



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Rotterdam International Secondary School

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Contents

Policy statement and principles	4
• Reporting Code Domestic Violence and Child Abuse, Government of the Netherlands.	4
Reporting code of domestic violence and child abuse (Meldcode)	4
Child Protection Statement	5
Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance	5
Policy principles	5
Policy Aims	6
1. Roles and responsibilities	7
1.1. The designated safeguarding leads (DSL)	7
2. Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct	7
3. Abuse of position of trust	8
4. Children who may be particularly vulnerable	8
5. Children with special educational needs and disabilities within a Learning Diversity Programme	8
6. Children missing education	9
7. Mental health	9
8. Whistleblowing if you have concerns about a colleague	9
9. Allegations and concerns raised in relation to staff, supply staff, contractors and volunteers	10
10. Staff training	10
11. Safer recruitment	10
11.1. Volunteers	10
11.2. Contractors	11
12. Site security	11
13. Extended school and off-site arrangements	11
14. Staff/student online relationships	11
15. Responding to Sexual Behavior: The Sensoa Flag System	11
16. Child protection procedures	12
16.1. Recognising abuse	12
16.2. Bullying	12
16.3. Taking action in extreme cases	12
16.4. If you are concerned about a student's welfare	12
16.5. If a student discloses to you	13
16.6. Notifying parents	13
17. Confidentiality and sharing information	13
18. Reporting directly to child protection agencies	14
19. Peer on peer abuse	14
19.1. Minimising risk	15
19.2. Managing allegations of peer-on-peer abuse	16
19.3. Supporting those involved	16
20. Serious violence	17
21. Child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation	17
21.1. Child Sexual Exploitation	17
21.2. Child Criminal Exploitation	18

	3
21.3. Organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs	18
22. Online safety	19
23. Sharing nudes and semi nudes	19
25. Honour-based abuse, FGM and Forced Marriage	21
26. Private fostering arrangements	22
27. Visas and guardianship status	22
28. Special circumstances	22
28.1. Looked after children - Children under state care	22
28.2. Children who have a social worker	22
28.3. Children staying with host families	22
Four categories of abuse	24
Indicators of abuse	25
Specific to radicalisation:	26
Appendix Two: List of Key Organisations in The Netherlands	27
Our mission is for every student to enjoy their youth.	2
Our mission is for every student to enjoy their youth.	1
Educating for self-awareness, curiosity and integrity in a changing world	2
Educating for self-awareness, curiosity and integrity in a changing world	1

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed yearly by the Care and Crisis Team, with a complete revision every two years

Care and Crisis Team (including Designated Safeguarding Leads, and Deputy Safeguarding Leads), School Community

Date: 07/09/2021

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RISS Staff

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Approved by the MR

Date: November 2024

Policy statement and principles

Rotterdam International Secondary School (RISS) Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy reinforces our school mission for every student to enjoy their youth, and our vision of education for self-awareness, curiosity, and integrity in a changing world.

This policy is one of a series of documents in the Key Documents section of our website that seeks to address the need to ensure the safest possible environment for our students.

- RISS Vision, Mission, and Core Values
- RISS Staff Code of Conduct
- RISS Learning Diversity Policy
- RISS High Quality Teaching and Learning Policy
- RISS Assessment Policy
- RISS Privacy Policy
- RISS Academic Integrity Policy
- RISS Learning Technology Plan
- RISS Acceptable Use of Technology Policy
- RISS Handbook (latest online edition 2024-2025)
- RISS Anti Bullying Policy
- RISS Drug Policy
- RISS Student Charter
- RISS Attendance Regulations
- RISS Mobile Phone Policy

In addition, this policy follows the lead provided by the following Dutch Government organisations:

- [Child Abuse](#) Board, Government of the Netherlands.
- [Youth Care and Child Protection](#), Government of the Netherlands.
- [Netherlands Youth Institute](#), Government of the Netherlands.
- [Reporting Code Domestic Violence and Child Abuse](#), Government of the Netherlands.
- [Managing Allegations of Child Abuse by Educators and Other Adults](#) protocol for international schools.

Finally, as a school member of Wolfert and BOOR, this policy is in line with their guidelines and procedures:

- The official BOOR complaint protocol procedure can be found [here](#).
- The official BOOR Privacy Statement can be found [here](#).

