

Stichting Primair en Voortgezet Onderwijs Zuid-Nederland



# Protocol for reporting to Veilig Thuis

Foundation "Primair en Voortgezet Onderwijs Zuid-Nederland"

Adopted by CMT February 2019

On 1 July 2013, the Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Reporting Code Act entered into force. This law requires the use of a reporting code for professionals in the event of (possible) signals of domestic violence and child abuse. This also includes sexual violence, honour-related violence, elder abuse and female genital mutilation. The law applies to professionals who work in the sectors: health care, education, childcare, social support, youth care and justice. The reporting code consists of a step-by-step plan, which states what you should do as a professional in the event of suspected domestic violence or child abuse. It is, therefore, an action protocol. The purpose of the law is not to report, but to get going help.

From 1-1-2019 there has been a tightening of the Reporting Code Domestic Violence and Child Abuse. This is necessary because there is insufficient control over unsafe situations in the home situation of children. All forms of serious and/or structural violence must be on the radar of Veilig Thuis.

Veilig Thuis will bundle the signals about unsafe situations from 1-1-2019. The purpose of this is to be able to offer children sustainable safety.

The improved Reporting Code contains an assessment framework that is tailored to one's own professional practice, with which employees of the schools can consider whether it is necessary to make a report to Veilig Thuis. This means that, in steps 4 and 5 of the Reporting Code, employees of the schools consider, among other things, whether there is acute or structural insecurity.<sup>1</sup> These considerations are recorded in a file. A protocol records who reports, who conducts the interviews with those involved.

Within SPVOZN, the protocol with regard to the improved reporting code is as follows:

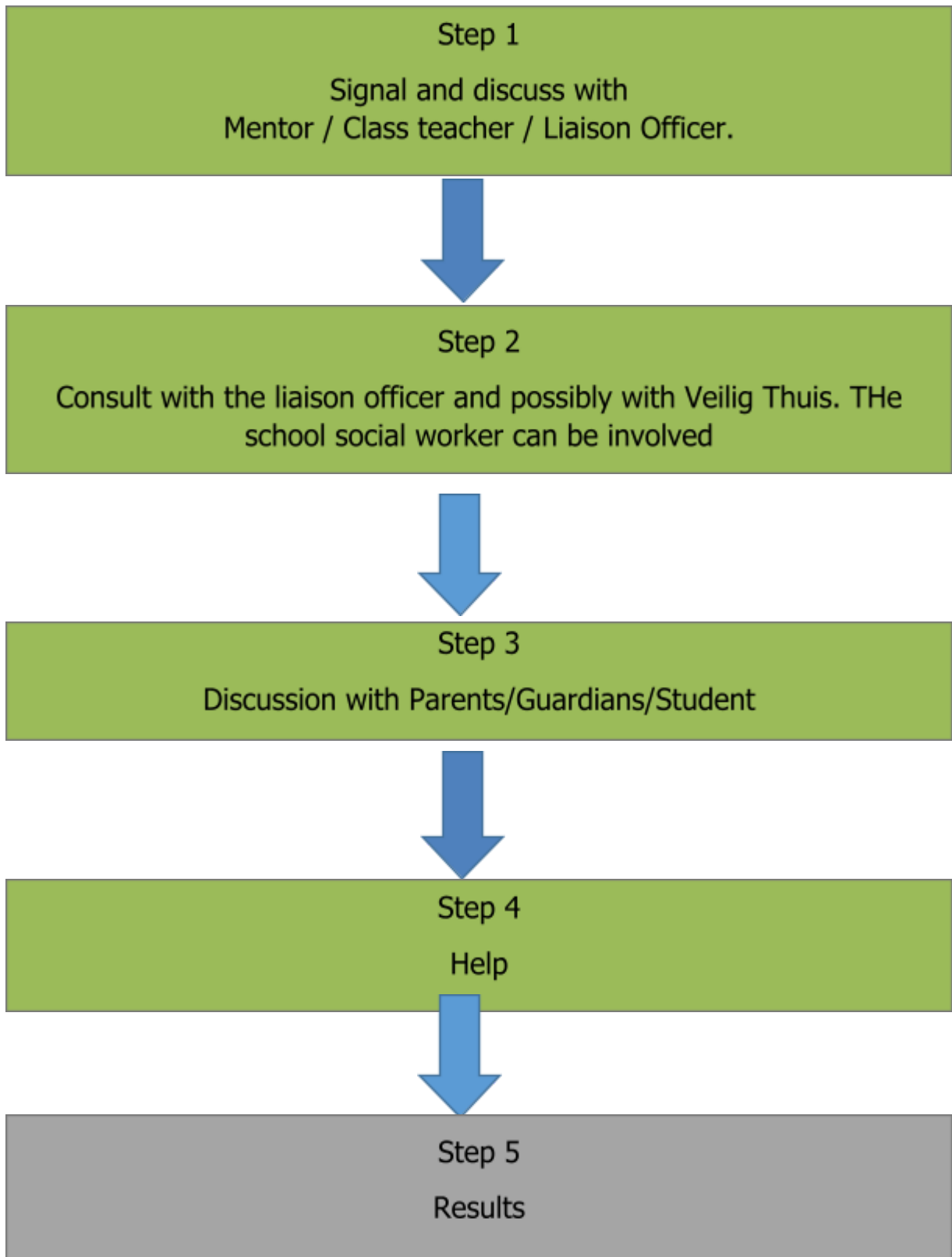
- A step-by-step plan is used (see Appendix 1).
- A liaison officer is appointed at every location within SPVOZN. This person will be mentioned on the website of the locations.
- The liaison officer will be informed by the mentor, internal supervisor or teacher about the suspicions of an unsafe situation for the student.
- Worries are discussed in the care team of the relevant location.
- Worries are recorded by the care team in a shadow file. **Nothing** is recorded in SOM or ParnasSys.
- Discussions with those involved are preferably conducted with several people.
- Veilig Thuis can still be consulted for advice. A real report at Veilig Thuis is only made if all the help provided leads to insufficient improvement in the situation.
- A **report** to Veilig Thuis is made by the liaison officer of the relevant location.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.veiligthuishollandsmidden.nl/professionals/digitale-meldcode/>

