



**ORANGA  
TAMARIKI**  
Ministry for Children

# PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

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POLICY AND STANDARDS

# PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

## INTRODUCTION

### Professional supervision

Professional supervision is one of the key enablers that can make positive shifts in practice leading to improved outcomes for tamariki.

It provides a formal and on-going process that is vital to quality child-centred practice, professional development, relationship enhancement and practitioner well-being.

### Benefits of supervision

Professional supervision supports practitioners to critically reflect and challenge their practice and enhance their professional judgment within a safe and supportive supervisory relationship.

Effective supervision can support practitioners with the impact of trauma and stress, increase job satisfaction and create a culture of continuous learning and development to support safe practice.

### Cultural supervision

Cultural supervision supports accountability, best practice, and professional and cultural development. It helps maintain a focus on identity, belonging and connection for tamariki. It ensures the strengths and aspirations of people from diverse and different cultures are respected and explored to produce practice that is culturally responsive.

Professional supervision contributes significantly to improving best practice and outcomes for Māori. The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 has three overarching principles that relate directly to working effectively with tamariki Māori. These are:

- **Mana Tamaiti** (responsiveness and restorative) for all children
- **Whakapapa** (identity and belonging)
- **Whanaungatanga** (relational and responsibility).



Within Te Tiriti o Waitangi there is an obligation to recognise the significance of Māori as Tangata Whenua of Aotearoa. The principles of partnership, participation and protection are relevant within supervision and Māori centred supervision to strengthen staff responsiveness in supporting the oranga journey of tamariki Māori which is paramount. It also addresses practitioner capability in relation to the practice framework core element: *“Working effectively with Māori”*.

# PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

## ABOUT THIS POLICY

### 1. Purpose

This policy sets out how professional supervision will be delivered to Oranga Tamariki practitioners.

It is designed to guide all Oranga Tamariki practitioners, who work directly with tamariki, their supervisors, team leaders or managers.

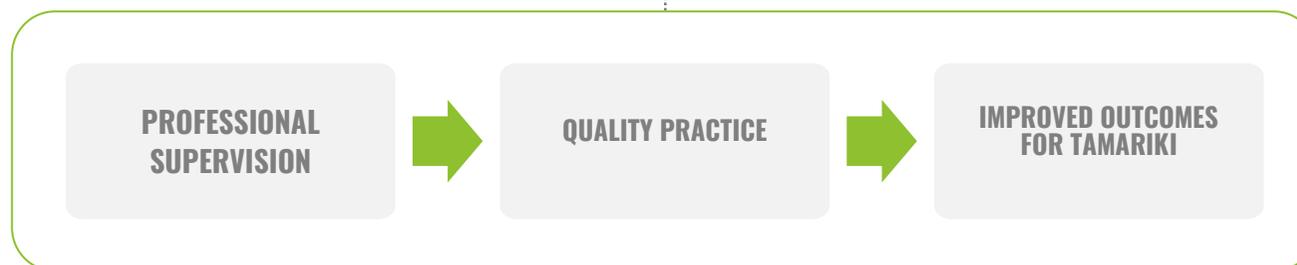
This policy will guide staff working in roles where they are required to maintain competence and/or an Annual Practising Certificate under their professional association.

This is to ensure quality supervision is effectively embedded in ways that enhance outcomes for tamariki, their whānau and carers.

### 2. Scope

The professional supervision policy and standards apply to practitioners employed by Oranga Tamariki on a permanent, temporary and casual basis. This includes, but is not limited to:

- youth/social workers and practitioners
- care and protection and youth justice co-ordinators
- supervisors
- practice leaders
- regional practice advisors
- team/case leaders of front line staff
- managers.