Reporting code of domestic violence and child abuse (Meldcode)

As part of our safeguarding policy, we are legally obligated to follow the Reporting code protocol, which is a national law in the Netherlands aimed at protecting individuals, particularly children, from abuse and neglect. This protocol applies to professionals in sectors such as education, healthcare, and social services.

The reporting code provides a structured, step-by-step process for handling suspicions of abuse or domestic violence. Our staff must follow these five key steps when any signs of abuse are identified:

1. **Identify and document signs:** Staff members are required to be vigilant in recognizing signs of abuse or neglect and must document any concerns.
2. **Consult with a colleague or expert:** If there are concerns, it is mandatory to discuss these with the DSL, Head of Section and/or an external expert to ensure the signs are understood in context and to gather different perspectives.
3. **Discuss with the individual/family:** In most cases, we are required to talk to the individual involved (child or family) to better understand the situation. Exceptions can be made if it might endanger the person or make the situation worse.
4. **Assess the level of risk:** After consultation and discussion, an assessment must be made to determine if abuse or neglect is taking place and how urgent the risk is.
5. **Decide on reporting or follow-up:** If abuse is suspected, the case must be reported to **Veilig Thuis**, the national helpline for domestic violence and child abuse. If the situation does not warrant an immediate report, other actions may be taken to support the individual.

It is important to note that **adherence to this protocol is not optional**—it is a legal requirement.

The reporting code plays a crucial role in safeguarding, ensuring that every concern is treated seriously, that the right steps are followed, and that professional responsibility is upheld. By using the reporting code, we ensure that potential abuse cases are handled consistently and appropriately, helping to protect vulnerable individuals from further harm.

Child Protection Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow procedures to ensure that our students receive effective support, protection, and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff members, visitors, volunteers, Wolfert representative members, and the BOOR Chairman, and are consistent with those of the local safeguarding regulations of The Netherlands.

Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

The school is situated in the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the city of Rotterdam. The school fully adheres to the laws of the country in all issues that pertain to the welfare of students and seeks advice from key external bodies to ensure that safe, meaningful, and prompt actions are taken to protect RISS students.

Policy principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language,

religion, or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.

- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff will reassure children that their concerns and disclosures will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

Policy Aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment regarding child protection to students, parents/guardians, and other partners.

Key personnel

The designated safeguarding leads (DSL) are Ms du Plessis, Principal, and Ms Stearn, Head of Counselling.

Contact details: lpl@wolfert.nl and cse@wolfert.nl

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) are Mr Mottram, Mr Oudman, and Ms Swart and Ms Prudhoe

The dedicated internal contact for students (vertrouwenspersoon) to whom students can always report any concerns is Ms C Stearn cse@wolfert.nl

Terminology

- **Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- **Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.
- **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time, or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.
- **DSL** refers to the designated safeguarding lead at the school.
- The term **Child** includes everyone under the age of 18. However, this policy of safeguarding all students under the care of RISS is still applicable to all students enrolled at RISS, over the age of 18 as well.
- **Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers, and adoptive parents.
- The **reporting code** refers to the mandatory reporting protocol in the Netherlands that provides professionals with guidelines on how to handle suspicions of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.

1. Roles and responsibilities

1.1. The designated safeguarding leads (DSL)

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the school. The DSL has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, which include:

- ensuring the child protection policies are known, understood, and used appropriately by staff, reviewed annually and publicly available
- ensure parents of students at the school are aware of the procedures and policies
- advising and supporting staff on child protection and safeguarding matters
- encouraging a culture of listening to children
- managing safeguarding referrals to children's social care, the police, or other agencies
- taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- liaising with the "case manager" and the designated officer(s) at the local authority where allegations are made against staff
- making staff aware of training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements available through the local safeguarding partner arrangements
- undergoing training and receiving regular updates to maintain the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role, including Prevent awareness training.

1.2. The deputy designated safeguarding leads (Heads of Section at RISS):

They are trained to the same level as the DSL and support the DSL with safeguarding matters as appropriate. In the absence of the DSL, the deputy DSL carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, one of the deputies will assume the functions above.

2. Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

Good practice includes:

- treating all students with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving students in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful, and safe behaviour among students
- being a good listener
- being alerted to changes in students' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse

- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, Staff Code of Conduct and key documents on wider student issues
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse
- referring all concerns about a student's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or children's social care.

