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A Mixed-methods Exploration of the Implementation of Supervision in Educational Settings.

By: Claire Lawrie

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Supervised By: Dr Anna Weighall and Dr Aisha McLean

The University of Sheffield School of Education

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Abstract

National data shows declining staff wellbeing (SEND Digest, 2025) and difficulties with staff retention (McLean et al., 2024), suggesting a need to further explore ways in which staff can be supported. Previous research suggests that supervision in schools has capacity building potential through by building on strengths and support (Bainbridge, 2020) and school-wide strategic support (Carroll et al., 2020) as well as overcoming challenges such as protecting time, staff shortages, finding a safe space and cost (Lawrence, 2020).

This research used a critical realist lens to explore the implementation of supervision within a local authority in the North of England, taking into consideration perceived enabling factors and barriers to implementation. A mixed methods design was used to explore the views of Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENDCos), Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and Senior Leaders across mainstream and specialist primary and secondary schools within one local authority. Quantitative data was collected through an online survey which received 29 participant responses and qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 7 participants.

Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA, Braun & Clarke, 2021) was used to draw out themes across all interviews. Four key themes were identified across the data: Structure, Purpose, Enabling Factors and Barriers. Enabling Factors and Barriers were explored within the subthemes of Personal Factors, Relational Factors, Systemic Factors and Awareness. Key findings suggested that supervision is still an emerging practice within educational settings in this local authority and has perceived benefits when implemented consistently.

Using the Theoretical Domains Framework (Cane et al., 2012), the study explores naturally occurring implementation of supervision and identifies recommendations and considerations for local authorities, schools and Educational Psychologists. This research adds to the current literature around supervisory practices in schools and argues that supervision should be considered as a mechanism for supporting staff wellbeing and professional development.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will provide an overview of my own background and context in relation to the research topic. I will then consider the research rationale and aims in relation to my background and the wider context. Finally, I will provide a short overview of how the thesis is presented to the reader.

1.2 Background and Context

Within my previous roles as Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo), Assistant Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, I encountered challenging situations daily. I regularly supported young people with complex needs and, although working with a supportive mainstream primary school, felt that I was often making decisions in isolation with little opportunity to reflect within a protected space. On starting the Educational Psychology Doctorate, I had heard little about supervision and had limited understanding of the theory, models or benefits that it could have within any role. As I began to experience supervision, I began to reflect on and observe how beneficial it would have been to me in my previous roles.

From speaking to colleagues, it appeared that Educational Psychologists were keen to offer supervision to schools and had some take up on their supervision training offer, but there appeared to be limited experience across the local authority. The more conversations I had with SENDCos and Senior Leaders in school, the more I felt supervision may be beneficial to support them in managing the complexities they were facing. National data shows declining staff wellbeing (Evans et al., 2018, SEND Digest, 2025) and difficulties with staff retention (McLean et al., 2024, NFER, 2024), suggesting a need to further explore ways in which staff can be supported.

The literature presents varying definitions of supervision but, for the purpose of this study, Morrison's adapted (2005) definition (Sturt & Rowe, 2018) was used within the data collection process to ensure participant understanding of supervision (see Chapter 2 for full definition). Currently, there is no formalised government guidance or policy on supervision in educational settings. While the Department for Education (DfE, 2023a) makes reference to supervision to support the role of Designated Safeguarding Leads, there is no expansion on how or what this should look like. Local authorities have begun to produce documentation in relation to this, but this is inconsistent across authorities. The literature suggests that

supervision in schools improves wellbeing and confidence (Reid & Soan, 2019), enhances practice and decision making (McGhee & Stark, 2021) and allows for prioritisation of emotional needs (Hurry & Russell, 2022; Forrest, 2024). Barriers identified often mirror those noted in other professions such as lack of time and space, poor supervision leading to negative experiences and systemic constraints such as funding (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010; Lawrence, 2020).

While the literature is beginning to create a picture of why supervision may be beneficial in schools, I feel there is still further need for greater clarity around how this may look in educational settings.

1.3 Research Rationale and Aims

Much of the research around supervision in schools has stemmed from evaluations of researcher-led supervision which has been purposely introduced to schools as part of the research itself (Forrest, 2024). The current research aimed to explore the current experiences of supervision within educational settings in a local authority in the North of England, taking into account familiarity, regularity and structure of supervision. It also aimed to explore ways that schools have been able to implement supervision and draw out examples of how barriers have been able to be overcome. The research hoped to draw out practical recommendations for policy makers, School Leaders and Educational Psychologists with the hope that supervision will be implemented more widely within the local authority as a mechanism to support educational staff fulfil their roles and manage their wellbeing.

The research explored the following research questions:

- What is the current picture of supervision in schools across the local authority?
- Is there a discrepancy between the desire for and the actual implementation of supervision in schools?
- What has helped schools to be able to implement supervision?
- How have barriers to implementing supervision been overcome?

The challenges educational staff face is of direct relevance to the Educational Psychologists who are supporting these staff. Therefore, this research is particularly relevant to Educational Psychologists to increase awareness of how supervision may look within the schools they are supporting and whether they have a role to play in implementing this

process. The local authority in this research offers a training package on supervision as part of their traded offer. Despite Educational Psychologists reporting that SENDCos are describing increasing challenges, there has been limited uptake on the training. Therefore, it would be beneficial to understand adaptations that may be needed to make the training more accessible to schools.

Since starting this thesis, the government has also released a white paper addressing the support for pupils with Special Educational Needs (DfE, 2026). Although this does not mention supervision, '*Chapter 5: Support and investment in high-quality staff*' highlights the need to address reasons why many leave the profession because of increased workload pressures which mirrors the suggestion that staff are facing increased complexities within their role.

The limitations of the research are considered, and it is acknowledged that, as the findings are from one local authority, caution should be applied when generalising the findings and may not represent the views and experiences of educational staff in other local authorities. It is also acknowledged that this data captures the views of only a small proportion of the schools across the local authority.

1.4 Outline of Thesis

This thesis will begin by exploring the previous literature relating to supervision in schools and the helping professions, considering theory, research and current policy. It will then outline the chosen methodology followed by details of the procedures relating to data collection. Both quantitative and qualitative findings will then be presented within the findings chapter. These findings are then discussed in the Interpretation and Discussion in light of previous literature and current context. Finally, implications of the research will be considered regarding local authorities, school settings and Educational Psychologists specifically.

1.5 Reflective Boxes

Shaw (2010) suggests that, as researchers, there is great responsibility in how we make sense of stories and experiences in order to effect change. Reflexivity allows researchers to recognise their own thoughts and feelings and consider how these may interact with the research process.

In order to embed a reflexive process within this research, I made use of supervision with my research supervisor and fieldwork supervisor, peer supervision with other trainee Educational Psychologists and through making note of my reflections within a research diary. I have incorporated extracts from my diary throughout the thesis as well as including comments on the analysis as a way of sharing how my own experiences and views may have influenced the research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

In this chapter, I will aim to situate supervision in schools within the current context of education and current understanding of supervision in education. To do this, I will explore the definitions, functions and models of supervision and their application within helping professions. I will then consider current policy and guidance around supervision in schools and research relating to experiences of supervision to date. I will explore research around the perceived benefits and barriers to supervision in schools and consider the role of the supervisor within this and the part Educational Psychologists play. Finally, I will consider how the current research aims to add to the existing literature on supervision in school.

2.2 Current Context

The demands of teachers and staff in school are ever-increasing, and the challenges faced on a day-to-day basis become increasingly complex and emotionally taxing (Hanley et al., 2019). From my experience in schools, school staff are operating within a wider socio-cultural context of high levels of accountability, increased complexity regarding individual pupil need and whole school need as well as significant emotional labour. School staff are required to evidence progress and impact across all areas of a challenging curriculum, ensure statutory and safeguarding responsibilities are met and adapt resources and ways of working to support a greater breadth of need due to limited resources in specialist settings. As a result, this can often lead to additional responsibilities, increased workload and increased emotional pressures which, in turn, can affect their own capacity to stay reflective and responsive.

School staff experience great responsibility and make hundreds of decisions in relative isolation. They are at the forefront of supporting the most vulnerable children and young people within local authorities, but unlike other professionals supporting the education and wider wellbeing of children and young people such as Social Workers, Educational Psychologists, Counsellors and Nurses, there is no agreed or formalised supervision in schools. Some teachers and other staff in schools are noticing that they have no structured framework for emotional support (Sturt & Rowe, 2018) and are recognising a need for change.

The literature suggests that the United Kingdom is currently facing increased difficulty recruiting and keeping teachers and leaders in post with 44 per cent more teachers having

intentions to leave teaching in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 (McLean et al., 2024). Findings from the Wellbeing in Secondary Education (WISE) pilot study found that, among a sample of 555 secondary school teachers, scores on the 70-point Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale were approximately four points below the average of the general working population, (Evans et al., 2018). The Teacher Wellbeing Index (Education Support, 2024) found that 77% of all staff experience symptoms of poor mental health due to work and 50% of staff consider that their organisation's culture has a negative effect on their wellbeing. SENDCo surveys suggest that more than 78% of SENDCos are considering leaving their role, highlighting workload challenges and concerns about mental health as a key driver for leaving (SEND Digest, 2025).

Research suggests that working with pupils who display challenging needs can lead to feelings of helplessness and anger (Greenhalgh, 1994) and impacts confidence and agency (Hanko, 2003). Early childhood special educators have talked about the anger and disbelief they feel when confronted with child maltreatment and how this can lead to isolation and withdrawal from others (DuBois, 2010). As schools are often best placed to offer support within communities, their offer of support often extends beyond the pupils they teach and into the families and communities in which they serve, increasing demands further. Concerns have been raised over the impact of poor wellbeing on the supply of school leadership (NAHT, 2021) and additional responsibilities negatively impacting mental health (Education Support, 2023). Blick (2019) suggests that changes need to be made at a systemic level within mission statements and policies to encourage support for the emotional nature of the experiences of teachers.

Based on this current picture, it is important to consider what is to be learned from others within the helping professions. UK psychologists have previously placed supervision as one of the top continuing professional development needs and key in, not only attracting them to jobs, but also keeping them in their jobs (Lavender & Thompson, 2000). In medical and allied health professionals, supervision was associated with increased job satisfaction, improved emotional wellbeing and less burnout (Dawson et al., 2013). Within education, workplace social support can provide a protective resource for teacher wellbeing (Kinman et al., 2011) and is positively impacted by supportive school communities and safe environments (Roffey, 2012).

Research suggests that there is a need for teachers to have opportunities for reflective practice to understand values and work through tensions (Blick, 2019) and are better equipped to attend to the needs of others if they have time to attend to their own needs Forrest (2024). While supervision alone cannot solve systemic issues such as

workload and funding, it can offer a space for school staff to reflect and problem solve away from the classroom.

2.3 What is Supervision?

2.3.1 Definitions of supervision

Even within professions with established supervision protocols, there is still variation in the definition of supervision, in part a result of it needing to reflect the context and role with which it is in. Within education, it is important to differentiate supervision from common professional development activities such as coaching and mentoring, as often educators will experience all such roles at times or even simultaneously throughout their careers.

It is important to acknowledge that there is likely to be overlap within schools with other professional supportive practices which includes consultation, coaching and mentoring. Consultation has been defined by Wagner (2000) as:

a voluntary collaborative nonsupervisory approach established to aid the functioning of a system and its inter-related systems (p.11).

Hymans (2018) suggests that:

Mentoring is a more structured, sustained relationship for supporting professional learners at the early stages of their career, through a career transition or when facing a particular challenge. For example, newly qualified teachers, supply and returning teachers or recently appointed headteachers can benefit from a mentor. The mentor is normally a more experienced colleague with knowledge of the needs and professional context of the other person. The process is usually time defined and has a significant emphasis on developing the less experienced colleague's instructional skills and classroom practice (p. 14).

Coaching is a more structured and sustained relationship to help develop a particular aspect of the professional learner's practice. It enables professional learners to review and define existing practice, to develop and extend skills, and to explore and introduce alternative strategies. It is of benefit to practitioners at any stage of their career. The coach is normally a professional who has particular expertise, but does not need specific subject knowledge, as the process focuses on the agenda of the person being coached (p. 14).

Although there are similar features across the different processes and likely that school staff may be experiencing a combination of these processes within their settings, they are not explored in detail within this literature review as it was felt that the focus should remain on the implementation of supervision specifically, in line with the research questions.

Within educational psychology, supervision is considered by many to be a psychological process focusing on personal and professional development (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010; Scaife, 2001) and improving quality of work (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020). Morrison's (2005) adapted definition (Sturt & Rowe, 2018) is drawn upon for the purpose of this research.

Supervision is a process by which one member of staff is given responsibility by the school to work with another staff member in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives, which together promote the best outcomes for students. These objectives and functions are:

1. *Competent accountable performance (managerial function)*
2. *Continuing professional development (developmental/formative function)*
3. *Personal support (supportive/restorative function)*
4. *Engaging the staff member with the school (mediation function). (P10).*

Morrison's adapted definition was chosen for this research as it was felt to give the most comprehensive account of the broad nature of supervision and provide enough detail for those who were hearing of supervision for the first time. However, it is recognised that the definition could be critiqued for its possible emphasis on the managerial function of supervision and organisational accountability which may not allow enough space to consider the deeper, reflective nature of supervision. It is also acknowledged that the definition does not emphasise the relational nature of supervision or highlight the importance of containment and psychological safety within the process. Hawkins and Shohet's (2012) definition states:

Supervision is a joint endeavour in which a practitioner, with the help of a supervisor, attends to their clients, themselves as part of their client-practitioner relationships and the wider systemic context, and by doing so improves the quality of their work, transforms their client relationships, continuously develops themselves, their practice and the wider profession (p.60).

Although this definition places a stronger emphasis on the supervisory relationship and the interaction between the supervisor and supervisee, it was felt that the use of

terminology such as 'client' could be misleading and lacked the clarity needed for those who were unfamiliar with supervisory practices in educational settings. For similar reasons, Hawkins and McMahon's (2020) definition was also not chosen.

A joint endeavour in which a practitioner, with the help of a supervisor, attends to their clients, themselves as part of their client-practitioner relationships and the wider systemic and ecological contexts, and by so doing improves the quality of their work, transforms their client relationships, continuously develops themselves, their practice and the wider profession (p.66).

Without a definitive definition of supervision, there is increased difficulty in developing school understanding of the process. Rae et al., (2017) aimed to determine how teachers in special schools understood and experienced supervision and explore the role of the Educational Psychologist in providing this. Using semi-structured interviews, they found that there appeared to be a lack of agreement in relation to what supervision looked like in their day-to-day practice and there was little understanding of the role Educational Psychologists could play in promoting wellbeing within supervision. Teachers were keen for supervision to be objective, solution-focused and confidential with opportunities to reflect, offload and feel contained whereas Educational Psychologists were less clear on their perceptions of what supervision provision should entail. This suggests that there is still work to be done in aligning a common expectation of supervision between schools and Educational Psychologists and this may be different on an individual basis.

2.3.2 Functions of Supervision

The British Psychological Society Supervision Guidelines for Psychologists (BPS, 2024) and Practice Guidelines (BPS, 2017) outline the role supervision has in maintaining quality standards of service delivery, suggesting that supervision supports the professional development and wellbeing of the supervisee as well as the children and young people they are working with.

Hawkins and Shohet (2007) found there to be three functions of supervision: developing supervisee skills and competence (educative); safeguarding (improving the quality of work) (managerial); sustaining and supporting the supervisee (supportive). The Proctor Model of supervision (Proctor, 1986) also focused on three primary functions of supervision: Normative, Formative and Restorative. The normative function of supervision provides accountability and adherence to professional standards, guidelines and policies while the formative function focuses on the development of knowledge and skills. The

restorative function is arguably the function missing within current education systems and provides space for addressing the emotional wellbeing of practitioners.

Where Educational Psychologists are supervising other professionals, the perceived functions of supervision have included providing opportunities to talk through cases, as well as receiving guidance and advice in regard to next steps (Callicott & Leadbetter, 2013). More recent evaluation documents around supervision for schools suggests:

The purpose of professional supervision is broadly to support teachers in dealing with their own wellbeing (restorative/supportive) and that of their pupils (formative/educative) through interaction with the supervisor and reflection on their practice from a psychological perspective. (Hurry & Russell, 2022, p2).

Although the purpose and benefits of supervision for the supervisee appear to be a key focus, Carrington (2004) challenged whether supervision offers just as many benefits to the supervisor themselves, with the consideration that having the dedicated time for supervision of trainees allowed her to reflect on her own habitual practices. Supervision can help supervisors recognise the effectiveness of their own work (Rae et al., 2017) as well as strengthening teacher's competencies in being able to teach and care for children with challenging behaviour and emotions (Pfeifer, 2011).

2.3.3 Models of supervision

Models of supervision have been developed to offer structure and guidance to the professional conversations within supervision (Hawkins & Shohet, 2007; Scaife, 2001; Hawkins & Smith, 2013). Many of these models build on the work of Hanks's 1990 Model of Process Consultation (Hanks, 1990), who emphasised the importance of asking answerable questions which empower and lead recipients to draw on their own resources, knowledge and experience. Although, historically, supervision has taken the form of one-to-one conversations, there are now multiple forms being used as part of everyday practice such as peer supervision, group supervision and multi-agency supervision. Sturt and Rowe's (2018) integrated model of supervision places the 4Ss; students, staff, school and stakeholders as central to the cyclical process of experience, reflection, analysis and action planning. They argue that, for supervision to be truly effective, the cornerstones of the model; supervision policy, agreement between supervisor and supervisee, recording of supervision and its review must be embedded in the foundations of the process.

Reflecting Team (Andersen, 1987) is a method of group consultation which stems from family therapy in which the case presenter is not actively involved in the group discussion but instead listens without contributing. It has been found to be an effective intervention within GPs for opening-up new perspectives and feeling validated (Shah, 2019) and has more recently been applied as a process of peer reflection in teaching (Hansen & Mendzheritskaya, 2024). Multi-disciplinary and multi-agency supervision is a growing area and provides benefits to the supervisor such as enhancement of skills and opportunities to help professionals from a range of backgrounds develop their ability to work reflectively (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010).

2.3.4 Psychological underpinnings of supervision

Supervision, when delivered effectively, allows space for individuals to reflect and make sense of their experiences rather than being focused solely on gaining advice or practical steps to overcome a challenge or problem. Bion's concept of containment (1959; 1984) is said to be achieved when a sense of psychological safety has been facilitated for the supervisee and is recognised as a function of supervision (Hawkins & Shohet, 2000). It has also been recognised that psychodynamic principles of transference and countertransference may be experienced (Wood, 2016) and may be particularly relevant when considering that staff responses may be influenced by feelings evoked by pupils, parents or colleagues. This suggests that supervision provides a mechanism to reflect on the emotional and relational impact of their work.

Evidence for the psychological nature of supervision can also be seen in the importance given to the supervisory relationship (Beinart & Clohessy, 2017). Scaife (2009) identifies the importance of creating feelings of safety and this is emphasised within the Supervision in Education: Quality Standards Framework (SIE, 2025) by setting out qualities of what a skilled supervisor should look like. This also highlights that supervision is not just a process for improving practice but also a relational process which allows staff to feel heard and valued. In order for the supervisor to supervise effectively, Morrison (2006) suggests that the emotionally intelligent supervisor can demonstrate self-awareness of their own emotional state whilst also being alert to how the supervisee is feeling and able to use these aspects to manage the relationship between them.

The Supervision in Education: Quality Standards Framework (SIE, 2025) also highlights the importance of contracting at the start of implementing supervision. This follows on from Sturt and Rowe's (2024) suggestion that a supervision agreement is essential for

supervision to be effective and that the process of producing the agreement itself, facilitates the development of the supervisory relationship.

2.3.5 Drawing on Research from Supervision within the Helping Professions

Due to policy guidelines, supervision in the helping professions has been established for a significant period (HCPC, 2024) leading to a larger body of research around the experiences of supervision in the helping professions than within schools specifically. The evidence base appears to be mixed in regard to the overall effectiveness of supervision but there are aspects to be drawn upon that bring an insight into the role supervision has to play in supporting individuals in their role. The benefits of supervision appear to be linked more with the details of how supervision is implemented and what it involves rather than the process as a whole; when supervision is done well, there are benefits identified but it appears that when it is not there is a risk of damage being caused. Although it is difficult to make direct links between supervision received and the impact on practice, good supervision is likely to increase confidence and offer new perspectives and ideas which, in turn, would lead to improved practice (Osborne & Burton, 2014).

Rothwell et al. (2021) identified the following enablers to clinical supervision effectiveness in a healthcare setting: regularity, within protected time, in a private space and delivered flexibly. Barriers identified focused around: lack of time, space and trust, lack of shared understanding of purpose and a lack of on-going support and engagement from leadership. Within social care, a lack of adequate supervision has been identified as being a factor in studies of child deaths in the UK (Saltiel, 2017) and was seen as an important space for evaluating practitioner accounts and informing decisions. Within Educational Psychology Services, supervision is deemed to play a role in assuring the quality and standards of service delivery as well as serving both wellbeing and professional development with a link to support work with children and young people (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010).

Research within the helping professions suggests benefits are to be had from regular supervision. Within counselling and psychotherapy practice, supervision is considered essential for continuing professional development and delivering ethical and effective therapy (Wheeler & Richards, 2007) and effective clinical supervision is associated with lower burnout and greater staff retention in social work healthcare organisations (Martin et al., 2021; Warwick et al., 2023). Supervision in health visitors has also been associated with

reduced burnout and stress and increased thinking capacity (Wallbank, 2013) and has been found to reduce staff sick days in hospital staff (Hyrkäs et al., 2001).

Although, to date, there is little research into the benefits of supervision to the pupils themselves, Bambling et al. (2006) found that the clients of supervised therapists did significantly better in terms of reduced symptoms of depression, less treatment drop out and greater satisfaction with both their treatment and their working alliance with their therapist. However, this was not the case in research relating to nurses who had received year-long supervision, with no improvement of satisfaction for patients found (White & Winstanley, 2010). As the limited research on client impact stems from areas outside of education, we need to be mindful in assuming that the same impact would be seen within pupil impact because of supervision.

2.4 Supervision within Education Settings

Although it is useful to consider the experiences of supervision from other professions where it is already embedded, it needs to be acknowledged that schools are working within their own standards and policies which may impact how supervision may be implemented in education systems. While there may be similarities in experience, it is difficult to generalise. This section will consider the current context of supervision in schools specifically and the research to date.

2.4.1 Policy and Guidelines

2.4.1.1 Supervision for Designated Safeguarding Leads

Following the introduction of '*Designated Senior Leads for Mental Health*', (DfE, 2017) concerns were expressed regarding time pressures and strain on staff without appropriate support and limited guidance on what support would look like. Reference to supervision is lacking within Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011) but is referenced as a requirement within Designated Safeguarding Lead roles (DfE, 2023a) which states, "*Lead practitioners should have access to high quality supervision,*" (p61) and "*The postholder should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support needed to carry out the role,*" (DfE, 2025, p31). It also recognises the role supervision has to play in regard to line management requirements to support ongoing professional development but gives no further guidance on what this supervision should look like or how it should be implemented.

Subsequently, local authorities have begun to devise their own guidance. My current local authority's Children's Safeguarding Partnership offers Safeguarding Supervision Guidance primarily focused on safeguarding in the Early Years but with some specificity over regularity. Some Multi-Academy Trusts have begun to develop Supervision Policy which suggest appropriate safeguarding provision for DSLs and specify termly supervision sessions (Co-op Academy Leeds, 2025). Within some local authorities, standards have been stipulated within safeguarding supervision policies which identify the importance of having a written policy, having appropriately experienced supervisors, regular, planned, protected time and space that is given priority, a written agreement or contract and clearly defined roles of supervisor and supervisee (Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership, 2025).

2.4.1.2 Supervision for Teachers and Leaders

Many schools are yet to have policies in place for supervision with teaching staff other than in the Early Years. Supervision may have a role to play in supporting teachers to meet Teachers' Standard 8 "*Fulfil wider professional responsibilities*," (DfE, 2011, p13) with particular reference to the part "*take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues*," (p13). It could be argued that teachers require protected and timetabled time for such opportunities and it is unclear in the standards how this should be delivered. Sturt and Rowe (2024) have begun to consider this further and have aligned the different purposes of supervision with the Teachers' Standards, particularly acknowledging the managerial aspect of supervision (See appendix 1 for table of reference). Senior leaders are responsible for ensuring staff performance in relation to the teachers' standards (DfE, 2011). Supervision could provide time and space for teachers to reflect, develop skills and problem solve in an environment that, although rewarding, can be incredibly challenging and emotionally exhausting. There is a need for staff to be able to offload while also allowing leadership an opportunity to observe the effects of the job on wellbeing (Sturt & Rowe, 2024).

Since 2014, academics and practitioners in the Faculty of Education at Canterbury Christ Church University have been researching and developing a model of supervision for education professionals (Bainbridge, 2020), which identifies the capacity building potential of supervision and its role in building on strengths and support. Bainbridge (2020) suggests that, by not providing supervision, schools are limiting opportunities to expand practice and could be impacting on the future learning experiences of young people and hindering the social and emotional wellbeing of the professionals. In 2019, Barnardo's Scotland published a discussion paper calling for "*a national conversation about the support available for the*

mental health and wellbeing of teaching staff and consideration of the role of Professional or Reflective Supervision within Education,” (Lawrence, 2020, p3). The previous discussion paper had argued that, for teachers to be able to provide effective “*positive educational, social and therapeutic relationships to children who have experienced trauma and adversity*”, a care infrastructure needs to be in place (Burley, 2019, p2). Through Barnado’s ongoing work with practitioners in schools, it was highlighted that there was a lack of professional supervision or specified time for reflection in relation to their own mental health and wellbeing and argued that professional supervision is essential for all professionals supporting children and young people with complex needs and vulnerabilities. Professionals at the UCL: Institute of Education, have also begun to produce guidance in regard to how supervision can support staff in schools (Carroll et al, 2020). This began with a focus on SENDCos, as they are responsible for a very wide area and the acknowledgement that many will not have experienced supervision themselves and do not have a model for how it can work.

The Supervision in Education Network (2025) has recently devised a standards framework to support the quality assurance of supervision in education. This recommends that Senior Leaders in education settings receive supervision from external supervision organisations which is delivered individually or in groups, face-to-face or remotely. It suggests that it should be regular and there should be a written contract between the commissioner and the supervisor. It also calls for a Register of Approved Supervisors in Education from 2027/2028 for supervisors from an education background to address the lack of guidance on the qualifications or training required to deliver supervision in educational settings and limited training routes available. The Department for Education’s proposed reforms to the schools and SEND systems in England (DfE, 2026) suggests a need to support and invest in high quality staff to address reasons why many leave the profession. The paper does not identify specific strategies which will be used to “*empower and invest in expert leaders, teachers and support staff*,” (p79) but there is a suggestion that leaders will be provided with “*safe and confidential space to develop new strategies to manage their resilience and capacity to thrive in their role.*” (p86) At this time, there is no expansion on how this will be done but offers the idea that there may be space available to consider changes to current practice and systems.

2.4.2 Current Experiences of Supervision in Schools

2.4.2.1 Staff Perceptions of Supervision

Overall, the research suggests that supervision is still an emerging practice, but that supervision is becoming a talking point for discussions around supporting teachers (Hood, 2024). As policies and standards have begun to emerge, so has the research regarding experiences of supervision in schools. Sturt and Rowe (2024) suggest that the model of supervision currently seen within schools may be a more informal approach which is not necessarily built on any theoretical base but relies mainly on ad hoc conversations regarding current concerns. Historically, supervision has been erratic and infrequent and difficult for school managers to organise (Newton, 1995) and Reid & Soan (2015) suggest that the wellbeing of staff working with high needs children is largely ignored.

Research suggests that teacher wellbeing impacts on their ability to cope with the profession and the stresses that arise from it; therefore, having a critical impact on providing a stable environment for the students in their care (Roffey, 2012). Groom and Rose (2005) found that Teaching Assistants (TAs) played a crucial role in the “*effective inclusion of pupils with SEBD in mainstream classrooms*,” (p20) with an increasing occurrence of Teaching Assistants being deployed to support children with social, emotional and behavioural problems (SEMH, SEND Code of Practice, 2014) and played a significant role in supporting teachers to manage behaviour within the classroom. There is now increased acceptance that teachers are not immune from associated emotional risks of being exposed to student adversity and trauma (Briggs, 2020) and Parker et al. (2012) suggest that supervision sessions can help individuals reflect and re-evaluate personal values and professional identities.

Barnado’s Scotland (Lawrence, 2020) used a Survey Monkey questionnaire to distribute a consultation designed to engage those working directly in education to explore their views and experiences of supervision. It should be noted that a self-selecting sample was used which may suggest that those who responded had particularly strong views regarding supervision and is therefore not necessarily representative of those in education. The results found that 90 of the 402 respondents had experienced supervision in education. Of these respondents, 44% had received supervision from a Senior Leadership member, 16% from an external organisation and 14% from an Educational Psychologist and 77% of experiences were on a one-to-one basis.

Using Q-methodology to explore perceptions of supervision amongst school staff, Beech et al. (2023) identified two varying viewpoints to supervision. Viewpoint 1 being that

supervision was perceived to be necessary and achievable with viewpoint two offering a more cautious stance that, although important, there were barriers to implementation. From this, it seems that there is still further research needed to explore the existence of supervision within school settings and how far the understanding and implementation of supervision has managed to reach.

2.4.2.2 ELSA Supervision

Much of the literature regarding supervision in schools' centres around group supervision, with the most established appearing to focus on the work of Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) and the functions and impact of their group supervision sessions which are included as a requirement for the role (ELSA Network, 2017). The functions of group supervision have been found to marry up with those of individual supervision, with ELSAs using the sessions to explore their skills, understanding and knowledge linked to the casework they were being faced with as well as using the sessions as a space for seeking and receiving emotional support (Ridley, 2017). Supervisees also report benefits in regard to wellbeing, team relationships and direct work with families (Anderson & Hayes, 2023) and feeling better able to support pupils (Osborne & Burton, 2014). France & Billington (2020) found that ELSAs valued supervision and gave reference to; valuing advice, gaining new ideas and benefiting from the support of a group, sharing resources and updates. Benefits to wellbeing were identified such as; reassurance, offloading concerns and increasing confidence and reported that the impact had extended to other school staff, with ELSAs becoming more solution focused in their conversations with school staff.

2.4.2.3 Group Problem Solving

Within some schools, although there is an absence of supervision, they have a system in place that offers a form of group consultation which allows staff to share stuck situations and look for solutions as a group. When trained to facilitate their own staff consultation groups, teachers have valued having time to discuss problems free from interruption, within a space of trust and concern and valued the sense of community despite noting barriers of time and prioritisation (Stringer et al., 1992). Positive outcomes associated with problem solving groups were linked to the environment, preparation and planning (Muchenje & Kelly, 2021).

2.4.2.4 Group Reflective Processes

Research suggests that more recent studies have focused on the reflective aspect of supervision in group supervision in schools. Teachers have been found to benefit from using reflective processes to consider personal and professional experiences that influence their reactions and modifying their responses/behaviour/reactions/practice to work more effectively with students (Southall, 2019). Similarly, reflective practices have been found to generate mutual support, awareness of other perspectives and strategies and build confidence and capacity to seek change (Gardner et al., 2022) and learn from daily experiences (Daniels et al., 2023). As these studies were not conducted in the UK, generalisations need to be made with caution, but it is useful to consider the role that reflection more generally may have in supporting teachers.

2.4.2.5 Group Supervision

Within the UK, Headteachers have reported that group supervision sessions with peers are useful and something that they would be willing to set time aside for (McBlain, 2010). Within specialist settings, group supervision was found to offer opportunities to foster camaraderie with colleagues and address stress through offloading, sharing and validating emotions and experiences (Willis & Baines, 2018). It is important to acknowledge that these findings are from a case study of one school and therefore it is difficult to generalise the benefits found to beyond this setting.

2.4.3 Perceived Benefits

Where supervision has been implemented, research has begun to suggest there are benefits to be gained, however as most studies to date have been small scale; caution needs to be given to making broad generalisations.

Directive supervision is positively related to teachers' performance and attitudes (Hoque et al., 2020). Senior Leaders and SENDCos have suggested that supervision can be invaluable for monitoring staff wellbeing and maintaining effective practice (Rae et al., 2017). Leaders have identified benefits such as having a structured process, gaining new perspectives and having a safe space which allows for recognition of areas of expertise and areas in need of development (Reid & Soan, 2019). They valued the emotional support provided by supervision, the priority it gives to their development needs and how it enables them to do their job more effectively and used supervision as a method for ensuring adherence to codes of conduct and promoting safe cultures. Solution-focused strategies

have been perceived to promote reflection, conversation and empowerment of student teachers (McGhee & Stark, 2021) despite participants acknowledging that this required a change in thinking and did not necessarily find the use of solution focused strategies easy. Although these findings are considered with caution as they relate to student teachers, it is likely that established teachers may experience similar challenges when taking part in reflective processes.

Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads who set up their own form of supervision within their own schools identified the benefit of having their emotional needs recognised and highlighted the impact of being the person in school who knows most about the children's lives (Sturt and Rowe, 2018). DSLs and all the staff they supervised reported a development in knowledge and skills and a clearer understanding of their roles in safeguarding students. Supervision had worked well where senior leadership teams had made a commitment to it and prioritised time for it.

From a survey completed by 402 respondents, participants reported positive experiences of supervision in education with wider benefits including reducing burnout, improving professional practice through self-evaluation and being better able to support children and families (Lawrence, 2020). Hurry and Russell (2022) reported on a small-scale evaluation of professional supervision within four primary schools over a 6-month period to explore the extent to which teachers found the process useful and how supervision informed future practice. Teachers reported that the groups were refreshing and sometimes uplifting and building support networks and learning from each other were frequently mentioned, they increased self-awareness about their own emotional state/needs and had led them to become less critical in regard to their daily work. It is important to acknowledge that the schools within the study were self-selecting, as were the individual participants who took part in the interviews, so may not be representative of the views of the participants as a whole.

Bainbridge et al.'s (2022) supervision project with school leaders, which took place over a five-year period, found that supervision had a positive impact on professional learning, health and wellbeing and wider school culture, arguing that it supports virtuosity of school leadership as well as supporting the care of school leaders and those they care for.

As part of the COVID-19 recovery plan for the education sector, the School Leader Mental Health and Wellbeing Service were commissioned by the Department for Education. Within this, one of the aims was *"To increase the evidence base on professional supervision and wellbeing support for school leaders and learn lessons to inform future policy and interventions,"* (DfE, 2023b, p5). The evaluation suggested that feelings of overwhelm, stress

or isolation led to school leaders applying to the service along with hopes that they would gain protected time to discuss challenges and manage workload and 79% of respondents stated that they would want to continue to access supervision in the future (DfE, 2023b). Wider school level benefits included improving their communication and relationships with colleagues, sharing ideas, tools, and strategies learnt through the sessions with other staff, and introducing wellbeing initiatives or support at their school. Further benefits included supervisors providing appropriate challenges in a safe, reflective space and a good understanding of educational contexts.

Feedback from a small pilot in the West of Scotland showed that Headteachers suggested that supervision allowed them to do something that supports themselves so that they can ensure they are able to support others around them (Forrest, 2024). Bamford (2025) suggests that staff wellbeing is influenced by the impact of leadership, having a shared goal and understanding, supportive structures being in place and a person-centred approach and found that simple timetable alterations allowed staff opportunities to problem-solve with other team members and impacted staff happiness as a result. This mirrors Boujut et al.'s (2016) findings that support from within an organisation is deemed more important than support from friends and family.

2.4.4 Barriers to implementation

Despite the benefits found from supervision, the literature suggests that there are still barriers remaining. Amongst Educational Psychologists, there is a concern that supervision can be considered a luxury when economic and time demands are at play (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010) and similar conclusions have been drawn amongst school-based research. It has been suggested that, within school staff, there is a lack of awareness of the potential benefits of supervision but also misunderstandings about its purpose being more of a monitoring function (Westergaard & Bainbridge, 2014).

Much of the research to date comes from studies where the supervision has been provided by the researchers and therefore not drawing from existing resources of the school. Reid and Soan (2019) provided senior leaders and SENDCos with an opportunity to reflect on, air and discuss professional practice issues. Using qualitative questionnaires, Reid and Soan found that participants viewed supervision as a *“powerful and restorative experience, professionally, personally and emotionally,”* (p59) but concluded that, despite this, supervision *“cannot solve the wider constraints that schools operate within linked to funding regimes, policy imperatives and the impact of socio-economic disadvantage,”* (p70) and is

reliant on being given high enough priority for funding. As the supervision within this study was provided by supervisors external to the school and without cost, there are implications to replicating such findings within schools where internal staff and school budget are required to enable the process. Examples of negative experiences of supervision are linked to poorly implemented supervision or a feeling that it did not bring any benefits. Challenges that arose were linked to practical issues around protecting time, staff shortages, finding a safe space and cost (Lawrence 2020). As Hawkins and McMahon (2020) suggest, “*research evidence is becoming increasingly essential to ensure that the allocation of time and resources to supervision continues to grow in a time of greater demand, higher expectations and less resources in the public services,*” (p299).

Even when a need for supervision has been recognised, evidence has suggested that busy schedules, lack of understanding of benefits and perceived stigma around leaders seeking help, hindered school leaders from accessing supervision support (DfE, 2023b). In addition, participants identified funding as a key barrier and feelings of guilt around using the school budget to pay for support. Hansen & Mendzheritskaya (2024) suggest that, due to the demands in place during the teaching process, it is difficult for teachers to engage in any reflection within the lesson and therefore reflection is better placed after the event as a guided peer activity. Therefore, supervision needs to take place at a time and place away from the classroom, ultimately creating a barrier in regard to where that time is taken from and the resources needed to provide it.

In addition to this, there are currently limited training options for in-house supervisors. Carroll and Esposito (2020) argue that if supervision is going to be financially sustainable and become embedded in everyday practice in schools, more educators need to be trained to become supervisors. The Centre for Inclusion Education at UCL Institute of Education has tried to address this through their delivery of a Supervision Skills for SENDCOs course, aiming to improve understanding and develop their own skills in delivering supervision within their own settings and led to the development of the guidance document ‘Professional Supervision: Guidance for SENDCOs and Senior Leaders’ (Carroll et al., 2020).

There is research to suggest that, even when systemic barriers are overcome, supervisees can feel uncomfortable with the process itself, disliking the inevitable silences or the lack of problem-solving advice in more reflective supervision experiences (Hurry & Russell, 2022). Within ELSA supervision, barriers centred round a lack of trust in the process and perceived the process to being a check on their practice while others had confusion in regard to the purpose and felt that the time away from school to attend supervision had a negative impact on the children they supported (Callicott & Leadbetter, 2013) suggesting

that, for support to be meaningful to teachers, supervision should not be imposed on them and relies on genuine engagement (Reid and Soan, 2019).

2.5 The Role of the Supervisor

The role of the supervisor is explored as this links to an understanding of how schools may be limited at offering supervision.

Educational psychologists in England regularly provide consultation as a support mechanism within education, with a number of local authorities beginning to shift towards a consultation model of delivery. As skilled professionals, Educational Psychologists are able to provide discrete support to teachers in coping with the demands of school life (Gibbs & Miller, 2014) and Educational Psychologist interventions which promote daily positive reflection, have been found to improve teacher's sense of self-efficacy (Critchley & Gibbs, 2012). It is commonplace for Educational Psychologists to offer group problem solving opportunities (Circle of Adults, Newton and Wilson, 1999; The Reflecting Team, Andersen, 1987; Solution Circles, Forrest & Pearpoint, 1996) and this seems to be the closest to a model of supervision that schools are receiving on a regular basis.

Currently, the main provision of supervision within school staff appears to be through that of ELSA supervision delivered by Educational Psychologists. Educational psychologists are able to bring in-depth knowledge of schools and the understanding that behaviour offers an insight into emotional wellbeing (Rae et al., 2017) which places them in a suitable position to support through supervision. Roffey (2012) suggests that Educational Psychologists are well-placed to be able to offer systemic, preventative support to staff in schools, particularly in regard to teacher wellbeing which in turn would reduce the need for expensive, intensive support and increase the capacity of schools to meet the needs of their diverse populations. As the pressure and changes within school continue, many schools are beginning to seek supervision as a means of supporting staff with the emotional demands they face (Sturt & Rowe, 2018).

There is limited research around the role of the supervisor in supervision in education, but Willis and Baines (2018) noted that ensuring all supervisees were given a voice during group supervision was an important part of a supervisor's role. The Supervision in Education Network (2025) suggests that the supervisor should hold skills in facilitation, self-awareness, relationship awareness and systemic awareness. France and Billington's (2020) research into the experiences of ELSA's within group supervision suggests that supervisors provided both emotional and practical support and were approachable and

knowledgeable. The research highlighted that the supervisor's ability to view cases impartially placed Educational Psychologists in a positive position for offering supervision within a multi-agency context. Teachers place importance on the expertise of the supervisor themselves to be able to enable a beneficial and constructive supervisory environment (Reid and Soan, 2019). This builds on the finding that Educational Psychologist interventions which promote daily positive reflection, have been found to improve teacher's sense of self-efficacy (Critchley and Gibbs, 2012).

The impact on supervisors themselves is one that requires careful consideration. As Reid and Soan (2019) pointed out, the responsibility of dealing with troubling issues during supervision of staff can be problematic for senior managers in schools if they are not receiving specialist 'clinical' supervisory support themselves. Antonio (2019) explored the professional support strategies planned by the head teacher to assist supervisors and teachers to carry out their professional duties. Findings showed that there were inadequate training and induction given to supervisors and therefore their supervisory skills extended little beyond observational checklists and conferencing.

As Educational Psychologist roles shift and change in line with traded models, Callicott and Leadbetter (2015) suggest, "*Supervision is one way in which EPs can work creatively towards enabling better outcomes for children,*" (p383). However, with a current national shortage of Educational Psychologists (DfE, 2023c) and the cost implication of providing external supervision in schools, this may limit the chances of supervision being embedded.

2.6 Overcoming resistance to change

Despite an increase in the use of consultation models in school and the development of guidance for SENDCos and senior leaders for implementing supervision, experience to date has shown that supervision is still yet to be seen as a priority or a regular feature in school processes for supporting staff.

In the context of this thesis, organisational change is explored to consider the factors at play when schools are making alterations to their structures, practices, culture or ways of working to offer greater depth of understanding to the enabling factors and the implementation of supervision. Organisational change theories consider how likely organisations can make changes, while also taking in to account the relational and psychological underpinnings of change. Lewin's (1951) model for understanding how change happens encompasses the three stages of 'unfreeze, change, refreeze'. The model

suggests that, before change can occur, individuals need to recognise the need to change. New practices can then be implemented or trialled before becoming part of the organisational culture. Finally, changes are then reinforced and developed until they become the normal way of working.