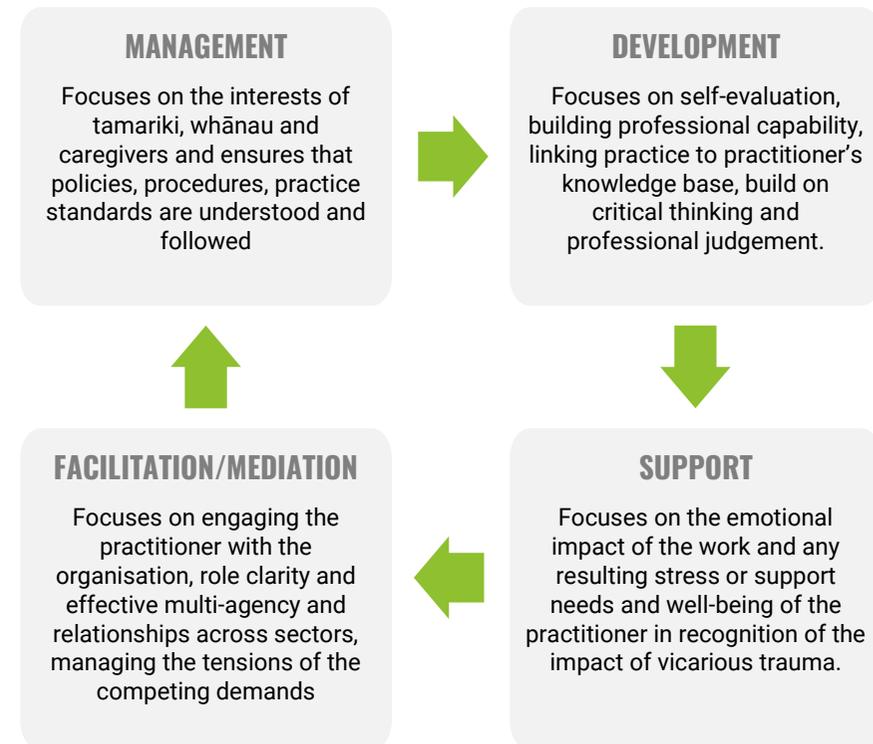
## 3. Definition of professional supervision

Professional supervision provides a formal and ongoing process that promotes professional competence, accountable and safe practice, continuing professional development, critical reflection, and practitioner wellbeing.

It enables, guides and facilitates the practitioner to meet organisational, professional and personal objectives within the four functions of professional supervision.

## 4. Functions of professional supervision

The supervision process performs four critical functions:



# PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION POLICY

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

SUPERVISORS* WILL:	SUPERVISEES WILL:	MANAGERS WILL:	LEADERSHIP WILL:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise that their supervision provides critical support to the wellbeing and professional development of staff</li> <li>• recognise that they are instrumental in both helping supervisees to identify skills and knowledge gaps in their practice, and developing a plan to address these</li> <li>• prioritise supervision and provide it in accordance with the policy</li> <li>• have the skills, training, expertise and cultural competence</li> <li>• participate in their own professional supervision and on-going professional development.</li> </ul> <p><i>* Roles that provide professional supervision</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise the support that supervision provides, as part of their wellbeing and professional development</li> <li>• prioritise and actively participate in regular supervision</li> <li>• be an active participant by engaging in the process of critical reflection and seeking professional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise that supervision is a critical support for the wellbeing and professional development of staff</li> <li>• ensure that professional supervision is a priority</li> <li>• ensure that supervisors have the required skills, knowledge and expertise</li> <li>• engage in their own supervision</li> <li>• demonstrate and provide leadership for cultural competence</li> <li>• ensure quality improvements processes are in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise that supervision is a critical support for the wellbeing and professional development of staff</li> <li>• ensure that professional supervision is available</li> <li>• ensure that a programme of continuous professional development is available for all supervisors</li> <li>• ensure that supervisors have the required skills, knowledge and expertise and cultural competence</li> <li>• recognise the importance and provide investment for a culture of learning and development.</li> </ul>

## 6. Types of supervision

There are many types of supervision depending on the learning and development needs of the supervisee and expertise of supervisors.

