



Children's Safeguarding and Family Help

Supervision orders: practice guidance for social workers

1 Introduction and purpose

This document sets out the procedures for social workers in the management of cases where a Supervision Order is being sought and/or has been granted. The document should be read together with the *Care and supervision proceedings and Public Law Outline* policy. [Care and Supervision Proceedings and the Public Law Outline](#)

This document provides guidance for CSFH practitioners on the following:

- seeking a supervision order within care proceedings
- working with families and the professional network
- drawing up, implementing and reviewing supervision support plans.

2 Information on supervision orders

- Supervision orders are a court order made under the Children Act 1989 within care proceedings where a care order is not granted and where:
 - the court feels the child should remain or return home but will need support
 - the local authority needs to “advise, assist and befriend” the child and provide support to the family in order to bring about positive change
 - making an order is better for the child than not making the order
 - it benefits the child and their family if the order is made to supervise the child in the community.
- The threshold for granting a supervision order is that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and this is attributable to the care they are receiving or the child is beyond parental control.
- The order requires the local authority to provide support for the child through specific actions and directions that the child must comply with, including:
 - living at a specific address
 - taking part in specified activities
 - reporting to a particular place at a specific time.
- The order will be in force for one year initially but can be extended to up to 3 years. Local authorities do not obtain parental responsibility under a supervision order.

3 Application for a supervision order

- Camden does not generally seek a supervision order within care proceedings but the court may judge that a supervision order is the best outcome of proceedings. Where it becomes apparent that the court believes the child should remain or return home and is looking to make a supervision order rather than a care order, Camden will be directed to file a supervision support plan at the end of proceedings and will be given a timescale for achieving this.
- The social worker/team manager should convene a legal planning meeting to discuss the application and at the final evidence meeting, once all assessments have been completed and the final statement is being drafted, the final version of the support plan must be agreed and filed with the final statement as proceedings are coming to an end as directed by the court.

4 The supervision support plan

Supervision support plans filed at court must be in the format as available at: [plwg-supervision-order-plan.docx](#)

When drawing up a supervision support plan, practitioners must ensure that the following principles are addressed:

Partnership and co-production with children and families

There should be evidence of co-working with families to produce the supervision order plan ensuring any support being offered is clearly identified and understood by families and that there has been exploration of the support that can be offered by the family's network.

- Social workers must work in partnership with families to co-produce the plan and reach agreement on the nature of the support to be offered so it is clear to families what they can expect from Camden and equally that families know what is expected of them in terms of complying with the supervision order.
- A meeting must take place with the family to plan support that will be offered by the extended family network. It is an expectation that a Family Group Conference (FGC) will have been held prior to care proceedings commencing but it is essential that a further FGC is held within 3 months of the making of the supervision order and before the first review in order to measure progress on implementation.

Multi-agency, multi-disciplinary working

The involvement of other agencies in delivering the plan should be clear with information on how the process of multi-agency working is supported.

- A multi-agency planning meeting should take place to consult with agencies on what support is needed and clarify what support and services will be provided by partner agencies in order to meet the concerns that arose during proceedings.
- Partner agencies should be consulted on the final draft of the support plan prior to filing at court.

Clear, tailored plans

- The plan should be individualised to the child's needs and describe how they will be safeguarded and their needs met whilst remaining living at home, with details of the services to be provided and which agencies are responsible.
- The plan must address the concerns and issues arising from proceedings and indicate how any risks will be managed. There should be clear outcomes with timescales and it should be clear how progress will be measured and monitored.
- The plan should include any support that will be provided from the extended family and community. Where another agency will be involved in delivering services and support, for example health or CAMHS, this must be clearly described in the plan.
- Social workers and supervisors can use the self-audit tool and thinking tool to help them meet best practice standards in relation to supervision support plans available in the Best Practice Guide available at: [April 2023 Report \(Supervision Orders\) - Final \(judiciary.uk\)](https://www.judiciary.uk)

Resource clarity

Any resources and funding that are to form part of the supervision order plan to support the family must be clearly evidenced and in place before the plan is finalised with the court.