3. Abuse of position of trust

RISS school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that under Dutch law, while the general age of sexual consent is 16, it is a criminal offence for an individual in a position of trust or authority (such as a member of school staff) to engage in any sexual relationship with a person under 18, even if consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and an RISS student may constitute a criminal offence, regardless of the student's age above 16. [Please see this link to the Rijksoverheid](#)

4. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- living in unstable and unsupportive home situations
- living transient lifestyles
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence, or parental mental health needs
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender or sexuality
- do not have English or Dutch as a first language
- at risk of sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage or being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

5. Children with special educational needs and disabilities within a Learning Diversity Programme

Children enrolled in the Learning Diversity programme can face unique or additional safeguarding challenges. The RISS Learning Diversity Policy specifies the support RISS is able to offer our students, and clarifies procedures and processes within our LD programme. Recognizing abuse and

neglect within this group can be particularly difficult due to several barriers, which may include::

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's learning difference without further exploration.
- the potential for these children being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff are trained to manage these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

6. Children missing education

Attendance, absence, and exclusions are closely monitored in the Netherlands. A child's absence from school or being missing from education can serve as a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. The Attendance Coordinator is responsible for tracking unauthorised absences and taking appropriate action, which may involve notifying the local authorities, particularly in cases where children are repeatedly absent or missing for extended periods during the school day. The contact details of the attendance office is available on the school website

7. Mental health

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their students.

All staff members are aware that mental health issues can indicate that a child has experienced or is at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, or exploitation. They also understand that adverse childhood experiences can significantly affect a child's mental health, behaviour, and educational outcomes.

If staff have concerns that a child's mental health may also pose a safeguarding risk, they will initially discuss these concerns with the student's tutor or Head of Section, who can then refer the student to the counselling department or DSL.

8. Whistleblowing if you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school enables staff to raise concerns or allegations directly to members of the leadership team, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Principal Ms Lani du Plessis (lp@wolfert.nl). Complaints about the Principal should be reported to the Executive Principal Mr Matthijs Ruitenbergh (mru@wolfert.nl) or via the BOOR Complaints Procedure (see page 4

above for link).

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action. Please see the [Dutch link](#) to reporting concerns:

9. Allegations and concerns raised in relation to staff, supply staff, contractors and volunteers

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, including support staff, cover staff, contractors or volunteers, the procedures are as above. Contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

10. Staff training

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, online safety and to know what to do if they have a concern. The school offers this via Educare, and other online programmes.

New staff will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL. All staff, including the DSLs, will receive training that is regularly updated. All staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via the normal channels of communication at RISS throughout the year.

11. Safer recruitment

Our school complies with the requirements of the local safeguarding arrangements by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications, and work history. The school's Recruitment Policy sets out the process in full and can be found in the Key Documents section of our website. At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training and key interview questions will be asked that concern child protection and safeguarding.

All relevant external staff are made aware of this policy and the implications of their role within our school.

The Wolfert, RISS included, ensures that agencies or third-party organisations, that supply staff or other individuals who may work in the school, have been appropriately checked and are suitable to work with children.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom a police check will be obtained confirming their suitability to work with children.

The school maintains a single central record of police checks for all staff. An update of police checks is conducted every two years.

11.1. Volunteers

Volunteers, including representatives from BOOR, will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school, their contact with students and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

11.2. Contractors

Checks are carried out to all contractors working on site and police checks where it is required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day, but will be accompanied by school staff. These checks are carried out by Wolfert and not by individual schools.

12. Site security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The Principal or Heads of Section will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

13. Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our school, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures. RISS staff members supervise off-site activities.

When our students attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, RISS checks that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

14. Staff/student online relationships

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with students within the Staff Code of Conduct.

15. Responding to Sexual Behavior: The Sensoa Flag System

To ensure a safe environment for all students we use the Sensoa Flag System to guide our responses to sexual behaviour. This system helps us assess sexual behaviour as appropriate or inappropriate by using a colour-coded framework: green, yellow, red, and black. These colours help us identify whether behaviour is healthy and age-appropriate or requires intervention.

The Sensoa Flag System ensures that we respond to sexual behaviour in a consistent and informed manner. It is grounded in principles of child protection and respect for healthy development. This approach enables us to

provide the necessary guidance, education, or intervention when inappropriate behaviour occurs.

16. Child protection procedures

16.1. Recognising abuse

To ensure that our students are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

Abuse may be committed by adults and by other children and young people.