Each of the following types of supervision described below may be practiced in varying contexts in Oranga Tamariki, according to the needs of individuals and teams.

In the main, professional supervision will be provided as:

- **One-to-one individual sessions:** this involves two participants where one is identified as supervisor.

Other types of supervision may be accessed in negotiation with your manager:

- **Group supervision:** this involves one supervisor with several participants. This can be useful in settings where there are many staff to be supervised and few trained supervisors. (Residences may opt for this type of supervision)

- **Peer group supervision:** this involves three or more participants who alternate roles to provide supervision to each other. This is recommended for more experienced supervisees; however, it can be done alongside another form of supervision.
- **Cultural supervision:** this focuses on ensuring that practice is culturally informed and responsive to the cultural values, protocols and practices of tamariki (this includes cultural identities beyond ethnicity). It supplements existing professional supervision processes.
- **Open door:** this involves incident or case specific consultations, as and when required with supervisor.
- **External supervision:** In some circumstances, professional supervision may not be readily available within Oranga Tamariki. External supervision may be accessed as long as it is provided by a qualified supervisor and within the Oranga Tamariki policy and standards.

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## 7. Frequency of supervision

Professional registration requires that social workers participate in regular supervision as per the Social Work Registration Board's policy (2015): "... a practitioner will access regular and appropriate supervision at least monthly and in a manner that is consistent with reasonable expectations of the levels of skill and practice ability of the individual."

In consultation with their supervisor, a practitioner may negotiate the use of different types of supervision such as cultural or peer supervision provided that it is of quality and supported by a supervision agreement.

Additional supervision sessions may be negotiated as and when required.

The following table is the recommended frequency for one to one individual professional supervision for full time practitioners within Oranga Tamariki. # \*

POSITION	FREQUENCY OF SUPERVISION
All youth/social workers/practitioners/co-ordinators (youth justice and care and protection) with less than or equal to 12 months Oranga Tamariki experience	1 hour per week
All youth/social workers/practitioners/co-ordinators (youth justice and care and protection) with more than 12 months Oranga Tamariki experience	1 hour per fortnight
Contact centre staff, supervisors, practice/team/case leaders/managers	1 hour per month
Regional practice advisors, learning and capability development advisors, national office professional practice advisors	1 hour per month

# The frequency for part time employees is to be considered on a pro rata basis

\* Residential youth workers may attend 3 weekly group supervision sessions

## 8. Cultural supervision

Cultural supervision is separate from professional supervision, but is intrinsically part of the supervision and support provided to staff.

Cultural supervision is about both cultural accountability and cultural development. It is essential to ensure that the aspirations of all cultures are respected and explored within the supervisory relationship and that services are delivered through culturally responsive, effective and acceptable practices.

There are broad and varied understandings about cultural supervision; however there is general agreement that this process is founded on a major premise that the culture of the supervisor and supervisee invokes different needs, understandings and responsiveness.

Cultural supervision provides a direct lens over Te Mana O Te Tamaiti, whakapapa and whanaungatanga. In order to deliver better outcomes for tamariki, all supervisors should be able to provide culturally competent supervision regardless of their ethnicity. Supervisors should know when to seek cultural advice and/or supervision and have identified people they can access.

### Māori centred supervision

Under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, there is an obligation that identifies a need for Māori centred supervision and directly links to the Oranga Tamariki practice framework core “working effectively with Māori”.

Several variations of Māori centred supervision may exist to meet the various needs of practitioners:

- **Tangata Whenua** – where participants (supervisor and supervisee) are Māori
- **Tangata Whenua (cross-cultural)** – Māori working with other cultures
- **Tauwiwi (bicultural)** – those who are not Māori who are working with Māori.

### Supervision with other cultures

In addition, other cultural realities need to be taken into account when addressing supervision needs to strengthen workforce capability and responsiveness to best practice for all tamariki and their families.

