



Policy on Staff Support and Supervision and appraisal procedures

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1. Purpose of Support and Supervision

Mohill Family Support Centre recognises its responsibility to ensure that all employees have access to regular support and supervision, including annual performance appraisals. All employees are expected to participate fully in on-going support and supervision which promotes:

- Excellence and effectiveness in performance;
- Co-operation and collective responsibility;
- Professional relationships and a team approach;
- On-going learning and reflective practice.

Supervision involves a regular, structured opportunity for employees to discuss their work. It involves planning, evaluating progress and achievements, reflecting on issues and challenges, making decisions and identifying development opportunities. It specifically aims to:

- Monitor and evaluate the employee's performance and ensure accountability of employees to the Centre;
- Give specific feedback to employees;
- Ensure good lines of communication between the employee, the Directors/Trustees and other employees;
- Discuss difficulties and sources of conflict, support the employee(s) to address them in a constructive manner and explore alternative ways of dealing with recurring problems;
- Help the employee manage their workload;
- Identify training and development needs;
- Plan and set realistic targets and prioritise the work;



- Provide a structured opportunity to discuss how the employee feels they are progressing in their work and to receive positive and constructive feedback from the Line Manager in relation to same;
- Facilitate communication and mutual understanding.

2. Support and Supervision Structures

2.1 Level of supervision provided

There are a number of structures within Mohill Family Support Centre to ensure that employees are supported and their work is supervised. These include:

- An informal open-door policy by the Coordinator to address emerging support needs;
- Regular and formal support and supervision meetings with individual employees;
- Annual appraisal procedures;
- Regular team meetings;
- Quarterly Staff liaison committee meetings (where Coordinator reports on overall employee relationships and performance within the Centre);
- Quarterly reports from the Staff liaison committee to the Board of Directors /Trustees;
- Access to external support should it be required and subject to funding.



2.2 Who carries out support and supervision?

The Board of Directors/Trustees delegates the role of supervision and support to the Staff Liaison committee which ensures that the appropriate structures are in place as follows:

- Two members of the Staff Liaison committee provide support and supervision for the Coordinator;
- The Coordinator is responsible for providing support and supervision for all other employees;

Access to the Staff Liaison committee:

Employees can access their employer through the Staffing Staff Liaison committee as follows:

- At Annual appraisals whereby a member of the Staff Liaison committee will carry out annual appraisals alongside the Coordinator;
- An employee may request a meeting with the Staff Liaison committee if they have concerns, they feel are not being addressed through their regular support and supervision sessions. This must be undertaken in the context of the Grievance Procedures which enables employees to express any problems or concerns they may have in relation to their employment and / or work.



2.3 Frequency of Supervision sessions

The frequency of supervision sessions depends on the length of time the employee has been employed:

- During induction there may be frequent informal check-ins and meetings;
- During the probationary period formal support and supervision meetings may be weekly or every 2 weeks or monthly depending on the individual employee's needs;
- For longer term employees formal support and supervision meetings are provided every 4-6 weeks.

Access to External Supervision

Access to external support and supervision depends on resources. The Centre acknowledges that external support is particularly important in situations where:

- Members of the Staff Liaison committee /Board of Directors/Trustees do not have the skills, experience or confidence to provide appropriate support and supervision for the Coordinator (who provides support and supervision for other employees);
- There are unforeseen circumstances and an employee requires particular support for a period of time;
- The nature of the work is particularly challenging and stressful.



If external support is funded by the FSC, the Centre reserves the right to seek value for money, check the bona fides of the supervisor and ensure that there is no potential conflict of interest. The Centre will also seek agreement on limits to confidentiality and reporting on progress.

2.4 Supervision Contract (see APPENDIX 1 for sample)

Mohill Family Support Centre aims to provide a positive experience for staff in the process of carrying out support and supervision. This includes the Centre's commitment to equality, dignity in the workplace and non-oppressive practices.