Health research has demonstrated that leadership, resource support, communication/shared decision making and individual self-efficacy skills are factors that influence implementation (Clarke et al., 2010). The Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF) (Cane et al., 2012) was initially developed for implementation research to identify influences on health professional behaviour related to implementation of evidence-based recommendations and provides a theoretical lens through which to view the cognitive, affective, social and environmental influences on behaviour (Atkins et al., 2017). Through exploration of the 14 domains (see table 1 below) the theory enables researchers to understand why behaviours occur and within this research, may help to understand the behaviours present in school staff and supervisors which enable the implementation of supervision within a school system. To date, there has been limited research that has applied the TDF to understanding implementation of practices within schools, but where it has been applied, it has provided a systematic approach to improving implementation (Weatherson et al., 2017). Richardson et al.'s (2019) systematic review of TDF research also suggests that the framework can be a useful approach to bring together quantitative and qualitative evidence and identify interventions that target the likely determinants of change. The TDF domains may provide novel insight when considering themes and questions relating to the experience of the process of implementing supervision as well as providing a framework for drawing out barriers and enabling factors from within these domains.

The Theoretical Domains Framework was adopted for this research as it provided a more comprehensive structure for addressing enabling factors and barriers to implementing supervision. It offers a clear and systematic framework for exploring factors such as knowledge, skills, beliefs about capabilities, emotions, social influences and environmental context, all of which were felt to be relevant to understanding the implementation of supervision in schools. Although Lewin's (1951) model offers a broad understanding of change, the TDF allows for exploration of the cognitive, emotional, social and contextual factors that shape behaviour and which are likely to be relevant in the context of educational settings. Although The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR, Reardon et al. 2025) can be used to predict or explain barriers and facilitators to implementation success, this is best applied to research whereby the intervention is designed and delivered as part of the research itself, whereas this research focused on the exploration of existing processes.

Table 1

Theoretical Domains Framework domains and constructs table taken from Cane et al., 2012.

Domain (definition)	Constructs
Knowledge An awareness of an existence of something	Knowledge (including knowledge of condition /scientific rationale), procedural knowledge, knowledge of task environment
Skills An ability or proficiency acquired through practice	Skills, skills development, competence, ability, interpersonal skills, practice, skill assessment
Social/Professional Role and Identity A coherent set of behaviours and displayed personal qualities of an individual in a social or work setting	Professional identity, professional role, social identity, identity, professional boundaries, professional confidence, group identity, leadership, organisational commitment
Beliefs about Capabilities Acceptance of the truth, reality, or validity about an ability, talent, or facility that a person can put to constructive use	Self-confidence, perceived competence, self-efficacy, perceived behavioural control, beliefs, self-esteem, empowerment, professional confidence
Optimism The confidence that things will happen for the best or that desired goals will be attained	Optimism, pessimism, unrealistic optimism, identity
Beliefs about Consequences Acceptance of the truth, reality, or validity about outcomes of a behaviour in a given situation	Beliefs, outcome expectancies, characteristics of outcome expectancies, anticipated regret, consequents
Reinforcement Increasing the probability of a response by arranging a dependent relationship, or contingency, between the response and a given stimulus	Rewards (proximal / distal, valued / not valued, probable / improbable), incentives, punishment, consequents, reinforcement, contingencies, sanctions
Intentions A conscious decision to perform a behaviour or a resolve to act in a certain way	Stability of intentions, stages of change model, transtheoretical model and stages of change
Goals Mental representations of outcomes or end states that an individual wants to achieve	Goals (distal / proximal), goal priority, goal / target setting, goals (autonomous / controlled), action planning, implementation intention
Memory, Attention and Decision Processes The ability to retain information, focus selectively on aspects of the environment and choose between two or more alternatives	Memory, attention, attention control, decision making, cognitive overload / tiredness
Environmental Context and Resources Any circumstance of a person's situation or	Environmental stressors, resources / material resources, organisational culture /climate, salient

environment that discourages or encourages the development of skills and abilities, independence, social competence, and adaptive behaviour	events / critical incidents, person x environment interaction, barriers and facilitators
Social influences Those interpersonal processes that can cause individuals to change their thoughts, feelings, or behaviours	Social pressure, social norms, group conformity, social comparisons, group norms, social support, power, intergroup conflict, alienation, group identity, modelling
Emotion A complex reaction pattern, involving experiential, behavioural, and physiological elements, by which the individual attempts to deal with a personally significant matter or event	Fear, anxiety, affect, stress, depression, positive / negative affect, burn-out
Behavioural Regulation Anything aimed at managing or changing objectively observed or measured actions	Self-monitoring, breaking habit, action planning

Hawkins et al. (2020) suggest that, even with clear processes of change, change can still create resistance which is usually fuelled by fear of the unknown, lack of or misinformation, threat to status or power, no perceived benefits, reluctance to experiment, and a strong peer group norm. They suggest that resistance can often be traced back to systemic issues such as structural pressures and organisational culture meaning that efforts are more likely to be unsuccessful when the focus of change falls at an individual level. In order to overcome this in the context of supervision, there needs to be a clear statement of policy (Hawkins et al., 2020).

Self-Determination Theory (Ryan and Deci, 2017) suggests that when the basic psychological needs of autonomy (the need to self-regulate one's experiences and actions), competence (the need to feel effectance and mastery) and relatedness (a sense of belonging and being integral to a social group) are met, individuals experience greater motivation and increased contribution to society. With this in mind, this theory can provide an understanding for leaders of factors that influence the likelihood that school staff will engage with changes. For the purpose of this research, it suggests that, for supervision to be successfully implemented in educational settings, an individual's basic psychological needs will need to be met.

2.7 Contribution of this Research

The literature outlines studies across multiple professions where supervision has been perceived as a beneficial process and can lead to positive impact on children and young people. The literature also demonstrates both organisational and relationship-based barriers to how successful supervision is implemented. From the research, and my own experience within practice, there appears to be a want and a need for supervision in schools but yet a limit in the number of settings where this is actually being put into practice and much of the research so far around supervision in schools focuses on supervision facilitated by the researcher. This therefore makes it hard to gain an accurate picture of what supervision practices provide on a day-to-day basis. Supervision forms a compulsory part of the ELSA training within schools and is seen as a beneficial process so, with the increased challenges around wellbeing, staff retention and increased complex needs in educational settings, there is an increased need for recommendations and strategies to support schools to implement supervision for all school staff effectively. Thus, the current research seeks to address this gap by establishing a clearer understanding of supervision in schools and how ~~effective~~ supervision practices are being implemented. It aims to identify the barriers they have overcome to make this happen with the hope of drawing on this to offer strategies and recommendations to educational settings, local authorities and Educational Psychologists.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Overview

In this chapter I will justify my ontological and epistemological positionality and reflect on how my research methods aligned with this. I will explain my reasons for my chosen methodology as well as briefly exploring other methodologies. This section will also outline my ethical considerations and how the quality of the research was maintained in order to provide reliable and trustworthy research. As there is currently little insight into how supervision strategies have been successfully implemented within schools in the UK, this research aimed to explore how schools are implementing supervision in the hope of drawing out recommendations for local authorities, educational settings and Educational Psychologists.

The following research questions were explored:

- What is the current picture of supervision in schools across the chosen local authority?
- Is there a discrepancy between the desire for and the actual implementation of supervision in schools?
- What has helped schools to be able to implement supervision?
- How have barriers to implementing supervision been overcome?

3.2 Ontological and Epistemological Positionality

My research is framed within critical realist ontology, in that I make assumptions that supervision practices within schools are influenced by real structures such as policy, resources, power and leadership and would exist outside of an individual's own perceptions. I aimed to explore these while recognising that the accounts of these experiences are influenced and shaped by an individual's own social contexts. I was conscious that I was entering into this research with my own previously formed perceptions on supervision and that my reasoning for exploring the topic stemmed from my own reflective realisation that supervision would have been beneficial in my previous role as SENDCo, Assistant Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. A mixed methods design was chosen in line with a critical realist approach. The quantitative methods, the survey, was used to offer insight into the reality of what is happening within schools within the chosen

local authority and the qualitative methods, the semi-structured interviews, were used to understand and gather the individual perspectives of this reality.

Within my research, the voices of one or two individuals from a school were captured. I think it is important to recognise that this represents just one viewpoint of the experience of supervision within that setting and that it is not necessarily the same experience for all or remembered in the same way. Supervision can be a personal experience which is open to much interpretation (Hawkins & Shohet, 2007). The critical realist lens allowed me to acknowledge that there may be a difference between the actual individual experiences of supervision and an individual's perceived experience of supervision that may be impacted by other factors such as power dynamics, overall ethos and school environment as well as the impact of sharing experiences within an interview in front of a researcher. The experiences of supervision are impacted by each individual's own previous experiences and perspectives, and my interpretation of what participants say is impacted by my own experiences and perspectives.

As Willig (2013) suggests, qualitative research methods can be used to gain a picture of the social world by seeking to capture, as truthfully as possible, something that is happening in the real world. Although I expected that my data would offer insight into practices and policies regarding supervision within schools, I acknowledge that this may not be a direct reflection and that the data will need to be interpreted in order to further understand how supervision is implemented and understand underlying themes relating to supervision implementation. A quantitative survey was used in the hope of gathering broader data from across multiple schools around the structure and practicalities of supervision. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were used to explore individual experiences and draw out facilitators and barriers. By using mixed methods within critical realist ontology, I aimed to be able to combine empirical observations and findings across a broader data set with deeper individual experiences and reflections to explore how supervision was implemented within educational settings.

3.3 Local Authority Context

The research focused on a Local Authority in the North of England. Within this Local Authority, the Educational Psychology Service currently operates under a traded model to schools which incorporates opportunities for systemic work including training. The supervision training package on offer to schools is within this offer and includes theory as well as opportunity to practice Solution Circles (Forrest & Pearpoint, 1996 and Reflective

Teams (Anderson, 1987) and draws on Resilience Based Clinical Supervision (Gilbert 2010) and Outsider Witness Supervision (Fox & Tench, 2002). As a result, these models were drawn upon in the survey when exploring experiences (see appendix 2).

3.4 Methodological Considerations

3.4.1 *Selecting a Research Design*

When selecting methodology, I recognised that I had mixed feelings regarding the overall aims of the research. Firstly, I was keen to gain a broad understanding of what the most current picture of supervision was across the local authority. I had had several conversations with Educational Psychologists and SENDCos previously to ascertain whether supervision existed in their school but recognised that this was not necessarily representative of the whole of the local authority. Conversations regarding examples of supervision, tended to link back to specialist settings, suggesting a need to explore whether this was just incidental or an accurate reflection. Secondly, I saw value in exploring individual experiences deeper and approaching the research from an appreciative perspective by drawing on the successful implementation experiences that may already be happening to inform future thinking. For this reason, a mixed methods approach was adopted which would provide both a broad, quantitative context while also allowing the use of qualitative methods to explore experiences further.

Considering that the research aimed to provide possible recommendations to educational settings, it was important that participant voices were captured from a range of situations and experiences. Participant voice needed to be an accurate reflection of the views of those currently in challenging roles within education and, although consideration was given to my own presence during qualitative data collection and the role of facilitation during the conversation, I was careful not to project my own views on to the participants. Quantitative data alone would limit the participant responses and would not necessarily allow for the participant to be portrayed in the way they intended (Watts & Stenner, 2005) and therefore the mixed methods approach would allow for this to be counteracted. Foucault (1997) suggests that it can be naive to accept a truth without questioning or critiquing it as this can lead to other truths being silenced. For this reason, as many 'truths' as possible were collected within the research by ensuring that participants were chosen to represent a range of views.

Within my practice as a Trainee Educational Psychologist, much of my work orientates around a strengths-based approach to stuck situations and this ethos also aligned

with my approach to research. As a result of this, an Appreciative Inquiry process could have been considered as a method of data collection and a way of working with a setting to draw out what was already working well in regard to the implementation of supervision.

Appreciative Inquiry as a process is used to elicit organisational change (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005) and follows four stages (discover, dream, design and destiny) which allows participants to consider the in-depth structure of processes within a setting. Although there are benefits of such an in-depth method of data collection, initial scoping of the research suggested that there would be limited schools within the local authority that would be in the position to offer such in-depth insights as a team. Although Appreciative Inquiry as the data collection method was deemed inappropriate, appreciative questioning was used within interviews to draw out how educational settings had been able to implement change (see Appendix 3).

As Bazeley (2022) states, *“To clearly define and set boundaries for mixed methods as an approach to research is difficult, if not impossible, and any attempt to do so is bound to be disputed,”* (p20). Following a review of 19 definitions of mixed methods, Johnson et al. (2007) produced the following definition:

Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration (Johnson et al., 2007, p123).

The approach to mixed methods methodology in this research aligned with Yin (2006) in that it strived for the methods to be genuinely integrated. The methods influenced each other throughout the whole process of the research and data and analyses were integrated before drawing final conclusions and each individual method served a clear purpose within the research (Bazeley, 2022).

These ideas aligned with the aims of the research and the overall approach to data collection.

3.4.2 Selecting Data Collection Methods

This research followed a mixed methods design in which a structured on-line survey was used to collect participant demographic data and identify patterns and trends in

supervision implementation. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather qualitative data regarding participant's experiences and perspectives. In line with a critical realist stance, surveys were used to identify patterns in how supervision was being delivered, who was accessing supervision and how supervision was being implemented. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to uncover the 'why', the causal mechanisms and values behind them and individual's interpretations of this.

3.4.2.1 Quantitative Data Considerations

By incorporating the quantitative survey, the research aimed to gain a broader understanding of the current picture of supervision across the local authority as current views were based on one-off conversations and limited previous experience. As there are over 170 schools within the local authority, all of which employ SENDCos and at least one senior leader, there was opportunity to gain a rich picture. As Watkins (2015) suggests, quantitative research "*can generate a broad understanding of a phenomenon,*" (p5) as well as being able to be conducted faster which is beneficial when working within course time constraints. Although the research strived to reach all possible participants on multiple occasions, the uptake was lower than anticipated (see Appendix 2 4: Recruitment Timeline for further details). Although disappointing, this in itself offered some insight into the level of priority that supervision currently had within school and led to reflection on assumptions made that leaders would value supervision as a supportive process. The use of the survey also provided clarity around the ~~understanding~~ range of experience of supervision across the local authority and the range of experience which would then influence how the semi-structured interview questions were approached.

The quantitative data was used to identify possible participants for follow-up interviews based on their willingness to be considered, their previous experience of supervision and their current setting. The breadth of data was important, so this would allow identification of participants from a range of settings if there were more participants than needed. The survey on its own would not have provided the depth of understanding being sought by the research. Although more qualitative questions could have been included within the survey, this would have been restrictive and would not have allowed for the depth that comes from conversations.

3.4.2.2 Qualitative Data Considerations

Qualitative data was initially planned to be captured through the use of focus groups which would have enabled insights to be captured through group interaction and how participants responded to each other (Lobe et al., 2022). Relational approaches are valuable within educational psychology practice and face-to-face focus groups would have provided a way of creating this. However, it was anticipated that there may potentially be logistical difficulties that would arise from trying to organise focus groups with those working in schools, managing busy diaries, and therefore the possibility of online focus groups or individual interviews was included within the original ethics submission (see Appendix 5). Conducting interviews face-to-face would have been preferable in order to enable a stronger rapport and promote richer conversation (Irvine, 2011), however, it was important to appreciate the time constraints participants were working within and offer as much flexibility as possible in order to make the process more convenient (Archibald et al., 2019).

Follow up interviews were used to explore the “how” of supervision implementation (Watkins & Gioia, 2015). Morse and Richards (2002) suggest that qualitative methods are beneficial when little is known about a topic and where there is interest in studying responses to natural settings or processes in order to understand experience. Although there is existing literature around the benefits of supervision, particularly in the field of social work, there is little exploration around how supervision has been implemented with school settings. Qualitative data collection allows flexibility meaning that when it was not possible to gather multiple participants within a focus group, it was still possible to allow the responses from previous interviews to inform questioning in later interviews.

As Willig (2013) identifies, it is important for researchers to reflect on both the interviewer and the interviewee’s experiences and avoid the assumption that all words provide a direct reflection of what may be thought or felt. This approach to data collection suited the research question as, although researcher assumptions around the implementation of supervision had been identified, the research aimed to generate novel insights too. The use of semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 3 for interview question prompts) allowed for flexibility within the question schedule and the opportunity for follow-up questions as deemed appropriate (Thomas, 2017). Having multiple participants spaced over time also brought the benefit of being able to reflect in between interviews. Consideration was given to how the questions had been interpreted by the participants and the aspects they had chosen to share and consider whether questions needed adapting or reframing for the following interviews.

As with any research method, there are always limitations to consider. Due to the in-depth nature of the findings and the small sample size used as a result, it can be challenging to generalise beyond the specific sample. In addition, although every effort was made to reduce researcher bias, the influence of me as the researcher cannot be ignored and it is acknowledged that this may have had influence within both the data collection and the interpretation of the findings.

3.4.3 Selecting a Method of Analysis

As the quantitative data was being used to inform questioning within the semi-structured interviews, this was analysed using descriptive statistics to help identify patterns, similarities and differences in supervision practices across schools.

Thematic analysis was initially planned to analyse qualitative data but, as the process evolved, I reflected and recognised that reflexive thematic analysis aligned more closely with my approach and ethos as a researcher. I noted how it was impossible to reflect back on any of the process of data collection without considering my active role and impact within all stages of the research. Thematic analysis is considered to be a data analysis tool which can be used to identify, analyse and report patterns or themes within given data (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and, as there was currently little existing research regarding how supervision is implemented, the research used complete coding (DeJonckheere et al., 2024).

Willig (2013) suggests that a potential limitation of thematic analysis is that the researcher is at risk of being overly focused on themes that have emerged from existing literature that they do not allow new insights to emerge from the data. To ensure this was addressed within this research, I consciously checked in with myself and my supervisors at points during the analysis. Reflexive thematic analysis allowed me to do this even further and prevented assumptions and previous experiences from influencing the interpretation. Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach (Braun & Clarke, 2022) was used for this and themes represented deeper structures, values or causal mechanisms that influence supervision practices. Reflexive thematic analysis reflects the researcher's own interpretative analysis of the data (Byrne, 2022) and as a result, although possible, there is no expectation that two researchers would always align in their interpretations however, as Braun & Clarke (2019) suggest, it can be useful to sense check ideas and therefore supervisors were used within the analysis stage to offer their own individual perspectives. Reflexive Thematic Analysis aligned with the underpinning theoretical assumptions of the research and allowed reflection on participant's experiences in their truest form. It allowed

for respect of the subjectivity of individual accounts while taking into account and embracing individual interpretations as the researcher.

The flexibility of thematic analysis can also be seen as a criticism by some, with the suggestion that it follows the same anything goes critique as qualitative research does as a whole (Antaki et al., 2002) and therefore lacks systematic data analysis more aligned with quantitative research. However, Braun and Clarke's 6 phase process has offered some structure to the process while retaining flexibility in how it is used (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) could have also been considered as a method of data analysis with semi-structured interviews however IPA aligns best with a constructionist or interpretivist viewpoint (Braun & Clarke, 2022) and therefore did not align with the critical realist lens. Within this research, the focus was on the codes that came up from across the data set rather than the individual accounts themselves. The research was interested in the impact of the wider social context when considering how supervision had been implemented which aligned more with Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

Narrative analysis is often considered within qualitative research and offers a deeper understanding of experiences which, although would have given greater opportunity to explore individual experiences, it may not have revealed some of the causal mechanisms or processes within schools that the research was hoping to find. Narrative analysis explores the "told", the words shared, and "the telling", the meaning beneath the words, (Tolman and Head, 2021) which, although interesting, did not align with the research aims of this study.

3.5 Quality in Research

Quality in research is important to ensure the credibility and reliability of findings, and particularly in relation to this research, to produce meaningful results and recommendations that can be used within practice. In this section, I will outline the steps taken to ensure quality of research across the mixed-methods design.

3.5.1 Quality within Quantitative Research

Within quantitative research, it is generally agreed that reliability and validity underpin the quality of the research (Howell, 2016). It was important to consider the face validity of the questionnaire to ensure that the questions were measuring what they aimed to measure and were clearly understood by participants. Prior to sharing the questionnaire, the online survey

questions were piloted by the research supervisors to allow for refinement of questions, clarification of phrasing and consideration of the definitions used.

3.5.2 Quality within Qualitative Research

Within research, reliability relates to the possibility of research generating the same results when the same procedure is used with a different group of participants (Yardley, 2008). As Braun and Clarke (2013) note, the presence and skill of the researcher within qualitative data collection impacts the things said by the participant and thus suggesting that reliability is unable to be applied in the same way. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest establishing trustworthiness instead within qualitative research which includes, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

In order to be able to generalise the findings and be able to offer applicability to other schools within the local authority, the research strived to collect a representative sample. As one of the aims of the research was to be able to create a set of recommendations for education settings, it was important that the data represented the input of a range of education settings across the local authority and, therefore, the survey was opened up to all schools across the local authority and the initial questionnaire was shared as widely as possible.

The semi-structured interview schedule was shared with research supervisors and additional question prompts were added into the questioning in case participants needed further guidance. This process also supported the interview approach and allowed there to be something consistent and considered to refer to during questioning. The first interview was used as a pilot interview, and questions were reflected on with supervisors to ensure they aligned with the research aims. It was important that, in order to maintain the credibility of the research, interviewer responses remained neutral within the interview schedule and therefore open-ended, appreciative questioning was used to elicit the views of the participants.

As participants needed to be contacted for a follow up focus group, their survey responses were not anonymous and therefore participants may have felt reluctant to respond honestly. It is also acknowledged that, as I previously worked in the local authority as a SENDCo, there may be some participants who have met me in this previous role and therefore this may place me in an 'in-group' position which may influence participants. However, as I have now shifted roles within the service, for some participants I will be positioned in the 'out-group'.

3.5.3 Integration

A mixed methods design was used, with quantitative data collected first via the survey and used to identify interview participants and lines of questioning, ensuring that both datasets worked together to add richness to the findings. This integration of data also allows for added validity as it allows validation or challenge of initial findings and strengthens the credibility of my conclusions as a researcher. Henwood and Pidgeon (1992) proposed seven attributes of good quality research, including *“theoretical sampling and negative case analysis,”* (p107) which suggests that the research should strive to include cases that do not necessarily fit as well as those which hope to generate novel insights. Therefore, the research sought to interview participants who had not experienced supervision as well as a participant who had chosen to stop accessing supervision in order to challenge the data.

3.5.4 Reflexivity within Research

According to Willig (2013) validity in research can be defined as *“The extent to which our research describes, measures or explains what it aims to describe, measure or explain,”* (p53). Due to the open nature of qualitative research, it can be left exposed to the question of validity. It is therefore considered important to maintain reflexivity throughout and scrutinise my own role within the research to try and maintain validity. As Willig (2013) notes, *“Reflexivity is important in qualitative research because it encourages us to foreground, and reflect upon, the ways in which the person of the researcher is implicated in the research and its findings,”* (p55). Within the research process, it was important that I regularly paused to reflect on my role and how this may impact participant recruitment. I was aware that as it became challenging to recruit participants, I was in conflict between maintaining my own deadlines and ability to stay on track and identifying the broadest range of participants possible. My reflections on the research also led me to make the shift from Thematic Analysis to Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The research was completed in line with the British Psychological Society’s Code of Ethics and Conduct (BPS, 2018) and was subjected to an ethical review in compliance with The University of Sheffield’s ethical principles and policies (see appendix 5 for Ethics Application, Appendix 6 for Data Management Plan and Appendix 7 for Ethical Approval Letter).

3.6.1 Consent

In order to ensure participants were able to give informed consent; participants were given an information sheet which outlined the purpose of the research and what their participation would entail prior to completing an online consent form (see Appendix 8). The information sheet made it clear that participants had the right to withdraw their questionnaire responses at any point prior to them being analysed. Participants who agreed to take part in the follow up interview were then required to complete a second consent form to ensure that they understood what their participation entailed and confirm that they were willing to be recorded (see Appendix 9). As there were days or weeks in some instances between completion of consent forms and dates of interview, I felt it was particularly important to ensure that the participant information sheet and consent questions were re-shared at the beginning of the interviews and participants had the opportunity to ask any questions.

3.6.2 Confidentiality

In order to maintain confidentiality, all data was anonymised after collection, ensuring that names were changed to participant numbers and any use of names of people or places were anonymised within the transcripts.

3.6.3 Data Protection

In line with The University of Sheffield ethics policy, all data was saved on the University storage (U:Drive) after recording and transferred to the X:Drive as soon as possible (see Appendix 6: Data Management Plan for further details).

Chapter 4 Procedure

4.1 Overview

The following chapter will outline the research procedure including how participants were selected and recruited and how the data was collected for both the quantitative survey and the qualitative interviews. The research was conducted in two phases; phase 1 involved the distribution and collection of quantitative data from an online survey and phase 2 was the collection of qualitative data through semi-structured interviews. Participants were required to have completed phase 1 of the research in order to take part in phase 2.

4.2 Quantitative Data Collection

Quantitative data was collected through the use of an online survey (see Appendix 2).

4.2.1 Survey Design

The survey was created using Google Forms and consisted of two parts; a section containing questions regarding consent and a section containing questions exploring knowledge and experience of supervision. Before answering the questions regarding supervision, a definition of supervision was provided to support those who may be unfamiliar with the term (see Appendix 10). The survey collected demographic information relating to the participant's role in school and the type of educational setting in which they worked. 11 questions, using a mix of multiple-choice and Likert-scale responses explored participant experiences of supervision, including regularity, supervisors and models of supervision. The final question explored possible challenges to implementing supervision. The survey remained accessible for a total of 4 months (see Appendix 4 for Recruitment Timeline) and there were 29 responses. The Theoretical Domain Framework (Cane et al., 2012) was referred to when reflecting on questions asked to support future recommendations. Table 2 below outlines how each question is linked to a domain.

Table 2

Survey questions linked to The Theoretical Domain Framework domains.

Question	Domain
Before today, were you familiar with the term 'supervision' as a supportive process within school?	Knowledge
Do you currently or have you ever experienced supervision within school?	Skills
How regularly did/do you receive supervision?	Environmental Context and Resources
Did this supervision take place on a 1:1 or group basis?	Environmental Context and Resources
What is the role of the person who usually facilitates or delivers this supervision?	Environmental Context and Resources
Which of the following models of group supervision are you familiar with?	Skills
Based on the definition given above on a scale of 1-5, how similar is this to the supervision you currently receive in school. (Please leave blank if you don't receive supervision in school)	Optimism Beliefs about Consequences
Based on the definition above, on a scale of 1-5, how beneficial do you think supervision would be to you in your current role?	Beliefs about Consequences
Have you or anyone in your school received training from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service on supervision?	Knowledge Skills
If yes, on a scale of 1-5, how beneficial has this been to practice within your school?	Beliefs about Consequences
Please add any extra information to describe current supervision processes within school.	Environmental Context and Resources
Are there any specific aspects of supervision that you feel have made/would make it challenging to implement in your school?	Environmental Context and Resources Social Influences Emotion

Reflective Point

To be transparent about my research, it was necessary for me to include all the relevant ethical information and details of the study in the participant information sheet which, in turn, created a rather lengthy document. I wondered if this had an impact on participants' willingness to complete the survey as it would have taken time to read all the details thoroughly. I also wondered if those that hadn't heard of supervision were disinterested as they didn't think it applied to them.

4.2.2 Survey Recruitment

As the aim of the research was to explore how supervision had been implemented in schools, participants within the role of SENDCo or within other senior leader roles within school were prioritised as I felt these roles would hold the greatest insight into how supervision processes had been introduced and the considerations that had been at play. Although I was also interested in how supervision existed for teachers and teaching assistants, I felt that this would have been too broad a participant sample to explore within this current research.

The survey was launched at a presentation slot within a Local Authority Wide SENDCo Briefing at which there were over 65 participants attending (see Appendix 11) for presentation). Despite allowing time within the briefing for completion of the survey, only 12 responses were received at this point. As a result, contacts within the Educational Psychology Service were used to share the survey further with SENDCos and senior leaders to gain more participants. An introductory paragraph and the poster containing the QR code link were then emailed out to these contacts.

4.2.3 Survey Participant Demographics

The survey was completed by 29 participants in total and included participants across 10 different roles within school (see figure 1 in Chapter 5) and 4 different types of educational setting. These demographics are explored further in Chapter 5.

4.3 Qualitative Data Collection

4.3.1 Semi-structured Interview Participant Recruitment

Within the survey consent form, participants were given the option to take part in a follow-up focus group or interview. Participants were then contacted via email with the aim to select participants from a mix of setting types (e.g. specialist, primary, secondary) and a mix of supervision experience. I had initially attempted to organise two focus groups; one for those who had experience of supervision and one for those who did not. Unfortunately, it proved very challenging to find dates and times where multiple participants were available, and after conversations with my supervisors, it was deemed appropriate to pursue individual interviews instead. In total, I conducted 6 interviews with 7 participants (2 participants from the same setting took part in the sixth interview) across a three-week period. I had hoped for 5 interviews but, after completing the fifth interview, I received interest from two participants within a secondary setting who had not experienced supervision and felt that, as this viewpoint had not already been covered in the previous interviews, it was important to ensure this was captured.

The 6 semi-structured interviews took place virtually, lasted approximately 30 minutes and were arranged at times that suited the participants. The participants included SENDCos, Headteachers, Deputy Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Heads and represented two mainstream primary schools, a secondary school, a primary special school and a specialist hospital school (see Chapter 5 for more detailed information relating to participant demographics).

Previous informal conversations and scoping of the research area had suggested that supervision practices may be more prevalent in specialist settings than in mainstream settings. For this reason, I planned to include specialist settings within my research in the hope of drawing on more established supervision practices and any factors that may also relate to mainstream policies and practices. It was important that I was able to speak to participants who had experience of supervision as I wanted to be able to apply an appreciative questioning approach to exploring what was working well and how this had been made possible. I also included participants who had not experienced supervision, to enable exploration of some of the reasons behind the lack of supervision. I also wanted to explore how this then contrasted with those settings where it was in place and consider how barriers had been overcome.

4.3.2 Semi-structured Interview Design

Semi-structured interviews were used to allow for flexibility in the conversation. I anticipated that within the interviews there would be aspects to the implementation of supervision that would be unique to individual participants and settings and not within my own assumptions and wanted to be able to explore these as they arose. Equally, I was conscious that without some structure, some participants may be unsure of relevant information or experiences to share, and I wanted the conversation to flow as naturally as possible to allow participants to feel safe and comfortable with me as a researcher. Virtual interviews can be useful as an alternative to in-person interviews (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014) and I felt that, as it had previously been difficult to organise dates and times regarding a focus group, virtual interviews offered more flexibility.

The semi-structured interviews followed a 6-question interview schedule (See Appendix 3: Interview Question Prompts). All 6 questions were asked but the flexibility of semi-structured interviews allowed for additional follow-up questions to be asked when deemed appropriate within each individual interview. The interview schedule for the final interview contained only 5 questions due to the participants having not previously experienced supervision. The Theoretical Domain Framework (Cane et al., 2012) was drawn upon to consider how key factors of influencing change were covered (see Table 3 below). The 4D Model of Appreciative Inquiry: Discovery, Dream, Design, Destiny (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005) was drawn upon to consider how the questions could be framed to draw out strengths-based responses. The questions were reviewed with the research supervisors and prompts added to ensure clarity for the interviewee if needed.

Table 3

Interview question links to The Theoretical Domains Framework domains.

Question	Domain
Tell me about how supervision has been implemented in schools. (Discovery)	Environmental Context and Resources
Tell me about times when supervision is most effective or successful. (Discovery)	Beliefs about Capabilities Optimism Beliefs about Consequences
Tell me about how schools overcame any barriers to introducing or engaging with supervision. (Discovery)	Reinforcement Intentions Goals
What have you valued most about supervision experiences? (Dream)	Emotion
What would the ideal future of supervision look	Environmental Context and Resources

like in schools? (Dream)	Behavioural Regulation Social Influences Goals
How could this ideal future be created? (Design)	Environmental Context and Resources Behavioural Regulation Social Influences Reinforcement

The first five interviews were with participants who had previous experience of supervision and followed the same semi-structured questioning. However, the follow-up questions within the interview were bespoke to the conversation. The sixth interview was with two participants, who were interviewed together, from the same setting who had not previously experienced supervision and therefore the questions used varied slightly to account for this.

At the beginning of all interviews, the participants were reminded of the ethical considerations outlined in the participant information sheet and the aims of the research and participants confirmed they were happy to continue.

Reflective Point

Within the interviews I grappled with my role as the researcher and recognised how challenging it was at times to remain within this role and not offer my own thoughts and feelings in response. I consciously wanted to ensure I appeared engaged and intent so used active listening skills such as summarising and repeating back participants information to ensure they felt heard. It was clear that my previous association with participants impacted how much participants shared, with those that I was more familiar with sharing more reflections and more in depth responses in comparison to participants that I had no previous relationship with.

4.3.3 Semi-structured Interview Participant Demographics

Out of the 29 survey participants, 20 agreed to be contacted to take part in follow up focus groups or interviews. Following contact, there were then 7 participants who completed the interviews. Of the 7 interview participants, 5 had experienced supervision and 2 had no previous experience. 2 participants were from the same primary school but interviewed separately and another participant was from a separate primary school. 1 participant was from a medical specialist setting and 1 from a communication and interaction specialist

setting. The 2 final participants were from a secondary setting and interviewed together. See Chapter 5 for further exploration of participant demographics.

4.4 Transcription

All interviews were recorded using Google Meet and stored on the University of Sheffield secure storage (U:Drive) before being transferred to X:Drive, in line with the ethical approval of the research (see Appendix 5: Ethics Application and Appendix 4 6: Data Management Plan). Interviews were initially transcribed during recording, and then manual transcription was used to check for accuracy and incorporate verbal fillers and dysfluency in line with recommendations from Braun and Clarke (2006). Reflexive thematic analysis does not require the detail needed in other methods such as discourse analysis, but I was keen to ensure that the transcript offered a true representation of the conversations. All transcriptions were anonymised and names were replaced with participant numbers.

4.5 Analysis

Ahmed et al. (2025) suggest that in order to ensure the credibility and meaning of findings, thematic analysis needs to be conducted systematically, and interpretive decisions need to be carefully documented. Therefore, using Reflexive Thematic Analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2021) six phase approach outlined below in Table 4, allowed me to add rigour and structure to my analysis:

Table 4

Braun & Clarke's (2021) Six Phases of Reflexive Thematic Analysis

Stage	Process
1. Familiarisation of the data	Reading and re-reading, noting initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes	Systematically coding interesting features across the dataset.
3. Generating initial themes from codes	Collating codes into potential themes
4. Reviewing and developing themes	Checking if themes work in relation to coded extracts and the entire dataset.
5. Refining, defining and naming themes	Refining specifics of each theme and generating clear definitions.
6. Producing the report	Final analysis and write-up of the report.

4.5.1 Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data

Following each interview, I made notes of my initial feelings and reflections from my own experience of being part of the interview as I wanted to ensure that these thoughts were not lost once I began transcribing and acknowledged that my own thoughts and feelings would not be present in the words I said and so not part of the transcription analysis. Before transcription, I then listened back to each interview recording with a focus on active listening and focusing solely on the content of the transcription and reflected on overall feelings or themes that arose from listening to the data. I tried to ensure I transcribed each interview straight after this play-back so that I had time to be fully immersed in the data and enabled myself to become “*intimately familiar*” (p204) the data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The time spent transcribing allowed me additional opportunity to familiarise myself with the data before I began reading and re-reading the data set which is necessary to ensure that I selected relevant information appropriately (Byrne, 2022). Orthographic transcriptions (see Appendix 12) were used to ensure breaks and pauses were included (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Once all the interviews had been transcribed, I read each transcription individually numerous times, ensuring that I observed my own thoughts and reflections at each point and recorded these within a reflexive journal as advised by Ahmed et al (2025).

4.5.2 Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes

The process of coding involves identifying which aspects of the data are relevant to your research question and tend to involve either selective coding or complete coding (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Selective coding focuses on collecting instances of a certain phenomenon whereas complete coding involves identifying anything that is of interest in relation to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Complete coding was used to ensure I did not miss anything that I had not previously considered (see Appendix 13). The dataset was coded using words and phrases and multiple codes were applied as necessary in line with Braun and Clarke’s (2013) guidance. I chose to do this manually using Microsoft Word as I felt that this enabled me to strengthen my relationship with the data further and allowed me to become entrenched in the data. Initially, I worked through each individual transcript, assigning initial codes to sections of the text and using the highlighting tool to ensure my labels were clear. I made use of the ‘add comment’ tool within Microsoft Word as a way of tracking my thought process at this point and documenting my reflections. I was then able to share these comments and reflections with my supervisors during supervision. I then went back through my initial codes checking for consistency of wording in my labels used. As there was a large amount of data to assign codes to, I ensured that, within each coding session, I was responsive to my own feelings of fatigue and ensured appropriated breaks

were given to ensure that I was applying the same level of thoroughness and attention to all parts of the transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Reflection Point

I observed how challenging I found it at this initial coding stage to not begin trying to interpret and draw out themes and sought feedback from supervisors to ensure I wasn't drifting into this stage with my codes. I also observed the importance of taking time to sit with my data at times and not rush in to making links too soon as I noted how enthusiastic I was about what my data was beginning to show.

4.5.3 Phase 3: Generating Initial Themes from Codes

Pattern-based analysis is based on the presumption that any ideas which recur across a data set capture something that is either psychologically or socially meaningful (Braun & Clarke, 2013) and therefore, in the case of this research, captures themes around the implementation of supervision that recur across participants or settings. In order to generate themes, the codes from all six transcripts were merged together in order to ensure any similar codes were worded consistently. From here, I began generating themes and grouping codes and transcription quotes from across all six transcripts into one table on Microsoft Word. An inductive coding approach was used in that codes given were based on what was found in the data rather than predetermined codes. However, as the codes were combined and explored in greater depth, it could be argued that a deductive approach was taken in relation to some codes as links were made to pre-existing theories around the functions of supervision and enabling factors and barriers.

During this phase, I chose to continue to keep the transcription quotes with the codes at all times to ensure that I did not lose touch with the raw data and run the risk of codes becoming misinterpreted within the analysis. For ease of viewing, I then transferred my initial themes and corresponding codes into a simplified table in order to have a clearer overview and check for overlapping codes and themes (see Appendix 14: Table of Codes and Themes and Appendix 15: Table of Codes and Themes Revised).

4.5.4 Phase 4: Reviewing and Developing Themes

The themes were then reviewed by linking back to both the raw data and my initial research questions. During this stage, it became apparent that there were sometimes multiple ways of interpreting both the raw data and the grouped codes and so it was important for me to keep reviewing my initial codes and themes. I used the 'track changes'

tool on Microsoft Word to record the changes I was making to document the process I was going through and ensure clarity and transparency. At this point, I felt that some codes had been grouped too broadly and therefore introduced new themes in their own right, as well as considering how some themes actually felt more like subthemes. Again, I made use of the 'insert comment' function to be able to note my reasoning for changes to support my reflections and analysis (See Appendix 16: Reorganisation of Themes).

4.5.5 Phase 5: Reviewing, Defining and Naming Themes

As Braun and Clarke (2013) suggest, at this point in my analysis I ensured that I was able to clearly define the themes I had produced in order to help me identify whether the scope of each theme was clear. I used thematic maps to help consolidate my understanding of the themes and as a visual method of exploring how my themes interacted with each other. At this point, I introduced clearer subthemes which incorporated individual codes from the initial coding stage, and I continued to check back with my raw data and transcription quotes to ensure that I was continuing to interpret the data appropriately.

Reflection Point

At this point I recognised the need for support from my supervisors to reflect, clarify and have the opportunity to explain my thinking and thought processes that had led to the finalised themes and subthemes. I noted that I was torn a little at this point as I noted that some themes felt much more interpretative than others and therefore felt more innovative in terms of research results but I also recognised that I needed to keep coming back to my research aims and how they fitted within this.

4.5.6 Phase 6: Producing the Report

I then considered extracts from the transcript that would illustrate the theme and the facets around it, taking into consideration the breadth of the quotes I was using to ensure views from a range of participants were drawn upon. Chapter 5 will consider the findings of the RTA.

Chapter 5 Findings

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will consider the findings drawn from the demographic data from the quantitative survey and then consider the survey responses relating to supervision experiences. The qualitative data will then be discussed and structured around the four themes identified. Quantitative descriptive data was drawn from the 29 survey responses. Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) was used to analyse qualitative data. As this research followed a mixed methods design, with the quantitative data being used to both inform the researcher of potential interview participants and also offer a broader scope of data regarding supervision experiences, the quantitative findings will be explored first but then drawn upon when considering the findings from the thematic analysis. There were four main thematic areas and these all contained subthemes within them.

5.2 Overview of Quantitative Findings

5.2.1 Survey Participant Demographics

The survey was completed by 29 participants in total and included participants across 10 different roles within school (see Table 5) and 5 different types of educational setting (see Table 6). The majority of participants who completed the survey were in a SENDCo role which could be as a result of the survey initially being launched at the SENDCo Network Briefing. However, the survey was then also shared with Headteachers and other senior leaders. The limited number of responses from these participants may also indicate lack of knowledge or interest in the subject of supervision. The complete survey can be found in Appendix 2.

The majority of the survey participants were from mainstream primary settings. This is likely to be reflective of the fact that there are significantly more primary settings than secondary settings across the local authority rather than representative of interest. Interestingly, there are only seven secondary specialist settings in the local authority and two of these chose to take part in the survey. This could suggest that there is more interest or understanding in supervision from those in specialist settings.

Table 5*Participant Roles*

Role in School	No. of Participants
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo	4
SENDCo	13
Consultant SEN Teacher	1
Executive SENDCo	1
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher	3
Head of School	1
Headteacher	3
Head of Year	1
Designated Safeguarding Lead	1
Deputy SENDCo	1

Table 6*Participant settings*

Educational Setting by Types	No. of Participants
Mainstream Primary	19
Mainstream Secondary	5
Primary Specialist	1
Secondary Specialist	2
Other	2

Table 7 provides an overview of roles across the different settings. The participants who responded to the survey from the specialist settings included a Deputy Headteacher and a Designated Safeguarding Lead. The literature around supervision in schools suggests that Designated Safeguarding Leads have been the primary focus of supervision so far, with small scale studies beginning to extend to senior leaders.

Reflection Point

Following the SENDCo briefing presentation, I felt a little despondent at the lack of interest in completing the survey and reflected on the factors that may have influenced this. The briefing was virtual and my presentation was the final slot at 5:15pm. I wondered whether this timing had influenced the lack of interest, especially as in comparison to some of the other topics within the briefing, supervision was not an immediate concern. I also wondered whether the small number of responses reflected a general lack of interest in the topic area or a general lack of knowledge regarding supervision. And finally, I also considered the impact of myself as the researcher within this situation and how me being there may inhibit responses.

Table 7*Participant role distribution across settings*

	Mainstream Primary	Mainstream Secondary	Specialist Primary	Specialist Secondary	Other	Total
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo	4	0	0	0	0	4
SENDCo	9	3	0	1	0	13
Consultant SEN Teacher	0	0	0	0	1	1
Executive SENDCo	0	0	0	0	1	1
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher	2	0	1	0	0	3
Head of School	1	0	0	0	0	1
Headteacher	3	0	0	0	0	3
Head of Year	0	1	0	0	0	1
Designated Safeguarding Lead	0	0	0	1	0	1
Deputy SENDCo	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	19	5	1	2	2	29

5.2.2 Survey Participant Experiences

Although supervision experiences are explored within the themes, it is useful to consider the broader picture of supervision experience that the survey provides. Questions 3-14 asked about experiences of supervision (see Appendix 2). Where appropriate, the responses to each of these questions are presented by setting type, and by role and each of the questions will be considered in turn.