In our work with Pacific children and families, practice principles of humility, dignity, responsibility, relationship, spirituality, guardianship and child’s best interest are integral to the supervisory engagement.

- **Tauwiwi (cultural)** – same culture e.g. Samoan working with Samoan
- **Tauwiwi (cross-cultural)** – where participants are working with cultures different from their own.

## 9. Other types of organisational learning support

In addition to professional supervision, there are other forms of professional learning, development and support activities to meet practitioners' needs across their developmental continuum. This may be provided by one's line manager, supervisor or another person depending on the developmental activity required.

Other types of learning support may include:

- **Technical abilities focused:** this involves a variety of activities to orientate staff to the organisation, its policies, procedures, processes, and role specific functions.
- **Advice and guidance:** this involves open door, informal or formal consultations with colleagues (supervisors, practice leaders, regional practice advisors, professionals from other disciplines, subject matter experts). This supports learning however critical reflection, inquiry, challenge and incorporating understanding is strengthened via formal supervision.
- **Group case discussions:** frequent, high-quality, case based, reflective group discussion incorporating analytical and hypothetical thinking with action focused, goal oriented case planning.
- **Coaching:** this is used to build the capability of practitioners, enhancing their existing skills and the development of new ones. It is also useful in assisting practitioners to gain a deeper understanding of practices for use in current and future work (Rush, Sheldon and Hanft, 2003). This is usually provided one to one.
- **Mentoring:** this involves personal development activities in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person (NZ Coaching & Mentoring Centre, 2013).
- **Consultation with learning advisors:** learning advisors will provide supervisors with additional support and guidance to align learning goals with professional development.
- **Cultural consultation:** brings culturally specific knowledge, skills and expertise to the supervision session or may be case specific situations that requires cultural input.
- **Debriefing:** may be a formalised de-brief sessions post a critical incident, or an informal discussion to debrief with a peer, supervisor or other trusted colleague.
- **Communities of practice:** a community of practice is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do, and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 1998)

## 10. Criteria for supervisors

Oranga Tamariki staff who provide professional supervision will have the required skills, knowledge and expertise to deliver quality culturally competent supervision.

Learning pathways for new and existing supervisors and other on-going learning and development opportunities will be accessed by supervisors to maintain and develop their competence.

All staff members who provide professional supervision in any form, must themselves participate in regular on-going supervision.

The Social Work Registration Board (2015) states that those who provide supervision to registered social workers:

- be registered social workers with a current Annual Practicing Certificate
- have completed training in professional supervision
- practice in accordance with accepted professional standards of experience and qualifications
- understand the Board's supervision policy and principles
- provide supervision that is relevant to the supervisee's spiritual, traditional and theoretical understandings, cultural worldview, experience, skills and requirements for accountability.

## 11. Supervisor characteristics

These are the key characteristics of a good supervisor:

- Professional values such as honesty, loyalty and integrity (Hensley, 2003)
- Behaviours such as role modelling, the use of humour, offering support, communicating complex concepts and promoting critical thinking (Clark et al, 2008)
- A sound knowledge base (Rushton & Nathan, 1996) and use of evidence informed models (O'Donoghue, 2017)
- An ability to challenge in a supportive way (Davys, 2005b)
- An ability to manage power and authority (Davys, 2005b)
- An openness to feedback and an ability to be self-monitoring (Davys, 2005b)
- Emotional intelligence within the human interactional process to manage the emotional impact of the work upon the worker (O'Donoghue and Tsui, 2011, 2015).
- Cultural awareness and competency (Eketone, 2012)

## 12. Establishing a supervisory relationship

The most important part of effective professional supervision is the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee. In fact, *“the ability to establish and maintain the supervisory relationship is a core requirement of a supervisor.”* (Davys and Beddoe, 2010).