There are four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix 1 along with indicators of abuse.

16.2. Bullying

Although bullying among children is not classified as a separate category of abuse and neglect, it remains a serious issue that can lead to anxiety and distress. All instances of bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying, should be reported to the student's tutor and the Heads of Section. Additionally, each incident should be registered in Magister via the Logbook.

16.3. Taking action in extreme cases

Any child, in any family, in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

Key points for staff to remember for acting are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child (victim)
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL/Principal, by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation or inquiry
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends, or family
- complete a record of concern in Magister
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed. The school has a staff confidant (Vertrouwenspersoon).

16.4. If you are concerned about a student's welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a student may be at risk. The student's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be unusual, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these situations, staff should provide the student with an opportunity to talk and inquire about their wellbeing, asking if they need support.

All staff should follow the reporting code and use Magister to record their concerns. If the student does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. After an initial conversation, if a staff member has serious concerns, they should immediately discuss these with the DSL.

16.5. If a student discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a student talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will let the student know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL/Principal or Head of Section. During their conversations with the students, staff will:

- allow the student to speak freely, without asking leading questions
- remain calm and composed, avoiding overreactions
- Offer reassuring nods or words of comfort, such as: "I'm so sorry this has happened", "I want to help", "This isn't your fault", "You are doing the right thing by talking to me"
- Be comfortable with silence, as it can provide the student with space to express themselves.
- **under no circumstances ask investigative questions**, such as how often the incidents occur, whether siblings are involved, or what the student's mother thinks
- not automatically offer any physical comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as "I wish you had told me about this when it started" may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the student what will happen next in the process
- report the disclosure verbally to the DSL/Principal or Head of Section even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- complete a detail report in Magister and ensure that you send an email to the Principal and Head of Section to notify that you have done so as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed after the conversation

16.6. Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL/Principal will contact the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion, or disclosure. For students over 18 years of age, consent will be sought before informing their parents.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the student. Therefore, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social services and/or the police before parents are contacted.

17. Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff members understand that child protection matters warrant a high level of confidentiality. Concerns should only be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Principal, Head of Section, or Executive Principal, depending on who is involved in the concern. The designated

person will determine who else needs to be informed and will share the information on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner and where:

- it is necessary and proportionate to do so; and
- the information to be shared is relevant, adequate and accurate.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share. Any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Child protection information will be stored safely within Magister.

The DSL/Principal will normally obtain consent from the student and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL/Principal may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to DSL/Principal.

Privacy laws do not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

18. Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with BOOR (see page 4), children's social care, or police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, their deputy, the Heads of Section and Executive Principal are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.
- Please refer to the [reporting code \(meldcode\)](#)

19. Peer on peer abuse

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's procedures where necessary. However, all staff recognise that children can abuse their peers and should be clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding peer-on-peer abuse. All peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Peer on peer abuse can take many forms, including:

- **physical abuse** such as shaking, biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling

- **bullying**, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- **sexual violence and sexual harassment** such as inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault or rape
- **causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent**, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- **consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)** including pressuring another person to send sexual imagery or video content
- **abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers (also known as teenage relationship abuse)** - such as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- **upskirting** – taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission for the purposes of sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress, or alarm
- **initiation/hazing** - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them
- **prejudiced behaviour** - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as, for example, 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. Tolerance of such behaviours can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer-on-peer abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence. Staff recognise that they should remain alert for any type of inappropriate behaviour.

Staff recognise that even if there are no reported cases of peer-on-peer abuse, such abuse may still be taking place but simply not being reported.

19.1. Minimising risk

At our school, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of peer-on-peer abuse:

- An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- Tutorials are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs, and other suitable activities.

- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school.
- We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.

19.2. Managing allegations of peer-on-peer abuse

Staff should pass all allegations of peer-on-peer abuse to the tutor/s and Heads of Section via email and register in Magister immediately or as soon as possible. They will then be investigated and dealt with as follows.

