

QUESTION

Q Are staff supervision meetings compulsory?

A The new EYFS requires each member of staff to have appropriate supervision meetings with a member of the management team. These supervision meetings are part of the ongoing supervision and monitoring process that happens in nurseries on a daily basis in a variety of forms. This new requirement for individual supervision meetings has been informed by serious case reviews, such as the Plymouth Serious Case Review, and research into the impact of staff qualifications and knowledge on children's development and progress.

You must also remember to make arrangements for supervision meetings for the nursery manager; this could be with the nursery owner, the chair of the management committee or, if appropriate, with a member of the local authority early years team.

Q What are the aims of supervision meetings?

A Supervision in a nursery is ongoing and takes many forms. This new requirement for supervision meetings is to provide further opportunities for practitioners to discuss the children's progress and development, their own progress, any support or training they may need and any sensitive issues they may need support with.

The EYFS sets out the aims of individual supervisions. They...

- Provide support to members of staff.
- Give opportunity for practitioners to discuss concerns/sensitive issues.
- Identify strengths and areas for development.
- Identify coaching and mentoring needs.
- Highlight training needs.

Q Who should conduct supervision meetings?

A The manager does not always have to be the person who carries out the supervision meetings. It

time



find out more

Free member factsheet 'Manager's guide to supervision', available at ndna.org.uk/factsheets

NDNA Early Years Development Zone course 'Managing performance through effective appraisal'. Visit www.ndna.org.uk/development-zone

'Your essential guide to leadership and management'. Visit www.ndna.org.uk/publications

The new requirement for supervision gives managers an opportunity to...

- Support staff members with their development needs.
- Provide mentoring and coaching options.
- Share successes.
- Identify any children who need support.
- Discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Support staff members with their own self-reflection.
- Ensure issues/problems are solved.
- Build trusting relationships that provide a culture of information sharing.

may be that room leaders can do their own room, or the deputy manager could do some. It is important that your supervisions are structured to provide discussion around staff development and support and any sensitive issues and concerns affecting team members. You should try to ensure that whoever is carrying out the supervision has had appropriate training and has a good relationship with the supervisee.



Fiona Bland, early years adviser at National Day Nurseries Association, explains how to get the most out of staff supervision meetings...

Q How can I get the most out of supervision meetings?

A To ensure that your staff are involved in the supervision process you should enable them to have a shared responsibility for supervision meetings. Both parties should be filling out any supervision forms/paperwork prior to the meeting in order to get their thoughts and ideas on paper. This will save time during the meeting and will ensure a more productive and focused meeting.

Supervision offers the opportunities to discuss issues such as...

- What has the staff member enjoyed most/least since the last supervision meeting?
- The staff member's relationship with key children and their parents.
- Are there any areas of work they need support with?
- Date of next meeting and actions to be completed before the next meeting.

Supervision meetings are likely to identify development needs. External training may not always be the best option for supporting your team. There may be a lack of finance to support training, or not enough time, or you may be unable to provide staff cover. Assigning a mentor or coach may be a more beneficial and cost effective way to provide support to practitioners.

Mentoring is linked with professional and career development and is somewhat characterised by an 'expert-novice' relationship (for example, you might invite an experienced member of your staff team to mentor a new member of your team in developing activities for your forest school planning). Coaching is defined with a narrower remit than mentoring and relates to specific areas of performance and job outcomes.