Developing the supervision agreement is critical for an effective supervisory relationship as it determines how the participants will work together to achieve mutually set goals. It is more than a task, rather a process of collaborative negotiation between the supervisor and supervisee. The supervisory relationship is underpinned by the development of a trusting, respectful and open relationship and within which *“risks may be taken, innovations attempted, challenges raised and development enhanced.”* (Morrison, 2005).

The participants will need to negotiate the terms of the agreement in relation to practicalities, organisational and professional requirements, setting clear expectations, managing conflict, resolving concerns, goal setting.

### 12.1 The supervision agreement

Oranga Tamariki has a professional supervision agreement template available on the practice centre.

An agreement should include the following:

- purpose and goals that considers type of supervision process, roles and responsibilities
- frequency and duration of supervision sessions
- identify other processes that may be used between supervision sessions or to augment formal supervision
- who will provide supervision if the supervisor is absent
- evaluation of the supervisory relationship
- regular reviews of the agreement

Other subjects to include when establishing a supervision agreement are covered in more detail in the following sections: confidentiality, documentation, supervision records and resolution of concerns.

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## 12.2 Confidentiality

Within the supervisory relationship, discussions are considered confidential. This excludes concerns or issues around safe practice.

The supervision agreement should cover the process for dealing with unsafe practice issues. The process should be discussed and agreed to early in the supervisory relationship.

The need to share information from supervision sessions should firstly be discussed with the supervisee. This may not always be possible if immediate safety concerns are present.

## 12.3 Documentation

Formal casework decisions must be recorded on the case management system, and who will do this is negotiated in the supervision agreement.

## 12.4 Supervision records

A supervision record must be maintained for each session that captures discussions and agreed actions. It also provides evidence of attendance. A template can be found on the practice centre.

## 12.5 Resolution of concerns

At times, a supervisee and their supervisor may disagree. It is important to discuss the concern together and work to resolve any ongoing issues in a timely and direct way.

If a compromise cannot be reached, they are encouraged to discuss the matter with an agreed third party in order to reach a mutually acceptable outcome. For example, a practice leader may be used when issues are practice related.

This is an area that should be covered at the time of negotiating the supervision agreement. It is essential that a pathway for the resolution of concerns is clearly articulated at the beginning of the supervisory relationship.

## 12.6 Review of the supervision agreement

Ideally, the initial supervision agreement should be reviewed at three months then yearly thereafter.

## 13. Model of practice

Oranga Tamariki supports the use of the integrative model of supervision (IMS):

- **Keeping the child at the centre of supervisory discussions**  
Tamariki are placed at the centre of the supervisory relationship, and their experiences are the focus of supervision and are considered in the context of their whānau and environment.
- **Knowledge and skill development**  
By establishing a collaborative learning environment facilitated by both the supervisor and supervisee, varied kinds of knowledge, skills and learning can be shared and the process of critical reflection used to enhance professional judgement.
- **Leadership and management**  
Supervisors demonstrate leadership by being fair and transparent, acting as change agents, assisting to effectively balance the five dimensions of supervision.
- **Advocacy**  
The supervisor is able to proactively advocate on behalf the supervisee and tamariki and mediates the various demands of working in this environment.
- **Safety**  
A safe supervisory relationship is essential to effective supervision. It is co-created and maintained by both the supervisor and supervisee and enables the impact of trauma to be proactively responded to.



Source: McPherson and McNamara, 2016, p28

## 14. Reflective supervision

The use of reflective supervision is a key part of the supervisor's role in developing practitioners. It provides a discrete and safe opportunity that assists staff to:

- Reflect on how their own perceptions, biases, attitudes and beliefs impact on practice.
- Identify knowledge and skill deficits and seek clarification.
- Reflect on any feedback and integrate changes into practice.

Reflective supervision provides an opportunity for the supervisee to examine their thoughts, feelings, actions and reactions that may arise within their work with tamariki and whānau. It aligns closely with the concept of learning from experience. The supervisor assists the supervisee to think about what they did, and what happened, to consider what was effective in their practice and what could be strengthened, then decide from these insights, what they would do the same or differently next time.