- **Information gathering** – children, staff and witnesses will be spoken with as soon as possible to gather relevant information quickly to understand the situation and assess whether there was intent to cause harm.
- **Decide on action** – if it is believed that any young person is at risk of significant harm, we will endeavour to deescalate and invite all relevant parties to discuss next steps. The DSL/Principal will then work with children's social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police.
- **Inform parents** - as with other concerns of abuse, the school will normally seek to discuss concerns about a student with parents. Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the student and so if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police. This is not the case for peer-on peer abuse,
- **Record** – all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing, kept confidential and stored securely on the school's child protection and safeguarding systems. The record will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and a note of the action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Children can report allegations or concerns of peer-on-peer abuse to any staff member and that staff member will pass on the allegation to the tutor/s and Head of Section for action in accordance with this policy. To ensure children can report their concerns easily, the tutors act as a gatekeeper in the first instance, however any member of staff can act as first in line to support students.

Where allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made, the school will act in accordance with the guidance set out within our school and ultimately by the Dutch Government.

19.3. Supporting those involved

The support required for the student who has been harmed will depend on their circumstance and the nature of the abuse. Support could include counselling, mentoring, external mental health support, the support of family and friends and/or support with improving peer relationships or, if applicable, restorative practice approaches.

Support may also be required for the student that caused harm. We will seek to understand why the student acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the student and/or change behaviours. Once those needs have been met, the consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

20. Serious violence

All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These include increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts could also indicate that children have been approached by or are involved with individuals associated with criminal gangs.

All staff are made aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

21. Child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation

Both Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. This power imbalance can be due to a range of factors, including age, gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

The school includes the risks of criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation within tutorials and where the curriculum offers the scope for this to be explored. A common feature of such exploitation is that the child often does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

21.1. Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse which may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Child Sexual Exploitation can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g., through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

Child Sexual Exploitation can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, namely, they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs, and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation which, as well as including the indicators set out under Child Criminal Exploitation below, can also include having older boyfriends and suffering sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant. All concerns are reported immediately to the DSL/Principal.

21.2. Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through country lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing, being forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or carry a knife for a sense of protection.

Children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys and both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or experiencing criminal exploitation. The main indicator can include children who:

- appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse drugs or alcohol
- go missing for periods of time or regular return home late
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

21.3. Organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs

Children and vulnerable adults can be exploited to move, store, and sell drugs and money, with offenders often using coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

This type of exploitation can occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child. This power imbalance can be due to the same range of factors set out under CCE, above.

Children can be targeted and recruited into becoming involved in a number of locations, including schools and colleges. Indicators of becoming victim to illegal drug dealings include those indicators set out under CCE above, with the main indicator being missing episodes from home and/or school. Additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited include children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from home
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g., knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation with which they have no connection or in a hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing

22. Online safety

As schools increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material. The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, and sexual predation.

We have ensured that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to manage the content available to students, who can contact our students, and the personal conduct of our students online. We have also ensured that appropriate levels of security protection procedures are in place to safeguard our systems, staff, and students. We review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

Online safety risks can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **content** - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content such as pornography, fake news or fake videos, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, radicalisation, and extremism
- **contact** - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users such as peer to peer pressure and adults posing as children or young adults to groom or exploit children
- **conduct** - personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm such as making, sending, and receiving explicit images, sharing other explicit images and online bullying
- **commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing, or financial scams.

All staff are aware of these risk areas and should report any concerns to the tutor/s and/or Heads of Section.

Please see this [online safety document](#) with a detailed step by step approach.

23. Sharing nudes and semi nudes

Sharing photos, videos and live streams online is part of daily life for many children and young people, enabling them to share their experiences, connect with friends and record their lives. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes means the sending or posting online of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums, or done offline between devices via services such as Apple's Airdrop.

The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'. Other terms used in education include 'sexting', 'youth produced sexual imagery' and 'youth involved sexual imagery'.

The motivations for taking and sharing nudes and semi-nudes are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by young people who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a young person in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner. Incidents may occur where:

- children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online
- images created or shared are used to abuse peers, e.g., by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to as follows:

- The incident will be referred to the tutor/s and Heads of Section for immediate action and the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff.
- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern that a young person has been harmed, or is at risk of harm, the police will immediately be contacted in accordance with this policy.

In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. Once a report is made to the police, the report must be recorded, and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices and interviews with the young people involved.