Of the 29 participants who completed the survey, 25 had heard of the term 'supervision' suggesting that supervision may still be an emerging practice and not yet embedded in schools. Considering that the survey was completed by predominantly SENDCos and leaders in schools, this could suggest that beyond this cohort of staff there may be limited knowledge. It should also be taken into consideration that there is a possibility that some participants did not complete the survey initially due to being unfamiliar with the term and therefore the high percentage may not be truly representative of SENDCos and leaders as a whole.

Question 3: Before today were you familiar with the term 'supervision' as a supportive process in school? (yes/no)

Figure 1 below shows how familiar participants were with supervision. Table 8 demonstrates that while mainstream primaries are familiar with supervision, there is less familiarity across secondary schools. As these are only small sample numbers no further generalisations can be made but suggest that familiarity is not consistent across settings. Table 9 demonstrates that there are still SENDCos within the local authority that are unfamiliar with supervision. Again, as it is a small sample size it is difficult to generalise but suggests that there is still a lack of awareness.

Figure 1

Response to question 3 (N=29)

Before today, were you familiar with the term 'supervision' as a supportive process within school?
29 responses

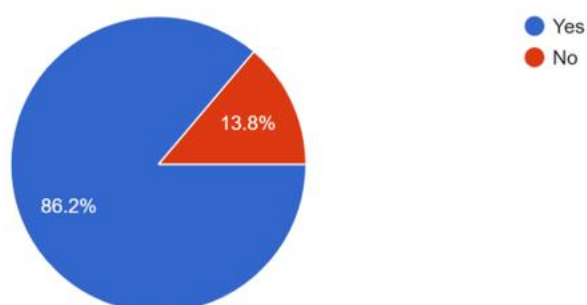


Table 8

Response to question 3 reported by setting (N=29)

Educational Setting Type	Familiar	Not Familiar	Total
Mainstream Primary	18	1	19
Mainstream Secondary	3	3	6
Primary Specialist	1	0	1
Secondary Specialist	1	0	1
Other	2	0	2

Table 9*Response to question 3 reported by role (N=29)*

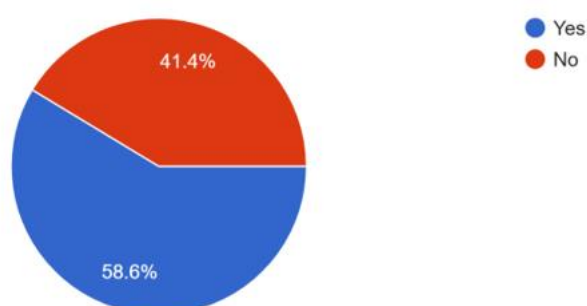
Role	Familiar	Not Familiar	Total
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo	4	0	4
SENDCo	10	3	13
Consultant SEN Teacher	1	0	1
Executive SENDCo	1	0	1
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher	3	0	3
Head of School	1	0	1
Headteacher	3	0	3
Head of Year	0	1	1
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	1	0	1
Deputy SENDCo	1	0	1

Question 4: Do you currently or have you ever experienced supervision within school? (yes/no).

Only 17 participants had experienced supervision themselves (see Figure 2). Taking into consideration that those who have experienced supervision may be more likely to participate in the first place, the overall picture across the local authority could be much lower.

Figure 2*Response to question 4 (N=29)*

Do you currently or have you ever experienced supervision within school?
29 responses



The findings shown in Table 10 suggest that there does not appear to be a consistent pattern of where supervision may be more likely to occur.

Table 10*Responses to question 4 reported by setting (N=29)*

Educational Setting Type	Experienced Supervision	Not Experienced Supervision	Total
Mainstream Primary	12	7	19
Mainstream Secondary	3	3	6
Primary Specialist	1	0	1
Secondary Specialist	1	1	2
Other	2	0	2

The findings shown in Table 11 suggest that supervision is currently being experienced by those in senior leadership roles as opposed to SENDCo roles alone.

Table 11*Response to question 4 reported by role (N=29)*

Role	Experienced Supervision	Not Experienced Supervision	Total
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo	4	0	4
SENDCo	5	8	13
Consultant SEN Teacher	1	0	1
Executive SENDCo	1	0	1
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher	2	1	3
Head of School	1	0	1
Headteacher	2	1	3
Head of Year	0	1	1
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	1	0	1
Deputy SENDCo	0	1	1

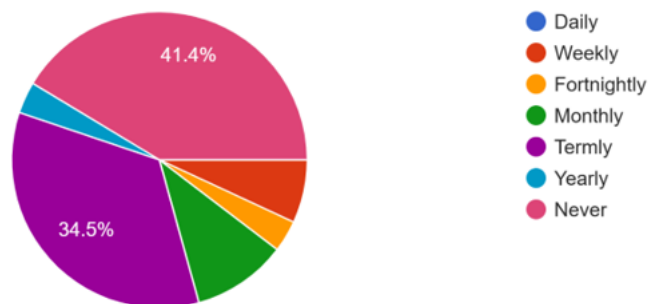
Question 5: How regularly did/do you receive supervision? (Multiple Choice)

The survey results shown in Figure 3 demonstrate that the regularity of supervision ranged from 'never' to 'weekly'.

Figure 3

Response to question 5 (N=29)

How regularly did/do you receive supervision?
29 responses



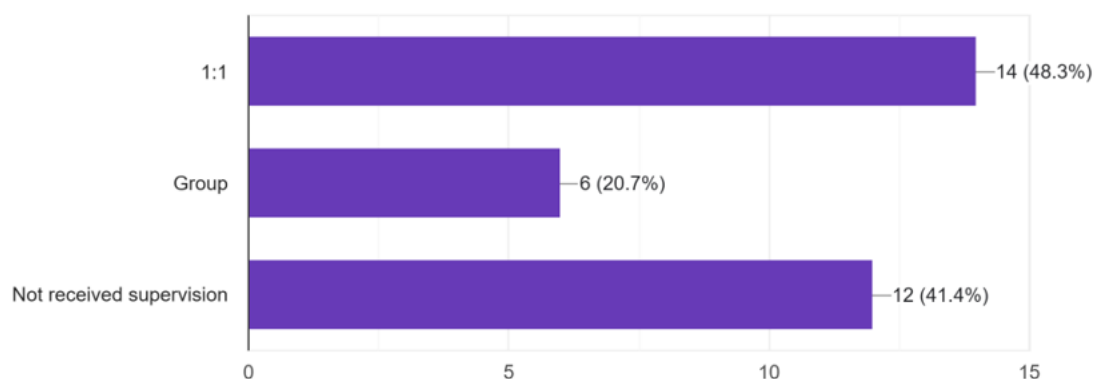
Question 6: Did this supervision take place on a 1:1 or group basis? (Multiple Choice)

Figure 4 below shows that, of the participants that had experienced supervision, 14 had experienced 1:1 supervision and 6 had experienced group supervision.

Figure 4

Response to question 6 (N=29)

Did this supervision take place on a 1:1 or group basis?
29 responses



Question 7: What is the role of the person who usually facilitates or delivers this supervision? (short answer response)

Table 12 below shows that of those who had experienced supervision, had received this from several roles with the most common being an externally paid supervisor.

Table 12*Response to question 7 (N=15)*

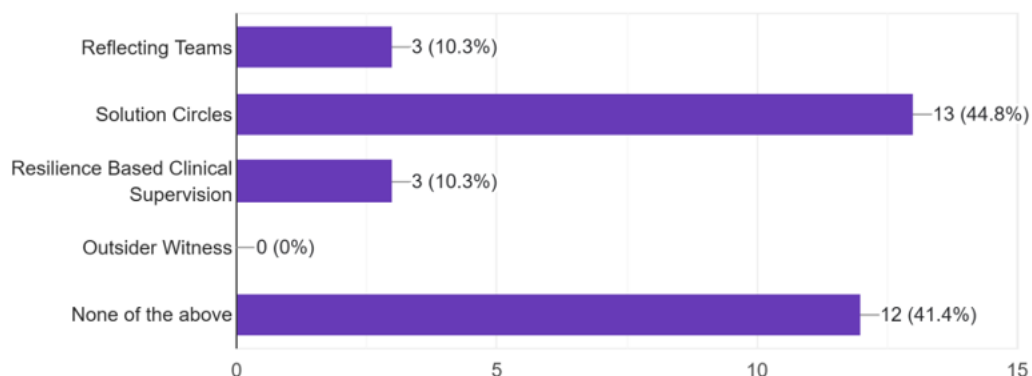
Role	Number of Participants
Trauma Informed Practitioner	1
SLT	1
Deputy Head	2
Locality SENDCo	1
Supervisor (Paid External Agency)	4
Director of Safeguarding Lead	2
Trust Lead	2
Social Worker	1
Executive Headteacher	1

Question 8: Which of the following models of group supervision are you most familiar with? (multiple choice)

Question 8 was included to try and explore the models of supervision being used across schools and highlighted solution circles as the most prominent model (see Figure 5).

Figure 5*Response to question 8 (N=29)*

Which of the following models of group supervision are you most familiar with?
29 responses

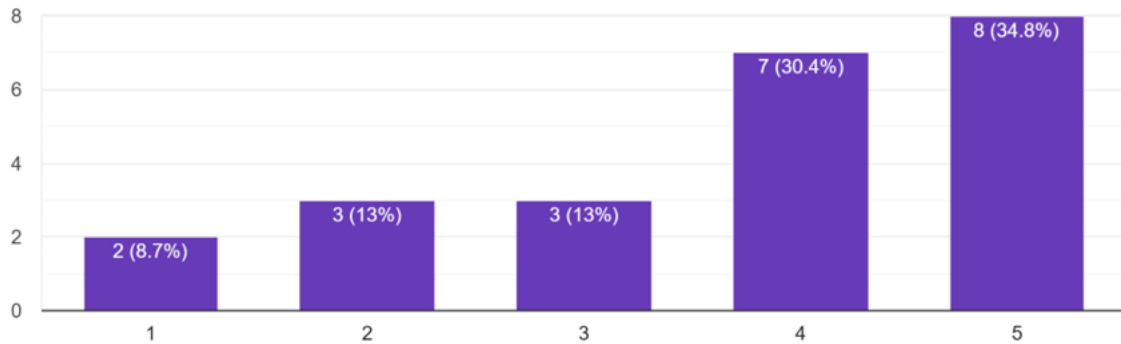


Question 9: Based on the definition above, on a scale of 1-5, how similar is this to the supervision you currently receive in school? (Likert scale from 1-5, 1 being not at all beneficial, 5 being very beneficial)

Responses to question 9 suggested that the definition of supervision given within the survey mostly aligned with the supervision participants had experienced (see Figure 6).

Figure 6

Response to question 9 (N=23)



Responses to question 9 suggested that the definition of supervision given within the survey mostly aligned with the supervision participants had experienced.

Question 10: Based on the definition above, on a scale of 1-5, how beneficial do you think supervision would be to you in your current role? (Likert scale from 1-5, 1 being not at all beneficial, 5 being very beneficial)

Figure 7 and Table 13 below shows that 26 of the 29 survey participants gave a score of 4 or more in regard to how beneficial they thought supervision would be, suggesting that there is a perceived need.

Figure 7

Response to question 10 (N=29)

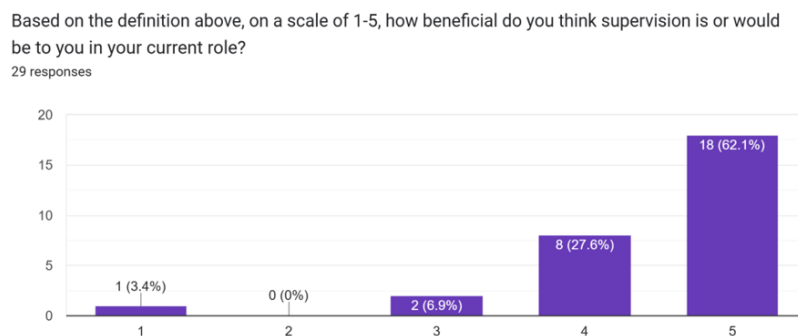


Table 13

Response to question 10 reported by setting (N=29)

Educational Setting Type	Average Score
Mainstream Primary	4.6
Mainstream Secondary	3.4
Primary Specialist	5
Secondary Specialist	5
Other	4.5

Table 14 demonstrates that most roles agreed that supervision would be beneficial. The lowest score came from Head of Year, but it should be noted that this was only 1 participant. Mainstream Secondary settings perceived supervision to be the least beneficial in comparison to other settings but this could also be linked to the fact that this setting was also the least familiar with supervision.

Table 14

Response to question 10 reported by role (N=29)

Role	Average Score
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo	5
SENDCo	4.3
Consultant SEN Teacher	5
Executive SENDCo	5
Deputy/Assistant Headteacher	4.7
Head of School	5
Headteacher	4
Head of Year	3
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	5
Deputy SENDCo	4

Table 15 demonstrates that those who were familiar with supervision perceived supervision as more beneficial to their role than those who were unfamiliar with supervision. This was the same for experience of supervision in contrast to those who had not experienced supervision.

Table 15

Response to question 10 reported by familiarity and experience of supervision (N=29)

Familiar with Supervision	Not Familiar with Supervision	Experience of Supervision	No Experience of Supervision
4.5	4.1	4.5	4.25

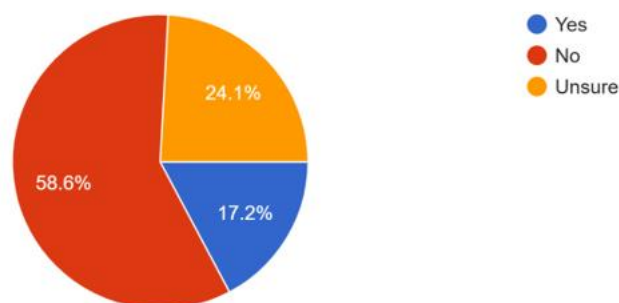
Question 11: Have you or anyone in your school received training from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service on supervision? (Yes/No/Unsure).

Figure 8 below shows that only 5 survey participants had accessed training from the Educational Psychology Service despite there being a training package available for schools to consider.

Figure 8

Response to question 11 (N=29)

Have you or anyone in your school received training from the Sheffield Educational Psychology Service on supervision?
29 responses



Question 12: If yes, on a scale of 1-5, how beneficial has this been to practice within your school? (Likert scale from 1-5, 1 being not at all beneficial, 5 being very beneficial).

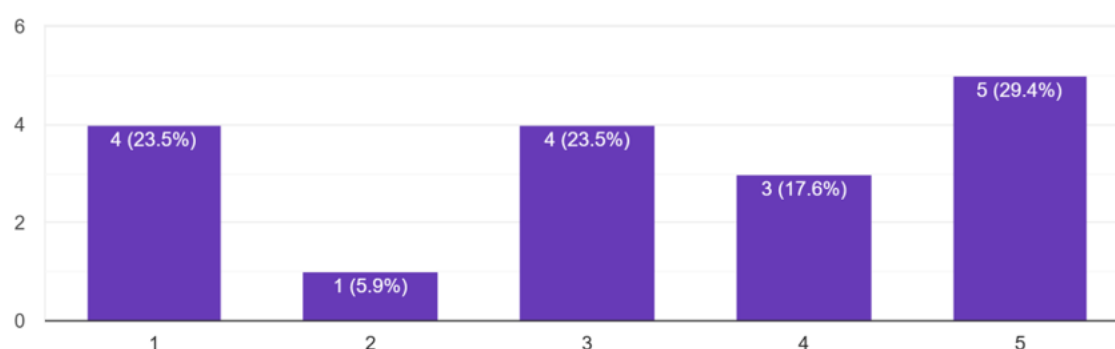
Figure 9 below shows that the majority of participants had felt that supervision training had been at least somewhat beneficial but a number of participants felt that it had not been beneficial to their practice.

Figure 9

Response to question 12 (N=17)

If yes, on a scale of 1-5, how beneficial has this been to practice within your school?

17 responses



Question 13: Please add any extra information to describe current supervision processes within school (Long answer response).

Table 16 below shows that participants identified additional details highlighting processes in place; mentioning ELSA supervision, the needs for a planning phase or training and some of the approaches already being used in schools.

Table 16

Response to question 13 (N=10)

Summary of Response
Planning phase
Private mental health support provider
Timetable in but never happened and not responsive to need
Setting would benefit from training
I am the only person in school who accesses supervision
Supervision is currently informal
We have used solution circles to support pupils but not to reflect on professional or organisational outcomes
ELSA supervision
Layered approach in school involving EP support and external support
Opportunity to articulate thought processes and decision-making processes can provide clarity of thought for heads

Question 14: Are there any specific aspects of supervision that you feel have made/would make it challenging to implement in your school? (Long answer response).

Table 17 below demonstrates that participants identified time as a key aspect that may make it challenging to implement supervision.

Table 17

Response to question 14 (N=5)

Response
Cost and time
Time and release time
Time
Time and releasing staff
Time and capacity and staff willingness to participate/lead

5.2.3 Overview of Quantitative Findings

The survey data suggests that there are mixed experiences of supervision across the local authority, with participants in this research experiencing variation in regard to regularity, structure and designated supervisors and with Solutions Circles being the most widely used model. Participants felt that supervision would be beneficial but had more mixed views in response to training experiences. These findings will be integrated with qualitative data in the following sections.

5.3 Semi-structured Interview Demographics

Participants were contacted following completion of the initial survey. As Table 18 below shows, of the 7 interview participants, 5 had experienced supervision and 2 had no previous experience. 2 participants were from the same primary school but interviewed separately and another participant was from a separate primary school. 1 participant was from a medical specialist setting and 1 from a communication and interaction specialist setting. The 2 final participants were from a secondary setting and interviewed together.

Table 18*Interview participant demographics*

Participant	Educational Setting	Role	Supervision Experience
1	Specialist Primary	Deputy Headteacher	Yes
2	Mainstream Primary	Deputy Headteacher & SENDCo	Yes
3	Specialist Secondary	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Yes
4	Mainstream Primary	Headteacher	Yes
5	Mainstream Primary	Deputy Headteacher & SENDCo	Yes
6	Mainstream Secondary	SENDCo	No
7	Mainstream Secondary	Deputy SENDCo	No

5.4 Introduction to Themes

The following research questions were explored in this research:

- What is the current picture of supervision in schools across the local authority?
- Is there a discrepancy between the desire for and the actual implementation of supervision in schools?
- What has helped schools to be able to implement supervision?
- How have barriers to implementing supervision been overcome?

Both the survey and the semi-structured interview questions had been designed with these research questions in mind, however, as a complete coding approach was used in the RTA, all themes from the data were considered in the findings. Participant's perception of the purpose of supervision was not something that was originally set out to be explored but was deemed to be an important theme emerging from the data which helped build a picture of the enabling factors and barriers which were relevant dependent on the purpose of supervision the individual was seeking. This will be explored further in Chapter 6. Using RTA, codes were drawn out from the data and grouped into subthemes. These subthemes were then grouped into 4 overall themes: Structure, Purpose, Enabling Factors and Barriers (see Figure 10).

Figure 10

Main theme map



Reflective Point

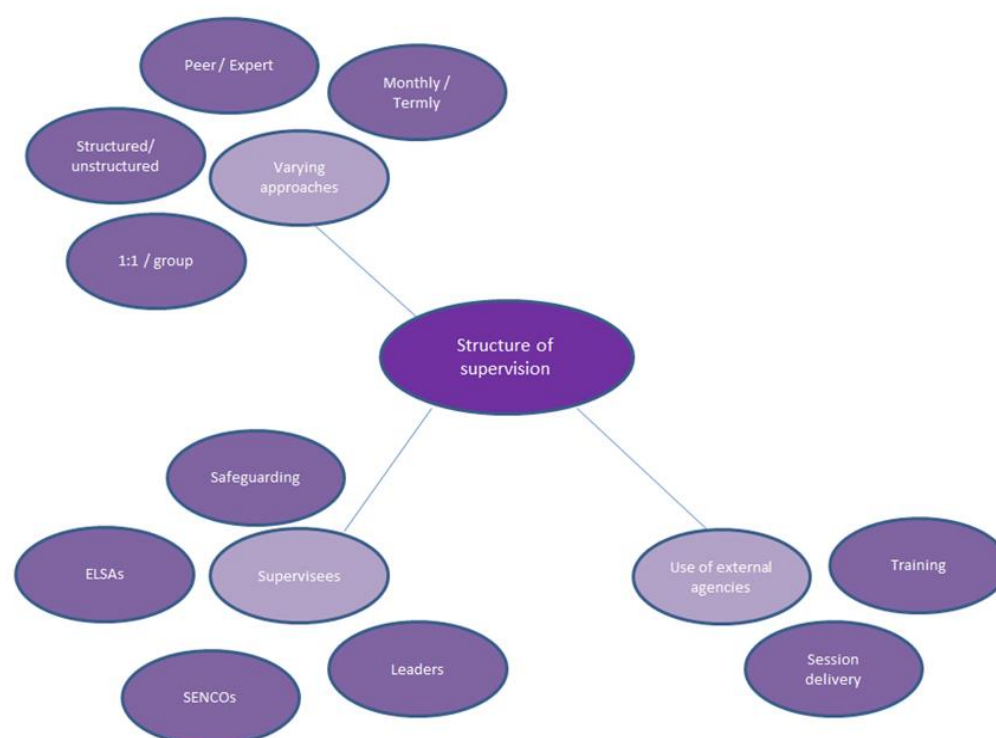
During the coding of the data, I observed that I was keen to ensure that I considered every part of the conversations and what this meant, as I didn't want to 'miss' anything crucial. As a result of this, purpose of supervision emerged. As this came out of the data, I hadn't initially considered this as a question within my research as I was keen to focus on 'implementation' of supervision from a more practical perspective. However, I recognise that I was actually very appreciative that this came out from the data anyway as, in hindsight, I feel that this gave me greater depth of understanding as a researcher regarding the complexities of implementing supervision.

5.5 Theme 1: Structure of Supervision

Theme 1 encompasses data from the quantitative survey and the six participant interviews. There are 3 subthemes representing the different aspects involved in the organisation of supervision within schools (see Figure 11).

Figure 11

Thematic map of Theme 1



There were three subthemes which came out from the qualitative and quantitative data: Varying approaches, Range of supervisees and Use of External Agencies.

5.5.1 Varying approaches

The quantitative data showed that there are varying approaches to supervision being implemented, with schools adopting a mix of 1:1 and group supervision, varying regularity, a mix of peer supervision and more expert-led supervision and varying levels of structure within the sessions themselves.

1:1 / Group

The quantitative data showed that, of the participants that had experienced supervision, 14 had experienced 1:1 supervision and 6 had experienced group supervision.

Qualitative data also reflected this pattern. Participants interviewed talked about both individual and group supervision with participant 3 experiencing both in an alternating pattern, *“one half term it’s an individual supervision session and the next half term it’s a group supervision session”*. Benefits of having group supervision included being able to draw on multiple perspectives in regard to complex situations:

“I do think there’s kind of a place for both...and I think it depending on the complexity of the case or kind of whatever it is you want to talk about, if you feel like you’ve exhausted all options having more people’s voices can be quite helpful.” (P2).

Reasons for accessing 1:1 or group supervision tended to stem from the offer available to individuals at the time. Some participants specified preferences for 1:1 supervision, stating that it was *“more about me”* (P4) or feeling that they were able to share more but all participants recognised that there was a use to both 1:1 and group.

Regularity

The survey results showed that the regularity of supervision ranged from ‘never’ to ‘weekly’. 2 of the interview participants had never experienced supervision and the remaining 5 had varied from one a month to 3 times a year. Participant 4 appeared to be having the most consistent experience of supervision: *“so it’s once a month and it’s an hour-long session...it’s on Zoom and it’s the same person every single time”*.

Peer/Expert

Participants talked of a mixture of peer supervision from perceived ‘experts’. Participant 3 talked about how peer supervision took the form of those with the same role meeting as a support network:

“It’s almost like DSL’s getting together saying what emerging issues are what their priorities are so it’s almost like er a I’m not sure informal is the right way to describe it but it’s less structured than say a solution circle would be.” (P3)

Participants also talked about supervision being provided by social workers, external supervision services and Educational Psychologists.

Structured/Unstructured

The survey responses showed that solution circles appeared to be the model most widely used across schools. Within the interview data, participants highlighted a mixture of structured and unstructured approaches with participants appearing to have personal preferences on what they found most beneficial. Participant 5 shared that: *“I kind of felt that the safeguarding supervision was probably a little bit more beneficial erm because it had structure to it so I knew what I was talking about”*. Participant 1 talked about how they were using the solution circles structure alongside other processes that they already had:

“So using solution circles and part of our MDT processes...so we can improve the erm improve how we support some of our more complex children within the classroom.” (P1)

Participant 7 recognised that a flexible approach to supervision may be needed and that there was not necessarily a ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution:

“...it's almost like a drop in session. That's how I think it should roll within schools because some weeks you don't need it and that's the reality. Some months you don't need it but there might be a particular difficult day or situation or whatever that looks like and I think having that having that allocated time would be beneficial.” (P7)

5.5.2 Supervisees

Both the quantitative and qualitative data showed that supervision was experienced by staff in a range of roles but most prominently those in leadership roles. Safeguarding leads talked of accessing supervision from safeguarding partners and social workers and SENDCos and Headteachers had accessed supervision via a Department for Education scheme highlighted to them by other leaders.

“and then the trust made us aware that the education support they're an organisation...erm the education support were offering free I think it was through the DfE I think there was like a joint kind of a joint thing where the DfE were funding them I think.” (P4)

Participants also shared that Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) were accessing supervision via the Educational Psychology Service.

“two people now that have supervision built in are our learning mentors because they have it through they deliver ELSA” (P4)

5.5.3 Use of External Agencies

Training

The data highlighted that schools were drawing on external agencies to support the implementation of supervision either through training or for supervision sessions directly. Participant 1 talked about how their school had sought support from their link Educational Psychologists to plan their journey and up-skill staff:

“we were lucky to have erm two EPs working with school who were able to tell us a lot of information to help us outline the journey that we wanted to take...at XXX School we have we have just completed a series of training sessions with our middle leaders to widen their awareness of supervision.” (P1)

Session Delivery

Although not formalised supervision, Participant 2 talked about how they used their link Educational Psychologist to discuss challenging cases:

“So I've done it more so with whoever my link EP was, whoever my link autism team teacher was...And had sort of supervision in that sense about the more challenging tricky cases erm and kind of use that allocated time for that.” (P2)

5.5.4 Summary of Findings for Theme 1

Theme 1 demonstrated that, across schools in the local authority, there is currently a mixed picture of the implementation of supervision. Some individuals are accessing supervision on a 1:1 basis, whereas some attend group supervision. Solution Circles is the most talked about structure being used in schools but equally, unstructured, more conversational, supervision is in place. Supervision is supported by peers and experts and is being accessed with varying regularity. Schools are seeking support from external agencies for both training and the delivering of sessions themselves. Those that access supervision are usually in leadership roles and in particular SENDCos, Headteachers and Safeguarding Leads.

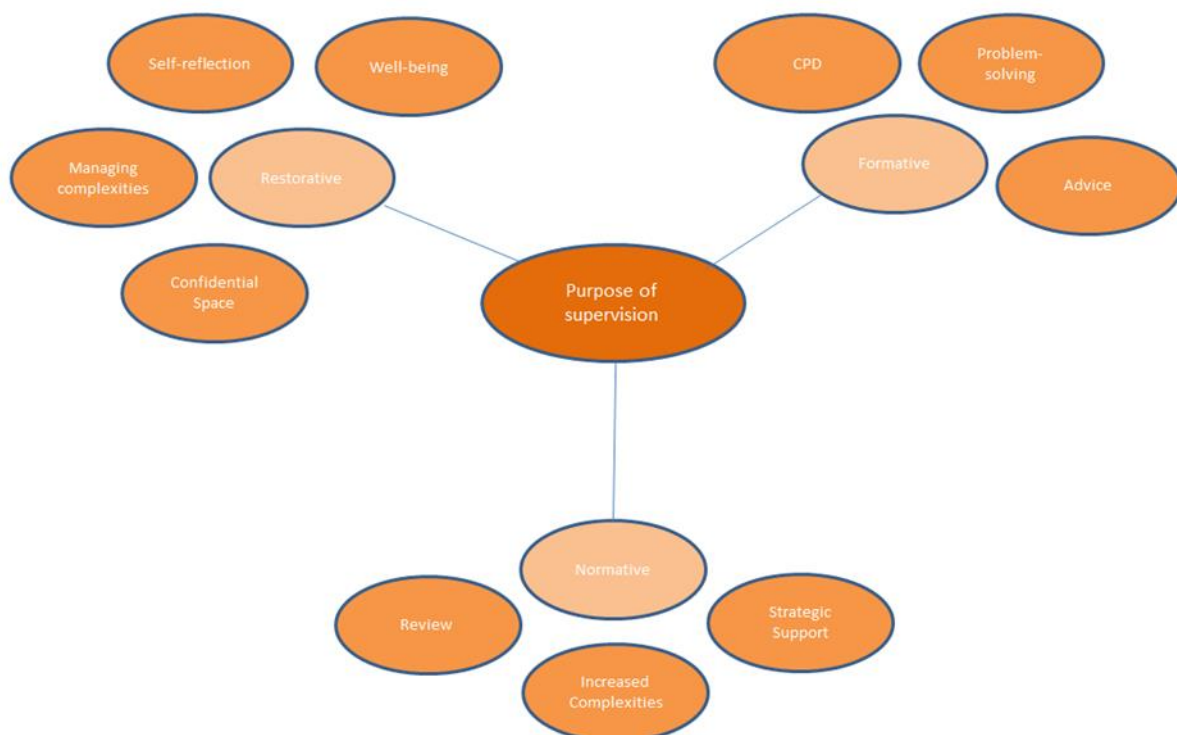
5.6 Theme 2: Purpose of Supervision

Theme 2 explored the purpose of supervision across schools. As I used a complete coding approach in my analysis, this theme was drawn out unexpectedly from the data set and was not focused on within the interview questions directly. It felt important to include, as consideration of the data overall suggested that what participants are seeking from supervision will impact what they need their supervision to look like, and therefore feeds into the enabling factors and barriers to implementation. 26 of the 29 survey participants gave a score of 4 or more in regard to how beneficial they thought supervision would be, suggesting that there is a perceived need. The qualitative data analysis was then able to offer insight into what purpose this perceived need would bring.

Purpose of supervision aligned with the 3 functions of supervision as suggested by Proctor (1986) and, as such Restorative, Formative and Normative formed the 3 subthemes. The three subthemes can be seen in the thematic map below (see Figure 12).

Figure 12

Thematic map of Theme 2



Reflective Point

It is important to note here that there are other theories of the function of supervision that may have aligned with the purposes being discussed by participants. Proctor's 3 functions of supervision align with my own understanding of what I seek from my own supervision and therefore may have influenced how I was interpreting the data and should be taken into consideration. I also chose to name the overall theme 'purpose of supervision' rather than 'functions of supervision' as 'purpose' was felt to align more with how participants talked about supervision overall.

5.6.1 Restorative

In regard to serving a restorative purpose, participants talked about aspects relating to overall wellbeing, space for self-reflection, managing complexities and providing a confidential space.

Wellbeing

Participants highlighted that supervision, when done well, provided a space which supported overall wellbeing through offering reassurance:

"I think when I used to talk to my member of staff at my other school it was almost like he didn't need to take things home and worry about things he'd discussed it he'd kind of shared what he'd done to make sure you don't go home and second guess yourself and then start worrying about had you done something to if you followed all the processes" (P6).

It also provided a space for consideration of work-life balance:

"...we'll touch on things like work-life balance and my home life and like healthy relationships and that sort of thing." (P4).

Personalisation impacted how well they felt supported:

"what I really like this is it's so specific to my to my context you know it's about It's not about me but it's about specific issues and problems that I'm having at this particular school and it can be anything." (P4)

It also provided a space to consider the impact of the job and provided protected time to offload:

“Supervision where you talk through those complex cases but also you talk through the impact it's having on you. I think that is growing now and I think that is sort of an area that probably is needing to be developed.” (P2)

It was also deemed as a safe space to manage emotions which came about through aspects of their role:

“...so there was a case that was particularly tricky erm it was quite emotionally draining erm as well as such and erm being able to being able to have the opportunities to discuss this erm with the safeguarding advisor.” (P5)

These aspects seemed to add to participant's sense of value and appreciation:

“I think staff value erm that as a school we were investing in supervision and supervision practices erm so they maybe felt heard.” (P5)

“Just having time feeling valued that actually you're valued and here's some time for you because you're important too because we do that second nature for everybody else that's part of our role isn't it we don't think twice about dropping everything for a kid or dropping everything for a parent.” (P7)

Participant 1 concluded that:

“...to talk to somebody in a in a different way from your friends and family or your work colleagues. I think it's hugely important and if more people accessed it the world would be a better place...I think even when your world is going really well I think supervision is something that we should all if I could access it once a week for the rest of my life I would do.” (P1)

This highlights the perception that supervision supports on-going wellbeing and not just response to challenge or crisis in a way that is not achievable from family and friends.

Self-reflection

Participants discussed supervision as a space for self-reflection on a personal level:

“that was a choice I made to not go with somebody that was an education person that was just looking at me as a human...rather than me as a teacher I was just a leader of a company rather than being a a school leader if that made sense.” (P1)

While also appreciating professional reflection:

‘...me and myself and my leadership skills and my own perception of things and and then more kind of erm like school priorities and kind of how as a team we might sort of approach things and improve things It's kind of that mix between the personal development and they I suppose it's personal and professional development.’ (P4)

Participant 2 talked about how supervision was used to offer alternative perspectives:

“you know if I've just not looked at something the right way and someone's gone, but have you looked at it from this angle? And you're like, no. So then it almost opens up a whole new sort of route to go down to maybe unpick’. (P2)

Managing Complexities

Supervision was discussed as a space to manage complexities around individual roles and pressures as well as regarding individual cases and seemed to stem from an overall feeling that the complexities and pressures within school had increased over time.

“They have sought separately just to support them erm externally with the the pressures of er their their leadership role within school.” (P1)

Confidential Space

Reflection Point

During the analysis stage of my research, I had initially placed ‘confidential space’ within Theme 1: Structure of Supervision however, as I came to write up my findings, this didn’t feel like the appropriate point to include it. After reflection, I felt that the quotes within the code expressed ‘confidential space’ more of a purpose of supervision that helped support the restorative element some participants were seeking from their sessions rather than as a reflection of how supervision is structured.

Supervision was perceived as providing a confidential space which appeared to then serve a restorative purpose as it ensured a safe, protected space.

“She's based really far down south so I think they try and pair you up so that it's not somebody that kind of knows the school and knows anybody that you'll know and

that kind of thing...but it's also like that protected space to be able to just have a confidential hour with somebody.” (P4)

Confidential space seemed to link with ‘trust’ which came out as an enabling factor or a barrier and will be discussed within theme 3 and 4.

5.6.2 Formative

Participants perceived supervision as having a formative purpose in that it supported skill development through advice seeking and problem-solving and had a role within continuous professional development.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Supervision as CPD was mentioned by multiple participants with participant 4 describing it as *“some of the best CPD that I’ve had for a headteacher,”* and other schools implementing it as part of *“their cycle of CPD”* in which *“every I think fourth or fifth week there’s a group a protected group supervision slot for them”*, (P3). Other participants recognised that they then applied the skills gained through supervision within their everyday practice, *“I’m able to use the skills what we’ve discussed moving forwards.”* (P5)

Problem Solving

Problem solving as a function of supervision was mentioned repeatedly by participants and seemed to be the most dominant purpose being sought by individuals. Participants talked about working through ‘stuck situations’:

“They provided me with safeguarding supervision and again that was working through erm any stuck cases erm any issues that I had and how we could resolve those moving forwards.” (P5)

While some participants expressed strongly that, in order for supervision to be deemed successful, they need to leave with solutions:

“...whereas I didn’t come away with any sort of like practical strategies or practical solutions which I think for me if I am going into supervision that’s the kind of thing I

want and it's because I'm stuck on something and I want somebody to be able to maybe help me think that through or offer things that I don't know.” (P2)

Advice

In addition to problem solving, participants also perceived supervision as a place to seek advice from someone they perceived as having knowledge or experience relevant to their role and situation:

“Whereas you know when I've spoken to the other person having theirs they've got someone who's in such a similar background and so in tune with oh and ah and had that real life experience themselves the advice has been really really successful.” (P2)

As well as an opportunity to share good practice:

“And also discussing if you need advice and things like okay, we've got this situation, what would you do? It's like sharing good practice, isn't it? as well.” (P7)

5.6.3 Normative

Participants perceived supervision as having a normative function in that it contributed to the effectiveness of their practice and offered accountability to supervisees by offering strategic support, opportunity for review and addressing the increasing complexities school staff are facing.

Strategic Support

Participants saw value in supervision to support them strategically as leaders:

“...strategically it did help talk through certain I don't know like difficulties challenges erm and talked about you know me as a leader...because I felt yeah it gave me some food for thought and it gave me some ideas of how to as a leader to think and plan.” (P2)

Participant 4 reflected that supervision supported wider whole school improvement:

"It might be about whole bigger school issues so it might be erm about I don't know I'm thinking of introducing this but I'm not quite sure how to do it because these are all the barriers and I think it's really important but I don't quite know how I'm going to do it...So it really helps with school improvement I think." (P4)

In other settings, although not currently happening, leaders were striving to use supervision as a way of improving whole-school practices:

"I think there's a place that I'd like to get to where we're using solution circles as a team of staff to solve a erm more teaching and learning based issues." (P3)

Review

Participants talked about the incorporation of 'review' within supervision in some instances and perceived this as an effective way of revisiting problems and making progress towards solutions.

"For somebody to then come back and say right so we've done this how did that go. What what went well? What didn't? What what do we need to change? So that review cycle part of it has been the most effective." (P2)

Increased Complexities

The data demonstrated an overall feeling that supervision had become more important as a response to the increasing complexities and challenges that schools felt they were facing. This applied particularly in relation to increasing special educational needs complexities:

"...my specific role is a very different starting point from when I started it because I didn't walk into a really sort of complex system of special needs. I didn't walk into the challenges that we have now. So for me it would be being mindful of the person then stepping into MY role that they're not going to grow with the school. They're coming in at the point where it's at its most complex." (P2)

5.6.4 Summary of Findings for Theme 2

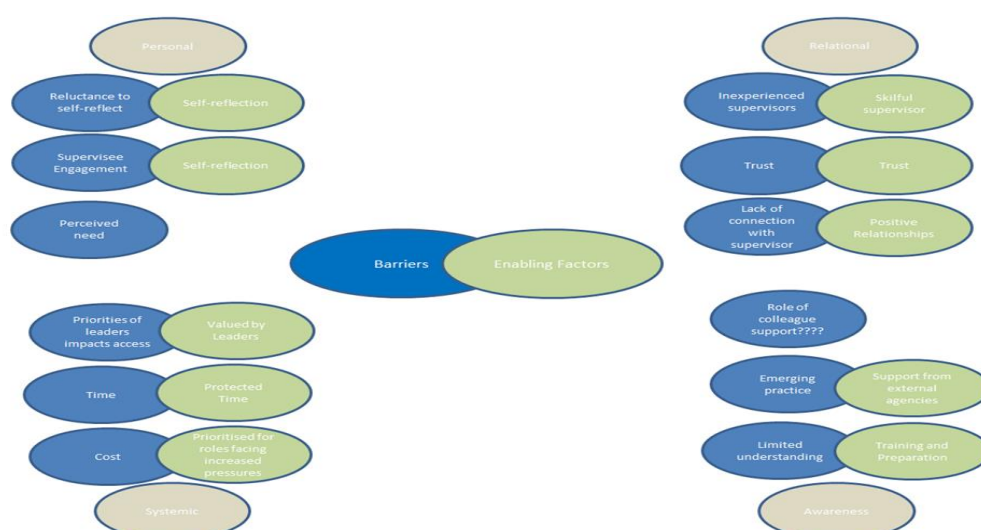
Theme 2 highlights three overarching purposes of supervision: Restorative, Formative and Normative. Although those experiencing more restorative supervision seemed to engage with supervision longer, a formative purpose seemed to be the most dominant within the data. Restorative supervision encompassed opportunities for self-reflection and managing complexities and provided a confidential space for individuals to be able to share. These factors combined, contributed to serve a wellbeing function of supervision. Within the formative purpose, participants were heavily seeking space for problem solving and advice which would then, in turn, provided CPD and moved their practice forward. The normative purpose was the least talked about but offered an opportunity for more strategic thinking with the consideration that being able to review actions enabled more accountability for oneself. The normative purpose seemed to be being driven by a need to address increasing complexities within educational settings.

5.7 Interconnectedness of Theme 3 and Theme 4

Although Theme 3 and 4 are discussed separately in this chapter, Figure 13 demonstrates the interconnectedness of enabling factors and barriers. A number of subthemes were discussed by participants both in terms of being an enabling factor or a barrier dependent on the other conditions present and research analysis of the codes was needed to determine where the individual participant was placing it. This will be unpicked further in Chapter 6.

Figure 13

Thematic Map of Interconnectedness of Theme 3 and Theme 4

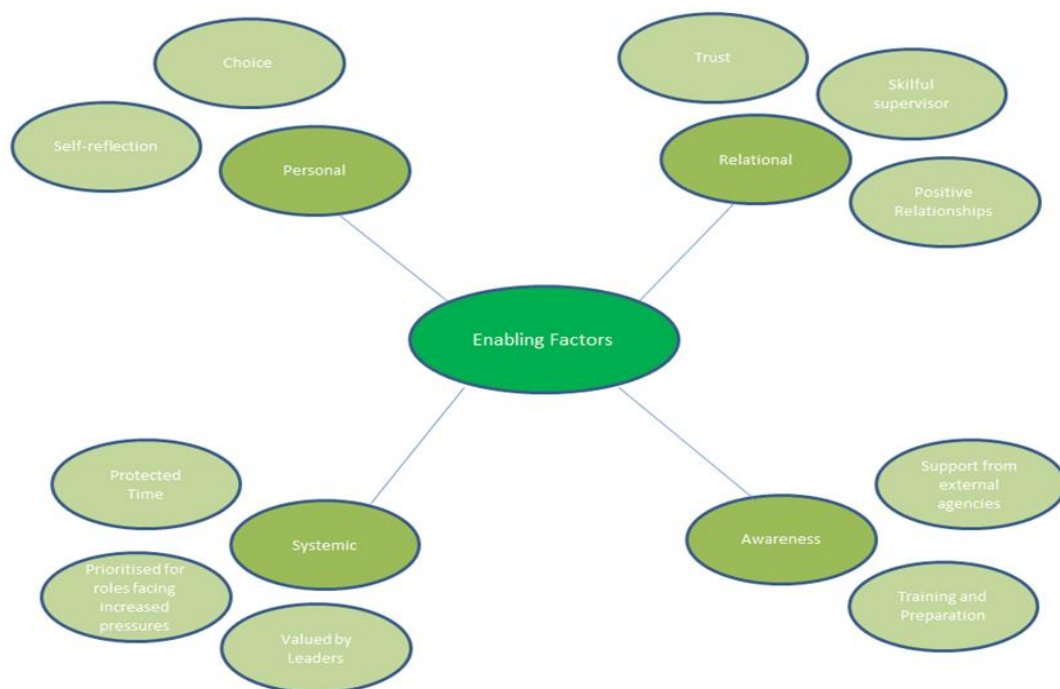


5.8 Theme 3: Enabling Factors to the Implementation of Supervision

This theme explores the factors that participants discussed that had enabled them to implement and maintain supervision practices within school. Within the interviews, participants were encouraged to talk about a time when supervision had been successful to help try and draw out enabling factors. These factors were grouped into the four subthemes: Personal, Relational, Awareness and Systemic. Figure 14 shows the thematic map for theme 3. These factors are considered further in relation to The Theoretical Domain Framework (Cane et al., 2012) in Chapter 6.