## Appendix 1

Step-by-step plan for improved reporting code for Veilig Thuis



Elaboration of the 5 assessment questions and decisions in steps 4 and 5 of the reporting code for education and compulsory education

### **Possible options**

Steps 1 to 3 have been completed and:

No action is required based on the steps. The file is recorded and closed.

There is a strong suspicion of domestic violence and / or child abuse. The competent authority of SPVOZN is informed (in case the suspicion is established by the school employee).

### **2. Safety**

Based on steps 1 to 4, the competent authority (officials and competent authority) / compulsory education have reasons to believe that there is acute and / or structural lack of safety

A: NO Continue to consideration 3.

B: YES or doubt, immediately (by telephone) (anonymously) report to Veilig Thuis. The considerations below are discussed with Veilig Thuis.

### **3. Help**

Is someone within our school or our chain partners able to offer or organize effective help and can the threat of possible domestic violence or child abuse be averted?

A: NO report to Veilig Thuis who takes a decision within 5 working days and provides feedback to the reporter.

B: YES Continue with assessment question 4 HELP

### **4. HELP**

Do the people involved accept assistance as organized in consideration 3 and are they willing to make an active effort?

A: NO Report to Veilig Thuis

B: YES initiate assistance, agree on a period in which the effect must be measurable or noticeable. Make and document as concrete as possible. Agree who has what role and appoint a case manager. Agree on the tasks that all involved and specifically the case manager has, so that everyone's expectations are clear. Register, execute and continue with consideration question 5.

### **5. RESULT**

Does the help lead, within the agreed period, to the agreed results with regard to the safety, well-being and / or recovery of those directly affected?

A: NO report to Veilig Thuis.

B: YES concludes assistance with recorded agreements on monitoring the safety of all involved.

