

**7 minute briefing:  
Supervision Orders  
July 2021**



**What is a Supervision Order?**

Supervision Orders are made under section 31. [Children Act 1989 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/31)

**Supervision Orders are made on the same basis as care orders** i.e. that the child is suffering or is likely to suffer **significant harm**. These orders **do not give parental responsibility to the Local Authority**.

Initially, a Supervision Order lasts for 6 months- 1 year. The Local Authority can apply to the court to extend the Supervision Order, but the Supervision Order can only be in place for a maximum of three years.

**Information sharing:**

When **children move across settings & Local Authority areas**, if they are or have been subject to a Supervision Order in the past, it is important that **new professionals** working with the family **are aware and understand** the high level of concern/risk that existed when the order was made.

**Key Practice Note:**

As **children on Supervision Orders have been deemed by a court to have met the significant harm threshold**, all professionals must remain alert to the possibility of on-going harm. **Where risk continues or new risks emerge consideration should be given to returning to court.**

**What does this look like in practice?**

Supervision Orders mean that the child/ren will have a **named social worker** who will **continue to visit and work with the family** while the Supervision Order is in place.

Often these children will already have been involved in multi-agency Child Protection processes that will have attempted to address the concerns before the matter going to court.

While a Supervision Order is in place there will be **regular multi-agency reviews involving all key professionals** and the family. This may be a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan depending on the circumstances of the child.

**What happens when a child is subject to a supervision Order?**

When there is a Supervision Order in force it is the duty of the supervisor (Local Authority) to:

1. Advise, assist and befriend the child;
2. **Take steps that are reasonably necessary to give support the child;**
3. Where the order is not complied with or the supervisor considers that the order is no longer necessary, to consider whether or not to apply to the court to vary or discharge the order.

A Supervision Order may require the supervised child to comply with directions given by the Local Authority to do things such as:

1. Live at a place specified by the Local Authority;
2. Present themselves to specific people at specific places or times e.g. to meet with the social worker;
3. To participate in activities specified on certain days.

**When are they made?**

Supervision Orders are made during **Care Proceedings** where Children's Social Care, acting on behalf of the Local Authority, have taken legal action against the parent/s to safeguard a child/ren.

While the court process is on-going the court may make an Interim Supervision Order. At the final hearing, if the court agrees there is evidence that it is **more likely than not** that a **child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm**, it may make a Supervision Order as opposed to a Care Order.

While on a Supervision Order the **child is usually living at home with the parents** who retain parental responsibility.