Figure 14

Thematic Map of Theme 3



5.8.1 Personal

There were two aspects of personal factors enabling supervision which came out from the data: Choice and Self-reflection.

Choice

Participants felt that having their own choice of supervisor increased the success of the supervision sessions and increased the likelihood of them continuing to engage with the sessions.

“...and that was a choice I made to not go with somebody that was an education person that was just looking at me as a human...Whereas erm the supervision I've got at the moment you didn't have a choice you just got allocated somebody.” (P1)

“I definitely would have continued it if I kind of felt like I had the right supervisor.” (P2)

Self-reflection

The willingness and openness of individuals to reflect on themselves was talked about as an aspect that had enabled participants to get the most from supervision. Participant 1 shared, *“I think it's really good for a person to allow yourself that time to reflect”* and, as such, had continued to access supervision for a sustained period of time. Participant 2 valued being supported to consider alternative perspectives: *“you know if I've just not looked at something the right way and someone's gone, but have you looked at it from this angle?”* which aligned with participant 4's views that *“she kind of helped me to number 1 reframe how I was thinking about them so it was about a little bit about me and kind of how I was viewing them”*. In turn, the success that supervisees felt they gained from supervision then made them more likely to continue.

5.8.2 Relational

Trust

Trust was talked about as an enabling factor of supervision in that, trust in the supervisor facilitated increased openness and opportunity to move forward with thinking:

“actually because I allowed myself to talk openly about that and bought in and trusted the person I was talking to we able to we were really able to unpick some things in order for me to move forward with that.” (P1)

Trust was also important to reduce fear within supervision and create a space where 'not knowing' was acceptable:

"I suppose within safeguarding sometimes it can be quite isolating as the DSL within school you know people look to you to have all the answers and sometimes I've got none so actually knowing that there's somebody else out there who I could reach out to without it being erm without it being frowned upon that I didn't know." (P3)

From a leadership perspective, Participant 4 felt that their supervisor's distance from the school allowed them to trust that they could talk openly without the supervisor knowing the people they were talking about:

"She's based really far down south so I think they try and pair you up so that it's not somebody that kind of knows the school and knows anybody that you'll know." (P4)

Skilful Supervisor

Participants described more positive experiences of supervision when they felt they had been supported by a skilful supervisor. Participant 3 talked about their supervisors skilful questioning as a way of drawing out their own knowledge:

"...what that person does really skilfully I think probably tells me without knowing that you know this that you know this do you know really skilfully just talks it through and asks you some really like why is she asking me that? And before I know it I'm like I do know this don't I? It's that..." (P3)

This was backed up by Participant 4 who felt that supervision is more effective when delivered by someone who has been professionally trained:

"I think it has to be a professional supervision who's that somebody who's been trained properly because she's really really skilled the person that I have." (P4)

Knowledge of a supervisee's role and context appeared to be a personal preference, with some participants opting for unfamiliar supervisors with no connection to their work place, while others felt that supervisor knowledge of context was an enabling factor which allowed more bespoke support:

"Someone who actually is aware of the challenges that you're faced with in such a you know such a tricky role was really really beneficial and we were able to I suppose manage my erm feelings around the case erm a little bit more effectively." (P5)

Participant 4 also noted how a supervisor's ability to empower them was beneficial.

“She kind of almost makes you feel like first of all accept that it's actually your fault a little bit...but she does that so that then you realize that you've got the power to change it as well...So she empowers you to be like no hold on this is up this is on me this is on me so I've got the power to do something.” (P4)

Positive Relationships

All participants talked about relationships within the interviews and the impact of positive relationships. Participant 3, while reflecting during the interview, came to the conclusion that *“maybe it's the relationship”* that *“allows that to be as effective it's that professionally challenging relationship that's like based on like mutual respect for each other's roles and each other's purpose in that moment”*. Participant 1 felt that having a friendly connection with their supervisor was important:

“Erm it might have just been a person that I or been a relationship thing a person that I would sit and have a cup of coffee with it it's that sort of that might have had something to do with it.” (P1)

This was supported by Participant 6 who, although not currently experiencing supervision felt that they had not needed to seek supervision because they already had a positive working relationship with a colleague:

“...but I think that relies heavily on the fact that we work well together we get on and so we're lucky in that factor.” (P6)

5.8.3 Awareness

Participants had mixed awareness of supervision but participants suggested that increased awareness and understanding of supervision was an enabling factor in implementation.

Support from external agencies

Some schools had sought the support of external agencies to either deliver training or deliver supervision sessions directly. Participant 1 talked positively about how the

Educational Psychology Service had supported their journey and increased knowledge amongst staff:

"We were lucky to have erm two EPs working with school who were able to tell us a lot of information to help us outline the journey that we wanted to take." (P1)

Another school had used the Educational Psychology Service to support change in school which had led to awareness that supervision may be beneficial:

"That's how we used our Educational Psychologist time last year to work that process through with the learning mentor team and what came out of that is that as a group of people within school that they would benefit from supervision." (P3)

Training and preparation

Participants felt that for successful implementation, staff needed to have adequate training and preparation and opportunity to ask questions before taking part in the supervision itself:

"...it would be very similar in if we were to introduce whole school supervision it would be a process of making staff familiar of it and developing their understanding before it actually happens...it's worked well where there's been a lot of developing understanding and time to process to question erm to then be ready to take it on properly." (P2)

Participant 1 felt that further training would also be beneficial to embed knowledge and practices further:

"...it would be really lovely if there was a like a full day if the EP team...so you could go and have the training maybe all in one go or sort of a series sometimes you might have say three one days over the course of a school year so you could erm find out a little bit more." (P1)

Training was also considered as a way of being able to create a whole-school approach to supervision:

"I think that if leaders were trained and managers erm were trained erm for your specific areas, you could maybe drip feed that down erm so that staff are well

equipped to be able to run supervision sessions themselves erm rather than having to buy in external support if that makes sense.” (P5)

Another helpful way of increasing knowledge and preparation before implementation was to hear stories from others who have done it and share experience:

“I’d probably want to hear some proper student voice so to speak of people who are having it and whether they think it’s worthy of it or not.” (P7)

5.8.4 Systemic

A number of systemic factors came out as being perceived as enabling factors to the implementation of supervision.

Protected time

Participants had experienced success in supervision when either they themselves or leaders above them had protected time for sessions and had shown flexibility in making this happen:

“...it needs protected time and it needs to be either some people do it after school and they’re happy to have that commitment but other people won’t want to do that and I think it’s that flexibility...” (P2)

Participant 3 identified organising lesson cover as a strategy that had enabled them to do this despite the conflict of priorities that they sometimes faced:

“...I know that I have to prioritise that time and sometimes it means getting a lesson covered because it’s not always done at a time that’s convenient.” (P3)

Although not in relation to formalised supervision, Participant 6 and Participant 7 talked about how having protected time for strategic conversations had enabled them to feel supported:

“Our vice principal’s done our timetable so that we have SEND time seven seven hours of SEND time allocated to us which means that we can’t be used for anything else...” (P6)

Protected time was often achieved through careful timetabling as Participant 3 explained “...we've put it there because it's protected so they've got a protected time once every four or five weeks where there's a group supervision” as well as consideration of how the use of the time itself was protected through the use of “*boundaried*” approaches such as solution circles:

“...that's why we kind of went for the solution circle approach because actually it's very boundaried and we've actually adjusted it so it's just five minutes on each of the bits...” (P3)

Prioritisation of Roles

When supervision was in place, it was being prioritised for roles deemed to be facing increased pressures or emotional impact such as Headteachers, Safeguarding Leads, ELSAs and SENDCos. This seemed to stem from recognition of limited capacity and time within school and, despite Participant 4's hopes that “*in an ideal world everybody in school would have supervision,*” this was not currently possible. Participant 2 felt that prioritisation would create a gradual introduction as “*it would have to start with first of all the leaders because I think it would have to start with the leaders understanding of it and the leaders protecting the time to do it to see the impact of it.*”

Participant 4 also talked about supervision as a priority for heads as “*you don't really get much headteacher training kind of specifically on how to be a headteacher,*” suggesting it was targeting a gap in professional support.

Other schools had been led by response from staff themselves and offered it out to those who felt they needed it:

“We bought in an external company erm who provided staff supervision erm to a range of stakeholders erm myself included erm but for any staff members that put themselves forward for supervision practice.” (P5)

Valued by leaders

In schools where leaders recognised the value of supervision themselves, this was then more likely to have prompted supervision to be offered to other leaders within school and led to flexible offers:

“...they just have to refer erm it can be in their own time erm but we're we're open and say, if you do need anything that we can do that within working time within the working hours.” (P5)

Where Multi Academy Trust leaders had promoted supervision to school leaders, those that had valued it had then been able to continue beyond the initial offer:

“The trust made us aware that the education support they're an organisation...Erm offering free I think it was through the DFE.” (P4)

Trust-wide approaches also appeared to support successful implementation of supervision.

“Yeah every school that's part of this trust the DSL receives that supervision.” (P3)

5.8.5 Summary of Findings for Theme 3

Enabling factors fitted into four sub themes: Personal, Relational, Awareness and Systemic. In regard to personal factors, participants benefitted from being able to choose their supervisors as there were personal preferences in what participants were seeking from a supervisor. Greater willingness to self-reflect also resulted in longer term engagement and increased openness. The supervisee-supervisor relationship was a dominant enabling factor and participants felt that where there was trust, positive relationships and a high-quality supervisor, supervision was deemed more successful and participants increased their engagement. Where systemic factors such as protected time and value of leaders were present, supervision happened more consistently. It was also deemed that leaders were overcoming the barrier of time by prioritising key roles in school rather than opting for a whole school approach.

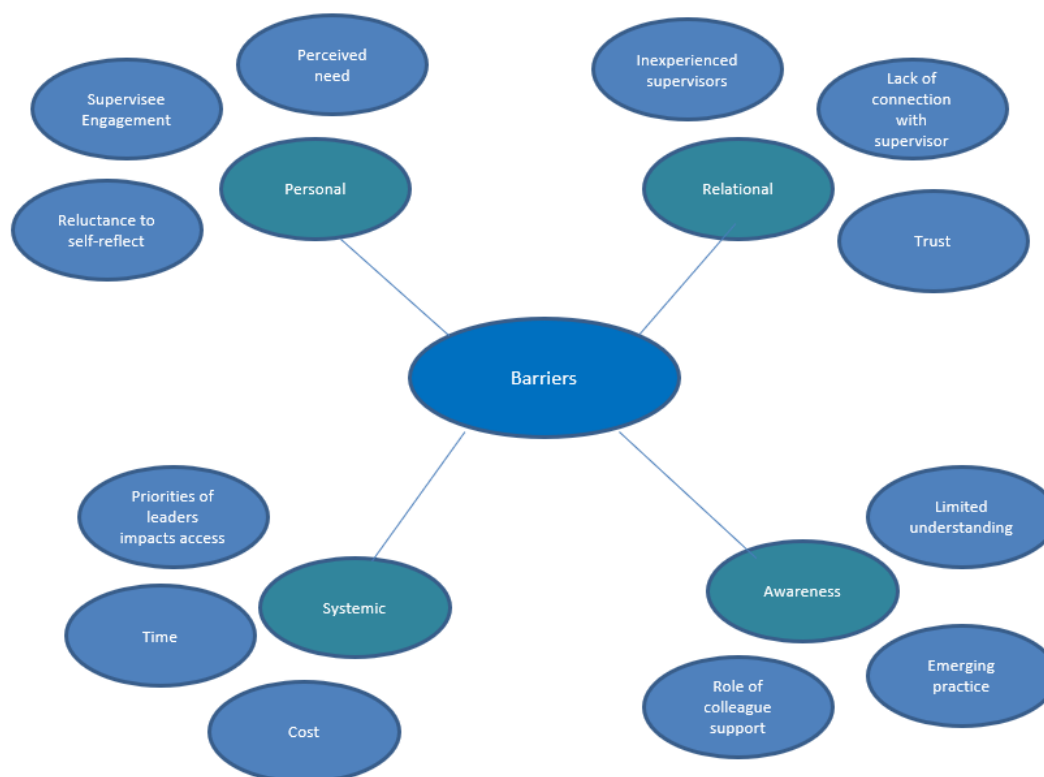
5.9 Theme 4: Barriers to the Implementation of Supervision

This theme explores the factors that were perceived to present a barrier to implementing and maintaining supervision practices within school. Within the interviews, participants were encouraged to reflect on how they had overcome any barriers to implementing supervision with a view of drawing out a solution-focused conversation rather than a problem saturated approach which aligned with the appreciative enquiry style questioning used to draw out the enabling factors. These factors were found to mirror the

subthemes from Theme 3 and so were grouped into the same four subthemes: Personal, Relational, Awareness and Systemic (see Figure 15).

Figure 15

Thematic Map of Theme 4



5.9.1 Personal

Perceived Need

Participants highlighted examples of other staff in school not recognising the need for supervision as a barrier to engagement. Participant 2 noted that some staff did not see the “*value*” and therefore this prevented them allocating time to it, whereas Participant 4 reflected that “*people just don't think that they need*” and think “*I'm handling things I'm okay*”, and attributed supervision as meeting a need when things weren't going well. This linked to Participant 4's experiences even when offered by leaders:

“I'll say to xxxx you know you have a real a really difficult case load and you deal with some really difficult families and some really hard situations and it'd be really good for you to have that sort of protected space for you to be able to reflect on this she said oh I'm fine and I cope with it fine.” (P4)

Participant 1 felt that, in some instances, the perceived need for supervision was linked to an individuals' confidence in supervision itself:

"...it's about the confidence of staff to believe in the supervision process that it will support conversations and support everybody's journey." (P1)

Whereas Participant 5 suggested that a lack of perceived need led to distrust:

"...senior leaders were maybe a little bit guarded erm to be to speak to the supervisor I kind of maybe thought that senior leaders thought what's the purpose?" (P5)

In situations where staff had engaged, as need reduced over time, this led to reduced engagement:

"Initially erm it was really well received but then as the years started to go on I think staff erm kind of dropped off so the momentum dropped off a little bit and staff maybe felt that they've got all what they had they could get out of supervision." (P5)

Participants who were not currently receiving supervision wondered if there had not been a need for formalised supervision *"because it kind of already happens."* (P7).

Supervisee Engagement

Participants shared that some individuals were reluctant to engage with supervision and therefore this impacted them, as leaders, being able to implement supervision further:

"I'd be more than willing for people to try for the six sessions and then for us to pay if they found it useful but I think it's that that's a barrier for getting people to getting more people to do it. They don't particularly want to." (P4)

Participants suggested that, if participants had been reluctant to engage, then they are unlikely to benefit from supervision and therefore there is reduced engagement in the future:

"...if you're not buying into this and wanting the best outcomes then I don't think supervision will work in the same way so for me that was hugely important." (P1)

Reluctance to self-reflect

Although reluctance to self-reflect was not stated directly by participants, analysis of the data suggested that when those seeking more practical, solution focused supervision encountered supervisors who encouraged more self-reflection, this posed a barrier to continuation. Participant 2 appeared to come to the realisation during the interview that this reluctance to self-reflect had potentially impacted their supervision engagement:

“...so I went into it probably very sceptical of I don't want to sit and talk about my life...whereas I'm a bit more like no no I'll just have the practical side erm so I think that's where maybe I didn't engage in the process as wholeheartedly as I could because I didn't know what to come what was going to come.” (P2)

This was also recognised by participant 4 who felt that some individuals feel uncomfortable talking about themselves:

“...she said I'm a little bit nervous because I don't like talking about myself...but I think that is a barrier for some people is they think it's going to just be an hour talking about myself.” (P4)

Reflection Point

This sub theme felt like an important one in regard to my positioning as a researcher. I had been conscious from the beginning that I was going in to this research being driven by the fact that, since experiencing supervision as a TEP, I had realised how beneficial this would have been in my previous role as Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo. As I had recognised such a high need for it, I was conscious that there was a risk that I was expecting that this would be the same for everyone who had experienced supervision already and needed to ensure I kept an open mind on this aspect. On analysing the data, it became apparent that, for some individuals, supervision hadn't brought them the same benefits or they didn't share the same perceived need that I had.

5.9.2 Relational

Inexperienced supervisor

The perceived experience and skills of the supervisor was felt to impact the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee and therefore impose a barrier to supervision feeling successful:

“The one that I've sought through erm through separately this year isn't as good but I think it's down to the quality of the the person leading the supervision rather than actually what we're talking about.” (P1)

Those participants who were seeking advice and solutions specific to their context, met barriers to supervision when they felt that the supervisor had limited knowledge of their context:

"I think there's no point in us going to somewhere external that doesn't know the setting or about SEN so obviously they'd have to...I got to kind of the end of that year and thought I don't feel like I'm actually getting a huge amount of advice but I just put it down to the supervisor." (P2)

Lack of connection with supervisor

The data suggested that, even for those who placed high value in supervision, lack of connection with their supervisor could impact their engagement with the supervision on a long-term basis:

"I haven't got that connection with him that I feel that I'm achieving as much from the sessions..." (P1)

Trust

Trust linked back to individuals seeking a confidential space for supervision and was deemed to hinder supervisee willingness to engage but also openness within sessions themselves. Participant 1 felt that having a supervisor who was in a senior position in school could have a negative impact on engagement:

"...there's a number of staff who really bought into it and there's one or two staff who still haven't bought into it and maybe they would if it was with somebody that they didn't know but I know you know if I sat down to do a session with some people they would really engage with it and other people that they would be quite closed." (P1)

Participant 6 talked about how lack of trust in the supervisor understanding what they did in their role would decrease their openness.

"...neither would she had been a person I would have gone to have that conversation because you do need to have some of that background." (P6)

They also spoke about the importance of trust in the supervisor's experience.

“...we look at external but again it's because I trust her erm experience she's been here quite a few times.” (P6)

5.9.3 Awareness

Both the qualitative and quantitative data suggested that supervision is still an emerging practice within schools, with some schools having very little or no knowledge of what it is or what it involves.

Emerging Practice

Of the 29 participants who completed the survey, 25 had heard of the term ‘supervision’ and only 17 had experienced supervision themselves.

Interview participants agreed that supervision was an emerging practice in schools with Participant 2 noting that there is little conversation about supervision:

“...people don't know enough about it and it's not a widely talked about sort of thing to do erm I think it's just that's why there's a gap...” (P2)

Even those participants who had experienced supervision for over a year described supervision as “*in very early days*” (P1) for school as a whole.

Participant 3 suggested that supervision may be specific to certain schools currently:

“I've been here for three years now and been a DSL for probably about 15 years and that's the first time I've ever had supervision.” (P3)

There was also evidence that, even when supervision practice was present in one school within a Multi-academy Trust, this did not necessarily mean that it was present across all schools:

“I've just had xxxx who's an exec head in the trust...she's just signed up for it so she's just about to start her first session for the free ones but she was recommended it from another head in the trust.” (P4)

Limited Understanding

Limited training and understanding appeared to be leading to misconceptions around what supervision entails which was posing a barrier to engagement:

‘...there’s probably only three of us in school, as in with me, the head and the safeguarding lead, who would probably have an understanding of what supervision is and what it should be I don’t think it’s widely known what it should be and what it is and what the purpose can be of it...’ (P2)

This was supported by Participant 4 who felt that *“they see it as more like counselling...and that you’ve got to dig deep into yourself.”*

Findings from the quantitative data suggested that those who were familiar with supervision or who had experienced supervision were more likely to perceive supervision as beneficial in comparison to those who had no experience. This could suggest that lack of awareness and training impacts the understanding of the benefits of supervision.

Role of Colleague Support

Although in schools colleague support would be perceived as a positive factor, in the case of implementing supervision it was suggested that having strong relationships with colleagues and a supportive ethos had prevented supervision being explored:

“...in other schools where they didn’t have that relationship possibly with a colleague that might that might be trickier to do but I would say we do kind of have it.” (P7)

5.9.4 Systemic

Priorities of Leaders Impact Access

Although not always identified as a direct cause, a number of the barriers to implementing supervision were dependent on the message from leaders and the priority they gave to supervision themselves. In some cases, this was not just in relation to Headteachers, but also in regard to the example set by other leaders in school too:

“...when your leaders aren’t even protecting your time to do it...” (P2)

Participants talked about more direct barriers from leaders, in respect to it being their decision whether supervision was continued and not the decision of the supervisee:

"I'm allowed four sessions and I think I'm waiting for my last erm session...I do have the option to go back to the the previous person to pay for private sessions but at this point with a nine-year-old at home erm then that's not something it's very expensive..." (P1)

Time

Time was mentioned with the quantitative data and across all participants as a factor that prevented the consistent implementation of supervision. Participant 1 talked about this from the perspective of even being able to find the time for training individuals on supervision in the first place.

"...schools are so busy...having the time to be able to do the training so people feel confident to be able to to lead some of these conversations." (P1)

Participant 7 shared that *"there's lots of talk about it but erm never seems to be any time to do it"* whereas Participant 1 noted that even when the desire is there, competing priorities can prevent time being available:

"I've had to cancel the last three sessions and reschedule them due to work commitments coming up and things that were more urgent than my supervision which sort of defeats the point of it if that makes sense." (P1)

This was mirrored by Participant 2 who reflected on the complexities and challenges of working in school, particularly in a leadership role:

"I ended up having to move them at the last minute because something came up and I I kept thinking, what should I be prioritizing here? My supervision or I don't know some crisis going on." (P2)

Supervisor availability and lack of time available between supervisor and supervisee was also raised as a barrier:

"...I have to be guided sometimes by that person's availability and if they're only available at that time and I'm teaching then I can't..." (P3)

Cost

Participants in this research were using external agencies to provide their supervision sessions which meant that supervision was a paid for service. As a result, the cost of supervision came out as a barrier to supervision. In some situations, individual supervision had ended due to lack of funding from school:

"I do have the option to go back to the the previous person to pay for private sessions." (P1)

In some schools, cost was an implicating factor for supervision being able to be rolled out wider in school, beyond school leaders, as not only was there a cost for the service, but also a cost to be able to release staff in classrooms:

"...lots of money that's it because then we could release people we could pay for it we could yeah just money...and I think that's probably the barriers of really having it on a whole school I think it would be really really expensive." (P4)

5.9.5 Summary of Findings for Theme 4

The barriers to supervision were grouped into the four sub themes of Personal, Relational, Systemic and Awareness. Personal barriers to supervision being sought stemmed from individuals not perceiving a need for it. Once accessing supervision, the success of supervision was impacted by individual supervisee engagement as well as a reluctance to self-reflect. The relationship between supervisor and supervisee became a barrier when individuals did not trust or connect with their supervisor or if they perceived that the supervisor did not have the skills or knowledge the individual was seeking. Systemic barriers of time and cost were identified as well as the priorities of leaders in school having an overall impact on whether supervision was implemented and embedded. Supervision was found to still be an emerging practice in schools with limited understanding leading to misconceptions. In some cases, supervision had not been implemented due to there already being other forms of colleague support in place.

Chapter 6 Interpretation and Discussion

6.1 Overview of chapter

The aim of this research was to explore the implementation of supervision in education settings across one local authority. This chapter will interpret and discuss the research findings in relation to this aim and the following research questions:

- What is the current picture of supervision across schools in the chosen local authority?
- Is there a discrepancy between the desire for and the actual implementation of supervision in schools?
- What has helped schools to be able to implement supervision?
- How have barriers to implementing supervision been overcome?

Four main themes were identified: Structures of Supervision, Purpose of Supervision, Enabling Factors and Barriers to Implementation. The key findings from these themes will be discussed in relation to existing literature and policy highlighted in Chapter 2 and in regard to existing theories. The current study will then be critically evaluated and limitations of the research considered.

6.2 Overview of Key Findings

6.2.1 Overall Summary

This research suggests that, while supervision is still deemed to be an emerging practice within schools and the structure and experience of supervision varies across school settings, school staff are finding ways to overcome barriers and implement supervision effectively and extend to roles beyond Designated Safeguarding Leads. Findings suggested that there is individual variation in what is deemed to be the purpose of supervision, but school staff agree that it serves as a space for problem solving and reflection. Enabling factors and barriers to implementing supervision were often interconnected, with the relationship often being dependent on systemic practice and the power of leaders and how presenting barriers had been addressed.

6.2.2 Summary of Findings in Relation to Research Questions

What is the current picture of supervision in schools across the local authority?

The research suggested that supervision is still an emerging practice within schools across the chosen local authority, with individuals experiencing both 1:1 and group supervision delivered by EPs, social workers and external supervision agencies.

Is there a discrepancy between the desire for and the actual implementation of supervision in schools?

The research suggested that the perceived need for supervision was greater than the experience of supervision currently on offer overall. However, the research also suggested that, in some instances, supervision is being offered in educational settings but individuals have chosen not to take up the offer.

What has helped schools to be able to implement supervision?

The research suggested that schools have been most successful in implementing supervision when they have used a clear, gradual approach to implementation and delivered training around what supervision is as part of that process. In educational settings where leaders value supervision and therefore prioritise time within the timetable, supervision is more likely to be maintained. Increased engagement in supervision was evident when participants felt that the purpose of the supervision aligned with their needs and a positive relationship with the supervisor had been established.

How have barriers to implementing supervision been overcome?

The research suggested that barriers to supervision were overcome when thought had been given to increasing understanding and addressing misconceptions around what supervision is. Prioritisation of time and allocation of budget for providing supervision had meant that supervision was able to be delivered regularly. Where flexible approaches to supervision and choice of supervisor had been incorporated, participants talked of longer-term engagement. Individual engagement in supervision relied on skilful supervisors, where participants were able to establish trust in the supervisor and a belief that they had the skill set needed.

6.3 Discussion of Themes in Relation to Literature

6.3.1 Structure of supervision

Theme 1 demonstrated the range of supervisory practices currently being used in schools and provided evidence for the research question 'What is the current picture of supervision across schools in the chosen local authority.' As will be discussed further in the limitations, this research focused on the experiences of SENDCos and senior leaders within school as my own personal experience suggested these were the most likely to be experiencing supervision and therefore best placed to offer insight to how supervision can be implemented. Participants identified that those roles perceived to be facing most challenges had been prioritised for supervision, this included leadership roles, SENDCos, Safeguarding Leads and those within pastoral support roles. Barnado's Scotland's discussion paper calling for "*a national conversation about the support available for the mental health and well-being of teaching staff and consideration of the role of Professional or Reflective Supervision within Education*" (Lawrence, 2020, P3) highlighted a lack of professional supervision or specified time for reflection. This research aimed to build on this and explore how this had moved on in the last 5 years and understand the experiences of staff within one local authority.

As there is currently no government-wide formalised expectation or policy relating to the implementation of supervision, in most cases, an individual's access to supervision was found to be determined by the ethos and culture of leaders and the resources available. This meant that offers of supervision were found to be inconsistent and varied across settings with participants accessing 1:1 and group supervision as well as structured and unstructured models. The findings suggested that Solution Circles is the most prominent solution-focused model being applied within schools, with its time-focused approach appearing to be most adaptable to busy school settings. Where leaders deem supervision as a priority, they were seeking external support to provide training and deliver supervision sessions to staff rather than attempting their own facilitation.

6.3.2 The purpose of supervision

In Chapter 2, it was acknowledged that there are varying definitions of supervision. The aim of this research was not to define supervision; however, it is useful to refer back to definitions when considering the perceived purpose of supervision. Definitions draw on purposes such as improving quality of work and client relationships and development of self, practice and the wider profession (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020) and providing best possible service to clients (Scaife, 2001). Hawkins and Shohet (2007) refer to the three functions of

supervision as: developing supervisee skills and competence (educative); safeguarding (improving the quality of work) (managerial); sustaining and supporting the supervisee (supportive). Although not too dissimilar, Proctor (1986) presents the three functions of supervision as Restorative, Formative and Normative and previous research suggests that teachers seek supervision which is objective, solution focused and confidential with opportunities to reflect, offload and feel contained (Rae et al., 2017).

The Department for Education (2015) defines supervision as “*a professional conversation*” and participants within this research aligned with this view, however, Theme 2: Purpose of Supervision drew out that the perceived function of supervision was susceptible to individual differences, with participants potentially seeking different functions or purposes of supervision at different points of practice.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the purpose of supervision was drawn out through complete coding and not linked directly to an initial research question. It was deemed appropriate to include as it offers a foundation for the enabling factors and barriers and enables deeper sense making of how participants perceive these factors. This research suggests that individuals do not all seek the same purpose of supervision and some seek multiple aspects potentially within the same session. As a result of this, the enabling factors and barriers to implementation may vary between individuals depending on how much they impact the purpose they are seeking. Therefore, it felt impossible to exclude this from the interpretation of the data.

Theme 2: Purpose of Supervision drew on Proctor’s Functions of Supervision (Proctor, 1986) and subsequently produced the subthemes: Restorative, Formative and Normative. Despite drawing on Proctor’s Functions of Supervision to support my understanding of perceived purpose, I chose to describe the overall theme as ‘purpose’ as this naming appeared to align more closely with the way in which participants talked about these areas. For participants in this research, the restorative, formative and normative aspects appeared to be more in relation to why supervision was needed rather than the role that it performed. This subtle difference again adds to the overall feeling that supervision was being implemented at times of increased complexity or emotional impact.

Formative Purpose

Participants in this research spoke most about the formative aspects of supervision. This aligns with previous literature which suggests that supervision in schools offers an

opportunity to develop practice and impact outcomes of young people (Bainbridge, 2020) and has a focus on personal and professional development (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010). This finding also aligns with research from within Educational Psychologist supervision where the perceived purpose was to talk through cases and offer advice and guidance (Callicott & Leadbetter, 2013). The data highlighted that participants were in need of spaces where they could problem solve and seek next steps with the suggestion that there is little time allocated to this within the realms of the usual school day. As suggested by the DfE's findings (2025), supervision may play a role in providing continuous professional development for leaders.

Restorative Purpose

Restorative support came through as the next strongest purpose of supervision. Research suggests that supervision sessions can help individuals reflect and re-evaluate personal values and professional identities (Parker et al., 2012; Hurry & Russell, 2022; Lawrence 2020) and provide powerful restorative experiences (Reid and Sloan, 2019, Stringer et al., 1992) and emotionally containing spaces (Hulusi and Maggs, 2015). Participants in this study felt that supervision provided a unique space to self-reflect and consider other perspectives which might not be ordinarily available in other time or space within school. Participants spoke of seeking a restorative purpose of supervision, seeing it as beneficial to wellbeing, a place to offload and share complex situations and a space to seek reassurance. The need for reassurance in a safe space seemed to highlight the isolation felt by staff in certain roles and a sense that they would usually be working things out on their own otherwise. The way participants spoke about being empowered and supported to make realisations on their own, could potentially add to the reasons why participants then continued to engage, suggesting supervision was not just about what they gained from the session but about the way the session made them feel. This supports findings from Gardner et al. (2022) which identified reflective circles as supporting awareness of other perspectives and building confidence to seek change.

Concerns have been raised over the impact of poor wellbeing on the supply of school leadership (NAHT, 2021) and additional responsibilities negatively impacting mental health (Education Support, 2023). The literature suggests that there is a retention crisis amongst school staff (McLean et al., 2024), the wellbeing of secondary school teachers is below the average of the general working population (Evans et al., 2018), and more than 78% of SENDCos are considering leaving their role (SEND Digest, 2025). Based on this, providing

processes which support teacher wellbeing seem more important than ever and support Forrest's (2024) suggestion that, by having time out regularly to attend to our own needs, we can better attend to the needs of others, and thus support staff retention. The restorative purpose of supervision found in this research would also support findings from the DfE (2023) that there is a need for supervision to support school leaders manage the pressures of their role and may align with future proposed reforms to the schools and SEND systems in England (DfE, 2026) which aim to provide *"safe and confidential space to develop new strategies to manage their resilience and capacity to thrive in their role,"* (p86).

Normative Purpose

The normative purpose of supervision provides accountability and ensures the safety and effectiveness of the supervisee's practice (Proctor, 1986). This research suggests that, although not sought by all participants, supervision offered a space to seek strategic support, manage the increasing complexities of school life effectively and offer a reviewing option which enabled participants to be supportively held to account for their practice. This mirrors Sturt and Rowe's (2018) suggestion that supervision can be used by leaders to ensure they are coping with the demands of the job and supports previous suggestions that supervisory discussions influence headteacher practice which, in turn, influences staff practice (Forrest, 2024) and aids management of workload (DfE, 2023b). It was felt that the normative purpose was particularly being driven by the increase in complexity in schools and participants recognising a shift over time in the need for supervision in comparison to historically. As mentioned previously, staff retention in schools is an ongoing concern often meaning that staff roles change frequently. Sturt and Rowe (2018) found that Deputy Safeguarding Leads and all the staff they supervised reported a development in knowledge and skills and a clearer understanding of their roles in safeguarding students through supervision. The normative purpose being sought by participants in this research also suggests that staff need a space to seek strategic support to ensure they are completing their role effectively.

Reflection Point

It is important to note that the interpretation in regard to increasing complexities may be influenced by my own experiences as a SENDCo and Assistant Headteacher. I had felt that needs and complexities had increased in the 15 years that I had been teaching and therefore I may be interpreting participant's view from a biased perspective.

6.3.3 Enabling Factors to Implementing Supervision

Sturt and Rowe (2018) suggest that for effective supervision in schools, supervision policy, agreement between supervisor and supervisee, recording of supervision and its review have to be embedded in the foundations of the process. Within this research, the enabling factors that appeared to be supporting the implementation of supervision in schools were found to be influenced by personal factors, relational factors, systemic factors and an overall awareness of supervision. These align with some of the standards starting to be stipulated within local authority safeguarding supervision policies (Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership, 2025, Leeds City Council, 2020).

Personal Factors

Within this research, personal factors which enabled supervision were the opportunity to make choices regarding supervision and a willingness to self-reflect. This theme highlighted the individual differences at play within creating the right supervisory environment. Where participants had chosen to take part in supervision, they spoke much more positively about the process and had engaged for longer periods of time. Negative stories around supervision were linked to participants feeling that they had not had a choice in either the structure of the supervision or the supervisor facilitating the session. Participants valued having information beforehand about their supervisor's background to support them in making their decision.

Opportunities for self-reflection are suggested as being needed for teachers to be able to work through tensions that may emerge between their values and their roles (Blick, 2019). Participants in this research, who were willing and able to self-reflect during sessions, spoke most passionately about the need for supervision and had the most desire to continue and actively promoted others partaking in supervision. Participants felt supervision had been successful when they had been skilfully supported to consider their own role within a situation and therefore the power that they had to make changes.

Relational Factors

As anticipated, relational factors influenced the success of supervision and therefore how well supervision was maintained. It has been previously suggested that teacher's wellbeing is positively impacted by supported school communities and safe environments (Roffey, 2012) and this was supported in this research by the subtheme of trust. Participants

felt they needed to be able to trust the supervisor and so often sought external supervisors with no connection to the school. Trust also enabled participants to be more vulnerable, resulting in deeper reflections and more openness which, in turn, seemed to impact the overall success of the supervision.

Participants talked about the benefit of having a skilful supervisor and reflecting that, when supervision was done well, it often involved a supervisor who was able to empower individuals as well as encourage self-reflection and problem solving. This research suggests that positive supervision happened when supervisors created a safe space where natural questioning promoted openness. These soft skills are often associated with Educational Psychologists which may support previous research that has found benefits to group consultations facilitated by Educational Psychologists (Stringer et al.,1992) and mirrors previous research suggesting that the expertise of the supervisor themselves enables a constructive supervisory environment (Reid & Sloan, 2019).

Awareness of Supervision

This research found that participants perceived that the successful implementation of supervision across multiple staff members was dependent on how schools had increased the understanding of supervision. Where schools had invested time in training and conversations around supervision and supervision policy, schools had had greater engagement from staff. Reid and Sloan (2019) suggested that supervision should not be imposed on teachers, which combined with the findings from this research, suggests that in order for supervisory practices to be meaningful and effective; schools need to invest time and preparation into the introduction of supervision in schools. This links back to the limited availability of local authority policy and guidance around wider implementation of supervision in schools. As noted in Chapter 2, where guidance is available, it is predominantly aimed at supervision for Designated Safeguarding Leads (Co-op Academy Leeds, 2025) and has yet to extend to wider roles. More recent publications (Supervision in Education: Quality Standards Framework, 2025 and Professional Supervision: Guidance for SENDCOs and School Leaders, 2020) have begun to try and address this but this research would suggest that there is still limited impact or knowledge of these.

Systemic Factors

Rothwell et al. (2021) identified regularity, within protected time, in a private space and delivered flexibly as enabling factors to clinical supervision. Based on this research, similar systemic factors were found to enable supervision with a focus on supervision being valued by leaders, time being protected and high-pressured roles being prioritised.

The findings from this research suggested that the value given to supervision by leaders influenced not only the success of supervision, but also how supervision was implemented. In the most positive examples, leaders proactively encouraged supervision practices by offering to pay for external supervisory services and by providing regular, protected time for individuals to access this. This supports the idea that leaders having a shared goal and understanding and supportive structures being in place influences staff wellbeing (Bamford, 2025) and suggests that by protecting space and time for reflective practice, staff will feel increasingly supported and valued.

This research suggested that, in order to manage the competing priorities and budget allowance, supervision is initially being aimed at leaders in school. As noted previously, it is important to consider that the research itself was targeted at leaders within school so may not be a representation of the complete picture, but participants' experiences generally appeared to align with this assumption. This mirrors Carroll et al.'s (2020) work which focused on SENDCo supervision and concluded that, in order for their supervision to be effective, a school-wide strategic approach and support from the leadership team was essential.

6.3.4 Barriers to Implementing Supervision

Barriers to implementing supervision were focused around the same four key areas as enabling factors: Personal factors, Relational factors, Systemic factors and Lack of awareness.

Personal Factors

Personal barriers were centred round lack of perceived need and reluctance to self-reflect which led to lack of supervisee engagement.

Opportunities to reflect allow teachers to work through tensions between their values and the role they are delivering (Blick, 2019) suggesting providing space in school to reflect is key. However, in this study, that space was dependent on the teacher's willingness to

reflect. Although a reluctance to self-reflect did not necessarily lead to unwillingness to engage in supervision completely, it was interpreted that those who had engaged more reflectively with supervision spoke most passionately about the benefits of supervision. Participants who had been seeking more practical advice had then been reluctant to engage when reflection had been a focus for the supervisor. This could be reflective of the fast-paced environment of schools and a need to continuously be moving forwards and therefore not allowing time for reflection. Interestingly, one participant seemed to acknowledge this within the interview space and questioned whether they had impacted the success of the supervision due to them not being willing to open up more. It appeared that even creating time and space for thinking within an interview process had been enough to provide some level of reflective thinking. Individual's reluctance to reflect is interesting to consider when we take into account the current efforts in school to support mental health and encourage young people to explore their own feelings and emotions but yet adults are not necessarily ready to do this themselves.

Participants also suggested that some school staff did not feel there was a need for supervision, which although suggests a supportive ethos in school, could also be linked to the misconceptions identified by participants around supervision being ~~tot-talk about~~ ~~problems~~ "dig deep into yourself" (Participant 4). It should also be considered that, depending on how supervision time is managed, this may be taking time from tasks that staff perceive as more of a priority. This suggests that, in order for supervision to be successful, careful consideration needs to be taken for individual differences and individuals need to feel part of the process without their being an impact on existing workload.

Relational Factors

Participants' experiences of supervision were heavily influenced by the supervisory relationship. Breakdowns or incompatibility in relationships led to disengagement and less useful experiences. Participants seeking more formative purposes of supervision were less likely to engage if they perceived that their supervisor did not have the appropriate knowledge or experience to support them in their role specifically. This suggested that where supervisees and supervisors had not been carefully matched, there was likely to be less impact gained from the process. There is currently no guidance on the qualifications or training required to deliver supervision in educational settings and limited training routes available (Supervision in Education Network, 2025) suggesting that there is a need for

further exploration into how supervisees can be guaranteed a positive experience when entering into supervision in school.

Systemic Factors

This research found that systemic barriers hindering supervision were lack of prioritisation from leaders, lack of time and cost of implementing supervision. This mirrored the DfE's (2023b), Rothwell et al.'s (2021) and Lawrence's (2020) barriers of lack of time, cost implications and lack of engagement from leadership.

Previous literature has identified that systemic level changes are needed when considering supporting teacher wellbeing and emotional experience (Blick, 2019; Bamford, 2025). Although participants talked about timetable adaptations and introduction of training, there was only one setting that had considered the policy around supervision implementation and as a result seemed to be better placed to offer supervision more widely within their setting. In other settings where leaders did prioritise supervision, lack of policy or clear processes may have hindered consistent and wider implementation. This aligns with Hawkins and McMahon (2020) who suggests that supervision culture can be seen through the extent that it is prioritised. In other helping professions, supervision is part of policy as well as a stipulation of associated registration agencies (HCPC, 2024) which supports the development of practice (Ashby, 2020).

Availability of time and protection of time in busy school environments is a common barrier to implementing change or practice (Stringer et al., 1992) and, as anticipated, was spoken about within this research. Interestingly, although present in interviews with all participants, whether it became a barrier or not appeared to be linked to how willing leaders were to overcome it and how much supervision was prioritised as a beneficial use of time.

As schools do not currently have the expertise or training needed to implement supervision 'in house', settings are relying on the use of external support to deliver training and supervision sessions. In an ever-tightening school budget, this is costly and, understandably, difficult for leaders to implement without thorough consideration. Even in examples where Educational Psychologist time was being used, this is also at a cost when they are operating on a traded model of service delivery. Previous literature suggests that by training educators to become supervisors, supervision can become more financially sustainable (Carroll & Esposito, 2020) but the current research suggests that internal supervisors would not necessarily be welcomed by supervisees seeking confidentiality and

anonymity or where there is a personal preference for supervisors who are external to their context. Participants spoke about the benefits of DfE funded supervision they had accessed but, at the time of writing this, applications to this service are currently paused due to increased demand.

Awareness of Supervision

The findings highlighted that supervision is still an emerging practice within schools and, in this local authority, does not appear to have advanced much beyond findings that only 90 of 402 respondents had experienced supervision (Lawrence, 2020). Even where participants had experienced supervision themselves, there was limited evidence of it extending widely within schools. It seems schools still have a limited understanding of supervision and what it can bring to a school which, in turn, is leading to misconceptions and reluctance to engage even when offered in some cases. This does not appear to have moved on much from Westergaard and Bainbridge's findings (2014) that supervision is perceived to have a monitoring function. Resistance to change can often be fuelled by fear of the unknown and lack of information or no perceived benefits (Hawkins et al., 2020) which could explain how misconceptions around supervision are preventing supervision being developed further in schools.