“All practitioners working in the complex and ambiguous world of child protection need to have the capacity to critically think about the ways they make sense of complex situations, cases and problems”. (Leading Practice, 2014)

Reflective supervision shifts away from a task based, compliance, case management approach as it utilises:

- reflective questioning
- critical thinking
- exploration and feedback
- It aims to move the practitioner towards:
  - increased professional judgement
  - an informed and intentional application of knowledge and skills in practice
  - practice aligned with the Practice Framework Principles and Standards.

“When reflection occurs in supervision, it can be in relation to reflecting on day to day practice, triggered by a challenging (clinical) encounter or in anticipation of having to manage a complex situation. It is imperative that reflective practice is conducted in a supportive environment to allow individuals to freely share information that promotes learning”  
(The Superguide, 2012).

## 15. The supervision session

To make the most of supervision, it is important that the sessions are structured.

O'Donoghue (2014) proposes an interactional map for the supervision session. The relationship between supervisee and supervisor is interactional and collaborative.

This process is also useful for assisting new supervisees and supervisors as a lead in to their supervisory discussions in the beginning phase.

The interactional map can also enable the participants to return the session into focus, as well as a method to review their sessions.

### Map of session stages and phases

(O'Donoghue 2014)

SESSION STAGES	SUPERVISEE PHASES	SUPERVISOR PHASES
Preparation	Continual consideration Session preparation	Reviewing records Thinking about the forthcoming session Attending to the setting
Beginning	Social engagement Orientation	Starting Checking-in
Planning	Agenda setting Prioritising items	Agenda setting Prioritising items
Working	Telling the story or presenting an item	Clarifying and exploring the story or issue
Ending	Summary and review The practicalities of next session	Reviewing what was covered Finishing up the session Finishing the notes

## 16. Outcomes and quality assurance

We will measure the effectiveness of professional supervision from the following outcomes:

- an increased amount of time spent on supervision across the workforce
- an increased satisfaction level with the quality of supervision received by staff members
- an increased knowledge and awareness of the standards and processes of supervision from supervisees and supervisors
- an increased level of supervision information (at a non-sensitive level) used to inform the system of continuous quality improvement, in terms of further staff and workforce development
- an improvement in the quality of professional judgements and decisions for tamariki, including culturally responsive practices.

### Examples of collection methods

- Regular surveys.
- Session observations.
- Evidence of supervision in case records.
- Supervision agreements and notes.
- Feedback loops.
- Interviews with supervisors and supervisees as part of quality assurance reviews.
- Activity studies.

# PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION STANDARDS



These standards for professional supervision have been designed to provide an organisational benchmark for supervision practice between supervisors and supervisees. They describe a clear bottom line and reinforce expected practice.

Effective practices will be shared amongst practitioners and supervisors as part of information sharing loops and continuous learning and improvement approaches.



## PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

Supervision promotes quality practice

"I will participate in supervision to focus on improving the quality of my practice in ways that contribute to successful outcomes for tamariki."



### Why do we have this standard?

- Professional supervision provides practitioners with guidance and support to develop and sustain quality child-centred practice.
- Professional supervision assists the practitioner to critically reflect on their practice, enhance their professional judgement and self-efficacy within a safe and supportive supervisory relationship.

### I will know I have achieved this standard when:

My case notes and supervision records for the tamariki and whānau I work with reflect:

- how I am meeting the standards and practicing the principles set within the Oranga Tamariki Practice Framework
- how I am considering cultural advice and guidance when working with Māori, Pacific and other diverse cultures and groups beyond ethnicity
- the decisions made in supervision about tamariki are recorded in their file.



## PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

Supervision occurs regularly

"I will participate and engage in regular and effective supervision in accordance with the supervision policy."



### Why do we have this standard?

- Effective support for practitioners within Oranga Tamariki requires time and space for regular and effective supervision.
- Effective supervision must occur regularly for a continuous improvement in practice.
- The type of supervision may vary according to needs (e.g. individual, group, cultural supervision or some other form).

