environment must be seen as part of the ongoing supervision.

6.4 All professionals involved with the child must keep appropriate records and share all relevant information promptly with the allocated social worker.

7 Extending the Supervision Order

7.1 The SORM must review the progress of the Supervision Order at least 12 weeks before it expires. A decision not to apply to extend any order must be clearly minuted with evidence as to why this is no longer necessary. This decision should be informed by an updated single assessment.

7.2 If sufficient progress has not been achieved and it is unlikely that it will be achieved without an order, following legal advice, an extension must be applied for if it is in the child's best interests.

8 Returning to Court

8.1 If there are concerns that the child continues to be at risk of significant harm, or is believed to be at risk of new and significant harm at any point during the progress of the supervision order, consideration must be given to convening:

- A strategy meeting with a view to conducting a section 47 investigation; and / or
- A legal planning meeting to decide whether it is appropriate to return to court in order to either vary the order to apply for an Emergency Protection Order / Care Order.

8.2 Multi-agency partners will be expected to support and contribute to any child protection action, care planning and provision of services as necessary.

8.3 Only in exceptional circumstances should a child be subject to a child protection plan whilst subject to a supervision order. Where a decision is made to hold a child protection conference in respect to a child who is subject to a supervision order, a clear rationale should be recorded by the Team Manager on the child's record as to why this is necessary and whether the team have considered returning the matter to court.

9 **Ending the Supervision Order**

- 9.1 If sufficient progress has been made the Supervision Order can be allowed to lapse. This decision must be minuted and evidenced as part of the SORM.

HD
01.12.2017