## Appendix 2

### Concepts and definitions

General reporting standards (guiding principles for assessment frameworks)

Reporting to Veilig Thuis of possible domestic violence or possible child abuse is a professional standard and as such necessary:

<b>Reporting standard A</b>	In ALL cases of acute lack of safety and / or structural lack of safety.
<b>Reporting standard B</b>	In all OTHER cases in which the liaison officer believes that, in view of his competences, his responsibilities and his professional limits, he/she cannot provide effective assistance or can organize insufficient (risk of) domestic violence and/or child abuse.
<b>Reporting standard C</b>	If the liaison officer offers or organizes help to protect those involved against the risk of domestic violence and/or child abuse, finds that the unsafe position remains or is repeated.

#### Acute lack of safety, structural lack of safety and disclosure

Acute lack of safety	
Definition	A student is in immediate physical danger, his safety is not guaranteed in the coming days and he or she needs immediate protection.
Explanation	When considering signs of domestic violence and/or child abuse, a school employee first and foremost estimates whether a person involved is in acute (life) danger. This concerns the presence of physical or sexual violence (with or without injury) or, in the case of dependent children, the absence of the most basic care (including food, drink, clothing and shelter) but also, for example, to unnecessarily administer medication or providing unnecessary care.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Violent injury that requires medical attention</li> <li>- (Serious) injury with a suspicion that it has been inflicted, or an attempt to that end</li> <li>- Attempting to strangle</li> <li>- Weapons use</li> <li>- (Suspected of) sexual abuse, sexual violence or sexual exploitation of children under the age of 18</li> <li>- Acute threat of killing themselves or a neighbour (including (ex) partner, children or family member, inflicting serious injury or taking away their freedom (family drama, honour killing, female genital mutilation)</li> <li>- Refraining from the care that threatens health acutely from -9 months to + 100 years, including abstaining from food</li> <li>- If a parent/guardian exaggerates/invents research data (medical) concerning complaints/disorders and abnormalities existing in the child or falsifies or selectively provides (medical) them in the context of an investigation or actually causes complaints and defects to the child.</li> <li>- Freedom restrictive measure goes to perpetrator without having taken adequate safety measures for the pupil of the school.</li> <li>- Acute unsafe situation exists or care is likely to fall away due to a suicide attempt, self-mutilation, acute psychological image, intoxication by alcohol or drugs.</li> <li>- Forced flight from home due to (threat of) domestic violence and/or child abuse.</li> <li>- A minor child left alone in the house without supervision and care of an adult</li> <li>- Minors who are locked up in the house and deprived of food and drink</li> <li>- Minors who live with a single parent, where this parent gets an acute psychosis</li> </ul>

<b>Structural lack of safety</b>	
Definition	There is a recurrence of unsafe situations or violence.
Explanation	A history of domestic violence or child abuse is the most important predictor of persistence of lack of safety (perpetrator and victimization) in the future.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minors growing up with parents with such serious (psychosocial, relational) problems as a result of intellectual disability, substance addiction, psychological problems that the physical and emotional safety of the child are repeatedly and/or constantly threatened and the development possibilities of these minors are structurally restricted</li> <li>- serious neglect which can cause permanent damage for young growing children</li> <li>- escalating forms of stalking in a partnership</li> <li>- Minor who regularly witness domestic violence between parents</li> <li>- Minors who have a high absenteeism</li> <li>- Minors who are regularly (physical) abused</li> </ul>

<b>Disclosure</b>	
Definition	Victims that, from themselves, ask an employee of the school for help or express (possible) domestic violence and/or child abuse.
Explanation	<p>If a victim, child or adult, voluntarily asks a school employee for help with domestic violence and/or child abuse or asks for help without assistance, this usually means that the (minor) victim experiences and fears an acute crisis for the safety of themselves or family members</p> <p>Discussing the concerns expressed by the victim with insufficient preparation can lead to (exacerbation of) situations of acute or structural lack of safety. This explicitly also applies to specific forms of domestic violence such as (ex) partner stalking, forced marriage, human trafficking, honour-related violence and parent abuse.</p> <p>A professional standard for reporting, in this case, means careful coordination on follow-up actions between the school employee, liaison officer, Veilig Thuis and the victim. When choosing whether or not to report, the safety of the victim is always paramount.</p>