Interestingly, supportive colleagues in school could pose a barrier to supervision being sought. Participants who felt that they had positive colleague connections did not necessarily feel that additional supervision was needed, although there were reflections on how this was not always what they had experienced and was also dependent on the time they were allocated with those colleagues. Although workplace social support and supportive school communities can provide positive support for teacher wellbeing (Kinman et al., 2011; Roffey, 2012), it needs to be considered whether this alone is enough to support all three of Proctor's functions of supervision or whether it is solely a restorative support.

Regarding the psychological underpinnings of supervision, the findings suggested that participants placed importance on the supervisory relationship and how this influenced how participants experienced supervision. In line with Bion's (1959) concept of containment, findings suggested that participants needed to feel trust and a relational connection with their supervisor as well as have an understanding of the purpose of the sessions in order to experience psychological safety. This suggests that the initial contracting of supervision will play an important part in beginning to lay the path for psychologically safe supervision to occur. A clear agreement would allow supervisees to understand the boundaries and

expectations of supervision as well as logistical aspects such as frequency, roles and responsibilities which would, in turn, reduce uncertainty and feel safer when bringing emotionally complexities to supervision.

The research suggested that, where participants had had negative experiences of supervision, they had been unlikely to engage in supervision in the future. Literature around harmful supervision has suggested that lack of trust, unresponsiveness and unaddressed power imbalances leads to negative experiences (Hutman et al., 2023). This is likely to impact supervision implementation due as concerns around judgement and vulnerability are likely to lead to lack of engagement.

The findings suggested that participants experienced conflict in relation to prioritising supervision over other duties and responsibilities. The Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) suggests when individuals are experiencing high levels of workload, emotional labour or stress, how they perceive the situation will impact whether problem-focused coping or emotion-focused coping is deemed the most appropriate at the time. This suggests that if the supervision on offer at the time does not match their preferred coping strategy, engaging in supervision may be perceived as an additional demand.

6.4 Summary of Discussion in Relation to Existing Theory

This research suggests that, although there are individual differences in what is sought from supervision, implementation of supervision depends not just on resources but on autonomy, competence, relatedness, knowledge, skills, beliefs about consequences and social influence. Where attention is given to these factors, barriers can be overcome and successful implementation achieved.

Self-Determination Theory (Ryan and Deci, 2017) suggests that social contextual factors influence an individual's ability to thrive through the satisfaction of their basic psychological need for autonomy, competence and relatedness. In the context of supervision, how an individual experiences the implementation of supervision in relation to these three factors may influence its impact. It is useful to consider this theory in relation to what may influence implementation beyond more practical considerations of policy and cost. This research suggested that individuals seek autonomy over who their supervisor is, when and how they receive supervision and what the purpose of that supervision session is. Individuals want to leave supervision sessions feeling competent in either their general day to day practice or with a specific problem situation, whether this is achieved through advice

giving and guidance or through a self-reflective approach where one's own thinking is shaped and empowered. Importantly, participants need to relate to their supervisor and feel safe and confident in the supervisory relationship in order to receive the full supervision experience and be keen to engage for a sustained period of time.

This research suggests that schools in this local authority are still on a journey of understanding and exploration in regard to implementing supervision. The Theoretical Domain Framework (Cane et al., 2012) suggests that human behaviour is influenced by 14 key domains which can be used to identify barriers and facilitators to change. This theory provides a way of viewing the cognitive, affective, social and environmental influences on the implementation of change and enables researchers to understand why behaviours occur. To date, there has been limited school-based research drawing on the TDF to support or explore implementation (Weatherson et al., 2017) but this research offers an opportunity to consider how behavioural science frameworks can influence systemic change within schools and how Educational Psychologists can be part of this. Within this research, participants referred to factors that would align with the domains of knowledge, skills, beliefs about capabilities, beliefs about consequences, environmental context and resources, social influences, emotion and behavioural regulation and it will be useful to draw on this when considering recommendations and implications for practice in Chapter 7.

Participants in this research talked about a lack of knowledge and skills leading to misconceptions and beliefs about capabilities related to participants perceiving they were not good at talking about themselves. Beliefs about consequences relate in regard to possible implications for owning up to 'not knowing' while environmental context and resources was talked about in relation to time, space and competing priorities. Social influences could be considered in relation to the school ethos and overall message given by leaders as well as there being influence from peers who may not feel the need for supervision. Emotion came into play as participants talked about times when they were worried by what to talk about in supervision or participants already feeling too overwhelmed to find the time for it. Behavioural regulation could apply to the fact that participants talked of inconsistencies in the delivery of supervision.

6.5 Evaluation of current study

This section will critically evaluate the current research by taking into account strengths, limitations and future research. This section will particularly focus on ethical considerations, critical reflections of the research methodology, and the overall rigour and

trustworthiness of the study. These are important considerations in light of the implications for future practice which will be considered in Chapter 7.

6.5.1 Ethical considerations

Ethical guidelines and principles were adhered to throughout the study as set out by The University of Sheffield as well as the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018) and the Health and Care Professionals Council standards of conduct, performance and ethics (2024).

For some participants, there were several weeks between their initial completion of the survey and participation in the interview. Although participants had consented to participation in the interviews during the initial survey phase, it felt ethically appropriate to regain consent at the interview stage. Participants were given the participant information sheet again and completed a second consent form to ensure that they fully understood their involvement. Participants were also reminded at the start of the interview to ensure participants knew they were able to opt out.

6.5.2 Critical Evaluation of Methodology

Credibility relates to how close the account of the participant matches the researcher's understanding and interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to achieve this in this research, I followed a well-established data gathering and analysis method, Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). I ensured that I immersed myself in the data prior to analysis and used research supervision to seek feedback on the level of rigour used within the coding stage. Codes were revisited multiple times to ensure closeness between my own perspectives and those of the interviewee. Initial coding began through an inductive lens, with codes being generated from the data rather than using predetermined codes. As the analysis was refined and themes were explored and refined, it should be acknowledged that a more deductive approach was introduced. In particular, the application of Proctor's Functions of Supervision was used to make sense of the emerging subthemes around the purpose of supervision and therefore prior knowledge of supervision theory influenced the organisation and naming of themes. While this supported a deeper theoretical interpretation of the findings, it also means that the themes were influenced by both participants' responses and the researcher's existing theoretical understanding.

In this research, the survey questions and semi-structured interview schedule were piloted by the research supervisors. This allowed for comments on clarity and relevance of the research tools as well as considerations around wording, sequencing and overall alignment with the research aims. However, it is acknowledged that supervisors were already fully aware of the research and therefore this may have skewed their perceptions of the research tools. It may have been beneficial to pilot the questions with school staff outside of the research to gather more accurate feedback in relation to how participants would have interpreted or responded to the questions. Therefore, while the piloting process strengthened the design of the data collection tools, it did not remove all potential issues relating to participant interpretation, accessibility or researcher bias.

The findings from this research reflect the experiences of staff within one local authority and therefore individuals will need to take into consideration that there will be differences between local authorities which may make transferability more challenging. The implementation of supervision within schools in other local authorities may be impacted by the priorities of other services within that authority, for example the Educational Psychology Service, and the level of input that has already been offered. Although this research was successful in gaining participants from multiple types of educational setting within the local authority (primary, secondary, specialist), this only represents the views of a small snapshot of settings. The survey had aimed to gather a broader overview of supervision implementation in schools but only gained responses from a relatively small proportion of all the schools across the local authority. As considered in Chapter 5, it should also be taken into consideration that the survey may have been more likely to have been completed by those who were familiar with supervision and therefore may not be fully representative of the local authority as a whole. A strength of this research is that 7 participants were able to be interviewed which is in line with Braun and Clarke's (2021) argument that six participants is adequate for Reflexive Thematic Analysis research.

This research chose to focus on SENDCos and leaders within school based on my own perceptions of where supervision was most likely to be happening. As this research sought to identify how schools had implemented supervision and how barriers had been overcome, this felt the most appropriate sample at this point in time. However, it should be considered that these are not necessarily the only roles receiving supervision and there may be alternative perceptions around who may need supervision most.

The Theoretical Domain Framework (Cane et al., 2012) was used in this research to explore how enabling factors and barriers to implementing supervision mapped on to the 14 domains proposed as influencing behaviour change in systems. Although this provided a

useful structure for identifying actions and recommendations, it is important to recognise the limitations of the framework. Mapping of the findings on to the TDF was a subjective process and therefore open to individual variation in how findings were interpreted and categorised. There were also instances where domains appeared to overlap, meaning that findings aligned with more than one of the domains.

My critical realist positioning recognises that the views of participants are subjective and open to interpretation. The findings from this research, therefore, offer my unique interpretation of the participants' experiences and therefore individuals should consider their own transferability in regard to their settings and context.

6.5.3 Researcher Reflexivity

Complete Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021) was deemed as the most appropriate method for exploring experiences of school staff around the implementation of supervision. Within this, reflective boxes were used to address my positionality, subjectivity and possible researcher bias within the whole of the research process as I was playing the part of both researcher and interviewer. Research supervision was also used to reflect on my role within the research and the potential impact this may have during participant recruitment and data analysis. As a literature review was conducted before the interviews took place, it is impossible to claim that my interviews, analysis and interpretations were not influenced by prior reading and theory.

6.5.4 Overall Quality of Research Summary

This research paid careful attention to ethical considerations throughout the whole of the research process and, as a result, participants were considered to be well informed. Rigorous analysis ensured that data was accurately interpreted, while taking into account researcher subjectivity and bias in line with critical realist ontology. Regular research supervision and the use of reflective logs ensured that the research had credibility and transferability whilst also being transparent in considerations of variability in contexts.

6.6 Chapter Summary

This research suggests that supervision within schools is still an emerging practice in the chosen local authority. The limited guidance and lack of government policy on

supervision means that implementation is dependent on the ethos and culture of school leaders. Individual differences suggest that there is not a 'one size fits all' approach to supervision and that consideration needs to be given to flexibility of approach. School staff identified personal, relational and systemic factors and overall awareness of supervision as both enabling factors and barriers to implementation dependent on how they were addressed within the process. This research suggests that drawing on Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017) and The Theoretical Domain Framework (Cane et al., 2012) is a useful approach to help leaders consider the psychological factors that underpin the implementation of change and help guide decisions when implementing supervision.

Chapter 7 Implications for Practice and Future Research

7.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will explore the practical implications of this research and the implications for government and policy makers, educational settings and Educational Psychologists.

7.2 Addressing Change

Psychological theories of organisational change can be drawn upon to consider the findings at a wider system level. Lewin's (1951) change model suggests that implementation involves a process of unfreezing, changing and refreezing. This is relevant to the findings in this research as supervision appeared to be more likely to be implemented when schools had recognised a need for change and developed a shared understanding. Where schools had made changes to allow time for supervision to be prioritised within the existing timetable and demonstrated value by leaders, supervision was more likely to be become embedded in practice. Where such barriers had not been addressed, supervision had not been embedded and continued more of an ad hoc basis.

The Theoretical Domain Framework (Cane et al., 2012) suggests that human behaviour is influenced by 14 key domains which can be used to identify barriers and facilitators to change. This may be beneficial for those wishing to make changes to reflect on before considering their approaches, with particular consideration to the domains of '*knowledge*', '*skills*', '*environmental context and resources*', '*beliefs and consequences*' and '*social influences*'. The implications and recommendations below relate to addressing the domains of knowledge and skills through consideration of appropriate training and opportunities for staff to gain experience. By creating psychologically safe supervision sessions with skilled supervisors, educational settings can address the domains of '*beliefs about consequences*', '*emotion*' and '*optimism*'. By considering a wider approach to supervision through local authority policy and guidelines, '*environmental context and resources* and '*social influences*' may be able to be addressed and create a culture where educational staff prioritise opportunities to reflect and seek supervision beyond 'stuck situations'. Table 19 below considers how factors identified by participants link to the TDF domains (Cane et al., 2012) and possible considerations for practice for government,

educational settings and Educational Psychologists. These are then explored further throughout this chapter.

Table 19

Mapping of participant factors to the TDF domains

Domain	Factors highlighted by Participants	Considerations for Government and Policy Makers	Considerations for Educational Settings	Considerations for Educational Psychologists
Knowledge	Lack of understanding of what supervision is Lack of understanding of purpose	Produce LA guidance Extension of the DfE offer	Access to training Opportunities for experiences	Training package Guidance documents Links to wider networks
Skills	Limited experience Negative supervisor experiences	Availability of skilled supervisors	Employing skilled supervisors Reflective ethos within school	Offer of supervisory practices within school Modelling skills
Social Professional Role and Identify	Leadership commitment Lack of perceived need	LA wide approach Link to teacher standards	Practitioner ethos School ethos Flexible approach to individual differences/needs Modelling from leadership	Modelling of reflective practice
Optimism	Varying perceived benefits Varying purposes	Clear guidelines and expectations for schools	Clear policy and practice Autonomy of practice	Clear training offer Consistent supervision offer
Beliefs about Consequences	Fear self-reflection Fear of judgement	Positive promotion of supervisory practices	Psychologically safe supervision sessions/supervisors Collaborative planning	Offer and external link Supervisor skills
Environmental contexts and resources	Time Cost Lack of policy and guidelines	Clear guidelines and policy for schools Government funding opportunities	School policy Timetabling adaptations to protect times Flexible offer	EP offer to schools within traded/untraded offer Role of group supervision
Social Influences	Prioritisation from leaders	Locality-wide offers	Modelling of engagement by leaders	Sharing positive experiences within training

				Use of research to support need
Emotion	Fear	Clear policy and guidelines to create consistency	Choice of supervisor Collaborative process of implementation Training	Sharing of experiences Psychologically safe supervisors

In this research, barriers such as limited time, uncertainty about the purpose of supervision, concerns about vulnerability and previous negative experiences suggested that resistance to supervision was not always a rejection of supervision itself but more of fear or uncertainty around risks and lack of psychological safety. As discussed in Chapter 6, Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017) suggests that social contextual factors influence an individual's ability to thrive through the satisfaction of their basic psychological need for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Self-Determination Theory has been applied to the findings to consider how change can be implemented at an individual level. The recommendations below consider how offering a flexible approach to supervision can ensure an individual's autonomy is addressed. The use of skilled supervisors will ensure individuals leave supervision sessions feeling competent and contained as well as creating trusted relationships. By considering these elements together, the implementation of supervision could be developed to be more impactful and long-lasting.

7.3 Implications for Government and Policy Makers

7.3.1 Government Guidelines and Policy

This research identified systemic barriers to the implementation of supervision in regard to protected time, cost and prioritisation of leaders. Schools are often juggling conflicting priorities and managing very tight financial budgets, making it difficult to create protected time for new initiatives. Guidance for Educational Psychologists (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010) suggests that, *“in times of change, when supervision is most necessary, supervision may be regarded as a luxury and minimised due to economic and time demands,”* (p2). Health and Care Professions Council Standards state that individuals must *“Understand the need for active participation in training, supervision and mentoring in supporting high standards of practice, and personal and professional conduct, and the importance of demonstrating this in practice (4.8).”* If difficulty is found in professions where supervision is already embedded, it is likely that implementing supervision in school systems where there are currently no formalised guidelines is likely to face increased barriers.

Currently, within the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011) there is no reference to supervision or the use of reflective spaces, with the closest references being within standard 8: Fulfil wider professional responsibilities, where it states: "*take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues,*" (p13). In order to increase prioritisation within schools, the current government should consider how teachers' standards may be adapted to incorporate the consideration of supervision or at the very least, opportunities for reflective practice. This is an important consideration based on current difficulties with teacher retention and a decline in the wellbeing of teachers.

At the time of writing this, The Department for Education has released proposed reforms to the schools and SEND systems in England (DfE, 2026). Although this does not mention supervision, *Chapter 5: Support and investment in high-quality staff* highlights the need to address reasons why many leave the profession as a result of increased workload pressures which mirrors the suggestion that staff are facing increased complexities within their role. The paper does not identify specific strategies which will be used to "*empower and invest in expert leaders, teachers and support staff,*" (p79) but supervision could offer the space for empowerment to occur. There is also a suggestion that leaders will be provided with "*safe and confidential space to develop new strategies to manage their resilience and capacity to thrive in their role,*" (p86). There is no expansion on how this will be done but previous literature on supervision suggests that leaders have benefited from such spaces created by supervision practices. With this in mind, it seems that now would be an appropriate time for a more formalised policy around supervision to be created.

7.3.2 Local Authority Guidance for Schools

Supervision appears to be an emerging area within schools and although local authorities are beginning to develop guidance around supervision for Designated Safeguarding Leads, there is limited reference to other roles within schools, potentially leading to an inconsistent offer across local authorities and schools. More recently, the Supervision in Education Network (2025) has produced a '*Quality Standards Framework*' which would be of use to schools but was not mentioned by participants in this research. This suggests that less formalised guidance is not currently reaching all those intended. Therefore, schools would also benefit from further guidance from the local authority around how to begin their supervision journey.

7.3.3 Resources

Time and money were identified as significant barriers to implementing supervision, even by those who found the sessions highly beneficial. As noted by Hawkins and McMahon (2020), at a time when there are greater demand, higher expectations and fewer resources in public service, research evidence plays an important part of ensuring the appropriate allocation of time and resources. This research adds to the growing body of research around supervision in schools to support consideration of how schools can be supported to provide supervision sessions without access being dependent on the school's individual budgets or resources.

Participants spoke positively about a funded Department for Education Supervision offer which they had accessed for six sessions. At the time of writing, applications for this funded support are “*currently closed due to extremely high demand*” (Education Support, 2026) suggesting that there is currently a supply and demand discrepancy for supervision amongst school leaders. This research suggests that local authorities need to consider how this offer can be extended further across schools. Findings from the evaluation of the programme suggest 94% of participants reported “*better being able to manage times of stress,*” (Education Support, 2025). This supports the current research findings and suggests that there is still a need to consider how the supervision offer can be broadened across educational settings.

7.4 Implications for Educational Settings

As the previous section explored the broader picture of supervision and acknowledged wider implications of policy and practice in educational settings, this section explores considerations individual educational settings will need to take into account when deciding on how to implement supervision within their setting.

7.4.1 Preparation and Training

There are a number of inevitable barriers to be faced when implementing supervision, but schools may be able to overcome some of these with careful planning. This research suggests that adequate preparation and training was needed before implementing supervision within schools. Staff need to have a clear understanding of what supervision is, what to expect from the sessions and have had time to consider what they hope to get out of

supervision. Staff need to enter into supervision feeling a sense of psychological safety and misconceptions need to have been addressed.

7.4.2 Flexible Approach

This research suggests that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to the function or purpose of supervision and the structure of a supervision session. Therefore, educational settings should offer flexible approaches to supervision where careful timetabling allows for protected time. Staff need to feel valued and that this time is as important as other priorities across school. The findings from this research mirror recommendations for Educational Psychologists, in that, the format, frequency and duration of supervision should be negotiated and reviewed by the supervisors and supervisees to ensure that identified needs are met. This research suggests that there are individual differences in what people seek from supervision and therefore settings should offer flexibility. This contracting would support the need for creating a safe space and reduce concerns from supervisees over judgement.

7.4.3 Skilled Supervisors

The skills of the supervisor were deemed highly important in this research suggesting supervisees need to be supervised by appropriately qualified and experienced supervisors and therefore careful consideration should be given if attempting to provide in-house supervision with peers or senior members of staff. Educational settings should seek external support where possible and should carefully match supervisors to supervisees. Although research has found success in delivering training packages to senior leaders for them to replicate supervision amongst staff (Carroll & Esposito, 2020), there is not currently any outcomes around the longevity of this approach. The current research appeared to suggest that using senior leaders within school would pose more barriers than gains, so this needs careful consideration by leaders if this approach is used.

7.4.4 Reflective versus Problem Solving

Currently, educational settings are using 'Solution Circles' (Forrest and Pearpoint, 1996) to provide time boundaried, problem-solving support to key roles within schools. This process utilises a facilitated, group-based approach which follows a clear structure which

works through a problem and collaboratively provides solutions. Although definite benefits to this were highlighted in this research, it is also important to consider that this does not provide opportunities for more reflective, deeper thinking on a 1:1 basis but is best placed as part of a catalogue of offers available to school staff. This also links back to the previous consideration that individuals are seeking different purposes to supervision and schools should give consideration to whether more 'solution focused' models provide the deeper reflection some school staff may seek.

7.5 Implications for Educational Psychologists

7.5.1 Preparation and Training

The Behaviour Change Technique Taxonomy (Michie et al., 2013) suggests techniques to support behaviour change interventions. Educational psychologists could play a key role in supporting the introduction of supervision within schools in a number of areas. In order to overcome knowledge barriers, Educational Psychologists should offer instruction on how to engage in supervision as well as providing information about the potential benefits and impact on wellbeing through clear training and sharing of research. This training should incorporate opportunities to practice reflective skills and provide scripts or scaffolds to support deeper thinking to overcome skills barriers. Educational Psychologists should also draw upon more recent guidance documents when creating and planning information sharing with staff.

7.5.2 Delivery of Supervision Sessions

Educational Psychologists are well-placed to offer supervision to schools and have the necessary skills and in-depth knowledge of schools (Rae et al., 2017) to make suitable supervisors. Currently, how Educational Psychologists offer supervision to schools is dependent on individual service offers. The local authority within which this research took place is currently seeking external support to deliver supervision sessions rather than their school educational psychologist. Educational psychology services should consider how they can offer supervision to senior leaders which meet the requirements identified above.

7.5.2 Implementation of the Government White Paper: Every Child Achieving and Thriving

The Department for Education's proposed reforms to the schools and SEND systems in England (DfE, 2026) suggests a need to support and invest in high quality staff to address reasons why many leave the profession. As mentioned previously, there is no specification within the document which identifies how staff will be supported but the identification of "safe and confidential space" suggests there may be opportunity to further develop supervision in schools. As Educational Psychology Services begin to consider their role within the new reforms and any implications this may have on their model of service delivery, it is an appropriate time to be considering how supervision is incorporated within this. Educational Psychologists should consider how a supervision offer may be delivered to schools, taking in to consideration training and preparation as well as direct delivery of supervision sessions.

However, it is important to acknowledge that there are currently ongoing challenges with Educational Psychologist retention and recruitment meaning that Educational Psychology Services will need to carefully consider how such support is allocated in order to deliver a model that is sustainable and allows for the flexibility and individual differences found within participants within this research.

7.6 Dissemination of Research

Within the research interviews, one participant suggested sharing of other experiences would be beneficial when considering implementing supervision. This research has captured a snapshot of voices of those who have experienced supervision, and although not the original aim of the research, highlighted perceived benefits and purposes of supervision. Based on this, the findings would be useful to other senior leaders and SENDCos within the local authority to help build an understanding of what supervision is so that individuals can make informed decisions on whether there is a place for supervision in their role and setting. The research will be shared at the local authority SENDCo Network Briefing following completion.

This research will also be shared with the relevant educational psychology service to inform future supervision offers to schools. The findings may support Educational Psychologists to reflect on their current training and offer to schools relating to supervision.

7.7 Considerations for Future Research

Supervision in schools still appears to be an emerging offer in educational settings and would benefit from further research into the area.

As previously discussed, a limitation of this research is that it primarily focused on SENDCos and senior leaders in school. It would be beneficial to explore supervision beyond leadership roles by conducting research with teachers and teaching assistants. As complexity has increased, teachers and teaching assistants are often being faced with challenging situations on a daily basis, suggesting they may benefit greatly from supervision.

In order to promote changes in policy and consider changes to teachers' standards to incorporate reflective practice, further evidence of the benefits of supervision may be beneficial. In particular, a focus on schools where supervision has been implemented internally and not through part of a research project would be beneficial. This could include longitudinal evaluations of supervision implementation, comparison of internal versus external supervision models and exploration of pupil and staff wellbeing outcomes.

Lastly, it is noted that this research captures the experiences within one local authority. Larger multi-authority studies would be beneficial to explore supervision experiences across a larger scale in order to make generalisations about supervisory experiences in school.

7.8 Conclusion

This research explored the implementation of supervision within a local authority in the North of England. The topic was situated within the broader context of educational settings with consideration given to staff retention challenges as well as current educational reforms and policy. This research contributes to the emerging evidence base around the role supervision has in educational settings. It highlights individuals' perceptions of the purpose of supervision and demonstrates the importance of taking these into consideration when devising policy and developing supervisory processes. It emphasises the importance of creating safe spaces for our school staff to reflect and problem solve, not only to enable them to be effective practitioners but also to support emotional wellbeing. Most importantly, the research offers clear considerations for how the implementation of supervision can be achieved and reaches out to leaders and policy makers to actively promote supervision practices as commonplace within educational settings. By drawing on the TDF (Cane et al.,

2012) the research offers a novel contribution to the field which allows behavioural science approaches to be applied from an educational psychology perspective with the aim of eliciting systemic change within schools and provides clear recommendations for implementing supervision in educational settings.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Mapping the Teachers' Standards to the functions of supervision (Sturt and Rowe, 2023)

Function of Supervision	Teacher Standard
Quality Assurance/Governance	1. Set high expectations 2. Promote good outcome 4. Well-structured lessons
Professional Development	3. Good subject curriculum knowledge 5. Adapt teaching 6. Accurate assessment
Organisational Engagement	8. Fulfil wider professional responsibility 9. Section 2 personal and professional conduct
Wellbeing	7. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

Appendix 2 - Survey Consent Form and Questions

Supervision Consent Form and Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please complete the initial questions regarding informed consent before continuing with the survey.

** Indicates required question*

1. Name *

2. School *

3. Email address (this will only be used to invite you to the focus group) *

4. I have read and understood the project information sheet. (If you answer No to this question please do not fill out the rest of the form until you understand what taking part in the project will mean). *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. I have been given the chance to ask questions about the research. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. I agree to take part in the project. *

Tick all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. I agree to complete the supervision survey. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

9. I agree to being contacted to participate in a focus group. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

10. If I chose to participate in the focus group, I understand that audio recordings will be made and transcribed and these audio recordings will be used in the research. I agree to being audio recorded and for transcripts of these anonymised audio recordings to be used in the research. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

11. If I have been part of a process of implementing supervision, I agree to complete the evaluation questionnaire. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

12. I understand that by choosing to participate as a volunteer in this research, this does not create a legally binding agreement nor is it intended to create an employment relationship with the University of Sheffield. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

13. I understand that I can withdraw from the research at any time. I understand that I do not have to give any reasons for this and there will be no negative consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that if I choose to withdraw from the focus group after the data has been transcribed, it will not be possible to remove the research data I have contributed. *

Tick all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

14. I understand my personal details such as name, school name, email address and school role will not be seen by anyone outside the research. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

15. I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Project Contact details for further information:

Researcher: Claire Lawrie, clawrie1@sheffield.ac.uk

University research supervisors: Aisha McLean, aisha.mclean@sheffield.ac.uk

Anna Weighall, anna.weighall@sheffield.ac.uk

The following questions will ask about your understanding and experience of supervision in schools. Please read the accompanying leaflet to provide a definition of what supervision is in the context of schools.

16. Role in school *

17. School type *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Mainstream Primary
- ☐ Mainstream Secondary
- ☐ Specialist Primary
- ☐ Specialist Secondary
- ☐ Private Nursery
- ☐ School-based Nursery
- ☐ Other

18. Before today, were you familiar with the term 'supervision' as a supportive process within school? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

19. Do you currently or have you ever experienced supervision within school? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

20. How regularly did/do you receive supervision? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Fortnightly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Termly
- ☐ Yearly
- ☐ Never

21. Did this supervision take place on a 1:1 or group basis? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 1:1
- ☐ Group
- ☐ Not received supervision

22. What is the role of the person who usually facilitates or delivers this supervision?

23. Which of the following models of group supervision are you familiar with? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Reflecting Teams
- ☐ Solution Circles
- ☐ Resilience Based Clinical Supervision
- ☐ Outsider Witness
- ☐ None of the above

24. Based on the definition given above, on a scale of 1-5, how similar is this to the supervision you currently receive in school. (Please leave blank if you don't receive supervision in school) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Similar

25. Based on the definition above, on a scale of 1-5, how beneficial do you think supervision would be to you in your current role? *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Very beneficial

26. Have you or anyone in your school received training from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service on supervision? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

27. If yes, on a scale of 1-5, how beneficial has this been to practice within your school? *

Mark only one oval.

- 1 2 3 4 5
-
- Not ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very beneficial

28. Please add any extra information to describe current supervision processes within school.

29. Are there any specific aspects of supervision that you feel have made/would make it challenging to implement in your school?

Thank you for taking part in the questionnaire.

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Google Forms

Appendix 3 - Interview Question Prompts

Interview Question Prompts

As my intention for the research is to produce recommendations for schools on what enables supervision to be implemented successfully, I have chosen to use an Appreciative Inquiry questioning approach linked to the 4D model of Appreciative Inquiry (Discover, Dream, Design, Destiny)

1. Tell me about how supervision has been implemented in schools. (Discovery)
 - Who, what, where, when?
 - Regularity?
2. Tell me about times when supervision is most effective or successful. (Discovery)
 - Can you give an example of a time where you felt it worked well? What did that look like? What do you think made it successful?
 - Have you developed any preferences in regards to when, who or how it is done?
3. Tell me about how schools overcame any barriers to introducing or engaging with supervision. (Discovery)
 - Were all staff on board?
 - How was time negotiated?
 - Did anyone choose to opt out?
4. What have you valued most about supervision experiences? (Dream)
 - How did it make you feel?
 - Was there any impact on your practice?
 - What made you continue?
5. What would the ideal future of supervision look like in schools? (Dream)

Prompts

- Group or individual?
- Internal or external supervisor?
- Time?

- Place?
 - Priority level?
 - Model or free-flowing?
6. How could this ideal future be created? (Design)
- What would need to improve/change?
 - What would you do differently?

For the group who haven't experienced supervision...

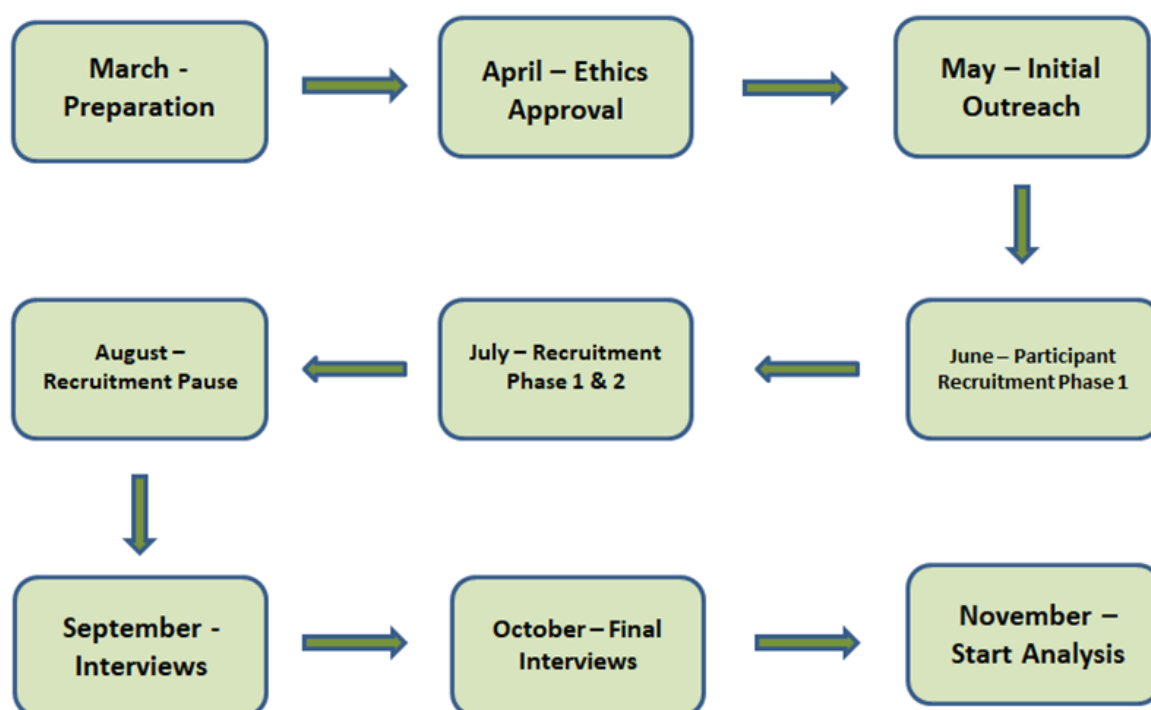
1. Tell me about your knowledge of supervision. (Discovery)
 - Have you heard of it?
 - What is your understanding?
 - Have you heard of it in relation to other professions?
 - Do you have any assumptions about what it may be like?
2. Tell me about any processes in schools to support staff development and wellbeing. (Discovery)
 - Mentoring/coaching?
 - Year group/subject support?
 - Line management?
 - Informal check ins?
3. What do you think people would value about supervision? (Dream)
 - What would they get out of it?
 - How would it make them feel?
 - Do you think it would be useful?
4. What would the ideal future of supervision look like in schools? (Dream)
 - Group or individual?
 - Internal or external supervisor?
 - Time?
 - Place?

- Priority level?
 - Model or free-flowing?
5. How could this ideal future be created? (Design)
- What would need to improve/change?
 - What would you do differently?

Appendix 4 - Recruitment Timeline

Overview

This document outlines the timeline for participant recruitment for this research. The schedule includes ethics approval processes, school term dates, communication with gatekeepers, and participant consent procedures.



March 2025 – Preparation

- Finalised research design and recruitment materials, including:
 - Participant information sheets
 - Consent forms
 - Recruitment scripts and email templates
- Identified target sample – SENDCos, Headteachers, Senior Leaders and considered how best to reach these
- Drafted initial contact letters for gatekeepers (e.g., SENDCo network organiser, Educational Psychologists).
- Prepared and submitted ethics application.

April 2025 – Ethics Approval

- Awaited ethics committee review.

- Received formal approval to begin recruitment activities.

May 2025 – Initial Outreach

- Contacted Lead Citywide SENDCo and SENDCo Network organiser to request time to present research at SENDCo briefing.

June 2025 – Participant Recruitment for Phase 1

- Presented research at SENDCo Network Briefing during a 15 minute virtual slot. Talked through the Participant information sheet and shared QR code link to online participant information sheet, consent form and survey.
- Received 12 survey responses during the presentation and received 2 emails from participants interested in being involved in the follow-up focus group/interviews.
- Due to limited response at the network briefing, considered avenues for sharing more widely within research supervision.
- Shared research recruitment documents via EPs to distribute to their link schools. Also asked to be shared by Citywide SENDCO to share with SENDCos and Leaders.

July 2025 – Continued recruitment for Phase 1 and identification of Participants for

Phase 2

- Emails sent to participants who had agreed to follow-up phase.
- 13 more participants completed the survey
- Due to limited time available in the school calendar, participants opted to be contacted in September to arrange dates.

August 2025 – Recruitment Pause

- Paused recruitment during school holidays but link to survey remained live.

September 2025 – Finalising the Sample and Interviews

- Emails to Educational Psychologists and Citywide SENDCo to request re-sharing of recruitment information to try and gain further survey responses.
- 4 further participants completed survey.
- Emails sent to participants who had agreed to follow-up phase.
- Options provided for possible focus group times but unable to find times that multiple participants could attend.
- Reflected in supervision and decided to carry out individual interviews instead.
- Emailed participants to confirm happy to attend individual interview and arrange time.

- Interview consent forms completed by participants and participant information sheet re shared due to significant time since initial recruitment.
- Compiled final participant list for interviews.
- Began individual interviews.

October 2025 – Final Interviews and Closing of survey

- Final interviews completed
- Link to survey closed to allow adequate time for analysis.

November – Begin Analysis

- Descriptive statistics gathered from survey.
- Thematic analysis used for interviews.

Key Decisions and Considerations

- There was a pause in data collection in August due to the school holidays and school staff being unavailable during this time. I also felt that contacting school staff during their holidays conflicted with the overall ethos and long term aims in that their protected time was being interrupted with talk of school.
- The decision was made to keep the survey open even when interview participants had been identified in order to gain as many participants as possible. I had also hoped that, with it being the start of the school year, school staff may have a little more time/thinking space to be able to complete the survey.

Appendix 5 - Ethics Application



Application 067687

Section C: Summary of research

1. Aims & Objectives

The aim of the research is to explore the implementation of supervision in schools within a UK Local Authority. For the purpose of this study, the definition of supervision in schools has been taken from Sturt and Rowe (2018) and adapted from the work of Morrison (2005). Supervision in schools is a 'professional conversation' which may take place on a one-to-one or group basis as a method of supporting staff so they can provide for the needs of the students and to build safe cultures for everyone in the school community.

"Supervision is a process by which one member of staff is given responsibility by the school to work with another staff member in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives, which together promote the best outcomes for students. These objectives and functions are:

- Competent accountable performance (managerial function)
- Continuing professional development (developmental/formative function)
- Personal support (supportive/restorative function)
- Engaging the staff member with the school (mediation function)

Morrison (2005)

Supervision needs to be a flexible response that caters to individual needs, and therefore in each supervision session the four aspects will not get equal attention every time. Supervisors need to remain mindful that they need to offer emotional support and not just managerial input, and that their role is equally to ensure accountability and not only to support and encourage.

The research will aim to address the following research questions:

What does supervision look like in schools?

Is there a discrepancy between the desire for and the actual implementation of supervision in schools?

What are the helping and hindering factors to implementing supervision in schools?

How can the hindering factors be addressed?

What processes have schools used to implement supervision successfully?

Objectives:

1. To recruit up to 175 SENDCos/Senior Leaders to complete an online questionnaire.
2. To recruit between 12-16 SENDCos/Senior Leaders/school staff to participate in two focus groups exploring the helping and hindering factors of implementing supervision.
3. To recruit up to 16 SENDCos/Senior Leaders/School staff to complete an evaluative survey of their experience of a process of implementing supervision.
4. To use the data from the above objectives to produce recommendations for schools, local authorities and Educational Psychology services around the implementation of supervision.

Within my day-to-day practice as a Trainee Educational Psychologist, I have had the opportunity to engage in numerous conversations with a range of school staff around the topic of supervision. It has been apparent that, although staff have an interest in taking part in supervision and feel the process would be beneficial, there are limited opportunities for this within these schools.

The United Kingdom is currently facing increased difficulty recruiting and keeping staff within schools (McLean, Worth & Smith, NFER, 2024) with a high number of SENDCos leaving or considering leaving their roles (Brown, 2024). Working with children offers endless rewards but can be extremely challenging and exhausting at times. Supervision also offers a space for staff to offload in relation to the events they are dealing with within the classroom but also within their own personal lives too. However Reid & Soan (2015) suggest that the well-being of staff working with high needs children is largely ignored and that, within school staff, there is a lack of awareness of the potential benefits of supervision but also misunderstandings about its purpose being more of a monitoring function (Westergaard & Bainbridge, 2014).

The existing literature highlights the need for processes which support staff well-being and retention, and the research suggests positive benefits of supervision as a way of doing this (Barnado, 2020, Forrest, 2024) but despite this, previous research has suggested that 'supervision is lacking at almost all levels within education.' (Carroll and Esposito, 2020) and is 'erratic and infrequent', (Newton, 1995). This research aims to build on the most recent studies linked to supervision in schools by exploring an area that is yet to be explicitly focused on: the facilitators and barriers to implementing supervision. This research would aim to identify some of the barriers that are preventing such supervision being implemented, with the hope of identifying recommendations for school leaders on how to begin their journey based on experiences of successful implementation. This research will build on the work by Carroll et al. (2020) and provide a picture of supervision within my current local authority, including data around the existing experiences of supervision for school staff and the processes being implemented including who is receiving it, how often and the form that this takes, as well as exploring the factors that help and hinder the implementation of supervision within schools and any processes that have supported implementation.

2. Methodology

The research will use an exploratory mixed method design, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods and will take part in 3 phases.

Phase 1: Quantitative questionnaire - An online questionnaire will be distributed to SENDCos, Headteachers/Principals, Deputy Headteachers/Principals to gather data on their current understanding of what supervision is, how it looks within their setting and how it has been implemented within their setting (See attached consent form and questionnaire for questions). The information sheet will contain a QR code to consent form to be completed before continuing to the questionnaire. The questionnaire will employ an opportunity sampling technique to collect data from all 172 schools within the local authority. The sample will include:

SENDCos: The survey will be shared with all SENDCos in the local authority using the Educational Psychology Service database of contacts.

School leaders: Headteachers/Principals, Deputy/Assistant Headteachers/Principals, Inclusion leads responsible for implementing supervision practices. The survey will be shared with all school leaders across the local authority using the Educational Psychology Service database of contacts.

Class teachers and teaching assistants: If there are limited participant responses from SENDCos and senior leaders, the survey may be opened up to class teachers and teaching assistants to increase the scope of possible participants.

Phase 2 - Qualitative Focus Group: A matched participant design will be used to identify possible focus group participants. Focus groups will either be conducted with a subset of Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinators (SENDCo) and school leaders who have implemented supervision in their school or with multiple senior leaders from the same school who have implemented whole-school supervision, depending on participant responses. These focus groups will allow participants the opportunity to share more detailed experiences of the implementation of supervision and provide contextual insights into the helping and hindering factors that have been experienced and any processes which have been followed. A focus group may also be conducted with a subset of SENDCos and school leaders who haven't implemented supervision in order to explore the factors preventing them from doing this. This will be based on the responses received in the phase 1 quantitative survey and based on participants who expressed that they would find supervision useful but that it isn't happening in their school. I will initially aim to create a focus group of staff from different schools but if this isn't possible, the

focus group will focus on the implementation of supervision in one school. If I am unable to gain enough participants for a focus group on the same date and time, then I will conduct individual interviews. Purposive sampling will be used to identify participants for the focus groups and each focus group will have between 3 and 8 participants, depending on recruitment and it is expected that they will last between 30 and 60 minutes. The focus group will be carried out face-to-face in a room within a Sheffield School. This will be arranged once I have identified participants from the questionnaire and will be chosen based on availability and most convenient location for participants. If I am unable to source a location or participants are unable to meet in person then I will conduct the focus groups virtually using Google Meet. I have chosen to try and conduct focus groups in person as I feel it is easier to ensure participants feel comfortable and relaxed and will help facilitate more open conversation. Research suggests that there isn't a clear consensus as to whether face-to-face or online focus groups hold specific advantages in terms of the data produced and the resources required and it is suggested that online focus groups can be considered when time and resources are constrained and deemed more practical (Jones et al., 2022). At the start of the focus group the participants will be given the information sheet again to look through, reminded of the consent form previously completed and asked to verbally confirm that they are happy to proceed, they will be informed again that the group will be audio recorded so that answers can be anonymously transcribed using a transcription software/app. There will be no visual recording done of the focus group.