24. Domestic abuse

In cases of domestic abuse, we must recognise the impact of domestic abuse on children if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

Domestic abuse is a pattern of harmful behaviours, including controlling, coercive, or violent actions, used by one person against another in an intimate

or familial relationship. It can take many forms, such as emotional, physical, sexual, financial, or psychological abuse, and can occur between current or former partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. The key aspect is that it's a misuse of power and control within a close relationship.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Any child can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in their home life. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious emotional and psychological impact on children, and in some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

All staff are aware of the impact domestic violence can have on a child. If any of our staff are concerned that a child has witnessed domestic abuse, they will follow the reporting code and report their concerns immediately to the tutor/s and Head of Section for immediate action.

25. Honour-based abuse, FGM and Forced Marriage

'Honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBA are abuse.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. Staff and the school Principal will consider it when deciding what safeguarding action to take.

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In the Netherlands, the practice is a criminal offence. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. Forced marriage is a criminal offence.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent. School staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a student about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to The Netherlands.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage, but the choice of whether to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it.

All incidents involving (a suspicion of) honor-based abuse, forced marriage and/or femal genital mutilation will be responded to as follows:

- The incident will be referred to the tutor/s and Heads of Section for immediate action and the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff.
- The school will follow the Reporting Code and will take appropriate steps when necessary, which could include involving the police.

26. Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone, other than a parent or a close relative, cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or aged under 18 if the child is disabled.

When a member of staff becomes aware that a student may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the tutor and Heads of Section, if necessary, the school will notify the local authority of the circumstances.

27. Visas and guardianship status

All students at RISS must comply fully with all Dutch immigration regulations to live and study in the Netherlands. RISS is not above the law and the school will always report any irregularities to the authorities and child protection agencies. Children must live with their parents or an officially appointed guardian. Any changes in children's status should be notified to the school with immediate effect.

If families mislead the school by omission or by providing false information the school retains the right to contact the relevant government officials, which may include the IND.

28. Special circumstances

Please note the below situations:

28.1. Looked after children - Children under state care

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is because of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child.

28.2. Children who have a social worker

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. At times, local authorities may share this information with us, and the DSL/Principal will hold and use this information to inform decisions about safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare.

28.3. Children staying with host families

Where it is the case, the school in partnership with the leader of the trip, may arrange for students to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. Some overseas students may reside with host families during school terms, and we will work within national guidance to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

It is not possible for schools to obtain criminal record information from adults abroad. Where students stay with families abroad, we will agree with partner schools a shared understanding of the arrangements in place. Staff will use their professional judgement to satisfy themselves that the arrangements are appropriate to safeguard the students, which will include ensuring students understand who to contact should an emergency occur, or a situation arise which makes them feel uncomfortable. We will also make parents aware of these arrangements.

RISS currently does not operate these kinds of trip arrangements, but it is not against them. Therefore, the above ensures that given the nature of a new experiential learning within the above lines, we will have clear expectations set out.

Appendix One: Categories of Abuse

Four categories of abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate

caregivers); or

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- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons, it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused, neglected, or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures, or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school, arrive late, or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their schoolwork
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'

Specific to radicalisation:

- expressing an obsessive or angry sense of injustice about a situation, and blaming this on others
- expressing anger or extreme views towards a particular group – such as a different race or religion
- suggesting that violent action is the only way to solve an issue
- sharing extreme views or hatred on social media
- Talking as if from a scripted speech