### I will know I have achieved this standard when:

- I have a current supervision agreement.
- I engage in regular and on-going supervision, and this is evident in supervision notes and logs.
- My supervision arrangements are consistent with the supervision policy and framework.
- Supervision agendas are mutually created with identified, measurable and realistic timeframes to achieve agreed upon outcomes.



## PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

Supervision focuses on the needs of supervisees

"I will participate in reflective supervision tailored to meet my needs for individual growth and professional development – and I am able to provide feedback on this supervision."



### Why do we have this standard?

- Effective supervision has an intentional focus on practice improvement for the supervisee
- Supervision includes a process of self-reflection and critical analysis to enhance professional judgement
- Supervision helps to identify and focus on the ongoing needs specific to the supervisee
- Professional supervision creates a safe place where supervisees can foster a stance of inquiry.

### I will know I have achieved this standard when:

- My professional development plan identifies my professional development needs which will be supported through supervision.
- I have opportunities to regularly provide feedback on the quality of my supervision so it best meets my needs – and this process of feedback ensures that supervision is fit for purpose for all involved.
- I am able to access different types of supervision and/or organisational learning support to meet my individual professional development needs.

STANDARD

4

## PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

Supervision supports working effectively with Māori

"I will participate in supervision to support my growth in capability in working with Māori tamariki and their whānau and carers."



### Why do we have this standard?

- We have an obligation under the Treaty of Waitangi to meet the needs and aspirations of tangata whenua / Māori.
- Most of our service interactions are with Māori and our practitioners need to be culturally responsive to be effective.
- Māori practitioners have access to cultural supervision provided by a Māori supervisor.

### I will know I have achieved this standard when:

- I seek out the whakapapa of the tamariki that I am working with.
- I access relevant cultural knowledge and advice and apply it in my work with Māori tamariki and whānau.
- Supervision records show reflective discussions on how I bring life to the core element of working effectively with Māori within the practice framework.
- My supervisor is able to apply the practice framework principles to support my development.



## PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

Supervision supports working effectively with cultural diversity

"I will participate in supervision to support my growth in capability in working with tamariki, whānau, carers and others who come from diverse cultural backgrounds."



### Why do we have this standard?

- Practitioners need to be effective in their practice with tauwi (those who are not tangata whenua / Māori).
- Practitioners need to be able to work effectively with children and young people from Pacific families and communities and from different cultural backgrounds that extend beyond ethnicity – these may include sexual and gender identities, disabilities and other characteristics.

### I will know I have achieved this standard when:

- The principles of dignity, humility, responsibility, relationships, child's best interests, spirituality and guardianship are evidenced when working with Pacific tamariki and families.
- Supervisors support supervisees to access the relevant culturally specific knowledge, advice and resources and it is evidenced because practice has been adjusted.
- Supervision notes and case records show exploration of perceptions and biases regarding different cultural groups.

**PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION**

Supervisors have knowledge, skills, and competence to facilitate professional supervision

"As a supervisor, I have a commitment to on-going learning to develop my knowledge, skills and competencies to facilitate and model effective leadership and professional judgement."

## Why do we have this standard?

- For supervision to effectively influence and support a lift in the quality of practice for supervisees, the supervisor requires the appropriate knowledge, skills and competence to do their role.
- As part of the process, supervisors have an openness to improving their approach and they are willing to participate in on-going learning and their own supervision to enable continuous improvement.
- Supervisors will receive feedback so they are able to reflect critically on their own processes and practices in professional supervision.

## I will know I have achieved this standard when:

As a supervisor:

- I regularly participate in my own supervision
- I regularly receive feedback so I can reflect critically on my own processes and practices in professional supervision
- I have opportunities for on-going support and professional development
- I integrate reflective practice as a foundational approach to supervision
- my supervision process is underpinned by evidence informed models.