Phase 3 - Quantitative evaluation: A quantitative survey may be given to participants within schools where a process of implementing supervision has been identified through the initial questionnaire in phase 1. This would be with members of the school staff from varying roles and allow an opportunity for participants to reflect on their own experiences of the process of implementing supervision specifically. Purposive sampling will be used to ensure that participants completing the evaluation questionnaire will only be those participants who have experienced the process of supervision implementation. This questionnaire will ask questions about what the process involved, who facilitated the process, which school staff members were involved in the process, what period of time the process was completed over and what aspects of the process were deemed useful or not useful. More specific questions may be included based on the outcomes of the focus group. This will be discussed with supervisors and if it is felt necessary, a resubmission of ethics will be completed.

If there aren't enough available participants to carry out a focus group, I will use the same selection criteria mentioned above to identify participants for individual interviews, using the same question as what would be directed to the focus group.

A pilot study will be carried out to provide an opportunity to check the clarity of my survey questions and check that they are interpreted as intended. This will be completed with a small subset of SENDCos and school leaders from a family of schools within the local authority. The pilot study may also be used to clarify my choice of definitions to ensure clarity. I will also carry out a pilot focus group if possible to enable me to check the open ended discussion question I give at the beginning and establish whether any further structuring will be required by myself.

Due to the number of participants, it wouldn't be appropriate to use statistical analysis therefore the survey responses will be collated and descriptive data will be produced in relation to the responses to questions. For multiple choice and scaled questions I will produce percentages of responses. Answers to open ended questions will be analysed and key themes drawn out using thematic analysis. The responses to the questions regarding experience of supervision will be used to identify participants for the focus groups.

Qualitative data from the focus group will be transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis to draw out themes, patterns and insights around the helping and hindering factors in implementing supervision. I will adopt the method proposed by Braun and Clarke (2003) to do this and follow the 6-step method of systematic thematic analysis as outlined below:

- Familiarising yourself with the data
- Coding
- Generating initial themes
- Reviewing themes
- Defining and naming themes
- Writing up

This method allows for organisation and interpretation of the data set in an in-depth, systematic and flexible way (Howitt and Cramer, 2010). Each focus group will be coded and transcribed individually and themes initially drawn out from each transcript. Coding will capture the entire data set and be reflective of the 'bulk of the data' (Joffe and Yardley, 2004, p.67). Themes will then be compared and contrasted across all transcripts to determine final themes. The analysis process will involve personal reflexivity, and I am aware that my presence will contribute to the construction of meaning throughout the process and acknowledge that I am not outside of the subject matter (Nightingale and Cromby 1999), this will be particularly important during the coding process, when themes are named, as the language used could also convey additional meaning and shape findings. (Willig, 2013 p11). I will use quotes from the transcripts to exemplify the themes.

3. Personal Safety

Have you completed your departmental risk assessment procedures, if appropriate?

Yes

Raises personal safety issues?

No

A university risk assessment has been completed as the focus groups will take place in-person, off-campus

Personal safety - Although my research will take place off university premises, the focus groups will take place within schools which means that they will be in a safe and well-managed environment. Although I will be conducting the focus group alone, I will ensure that my research supervisors are aware of the dates, times and locations of the focus groups so that someone is aware of my whereabouts and

my contact details. If it is required that I conduct individual interviews, I will ensure that these are carried out within the normal school opening hours to ensure that other adults are in the building so that there is no risk to myself.

I need to be mindful that participants may mention names of Educational Psychologists they have worked with as part of their responses to the implementation of supervision on the questionnaire, within the focus group and also within the evaluation questionnaire. I need to ensure that participants are reminded that information shared by others within the focus groups should not be shared outside of the group and I will ensure that any names mentioned remain anonymous in the transcript.

Safeguarding - I will ensure that, if any safeguarding concerns arise during the focus group, I will follow procedures outlined in The University of Sheffield 'Information and Resources to our Preventing Harm in Research and Innovation Safeguarding Policy as well as the safeguarding procedures for the school that I am in. I will ensure that I inform my supervisors of any safeguarding concerns and follow the appropriate routes for reporting safeguarding concerns relating either to myself or others. I will ensure that a Health and Safety risk assessment is completed as my data collection will take place off campus. All individuals involved in the research will be made aware that any concerning information or incidents should be reported to the designated safeguarding officer within their school or the following designated safeguarding contacts: Research supervisors: Aisha McLean and Anna Weighall. University Safeguarding Contact: Professor Rebecca Lawthom.

Section D: About the participants

1. Potential Participants

I will initially start with data collection from SENDCos and senior leaders within schools across the Local Authority but this may extend to teachers and teaching assistants who have experienced supervision in school.

2. Recruiting Potential Participants

Participants will be recruited either through attendance at the Local Authority SENDCo Network Briefings or through emails sent out to schools from Educational Psychologists within my service. Participants will receive a copy of the information sheet which outlines the research and this will contain a QR code with a link to the consent form and the online questionnaire.

2.1. Advertising methods

Will the study be advertised using the volunteer lists for staff or students maintained by IT Services? No

- not entered -

3. Consent

Will informed consent be obtained from the participants? (i.e. the proposed process) Yes

All potential participants will be able to read the information sheet either via a paper copy at the SENDCo Network Briefing or via the email they receive. The information sheet will contain information regarding how the data will be collected, stored, analysed and disseminated. Participant's will need to complete the consent form prior to completing the questionnaire. The consent form will also gain consent regarding the participation in the focus groups and the evaluation questionnaire so that all participants have a full understanding of the breadth of the research.

4. Payment

Will financial/in kind payments be offered to participants? No

5. Potential Harm to Participants

What is the potential for physical and/or psychological harm/distress to the participants?

Inconvenience - I am aware that I am asking participants to give up their own time to complete the questionnaires or attend the focus groups. The questionnaire will be introduced at the SENDCo Network Briefing which will take time out of the usual schedule and usually happens after the school day. The focus groups will last between 30-60 minutes and may need to be scheduled for after the end of the school day in order for participants to be able to attend. This may mean that it interrupts other work-related activities that they would normally do at this time and be considered an extra commitment beyond their work.

Discomfort in focus groups - The participant's may be in a focus group with people they are unfamiliar with or may be in a focus group with other school staff members meaning that there will be a mix of relationships and differing levels of perceived authority. This may impact participant's willingness to contribute and lead to feelings of discomfort. If participants are in a focus group with someone they perceive to be more senior, there may be power dynamics at play which may hinder participation and confidence.

How will this be managed to ensure appropriate protection and well-being of the participants?

To reduce the inconvenience, the focus group will be planned at a time that is convenient to participants and will be facilitated in a way

that ensures it remains within the 30-60 minute time frame.

In order to reduce discomfort, I will endeavour to create a welcoming environment, both when introducing the questionnaire and when conducting the focus groups. At the start of the focus group, ground rules will be established which promote the safety and confidentiality of the space and participants will be reminded that anything they share in the focus group should remain confidential between participants and I will reiterate that any quotes used within my research will be anonymous. Participants will be reminded that the focus group is recorded, but that personal information will be anonymised and kept confidential until later destroyed. Participants will be reminded that they are free to take a break if needed and will be provided with information about their right to withdraw.

In order to reduce the impact of power dynamics within the focus group, I will remind participants that they have been invited to share their honest opinions and that all opinions should be respected. I will monitor the contributions of the group members during the focus group and endeavour to encourage contributions from all perspectives.

I will aim to be attuned to the needs of the participants during all phases of the research and facilitate a break in the focus group if I feel it is needed. Participants will have the opportunity to ask any further questions after completing the questionnaires or attending the focus groups and will be able to contact me on the contact details provided on the information sheet if they have any questions at a later date.

6. Potential harm to others who may be affected by the research activities

Which other people, if any, may be affected by the research activities, beyond the participants and the research team?

Wider school community, schools within the local authority.

What is the potential for harm to these people?

During the focus group, participants may refer to supervision experiences they have had within school or with leaders.

How will this be managed to ensure appropriate safeguarding of these people?

I will remind participants at the start of the focus group that they should try and avoid naming people or schools specifically.

7. Reporting of safeguarding concerns or incidents

What arrangements will be in place for participants, and any other people external to the University who are involved in, or affected by, the research, to enable reporting of incidents or concerns?

Participants involved in the research will be made aware that any concerning information or incidents should be reported to the designated safeguarding officer within their school or the designated safeguarding contacts named in the section below.

Who will be the Designated Safeguarding Contact(s)?

If participants wish to make a report of a concern or incident relating to potential exploitation, abuse or harm resulting from involvement in this project, they can contact the project's Designated Safeguarding Contact, Aisha McLean at aisha.mclean@sheffield.ac.uk. If the concern or incident relates to the Designated Safeguarding Contact, or if they feel a report they have made to this Contact has not been handled in a satisfactory way, they can contact the University Safeguarding Contact, Professor Rebecca Lawthom and/or the University's Research Ethics & Integrity Manager (Lindsay Unwin: l.v.unwin@sheffield.ac.uk).

How will reported incidents or concerns be handled and escalated?

Any reported incidents will be handled in line with the university safeguarding policy and reported to my supervisors as soon as possible.

Section E: Personal data

1. Use of personal data

Will any personal data be processed or accessed as part of the project?

Yes

Will any 'special category' personal data be processed or accessed as part of the project?

No

Provide the number of people whose personal data you expect to process or access.

175

2. Managing personal data

Which organisation(s) will act as data controller(s) of the personal data?

University of Sheffield only

Who will have access to the personal data?

I (Claire Lawrie) will be responsible for collecting the personal data and will have access to the data for the duration of the research. This may also be accessed by my two university thesis supervisors.

What measures, processes and/or agreements will be put in place to manage the personal data?

All data will be stored on either Google Drive or the university X: Drive which is encrypted. Questionnaire collection will be conducted online using Google Forms. Focus groups will take place in a quiet space to ensure others around them cannot hear what they or the researcher is saying. Participants will be asked to keep the discussion confidential so there is less chance of their school being known to have taken part in our research. I am going to be running the focus group in a private room in the schools. If there are windows, I will ask that the curtains are closed and if that's not possible, to cover them with paper. Participant email addresses will not be shared with anyone other than the researcher and their supervisors. These email addresses will only be used for recruitment. Participants' personal information will be stored in a separate digital file from research data to ensure data remains anonymous. The researcher will not sync or stream the contents of their University Google Drive account to other devices. Transcription of the recording will be completed as soon as possible after gathering the data. To protect the participants' identity, pseudonyms will be utilised for participants names and any places or personal information they disclose which could potentially identify them. University encrypted audio equipment will be used to record the focus groups. Transcriptions will be checked for accuracy by the researcher and to protect the participants' identity, pseudonyms will be utilised for participants names and any places or personal information they disclose which could potentially identify them. Only the researcher and supervisor (if necessary) will have access to transcriptions. Participants will not be identified in any reports, publications or the write up of this work. Everything the participant shares with the researcher will be confidential unless they indicate that they or somebody else may be at risk of any harm. In this instance the designated safeguarding contact will be informed and university procedure followed. Participants will be informed of this in their information sheet before they consent to take part in the research. A data management plan has been completed and included with this submission. This was initially submitted to the DMP feedback service and amended in line with their feedback.

Will all identifiable personal data in digital or physical format be destroyed within a defined period after the project has ended?

Yes

When will the identifiable personal data be destroyed?

All identifiable personal data will be deleted once I have completed my thesis in approximately July 2026.

3. Third-party services

Will any external third-party services not provided by the University be used to process or access personal data during the project?

No

4. Security of computers, devices and software

Will personal data be processed or accessed on any computers or devices that are not managed by the University of Sheffield?

Yes

Will all computers and devices that are not managed by the University of Sheffield be secured in accordance with the IT Code of Connection?

Yes

Will any software not approved by the University of Sheffield be used to process or access data?

No

Will any software be written or developed in order to process or access the personal data?

No

Appendix 6- Data Management Plan

Plan Overview

A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline

Title: PGR Doctoral Thesis - Exploration of the implementation of supervision in schools.

Creator: Claire Lawrie

Principal Investigator: Claire Lawrie

Data Manager: Claire Lawrie

Project Administrator: Claire Lawrie

Affiliation: The University of Sheffield

Funder: The University of Sheffield

Template: Postgraduate Research DMP (The University of Sheffield)

Project abstract:

The aim of the research is to explore the implementation of supervision in schools within a UK Local Authority. Supervision is a process in which the supervisor supports and guides the work of a supervisee through restorative conversations, formative feedback and professional development.

The research will aim to address the following research questions:

- What does supervision look like in schools?
- Is there a discrepancy between the desire for and the actual implementation of supervision in schools?
- What are the helping and hindering factors to implementing supervision in schools?
- How can the hindering factors be addressed?
- What processes have schools used to implement supervision successfully?

Objectives:

1. To recruit up to 175 SENDCos/Senior Leaders to complete an online questionnaire.
2. To recruit between 12-16 SENDCos/Senior Leaders/school staff to participate in two focus groups exploring the helping and hindering factors of implementing supervision.
3. To recruit up to 16 SENDCos/Senior Leaders/School staff to complete an evaluative survey of their experience of a process of implementing supervision.
4. To use the data from the above objectives to produce recommendations for schools, local authorities and Educational Psychology services around the implementation of supervision.

Start date: 18-04-2025

End date: 26-07-2026

Last modified: 22-04-2025

Grant number / URL: N/a

PGR Doctoral Thesis - Exploration of the implementation of supervision in schools.

Defining your data

- What digital data (and physical data if applicable) will you collect or create during the project?
- How will the data be collected or created, and over what time period?
- What formats will your digital data be in? (E.g. .docx, .txt, .jpeg)
- Approximately how much digital data (in GB, MB, etc) will be generated during the project?
- Are you using pre-existing datasets? Give details if possible, including conditions of use.

Approximately 175 online survey question responses will be collected using Google Forms. Audio recordings from two focus groups will be collected using an encrypted device and saved to the University X: Drive then deleted from the audio device once the transferred files have been checked for quality and completeness. Consent forms will be completed as part of the online survey questionnaire and consent forms will be saved on the University X: Drive.

Questionnaire data will be collected by participants following a QR code link shared in person or via email. The data will be saved as Excel files and will be approximately 35MB. The Google Form will collect personal data including name, school, email address and role as this information will be used to identify possible participants for the focus group. This information will be stored on the X: Drive. Audio recordings will be collected in-person using university audio recording equipment. Audio recordings will be transcribed by hand by myself and saved as word documents on the X: Drive. Participants will be assigned a numerical ID within the transcripts with the key linking personal and pseudonymised data kept in a separate, encrypted folder. This key will be deleted once the transcription data has been analysed and themes identified. Audio transcriptions will be named 'focus group 1' and 'focus group 2'.

Looking after data during your research

- Where will you store digital data during the project to ensure it is secure and backed up regularly? ([University research storage](#))
- How will you name and organise your data files? (An example filename can help to illustrate this)
- If you collect or create physical data, where will you store these securely?
- How will you make data easier to understand and use? (E.g. include file structure and methodology in a README file)
- Will you use extra security precautions for any of your digital or physical data? (E.g. for sensitive and/or personal data)

Digital data will be stored on the university X: Drive to ensure it is secure.

Focus groups recordings will be labelled 'Focus Group 1' and 'Focus Group 2'. All of the forms data will be saved in one file, also on the X: Drive. A README.txt file will be saved along with the data files and contain the file naming schema and methodological information.

Recordings will be deleted once the transcriptions have been checked.

Storing data after your research

- Which parts of your data will be stored on a long-term basis after the end of the project?
- Where will the data be stored after the project? (E.g. University of Sheffield repository [ORDA](#), or a subject-specific repository)
- How long will the data be stored for? (E.g. standard TUoS retention period of minimum 10 years after the project)
- Who will place the data in a repository or other long-term storage? (E.g. you, or your supervisor)
- If you plan to use long-term data storage other than a repository, who will be responsible for the data?

Data which supports my published results will be retained. Analysed data and material such as a blank questionnaire may be placed in the University repository [ORDA](#). It may also be possible to place data such as anonymised transcripts in the [UK Data Service](#), a repository with controlled access. If this is not possible, fixed-term storage on the X: drive might be arranged, with a named role in my department responsible for the data and its deletion at a specified time. Digital records of participant consent will be retained for an appropriate period after the project, and as long as the research data are retained in identifiable form, after which a template consent form will be retained with the data.

Transcriptions and quotes will be carefully redacted to ensure that secondary identifiers have been removed.

Sharing data after your research

- How will you make data available outside of the research group after the project? (E.g. openly available through a repository, or on request through your department)
- Will you make all of your data available, or are there reasons you can't do this? (E.g. personal data, commercial or legal restrictions, very large datasets)
- If there are reasons you can't share all of your data, how might you make as much of it available as possible? (E.g. anonymisation, participant consent, sharing analysed data only)
- How will you make your data as widely accessible as possible? (E.g. include a data availability statement in publications, ensure published data has a DOI)
- What licence will you apply to your data to say how it can be reused and shared? (E.g. one of the [Creative Commons](#) licences)

The data will be included in my thesis which will be shared within the university and my local authority Educational Psychology Service. This will also be made openly available in the thesis repository 'White Rose eTheses online'. The research may also be published if felt appropriate. Overall statistics and themes and anonymised quotes will be shared when feeding back on research or developing future training linked to supervision within my professional work.

Research data will be made available for reuse if possible. This will be done through the the University of Sheffield's ORDA. A data availability statement will be included in my thesis and other publications, explaining how data can be accessed. This will include the DOI for data in a repository such as ORDA or the UK Data Service.

Putting your plan into practice

- Who is responsible for making sure your data management plan is followed? (E.g. you with the support of your supervisor)
- How often will your data management plan be reviewed and updated? (E.g. yearly and if the project changes)
- Are there any actions you need to take in order to put your data management plan into practice? (E.g. requesting [University research storage](#) via your supervisor.)

I am responsible for making sure my data management plan is followed and am being overseen by two academic supervisors: Aisha McLean and Anna Weighall.

My data management plan will be reviewed if my data collection changes and once I have collected my data.

I will need to request University Data Storage on the X:Drive through my supervisor before collecting my data.

Appendix 7 - Ethical Approval Letter



Downloaded: 23/05/2025
Approved: 22/05/2025

Claire Louise Lawrie
Registration number: 230108279
School of Education
Programme: Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

Dear Claire Louise

PROJECT TITLE: Exploration of the implementation of supervision across schools within Sheffield.
APPLICATION: Reference Number 067687

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 22/05/2025 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 067687 (form submission date: 16/05/2025); (expected project end date: 25/08/2026).
- Participant information sheet 1153337 version 1 (16/05/2025).
- Participant information sheet 1152372 version 1 (28/04/2025).
- Participant consent form 1152373 version 1 (28/04/2025).

If during the course of the project you need to [deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation](#) please inform me since written approval will be required.

Your responsibilities in delivering this research project are set out at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

James Bradbury
Ethics Admin
School of Education

Please note the following responsibilities of the researcher in delivering the research project:

- The project must abide by the University's Research Ethics Policy: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/research-services/ethics-integrity/policy>
- The project must abide by the University's Good Research & Innovation Practices Policy: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.6710661/file/GRIPPolicy.pdf
- The researcher must inform their supervisor (in the case of a student) or Ethics Admin (in the case of a member of staff) of any significant changes to the project or the approved documentation.
- The researcher must comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.
- The researcher is responsible for effectively managing the data collected both during and after the end of the project in line with best practice, and any relevant legislative, regulatory or contractual requirements.

Appendix 8 - Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet

Research Project title: Exploration of the implementation of supervision across schools within a UK Local Authority.

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Contact me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information on. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Student researcher: Claire Lawrie

Researcher supervisors: Aisha McLean and Anna Weighall

Ethical Approval Number: 067687

What is the project's purpose?

This research is part of my Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at The University of Sheffield. The research aims to explore the implementation of supervision within schools, staff experiences and explore the helping and hindering factors to successfully implementing a supervision process within schools.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen to take part as you work within a school within the Local Authority.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time prior to the focus group taking place without any negative consequences. You do not have to give a reason. Whilst you can withdraw from any on-going or future data collection, your data cannot be removed from the study once the focus

group has begun. If you wish to withdraw from the research, please contact me on the details given below. Please note that by choosing to participate in this research, this will not create a legally binding agreement, nor is it intended to create an employment relationship between you and the University of Sheffield.

What will happen to me if I take part? What do I have to do?

You will be asked to complete an online questionnaire about your experiences of supervision. After completion of this questionnaire, you may also be asked to take part in a focus group with 5-8 other participants. These may be from your own schools or from other schools across the Local Authority. This will take place within a school in the local authority during working hours and I anticipate that this will take approximately 30-60 minutes. I will ask a series of open questions to try and gain the group's views on the helping and hindering factors to implementing supervision. During the focus group, responses will be audio recorded so that I can then analyse the group's responses to try and identify common themes. All responses will be anonymous and yours or the school's name will not be included in my research. If you indicate that you have experienced a process of supervision implementation within your school, you may also be asked to complete a further questionnaire to gather your views on this process.

Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

If you take part in the focus group, the audio recordings of your contributions made during this research will be used only for analysis. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

All participants are able to contribute as much as they are willing. As there are other participants within the focus group, I cannot guarantee complete anonymity, however all participants will be asked to keep all information shared confidential. To minimise a lack of confidentiality, I will ask that curtains are closed and we are in a private space.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will help gain a deeper understanding of how supervision is implemented in schools across the Local Authority and lead to practical recommendations for school leaders, policy makers and the educational psychology service on how to effectively implement and support supervision in schools and overcome barriers. This may lead to changes which would have a positive impact on staff working within schools.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and will only be accessible to myself and my supervisors. You or your school will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications unless you have given your explicit consent for this.

What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?

According to data protection legislation, I am required to inform you that the legal basis I am applying in order to process your personal data is that 'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e)). Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>. As I will be collecting some data that is defined in the legislation as more sensitive (information about your role), I also need to let you know that we are applying the following condition in law: that the use of your data is necessary 'for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific research purposes or statistical purposes' (9(2)(j)).

What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?

The data from the questionnaires will be collated and used to produce descriptive data on the implementation of supervision in schools in the local authority. The focus group will be audio recorded and then anonymously transcribed. Pseudonyms will be used to replace any identifiable names or identifiers used in direct quotes within my thesis. I will not identify any participating schools or participants within the reports, publications or other outputs arising from the research. Original data will only be accessed by myself. All data will be stored securely and then deleted after the research is completed. The results of the research will be shared with schools across the local authority and the local authority Educational Psychology Service and may be published if deemed appropriate. Schools or individuals will not be identified in the feedback to schools and Educational Psychology Service.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is being carried out as part of my Doctoral thesis at the University of Sheffield.

Who is the data controller?

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that The University of Sheffield is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

Who has ethically reviewed this project?

This project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by The School of Education.

What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research or report a concern or incident?

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the research and wish to make a complaint, please contact Aisha McLean at aisha.mclean@sheffield.ac.uk or Anna Weighall at anna.weighall@sheffield.ac.uk in the first instance. If you feel your complaint has not been handled in a satisfactory way you can contact the head of the Educational Psychology Department, Penny Fogg. If the complaint relates to how your personal data has been handled, you can find information about how to raise a complaint in the University's Privacy Notice: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>. If you wish to make a report of a concern or incident relating to potential exploitation, abuse or harm resulting from your involvement in this project, please contact the project's Designated Safeguarding Contact, Aisha McLean at aisha.mclean@sheffield.ac.uk. If the concern or incident relates to the Designated Safeguarding Contact, or if you feel a report you have made to this Contact has not been handled in a satisfactory way, please contact the University Safeguarding Contact, Professor Rebecca Lawthom and/or the University's Research Ethics & Integrity Manager (Lindsay Unwin; l.v.unwin@sheffield.ac.uk).

Contact for further information

If you require further information at any time during the research please contact Claire Lawrie at clawrie1@sheffield.ac.uk, Aisha McLean at aisha.mclean@sheffield.ac.uk or Anna Weighall at anna.weighall@sheffield.ac.uk.

How do I become involved?

If you are a staff member in a local authority school, you are eligible to take part and I would love to hear your views. Please follow the QR code below for a link to the consent form.

Appendix 9 - Interview Consent Form

Interview Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the supervision research interview or focus group. This will last approximately 45 minutes and will take place virtually. Please complete the consent questions below prior to the interview or focus group.

For further information, please refer back to the participant information sheet shared within the initial consent form.

[Participant Information Sheet](#)

* Indicates required question

1. Name *

2. Email address *

3. If I chose to participate in the interview/focus group, I understand that audio recordings will be made and transcribed and these audio recordings will be used in the research. I agree to being audio recorded and for transcripts of these anonymised audio recordings to be used in the research. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. I understand that I can withdraw from the research at any time. I understand that I do not have to give any reasons for this and there will be no negative consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that if I choose to withdraw from the focus group after the data has been transcribed, it will not be possible to remove the research data I have contributed. *

Tick all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. I understand my personal details such as name, school name, email address and school role will not be seen by anyone outside the research. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs. *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. Please add any additional information if necessary.

Thank you for your time.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

What is Supervision?



Supervision in schools is a 'professional conversation' which may take place on a one-to-one or group basis as a method of supporting staff so they can provide for the needs of the students and to build safe cultures for everyone in the school community.

What are the functions of supervision?

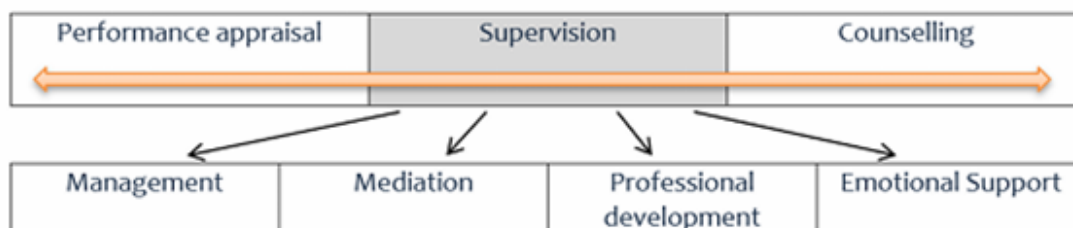
Supervision is a process by which one member of staff is given responsibility by the school to work with another staff member in order to meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives, which together promote the best outcomes for students. These objectives and functions are:

1. Competent accountable performance (managerial function)
2. Continuing professional development (developmental/formative function)
3. Personal support (supportive/restorative function)
4. Engaging the staff member with the school (mediation function)

Morrison (2005)

Is supervision always the same?

Supervision needs to be a flexible response that caters to individual needs, and therefore in each supervision session the four aspects will not get equal attention every time. Supervisors need to remain mindful that they need to offer emotional support and not just managerial input, and that their role is equally to ensure accountability and not only to support and encourage.



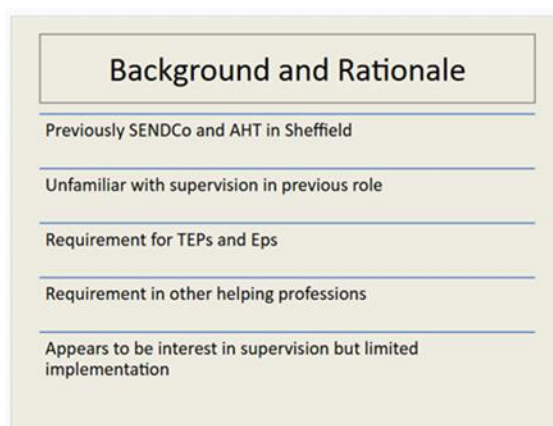
Ref. [B.Rothwell \(2018\)](#)

Appendix 11 - Launch Presentation



Exploring the Implementation of
Supervision in Schools

Claire Lawrie
Trainee Educational Psychologist
The University of Sheffield



Background and Rationale

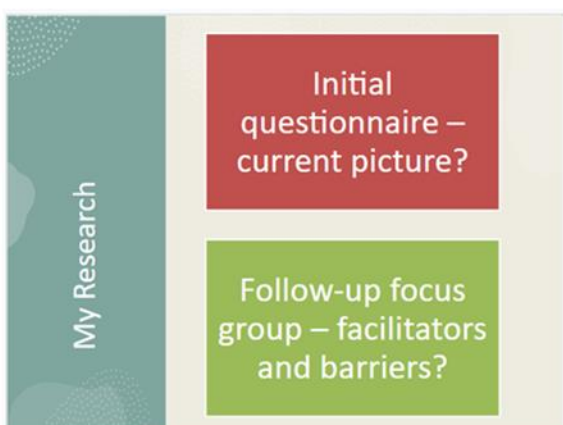
Previously SENDCo and AHT in Sheffield

Unfamiliar with supervision in previous role

Requirement for TEPs and Eps

Requirement in other helping professions

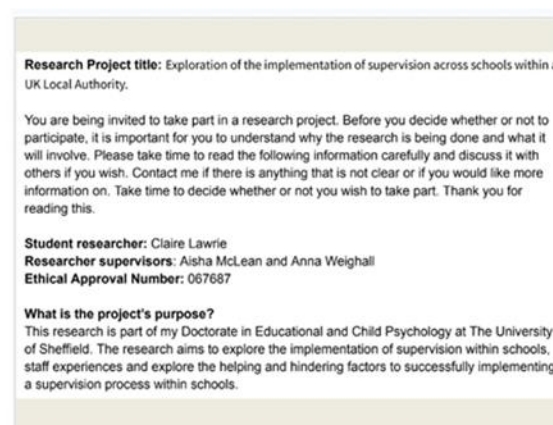
Appears to be interest in supervision but limited implementation



My Research

Initial
questionnaire –
current picture?

Follow-up focus
group – facilitators
and barriers?

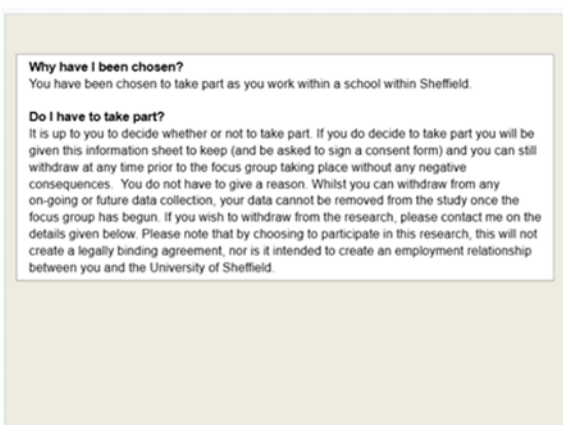


Research Project title: Exploration of the implementation of supervision across schools within a UK Local Authority.

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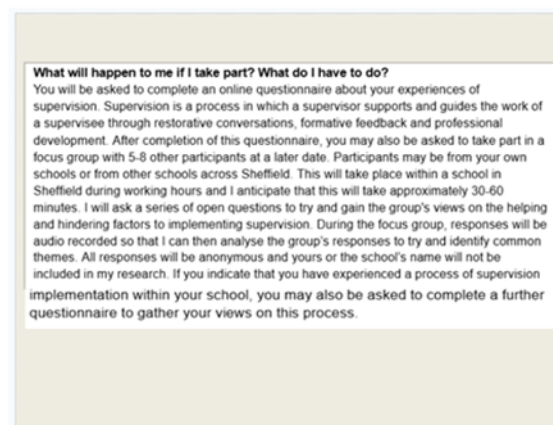
Student researcher: Claire Lawrie
Researcher supervisors: Aisha McLean and Anna Weighall
Ethical Approval Number: 067687

What is the project's purpose?
This research is part of my Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at The University of Sheffield. The research aims to explore the implementation of supervision within schools, staff experiences and explore the helping and hindering factors to successfully implementing a supervision process within schools.



Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen to take part as you work within a school within Sheffield.

Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time prior to the focus group taking place without any negative consequences. You do not have to give a reason. Whilst you can withdraw from any on-going or future data collection, your data cannot be removed from the study once the focus group has begun. If you wish to withdraw from the research, please contact me on the details given below. Please note that by choosing to participate in this research, this will not create a legally binding agreement, nor is it intended to create an employment relationship between you and the University of Sheffield.



What will happen to me if I take part? What do I have to do?
You will be asked to complete an online questionnaire about your experiences of supervision. Supervision is a process in which a supervisor supports and guides the work of a supervisee through restorative conversations, formative feedback and professional development. After completion of this questionnaire, you may also be asked to take part in a focus group with 5-8 other participants at a later date. Participants may be from your own schools or from other schools across Sheffield. This will take place within a school in Sheffield during working hours and I anticipate that this will take approximately 30-60 minutes. I will ask a series of open questions to try and gain the group's views on the helping and hindering factors to implementing supervision. During the focus group, responses will be audio recorded so that I can then analyse the group's responses to try and identify common themes. All responses will be anonymous and yours or the school's name will not be included in my research. If you indicate that you have experienced a process of supervision implementation within your school, you may also be asked to complete a further questionnaire to gather your views on this process.

Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

If you take part in the focus group, the audio recordings of your contributions made during this research will be used only for analysis. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

All participants are able to contribute as much as they are willing. As there are other participants within the focus group, I cannot guarantee complete anonymity, however all participants will be asked to keep all information shared confidential. To minimise a lack of confidentiality, I will ask that curtains are closed and we are in a private space.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will help gain a deeper understanding of how supervision is implemented in schools across Sheffield and lead to practical recommendations for school leaders, policy makers and the educational psychology service on how to effectively implement and support supervision in schools and overcome barriers. This may lead to changes which would have a positive impact on staff working within schools.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

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What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?

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What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?

The data from the questionnaires will be collated and used to produce descriptive data on the implementation of supervision in schools in Sheffield. The focus group will be audio recorded and then anonymously transcribed. Pseudonyms will be used to replace any identifiable names or identifiers used in direct quotes within my thesis or any other publications. I will not identify any participating schools or participants within the reports, publications or other outputs arising from the research. Original data will only be accessed by myself. All data will be stored securely and then deleted after the research is completed. The results of the research will be shared with schools across Sheffield and the Sheffield Educational Psychology Service and may be published if deemed appropriate. Schools or individuals will not be identified in the feedback to schools and Educational Psychology Service.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is being carried out as part of my Doctoral thesis at the University of Sheffield.

Who is the data controller?

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that The University of Sheffield is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

Who has ethically reviewed this project?

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What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research or report a concern or incident?

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the research and wish to make a complaint, please contact Aisha McLean at aisha.mclean@sheffield.ac.uk or Anna Weighall at anna.weighall@sheffield.ac.uk in the first instance. If you feel your complaint has not been handled in a satisfactory way you can contact the head of the Educational Psychology Department, Penny Fogg. If you have a complaint about how your personal data has been handled, information about how to raise a complaint can be found in the University's Privacy Notice: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/governance/data-protection/privacy-general>. If you wish to make a report of a concern or incident relating to potential exploitation, abuse or harm resulting from your involvement in this project, please contact the project's Designated Safeguarding Contact, Aisha McLean at aisha.mclean@sheffield.ac.uk. If the concern or incident relates to the Designated Safeguarding Contact, or if you feel a report you have made to this Contact has not been handled in a satisfactory way, please contact the University Safeguarding Contact, Professor Rebecca Lewthorn and/or the University's Research Ethics & Integrity Manager (Lindsay Unwin, L.unwin@sheffield.ac.uk).

Contact for further information
If you require further information at any time during the research please contact I. Dore.
I email at ian.dore@sheffield.ac.uk, or Anna McLean at anna.mclean@sheffield.ac.uk or Anna Weighall at anna.weighall@sheffield.ac.uk.

How do I complete the survey?
If you are a staff member in a Sheffield school, you are eligible to take part and would like to hear your views, please follow the QR code below for a link to the consent form.

<https://forms.gle/t6qs7Hr8lkK7zT6>



Appendix 12 - Example Transcript

Participant 1 Interview Transcription

Attendees

Interviewer (I), Participant 1 (P1)

Transcript

I: Okay then erm so first of all just kind of tell me about how supervision has been implemented in your school kind of what it looks like. Does anyone access it? How they access it? Erm how often? That kind of idea.

P1: Ok so erm supervision with us is something that's fairly new. The headteacher and the deputy head have erm supervision sessions that they have sought separately just to support them erm externally with the the pressures of er their their leadership role within school.

I: Yep

P1: Erm in my experience sometimes supervision has been helpful I've had two different formats of it and one of them that was really helpful erm the one that I'm accessing erm at the moment is not as useful if I'm honest and I think that's more down to erm the relationship with the, between the person who is leading the supervision em the previous supervision that I had as a leader, em, was really good and that was the part of the DFE process

I: Right

P1: I accessed that erm the one that I've sought through erm through separately this year isn't as good but I think it's down to the quality of the the person leading the supervision rather than actually what we're talking about so, it's been interesting for me to see the two models erm I know the headteacher erm from what she said about the supervision she gets erm and her regular sessions she's finding those really helpful as well.

I: Yeah

P1: Obviously, I can't comment on that because I don't know the process of hers

I: Yeah

P1: Because it's confidential between her and her person erm at XXX School we have we have just completed a series of training sessions with our middle leaders to widen their awareness of supervision erm we're trying to look at two different models of supervision, one for supporting staff erm through the the journey that is working in schools particularly a complex school like we are erm so we're looking at two sides to it erm supporting staff with their journey and helping our leaders to support other staff in school with their journey.

I: Yeah

P1: Erm but we're also looking at it to support class teams with some of our more complex children. So using solution circles and part of our MDT processes which is multi-disciplinary team processes

where we erm tap into EP support, OT, speech and language erm we're trying to bring LD CAMHS on into that attendance and inclusion neurodisability team erm SENDSARS, who else in those meetings and the leaders from erm the different the different pastoral leaders erm parental support and different staff within school so we can improve the erm improve how we support some of our more complex children within the classroom so we're currently in very early days of staff being having that support and having that awareness of the support that we want to put in place.

I: Yeah and you talked about erm the supervision that you currently sought to access, how regularly does that happen?

P1: Erm I'm allowed four sessions and I think I'm waiting for my last erm session but erm trying to organise those sessions around being in school, my home life with having a nine-year-old and sort of not being able to access them at certain times

I: Yeah

P1: Erm you know later into the evening it's been really tricky. So, I've had to unfortunately, I've had to cancel the last three sessions and reschedule them due to work commitments coming up and things that were more urgent than my supervision which sort of defeats the point of it if that makes sense. But I felt I've had to do that

I: Yeah

P1: because the timings that were available through him weren't great for me so it hasn't been as good this time as I have done previously.

I: Yeah and the one that you mentioned that you received erm through the DFE what led that to stop? Was it just a limited number of sessions?

P1: Yeah it was erm you were given a limited number of sessions it was one that you could apply to through the DFE It was part of they they had a big project and the thing with that is you were it was through an external company and erm you were sent a selection of people who you could erm who you could link up with as your supervision partner.

I: Yeah

P1: And so there was some history about them so I actually ended up choosing somebody who was erm in corporate supervision rather than erm education supervision so there was a bit of information about that person and their history and how they'd ended up getting to to do that role

I: Yeah

P1: Erm and so I actually chose somebody I was interested my partner works in the corporate world and I work in the educational world and quite often there's a very big difference between what he sees and what I see as as day to day and processes and things like that.

I: Yeah

P1: So I I felt it would be quite interesting to step out of the education world into the corporate world a little bit for my supervision to see if the messages were a bit different or a bit more generalized or or just that balance so for me that was quite interesting and that was a choice I made to not go with somebody that was an education person that was just looking at me as a human

I: Yeah

P1: Rather than me as a teacher I was just a leader of a company rather than being a school leader if that made sense.

I: Yeah

P1: And I found that I found that was really interesting. Whereas erm the supervision I've got at the moment you didn't have a choice you just got allocated somebody erm and it's somebody that understands education, but it feels more education based rather than me based if that makes sense.

I: Yeah definitely. So do you think it was beneficial then in that first instance having that kind of overview of what the supervisor had as their background before choosing?

P1: Most definitely.

I: Yeah

P1: Erm it might have just been a person that I or been a relationship thing a person that I would sit and have a cup of coffee with it it's that sort of that might have had something to do with it, it might not. But for me that was, they actually worked for, they had a big history for the company my husband works for erm which was why I was just interested to see that difference.

I: Yeah, definitely that's really interesting erm so you I think you've kind of covered my next question which is kind of tell me about a time when supervision is most effective or successful and you've kind of mentioned that situation where you were able to choose the supervisor that you're going to work with.

P1: Yeah.

I: Was there anything kind of thinking within the individual sessions of supervision? Can you think back to a time or one of the sessions that you found particularly successful? Erm and kind of think about what was it about that or what the topic of conversation was obviously within confidentiality that kind of made it successful.

P1: I think it erm sorry I've just noticed the picture's frozen there.

I: It's okay. I can still hear you clearly so

P1: That's ok erm I think it depends on the buy in from the person who is accessing the supervision. Erm one of them was one of the sessions was unpicking erm looking at why I might react in a certain way erm depending on my history. I've had some had a particularly traumatic event in my past and actually because I allowed myself to talk openly about that and bought in and trusted the person I was talking to we were able to unpick some things in order for me to move forward with that

I: Yeah

P1: Which I couldn't even though we've had similar conversations with the person I'm currently doing I haven't got that connection with him that I feel that I'm achieving as much from the sessions if that makes sense.

I: Yeah

P1: Erm so it's about I think a big part of it is if you don't as the person accessing the supervision if you're not buying into this and wanting the best outcomes then I don't think supervision will work in the same way so for me that was hugely important.

I: Yeah and do you think that with the supervision you're accessing now do you think the fact that you like you say haven't got quite that same connection with this supervisor do you think that will influence whether you take supervision up again or?

P1: No, I would like to take supervision up again erm I do have the option to go back to the the previous person to pay for private sessions but at this point with a nine-year-old at home erm then that's not something it's very expensive it's not something erm that I'm able to do at the moment erm but it's something that if I did have the option to do that I would definitely i think even when your world is going really well I think supervision is something that we should all if I could access it once a week for the rest of my life I would do

I: Yeah

P1: Even when not working. I think it's really good for as a person in general to allow yourself that time to reflect and erm to talk to somebody in a in a different way from your friends and family or your work colleagues. I think it's hugely important and if more people accessed it the world would be a better place.

I: Fantastic erm so thinking thank you you've told me so much erm about your journey which has been so useful thinking kind of back now to the school's journey erm you obviously talked at the beginning about how you have successfully kind of started on a journey of implementing supervision. Did you identify kind of whether were there were there any barriers in that journey that you've had to overcome or any barriers that you're still having to overcome within that?

P1: Erm yeah, there's quite a few erm you obviously need staff to buy in erm we had a really our reason for starting this journey was supporting staff and supporting our pupils erm on a higher level than we currently are even though we we do support really well we can all improve erm you need your staff teams to buy in to wanting to to have that support erm so that's really tricky erm schools are so busy we're all spinning so many erm spinning so many different plates actually getting having the time to be able to do the training so people feel confident to be able to to lead some of these conversations. We quite often are having to have more difficult conversations erm about children and staff as well so you know there was a good reason for us needing to start it but you know there is a big cost implication there's a big time implication and there is you have to have all the staff erm so thinking around the table when we had some training about this erm there's a number of staff who really bought into it and there's one or two staff who still haven't bought into it and maybe they would if it was with somebody that they didn't know but I know you know if I sat down to do a session with some people they would really engage with it and other people that they would be quite closed.

I: Yeah

P1: So erm yes there are barriers.

I: And what do you think then as a school enabled you to be able to prioritise it as something you wanted to develop?

P1: Erm it's the commitment of the leadership team to making the school a better place for both our staff and our children but there's there is also been you know the funding and the time element which is something that we're just having to work with.