Appendix Two: List of Key Organisations in The Netherlands

Name	Website address	Ages Supported	Organisation Status	Notes
113 Suicide Prevention	https://www.113.nl/english	ALL	Independent stichting/foundation - Government subsidised	National help line with regional divisions. Various organisations work together with the 113 foundation. Both trained volunteers and professionals work at the organisation. Government subsidised
Veilig Thuis	https://veiligthuis.nl/	ALL	Governmental	National organisation for reporting domestic violence and child abuse with regional divisions
Centrum Seksueel Geweld (Sexual Assault Centre)	https://centrumseksueelgeweld.nl/	ALL	Partnership governmental organisations and subsidised	Forensic, Medical and Psychiatric help for all victims of sexual violence. Medical doctors, police, nurses and other professionals form the organisation. Organisations that make up organisation: hospitals, GGD, GGZ, police and Slachtofferhulp Nederland;
Jongeren Hulp Online	https://jongerenhulponline.nl/	14-23	Partnership	Partnership of more than 20 helplines for adolescents. Issues relating to: loneliness, substance abuse, sex, eating disorder, self-image, divorce, LHBTIQ+, sexual/online abuse amongst others. Initiative of Nederlands Centrum Jeugdgezondheid and Alles is Gezondheid.
Helpdesk Schools and Social Safety	Telefoon: 030 – 285 66 16 (schooldagen van 9.00 tot 16.00 uur) E-mail: helpdesk@schoolenveiligheid.nl https://www.schoolenveiligheid.nl/helpdesk/	ages 4 to 18	Independent stichting/foundation	school professionals with questions about safety policy, pedagogical climate or undesirable behaviour can contact the helpdesk; can be contacted on how to manage communications around cases of abuse within a school community
K-EETi	https://www.kenniscentrum-kjp.nl/nieuws/k-eeti-advieslijn-eetstoornissen/zorg/	ALL	Independent stichting/foundation	Advice on eating disorders - for professionals. Not for students/parents but for counsellors to gather advice on what to do in specific cases. Initiative from the Kenniscentrum Kinder en Jeugdpsychiatrie.
Blijf Groep	https://www.blijfgroep.nl/	ALL	Independent stichting but close ties to governmental organisations (veilig thuis)	Works in close co-operation with veilig thuis. We offer assistance to all involved: victims, children, witnesses and perpetrators. Our aim is to stop the violence and create safety through customised support. Blijf Group offers both help at home as crisis shelters and residential support. We also offer extensive support through groups for children, teenagers and adults. Blijf Group has branches in North Holland and Flevoland.
Jellinek	https://www.jellinek.nl/		GGZ	Part of the Arkin GGZ. Treatment as well as advice,

				guidance, training, self-help, and research.
COC	https://www.coc.nl/engels	ALL	Independent stichting/foundation. Subsidies from government.	
GENDI	https://www.gendi.nl/	Ages 4 to 18	Independent stichting/foundation	Initiative from School en Veiligheid
Dr.Leo Kannerhuis - centre for Autism	https://www.leokannerhuis.nl/	Ages 2 and older	GGZ	Treatment and knowledge institute. Part of Parnassia GGZ group.
NPI	https://www.npispecialist.nl/	AGES 4 TO 23	GGZ	Part of Arkin GGZ
Trimbos Instituut	https://www.trimbos.nl/english/	ALL	Non profit Organisation	Mental Health and Addiction support and information
Yes we can clinic	https://www.yeswecanclinics.nl/	Ages 13 to 27	Private clinic	Netherlands-based - under 18s also
Brijder	https://www.brijder.nl/		GGZ	do individual sessions but also parent workshops and teacher workshops. Part of Parnassia GGZ
Youz	https://www.youz.nl/		GGZ	Youz helps children, young people and (young) adults who have complaints or more serious psychological or addiction problems. We also treat their families. We treat as intensively as necessary and as briefly as possible. We work on outpatient clinics and digital platforms, but we also offer highly specialised mental health care (GGZ), admission and crisis care.
Help Wanted	https://www.helpwanted.nl/	All	Independent stichting/foundation	Help wanted is a helpline for online inappropriate behaviour. They offer practical help and provide personal advice to anyone affected by online inappropriate behaviour. You can chat, email, or call them. This service is always free and can be anonymous if you prefer.
Huwelijksdwang en achterlating	https://www.huwelijksdwangenachterlating.nl/	All	Governmental	The National Coordination Centre for Forced Marriage and Abandonment (LKHA) is a knowledge and expertise centre for forced marriage and abandonment. They advise and assist professionals with complex cases. Additionally, they help victims of forced marriage and abandonment abroad to return to the Netherlands.
CJG Rijnmond	https://cjpgrijnmond.nl/	All	Governmental	CJG Rijnmond is there for pregnant women, parents, and children aged 0 to 18 in the

				Rotterdam-Rijnmond region. Their professionals provide answers to questions about parenting, growing up, and health. No question is too unusual for them. Every municipality in the Netherlands has a CJG.
@ease	https://www.ease.nl/rotterdam.php	Ages 12-25	Governmental	Dealing with something? Talking about it helps! At @ease, you can simply drop in or chat: anonymously, without an appointment, and for free. They're there especially for young people aged 12 to 25.
Kindertelefoon	https://www.kindertelefoon.nl/informatie-voor-volwassenen/over-ons	Ages 8 to 18	Governmental	De Kindertelefoon is the go-to place in the Netherlands where children can talk freely (by phone and online chat) and confidentially about topics they may not feel comfortable discussing in their own environment.