The supervision contract will be in keeping with Mohill Family Support Centre's overall Vision, Objectives, Strategic Plan and Supervision Policy and adhere to the following headings:

- Content
- Boundaries i.e. what can/cannot be discussed;
- Confidentiality and maintaining of records – how confidentiality will be guaranteed at all times and responsibility of both parties;
- Duration and frequency of sessions i.e. how often and how long;
- Methods of dealing with issues arising, for example disagreement, conflict, breakdown in the working relationship;
- Evaluation Process
- Communication of content i.e. what gets 'fed-back' to other staff / the Staff Liaison committee / the Board of Directors/ Trustees etc.



Main content of meetings

The content of support and supervision meetings will be based on the following:

- Issues arising and achievements in relation to the progression of the employee's key areas of work;
- Completion of actions agreed at previous supervision meeting;
- Future priorities and plans;
- Any training needs identified;
- Any issues to be fed-back to other employees / Staff Liaison committee /Board of Directors/Trustees;
- Any grievance or disciplinary issues arising.



2.5 Confidentiality

Mohill Family Support Centre is committed to maintaining confidentiality within the context of support and supervision meetings. This will be maintained as follows:

- Any person with a designated responsibility for supervising staff within the Centre will maintain confidentiality with regard to supervision meetings. Feedback to the Staff Liaison committee / Directors/Trustees or other staff will be based on what was agreed with each member of staff within the supervision setting. However, should a disciplinary or grievance issue arise, or it is considered that there is a serious breach of conduct, this information will need to be related to the Staff Liaison committee / Directors/Trustees. (See Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures in Employee Handbook).
- The 'supervisee' will also be expected to maintain confidentiality in relation to supervision meetings and only discuss with others what has been agreed between themselves and their Coordinator.



2.6 Keeping records

Keeping records will be undertaken as follows:

- Both the Coordinator and employee will agree as to what is recorded during a supervision meeting;
- Records will be kept in the employees HR File in a confidential setting;
- All workers can have access their files and to have a copy.

3. Appraisal structure /Meeting

3.1 Carrying out appraisals

Mohill Family Support Centre is also committed to providing employees with a formal appraisal process. Appraisals are a specific tool in the overall role of providing supervision and support for employees. They are different to regular Supervision in that they take an overview of the employee's work over a 12–18-month period and they do not focus on day-to-day issues.

An appraisal is a joint assessment by the person being appraised (the employee) and the appraisers of how the employee is doing in the job and provides an opportunity to agree any changes to support them to develop further in their role in terms of: training, support, supervision, opportunities for development, increased or decreased responsibility, and amendments to the job description, if applicable.



The appraisal structure within Mohill Family Support Centre is as follows:

- Two members of the Staff Liaison committee will provide an Appraisal for the Coordinator;
- The Coordinator and a member of the Staff Liaison committee / will carry out Appraisals with other staff;

3.2 Content of appraisal meetings

The content of appraisal meetings will be:

- Review issues arising in support and supervision meetings throughout previous period;
- Take an overview of the work and a longer-term approach to the development of the employee;
- Validate the employee and acknowledges strengths and skills in the work;
- Identify gaps in skills and knowledge and explores how this might be addressed through training or other supports;
- Review the support and supervision structure;
- Hear from the employee as to how other structures and policies of the Centre might be improved.



3.3 Appraisals during probationary period

The probationary period for new employees lasts for 6 months. The employee will expect to receive a formal appraisal at 3 and 5 months to ensure that the employee fully understands their role and to deal with any problems arising in work performance prior to a long-term contract being offered.

The probationary period may be extended for an additional 3 months to give some additional time to address issues.



4. How difficulties will be dealt with

4.1 Issues relating to grievance / disciplinary:

In the event of difficulties arising between the Coordinator and the employee in relation to industrial relations, terms and conditions, or grievance and disciplinary issues, the Staff Liaison committee will be informed. This can either be through the Coordinator or by both parties as agreed at the supervision meeting (See Employee Handbook).

In dealing with the issues arising the Staff Liaison committee will need to implement the Centre's Grievance or Disciplinary procedures as appropriate and inform the Board of Directors/Trustees.