I: Yeah okay and I suppose that goes back to like you said that that and that reasoning is sometimes why then it doesn't get prioritised for something more urgent I think as you phrased it might stop it happening.

P1: Yeah.

I: Yeah. Okay. Erm so thinking about then the future of supervision erm for you what what would that look like? I know you kind of briefly touched on it by saying you would have it every week erm

P1: That's just me personally.

I: Yeah erm how else would it look for you

P1: Erm

I: Or for it to be successful in a school?

P1: In school we would really like erm the leadership team and the middle leaders to feel confident to support erm other staff in school with any issues and difficult conversations so it's just about erm it's about the confidence of staff to believe in the supervision process that it will support conversations and support everybody's journey erm it's also important for us erm to start some of our MDT processes with solution circles with the class teams we already have MET meetings which is managing emotions together where erm before children so where we look at what's working and what's not working for all children in all classes erm for the children who our usual SEN provision isn't working erm if that's not working for them we want to use solution circles in those MET meetings to unpick some of the things that are working and not working and start to look at what else we need to look at and we want to use those conversations to then feed into our MDT meetings which we have erm five times a year where we have the external support so going from classroom and in school support up to the external support that we have from wider professionals.

I: Yeah

P1: So we're having more of those we're looking at the solution circles as a class team and finding out from parents how they feel and then we're using that conversation to help support the things that we're putting in for the children in at school level before we then looking at speech and language, OT, our EP using our EP time and the wider professionals that work with school so it's adding for us putting in putting in those processes erm at classroom level and at leadership level within school will really support everybody

I: Yeah

P1: If that makes sense.

I: Yeah, great. Thank you. If erm if you were talking to another school who was starting to think about their journey of implementing supervision, is there any kind of advice or recommendations that you think would be useful for them?

P1: Erm having some training and some discussions before you look at implementing training for middle leaders so erm the head teacher and I did some research and had some conversations er with our EP support and the wider team for EP support erm just to find out about what that might look like for our school and what we wanted so we were quite clear on what we wanted our journey to look not just a general this is this is supervision so it has to be prioritized for your cohort your children you know your families and your staff team.

I: Yeah

P1: So just looking at that in detail I mean we were lucky to have erm two EPs working with school who were able to tell us a lot of information to help us outline the journey that we wanted to take.

I: Ok fab erm is there anything else in relation to supervision that you think you want to share erm that I've not asked you about?

P1: No the only thing the only thing I would like if there was sort of more we've had some short training sessions with our middle leaders but actually erm it would be really lovely if there was a like a full day if the EP team as part of their sort of their XXXX offer were able to have a whole day so you could go and have the training maybe all in one go or sort of a series sometimes you might have say three one days over the course of a school year so you could erm find out a little bit more so we we had some good training really good training but it was a short after school meeting rather than a full day course that you could go on.

I: Yeah

P1: So I would be really interested in going and understanding a bit more of the background than we had in those shorter times even though I feel I have a clear understanding I'm just interested so you know sometimes in school in education you can go you sign up for a course and it's three one days you know across the year and you can go and do little tasks and things and have a go erm ee did that but we did a shorter version because it was only an after school meeting whereas it would be really useful if particularly if something like this was being rolled out through XXXX erm or through a local authority it would be really interesting to be able to sign up for a you know a full day or a course that gave you a starting point and maybe as a not as a train the trainer but as a sort of you're now I don't know what you would call it because there's no you're obviously not going to have a qualification in it but just that you're sort of a more aware person about it or something like that

I: So you could go back and implement that within schools.

P1: Yeah, yeah

I: And who when you take it back to schools in an ideal world who would you want to then supervise?

P1: Erm I would want to train my middle leadership team to be able to to then do that so whether it was having a conversation with one teaching assistant or whether being able to work in groups and having that support you know to look at a particular child or a particular class or a particular situation I would just want on one hand staff to feel supported because they know the format of conversations and then they know how we're going to to approach things but also for our staff to have my middle leaders to have the confidence to be able to to do that in school as well so it works both ways.

I: Yeah, definitely. Okay, that's great. Is there anything else that you want to add?

P1: No just the quality of the training that we had was very erm was very thorough and supportive so it feels like we're in a really good place I just wish we had a lot more time to be able to do it but I'm really interested to look at particularly with the children how we can get that into our MDT process from classroom level up it just takes time but the quality of the training that we had was really interesting.

I: Okay that's good that's great okay thank you

Appendix 13 - Example of Coding Process

Participant 1 Interview Transcription

Attendees

Interviewer (I), Participant 1 (P1)

Transcription	Code
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I: Okay then erm so first of all just kind of tell me about how supervision has been implemented in your school kind of what it looks like. Does anyone access it? How they access it? Erm how often? That kind of idea.

P1: Ok so erm supervision with us is something that's fairly new. The headteacher and the deputy head have erm supervision sessions that they have sought separately just to support them erm externally with the the pressures of er their their leadership role within school.

I: Yep

P1: Erm in my experience sometimes supervision has been helpful. I've had two different formats of it and one of them that was really helpful erm the one that I'm accessing erm at the moment is not as useful if I'm honest and I think that's more down to erm the relationship with the, between the person who is leading the supervision em the previous supervision that I had as a leader, em, was really good and that was the part of the DFE process

I: Right

P1: I accessed that erm the one that I've sought through erm through separately this year isn't as good but I think it's down to the quality of the the person leading the supervision rather than actually what we're talking about so, it's been interesting for me to see the two models erm I know the headteacher erm from what she said about the supervision she gets erm and her regular sessions she's finding those really helpful as well.

I: Yeah

P1: Obviously, I can't comment on that because I don't know the process of hers

I: Yeah

P1: Because it's confidential between her and her person erm at XXX School we have we have just completed a series of training sessions with our middle leaders to widen their awareness of supervision erm we're trying to look at two different models of supervision, one for supporting staff erm through the the journey that is working in schools particularly a complex school like we are erm so we're looking at two sides to it erm supporting staff

New to schools

Accessed by SLT

Managing complexities/pressures

Helpful

Importance of relationships

External support

Skills of supervisor

Helpful

Confidentiality

Role of training

Managing complexities/pressures

Role of training

Managing complexity solving

Problem

New to schools

Role of training

Limited access[05]

[01]I think there is something else to consider about this comment but I'm not sure yet. Does it link to the common approach of teachers to almost put on an act in the classroom? Do teachers have space to be human when they are carrying the responsibility of 30 children? Or does this just resonate with my own experiences?

[02]Word choice – achieving? What does this tell us about perception of supervision? Purpose?

[03]Really important message to think about – is this explained enough in the introduction to supervision?

[04]Is there something here about attitude to change? Willingness to overcome barriers as a school? Leadership team?

[05]Initially put this as Power of leaders and then changed as I felt I was starting to analyse/look for themes rather than just code

[06]Is this about feeling seen?

[07]Does this also come back to power of leaders? If teachers are having to pay for it themselves?

Appendix 14 - Table of Codes and Themes

Theme	Descriptive codes
1. Schools have limited understanding of supervision	· Supervision is new to schools · Supervision isn't talked about in schools · Staff have misconceptions of the purpose of supervision · Difficulty finding time to think about it · Leadership confidence to support with supervision is limited · Staff are unsure what to expect from supervision · Staff in schools are seeking more training of supervision · Limited experience · Difficulty showing staff supervision · Supervision offers have been inconsistent over time
2. Schools prioritise supervision for roles facing increased pressures	· Supervision for senior leaders · Supervision for Heads · Supervision for SENDCos · Support for staff when needed · Safeguarding Leads · ELSA supervision · Pastoral staff

3. Supervision is perceived as a space for problem solving and reflection on 'stuck' situations and complex situations	· Support for individual cases · Strategic problem solving · Supports challenges of the role · Follows a problem solving structure · Space to hear multiple views · Leads to clear outcomes
4. Access to supervision depends on how it is prioritised by those 'in charge'	· Supervision is sought by individuals themselves · Leaders choose who is prioritised · Supervision is time limited · Leaders have control over availability · Leaders control the budget · Supervision is offered by the Trust in some schools · School need to fit supervision in with other priorities · Leadership commitment · Policy/contract limitations · Lack of understanding from leaders · School ethos

5. The success of supervision is dependent on the relationship between supervisor and supervisee	· Relationships impact the usefulness of supervision · Personal relationship · Consistency of supervisor · Need to connect · Positive staff relationships can offer some supervision · Professionally challenging relationship based on Mutual respect · External support can be beneficial or a hindrance · Need for being able to choose supervisor · Need trust in supervisor · Need to feel listened to · Relationship beyond supervision session · Supervisors need to have empathy for the context
6. Supervision provides a confidential space	· Confidential process · Space to talk openly · No personal connection to context can be preferred
7. Supervisees seek different functions of supervision	· Space to manage complexities and pressures · Space for personal reflection · Space for strategic support · Space to seek advice · Problem solving space · Space to increase knowledge · Space to revisit and review · Space for continuous professional development

8. The success of supervision is impacted by the quality of the supervisee	· Level of skills of supervisor · Ability to offer advice · Supervisor confidence · Lack of relevant knowledge · Knowledge of supervisor · Ability to support reflection · Line manager skills · Ability to empower
9. Schools currently rely on external agencies to provide supervision	· Support from outside agencies for individual cases · Supervision from external companies · ELSA supervision · Supervision support from the EPS · Clinical supervision · Supervision from social workers · DfE led supervision · Safeguarding Partners · Locality support

10. Implementing supervision in schools requires preparation and training for staff	· Training to increase understanding · Whole school commitment · Opportunity to hear from experience · Training to increase skills · Training to increase confidence · Opportunity for research and discussions · Opportunity to work with EPs · Staff need to know what to expect
11. Supervision is impacted by time available	· Ability to prioritise supervision · Supervisor availability · Time is already stretched in schools · Commitment of leaders to prioritise time · Time needs to be protected · Supervision needs structure to ensure it's a good use of time
12. The engagement of the supervisee influences the impact of supervision	· Initial buy-in of supervisee · Level of trust in supervisor · Supervisees recognition of the value of supervision · Supervisees ability to recognise need for supervision · Willingness of supervisee to be open and self-reflect · Need for supervision can be dependent on current context
13. Supervision is perceived as a space for reflection	· Space to explore emotional impact · Space to reflect on experience generally · Space to reflect on actions · Space to explore another perspective

14. Supervision offers aspects that are beneficial to staff wellbeing	· Offers a space for topics personal to the supervisee · Provides an opportunity for CPD and impacts practice · Supervision provides protected time to reflect · Supervision provides a space to offload · Supervision provides a space for reassurance · Positive impact on time · Being given time helps staff feel valued · Space to regulate emotions
15. The need for supervision in schools has increased	· Staff are managing more complex situations · Staff are seeking increased access to supervision · Supervision is even more important for staff that are new to role
16. The implementation of supervision is different across schools	· Support doesn't always continue · Availability depends on access to agencies · Timings and logistics · Some schools access peer support across schools · Some schools access peer support internally · Structured vs unstructured · Open approach · Flexible approach

17. School staff benefit from opportunities to have professional conversations in some form	· Colleague support is built up over time · Colleague support is easier in smaller settings · Staff value knowing who they can talk to · Staff value opportunity for dialogue · Staff value open ethos · Value of time to talk through cases · Feeling listened to · Reflective conversations happen through PDRs
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Appendix 15 - Table of Codes and Themes Revised

Theme	Descriptive codes
1. Schools have limited understanding of supervision	- Supervision is new to schools - Supervision isn't talked about in schools - Staff have misconceptions of the purpose of supervision - Difficulty finding time to think about it - Leadership confidence to support with supervision is limited - Staff are unsure what to expect from supervision - Staff in schools are seeking more training of supervision - Limited experience - Difficulty showing staff supervision - Supervision offers have been inconsistent over time
1a. Supervision is an emerging practice	- Supervision is new to schools - Supervision isn't talked about in schools - Staff in schools are seeking more training of supervision - Limited experience
2. Schools prioritise supervision for roles facing increased pressures	- Supervision for senior leaders - Supervision for Heads - Supervision for <u>SENCOs</u> - Support for staff when needed - Safeguarding Leads - ELSA supervision - Pastoral staff
3. Supervision is perceived as a space for problem solving and reflection on 'stuck' situations and complex situations	- Support for individual cases - Strategic problem solving - Supports challenges of the role - Follows a problem solving structure - Space to hear multiple views - Leads to clear outcomes
4. Access to supervision depends on how it is prioritised by those 'in charge'	- Supervision is sought by individuals themselves - Leaders choose who is prioritised - Supervision is time limited - Leaders have control over availability - Leaders control the budget - Supervision is offered by the Trust in some schools - School need to fit supervision in with other priorities - Leadership commitment - Policy/contract limitations - Lack of understanding from leaders - School ethos
5. The success of supervision is dependent on the relationship between supervisor and supervisee 5. Positive relationships support impact of supervision	- Relationships impact the usefulness of supervision - Personal relationship - Consistency of supervisor - Need to connect - Positive staff relationships can offer some supervision - Professionally challenging relationship based on Mutual respect - External support can be beneficial or a hindrance - Need for being able to choose supervisor

Comment [01]: I think this overlaps with theme 7

	• INeed trust in supervisor • Need to feel listened to • Relationship beyond supervision session • Supervisors need to have empathy for the context	
5a. Lack of connection hinders impact of supervision	• <u>Need to connect</u> • <u>External support can be a hindrance</u> • <u>Personal choice of supervisor</u> • <u>Lack of Trust</u>	
6. Supervision provides a confidential space	• Confidential process • Space to talk openly • No personal connection to context can be preferred	
7. Supervisees seek different functions of supervision	• <u>Space to seek advice</u> • <u>Problem solving space</u> • <u>Space to increase knowledge</u> • <u>Space for continuous professional development</u> • Space to manage complexities and pressures • Space for personal reflection • Space for strategic support	
	• Space to seek advice	
	• <u>Space for personal reflection</u> • <u>Space to manage complexities and pressures</u> • Problem solving space • Space to increase knowledge	
	• <u>Space to revisit and review</u> • Space for continuous professional development • <u>Space for strategic support</u>	

8. The success of supervision is impacted by the quality of the supervisor	• Level of skills of supervisor • <u>Ability to offer advice</u> • <u>Knowledge of supervisor</u> • <u>Ability to support reflection</u> • <u>Ability to empower</u> • <u>Line manager skills</u>	Formatted: Font: (Default) Arial, 11 pt
	• Ability to offer advice • Supervisor confidence • Lack of relevant knowledge • Knowledge of supervisor • Ability to support reflection • Line manager skills • Ability to empower •	
9. Schools currently rely on external agencies to provide supervision	• Support from outside agencies for individual cases • Supervision from external companies • ELSA supervision • Supervision support from the EPS • Clinical supervision • Supervision from social workers • DfE led supervision • Safeguarding Partners • Locality support	

10. Implementing supervision in schools requires preparation and training for staff	• Training to increase understanding • Whole school commitment • Opportunity to hear from experience • Training to increase skills • Training to increase confidence • Opportunity for research and discussions • Opportunity to work with EPs • Staff need to know what to expect	
11. Supervision is impacted by <u>lack of</u> time available	• Ability to prioritise supervision • Supervisor availability • Time is already stretched in schools • Commitment of leaders to prioritise time • Time needs to be protected • Supervision needs structure to ensure it's a good use of time	
11a. Supervision is impacted by <u>prioritisation of time</u>	•	
12. The engagement of the supervisee influences the impact of supervision	• Initial buy-in of supervisee • Level of trust in supervisor • Supervisees recognition of the value of supervision • Supervisees ability to recognise need for supervision • Willingness of supervisee to be open and self-reflect • Need for supervision can be dependent on current context	
13. Supervision is perceived as a space for <u>reflection</u>	• Space to explore emotional impact • Space to reflect on experience generally • Space to reflect on actions • Space to explore another perspective	Comment [02]: I think this feeds in to theme 7
14. Supervision <u>offers</u> aspects that are beneficial to staff wellbeing	• Offers a space for topics personal to the supervisee • Provides an opportunity for CPD and impacts practice • Supervision provides protected time to reflect • Supervision provides a space to offload • Supervision provides a space for reassurance • Positive impact on time • Being given time helps staff feel valued • Space to regulate emotions	Comment [03]: I think this feeds in to theme 7
15. The need for supervision in <u>schools</u> has increased	• Staff are managing more complex situations • Staff are seeking increased access to supervision • Supervision is even more important for staff that are new to role	Comment [04]: I think this feeds in to theme 7
16. The implementation of supervision is different across schools <u>Varying approaches</u>	• Support doesn't always continue • Availability depends on access to agencies • Timings and logistics • Some schools access peer support across schools • Some schools access peer support internally • Structured vs unstructured • Open approach • Flexible approach	
17. School staff benefit from opportunities to have professional	• Colleague support is built up over time • Colleague support is easier in smaller settings • Staff value knowing who they can talk to	
conversations in some form	• Staff value opportunity for dialogue • Staff value open ethos • Value of time to talk through cases • Feeling listened to • Reflective conversations happen through PDRs	

Appendix 16 - Reorganisation of Themes

Theme	Descriptive codes	Quote
Schools have limited understanding of supervision	Supervision is new to schools	supervision with us is something that's fairly new at XXX School we have we have just completed a series of training sessions with our middle leaders to widen their awareness of supervision so we're currently in very early days of staff being having that support I've been here for three years now and been a DSL for probably about 15 years and that's the first time I've ever had supervision Although interestingly I only found that out today because I've just had xxxx who's an exec head in the trust just had a meeting with her and I mentioned to her that I was doing this next and she said oh, great she said so she's just about she's just signed up for it so she's just about to start her first session for the free ones but she was recommended it from another head in the trust I know supervision is quite a new thing I think that supervision is something that I've become aware of as a leader over the past couple of years and that's probably it. So, it's quite new in the grand scheme of things. I think yeah. Yeah my last school our erm deputy DSL talked about having supervision erm and we had an art therapist there and he did supervision with her so yeah I've heard of the term but not

		really been involved in it.
	Supervision isn't talked about in schools	No, I don't think so I think there's we've got people in school that have it erm but it isn't it isn't a widely talked about area erm it's certainly not a widely talked about area It really could be so beneficial but I just don't think it's because people don't know enough about it and it's not a widely talked about sort of thing to do erm I think it's just that's why there's a gap... I just don't think people know a lot about it to be honest I wouldn't say I've heard it here.

	Staff have misconceptions of the purpose of supervision	I think also some people just think that they're going to have to talk to someone about their problems so I suppose the the whole school big picture would be a better understanding of what supervision can be erm and also it not being what I think people's idea would be that it's sitting down and talking about your problems. Erm So I don't think but I think that's a lack of awareness of what supervision can and can't be erm I don't think there's erm a wide there's probably only three of us in school, as in with me, the head and the safeguarding lead, who would probably have an understanding of what supervision is and what it should be I don't think it's widely known what it should be and what it is and what the purpose can be of it I think maybe some people's perception is that it's going to be sort of like deep and meaningful and kind of I think they see it as more like counselling they think it's maybe more like counselling and that you've got to dig deep into yourself but I think that is a barrier for some people is they think it's going to just be an hour talking about myself Yeah I think that senior leaders were maybe a little bit guarded erm to be to speak to the supervisor I kind of maybe thought that senior leaders thought what's the purpose? I don't need supervision
	Difficulty finding time to think about it	schools are so busy we're all spinning so many erm spinning so many different plates actually getting having the time to be able to do the training so people feel confident to be able to to lead some of these conversations. Yeah I've worked across a few schools and there's lots of talk

	about it but erm never seems to be any time to do it.
Leadership confidence to support with supervision is limited	In school we would really like erm the leadership team and the middle leaders to feel confident to support erm other staff in school with any issues and difficult conversations
Staff are unsure what to expect from supervision	So I felt I had to come thinking oh god what can I talk about today and it would be sometimes I think that that was pointless why have I talked about that? I'm not going to do anything to do with that but it I didn't have any sort of idea from the beginning what supervision one to one with particularly someone who was external And I suppose when I started my one to ones I went into it blind and I went into it because I'd done ones in school but that had never been about me that had been about supervision of cases like complex cases so I went into it probably very skeptical
Staff in schools are seeking more training	So I would be really interested in going and understanding a bit more of the background than we had in those shorter times even though I feel I have a clear understanding Just about a bit more about maybe how we can maybe structure it more to get more out of it I don't know. Or maybe examples from other schools or other places how they do it that'd be helpful

		But for me the idea is someone will take on my role within the next year and I think I'm going to have to be mindful of what I have felt I needed and not got
	Limited knowledge of the use of supervision	but I don't think it's anything I don't think it's something that people know a lot about. and I think I only know about it because of my role But I think the main barrier is staff understanding what it is I think the main barrier would be a the understanding of it...And the benefits that it could have and what it could look like you sort of hear about it I've always sort of heard about it but never really really understood like what it's for and kind of you know who would need it and why and so on and so on No I don't think they did. There wasn't understanding

	Limited experience	erm whereas I think because other people don't experience it generally it's not nec I think that people have dipped their toe into it and sort of had little bits but they wouldn't know that it necessarily that it was a form of supervision and nobody's really had anything formal. I've always wanted to do supervision we I've always felt like it's an area that we haven't really done properly Do you think we are explaining that what super because obviously we haven't had any experience ourselves but would that kind of cover what your definition of supervision is? Yeah because we say maybe because we don't call it supervision and then saying thinking that I am a one-to-one with the principal but it's not supervision in that I talk about that we have discussions about school priorities and things so I probably say that is less supervision then but his door is always open for anybody actually.
	Difficulty showing staff supervision	and it's hard to kind of show people what supervision is without them being in it and obviously if it's a one to one professional one you're not going to have somebody sitting in watching it erm but and for me people who sit in them with me it's kind of quite specific to a like a certain case I don't think people would understand how to transfer the process onto themselves
The offer of supervision within schools has ^[O1]	Support to SENDCos from EPs	historically when I first started we used to do it as SENDCos within the locality with the educational psychology service.

been inconsistent over time	Lack of continuation	and we took sort of individual cases erm the ones we were stuck with and we took those to supervision with the group of SENDCos and two EPs they came to that session erm that did then then phase out out erm and sort of wasn't something that was continued after a few years
	Supervision offer varies within schools	I've been here for three years now and been a DSL for probably about 15 years and that's the first time I've ever had supervision
	Desire for supervision	I've always wanted to do supervision
	Limited priority	I've always wanted to do supervision we I've always felt like it's an area that we haven't really done properly
	Different school ethos	Yeah I'm only in my third year and I can still think talking to you I wouldn't have this experience at my last school[02]

Schools prioritise supervision for roles facing increased pressures	Accessed by SLT Supervision for senior leaders	The headteacher and the deputy head have erm supervision sessions Erm I've also had supervision as a leader so that was something that school offered to all the leaders Well there's no she's I'm thinking it is generally the leaders erm that have the most supervision Erm but I think it would have to start with first of all the leaders because I think it would have to start with the leaders understanding of it and the leaders protecting the time to do it to see the impact of it so myself and I tried to convince other leaders to do it but they just didn't seem that keen For me all leaders would have super I mean okay okay let me be even more ambitious than that in an ideal world everybody in school would have supervision Erm yes so I think we could probably you we could probably do it where the leaders did have it erm and then we could because you know supervision and coaching are two different things but there probably you know there there probably is a structure that you could get within school that I know some schools do where you have a a peer kind of kind of peer coaching[03] so we're looking at two sides to it erm supporting staff with their journey and helping our leaders to support other staff in school with their journey
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	Supervision for Heads	they have sought separately just to support them erm externally with the the pressures of er their their leadership role within school. Sometimes it's more of like a like god last year's SATs results we had we had a session on that Erm and I think I suppose that's why our head has continued it because she needed someone above her to be able to have You don't get a lot other than the NPQH you don't really get much headteacher training kind of specifically on how to be a headteacher.
	Supervision for SENDCos	

	Support for staff when needed	supporting staff and supporting our pupils erm on a higher level than we currently are even though we we do support really well we can all improve because I think it would be identifying who felt they needed and well actually that's not a good example because our office staff are probably getting a really high level of supervision at the minute erm and that's being done on a sort of fortnightly basis so they are having that supervision time but it's an area that we felt needs it and I think that's what we're probably doing as a school targeting key areas that feel they need some level of supervision. so we've had erm I've got two experiences of supervision one is that we bought in an external company erm who provided staff supervision erm to a range of stakeholders erm myself included erm but for any staff members that put themselves forward for supervision practice Yeah it was actually through the head teacher so the head teacher just because xxxx had I suppose experienced trauma the headteacher offered supervision erm to all members of staff and if anyone was particularly needing some erm and I think that tied in nicely with the period of instability that we had erm just to help staff feel a little bit more settled.
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Safeguarding Leads

So the trust that we're part of puts in place a supervision session every half term for DSLs

Yeah every school that's part of this trust the DSL receives that supervision.

I think I have got space to talk about individual cases if I'm struggling but actually the overall thing and the overall pressure is still part of that it I'm still able it's still part of that.

I've always thought that xxx our our safeguarding lead...Er should really could really could do with it

So erm so that's it at the moment but I really feel that our safeguarding lead should have it as well.

and then there's also another supervision erm which I've erm been a part of which erm was done by another service within xxxx. It was a safeguarding service erm and they provided me with safeguarding supervision

Yeah my last school our erm deputy DSL talked about having supervision erm and we had an art therapist there and he did supervision with her so yeah I've heard of the term but not really been involved in it

really I mean you will have your safeguarding meeting and I don't know whether that is very and that's a regular slot where pastoral will meet with the assistant principal who oversees that

I see a bit differently to xxxx cuz she does safeguarding and I don't know how she does it because she sees I see plenty in my role but I know she sees a lot more and I think sometimes talking to someone about the experiences that kids have had that you need someone to talk to because you want to go

		home and hug your kids that little bit tighter because do you know what I mean?
	[O4]	
	[O5]	that

	ELSA supervision	So there are some members of staff in school so like we have an ELSA trained member of staff so she has official supervision Erm the only other person that has supervision erm two people now that have supervision built in are our learning mentors because they have it through they they deliver ELSA So, they go to all the network meetings and then they have their ELSA supervisions with the EP service. So, yeah, they do
	[06]	
	Pastoral Staff	And each thinks it's the other's fault if that makes any sense so what we I'd like to get to is actually the pastoral staff within school have got that model of supervision that they work through as part of their line management I think there's a place that I'd like to get to where we're using solution circles as a team of staff to solve a erm more teaching and learning based issue.

Supervision is perceived as a space for problem solving and reflection on 'stuck' situations and complex situations	Support for individual cases	[O7] erm we're trying to look at two different models of supervision, one for supporting staff erm through the the journey that is[O8] working in schools particularly a complex school like we are but we're also looking at it to support class teams with some of our more complex children We quite often are having to have more difficult conversations erm about children and staff as well [O9] more experienced and I'm in the role longer erm and I still find it really, really valuable to talk through particular cases with people whether it be somebody in school or an outside agency and find that really useful. [O10] we took sort of individual cases erm the ones we were stuck with and we took those to supervision with the group of SENDCos and two EPs And had sort of supervision in that sense about the more challenging tricky cases erm and kind of use that allocated time for that.
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	Strategic problem solving	and it was useful to an extent in the sense of strategically it did help talk through certain I don't know like difficulties challenges erm and talked about you know me as a leader And each thinks it's the other's fault if that makes any sense so what we I'd like to get to is actually the pastoral staff within school have got that model of supervision that they work through as part of their line management I think there's a place that I'd like to get to where we're using solution circles as a team of staff to solve a erm more teaching and learning based issue.
	Supports challenges of the role	I think we've been really open with staff and we've been able to say that supervision is there as a tool to help you benefit from within your practice erm and just to discuss the challenges that you may face within your role

	Follows a problem solving structure	using solution circles as part of our MDT processes Whereas I didn't come away with any sort of like practical strategies or practical solutions which I think for me if I am going into supervision that's the kind of thing I want and it's because I'm stuck on something and I want somebody to be able to maybe help me think that through or offer things that I don't know That's led by the senior learning mentors following a solution circle approach. Sometimes it's on kind of bigger issues but often it's about right I've had this situation with this person or this person has I've got this yeah I've got this situation with this person how shall I address it? she really helps to it's like er I should probably record it on CPoms actually (pause) because it's almost like you remember the solution circles... It's almost like a solution circle but then also to really kind of because we're doing it each week it's helped me to kind of set small rather than it being like this one big problem and then there's also another supervision erm which I've erm been a part of which erm was done by another service within xxxx. It was a safeguarding service erm and they provided me with safeguarding supervision and again that was working through erm any stuck cases erm any issues that I had and how we could resolve those moving forwards eah I think supervision externally is more I don't know problem solving as such
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		[O11]
	[O12]	
	Space to hear multiple views	I do think there's kind of a place for both erm so I think when I've had when we've done group supervision before erm it can be useful to have lots of people's views erm and I think it depending on the complexity of the case or kind of whatever it is you want to talk about, if you feel like you've exhausted all options having more people's voices can be quite helpful that was obviously more reflecting on your practice and any issues that you may have faced and how you could work through those collaboratively
	[O13]	
	Leads to clear outcomes	And it getting to the end and you've done like you've had an half an hour or meeting or whatever it is but actually it's really clear at the end who's going to do who's going to take that forward So you know I find it really yeah and it really does help me to kind of look sort of rationally at an issue or a situation or a problem and kind of plan a way forward for how to address it I am still now and we sort of then say right so in the next two weeks this is what I'm going to do And then I'll come up with loads of actions for kind of how we can support the child more
	[O14]	

Supervisors seek different functions of supervision	Space to manage complexities and pressures	they have sought separately just to support them externally with the pressures of their leadership role within school. but I think the supervision that is often missing now I think is sometimes to do with the complexity of cases in my role and the amount of impact that can have. But not got not because nobody's willing to give it more so just because I'm more experienced and I'm in the role longer and I still find it really, really valuable to talk through particular cases with people whether it be somebody in school or an outside agency and find that really useful. would say it's probably more about individual children and staff or teams.
	Space for personal reflection	that was a choice I made to not go with somebody that was an education person that was just looking at me as a human... Rather than me as a teacher I was just a leader of a company rather than being a school leader if that made sense. Erm one of them was one of the sessions was unpicking erm looking at why I might react in a certain way erm depending on my history. I think it's really good for as a person in general to allow yourself that time to reflect but it is also an opportunity for us to be able to kind of have a talk and making sure everyone's okay

	[O15]	
	[O16]	
	[O17]	
	[O18]	
	Space for strategic support	and it was useful to an extent in the sense of strategically it did help talk through certain I don't know like difficulties challenges erm and talked about you know me as a leader because I felt yeah it gave me some food for thought and it gave me some ideas of how to as a leader to think and plan I think I'm open to group and I think it can work, but I think they're often more useful if it's a bit more of a generic thing erm if you know you wanted to talk about something whole school...Or a whole area that can be quite useful So it really helps with school improvement I think I'd say it's more discussing kids and stuff and action plans it's just to make sure nothing's missed really and like you say to discuss cases and things sometimes it's just a case of meeting up and finding out the beginning of the year's gone, who's on the SEN register, how many EHCPs and kind of just feeling that you're not on your own

Space to
seek advice

but I think sort of I did it for about a year and then I got to kind of the end of that year and thought I don't feel like I'm actually getting a huge amount of advice

Whereas you know when I've spoken to the other person having theirs they've got someone who's in such a similar background and so in tune with oh and ah and had that real life experience themselves the advice has been really really successful

I think if I'd If I'd have been able to take from it more practical solutions and more practical advice because the supervisor had that experience to share that erm I think it would be really different

Or advice of where else to go to kind of get that help I think it for me I feel they're the most successful when there's almost some sort of practical potential outcomes

Erm that I've tried everything and I don't know what to do erm it makes it we can really identify like small clear goals and clear wins like some of them are really practical why don't you erm why don't you make their environment nicer... So little things like that is practical

And sometimes we will say I probably wouldn't have done that but I could understand in the time where you thought that that was the right course of action

But also she's very measured so sometimes if I'm not sure about something I will ring her or we'll come in when she does exam concessions go can I just run something by you

And also discussing if you need advice and things like okay, we've got this situation, what would you do? It's like sharing good practice, isn't it? as well.

I do think there's kind of a place for both erm so I think when

		I've had when we've done group supervision before erm it can be useful to have lots of people's views erm and I think it depending on the complexity of the case or kind of whatever it is you want to talk about, if you feel like you've exhausted all options having more people's voices can be quite helpful
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Problem
solving

but it was never ever going to give me I think what I felt I needed which is to unpick certain situations.

Because having spoken to colleagues where it can be I go with a problem and actually I come out of it and I've got a list of strategies or a list of suggestions or some different avenues to try. I quite like that

Whereas I didn't come away with any sort of like practical strategies or practical solutions which I think for me if I am going into supervision that's the kind of thing I want and it's because I'm stuck on something and I want somebody to be able to maybe help me think that through or offer things that I don't know

and I think it's the ones where it has been give me some practical things to try because we've reached a point where we can't do anything and we don't know what else to do what what even if it's just one thing, what can we try

So actually a kid er won't engage in maths say well actually it's for that math teacher to say I'm really stuck here. Can we have a solution circle around this young person? That's kind of the place I'd like to get to but the issue with that and the massive issue with that is time.

I

Sometimes it's on kind of bigger issues but often it's about right I've had this situation with this person or this person has I've got this yeah I've got this situation with this person how shall I address it?

then kind of doing problem solving what one-to-one

	Space to ncrease knowledge	I think the ones that have been most successful are the ones where I've come away thinking well either with some knowledge that I didn't know she's just very so my thing was always what would you this say and I learned loads from her being in meetings with her as well and things about just even things like tone of voice [O19]
	Space to revisit and review	they've really understood that that's something they've not considered. So that can be explored and these are some things to try and also there's a you know there's going to be a review group supervision that's what you lose because you talk about it in the group at that time but there's no follow up erm and it's just it's more isolated isn't it? I think that's why the group ones aren't better because you go knowing this is going to be an isolated conversation about something...And there's going to be no follow up from it it would just be down to me to what I do with it. Whereas I think when it's been more like one to one the follow-up part of it is really crucial and then in the next meeting we always kind of review those For somebody to then come back and say right so we've done this how did that go. What what went well? What didn't? What what do we need to change? So that review cycle part of it has been the most effective. or she asks if I want to so it's not like I I have to she like she asks me if I want to kind of revisit those before we...Move on to the next thing

	[O20]	
	Space for continuous professional development	what I then try and do is follow that type of approach with my line management of the two senior learning mentors so I then line manage there's not supervision on the timetable but I've certainly learned loads from my supervision and then try and reflect that and mirror that in how I line manage them They'll be using that solution circle model as part of their erm as part of their CPD
	[O21]	
	[O22]	
	[O23]	
	[O24]	
		[O25]
Access to supervision depends on how it is prioritised by those 'in charge'	Supervision is sought by individuals themselves	The headteacher and the deputy head have erm supervision sessions that they have sought separately just to support them erm externally with the the pressures of er their their leadership role within school. you could apply to through the DFE It was part of they they had a big project and the thing with that is you were it was through an external company and erm you were sent a selection of people who you could erm who you could link up with as your supervision partner.

		So, they just have to refer erm it can be in their own time erm but we're we're open and say, if you do need anything that we can do that within working time within the working hours.
	Leaders choose who is prioritised	Erm I've also had supervision as a leader so that was something that school offered to all the leaders
	Supervision is time limited	Yeah it was erm you were given a limited number of sessions I'm allowed four sessions and I think I'm waiting for my last erm session
	[O26]	

	Leaders have control over availability	because the timings that were available through him weren't great for me so it hasn't been as good this time as I have done previously. then that's really hard as well to try and leave school early because the latest meeting that she does is 5:00 erm but we normally meet at 4 so I do sometimes but that's thats hard and how the school enables us to work so our vice principal's done our timetable so that we have SEND time seven seven hours of SEND time allocated to us which means that we can't be used for anything else so we have our meetings and we do this and so I guess we have got a lot of dedicated time together haven't we? and and so if I think it's I think for it to get going it needs protected time and it needs to be either some people do it after school and they're happy to have that commitment but other people won't want to do that and I think it's that flexibility of we'll we'll have to be flexible about when people do it and protect that time erm
	[O27]	

	Leaders control the budget	I do have the option to go back to the the previous person to pay for private sessions but at this point with a nine-year-old at home erm then that's not something it's very expensive it's not something erm that I'm able to do at the moment erm but it's something that if I did have the option to do that I would definitely there was a good reason for us needing to start it but you know there is a big cost implication but there's there is also been you know the funding and the time element which is something that we're just having to work with. and then the trust made us aware that the education support they're an organization...Erm the education support were offering free I think it was through the DFE I think there was alike a joint kind of a joint thing were the DF were funding them I think she's just signed up for it so she's just about to start her first session for the free ones and I think that's probably the barriers of really having it on a whole school I think it would be really really expensive Money! (laughing) Lots of money. Money ooo yeah money. Lots of that's it because then we could release people we could pay for it we could yeah just money. so we've had erm I've got two experiences of supervision one is that we bought in an external company erm who provides staff supervision erm to a range of stakeholders but obviously now I'm paying for it they've been supportive.
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		Did I say that I'm paying for it now? But they've been really supportive in terms of me kind of that of me continuing to pay for that from our school budget
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	Leadership is offered by the trust in some schools	and then the trust made us aware that the education support they're an organization...Erm the education support were offering free I think it was through the DFE I think there was alike a joint kind of a joint thing were the DF were funding them I think So the trust that we're part of puts in place a supervision session every half term for DSLs Erm that is delivered by a trained social worker who's not affiliated to the school the trust pay for her but isn't really affiliated to the trust the trust don't employ her she does it erm I would imagine as like a consultancy thing Yeah every school that's part of this trust the DSL receives that supervision. and then the trust made us aware that the education support they're an organization...Erm the education support were offering free I think it was through the DFE I think there was alike a joint kind of a joint thing were the DF were funding them I think Who's doing it as well so think I said it was the trust that had sort of shared the information
	[O28]	

	Schools need to fit supervision in with other priorities	schools are so busy we're all spinning so many erm spinning so many different plates actually getting having the time to be able to do the training we did that but we did a shorter version because it was only an after school meeting erm as part of their but we've put it there because it's protected so they've got a protected time once every four or five weeks where there's a group supervision I've always wanted to do supervision we I've always felt like it's an area that we haven't really done properly
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	Leadership commitment	it's the commitment of the leadership team to making the school a better place for both our staff and our children it because it's hard isn't it when your leaders aren't even protecting your time to do it to then go right down to say I don't know your office staff to say that they need it I've been here for three years now and been a DSL for probably about 15 years and that's the first time I've ever had supervision Yeah it was actually through the head teacher so the head teacher just because xxxx had I suppose experienced trauma the headteacher offered supervision erm to all members of staff and if anyone was particularly needing some erm and I think that tied in nicely with the period of instability that we had erm just to help staff feel a little bit more settled but I do feel if in this school I don't know if you feel the same if I did say right I feel like I need this they would put it in place if that's what we wanted the principle would absolutely put things and we have a two hour meeting sort on a Monday so I'm sure that would be accommodated And that's a fine example isn't it of how great this school does listen it was kind of we thought it needed a deputy needed SENDs becoming much bigger and that was taken on board you're part of SLT as well you rarely get that but you don't see that in other schools
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	[O29]	
	Flexibility of leaders	
	Policy/contract limitations	erm so for me around making that possible it's the you know the teachers' terms and conditions in terms of directed time are potentially a limiting factor to that
	[O30]	
	Lack of understanding from leaders	And I feel that's different to where I worked last time in that one I wouldn't have someone who one understood my role which obviously xxxx does and that's quite unusual My line manager didn't understand my role
	School ethos	You whereas SLT here when I arrived, this is relevant. The principal's wiping tables so there's not that real hierarchical of he's not available and the principal and everyone is available to everyone you know you go and see the principal's PA and you can sit down and have a conversation about something that's worrying you could talk to the caretakers couldn't you?
The success of supervision is dependent on the relationship between supervisor and supervisee	Relationships impact the usefulness of supervision	the one that I'm accessing erm at the moment is not as useful if I'm honest and I think that's more down to erm the relationship with the, between the person who is leading the supervision erm the previous supervision that I had as a leader erm was really good And it's that what so maybe it's the relationship

		And I think the mix of the staff as well if we work differently so of the other assistant principal your line manager... But it could be different because she's different to me.
Personal relationship		But personally, I think I just work work better one to one Because you're smaller it's easier to just run and talk to them rather than email so then becomes more personal. Erm it might have just been a person that I or been a relationship thing a person that I would sit and have a cup of coffee with it it's that sort of that might have had something to do with it,
Consistency of supervisor		So it's once a month and it's an hour-long session once a month erm it's on Zoom and it's the same person every single time which is which is really really important
Need to connect		but I think that relies heavily on the fact that we work well together we get on and so we're lucky in that factor. Which I couldn't even though we've had similar conversations with the person I'm currently doing I I haven't got that connection with him that I feel that I'm achieving as much from

		the sessions if that makes sense.
	Positive staff relationships can offer some supervision	I think because we're little you see everybody a lot of the time and therefore creates that family feel and again loses that hierarchical element. On that person but that also means that you're having to talk to people more and things and that's what builds the relationships and I guess So I would be concerned not in this school but if in other schools where they didn't have that relationship possibly with a colleague that might that might be trickier to do but I would say we do kind of have it
	Professionally challenging relationship based on Mutual respect	Maybe I'd say that's what allows that to be as effective it's that professionally challenging relationship that's like based on like mutual respect for each other's roles and each other's purpose in that moment if that makes sense.