- It is essential that all parties understand what resources and funding will be put in place in support of the plan before the plan is filed.
- Any resources to be provided should be agreed at the Access to Resources panel and advice should be taken from the Resource Team and CAMHS with regard to suitable resources that may be available. All services and support must be in place once the order comes into force.

Supervision orders

- Changes to any provision of support must be discussed with parents in the first instance and confirmed in the updated plan giving reasons following review.

Formal, robust review

The review framework must be robust and clearly detailed in the plan before proceedings conclude. See Section 6 for details on how plans will be reviewed.

Accountability

The following information should be available to the court and all parties:

- How information on the details of the plan and the outcome of any review outcome will be shared with parents and children.
- The process for families to make complaints or representations or raise concerns (including named officers) - see section 8
- How these will be dealt with included timescales.
- The process Camden will follow if there are concerns about progress under the plan (ie; escalation/contingency) - see sections 5 & 6

5 Management and escalation of cases

- Cases where a supervision order is in force will be managed under child in need procedures unless there are high levels of concern and it is thought the child may be at risk of significant harm. These cases will be managed under child protection procedures.
- A strategy meeting should be held for any case where significant harm thresholds may be met; this may be at the beginning of the order, following a review or at any point where risk escalates.
- Each plan should have a contingency plan as to what will happen if there is no progress in implementing the plan or outcomes are not being achieved and should describe the circumstances under which the case can be escalated.
- Cases should be escalated following a decision by the review via a Legal Planning meeting and referral to the Care Pathways panel for a decision on instigating care proceedings.

6 Reviewing the plan

- Reviews of supervision plans should be held:
 - One month after the order is granted (in order to ensure it is being implemented and make any changes required).
 - Then every 3 months for the duration of the order to check progress.
- The first review held after the order is granted and the last review held before the order lapses must be chaired by an IRO or CPO:
 - If the child was previously looked after their allocated IRO should chair reviews.
 - If the child was subject to a child protection plan the CPO who chaired the conferences should chair the review.
 - Otherwise the IRO service manager will allocate an IRO/CPO on the basis of availability or through the IRO/CPO link to the team to which the child is allocated.
- All other reviews should be chaired by the relevant team manager.
- It is important that parents and children over the age of 4 are enabled and encouraged to attend and actively participate. Children's views must be obtained by social workers in a manner that is consistent with their age and understanding.
- Parents and children should be consulted on arrangements for reviews and which professionals should attend in order to encourage their participation with advocacy representation arranged so that they are able to fully participate in meetings.
- The first review should ensure that all resources and packages of support are in place and subsequent reviews should monitor progress and outcomes against the stated goals.
- The chair is responsible for ensuring there is clear documentation to note what was discussed and agreed in the review and that is shared with all participants. The process should be clearly recorded on the MOSAIC workflow.
- Information about the review framework must be clearly detailed in the supervision support plan before proceedings conclude.

7 Ending a supervision order

- Where the duration of a supervision order is 12 months, the review must decide at least 3 months (preferably 4 months) prior to expiration of the order on whether or not to apply to the court for a further supervision order before the expiration of the order.
- Where the duration of a supervision order is less than 12 months, this decision must be made at a review at least 2 months (or preferably 3 months) before the order expires.
- The review Chair should notify the Legal Proceedings and Case Progression Service Manager of any decisions made at these reviews within 7 days of the meeting.
- A legal planning meeting should be convened at least 1-2 months before the order expires to consider options for the next steps which may be:
 - applying for a further order
 - continuing to manage the case as a CIN case
 - stepping up to child protection procedures
 - closing the case and where appropriate stepping down to Early Help.

8 Complaints and representations

Where parents are unhappy about the implementation of the plan or the support and resources available they should be advised to use Camden's children's complaints system with matter raised with the social worker and/or review chair in the first instance.

9 Quality assurance processes

- The Legal Proceedings and Case Progression manager will keep track of all supervision orders open to Camden.
- The quality of practice and implementation of support plans will be overseen by the chair of the review.
- Cases involving supervision orders will be incorporated into the CSFH audit framework to monitor effectiveness of practice and outcomes.
- The courts are responsible for the quality of supervision support plans.