4.2 Issues relating to inter-personal problems:

In the event of difficulties arising between both parties that may relate to inter-personal issues, one or both parties could request help or mediation from a neutral third party (If this is required the Staff Liaison committee will be informed as it may have resource implications).

Both parties must agree who the neutral person should be. Possible third-party mediation could come from the Staff Liaison committee and or Directors/Trustees, from the Human Resources company or consultant.

Should the issues not be resolvable through mediation, the Staff Liaison committee may have to provide arbitration and make decisions as to what happens to resolve the difficulties.



Clarification of mediation and arbitration:

A mediator is an impartial external person who facilitates the process of both parties reaching their own agreement.

An arbitrator is an impartial external person who sets out to facilitate the process of both parties reaching agreement, but in the absence of an agreement being reached the arbitrator makes a decision that both parties will agree to.

5. Evaluation

Evaluation of the support and supervision meetings will take place through the annual appraisal procedures.



APPENDIX 1: Support & Supervision Contract

1. CONTENT OF MEETINGS:

The content of meetings shall include:

- Issues arising which may block progression of key areas of designated work allocated to each worker through their Job Description;
- Actions for employee / Coordinator agreed at previous supervision meeting;
- Any training needs identified;
- Issues to be fed back to the:
 - Directors/Trustees
 - Staff Liaison Committee
- Any grievance or disciplinary issues arising.
- Other

2. Confidentiality:

Any person with a designated responsibility for supervising staff within the Centre will maintain confidentiality with regard to support and supervision meetings.

Feedback to the Staff Liaison committee / Directors/Trustees or other staff will be based on what was agreed with each worker within the supervision setting.



However, should a disciplinary or grievance issue arise or it is considered that there is a serious breach of conduct this information will need to be related to the Staff Liaison committee / Directors/Trustees

The employee will also maintain confidentiality in relation to supervision meetings and only discuss with others what has been agreed between themselves and their Coordinator.

3. Duration and Frequency of Sessions.

In Probationary period

- Every week in the first month;
- Every two weeks in the second and third months;
- Every month in the final 3 months.

Post probationary period

- Every four to six weeks depending on need.



4. Methods of Dealing with Conflict

Issues relating to grievance / disciplinary:

In the event of difficulties arising between the Coordinator and employee in relation to industrial relations, terms and conditions or grievance and disciplinary issues the Staff liaison committee will need to be informed. This can either be through the Coordinator or by both parties as agreed at the supervision meeting.

(See Employee Handbook).

In dealing with the issues arising the Staff Liaison committee will need to implement the Centres grievance or disciplinary procedures as appropriate and inform the Board of Directors/ Trustees.

Issues relating to inter-personal problems:

In the event of difficulties arising between both parties that may relate to inter-personal issues, one or both parties could request help or mediation from a neutral third party. (If this is required the staff liaison committee should be informed as it may have resource implications).

Both parties must agree who the neutral person should be. Possible third-party mediation could come from the staff liaison committee/Directors/Trustees, HR Company, HR Consultant or from Tusla Child and Family Agency.

Should the issues not be resolvable through mediation the Staff liaison committee may have to provide arbitration and make decisions as to what happens to resolve the difficulties?



5. EVALUATION

Through the annual appraisal procedures.

Signed by Employee: _____

Signed by Line Manager: _____

Date: _____



Appendix 2: Sample Support and Supervision Record Sheet

Name of Coordinator: _____

Name of Employee: _____

1). Issues to be discussed in relation to the Job Description / Workplan

What is going well?	Current struggles/issues



2). Any actions agreed to be taken:

By Line Manager	By Employee:

3). Any training needs or additional support identified:



4). Any issues to be fed back to the Directors/Trustees:

5). Any issues to be fed back to the Staff liaison Committee:

6). Any issues to be discussed with other staff

7). Outstanding issues for discussion at next supervision meeting:

Signed by Coordinator: _____

Signed by Employee: _____

Date: _____