	External support can be beneficial or a hindrance	so I actually ended up choosing somebody who was erm in corporate supervision rather than erm education supervision That was a bit of a mixed experience at the very beginning because it was an external company And so I went into it almost scrambling around thinking I need to think about what to talk about today because I don't feel that this is a natural conversation yet because I don't I didn't feel like the supervisor just knew enough to be a natural conversation. so yeah so she's not based in xxxx she doesn't know she's based really far down south so I think they try and pair you up so that it's not somebody that kind of knows the school and knows anybody that you'll know and that kind of thing That's true. We're very honest. I think there's no point in us going to somewhere external that doesn't know the setting or about SEN so obviously they'd have to be but also saying have have you thought about that?" And then going, "But that wouldn't work." Do you know what I mean?
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	Need for being able to choose supervisor	it was through an external company and erm you were sent a selection of people who you could erm who you could link up with as your supervision partner. So I I felt it would be quite interesting to step out of the education world into the corporate world a little bit for my supervision to see if the messages were a bit different or a bit more generalized or or just that balance so for me that was quite interesting and that was a choice I made to not go with somebody that was an education person that was just looking at me as a human Whereas erm the supervision I've got at the moment you didn't have a choice you just got allocated somebody so I definitely I definitely would have continued it if I kind of felt like I had the right supervisor
	[O31]	

	Need trust in supervisor	actually because I allowed myself to talk openly about that and bought in and trusted the person I was talking to we able to we were really able to unpick some things in order for me to move forward with that That ability to know that you've got erm I suppose within safeguarding sometimes it can be quite isolating as the DSL within school you know people look to you to have all the answers and sometimes I've got none so actually knowing that there's somebody else out there who I could reach out to without it being erm without it being frowned upon that I didn't know. so yeah so she's not based in xxxx she doesn't know she's based really far down south so I think they try and pair you up so that it's not somebody that kind of knows the school and knows anybody that you'll know and that kind of thing and that makes it a really safe kind of safe space I suppose. so actually I guess there is sometimes we look at external but again it's because I trust her erm experience she's been here quite a few times she's been in my last school so she knows the differences between the environments so and there is you have to have all the staff erm so thinking around the table when we had some training about this erm there's a number of staff who really bought into it and there's one or two staff who still haven't bought into it and maybe they would if it was with somebody that they didn't know but I know you know if I sat down to do a session with some people they would really engage with it and other people that they would be quite closed.
	[O32]	
	Need to feel	It's more so coming away and feeling like they've really understood that case about that child

	listened to	
	Relationship beyond supervision session	but erm the person who delivers it is so generous as well that actually if you're stuck with something in the meantime you can just give her a ring. And for me that's invaluable that actually that it's about more than its about more than the supervision the supervision session is great but it's about more than that so I know if I'm stuck tomorrow with a real complex safeguarding stuff I can just phone her
	[O33]	
	Supervisors need ot have empathy for the context	but we'd obviously interviewed them and felt that erm they knew a bit of our school context so they were embedded as such and neither would she had been a person I would have gone to have that conversation because you do need to have some of that background of because all the people do look at us I think sometimes and what do they do whereas we never stop because it's very pastoral based isn't it but for me it would be because no one else knows what we're going through I think it's got to be someone who understands our setting and understands our role in SEN so there is someone. Aw yeah yeah So I have my old line manager from my other school who was retired which comes in and does exam concessions. Yeah. And I know someone who works at xxxx who is an ex SENDCo and everything and she's getting involved in the SEN manifesto so she's a good person that I might ask but again it's people who know me the role and about the school so, yeah, they've got a lot in common.

The success of supervision is impacted by the quality of the supervisee	Level of skills of supervisor	I accessed that erm the one that I've sought through erm through separately this year isn't as good but I think it's down to the quality of the the person leading the supervision rather than actually what we're talking about And actually what that person does really skilfully I think probably tells me without knowing that you know this that you know this do you know really skilfully just talks it through and asks you some really like why is she asking me that? And before I know it I'm like I do know this don't I? It's that and kind of the way that I go and sometimes it's about individual children so you know but she's sort of drawn that out of me so it might be like how's your day been? I've had a really bad day. Why has your day been really bad? because this child you know I've had to do a suspension because of this child and then we'll kind of unpick and I think it was unlucky for XXXX because I just don't think she had somebody as good as me.... So that sort of put her off It has to be from from my experience I think it has to be a professional supervision who's that somebody who's been trained properly because she's really really skilled the person that I have erm and somebody that doesn't know the school But she's also training to be a therapist she's in her 60s she's retired but now she's gone on But also she's very measured so sometimes if I'm not sure about something I will ring her or we'll come in when she does exam concessions go can I just run something by you It's probably a bit if it was a model of supervision I feel like I'm
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		just nattering I know it's so much more than that and I know the person who's delivering it is absolutely thinking about what and structuring of it But I know when it comes around for my group supervision or my individual one I'm always grateful that it's that and at the end of it I'm glad it was group this time I always find myself I'm glad but personally I've got no preference at all. If it's done right then either work. If it's not done right then neither work.
	Ability to offer advice	I got to kind of the end of that year and thought I don't feel like I'm actually getting a huge amount of advice but I just put it down to the supervisor

[O34]	
Supervisor confidence	schools are so busy we're all spinning so many erm spinning so many different plates actually getting having the time to be able to do the training so people feel confident to be able to to lead some of these conversations. In school we would really like erm the leadership team and the middle leaders to feel confident to support erm other staff in school with any issues and difficult conversations
[O35]	
Lack of relevant knowledge	it wasn't anybody who had any knowledge of the school I felt that I spent a really long time trying to give this picture of the sort of situation that I was in and the circumstances that will make sense as to why I'm saying XY type thing In the sense of I didn't feel she had the knowl the sort of experience and knowledge that would support me in my setting. but I I didn't get that with my supervisor erm she she was really understanding of the situation and really but she was from a secondary background whereas I was talking about everything from a primary. She didn't have the experience of SEND which is obviously my main part of my role erm and so she was able to talk kind of strategically about how things could be, but ultimately it didn't it it didn't feel specific enough to my situation. Whereas I think if I had somebody that was more experienced and in line with a like a role that I have here, I think it would have been much easier to then have those conversations

		about really specific things that erm you just you wanted to unpick with somebody Yeah because I remember a head of department at my last school actually saying, "What do you do till late?" And I'm like "I have no idea." ...What do you do? And it wasn't being nasty. It was just cuz I was saying I was working really late all the time she was like "I have no idea what you do" because she was department and sometimes pastoral is such a far cry so can you imagine someone like that giving you supervision?
		a[036]

	Knowledge of supervisor	Whereas you know when I've spoken to the other person having theirs they've got someone who's in such a similar background and so in tune with oh and ah and had that real life experience themselves the advice has been really really successful I think if I'd If I'd have been able to take from it more practical solutions and more practical advice because the supervisor had that experience to share that erm I think it would be really different and with someone who actually is aware of the challenges that you're faced with in such a you know such a tricky role was really really beneficial and we were able to I suppose manage my erm feelings around the case erm a little bit more effectively o yeah I think here would be very different like xxxx said but I still think it probably would be between us two because no one knows the role better than we know but maybe we should have allocated time possibly we're all very different settings so xxxx's in there and xxxx and xxxx and xxxx, but we all have a common theme in that we're all SENDCos and we all know a bit about each other's schools
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	Ability to support reflection	you know if I've just not looked at something the right way and someone's gone, but have you looked at it from this angle? she kind of helped me to number one reframe how I was thinking about them so it was about a little bit about me and kind of how I was viewing them but then it's also right but she always asks it like she really makes you question yourself because she asks it like she assumes that things are happening already so she'll say things like so erm when you have your weekly meetings with them what do you discuss? And I'm like Oh but I don't have weekly meetings with them.(Laughing) You know so that sort of thing so it kind of makes me think.That's obviously one of the issues then isn't it?
	Negative experience	[O37]
	[O38]	
	Line manager skills	think there's a lot to be said for being an effective line manager and there's a lot of crossover I think between being able to line manage somebody and give them supervision.
	[O39]	
	[O40]	

	[O41]	
	[O42]	
	[O43]	
	Ability to empower	she kind of almost makes you feel like first of all accept that it's actually your fault a little bit I know it sounds really awful but actually it's your fault a bit but she does that so that then you realize that you've got the power to change it as well. Does that make sense? So she empowers you to be like no hold on this is up this is on me this is on me so I've got the power to do something. Know what I mean? Rather than that feeling of like I don't know what to do it's out of my control sort of thing.
	[O44]	
Schools currently rely on external agencies to provide supervision	Support from external agencies for individual cases	so using solution circles as part of our MDT processes which is multi-disciplinary team processes where we erm tap into EP support, OT, speech and language erm we're trying to bring LD CAMHS on into that attendance and inclusion neurodisability team erm SENDSARS, who else in those meetings and the leaders from erm the different the different pastoral leaders erm parental support and different staff within school so we can improve the erm improve how we support some of our more complex children within the classroom so in school I've kind of done it alongside the outside agencies. But not got not because nobody's willing to give it more so just because I'm more experienced and I'm in the role longer erm and I still find it really, really valuable to talk through particular cases with people whether it be somebody in school or an outside agency and find that really useful.

	Supervision from external companies	so we've had erm I've got two experiences of supervision one is that we bought in an external company erm who provided staff supervision erm to a range of stakeholders then the staff supervision is just someone that we employed erm separately erm so we didn't have a say on who they were it was just someone from the company it was the director of the company that came across
	[O45]	
	[O46]	
	ELSA supervision	So there are some members of staff in school so like we have an ELSA trained member of staff so she has official supervision...But she also has her formalized supervision through the course and through the EP service

	Supervision support from the EPS	then what we've done last in the summer term yeah summer term we did some work with the educational psychology service around doing erm what's it called PATH? helping our leaders to support other staff in school with their journey.
	Clinical supervision	We do have access at some of the sites to clinical supervision....Given the nature of our school
	Supervision from social workers	No she doesn't know completely unfamiliar is no yeah completely unfamiliar isn't from an education background is from a social care background. I think? I think it does benefit because you get that impartial eye Erm that is delivered by a trained social worker who's not affiliated to the school the trust pay for her but isn't really affiliated to the trust the trust don't employ her she does it erm I would imagine as like a consultancy thing
	DfE led supervision	and then the trust made us aware that the education support they're an organization...Erm the education support were offering free I think it was through the DfE I think there was alike a joint kind of a joint thing were the DF were funding them I think that was the part of the DfE process Erm and so I had the six free sessions
	Safeguardin	So the safeguarding supervision is aligned with our

	g Partners	safeguarding partner erm so they obviously have an awareness of the context of the school
	Locality support	Yeah, absolutely and I guess when we go to locality That's supportive And that's really good
Supervision provides a confidential space	Confidential process	I can't comment on that because I don't know the process of hers... Because it's confidential between her and her person but it's also like that protected space To be able to just have a confidential hour with somebody
	Trust in supervisor Space to talk openly	actually because I allowed myself to talk openly about that and bought in and trusted the person I was talking to we able to we were really able to unpick some things in order for me to move forward with that Because I don't I almost knew that that isn't what it is meant to feel like but that was my first experience of supervision. So for me when they stopped I was kind of breathed a sigh of relief
	No personal connection to context can be preferred	so yeah so she's not based in xxxx she doesn't know she's based really far down south so I think they try and pair you up so that it's not somebody that kind of knows the school and knows anybody that you'll know and that kind of thing that I have erm and somebody that doesn't know the school

Implementing supervision in schools requires preparation and training for staff	Training to increase understanding	at XXX School we have we have just completed a series of training sessions with our middle leaders to widen their awareness of supervision Yeah. I think training to do it properly wouldn't it? So there's no difference between sort of support staff, office staff, they get included so every so then but then we almost have to then make sure that everybody knows what's going to happen and that's where it's worked really well erm and I think it would be very similar in if we were to introduce whole school supervision it would be a process of making staff familiar of it and developing their understanding before it actually happens. The quality of the training that we had was very erm was very thorough and supportive Whereas I'm a bit more like no no I'll just have the practical side erm so I think that's where maybe I didn't engage in the process as wholeheartedly as I could because I didn't know what to come what was going to come.
	Whole school commitment	Just because there's no point in doing it half-hearted and not really knowing I wasn't going to say that but there's no point in doing something that is token gesture because we're supposed to be getting something out of it and therefore if we're going to do it, let's do it properly.
	Opportunity to hear from	I'd probably want to hear some proper student voice so to speak of people who are having it and whether they think it's

experience	worthy of it or not.
Training to increase skills	helping our leaders to support other staff in school with their journey. [O47] I think that if leaders were trained and managers erm were trained erm for your specific areas, you could maybe drip feed that down erm so that staff are well equipped to be able to run supervision sessions themselves erm rather than having to buy in external support if that makes sense that's where we'd be open to any sort of training from erm I don't know, different agencies erm if they were able to put training on erm I'm not quite sure where we would get that but we would be erm interested in you know upskilling our staff
Training to increase confidence	schools are so busy we're all spinning so many erm spinning so many different plates actually getting having the time to be able to do the training so people feel confident to be able to lead some of these conversations. In school we would really like erm the leadership team and the middle leaders to feel confident to support erm other staff in school with any issues and difficult conversations
Opportunity for research and discussions	Erm having some training and some discussions before you look at implementing training for middle leaders so erm the head teacher and I did some research and had some conversations er with our EP support and the wider team for EP support

	Opportunity to work with EPs	we were lucky to have erm two EPs working with school who were able to tell us a lot of information to help us outline the journey that we wanted to take. it would be really lovely if there was a like a full day if the EP team as part of their sort of their XXXX offer were able to have a whole day so you could go and have the training maybe all in one go or sort of a series sometimes you might have say three one days over the course of a school year so you could erm find out a little bit more so we we had some good training really good training but it was a short after school meeting rather than a full day course that you could go on we did that with that's that's how we used our Educational Psychologist time last year to work that process through with the learning mentor team
	[O48]	
	[O49]	
	[O50]	q
	[O51] consultation	And what came out of that is that as a group of people within school that they would benefit from supervision
	[O52]	

	Staff need to know what to expect	we stopped and thought we need to take more time with this to make the program right for our staff erm so there was a lot of work done with erm the chimp management project in terms of what how it would work best for our staff what we felt how we felt our staff worked best erm what we felt our staff needed to know beforehand so then we put in a lot of time before for the staff that were delivering it to come and meet our staff to introduce themselves to talk through so there was there was a lot of prep work done And I think by the time we actually got to starting the sessions nobody felt in any sort of grey area about what this was going to be everybody knew what it was going to be erm and I think that worked well and that's always worked well here if our staff know exactly what is going to be expected of them and what is what something's going to be I don't think anyone here likes this fear of the unknown. Everyone would just shut down erm so I think that's where it's worked well where there's been a lot of developing understanding and time to process to question erm to then be ready to take it on properly. erm but the process wasn't explained erm and I think that's when it's more successful when the process is explained like we did it with a whole range of outside agencies when we opened the new building in school and we did that but it was talked through of right this is what we're going to talk about this is why we're talking about it this is what we want to achieve by the end and then the reflection at the end of did we do all that?
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Supervision is impacted by time available	Ability to prioritise supervision	but erm trying to organise those sessions around being in school, my home life with having a nine-year-old and sort of not being able to access them at certain times...Erm you know later into the evening it's been really tricky so I've had to unfortunately, I've had to cancel the last three sessions and reschedule them due to work commitments coming up and things that were more urgent than my supervision which sort of defeats the point of it if that makes sense. But I felt I've had to do that And it was often really I ended up having to move them at the last minute because something came up and I I kept thinking, what should I be prioritizing here? My supervision or I don't know some crisis going on They are a limiting factor because they the teaching profession would say well that if I'm doing that solution circle it's taken over my directed time It's just an extra kind of time that she hasn't got but that pressure and it's that it's almost like having to stop and remember that it's important to do it rather than just getting on with the nitty-gritty of of doing it and that's like my supervision sometimes I know that I have to prioritize that time and sometimes it means getting a lesson covered because it's not always done at a time that's convenient and that for me I'm sometimes I'm sometimes torn between actually is it more important that I'm accessing this group supervision or that that class have got a different teacher.
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	Supervisor availability	because the timings that were available through him weren't great for me so it hasn't been as good this time as I have done previously. but also the additional stuff that can because I'm I have I have to be guided sometimes by that person's availability and if they're only available at that time and I'm teaching then I can't do you know what I mean? then that's really hard as well to try and leave school early because the latest meeting that she does is 5:00 erm but we normally meet at 4 so I do sometimes but that's thats hard
	[O53]	

	Time is already stretched in schools	schools are so busy we're all spinning so many erm spinning so many different plates actually getting having the time to be able to do the training but there's there is also been you know the funding and the time element which is something that we're just having to work with. and I think when it was offered to staff, no one picked it up because they were just like it's just not something I've got time for I mean I think the main barrier would be time it is just the time erm and I did find it a bit of a pain to do it Time so time's a barrier. So for me there's that pressure it it's that pressure of the capacity of time So actually a kid er won't engage in maths say well actually it's for that math teacher to say I'm really stuck here. Can we have a solution circle around this young person? That's kind of the place I'd like to get to but the issue with that and the massive issue with that is time. Obviously the same barrier that everybody says all the time which is time having just sort of dedicating the time to it. Yeah I've worked across a few schools and there's lots of talk about it but erm never seems to be any time to do it.
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		Time which is always a struggle but yeah it is just creating that time isn't it I mean I do think they create lots of opportunity of time here but again that again but yeah that's it in a nutshell you can do anything with time
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	Commitment of leaders to prioritise time	it's the commitment of the leadership team to making the school a better place for both our staff and our children because I can see the mileage in it and I can see the value in it but it's hard to then protect that time with people if they don't see that value in it it because it's hard isn't it when your leaders aren't even protecting your time to do it to then go right down to say I don't know your office staff to say that they need it think staff value erm that as a school we were investing in supervision and supervision practices erm so they maybe felt heard and the option was there for if they did need any supervision erm any supervision support erm so I do think that that has been beneficial and like I said just feeling heard So, they just have to refer erm it can be in their own time erm but we're we're open and say, if you do need anything that we can do that within working time within the working hours. Not necessarily sure it would be accommodated every week we have other things on don't we like having the EP coming in to do some training
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	Time needs to be protected	and and so if I think it's I think for it to get going it needs protected time and it needs to be either some people do it after school and they're happy to have that commitment but other people won't want to do that and I think it's that flexibility of we'll we'll have to be flexible about when people do it and protect that time erm I think for me individually it's just having that dedicated time. I'd say even for me now on a weekly basis And we hadn't set out to do it as such but we've sort of said that has really helped to just have that time so I think for me its the in an ideal world it would be that protected time each week to be able to discuss whatever needs discussing erm I think for for staff like whole school erm it it kind of comes down to the same thing it's the protected time to do it and I think what I what I feel I benefit from my individual stuff it's just that it's just that protected time for me as a DSL erm as part of their but we've put it there because it's protected so they've got a protected time once every four or five weeks where there's a group supervision really I mean you will have your safeguarding meeting and I don't know whether that is very and that's a regular slot where pastoral will meet with the assistant principal who oversees that but maybe we should have allocated time possibly. It's an interesting thought. No I am and I'm not so I kind of think I could value it having a set time But we're lucky that we've got this if we were thinking bigger for other schools then the they probably would have to say
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		and allocate the time because it wouldn't happen would it?
	Supervision needs structure to ensure it's a good use of time	Yes so what I'd say for me it's I think there's a couple of things is the way in which we're using sol solution circles because it's so boundaried actually it avoids it just drifting And actually that's why we kind of went for the solution circle approach because actually it's very boundaried and we've actually adjusted it so it's just five minutes on each of the bits... You know we're really tight really tight on it so actually it's really boundaried erm that acknowledgement yeah that acknowledgement of that 20 minutes being beneficial and it might take you if you do

		three a year it might take you an hour over your directed time but I understand why teachers are quite protective of their directed time.
	[O54]	
	[O55]	
	[O56]	
	[O57]	

The engagement of the supervisee influences the impact of supervision.	Initial buy-in of supervisee	I think it depends on the buy in from the person who is accessing the supervision. think a big part of it is if you don't as the person accessing the supervision if you're not buying into this and wanting the best outcomes then I don't think supervision will work in the same way so for me that was hugely important. you obviously need staff to buy in and there is you have to have all the staff erm so thinking around the table when we had some training about this erm there's a number of staff who really bought into it and there's one or two staff who still haven't bought into it and there is you have to have all the staff erm so thinking around the table when we had some training about this erm there's a number of staff who really bought into it and there's one or two staff who still haven't bought into it and maybe they would if it was with somebody that they didn't know but I know you know if I sat down to do a session with some people they would really engage with it and other people that they would be quite closed. so there was only actually me and the head who took it on is so nobody is it's been offered out multiple times to the leaders and it's just not even directly verbally like ah this is you could have supervision and they're like I don't really want I don't really want supervision. So you're kind of like that's really and I don't want to say no don't do that you've got to wait that week to do it actually they're doing it themselves. What we've not had to work hard at is getting staff to buy into
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it. You know staff buy in's been really strong

I think that some staff so initially erm it was really well received

you need your staff teams to buy in to wanting to to have that support erm so that's really tricky

what I would say is that nobody else took up the idea of supervision

so myself and I tried to convince other leaders to do it but they just didn't seem that keen

but just that kind of to get the b the buy in for I'd be more than willing for people to try for the six sessions and then for us to pay if they found it useful but I think it's that that's a barrier for getting people to getting more people to do it. They don't particularly want to

	Level of trust in supervisor	actually because I allowed myself to talk openly about that and bought in and trusted the person I was talking to we able to we were really able to unpick some things in order for me to move forward with that And I think sometimes externally is good in some ways I know it's not an issue for us and stuff but if you wanted to have a moan about me you wouldn't want to visual me and vice versa
	[O58]	

	Supervisees recognition of the value of supervision	it's about the confidence of staff to believe in the supervision process that it will support conversations and support everybody's journey Because I've seen how effective it can be done. I recognize the value in it. I think we've been really open with staff and we've been able to say that supervision is there as a tool to help you benefit from within your practice erm and just to discuss the challenges that you may face within your role and you know we've been very clear with that and I think that staff have been able to buy in erm as a result of that. but I think she just feels it's just an extra thing to do. so people seeing the value in it, that's a big barrier it because it's hard isn't it when your leaders aren't even protecting your time to do it to then go right down to say I don't know your office staff to say that they need it think I think the barrier that there's been with trying to get other people to join is that they don't see they don't see the value of it Erm and so I had the six free sessions erm but then I found it so valuable that er I continued it so I've been having it now for a couple of years. think staff value erm that as a school we were investing in supervision and supervision practices erm so they maybe felt
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		heard	
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	Supervisees ability to recognise need for supervision	But not got not because nobody's willing to give it more so just because I'm more experienced and I'm in the role longer erm and I still find it really, really valuable to talk through particular cases with people whether it be somebody in school or an outside agency and find that really useful. Yeah so I think that could be one of the barriers erm people just don't think that they need it they think they think you know, I'm all right you know I'm handling things I'm okay sort of thing. That's sort of the impression that you get as well that I'm not like I don't have any so when I'll say to XXXX I'll say to xxx you know you have a real a really difficult case load and you deal with some really difficult families and some really hard situations and it'd be really good for you to have that sort of protected space for you to be able to reflect on this she said oh I'm fine and I cope with it fine. Yeah I think that senior leaders were maybe a little bit guarded erm to be to speak to the supervisor I kind of maybe thought that senior leaders thought what's the purpose? I don't need supervision I think that some staff so initially erm it was really well received but then as the years started to go on I think staff erm kind of dropped off so the momentum dropped off a little bit and staff maybe felt that they've got all what they had they could get out of supervision so they didn't feel that it was necessary anymore But I suppose though you know like I said I'm not sure it's quite needed here because it kind of already happens
	[O59]	
	[O60]	

	Willingness of supervisee to be open and self-reflect	I think also some people just think that they're going to have to talk to someone about their problems Erm I think some people think which is what XXXX said to me today she was like I don't like talking about myself she said I'm a little bit nervous because I don't like talking about myself but I think that is a barrier for some people is they think it's going to just be an hour talking about myself And I don't really want to do that so we're doing that in school and the staff training part of it is not actually about erm how you help the children it's about helping yourself and it's taken us a looong time to get people to understand what that is and I know it's not supervision in its in itself but it's like a like a tiny little bit sim there's some tiny similarities because people are having to have that time to reflect and it's taken us a long time to feel that we're at the right point to deliver it so I went into it probably very skeptical of I don't want to sit and talk about my life and I was very erm very keen to keep it on track with work rather than digressing so even if there was any conversation of where and I could tell where she was going we're going back on track like this isn't what I want from supervision it wasn't something that we wanted to put our staff through erm because because it is a lot of personal reflection and there are some sessions which you know they class as quite triggering to people because it's you know unpacking trauma and how that affects in day to day and it builds on a lot of self-reflection about like what type of person they want to be what are their moral values and things like that Whereas I'm a bit more like no no I'll just have the practical side erm so I think that's where maybe I didn't engage in the process as wholeheartedly as I could because I didn't know what to come what was going to come but I think that is a barrier for some people is they think it's
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		going to just be an hour talking about myself And I don't really want to do that I think maybe some people's perception is that it's going to be sort of like deep and meaningful and kind of I think they see it as more like counselling they think it's maybe more like counselling and that you've got to dig deep into yourself Yeah I think that senior leaders were maybe a little bit guarded erm to be to speak to the supervisor I kind of maybe thought that senior leaders thought what's the purpose? I don't need supervision or if there was whether someone was like spying if that makes sense so yeah I think that's a that was I think the general feelings nobody's ever said that to me but I think that they're the general feelings the general gist
	[O61]	

	[O62]	
	Need for supervision can be dependent on current context	Yeah and I think as well xxxx went through a particularly tricky time erm with leadership about three years ago now two years ago and erm once we established erm the leadership positions that we've currently got I think that staff erm felt a little bit erm more settled as well so that maybe coincided as well with it. But what has become apparent while er while we've been talking about it and working it through that actually they're doing them on weeks where they don't need to do them as well.
	[O63]	
	[O64]	
	[O65]	
	[O66]	
	[O67]	
	[O68]	

Supervision is perceived as a space for reflection	Space to explore emotional impact	Erm one of them was one of the sessions was unpicking erm looking at why I might react in a certain way erm depending on my history. Supervision where you talk through those complex cases but also you talk through the impact it's having on you. I think that is growing now and I think that is sort of an area that probably is needing to be developed whereas like other people I know colleagues are much more open to being like I'll I'll bring my personal life into a supervision session kind of and I think you can if you want to like there's there's been a couple of times when we've touched on a couple of things erm like reasons why I would feel frustrations about certain things and she's tried to get me to explore that a little bit...Erm like you know things in my past and that sort of thing
	[O69]	
	Space to reflect on experience generally	I think even when your world is going really well I think supervision is something that we should all if I could access it once a week for the rest of my life I would do I think it's really good for as a person in general to allow yourself that time to reflect

	Space to reflect on actions	and just focusing on trying one thing reflecting on it and trying something again Erm but it but the reason that made it so successful was because number one she helped me to realize that I actually have a lot of expectations of the team that I haven't communicated to them
	[O70]	
	Space to explore another perspective	you know if I've just not looked at something the right way and someone's gone, but have you looked at it from this angle? And you're like, no. So then it almost opens up a whole new sort of route to go down to maybe unpick So you know I find it really yeah and it really does help me to kind of look sort of rationally at an issue or a situation or a problem but then it's also right but she always asks it like she really makes you question yourself because she asks it like she

		assumes that things are happening already
	[O71]	
Supervision offers aspects that are beneficial to staff wellbeing	Offers a space for topics personal to the supervisee	I think even when your world is going really well I think supervision is something that we should all if I could access it once a week for the rest of my life I would do cos you know we'll touch on things like work-life balance and my home life and like healthy relationships and that sort of thing. So that there's a there's a good balance definitely between the personal and professional and a good balance between really strategic and really practical. and a lot of it as well was obviously checking on wellbeing as well supervision where you talk through those complex cases but also you talk through the impact it's having on you. I think that is growing now and I think that is sort of an area that probably is needing to be developed what I really like this is it's so specific to my to my context you know it's about It's not about me but it's about specific issues and problems that I'm having at this particular school and it

		can be anything. and erm to talk to somebody in a in a different way from your friends and family or your work colleagues. I think it's hugely important and if more people accessed it the world would be a better place.
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	Provides an opportunity for CPD and impacts practice	Because I've sort of said to them that I think it is some of the best CPD that I've had for a headteacher. so what's part of their cycle of CPD is that every I think fourth or fifth week there's a group a protected group supervision slot for them Because I've sort of said to them that I think it is some of the best CPD that I've had for a headteacher. Erm there's certain teachers that I think god you could you would benefit so much from that from from some supervision erm and other staff as well just like I say if it's really good professional development for me then why would it not be for everybody? And I think it keeps them up to date with their erm general practice and I suppose that that has been used moving forwards within my practice erm that I'm able to use the skills what we've discussed moving forwards
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	Supervision provides protected time to reflect	I think it's really good for as a person in general to allow yourself that time to reflect Su So you know I find it really yeah and it really does help me to kind of look sort of rationally at an issue or a situation or a problem bu and I think what I what I feel I benefit from my individual stuff it's just that it's just that protected time for me as a DSL
	[O72]	[O73]

Supervision
provides a
space to
offload

and you're carrying not the weight of the world on your shoulders because it's not like that but you're carrying a lot of stuff and just that protected time

but that pressure and it's that it's almost like having to stop and remember that it's important to do it rather than just getting on with the nitty-gritty of of doing it and that's like my supervision sometimes I know that I have to prioritize that time and sometimes it means getting a lesson covered because it's not always done at a time that's convenient

I've become frustrated because everything that I've tried has not worked

Yeah what you just think I think when I used to talk to my member of staff at my other school it was almost like he didn't need to take things home and worry about things he'd discussed it he'd kind of shared what he'd done to make sure you don't go home and second guess yourself and then start worrying about had you done something to if you followed all the processes

but sometimes they come up with ideas about we do this and it is an offload what would you do?

It's more so coming away and feeling like they've really understood that case about that child

erm just someone else to talk to about it because obviously we deal with some pretty tough stuff sometimes I don't know

but it is also an opportunity for us to be able to kind of have a talk and making sure everyone's okay

for me I think being able to talk to people about that

I think I have got space to talk about individual cases if I'm struggling but actually the overall thing and the overall pressure is still part of that it I'm still able it's still part of that.

I see a bit differently to xxxx cuz she does safeguarding and I don't know how she does it because she sees I see plenty in my role but I know she sees a lot more and I think sometimes talking to someone about the experiences that kids have had that you need someone to talk to because you want to go home and hug your kids that little bit tighter because do you know what I mean?

I've become more and more frustrated and so then kind of stopped trying sort of thing erm whereas and and also my emotions so that kind of feeling of eurgh like again they've done that again or this has happened again and I've tried this and it never works never and they never and it it the session I've had a couple of sessions on this team

	[O74]	
	Supervision provides a space for reassurance	support you know to look at a particular child or a particular class or a particular situation I would just want on one hand staff to feel supported And actually what that person does really skilfully I think probably tells me without knowing that you know this that you know this do you know really skilfully just talks it through and asks you some really like why is she asking me that? And before I know it I'm like I do know this don't I? It's that And sometimes it's like yeah what xxxx said that kind of unpicking things a little bit as well because sometimes it can be a bit like did I make the right decision? Did I do? Unpicking and kind of a bit peace of mind offering isn't it sometimes as well if that makes sense. Yeah I wouldn't say that we call it supervision but I think we'll always talk about what we've done. Have we made the right decision? What would you do? and I know safeguarding is very different but I know that he got a lot out of it being not a problem shared but just that someone who knew what his role was and what that involved and had he done everything right and could he go home and sleep peacefully knowing that everyone was safe so do you you probably feel like that bit in safeguarding That ability to know that you've got erm I suppose within safeguarding sometimes it can be quite isolating as the DSL within school you know people look to you to have all the answers and sometimes I've got none so actually knowing that there's somebody else out there who I could reach out to without it being erm without it being frowned upon that I didn't know.

	[O75]	But not got not because nobody's willing to give it more so just because I'm more experienced and I'm in the role longer erm and I still find it really, really valuable to talk through particular cases with people whether it be somebody in school or an outside agency and find that really useful.
	Positive impact on time	whereas actually there is huge gains if it goes well...It has a really positive impact on your time
	Being given time helps staff feel valued	think staff value erm that as a school we were investing in supervision and supervision practices erm so they maybe felt heard Just having time feeling valued that actually you're valued and here's some time for you because you're important too because we do that second nature for everybody else that's part of our role isn't it we don't think twice about dropping everything for a kid or dropping everything for a parent so I think it would help possibly I'm not talking from personal thing cuz I feel like I get it but I think for some people it'd be a massive part of making them their role you know them feeling valued and a needed member of the team or whatever that looks like. And not many SENDCos who are part of the SLT team and that to me speaks volumes of how much they value and listen when we talk about stuff

		Even some of the bigger schools so I wasn't SLT at my last school but my line manager didn't know anything about SEN and went to senior staff meetings so there's a presence on SLT for SEN I don't think xxxx she's not on SLT is she?
	[O76]	
	Space to regulate emotions	but she also helped me to kind of so to manage my own emotions around it Yeah so erm I'll talk about the safeguarding erm supervision so there was a case that was particularly tricky erm it was quite emotionally draining erm as well as such and erm being able to being able to have the opportunities to discuss this erm with the safeguarding advisor and with someone who actually is aware of the challenges that you're faced with in such a you know such a tricky role was really really beneficial and we were able to I suppose manage my erm feelings around the case erm a little bit more effectively

	Feeling valued	Yeah so yeah there's a lot of understanding about the role here more I think.
The need for supervision in schools has increased	Staff are managing more complex situations	We quite often are having to have more difficult conversations erm about children and staff as well so you know there was a good reason for us needing to start it Do you know you kind of got the safeguarding supervision...Supervision where you talk through those complex cases but also you talk through the impact it's having on you. I think that is growing now and I think that is sort of an area that probably is needing to be developed erm and I do think given the current climate of the way things are in school erm and the challenges I mean you know particularly in a school like this erm actually it it it could be so beneficial And I think that would I think anybody starting it, my specific role is a very different starting point from when I started it because I didn't walk into a really sort of complex system of special needs. I didn't walk into the challenges that we have now. So for me it would be being mindful of the person then stepping into MY role that they're not going to grow with the school. They're coming in at the point where it's at its most complex

		and you're carrying not the weight of the world on your shoulders because it's not like that but you're carrying a lot of stuff and just that protected time
	Staff are seeking increased access to supervision	And therefore supervision for them is almost more important than supervision for me I But what has become apparent while er while we've been talking about it and working it through that actually they're doing them on weeks where they don't need to do them as well.
	Supervision is even more important for staff that are new to role	But not got not because nobody's willing to give it more so just because I'm more experienced and I'm in the role longer erm and I still find it really, really valuable to talk through particular cases with people whether it be somebody in school or an outside agency and find that really useful. I think anybody taking on this role now would need more

		frequent supervision.
	[O77]	
The implementation of supervision is different across schools	Support doesn't always continue	historically when I first started we used to do it as SENDCos within the locality with the educational psychology service.
	Availability depends on access to agencies	So I've done it more so with whoever my link EP was, whoever my link autism team teacher was...And had sort of supervision in that sense about the more challenging tricky cases erm and kind of use that allocated time for that. Do you know you kind of got the safeguarding supervision...Supervision where you talk through those complex cases but also you talk through the impact it's having on you
	Timings and logistics	on a sort of four to six weekly basis. One half term it's an individual supervision session and the next half term it's a group supervision session.

	Some schools access peer support with other schools	It's more of a its almost so more of it's almost like DSL's getting together saying what emerging issues are what their priorities are so it's almost like er a I'm not sure informal is the right way to describe it but it's less structured than say a solution circle would be.
	[O78]	I
	Some schools access peer support internally	That's led by the senior learning mentors following a solution circle approach.
	[O79]	
	[O80]	
	[O81]	
	[O82]	

	Structured vs unstructured	I kind of felt that the safeguarding supervision was probably a little bit more beneficial erm because it had structure to it so I knew what I was talking about whereas with the other supervision I was kind of looking for problems and trying to find problems to discuss if that makes sense It was the safeguarding one is more structured We generally have an agenda
	Open approach	I think we've been really open with staff and we've been able to say that supervision is there as a tool to help you benefit from within your practice erm and just to discuss the challenges that you may face within your role
	Informal professional conversations	Yeah I think we do do it but it's more informal within our office
	Flexible approach	Do you know a bit like the kids for me I wouldn't want it as a set weekly thing I just like and I think this would work in bigger schools it's almost like a drop in session. That's how I think it should roll within schools because some weeks you don't need it and that's the reality. Some months you don't need it but there might be a particular difficult day or situation or whatever that looks like and I think having that having that allocated time would be beneficial but I don't think it would work as this once a week and you are different.

School staff benefit from opportunities to have professional conversations in some form	Colleague support is built up over time	because I'm quite fortunate having been in a school for a long time I have a very close group of colleagues that you can talk quite openly with And myself and the safeguarding lead are trying to do this once a week we're trying to come together and sort of be each other's supervision in a loose term to sort of say like where are we and where are we going and that's actually been really useful as a really useful part of the week So I would be concerned not in this school but if in other schools where they didn't have that relationship possibly with a colleague that might that might be trickier to do but I would say we do kind of have it and then I'm thinking we do it all the time anyway so that one hour would still be beneficial I can't see us ever not meeting would never be beneficial but it might not necessarily be I don't know how to I kind of agree with you in that we do do it all a set time for me and xxxx would always be beneficial if no one could interrupt us but we would carry on with those conversations all week and in that slot there so
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Staff value open ethos	I think we are very much in the sense of we're a very open and honest culture and people will talk about things erm and ask for advice but it's not in any sort of structured way. I also think it's embedded in our practice because we're talking all the time as well when we're making decisions
Staff value knowing who they can talk to	so there's so that kind of means everybody knows who they can go to but there isn't any formalized supervision so I don't even know if that's classed as supervision but almost it's entwined with that can I just have a quick word? Do you agree with it that sort of thing and that for me is part of that process of feeling comfortable and feeling like you've got someone to lean on in the workplace. But it isn't that I think you deal on it very well but one I'm a worrier I really worry about have I done everything and you are because we'll text each other. I think here having xxxx as deputy SENDCo and working closely together which is what I didn't have so I was very isolated in that I was the only SENDCo who knew the role whereas before my line manager left she also knew the role so we were never realized until she left.
Colleague support is easier in smaller settings	, I think it's more so that it's just the structure means that there is always somebody to go to to talk to Yeah and that's how I feel. I don't know if it's just cuz it's a smaller school that we're in but yeah I just feel like it kind of happens but not formally

	Staff value opportunity for dialogue	And equally my role in school erm and working very closely with say the head or the safeguarding lead there's always that constant dialogue between us but somebody going new into the role I think it would be the frequency of it So I'm kind of saying I think anytime you can just start have with a professional is always going to be beneficial but is it a gap here probably not but that's because of how me and xxxx work together I think having the time for staff to discuss any potential problems that they have I think staff have valued that
	Value of time to talk through cases	But not got not because nobody's willing to give it more so just because I'm more experienced and I'm in the role longer erm and I still find it really, really valuable to talk through particular cases with people whether it be somebody in school or an outside agency and find that really useful. Or advice of where else to go to kind of get that help I think it for me I feel they're the most successful when there's almost some sort of practical potential outcomes whether they work or not doesn't it is irrelevant But I have the safeguarding meeting that's why and I think if you were privy to that you wouldn't you and that's where the safeguarding meeting isn't just about it is a conversation a bigger conversation as well so yeah so you'd feel better it's because you're not in that meeting so you don't know. And we do do that we kind of go through the C Poms logs and things so there is that thorough discussion and things and it does feel very supported so I would say it does feel a little bit like supervision at the same time but yeah

	Feeling listened to	It's more so coming away and feeling like they've really understood that case about that child So I'm kind of saying I think anytime you can just start have with a professional is always going to be beneficial
	[O83]	I suppose there's probably low level supervision in the sense of the structure of the school with things like phase leaders but the phase leaders are leaders. So they might offer supervision to staff erm but I suppose it's direct. It's still run by the leaders
		and I think what I what I feel I benefit from my individual stuff it's just that it's just that protected time for me as a DSL but its it's that's not really what it's for its professional supervision
	Reflective conversations happen through PDRseed dependednt both those exper	Yeah. Yeah. So we have erm professional development review so where we check in with staff at least termly erm and discuss how they feel that they're getting on if there's any further support that they would like erm in terms of their job erm if there's anything further training that they would like erm and where they can see that their career going and it's a reflective tool so it's graded erm and staff grade it first and then bring it back to us and then we have a reflective conversation is held with that information then
	Staff retention	Yeah, there's something I do feel lucky to work here to work

Supervision impacts everyday practice	Supervision skills applied in line management	It's not on a timetable as a supervision slot erm it's but I try and mirror that in line management
	Part of CPD cycle	[O84]
[O85]	Offsite supervision	I think so the supervision I think that they have I should know this that they have for ELSA they actually leave the building for I might be wrong but be I think they actually go and meet somebody.
	Lack of private space	But another barrier for me is that obviously because it's really kind of confidential things that I talk about erm actually so she's shes she always says you've got to make sure you have a space on your own that you that you close the door that nobody comes in some of them might be talking about senior leaders you know that not in a but yeah but it's also like that protected space To be able to just have a confidential hour with somebody
	Ability to step away from staff	I might be and senior leaders are used to walking in for pretty much every other thing you know if I'm on this Zoom now they're not going to think you know they might nip in and get their bag or whatever
	Understanding from staff of need for confidential space	But even that they can't do when I'm on the supervision erm so that's that's been a bit people getting used to that when I say I'm on mainly mainly senior leaders who would come in and out you know for me to say I'm on my supervision and then they're like why can't like that's kind of a little bit of a barrier
	Weekly check ins	some schools do it sort of in circles they have in they have a weekly circle check-in with staff it's not quite the same thing but like literally Monday morning the whole staff meet in their circles And talk about kind of like any issues that they've had last week what are you going to focus on this week and they

		sort of do it in a circle so you could do something
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[O1]I think this is a sub-theme of theme 1 so merged

[O2]Moved to subtheme of new to schools

[O3]Removed from this section

[O4]Don't think this fits here now

[O5]Overlapping code

[O6]Don't think this fits here

[O7]Doesn't fit here

[O8]Added to anomalies as well as feel this is saying something more

[O9]Emotion impact not problem solving

[O10]Move to anomalies to think about later

[O11]Move to anomalies

[O12]Overlapping code

[O13]Overlapping code

[O14]Overlapping code

[O15]Doesn't feel like it fits here anymore

[O16]Code overlap

[O17]Overlap with theme 6

[O18]Code overlap

[O19]Doesn't fit here

[O20]Code overlap

[O21]Moved to anomalies

[O22]Code overlap

[O23]Overlap with strategic support

[O24]Space to reflect

[O25]Moved to anomalies

[O26]Code overlap

[O27]Changed my interpretation of this. More about how people need to access it themselves in some cases.

[O28]Doesn't seem to fit here anymore

[O29]Code overlap

[O30]Moved to anomalies, not sure it fits here

[O31]Overlapping code

[O32]Code overlap

[O33]Code overlap

[O34]Overlap with theme 7

[O35]Move to anomalies, doesn't fit anymore

[O36]Overlap with theme 5

[O37]Doesn't feel like it fits here anymore

[O38]Code overlap

[O39]Code overlap

[O40]Code overlap

[O41]Moved to anomalies

[O42]Code overlap

[O43]Code overlap

[O44]Overlapping code

[O45]Code overlap

[O46]Doesn't fit in this theme

[O47]Overlap from theme 8

[O48]Code overlap

[O49]Code overlap

[O50]Code overlap

[051]Code overlap

[052]Code overlap

[053]Code overlap

[054]Code overlap

[055]Code overlap

[056]Code overlap

[057]Moved to anomalies – doesn't fit here

[058]Code overlap

[059]Overlap with theme 11

[060]Code overlap

[061]Overlapping code

[062]Overlapping code

[063]Code overlap

[064]Code overlap

[065]Code overlap

[066]Overlap with theme 5

[067]Code overlap

[068]Code overlap

[069]Overlap with theme 3

[070]Overlap with theme 3

[071]Doesn't fit here

[072]Code overlap

[073]Not relevant

[074]Doesn't fit

[075]Code overlap

[076]Code overlap

[077]Code overlap

[078]Doesn't fit with theme

[079]Doesn't fit theme

[080]Doesn't fit theme

[081]Doesn't fit theme

[082]Doesn't fit with theme

[083]Don't fit with theme

[084]Moved to theme 14

[085]Discarded theme. Not enough to make it a theme on its own but also feels more like a recommendation than a theme.